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The Teachers' Monthly.

Vol. II.

OCTOBER, 1896.

No. 10.

IMPROVEMENTS IN OUR LESSON HELPS.

The Sabbath School Committee have decided to introduce the improvements in the lesson helps for 1897 with the last quarter of 1896. Accordingly our readers will find the *Monthly* enlarged to 32 pages and a colored map inserted. This very materially increases the cost of publishing and they have therefore been compelled to raise the price to 50 cents for a single copy and 40 cents for school subscriptions. Present subscribers will receive their copies at the old rate of 25 cents until the expiry of the time for which they have subscribed, but all renewals and new subscriptions will be charged at the advanced rate. In taking this forward step the committee have considered solely the wants of our teachers. The limited space at the disposal of the editor, when the magazine consisted of twenty pages, prevented the insertion of sufficient help to the teacher in the way of comment and illustrations. These will now be supplied with all the fulness that can be reasonably desired. As much space will be given to each lesson as is found in the ordinary Teacher's helps for which a higher price is charged, and the matter given will be the best "beaten oil" that the editor can produce or procure. Our teachers will find that, from cover to cover, the *Monthly* has taken a long stride forward.

The colored map will be inserted also in the *Senior* and *Intermediate Quarterlies*, and a new section in the former, "Bible Search Lights," will give a fresh stimulus to the study of the Daily Readings and marginal references. Our *Quarterlies* are now, we think, the cheapest and best for practical purposes, that our schools could use. They are not overloaded with matter which the scholar has merely to read over and "absorb" without mental effort, but while giving all necessary information, they encourage to independent thought and Bible study. The scholar who faithfully studies our *Quarterly* or *Leaflet*, not only knows his lesson well, but has learned to think and use his Bible too.

The *Primary Quarterly* and the *Primary Department* in the *Teachers' Monthly* continue under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Geo. H. Archibald, whose very original and practical methods of treating the lessons give our primary teachers a new interest in their work.

We solicit for our lesson helps, in their improved form, the cordial support of our teachers. The convener is in receipt of hundreds of replies to a postal card recently issued, in which the following and similar expressions are constantly repeated:

- "They meet our need much better than those we previously used."
- "They are in advance of the American helps."
- "They are quite superior to the other helps that have come under our notice."
- "We find them very much better than the Westminster we formerly had."
- "The *Primary Leaflet* and *Quarterly* excel any other that I have seen."
- "They are excellent."
- "They excel any other that has been brought forward as yet."
- "They are far ahead of any others."
- "At least equal to any we have used."
- "The best and most convenient ever used by our school."

Abundant testimony is also born to their success in promoting the home study of the Bible, regular and punctual attendance, and the use of the Bible itself in the school. Almost without exception all the replies received approve of our church publishing its own S. S. literature and not remaining dependent upon "American" sources. The letters referred to will all be published as a supplement to the November *Monthly*, so that our subscribers may read for themselves the pleasant words that have given the editor so much encouragement.

The General Assembly requests that the **WHOLE COLLECTION** in connection with Children's Day services be sent to the S. S. Committee.—*Minutes 1896.*

This magazine will doubtless be received before September 27th, so we hope your school and congregation will celebrate the day with enthusiasm. Our friends in "the states" have adopted our "Children's Day" as their "Rallying Day." Make it a grand rally of parents and friends with the school, that a fresh interest may be aroused in our delightful work of caring for the lambs.

Notes on the Lessons.

LESSON I—October 4th, 1896.

Solomon Anointed King. I KINGS I : 28-39.

(Commit to memory verses 28-30).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways." I Kings 2: 3.

PROVE THAT—Those in authority should be respected. I Pet. 2: 13.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 39, 40, 41.

LESSON HYMNS: *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 16, 22, 57, 69.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday*. A mother's request. I Kings I: 15-27. *Tuesday*. Solomon anointed king. I Kings I: 28-39. *Wednesday*. A danger averted. I Kings I: 41-49. *Thursday*. David's prayer for Solomon. Ps. 72. *Friday*. A prosperous king. I Chr. 29: 20-30. *Saturday*. The Prince of Peace. Isa. 9: 1-7. *Sabbath*. Everlasting dominion. Dan. 7: 9-14. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. Our lessons this Quarter treat of the life and writings of Solomon. The genius of David laid the foundations of the splendor of this reign. Our opening lesson describes the circumstances attending the accession of the new king.

LESSON PLAN. The King's Promise. vs. 28-31. II. The King's Instructions. vs. 32-35. III. The King's Successor. vs. 36-39.

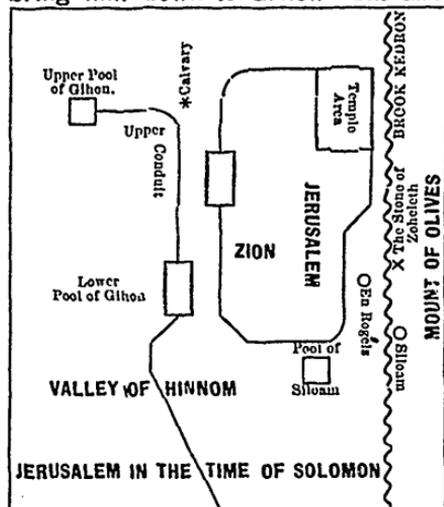
28. Then king David answered and said—Adonijah, the eldest son of David, in many points resembling his half-brother Absalom, had taken advantage of David's increasing feebleness to organize a conspiracy and seize upon the succession. Even Joab and Abiathar were implicated in it. Gathering his adherents around him at a great banquet near Enrogel, a fountain close by Jerusalem on the south-east, while the company were excited with wine and good fellowship, he caused the cry to be raised "Long live king Adonijah." Knowing that David had already selected Solomon as his successor, as soon as he heard of these proceedings, Nathan the prophet told Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, who at once informed the king. While she was speaking Nathan came in and, according to etiquette, Bathsheba retired from the royal presence. Nathan repeated the news to the king, who recalled Bathsheba. If Adonijah had thought that David was in his dotage his prompt and energetic action proved the reverse. He does not stagger irresolutely hither and thither, like a sick, feeble old man without any will of his own, but, as if he were still the strong hero, the undismayed, determined, energetic man, such as in his best years he had so often shewn

himself amid dangers and in critical situations, he raises himself from his sick-bed, swears to observe his word, issues his orders and puts them into immediate execution. (Baehr). **Call me Bathshe'ba**—She had retired when Nathan was announced, not in order that they might seem to have acted independently, but "for reasons of propriety, inasmuch as, in audiences granted by the king to his wife or one of his counsellors, no third person ought to be present unless the king required his attendance." (Keil). **And she came into the king's presence and stood before the king**—Lit. "came before the king and stood before the king." 29. **And the king swore**—This was a solemn renewal of a previous promise (v. 13). The emergency arouses all the old time vigor and promptitude of the king. **And said, As the Lord liveth**—i. e. "as surely as the Lord liveth," the commonest form of reverent oath among the Hebrews (Jer. 4: 3; 5: 2; Hos. 4: 15), "by the life of Pharaoh" (Gen. 42: 15). It corresponds to our own phrase "so help me God." God is frequently spoken of as "the living God," and the idea in this form of asseveration seems to be this, "the Lord is living, of that there is no doubt, and as certainly

shall I do what I now promise." (Lumby). **That hath redeemed my soul out of all distress**—It is like David to add this expression of gratitude to the usual formula. His providential deliverances had been many and striking. Compare his words in 2 Sam. 4: 9; 1 Sam. 26: 24; Ps. 25: 22; 31: 7; 34: 6, 7, 17, 22; see also Gen. 48: 16. God's goodness to David was a pledge that His promise regarding the one who was to occupy the throne would not fail. **30. Verily, as I swear unto thee by the Lord, the God of Israel (R. V.)**—We do not know when David gave this promise, but such an oath would have been impious except by divine direction. If he had shewn parental partiality to either son, it would seem that Adonijah and not Solomon was the subject of it (v. 6). "It is to be explained only by his faith in the promise of Jehovah, by his firm certainty and assurance that Solomon was the divinely-appointed successor, and that through him his own "house" as well as the house of Jehovah should be built up (2 Sam. 7: 11-13). (Baehr). **Saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day—R. V. "Verily so will I do this day."** Solomon was now about 18 years old and was under the special tuition of Nathan (2 Sam. 12: 25). That it was the king's wish that he should be regarded as heir-apparent to the throne must have been generally known. Within certain limits, oriental monarchs have always claimed the right of nominating their successors. The late Shah of Persia is not succeeded by his eldest son, the one generally believed to be the most competent to rule. In making this choice David endeavored to provide most wisely for the theocratic succession. Evidently Adonijah was a second Absalom, lacking in all the qualities necessary for the head of the theocracy. The extraordinary endowment of Solomon was a clear indication of providence that he alone was fitted to advance the glory of the kingdom. (Baehr). **31. Then Bathshe'ba bowed with her face to the earth and did reverence to the king**—This profound obeisance was not uncalled for. There is not the slightest doubt that if the plot of Adonijah had succeeded, Solomon, his mother, and all his partizans would have been put to death (2 Kings 11: 1).

In the Assyrian sculptures, ambassadors are represented with their faces actually touching the earth before the feet of the monarch. (Rawlinson). **And said, Let my lord king David live forever**—This is the only occasion mentioned in the Bible, when this extravagant expression is used to a Hebrew monarch, but it must have been in common use. It is frequently addressed to the Babylonian and Persian kings (Dan. 2:4; 3: 9; 5: 10; 6: 21; Neh. 2: 3). In the course of nature David could not live much longer, so that if the words meant anything more than respectful compliment, they implied that, in her zeal for her son, Bathsheba had no wish for the king's speedy removal, but only that the matter might be so fixed and settled as to prevent successful conspiracy against the carrying out of the royal will. **32. And king David said, Call me Za'dok the priest, and Na'than the prophet, and Bena'iah the son of Jehoi'ada, and they came before the king**—The order of the names marks the position of the persons with regard to the matter in hand. (Rawlinson). Abiathar, Zadok's colleague in the highpriesthood, had gone after Adonijah, perhaps out of jealousy at special favor shewn to the latter. (Baehr). Benaiah is summoned to take the place of Joab, who had also implicated himself in this folly. It is suggested that he had felt himself losing favor with David and wished to be amongst the first to hail the new king. By joining together priest, prophet and captain of the royal guard the coronation of Solomon would be seen to have the old king's sanction. **33. The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord—R. V. "And the king said. "The servants" were the Cherethites and Pelethites, the king's body-guard (v. 38.)** Perhaps also the Gibborim, or "mighty men" (2 Sam. 20: 6, 7). It is probable that these were not Israelites, but foreigners, possibly of the Philistine race. Many absolute monarchs have preferred hired mercenaries as their immediate attendants. Compare the Swiss guards of Louis XVI. of France who so bravely died in defence of their unfortunate master. "Lord" is plural, the plural of majesty," referring to the king himself. David is speaking after the manner of the court and issuing an important order in formal, stately language. **And cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule**—The rabbins tell us that it was death

for any one to ride on the king's mule without his permission. (Rawlinson). This would therefore be a very plain token that Solomon was to occupy the king's place with his consent. We do not read of mules in Palestine before the time of David (Gen. 36: 24 is "hot springs" in R. V.) and their use seems to have been restricted to royalty and distinguished persons (2 Sam. 13: 29; 18: 9). **And bring him down to Gi'hon**—The exact



locality of Gihon (*the stream*) is disputed. The most recent view places it at the lower pool of Siloam, about 100 yards from Enrogel, where Adonijah and his followers were feasting. But 2 Chr. 32: 30 and 33: 14 place it at the west of the city in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and verse 41 would imply that the conspirators knew nothing of what was taking place until they heard the uproar of rejoicing from the city. Prof. Rawlinson thinks that it was the name of the valley, afterwards called the Tyropean, which traversed the city from north to south, between Mt. Zion and the temple hill. "Adonijah had held his feast at the Fuller's Spring; Solomon was to be anointed at Gihon; the ceremonies at both places were religious acts, accompanied by sacrifices to propitiate God, and hence in each case held near a spring for the necessary ablutions, &c." (Geikie). **34. And let Za'dok the priest and Na'than the prophet anoint him there king over Israel**—The sacred anointing oil was kept in the tabernacle of which Zadok had charge (v. 39; 1 Chr. 16: 39; Ex. 30: 23-33). It was used exclusively in con-

nection with religious services, and signified the outpouring of spiritual gifts and graces from God. The only kings whose anointing is mentioned are Saul (1 Sam. 10: 1), David (1 Sam. 16: 13), Solomon, Jehu (2 Kings 9: 3, 6), Joash (2 Chr. 23: 11) and Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23: 30). But from the reference in the parable of Jothan (Judges 9: 8) we would infer that it was a ceremony universally practised. It was performed by a prophet in all the cases mentioned. The king was set apart by direct authority of God and his office had no Messianic significance, therefore the chief function was assigned to a prophet and not to a Priest. **And blow ye with the trumpet and say, God save king Sol'o-mon**—This was to serve as a solemn proclamation after the anointing had taken place. (Keil). Compare 2 Sam. 15: 10; 2 Kings 9: 13; 11: 14. Adonijah's faction had not gone so far as this. No doubt they wished to gain strength before making such a public display of what they were doing. (Lumby). David's promptitude forestalled them. **35. Then ye shall come up after him**—As his supporters and body-guard. (Lumby). (See verse 7). **That he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead**—My deputy and vice-king while I live, and absolutely king when I die. (Benson). It was virtually an abdication in Solomon's favor (vs. 46, 51, 53; 1 Chr. 29: 23, 26). (Hammond). **And I have appointed him to be ruler**—R. V. "prince." The title was that given by God specially to those who should lead his people, e. g. Saul (1 Sam. 9: 16 "captain,") David (1 Sam. 25: 30 "leader,") Hezekiah (2 Kings 20: 5) and Christ (Dan. 9: 25). (Lumby). **Over Israel and over Judah**—He had himself, for some time, been ruler only over Judah; then he had conquered Ephraim, which named itself Israel, and had united it again with Judah. The old disunion had again exhibited itself on the revolt of Absalom (2 Sam. 19: 40); hence, with Adonijah's like undertaking in view, he deemed it necessary to declare expressly that Solomon should be ruler over Israel and Judah. (Baehr). It may be, however, that "Israel and Judah" was even then the current designation of the kingdom. We have probably only the substance of what David said, not the exact words. **36. And Bena'iah, the son of Jehoi'ada,**

answered the king—Probably he spoke, not because the execution of the order depended upon him (Baehr), for both Zadok and Nathan had much more important parts to perform, but as a blunt soldier who was accustomed to speak his mind. (Hammond). **Amen; the Lord God of my lord the king say so too**—"Jehovah, the God of my lord the king" (R. V.) David might plan and his servants might labor for this end, yet it would not be brought about except with God's will (Ps. 127: 1; Jer. 28: 6). (Lumby). **37. As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Sol'omon.** This was not flattery, but a grateful acknowledgement of the Hand that had blessed Israel through David. **And make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David**—No doubt the promises to David were well known to the pious attendants of the king and they shared his high expectations regarding the future (1 Chr. 17: 11-27). See ch. 3: 11, 12. **38. So Z'adok the priest, and Nathan the proph., and Bena'iah, the son of Jehoi'ada, and the Cher'ethites and the Pe'lethites**—These constituted the royal body-guard. Some suppose that they were composed of foreign mercenaries—Cretans and

Philistines. (Compare Gittites, from Gath, 2 Sam. 15: 18). The older interpretations, based upon the supposed derivations of the names, understand that they refer to their duties a royal "executioners" and "runners" or "couriers." They were the "mighty men" referred to in verse 8, who had not been seduced from their loyalty. **Went down and caused Sol'omon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon**—The populace would notice the unwonted parade and the news would quickly spread through the city. A vast concourse would speedily assemble. **39. And Za'dok the priest took a horn of oil out of the tabernacle** (R. V. "tent") and anointed Solomon—Nathan was joined with him in this act (verse 45). The tabernacle on Mt. Zion, where the ark was kept (2 Sam. 6: 17; 1 Chr. 15: 1) must be meant here, as there was no time to fetch the oil flask from Gibeon where the old tabernacle stood. **And they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, God save king Sol'omon**—David's commands were carried out to the letter. Solomon was accepted by the people with loud demonstrations of loyalty, and the banquet of the conspirators came to an abrupt conclusion.

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

Compare Adonijah and Absalom in regard to character and disposition. What notable men did Adonijah persuade to join his company? (1 Kings 1: 7). Where was his feast held? (1 Kings 1: 9) Who revealed the plot? To whom did he first speak? How was David informed of it? Whose granddaughter was Bathsheba? (2 Sam. 11: 3; 23: 34). Was the genius of Solomon in any degree hereditary? (2 Sam. 16: 23). By what other name was he called? (2 Sam. 12: 25). Had he any brothers? (2 Chr. 3: 5). Who was his tutor? (2 Sam. 12: 25).

29. Shew that this solemn expression was sometimes lightly used (Jer. 4: 2; 5: 2; Hos. 4: 15). What is the christian's refuge in trouble and danger? (Ps. 34: 7, 22; Heb. 1: 14; Ps. 84: 11, 12).

30. What right had David to make this promise? (2 Sam. 7: 11-13; 12: 25). What gracious promise may believers claim for their children? (Acts 2: 39; Gal. 3: 29).

31. What danger had been now averted? (2 Kings 11: 1). What greater danger ought we to avert by promptitude? (Ps. 95: 8; John 3: 15, 36).

32. When did Zadok connect himself with David? (1 Chr. 12: 28). How did he shew his loyalty at the time of Absalom's rebellion? (2 Sam. 15: 24). Who was his colleague in the high-priesthood? What title for the first time appears in connection with the name of Nathan? (1 Kings 1: 23; 1 Sam. 9: 9). What books, unfortunately lost, did he write? (1 Chr. 29: 29; 2 Chr. 9: 29). To what tribe did Bena'iah belong? (1 Chr. 27: 5). Give some of his exploits. (2 Sam. 23: 20, 21). To what rank did Solomon promote him? (1 Kings 2: 35).

33. Where was Gihon situated? (2 Chr. 32: 30; 33: 14). Where else do we find this name? (Gen. 2: 13).

34. What other kings were anointed? (1 Sam. 10: 1; 16: 3; 2 Kings 9: 3, 6; 2 Chr. 23: 11; 2 King 23: 30). What evidence that it usually formed part of the coronation services of kings? (Judges 9: 8.) What were the ingredients of the sacred anointing oil? (Ex. 30: 23-33). With what was Christ anointed (Heb. 1: 9). To what office? (Luke 4: 18). What anointing do believers receive? (2 Cor. 1: 21; 1 John 2: 27).

36. Shew that the divine sanction and blessing are essential to success. (Ps. 127: 1; 1 Cor. 3: 6, 7; John 15: 5; Jas. 4: 13-15). Was there a second recognition of Solomon as king? (1 Chr. 29: 22). Of what greater king was Solomon a type? (Isa. 9: 6, 7). What is said of the extent and duration of his kingdom? (Dan. 7: 14).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

I. THE KING'S PROMISE. No doubt David was divinely guided in selecting Solomon as his successor. Neither Absalom nor Adonijah were fitted for the throne, although their father's partiality might have placed them in it. As God had prepared David so he had prepared Solomon. He was endowed with just the talent necessary for the times in which he was to live. As Samuel instructed David so Nathan superintended the education of his son. It was no doubt well understood by those intimate with the king that Solomon was heir apparent, yet when the conspiracy of Adonijah was revealed, prompt steps were taken to checkmate it. God's purposes are carried out by our attending to the part confided to us. In doing His work we must act as if everything depended upon ourselves, but trust as if all rested on God. Our energy and prudence will then be rewarded with success. Nathan at once informed the king, and David, with characteristic promptitude, issued his orders.

28. *Call me Bathsheba.* There is a beautiful exhibition of affection in thus calling back Solomon's mother and his own much-loved wife, to reassure her that he had not forgotten his promise. He realized at once the grave danger which menaced them and with tender solicitude would dispel her fears without a moment's delay. "Be kindly affectioned one toward another."

29. *That hath redeemed my soul out of all distress.* This grateful remembrance of his own deliverance in times of peril comes appropriately as an encouragement to Bathsheba in her present peril. Only trust God and we need not fear. Dangers and difficulties in the path of duty should only rouse us to more heroic efforts. Trials overcome in the past should assure us that coming ones will be safely surmounted. "The Lord redeemeth

the soul of his servants; and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate." (Ps. 34: 22).

30. *Even so will I certainly do this day.* It might have been better had he carried out his intention sooner but the time for delay was now clearly past. He must act at once, or Solomon will never sit on his throne. Such critical moments occur often in our lives. If we let them pass unimproved the blessing they offer may never come back to us; the good we might have done will be left for others to do. On the rocky coasts and islands of Britain the people are in the habit of collecting the eggs of the wild seabirds which are laid upon ledges of the cliff. They are generally inaccessible except by a rope let down from the edge of the precipice. On one occasion an egg-gatherer found the rock to overhang so much that he was obliged to swing himself like a pendulum so as to gain a footing on the ledge. He succeeded in his object but unfortunately the rope slipped from his grasp and he was left without any means of ascent or descent. For a moment he watched the vibrations of the rope as each time it became more and more distant; then suddenly exclaiming "It is nearer than it will ever be again, I must clasp it or die." He sprang out to meet it, caught it, and was safe. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." (Ps. 95: 8).

31. *Let my lord king David live forever.* Such extravagant language was common in the East but if it meant anything more than court politeness, it denoted that Bathsheba had no wish to see Solomon on the throne if David's death was necessary to his succession. There is a better sense in which we may wish that those whom we honor and love may "live forever." Jesus says that those who believe in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3: 15). When the Bishop of Rochester was about to be beheaded by Henry VIII., as

he saw the scaffold which he was approaching, he took out a little pocket Testament and looking up to heaven exclaimed, "Now, O Lord, direct me to some passage which may support me through this awful scene." He opened the book and his eye fell upon the words "This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." The Bishop closed the book saying, "Praised be the Lord, this is sufficient both for now and for eternity." We can know Christ only by trusting, loving and obeying him.

II. THE KING'S INSTRUCTIONS. David took care that the people should clearly see that the anointing of Solomon had his authority. He joined in the act the high priest, the prophet, and the commander of the royal guard. He then caused the young prince to ride on his own mule, which it would have been treason for Solomon to do without the king's consent. The sacred anointing oil was to be used and official proclamation made by sound of trumpets. Solomon's possession of the throne was beyond dispute.

34. *Anoint him their king over Israel.* The anointing was the most solemn part of the ceremony and signified his endowment with all kingly virtues, and that he held his throne by the appointment of God, whose Holy Spirit would direct him in the exercise of his responsible duties. All our duties are as really assigned to us by God as the loftier functions exercised by them are to kings. Every post of usefulness, however humble, is a throne to the occupant of it, and his coronation will come by and bye if he is faithful in it.

"All service ranks the same with God,
If now, as formerly he trod
Paradise, His presence fills
Our earth, each only as God wills
Can work—God's puppets, best and worst,
Are we ; there is no last nor first."

Emerson says, if we weave a yard of tape in all humility, and as well as we can, long hereafter we shall see that it was "no cotton tape at all, but some galaxy which we braided and that the threads were time and nature." Remember that God is a silent, but the most powerful, partner in every honest calling. He it is who makes vacancies and fills them and never fails to place those who allow him to lead them where they can really serve him best.

35. *He shall be king in my stead.* Usually kings and humbler people hold on to power

and position as long as they can, often long after their usefulness has gone. But as David was in no hurry to snatch the crown from Saul, so now he readily relinquishes it when he sees that the good of the kingdom demands that he should. Such a spirit of unselfishness is as beautiful as it is rare. Only a large minded man, with strong faith in God, cherishing as his supreme aim in life the fulfilment of the divine purpose could have acted thus. Yet this is the true spirit of Christian service. It is said that the secret of his excellence as an orator was the utter and absolute oblivion of himself which Demosthenes displayed. His constant solicitude was to confine the attention of the hearer to the cause he was pleading without diverting it to himself by displays of wit. God's work is vastly more important than the workman and we shall do it best when we think least of the praise or blame we may receive from men. Amongst the Spartans it was thought noble to live for the state alone. When one lost his election to the Council of Three Hundred he is said to have expressed his joy that there were three hundred better men than himself found in the city. Would that we had such men by the thousand in church and state. When on his way to meet the papal ambassador, Martin Luther said, "In Augsburg even in the midst of mine enemies, Jesus Christ also reigns. May Christ live, even if Martin should die." We do not need, for the display of this virtue, heroic occasions, but ample opportunity for its exercise will occur in our daily experiences. Let us always distrust our own motives when selfish considerations have any place amongst them whatever.

III. THE KING'S SUCCESSOR. David's instructions were duly carried out. Before the conspiracy of Adonijah could come to a head, the shouts of the people proclaimed the accession of Solomon. He was king by the will of God, the appointment of David and the acclaim of Israel. To dispute his right would have been folly and madness. How far he fulfilled the bright promise of his youth, his fame, his works, his wisdom and his folly will be studied in the lessons of this Quarter.

36. *Amen ; the Lord God of my Lord the king say so too.* Unless our will accords with God's will the success of our plans is a misfortune. When God ratifies what we do success is certain. Our duty is to find out first what

God's will is and then to do it; we ought not first find out what we wish and then ask God's permission to proceed.

37. *Make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.* This prayer was answered (1 Kings 3: 11, 12). Yet David's work made Solomon's glory possible. He had consolidated the tribes into a nation, subdued all their enemies round about, and laid the foundations of commercial prosperity. So we build upon the results of the past and in turn provide a basis on which our successors may build still further. It is said that when the younger professor Silliman was once lecturing in New York his father was in the audience. A gentleman sitting behind him was so filled with admiration of the youthful *savant* that he exclaimed in an audible whisper, "He beats the old gent." The father, turning round, replied, "He ought to; he stands on my shoulders." All that the past has transmitted to us of blessings and privileges are a sacred trust which we must pass on to others unimpaired.

39. *God save king Solomon.* He was welcomed for his father's sake, and ere long he was honored for his own. His faults were forgiven in the splendor of his reign and after thousands of years, the numerous legends

regarding him shew how greatly his memory was revered. Besides this earthly glory we may find in Solomon a type of "great David's greater son," Jesus. He was divinely appointed, came according to promise, was duly anointed and enthroned. He was victorious over his enemies, spoke words of marvellous wisdom and treated his adversaries with forgiving mercy. Let us shout "Hozanna to the son of David."

ADDED POINTS.

1. From the conduct of Nathan and Bathsheba learn respect for the conventional proprieties of life.
2. Solemn oaths should not be lightly spoken.
3. We should keep our promises to the letter.
4. There is nothing humiliating in acts of respect to superiors by age or office.
5. The best way to eject usurpers is to enthrone the legitimate king before the rebels have gathered strength. Give your heart to Christ before Satan take possession of it.
6. Be unselfish enough not to envy those who are cleverer and more fortunate than yourself.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

Our lesson tells of the entry of a king into Jerusalem. Draw, or have prepared before hand,

| | | |
|--|---|---------|
| SOLOMON | } Promised } Anointed } Enthroned | } JESUS |
| <p>"A greater than Solomon is here."</p> | | |

an outline of the city with Gihon on the West and the Mt. of Olives on the East. Review, by questioning, the facts of the lesson. With Ps. 72 as the connecting link recall the triumphal entry of Christ. Compare and contrast the two. Christ came according to promise. He too was anointed, but by suffering, crowned, but with thorns and enthroned, but on a cross. Mark the traditional spot of calvary with a cross. It lies close outside the wall on the N. W. Speak of this "greater than

Solomon" whose "words make wise unto salvation."

LESSON II—October 11th, 1896.

Solomon's Wise Choice. 1 KINGS 3: 5-15.

(Commit to memory verses 11, 12.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Ps. 111: 10.

PROVE THAT—We need the Lord's guidance. Ps. 37: 5.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 42, 43, 44.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 1, 78, 220, 72.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Solomon's wise choice 1 Kings 3: 5-15. *Tuesday.* The choice of Moses. Heb. 11: 17-26. *Wednesday.* Joshua's choice. Josh. 24: 14-24. *Thursday.* The excellency of wisdom. Job 28: 12-28. *Friday.* Which to choose. Deut. 30: 11-20. *Saturday.* Righteousness the first choice. 1 Tim. 6: 6-16. *Sabbath.* The best knowledge. Phil. 3: 1-14. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. Solomon treated those implicated in the plot of Adonijah with wise leniency and his authority was unquestioned henceforth. The closing scenes of David's life are described in 1 Chr. 22, 28 and 29 chapters. For sublimity and pathos the narrative is unexampled. His private charge regarding certain obnoxious and dangerous persons (1 Kings 2: 1-9) is painful reading and forcibly reminds us of the lower ideas regarding some points of morality which possessed even good men in Old Testament times. Read in connection with our lesson 2 Chr. 1: 1-13; 1 Kings 4: 29.

LESSON PLAN. I. Solomon's Prayer. vs. 5-9. II. God's Answer. vs. 10-15.

5. In Gib'eon—About 6 miles N. of Jerusalem. It was an important city of the Hivites at the time of the conquest (Josh. 10: 2.) Here were the Tabernacle and all its furniture except the Ark of the Covenant. These had been removed thither from Nob (compare 1 Sam. 21: 6 with 1 Chr. 16: 39, 40; 2 Chr. 1: 3), thus making it the central place of the national worship (verse 4). How or when this change took place we do not know. Perhaps the massacre of the priests by Saul had made Nob abhorrent (1 Sam. 22: 19). Here Solomon held a great religious festival by way of solemn inauguration of his reign (2 Chr. 1: 2, 3). Upon the ancient altar of burnt offerings roared under the shadow of Sinai by the inspired Bezaleel (2 Chr. 1: 5), he offered a thousand victims. Such immense offerings were not uncommon (1 Kings 8: 63; 2 Chr. 29: 33, 34). This is the last occasion in which we read of sacrifices offered at Gibeon. **The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night**—A soul directed towards God and divine things in its wakeful state is peculiarly fitted, in the stillness of the night, in its involuntary activity, *i. e.*, in its dreams, to receive purely spiritual, inwardly divine influences. Such was the case with Solomon. His dream shews what then agitated and filled his soul, and that the festivity he then held was not an empty political ceremony. Adonijah at Enrogel would never have been able to dream so. (Baehr). The prophetic dream of the night, as a rule, is connected with the moral reflections and presentiments of the day. (Lange). Other instances of remarkable dreams, Jacob, Gen. 31: 11; Pharaoh, Gen. 41: 25; Joseph,

Matt. 1: 20; 2: 13, 19. **And God said**—Notice the change in the divine name "Jehovah" appears, "God" (Elohim) speaks. Modern critics lay great stress upon the occurrence of these names, but in the narrative before us they seem to be used without any special reason for one rather than the other. **Ask what I shall give thee**—This is God's response to the king's homage. He speaks as a king to a king. God daily makes as large and liberal offers to us. (Kitto). He knew Solomon's needs, but will supply them only if the king asks rightly. Read Ezek. 36: 37; Matt. 21: 22; Jas. 4: 2. **6. And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great kindness (R. V.) according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee**—Such grateful humility and such high appreciation of moral excellence are qualities of heart favorable to the reception of God's best gifts. We see readily how great a debtor David was, who had received from God's hands royal appointment, providential guidance, wise conquests, public favor, and settled empire; but some students—with David's great sins fresh in their minds—may be disposed at first to question his truth and righteousness and uprightness of heart. Solomon's estimate of his father is nevertheless correct. David, blundering and sinful as he was, always sought to be on Jehovah's side. Before christians pass judgment upon him they should remember (1) that the lofty moral ideal that Jesus brought to earth David never caught a glimpse of; and (2) that his rank as king lifted him high above ordinary

law, and as the general moral sentiments of the Hebrews were not higher, but lower, than his own, there was no public opinion to restrain him. None of us has yet tried to walk, as he had to walk, without moral hedges or fences of any sort. Don't be too sure how good you would be if all such restrictions were taken away. Many sins have grown more difficult, and many virtues have grown easy since David's time, for which fact we should all thank God. (Ill. Notes). God's mercies to David encouraged Solomon to prefer his petition for continued and increased blessings. This is his *first* plea. "Truth" here contains all his duties to God, as "righteousness" those to men, and "uprightness" the right manner of performing both sorts of duties. (Pool). **And thou hast kept for him this great kindness**—God's goodness carried forward the blessing and prolonged the dynasty which he had founded, promising the same "kindness" or favor to all his successors who should imitate his virtues (1 Kings 2: 4). **That thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day**—David himself recognizes this as his crowning mercy (1 Kings 1: 48). **7. And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father**—Solomon places the responsibility for being in his present position where it belongs. His being king was not due to personal ambition, nor to the wise foresight and prompt action of others but to God himself. He had, therefore, a strong *second* plea for divine grace to discharge his duties. God never disclaims such an appeal. **And I am but a little child**—This is doubtless the language of humility. Modern commentators place his age at 18 or 20, but others think he could not have been more than fourteen, as Josephus, the Jewish historian, states. David speaks of him as "young and tender" (1 Chr. 22: 5; 29: 1). **I know not how to go out or come in**—The usual expression for performing the active duties of life (Num. 27: 17; Deut. 28: 6; 31: 2; 1 Sam. 18: 13; 2 Sam. 3: 25; Ps. 121: 8). A consciousness of his youth and inexperience forms Solomon's *third* plea. Any sense of weakness and insufficiency that leads us to cast ourselves on God's wisdom and strength is a source of real power (2 Cor. 3: 5; 12: 10). **8. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered**

nor counted for multitude—In contrast to his own youth and lack of familiarity with public affairs stood the vastness of the interests controlled by him. The importance of these and the necessity for maintaining them unimpaired constitutes Solomon's *fourth* plea. He was called to rule over the people of God's own choice, his peculiar people, standing to him in a very near and holy relationship, a relationship fraught with infinite blessings to the world. The nation must be worthy of this high calling and would be largely what their king made them. They were also a very numerous people. The promises to Abraham (Gen. 13: 16; 15: 5) were practically fulfilled. The actual number, as inferred from 2 Sam. 24: 9, and 1 Chr. 21: 5, 6, would have been about 6,000,000, but there were also tributary nations. **9. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?**—The special type of wisdom which Solomon asked was that sagacity, that intuitive apprehension of character and conduct, coupled with an unflinching sense of equity as between man and man, which he needed as the supreme judge of Israel. His thought was specially upon the civil administration of the law. (Cowles). "An understanding heart" is literally "a hearing heart," and implies discrimination, penetration, a judicial mind. (Hammond). He showed his wisdom by asking wisdom. He became wise because he had set his heart upon it. (Stanley). (Prov. 2: 3-9; Jas. 1: 5). The judicial functions of the monarch were considered more important than his military duties. He sat in person as judge (verses 16-18). Read 1 Sam. 8: 5, 20; 2 Sam. 15: 4. "Absalom, that was a fool, wished himself a judge; Solomon, that was a wise man, trembled at the undertaking." (Benson). **10. And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing**—Although the whole occurrence took place in a dream, yet Solomon's choice was the one he would have made at any time. Our words and acts during dreams are often a more correct expression of our real selves than our waking department. The mind acts freely and the influences which come through the body are suspended. "Dreams become significant when they are the concentrated essence of the main stream of the waking thoughts, and

picturesquely exhibit the tendency of the character. This is precisely the use of dreams: our tendencies, unbridled by reason and fact, run on to results; and we see the character unimpeded by social checks, and as it would be were it unmodified by the restraints and efforts and external considerations of our conscious hours. Our vanity, our pride, our malice, our impurity, our deceit, our every evil passion has free play, and shews us its finished result, and in so vivid and true, though caricatured, a form, that we are startled and withdrawn from our purpose." (Dodds). Notice that the word "Lord" in this verse is not printed in italics and therefore does not stand for "Jehovah" but for "lord" or "master." He with whom Solomon spake was his "over-lord," the "king of kings." 11. **And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing—** All acceptable prayer is prompted by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8: 26). Selfish prayers are described in Jas. 4: 2, 3. Solomon's request is here estimated by what he did not ask, and its excellence is enhanced by allusion to three things which a smaller man in Solomon's place would have desired. (Terry). **And hast not asked for thyself long life—**Lit. "many days." One of the chiefest temporal blessings (Ps. 91: 16; Prov. 3: 2; 22: 41). Neither hast asked riches for thyself—Although wealth has its dangers (Job 31: 24; Ps. 62: 10; Matt. 13: 22; Mark 10: 24; 1 Tim. 6: 10), yet it is right to pray for success in our worldly calling. Riches acquired through God's blessing upon our honest labors is a means of good to ourselves and to others (1 Tim. 6: 17-19). **Nor hast asked the life of thine enemies—***i.e.* the defeat of foes in battle. Personal enemies are not referred to. God is the source of victory (1 Sam. 17: 47; Ps. 18: 39; 144: 10; Heb. 11: 32, 33). **But hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment—**Lit. "to hear judgment," *i.e.* to attend to the divine voice within. Others take the phrase to mean "discernment in hearing causes," as exemplified in the instance of the two mothers (vs. 16-27). (Hervey). He who applies his heart to wisdom does, at the same time, take the most proper method of gaining long life, riches and reputation, which are very often not only the rewards but the effects of wisdom. (Addison). 12. **Behold, I have done according to thy words—**"I have granted thy prayer." Such prayers are always

answered (1 John 5: 14, 15; Jas. 1: 5). **Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart—**He was gifted with rare powers of penetration. His sagacity was renowned and his learning immense (ch. 4: 29-34). **So that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee—**The fables which are told of him, now three thousand years afterwards, testify to the truth of this promise. His wisdom was doubtless to a certain extent a supernatural gift, but we must not suppose that he received all his knowledge without any effort on his part. He doubtless studied and toiled like other men for his acquirements; but he was divinely and supernaturally assisted, in a manner and to an extent which no other man ever enjoyed. (Terry). (1 Kings 10: 23, 24, Eccl. 1: 13-16). 13. **And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor—**The "honor" referred to is military glory, and corresponds to "life of thine enemies" in v. 11 (ch. 4: 21, 24). Compare the sayings of our Lord in Matt. 6: 33; 13: 12. Also what is said of divine wisdom in Prov. 3: 16, and God's superabundant giving in Eph. 3: 20. **So that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days—**Give your whole heart and chief endeavor to seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and God will see to the filling of your cup with earthly good, as may be best for you in his sight. Hence we may conclude that the principle on which God blessed Solomon was not exceptional but general. Anybody can have blessings from God on the same principle, the Lord himself being judge as to what is really good for any one of us personally to have. "Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is," and in no trivial sense. (Cowles). If we make sure of wisdom and grace, those will either bring outward prosperity with them or sweeten the want of it. (Henry). 14. **And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days—**This does not mean that God approved of all David's life, but only of his sincere and constant desire to serve God. He sinned greatly but he repented deeply, and his heart was right with God. This promise, unlike those in the previous verse, is conditional.

Solomon was not an old man when he died, only about sixty, but he had not fulfilled the condition (ch. 11: 1-8). **15. And Solomon awoke, and, behold, it was a dream—** But it was not a mere phantom of slumber. This was one of the recognized modes of divine revelation (Gen. 41: 7; 31: 11; 1 Sam. 28: 6, 15). In some way Solomon recognized its peculiar character above all ordinary dreams, and proceeded to offer solemn thanksgiving before the ark at Jerusalem. **And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord—**This had been brought to Jerusalem by David (2 Sam. 6: 17). Mount Zion had therefore gathered

around it more sacred associations than Gibeon. **And offered up burnt offerings—**In these the victim was consumed whole. They were expressive of entire consecration. **And offered peace offerings—**Of these only a portion was consumed. The rest was eaten at a sacrificial feast. They denoted fellowship with God and brotherly love. **And made a feast to all his servants—**They feasted upon the peace offerings (Deut. 14: 29). Compare David (2 Sam. 6: 49; 1 Chr. 16: 3). The king's burnt offerings, peace offerings, and the feast to his servants were tokens of his faith in and joy over the promises which had been made to him in his dream. (Lumby).

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

Who brought to the conspirators the news of Solomon's accession? (Kings 1: 42). What did Adonijah do and how did Solomon treat him? (1 Kings 1: 50). For what implied offence was he ultimately executed? (1 Kings 2: 25). What was Joab's final end? (1 Kings 2: 28-34). How did Solomon treat Abiathar? (1 Kings 2: 26, 27).

5. Where do we first read of Gibeon? (Josh. 9: 3-15). What is the possible reason for the removal of the tabernacle from Nob to Gibeon? (1 Sam. 22: 19). Mention some of the famous dreams divinely sent. (Gen. 31: 11; 37: 5, 9; 41: 25; Dan. 7: 1; Matt. 1: 20; 2: 13, 19). Shew that God's purposes regarding us do not render our prayers unnecessary. (Ezek. 36: 37). Why does God not answer some prayers for good things? (Jas. 4: 3).

6. What special blessings are promised to the children of God's people? (Gen. 26: 24; 1 Kings 15: 4; Ps. 37: 26; 112: 2; Isa. 44: 3).

7. What other reference is made to Solomon's youth? (1 Chr. 22: 5; 29: 1). For commendation of humanity see Ps. 9: 12; 10: 17; 25: 9; 149: 4; Prov. 3: 34; 15: 33; Isa. 57: 15; 1 Pet. 5: 5.

8. What was God's promise to Abraham regarding his descendants? (Gen. 13: 16; 15: 5). What was the actual population? (2 Sam. 24: 9; 1 Chr. 21: 5, 6).

9. From whom does wisdom come? (Job 28: 12-28; Jas. 1: 5). The best object of knowledge—Phil. 3: 10; Eph. 1: 18; 3: 19; John 17: 3.

10. What was Moses' choice? (Heb. 11: 25). What was Joshua's choice? (Josh. 24: 15). What should be our first choice? (Matt. 6: 33).

11. Is long life a blessing? (Ps. 91: 16; Prov. 3: 2; 22: 41). What are some of the dangers connected with wealth? (Matt. 13: 22; 1 Tim. 6: 10). How should riches be used? (1 Tim. 6: 17-19). What spirit should we cherish towards our personal enemies? (Matt. 6: 12; Col. 3: 13; 1 Pet. 3: 9). Is it right to pray for victory in battle? (Heb. 11: 32, 33).

13. What is God's mode of giving? (Eph. 3: 20).

14. Did Solomon fulfil the condition. (1 Kings 11: 1-8). What choice is set before every one? (Deut. 30: 19; Matt. 6: 24).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

I. SOLOMON'S PRAYER. Evidence of piety, divine help in assuming the responsibility of a youthful sovereign augurs well for the royalty. Long has she reigned and long may she still be spared to a nation whom her wisdom and godliness has blessed. When princess Victoria received intimation of her succession to the throne she asked the Arch-bishop Soloman came to the throne he inaugurated a peaceful reign of almost forty years by a great for her. Like Solomon she felt the need of, national "consecration meeting" at Gibeon.

Here upon the brazen altar, first erected under the shadow of Sinai 500 years before, he offered up, with imposing ceremonies, a thousand burnt offerings. Besides the obvious religious significance of this assembly, it had a lasting political effect in unifying the nation and creating a sentiment of personal loyalty to the young king.

5. *The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream.* Usually God answers prayer without any special indication that he has heard it, but on this occasion he desired to put Solomon to a further test, for the confirmation of his own character, and the instruction of those who, like us, should afterwards peruse the narrative. It is foolish to attach importance to the fancies of "dreamland," but when God sends a message to us while the body slumbers, we shall have no difficulty in recognizing it. It will be on a worthy occasion and befitting the character of the Divine Being. *Ask what I shall give thee.* God presents the same gracious offer to each of us every day and moment of our lives. "Whatsoever we ask, believing, we shall receive." "Ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." "Ye have not because ye ask not." "If we ask things according to his will he heareth us." What we ask for shews what we really are.

6. *Thou hast shewed mercy unto thy servant David my father.* Solomon prefaces his request by three considerations, which together form an argument with God that he should grant it. The first reminds God that the fact of his being on the throne at all is but the culmination of a long series of mercies to his father David. God made Solomon king as a favor to David and therefore he might be pleaded with to bestow upon the son all that was necessary to make him an honor to his father's name. Solomon was warranted in presenting this plea, for God has promised specially to bless the children of those who serve him. He said to Isaac "I will bless thee * * * for my servant Abraham's sake." (Gen. 26: 24). For David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem to set up his son after him" (1 Kings 15: 4). Of the righteous we are told, "His seed is blessed" (Ps. 37: 26), and "they shall be mighty upon the earth" (Ps. 112: 2). To them the promise is fulfilled "I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring" (Isa. 44: 3). But if we are not worthy of this heritage of divine favor it will

be taken from us. The blessed entail is broken by disregard of the pious instructions of youth and departure from the holy way in which our parents walked. It is said that Earl Cairns, when a little boy, was deeply impressed on hearing the words "God claims you." He told his mother. "What are you going to do with the claim?" she said. He answered "I will own it, and give myself to him." At school, at college, as a member of parliament, this was his motto. When appointed Lord Chancellor he was teacher of a large Bible class, but every Sunday still found him in his place. For all his burdensome public duties he would not give it up. *God's claim on his time and talents could not be crowded to one side.* So God claims you, as the child of his servants, your father and mother.

7. *I am but a little child.* This was spoken with becoming humility. Solomon shewed his real wisdom and greatness in being conscious of his insufficiency and the magnitude of the responsibilities resting upon him. But, with the apostle, he knew that his "sufficiency was of God" (2 Cor. 3: 5). On assuming the governorship of the Soudan, with the suppression of the slave trade as his task, General Gordon wrote, "No man ever had a harder task than I, unaided, have before me; but it sits as a feather on me. As Solomon asked, I ask wisdom to govern this great people; and not only will He give it, but all else besides." St. Augustine said that there were but three fundamental articles in the christian religion and these were one and the same—all "humility." *Those who rely upon God for everything will lack nothing.*

8. *Thy people which thou hast chosen.* God's mercy to his father, his own insufficiency and the character of the office he was called to fill were the three pleas presented by Solomon. The sacredness of the theocratic sovereignty and the greatness of the nation invested the throne with peculiar responsibilities. Too many desire office for the sake of its dignity and emoluments, feeling little the obligations attaching to it. Real honor can come only to those who fulfil well the duties to which they may be called.

9. *An understanding heart.* This was not absolutely the best thing that a sinful mortal could ask for, but it was the thing most needed in the circumstances. The grace of God in the heart is far more necessary than intellectual

superiority. But when, of several alternatives, Solomon chose really the noblest, God was pleased at the spirit shewn. It was a proof that Solomon had the capacity for receiving what he asked for, and discretion to use all the others without abusing them. Like Solomon we too must choose between alternatives on many occasions. To refuse to choose is itself a choice. To exercise ourselves in trying to choose well is moral education. "There is no human soul to which God has not given the choice of good and evil. 'He hath set fire and water before thee; stretch forth thine hand unto whither thou wilt.'" (Farrar).

"Our lives are songs; God writes the words,
And we set them to music at pleasure;
And the song grows glad, or sweet, or sad,
As we choose to fashion the measure.

We must write the music, whatever the song,
Whatever its rhyme or metre;
And if it is sad we can make it glad,
Or if sweet, we can make it sweeter."

II. GOD'S ANSWER. If we "covet earnestly the best gifts" the minor blessings will be added to them. If we ask wisdom we have the assurance that God will give it liberally (Jas. 1: 5). Solomon's choice was at once approved and all the gifts usually most craved by kings were promised besides. God gives "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

"I knelt before thy gracious throne
And asked for peace with suppliant voice;
And peace was given: not peace alone,
But love, and joy, and ecstasy."

11. *Because thou hast not asked.* To ask for long life may be to ask for prolonged unhappiness, unless we have learned the secret of making life sunny and useful. The ungodly may dread death because of the terrors of the next world, but he does not love life for itself when age has wrought its work upon intellect and senses. Those who desire riches as the be all and the end all of earthly felicity seldom find its acquisition to enhance their true happiness or to satisfy the deeper longings of the soul. It was said to the writer when in London: "If you want to see the most unhappy looking people in England, go to Hyde Park and watch the procession of carriages." The wealthy and titled occupants certainly did not seem so really happy as the street gamins who stared at them from the curb stones. *Fame*, for that is what "the life of thine enemies"

means, is just as unsubstantial, though perhaps a nobler object of pursuit. Those who have gained the most of it have been most willing to testify to its emptiness. On the other hand it holds good always that "the people who do not make worldly good their first object are the people who can be most safely trusted with it, and who get most enjoyment out of it." (Maclaren). A wealthy London gentleman, on a certain birthday, invited his servants to his house to receive gifts. "What will you have?" he asked the groom, "this Bible or a twenty dollar bill?" "I would take the Bible but I cannot read; I think the money will do me more good." "And you?" he said to the gardener. "My wife is so ill I sadly need the money," responded he. "Mary, you can read," he said to the cook, "will you take the Bible?" "I never get time to read." They all with one accord made excuses except the errand boy. "My lad," said the benefactor, "will you take the twenty dollars and replace your shabby clothes?" "Thank you," answered the lad, "but mother used to read to me that the law of God was better than silver. I will take the book, if you please." As he received the Bible and unclasped it, a gold piece fell to the floor. Turning its pages he found them thickly interleaved with bank notes. To those who choose the best God gives the most. (A. C. M. in the *Practical Commentary*).

14. *If thou wilt walk in my ways.* Long life was promised only upon condition of steadfast adherence to God's law. It is not true that the good die young, but godliness promotes longevity. A quiet conscience and regular, temperate habits will do more to maintain "a sound mind in a sound body" than any other causes. The desire for long life is natural and not wrong. It is frequently mentioned in the Bible as a reward of righteousness. But we should wish to live in order that we may be useful to our fellowmen, not that we may selfishly enjoy a prolonged existence.

"He lives who lives to God alone,
And all are dead beside;
For other source than God is none
Whence life can be supplied.

To live to God is to requite
His love as best we may;
To make his precepts our delight,
His promises our stay.

But life within a narrow ring
Of giddy joys comprised,
Is falsely named, and no such thing,
But rather death disguised."

ADDED POINTS.

1. We are most likely to meet God when engaged in his worship.
2. All God's blessings are mercy shewn to the undeserving.
3. We should strive to be worthy of the church heritage we possess.
4. It is important to act discreetly before others.

5. We ought not to shrink from responsibility but ask God to help us to discharge it properly.

6. God is always pleased when we make a noble and unselfish choice.

7. We are so apt to choose wrongly that we ought to pray

"The good we asked in mercy grant
The ill, though asked, deny."

8. God's way is the safest and best always.

9. We should always give thanks for answered prayers.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

Shew what folly it is to set our hearts upon *Pleasure, Riches, or Fame*, writing these three words on the board. Shew the need of discretion, prudence, sagacity, all that is implied in

"SEEK YE FIRST"

Not { PLEASURE
RICHES
FAME

Not even WISDOM, but

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD"

and

"All these things shall be added unto you."

the *Wisdom* prayed for by Solomon. Write the word a little space below *Fame*. Then show that there is a better choice still. It is better to know God and his son Jesus Christ, than to know all about our fellowmen. Spiritual excellence is better than intellectual sharpness. It is better to be *good* like Jesus

than *wise* like Solomon. If we have His spirit in our hearts we shall get all the pleasure, riches and fame that is good for us and all the wisdom that we need. Fill out the words on the board and apply.

LESSON III—October 18th, 1896.

Solomon's Wealth and Wisdom. I KINGS 4: 25-34.

(Commit to memory verses 29, 30).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." I Sam. 2: 30.

PROVE THAT—God prospers the upright. Prov. 14: 11.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 46, 47, 48.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 156, 74, 236, 253.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday*. Solomon's wealth and wisdom. I Kings 4: 25-34. *Tuesday*. Wisdom's invitation. Prov. 8: 13-21, 32-36. *Wednesday*. The source of wisdom. Ps. 119: 97-104. *Thursday*. Insufficiency of worldly wisdom. I Cor. 1: 20-31. *Friday*. True glory. Jer. 9: 12-24. *Saturday*. God-given wisdom. Dan. 1: 11-20. *Sabbath*. Spiritual wisdom. I Cor. 2: 1-13. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. The preceding portion of our chapter is occupied with a list of Solomon's officers (vs. 1-20) and a description of the extent of his kingdom (vs. 21-24). In all this there is the fulfilment of the divine promise. To dwell merely upon the outward glory of such a

kingdom would profit little if we did not point the moral which it teaches. The first half of our lesson affords an excellent text from which to speak of the use and abuse of temporal blessings. Solomon found all to be but vanity and vexation of spirit, but surely God did not mean that it should be so. The second half of our passage naturally suggests thoughts upon the right employment of education and mental ability. Talents which are not consecrated by piety are apt to prove a snare rather than a blessing.

LESSON PLAN. I. Solomon's Wealth. vs. 25-28. II. Solomon's Wisdom. vs. 29-34.

25. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely—Heb. "confidently," they had a sense of security (Jer. 23: 6). Notice that the two sections of the nation were clearly marked out from the very first, and might be compared to the two sections of Great Britain, England and Scotland. In 1 Kings 2: 32, Abner is called "Captain of the host of Israel" and Amasa "Captain of the host of Judah." See also the strife between the two parties after the defeat of Absalom (2 Sam. 19: 41-43). **Every man under his vine and under his fig tree**—A proverbial expression for peace and prosperity (2 Kings 18: 31). It is used of the blessedness of the Messianic kingdom (Mic. 4: 4; Zech. 3: 10). For the description of the opposite condition under the same figure see Joel 1: 12; Hab. 3: 17. The vine covered the house (Ps. 128: 3) and the shade of the fig tree afforded a place of quiet retirement (John 1: 50). **From Dan even to Be-er'she-ba**—As we would say "from Halifax to Vancouver." From north to south throughout the whole land. For Dan see Judges 18: 29, and for Beersheba Gen. 21: 31, and for the phrase Judges 20: 1; 1 Sam. 3: 20; 2 Sam. 3: 10, &c. **All the days of Solomon**—God's promise to Abraham was now fulfilled as far as it related to a temporal kingdom (Gen. 12: 7; 13: 14-15; 15: 18). **26. And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen**—Rather "saddle horses." "Forty" is a copyist's error for "four," which we find in the parallel passage 2 Chr. 9: 25. We would also infer that 4000 was the correct number because Solomon had 1400 war chariots (ch. 10: 26) and would not require more than two horses to each, with a number of spare ones. For the number of war chariots possessed by other kings see 2 Chr. 12: 3; 14: 9; 2 Sam. 8: 4; 10: 18. In thus multiplying horses Solomon violated Deut. 17: 16. They were doubtless used for pomp and display but would serve to overawe the tributary kings and preserve peace. **27. And those officers**—

Enumerated in verses 8-19. **Provided victual for** (Heb. "nourished") **king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month**—The stations of these men were in different parts of the country, and each for his month had to gather from the districts assigned to him contributions in kind for the royal household. (Lumby). **They lacked nothing**—Rather "suffered nothing to be lacking." The idea of the verb is that of *inspecting* troops, and marking, and at once correcting deficiencies. (Lumby). **28. Barley also and straw for the horses and dromedaries brought they unto the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge**—Oats are not grown in the East, there, as in Southern California, the food of horses is barley harvested before it is quite ripe, and cured like hay. The dromedary has but one hump, the camel two. It is swifter than the camel and is accounted the more valuable animal. The word here, however, may mean "mules" or "swift beasts" generally (see marginal reading), so that many scholars translate "swift coursers" or "race horses" used by the king's messengers. Compare Esth. 8: 10, 14. The words "the officers" are not in the original and the verb "was" is in the singular. The R. V. margin reads "where he (that is, the king) was." But from ch. 10: 26 we learn that the horses were distributed in different towns throughout the land. To these different depots, therefore, the purveyors must forward the provender "unto the place where it should be." (Hammond). If the king had been referred to he would have been mentioned, and, moreover, these officers had the charge of the whole force of cavalry, &c., not merely of those in immediate attendance upon the king. **29. And God gave Solomon wisdom**—Practical wisdom, ability to decide what is the judicious and careful course to pursue. (Keil). **And understanding exceeding much**—Keeness of understanding to arrive at the cor-

rect solution of difficult and complicated problems. (Keil) **And largeness of heart**—Mental capacity to embrace the most diverse departments of knowledge. (Keil). A comprehensive, powerful mind, capable of grasping the knowledge of many and difficult subjects; poetry, philosophy, natural history in its various branches; he was master of them all. (Lumby). The Easterns speak of the heart where we should say of the head or intellect (ch. 3: 9, 12; 10: 24. Compare Matt. 15: 19; Eph. 1: 18, (Gr. "eyes of your heart"); Heb. 4: 12. (Hammond). **Even as the sand that is on the seashore**—A proverbial expression for a great number or unlimited quantity of anything. It is found again in Gen. 22: 17; 32: 12; 41: 49; Josh 11: 4; Judges 7: 12 &c. Solomon seems to have had a singularly comprehensive mind, that could take pleasure in many studies, a very wide range of observation and reflection, and a strong grasp of all the great problems of human life. He was the first man of science in his nation, and though his works on natural history have not been preserved, because they were foreign to the purposes of the Bible, yet all wise and reverent astronomers, botanists and zoologists may fairly be reckoned as followers of Solomon. Like all men of a full mind, he delighted to communicate, and poured himself out in three thousand proverbs, and songs a thousand and five. He also excelled in witty and piercing conversation, and such was the reputation of the royal sage that "there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." (Dr. Donald Fraser). **30. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country**—The *Beni Kedem*, literally. Professor Rawlinson considers this to be a distinct tribe dwelling on the Euphrates (see Gen. 29: 1). Job belonged to it (Job. 1: 3) and Balaam (Num. 23: 7). The general opinion, however, is that the phrase "Children of the east country" is a general expression for all the Arabian tribes east and south-east of Palestine—Sabæans, Idumæans, Temanites, Chaldeans. (Hammond). These were from early times noted for their astrological investigations and for their wisdom. The character of their learning may be gathered from the book of Job. It was expressed principally in detached thoughts, proverbial phrases

and observations in the realm of natural history. From these regions came the "wise men" unto Bethlehem when Christ was born (Matt. 2: 1). (Lumby). **And all the wisdom of Egypt**—This lay to the west of Solomon's empire. East or west none was his peer. The re-discovery of ancient Egypt in our own day has fully corroborated her ancient fame. We read of "the wise men and sorcerers" of Pharaoh as early as Ex. 7: 11, and "the wise men of Egypt" are mentioned in the history of Joseph (Gen. 41: 8). The tradition of Egyptian wisdom is noticed in Stephen's speech (Acts 7: 22). (Lumby). It differed very considerably from the wisdom of *Kedem*, being scientific rather than gnostic or sententious, *i. e.* expressed in proverbs and maxims. It included geometry, astronomy, magic and medicine. (Hammond). **31. For he was wiser than all men**—*i. e.* known to the writer, either of past time or contemporaries. **Than E'than the Ez'ra-hite, and He'man, and Chal'col, and Dar'da, the sons of Ma'hol**—The four names of this verse are also mentioned as sons of Ze'rah, the son of Judah. Whether they are the same or not is disputed, and the decision is of little consequence. They would have been utterly forgotten but for this mention of them. **And his fame was in all nations round about**—It reached the ears of the Queen of Sheba (ch. 10). **32. And he spake three thousand proverbs**—Less than one-third of these are preserved in the Book of Proverbs which bears his name, but all of its contents are not from his pen. The Book of Ecclesiastes is generally attributed to Solomon. The proverb of the Hebrews was, as we see from those preserved, more of the character of a parable, or wise comparison, than what we commonly call by that name. (Lumby). **And his songs were a thousand and five**—These have all perished except the song of songs, Psalms 72, 127, 128, and, some add, first and second. We need not suppose that all his songs were of a sacred character. **33. And he spake of trees**—*i. e.* he gave descriptions of the whole vegetable world, and he discussed the virtues of the various plants. For it has been always of their medical properties that the earliest works on plants have treated. They were the remedies for all diseases, and a knowledge of "simples," as they were called in England in olden times, was counted for the

highest wisdom. (Luby). From the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall—The cedar and hyssop are placed in antithesis, the former as the largest and most glorious of trees, the latter as the smallest and most insignificant of plants, to embrace the whole of the vegetable kingdom. (Keil). The "hyssop" referred to is a species of moss resembling the hyssop in miniature. He spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes—The Biblical, but unscientific and popular, classification of the whole animal kingdom. He was an enthusiastic collector and student of nature. 34. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon—*i. e.* from every nation (2 Chr. 9: 1-23; Isa. 2: 2, 3; Col. 2: 3). From all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom—They sent embassies to him shewing respect and friendship.

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

What instance of Solomon's sagacity is given? (1 Kings 3: 16-28). What was the daily provision for Solomon's household? (1 Kings 4: 22, 23).

25. What evidence that there was a real division of the nation before the time of Rehoboam? (2 Kings 2: 32; 2 Sam. 19: 41-43; 24: 9). Where is the blessedness of Messiah's kingdom described in similar terms? (Mic. 4: 4; Zech. 3: 10). What prophet uses the same idea in declaring his confidence in God? (Hab. 3: 17). To whom did Jesus say "when thou wast under the fig tree I saw thee?" (John 1: 50). What promises were now fulfilled to Israel? (Gen. 12: 7; 13: 14, 15; 15: 18).

26. What injunction of the Mosaic law did Solomon here violate? (Deut. 17: 16). In what sense is "the divine right of kings" true? (Prov. 8: 15, 16).

29. To whom is wisdom certainly promised? (Prov. 8: 17). What is the text-book of wisdom? (Ps. 119: 98, 100). What other persons received a special gift of wisdom? (Dan. 1: 20).

30. What persons mentioned in the Bible belonged to "the children of the East?" (Num. 23: 7; Job. 1: 3; Dan. 2: 48; Matt. 2: 1). Where are the wise men of Egypt first mentioned? (Gen. 41: 8). How did they withstand Moses? (Ex. 7: 11). What reference in the N. T. to the wisdom of the Egyptians? (Acts. 7: 22). When the world's wisdom fails what does Divine Wisdom teach? (1 Cor. 1: 21, 27, 28).

34. What prophecy of a similar recourse to Jerusalem for wisdom? (Isa. 2: 2, 3). Who is our "Solomon?" (Col. 2: 3). What is the sum of all true saving knowledge? (1 Cor. 2: 2). By what power is that knowledge made effectual? (1 Cor. 2: 4, 10, 11). In what knowledge then ought we to pride ourselves? (Jer. 9: 23, 24).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

I. SOLOMON'S WEALTH. The reign of Solomon was the "Augustan age" of Hebrew history. Then the nation reached the culmination of its political career. The dazzling splendor of that period eclipses any other in the whole course of its existence. Solomon was one of the most magnificent potentates of the "gorgeous east" which

"With richest hand

Showers on her kings barbaric, pearl and gold."

His extensive commercial enterprises made Palestine an emporium of all the products of the known world, and his numerous public works gave employment to vast multitudes. It was an era of unexampled peace and prosperity.

25. *Every man under his vine and under his fig tree.* What a beautiful scene is called up before the imagination by this figure. We seem to see the household gathered beneath the shade of the fragrant vine that clusters over the porch, or the leafy fig tree that shelters the dwelling from the fierce solar rays. Justice is administered with an even hand and the marauders of the desert which, in the days of Gideon swarmed like locusts over the land lend now their peaceful caravans to supply the luxuries which are brought within the reach of all. We have enjoyed peace and the right administration of the laws so long that we scarcely realize the unspeakable blessing vouchsafed to us. The stories of Armenian

horrors give some faint idea of the opposite condition of affairs, and the vast military establishments of European nations betray the uneasiness and suspicion which must constantly exist among them. The outburst of antipathy to Great Britain which applauded the Olney letters regarding the Venezuela boundary dispute; the cool insolence with which the invasion of Canada was discussed and the undisguised satisfaction expressed in respectable papers at the prospect of "annexing" us by bloody conquest, shews that we hold our present happy immunity from "wars' rude alarms," not by our geographical position, nor even by virtue of the sheltering aegis of the mother land, but by the benign favor of the "God of battles" whose prerogative it is to govern the nations. Let us try to perpetuate this happy condition by cultivating that righteousness which exalteth a nation, and avoiding sin, which is a reproach to any people (Prov. 14: 34).

28. *Every man according to his charge.* For all his luxury Solomon would have no idlers around. The organization of every department of the public service was perfect and every man knew his work, and when his turn came, he did it. Those curses of an Oriental court, the idle sycophants who surround the person of the monarch and prey upon his selfishness, his pride and his fears seem to have had no place at Jerusalem. When Solomon wrote "The hand of the diligent maketh rich" he took care to place no premium upon idleness by weak favoritism. The man "diligent in his business" was the man who "stood before" the king of Israel. It would not be a misfortune, to say the least, if the Egyptian law were revived which required every individual to appear annually before a particular magistrate and give an account of his profession and the manner in which he acquired his subsistence. A capital punishment, it is said, was decreed against anyone who could not shew that he procured it by honest means. At Athens it was a punishable crime to be idle.

"Ho, all who labor, all who strive!
Ye wield a lofty power;
Do with your might, do with your strength,
Fill every golden hour.
This glorious privilege to do
Is man's most noble dower."

Side by side with industry we place its twin brother, order. It is evident that this prevail-

ed throughout Solomon's immense establishment. Order has been called "Heaven's first law" since the first step in creation was the reduction of chaos.

"Confusion heard his voice and wild uproar
Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;
Till at his second bidding, darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung."

It is the first law of applied "industry." How many fritter away time and energy in mere "busy-ness" without accomplishing a tenth part of what might have been done by the same activity wisely directed. The time necessary to plan work is not lost. It is better to wait a little for the right time than to act prematurely and ineffectively. When doing our part let us see that it, at least, is well done whatever shortcoming may be charged to others.

Lest the account of Solomon's wealth may fire the imaginations of the scholars and lead them to appreciate riches too highly, they should be reminded of their transitory character,—“Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle towards heaven” (Prov. 23: 5); their unsatisfying nature,—“I feel like a galley slave, and worn out with care” said one of our modern millionaires; and the dangers which accompany them,—a tendency to luxury and selfishness, to pride and vanity, to covetousness and dishonesty, to hardness of heart and worldliness.

II. SOLOMON'S WISDOM. This was his best distinction. His empire has long since vanished, but his teachings remain. Some of the courtiers of the Emperor Sigismund, having no taste for learning, inquired why he honored and respected men of low birth on account of their science. The Emperor replied, “In one day I can confer knighthood and nobility on many; in years I cannot bestow genius upon one.” Those who possess wealth without wisdom resemble the luckless king of Persia who was left by the Moslems to starve in his own treasury. With all the wealth of Ormuz around him he was poor even to starvation.

29. *And God gave Solomon wisdom.* He was a man taught of God. No doubt he was supernaturally gifted, but his erudition did not come to him without hard study. Diligent application will often supply the place of genius. In the long race of life the brilliant graduate is often outstripped by the less talent-

ed but more persevering fellow student. Patient industry will alone achieve substantial results. God's gift to Solomon of sagacity and learning comes to every one in the measure of his natural ability to receive it, if he does not fritter away time and opportunities by slothfulness and self-indulgence. *Largeness of heart.* Men differ widely in their natural capacity. Few men are fitted to excel in more than one or two directions. Their natural limitations, mental and otherwise, circumscribe their spheres of activity. But Solomon was endowed with great versatility of genius. He was the first statesman, the first philosopher, the first *savant*, the first sage of his time. In him profound learning and practical shrewdness went hand in hand. His knowledge of men was as perfect as his acquaintance with nature was accurate and extensive. "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom" (Jas. 3: 13). He is the truly wise man whose life, in whatever calling he finds himself, is distinguished by the fear of God and the love of man.

"Wisdom and goodness are twin-born, one heart
Must hold both sisters, never seen apart."

33. *And he spake of trees &c.* Solomon was a lover of nature and from her teachings much of his wisdom came. Doubtless as he "considered the lilies" he frankly acknowledged that they were more gorgeously arrayed than himself. He was not too exalted to learn diligence and providence from the ant, courage and aspiration from the spider, orderly union and cooperation from the locust, and watchfulness from the cony. There is no more healthful and inspiring pursuit for our young people than the study of natural history. A few moments will not be mispent if they are spared to point out to them some of its charms and

benefits. These are no less apparent, if less varied, when the "sere and yellow leaf" has supplanted the verdure of summer and the "snow crowned" reign of winter is at hand. Chaucer called nature "The vicar of the Almighty Lord" and another poet has said "The course of nature is the art of God." Many a frivolous life would be redeemed from uselessness, if our scholars could learn to love the beautiful things which God is shewing them everywhere. Many an idle hour would be saved if they could be induced to spend their half holidays, and spare hours in the studies which occupied Solomon.

"Be it my only wisdom here
To serve the Lord with filial fear,
With loving gratitude;
Superior sense may I display
By shunning every evil way
And walking in the good.
O may I still from sin depart:
A wise and understanding heart,
Jesus, to me be given;
And let me, through Thy Spirit, know
To glorify my God below,
And find my way to heaven."

ADDED POINTS.

1. Blessed is that people whose God is the Lord.
2. Those who are engaged in the King's service must be faithful.
3. Those who busy themselves with other people's affairs, seldom attend to their own duties well.
4. Prayer for guidance is always heard.
5. The humblest christian knows far more than the wisest heathen.
6. If God has thought it worth while to make anything, it is worth our while to study it carefully.
7. Never be too proud to learn from older and wiser people.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

SOLOMON IN ALL HIS GLORY

Was not { So RICH
So WISE
So HONORED

as those to whom Jesus gives

THE HEAVENLY INHERITANCE.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS LOVE.

THE CROWN OF LIFE.

"Set your affections on things above."

Our lesson to-day is about *Solomon in all his glory*. Review the facts of the lesson shewing that he *was Rich, Wise and Honored*, writing each in turn on the board. We may think too much of the magnificence of Solomon. Grand as he was the youngest and the humblest may be far grander. He was

only the son of David, we may become sons of God (John 3: 1, 2). How may we become sons of God? (John 1: 12, 13). Let us see what Christ gives to those who are born again. For Riches, he gives (1 Pet. 1: 4), *A Heavenly Inheritance*; for wisdom, (Eph. 3: 19), *A Knowledge of His Love*; and for Honor, (Rev. 2: 10), *A Crown of Life*. Dwell on each of these so as to impress its superiority to the earthly counterpart on the mind of the scholars and complete sentence on the board by writing in the words necessary.

LESSON IV—October 25th, 1896.

The Proverbs of Solomon. PROV. 1: 1-19.

(Commit to memory verses 7-10).

GOLDEN TEXT: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Prov. 1: 10.

PROVE THAT—We should listen to our parents. Prov. 1: 8.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 49, 50, 51, 52.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 15, 117, 83, 116.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday*. The proverbs of Solomon. Prov. 1: 1-19. *Tuesday*. The way of understanding. Prov. 2: 1-9. *Wednesday*. Better than rubies. Prov. 8: 1-11. *Thursday*. Wisdom and folly. Prov. 10: 1-14. *Friday*. Looking to the end. Prov. 14: 1-12. *Saturday*. Rejecting reproof. Prov. 15: 1-12. *Sabbath*. Good and evil. Prov. 15: 20-33. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. The collection of proverbs that passes under the name of Solomon is the work of many authors at different periods. To those originated by the wise king, or edited under his direction, others have been added at later periods the whole retaining the title which they originally bore. The following divisions are clearly discernable:

I. *Introduction*—Chapters 1 to 9. In this true wisdom is personified and represented as the basis of all moral effort.

II. *The genuine proverbs of Solomon*—Chapters 10: 1-22: 16. Maxims, precepts, admonitions &c., in the form mostly of epigrams consisting of two clauses. They all refer to the various relations of life.

III. "*The words of the wise,*" First supplement added to the original book and made before the time of Hezekiah—Chapters 22: 17-24: 34. They are of the same general tenor as those of Solomon.

IV. *Gleanings by the men of Hezekiah*—Chapters 25-29.

V. *Supplements*—Chapter 30. "The words of Agur"; chapter 31, "The words of Lemuel" and an alphabetical acrostic in praise of the virtuous woman. The authorship of this is unknown.

LESSON PLAN. I. Wise Words. vs. 1-9. II. Warning Words. vs. 10-19.

1. The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel—Lord Brougham called a proverb "The wit of one, the wisdom of many." The Hebrew word literally means "a comparison," but the general meaning includes all pointed, pithy sayings expressive of a well-established truth relating to morals or manners. It is not pretended that all the proverbs in this book were invented or even collected by Solomon, but it still bears as legitimately his name as the latest edition of Webster's Dictionary" that of the long-deceased original compiler. Solomon's own sins are never excused in his writings. His most solemn warnings are against those whose evil he had himself experienced. He is the first sacred writer whose name appears in connection with his works. 2. To know wisdom and instruction—The design of the book is to cause the reader to become wise in the affairs of life. "Wisdom" becomes personified. "The power by which human personality reaches its highest spiritual perfection, by which all lower elements are brought into

harmony with the highest, can hardly be thought of as other than itself personal, life-giving creative." (Meredith). "Instruction" is properly "chastisement" and signifies education, moral training, good culture and habits, the practical side, as it were, of wisdom. (Zoeckler). **To perceive the words of understanding**—Lit. "discern the words of discernment." "Whereby you may discreetly discern between good and bad, the lawful and the unlawful, the useful and the hurtful, the true and the false, and may know what you ought and what you ought not to do in every circumstance." (Cornelius à Lapide). "Understanding" differs from "wisdom," in that by wisdom things are surely known; by "understanding" things that differ are prudently discerned, and a discriminating judgment is formed on them after inward consideration." (Fausset). **3. To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity**—R. V. "To receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, and judgment, and equity." The second object of the book is to enable the reader to accept, and incorporate amongst the principles which govern his life those of wisdom &c. The word for "wisdom" here is not the same as in the preceding verse but rather that clear sight which "by reason of use" discerns readily between good and evil (Heb. 5: 14). (Phyllott). Circumspect consideration. (Fausset). "Justice expresses that which is fitting according to the will and ordinance of God the Supreme Judge (R. V. "righteousness" Deut. 33: 19), "judgment," what is usage and custom among men (Isa. 42: 1; 1 Sam 8: 3); "Equity" what is right and reasonable, and in accordance with a walking in the way of truth, and so denotes a straightforward, honorable and upright demeanor. (Zoeckler). "The design of my instruction is to enable you to acquire an intelligent discipline, a habit of prudence in your personal conduct, of morality in your social and civil relations, and of rectitude in all things." (Hunter). Character, not knowledge, is the highest aim of education. **4. To give subtilty**—R. V. marg. "prudence." The original word means "laying bare." It is therefore the clearness of sight which detects evil under the mask of good, such as that by which our Lord confuted the tempter, and detected the hypocrisy of the men who sought to entrap him (Mark. 3: 24; Luke 20: 20-26).

(Phyllott). "Subtilty" is not shrewdness in the sense of worldly cunning, but that knowledge which will put one on his guard against the subtle snares of the world. "Be ye wise as serpents" (Matt. 10: 16). (Fausset). **To the simple**—properly "the open," those who are readily accessible to all external impressions and therefore inexperienced (ch. 7: 7; 9: 4; 14: 15). (Zoeckler). **To the young man knowledge and discretion**—The book is intended for the young and inexperienced, that they may act thoughtfully and discreetly with a correct knowledge of men and things. It has been said that the cautious shrewdness characteristic of Scotchmen is due largely to the Book of Proverbs in the parish schools where it formed the first reader put into the hands of the young and was largely committed to memory by them. **5. A wise man will hear and will increase learning**—R. V. "That the wise may hear and increase learning." This is one of the aims of the book. Learning is lit. "that which is received." True wisdom is never stationary but always progressive; because it secures the ground behind it as a basis for further advances. (Fausset). Contrast those referred to in 2 Tim. 3: 7. "He who is not adding is wasting; he who is not increasing knowledge is losing from it." (Jewish proverb). **And a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels**—R. V. "and that the man of understanding may attain unto sound counsels." Literally, the power to *steer* his course rightly on the dangerous seas of life. This "steersmanship," it may be noted, is a word almost peculiar to proverbs (11: 14; 12: 5; 24: 6). In Job 37: 12 it is applied to the guidance, the *steering*, with which God directs the movements of the clouds of heaven. (Plumptre). The word is derived from the name of the cords with which a sail is managed, by which the ship is directed in its course by the steersman, or commander. The wise man's counsels are such figurative cords for the guidance of himself and others in the house, the state, the church, &c. (Fausset). Compare ch. 9: 9 with Matt. 13: 12. The same idea is repeated in Mark 4: 25; Luke 8: 18; 19: 26. The "man of understanding" (same word as in verse 2) is the discreet and discerning man, one who displays the practical side of wisdom, and "wise counsels" are the application of "learning," or knowledge in general, to the affairs of life. **6. To under-**

stand a proverb and the interpretation—R. V. “and a figure.” The grammatical construction is continued. The object of the book is further described. The proverbs are not to be merely learned by rote but they are to brighten up the intellect and help men to perceive further wisdom and apply it to the guidance of life. They are to give practice and skill in the understanding of difficult sayings, penetration of mind in solving mysteries. If we accept the rendering of verse 5 given in our Bibles then verse 6 means that the wise and discerning man is to increase in knowledge and “steersmanship” in order that he may understand the proverbs and enigmas of sages. The only other instance in which the word for “interpretation” occurs is Hab. 2: 6, and there it is rendered “taunting proverb.” Here “riddle,” or “enigma,” would be a better parallel to “dark sayings,” in the second clause of the verse. The idea is that of a saying which requires an interpreter. The words of the wise and their dark sayings—It is clear from this that the book contains the utterances of others besides Solomon. The “dark sayings” of the wise are those deep abstruse maxims which purposely tax the ingenuity of the reader in order to fix their rich thought more deeply in his mind. (Cowles). (Ps. 49: 4; 78: 2). “Many of the passages in this book are enigmas, or riddles, intentionally obscure or difficult for the purpose of exercising thought and ingenuity; or the words are susceptible of more than one meaning, one, perhaps, more obvious, and the other occult, and only to be found by research. This is an educational book, and contains its exercises of skill. The general meaning of this verse is, that he shall attain to excellence in comprehending the force and beauty of the higher forms of discourse and composition, such as are used by poets and sages. This he cannot do without possessing a high cultivation himself, and hence it is another way of saying that he shall rise to an eminent degree of intellectual accomplishment. Here, then, is the object which the regal sage proposes to himself and his pupils in the composition of this work.” (Hunter).

7. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge—The “fear of the Lord” is not a slavish dread, but a reverential and filial regard in which love blends with profound homage. We cannot love God and

not cherish the sentiments of filial trust and awe. The “beginning” is rendered in the margin “chief” or “principal” part. It is the first thing both as the starting point and the pervading spirit, of research. “The beginning of wisdom is not found in keen insight, or wide experience, nor the learning of the schools, but in the temper of reverence and awe.” (Cook). “If this universe is a thought of the divine mind, a work of the divine hand, a scene of divine operations in which God is realizing by slow degrees a vast spiritual purpose, it is self-evident that no attempt to understand the universe can be successful which leaves God out of account.” (Horton). For a similar sentiment see Job 28: 28; Ps. 111: 10; Prov. 9: 10; Ecc. 12: 13. But fools despise wisdom and instruction—Solomon would say, especially to his youthful readers: “Will you go with me into this study of all wisdom? If so, then begin by implanting deep in your heart, and cultivating carefully, the fear of the Lord. If not, then ye know your place and the company of your choice. None but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (Cowles.) This verse really begins the book. What precedes is introduction. It is the first and foremost utterance of wisdom.

8. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother—The whole pious instructions and counsels received in childhood. Reverence for parents is the basis of reverence for God. The parent stands to the child in the place of God until his understanding becomes capable of receiving the thought from him. (Eph. 6: 1). The first step in a course of life that is contrary to the laws of God and man is disobedience to the first and most sacred human authority, that of the parent.

9. For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck—Parental discipline and instruction, obediently received, will adorn the character, as the richest gold and jewels do the body. For the comparison here see ch. 3: 3; 6: 21. To the Israelite’s mind no signs or badges of joy or glory were higher in worth than the garland round the head, or the gold chain round the neck, worn by kings and the favorites of kings. (Gen. 41: 42; Dan. 5: 29). (Stuart). An “ornament of grace” is translated in the R. V. “a chaplet of grace,” a beautiful

crown (ch. 4: 9). Those who heed well the instructions of the pious home will be admired for their virtue and discretion.

10. My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not—The sage addresses his hearer as "son." To suppose, as some do, that these proverbs were compiled for the instruction of Rehoboam, is foreign to the styles of Eastern teachers. The secret of moral strength in youth lies in the power to say "No" when urged to do evil. (Ps. 1: 1; Eph. 5: 11). To hesitate or argue is to fall.

11. If they say, Come with us—An illustration of one mode of temptation by sinners. Let us lay wait for blood—The warning thus placed at the head of all others betokens a state of society much like that which now exists in Italy. It would seem that *banditti* were not only frequent, but that the attractions which such a mode of life offered to young, idle and profligate persons were great and dangerous. Such a mode of life was not only utter ruin to character, but was fraught with the most imminent danger of destruction. Those who lived in this way, as it would seem, employed all the arts of persuasion to entice the young to join their corps, and thus to strengthen them in their warfare against the peaceful possession of property. (Stuart). Let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause—To "lay wait" and to "lurk privily" suggest the idea of a huntsman and his game. "Without cause" may be joined to the verb "Let us lurk privily without cause," *i. e.* though he has never wronged us. The robber is here represented as "blurring out" the whole truth as his conscience speaks. Or the words may be joined to "innocent," "he that is innocent in vain," whose innocence will be no protection to him. Compare the irony in verse 17. The warning of these verses may be more directly needed by many of the boys in our Sabbath Schools than their parents and teachers recognize. The popularity of cheap stories of bandits and pirates shew the strange fascination which a freebooter's life has to adventurous youths. (Hurlbut).

12. Let us swallow them up alive as the grave—R. V. "Sheol," the great underworld of the dead, all-devour, merciless. (Cook). And whole, as those that go down into the pit—The great cavernous deep, the world of shades. (Plumptre). Com-

pare the destruction of Korah and his company (Num. 16: 30). "Whole" in the R. V. margin is translated "Even the perfect," or "upright ones," and corresponds with the "innocent" of the preceding verse. They would utterly destroy their victim and all traces of their crime. (Ps. 28: 1; 143: 7 "quick" means "living.")

13. We shall find all precious substance—Gold, silver, precious stones, etc. We shall fill our houses with spoils—"To fill our houses with spoil is wicked and abominable, whether that spoil be taken amid the terrors of pistol firing, or as bribes of corrupted politics, or with the sleek and pious smile of the gifted business man who is an adept in the art of thieving as well as in the art of hypocrisy." (Hurlbut).

14. Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse—The R. V. reads: "Thou shalt cast in thy lot among us; we will all have one purse." Here is an appeal to romantic sentiment. The oneness of the purse consists in this, that the booty which each one of them gets belongs, not wholly or chiefly to him, but to the whole together. (Keil).

15. My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path—(Ps. 1: 1; 119: 101). Do not parley with temptation. Restrain thyself by force and violence, as the word implies. (Pool). Tear yourself away.

16. For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood—They are eager to perpetrate acts of violence. Their downward career is willingly accelerated. They glory in their shame. Only ruin can result from associating with them. The verse is quoted in Isa. 59: 7 and Rom. 3: 15.

17. Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird—Heb., "in the eyes of anything that hath a wing." The net must be concealed or the fowler cannot trap the birds. Solomon here uncovers the net spread for thoughtless youth, and expresses his confidence that the revelation will be a warning of the danger. What mad folly to run with open eyes into the snares of evil.

"Duly advised the coming evil shun.
Better not do the deed, than weep it done."

18. And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives—These words refer back to verse 11. "They

who lay snares for the blood of the innocent lay snares for themselves. They who desire to swallow up the virtuous alive, as the grave, they themselves will be swallowed up in the grave, and be plunged to destruction."

19. So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof—(ch. 15: 27; 1 Tim. 6: 10), "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many

arrows." "We are not tempted to be high-waymen, but the greed of gain is alive to-day. The gambler, the rumseller, the sweater, the one who takes advantage of the misfortunes or poverty of his neighbor, who eats up smaller dealers by unfair competition, who reduces wages to the lowest degree, who is dishonest to his employees, who adulterates food, who misuses his public office for gain, and a multitude of others are all walking in the same way, a way whose borders are lined with ruins and whose end is destruction."

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

How far do the genuine Proverbs of Solomon extend? (ch. 22: 16). What is the authorship of the next section of the book ch. 22: 17—24: 34? When was ch. 25: 1—29: 27 compiled? Who is the author of ch. 30? Who is the author of ch. 31: 1-9? With what anonymous poem does the book close?

2. What is really the final reward of the searcher after wisdom? (Prov. 2: 3-6; Ps. 111: 10).

3. How does Paul describe the mature Christian? (Heb. 5: 14).

4. What kind of subtily is not to be commended? (Ps. 55: 21; Eph. 4: 25; Col. 3: 9; Rev. 21: 8, 27). What kind is approved of? (Matt. 10: 16; Rom. 16: 19; Eph. 5: 15; 1 Cor. 9: 19-23; 10: 33). Give examples of true penetration from the life of Christ. (Mark 3: 24; Luke 20: 20-26). Where does the Bible address specially young men? (Ps. 119: 9; Titus 2: 6; 1 John 2: 13). What special promise is given to youthful piety? (Prov. 8: 17).

5. How are those whose wisdom does not increase described in the N. T.? (2 Tim. 3: 7). How is the general principle implied in this verse stated by Christ? (Mark 4: 25; Luke 8: 18; 19: 26).

6. Why did Christ speak in parables? (Matt. 13: 10-13).

7. What evil is denounced against disobedient children? (Prov. 20: 20; 30: 17). What promise to the obedient? (Deut. 5: 16).

10. How are we to resist temptation? (Matt. 26: 41; 1 Cor. 10: 13; Gal. 5: 16; Eph. 4: 27; 6: 10-17; Heb. 2: 18; 12: 3; Jas. 1: 12-15; Rev. 12: 11).

15. Does custom excuse evil-doing? (Ex. 23: 2). What danger is there in associating with unprincipled people? (Num. 33: 55; 2 Chr. 19: 2; 1 Cor. 15: 33).

18. Is it possible for the transgressor to escape punishment? (Num. 32: 23; Ps. 90: 8; 139: 11; Prov. 13: 21; 1 Cor. 4: 5).

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

The practical lessons of this day's study arise out of it verse by verse as it is being taught. The space at our disposal will not permit us to enlarge upon them. We would confine our Blackboard Review chiefly to inculcating the duty of resolutely saying "NO" to every invitation to do wrong, and carefully avoiding the companionship of evil-doers. A wise father who would not permit his daughters to associate with anyone whose conduct was not becoming,

LEARN

TO SAY

NO.

one day handed one of them a black coal from the hearth. She took it in her hand only to find her fingers blackened and her white dress soiled as well. "We cannot be too careful in handling coals" she said in vexation. "Yes, truly!" said the father. "You see my child, the coals, even if they do not burn, blacken: So it is with the company of the vicious."

"Avoid a villain as you would a brand,
Which, lighted, burns, extinguished, smuts the hand."

Primary Department.

Edited in connection with the *Primary Quarterly for Little Folks*, by MR. & MRS. GEORGE H. ARCHIBALD, Montreal, P. Q.

THE STORY OF THE SPIDER'S NET.

(This story may be used or referred to in every lesson this Quarter.)

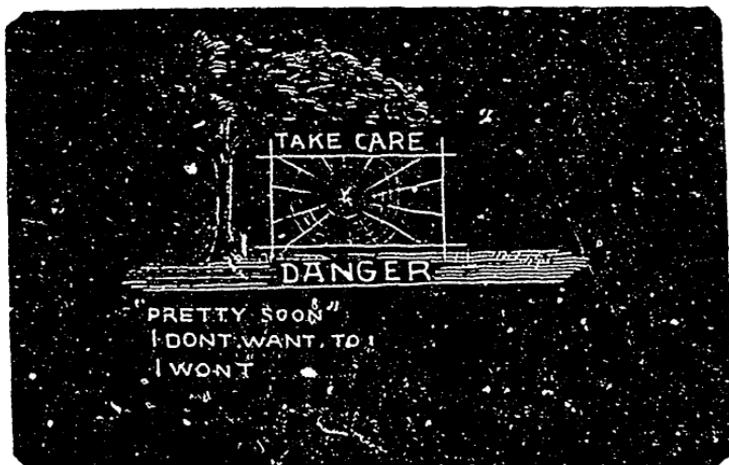
Boys and girls, I want to tell you a story. Once upon a time I put a book in my pocket and walked along a country road. At the side of the road was a beautiful green bank, which was shaded by a large oak tree. It looked so inviting I thought I would sit underneath it and rest. Just behind the tree was a fence. I had not read long when I saw crawling towards me on the top of the fence—guess what? It crawled along until it came to just about the centre of the rail. Suddenly it dropped until it nearly reached the lower rail of the fence, and I saw that it was hanging by a fine silken cord, and swinging to and fro in the air. Presently it lowered itself down till it rested on the lower rail of the fence, and fastened its silken cord to the rail. As I looked at the slender cord I saw what appeared to be a little knot just in the centre, and watched the spider (for of course it was a spider), as he divided the cord into a number of cords, stretching them out until it had spread from the centre outward a network of silk. I watched the spider as he busily finished the weaving of his net, more interested in his work than in my book.

Who knows what spiders spread nets for? To catch flies. Whoever saw a fly get caught in a spider's net? Pretty soon the spider crawled into the centre and waited for a fly to come along. Presently I saw one flying right towards the net. I could not help crying out "Little fly, you had better take care, there's danger! A net has been spread to catch you and if you get into it you can't get out again."

Boys and girls, do you know that some one is spreading nets to catch you? Who is it? Yes, Satan is spreading his nets everywhere to catch boys and girls—at home, on the street, even in Sunday-school he spreads his nets to catch us.

One time I saw a fly get into a spider's net and he could not get out again, for a fly can never get out of a spider's net alone. When a boy or girl gets caught in Satan's net they can never get out themselves. One time a little girl got caught in Satan's net—she had said what was not true. When she found she was caught she asked her papa if she could not get out of Satan's net and he said "No, you are not able to get out of Satan's net alone." Then she said to him "Papa, will you take me out?" Papa said "No, I am not strong enough," and when she asked him what she would do to get out of Satan's net he told her that she must ask Jesus, for he only could take her out.

As this story is told for the first time sketch on the blackboard the road, the tree, the fence, the spider's net, the spider, the fly, etc. Practice it well beforehand, for much of the success of the Quarter's lesson will depend upon the impression made the first time it is told. This illustration has been used again and again by the writer and found most helpful.



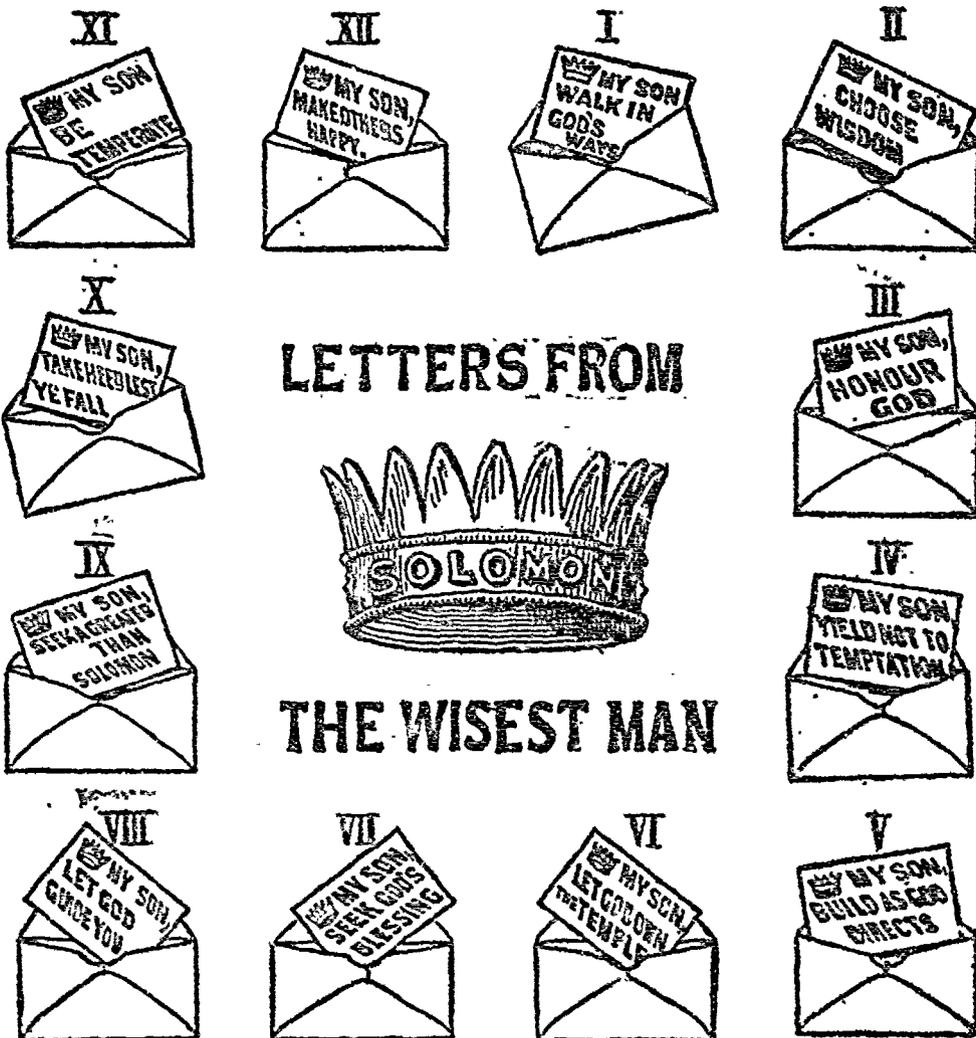
PREVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER : "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter : Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12: 13.

The lessons for the last Quarter were about David "the shepherd king." Our lessons for the next Quarter (all but the last, our Xmas lesson) are connected with Solomon, they being either his history or writings. Solomon "was wiser than all men," and perhaps we could not do better than cluster the thoughts of the Quarter around the idea "letters from the wisest man, king Solomon." Two Quarters ago we studied about Jesus the king; last Quarter about David the king, and this Quarter we study about Solomon the king.

The following will perhaps suggest a plan for this Quarter's Review :

1. Use a spare blackboard for review purposes.
2. Make a crown to represent Solomon, the wise king.
3. Make or get twelve envelopes about seven inches long by five wide ; in one of these each week put a card on which the Preview Thought for each lesson has been printed. At the proper time this card can be drawn from the envelope and exposed to view, as seen in the cut below.
3. As a help to gain and keep the attention of children in review and on Review Sunday it might be well every week, after the lesson is over, to put within the envelope for the day one or two of the symbols used, or a sketch of the blackboard work reduced in size. For example Lesson I : On a piece of black paper (tailor's black pattern paper is the best), sketch the picture as shown in cut of Lesson I. In Lesson IV the two hearts as suggested in that lesson, might be kept. These will all be found helpful for recalling the lesson thoughts.
5. Review each Sunday as time will permit.
6. As an additional help note "the story of the spider's net" on page 215. On the first Sunday tell the story (with the help of the blackboard) as vividly as possible, so that you can recall it every Sunday. This will help to make the truth of each lesson real and living, and it will make a point of contact in the child mind.



LESSON I—October 4th, 1896.

Solomon Anointed King. I KINGS I : 28-39.

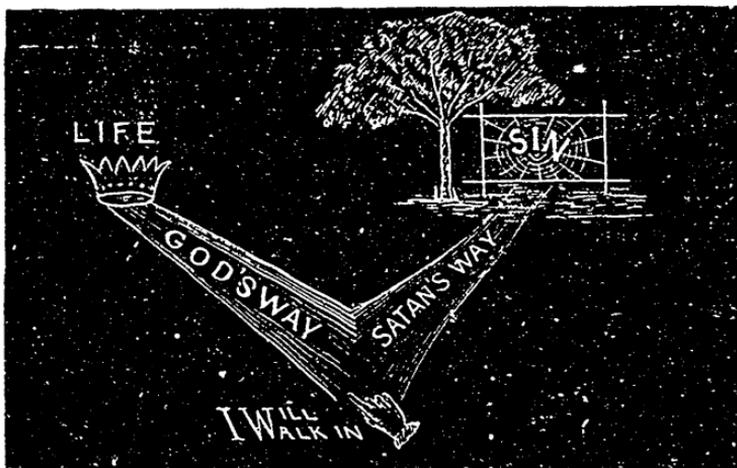
I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways."
I Kings 2 : 3.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Walk in God's ways.

III. LESSON STORY: Last Quarter's lessons, which we all enjoyed so much, were about David, "the shepherd king." This Quarter they are about Solomon, David's son. In today's lesson we get another peep at our old friend "the shepherd king." He was very old at this time and was soon going to die. He wished to make his son Solomon king, so called for his wife Bath-sheba and told her that her son Solomon should reign after him. Then he told her to call Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, the captain of the body-guard. When they had come before David he told them to go with the royal body-guard and take Solomon, who was to ride on his mule to Gihon. David also said, when there Zadok and Nathan were to anoint him king over Israel, and blow with a trumpet and say "God save king Solomon!" They did as David commanded them, and when they blew the trumpet all the people said "God save king Solomon!" After that Solomon, the new king, was brought to the palace at Jerusalem. There he reigned six months with David, his father, and after David's death took his place on the throne.

IV. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON :

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Review about the old king David. Tell of his old age and approaching death. Hold in the hand a symbol of the crown with David's name on it.
3. Solomon appointed king by his father David. Hold in the hand a crown with the word "Solomon" upon it.
4. Solomon the young king listens to the advice given by David the old king.
5. Introduce the Golden Text.
6. Explain the meaning of "charge." The word here used means the care of the taber-



nacle and other things committed to the Levites. Solomon was to take care of everything that God had committed to him. Thus, this was one part of David's command to his son, and to walk in his ways was another.

7. Tell the story of the spi-

der's net as found on page 5.

8. There are two ways—God's way and Satan's way. Satan is setting nets to catch boys and girls. We are going to learn about a net every Sunday this Quarter. Having our own way is one of Satan's nets. Take a piece of cardboard about five inches long and one inch wide, and print "God's way" on it. On another piece about three inches long print "our way." Emphasize the thought that we all want our own way. Presently, by crossing "God's way" and "our way" the cross is formed. Here the question may be asked "Did

you ever know what made the cross?" It is because "God's way" and "our way" are so different. Jesus loved us so much that he gave his life, so that he might take us out of, and keep us from, Satan's net.

9. Listen to the voice of the wise man, "My son, walk in God's way." Hold up the envelope and draw from it the central truth and pin both to the board.

LESSON II—October 11th, 1896.

Solomon's Wise Choice. 1 KINGS 3: 5-15.

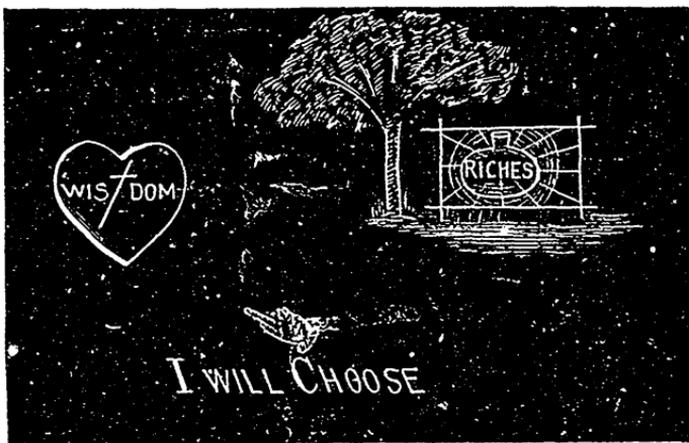
I. GOLDEN TEXT: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." PS. 111: 10.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Choose wisdom.

III. REVIEW: About whom were our lessons last Quarter? Who are they about this Quarter? What was David's wish about Solomon? What did all the people say when Solomon was made king?

IV. LESSON STORY: Solomon, the new king, was the wisest man who ever lived. What made him so wise? We shall see. Soon after he became king Solomon made a great feast at Gibeon and invited all the people to it, for he wanted to show them that he was going to serve God as David his father had done. There God spoke to him in a dream and asked him what he would give him. Solomon might have asked God for riches, or honor, or something else all for himself, but he showed a humble spirit and told God that although he had made him king in the place of his father David, he was but a little child and did not know how to rule over such a lot of people, and asked God to give him an understanding heart to do this. Solomon chose the best of all gifts—a wise heart, wisdom. His choice pleased God and God said to him "Because thou hast asked this thing and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast

asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thy enemies: I have given thee an understanding heart, so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." God told him that he had also given him what he had not asked, both riches and honor, and



promised to give him long life too if he would love and obey him as David his father had done. Solomon awoke, but all these things he had dreamed about came to pass. Soon after this he went home to Jerusalem, sacrificed to God, and made a great feast to all his servants.

V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON :

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Have drawn on the blackboard beforehand a picture of the spider's net.
3. This is a lesson about choosing.
4. Who ever made a choice? Tell us about it.
5. Solomon's dream in Gibeon.
6. If you were allowed to have anything you wanted what would you choose? That was the privilege God gave Solomon.

7. Review the story of the spider's net. One of the nets that Satan spreads in which to catch people is riches. As you speak of this, with colored chalk, draw a picture of a bag of money, as shown in the cut, and show how people are often caught by Satan in this net.

8. Satan wanted to catch Solomon in this net, but Solomon was wise and chose wisdom.

9. Why did Solomon thus choose?

10. Because he feared the Lord. Make the meaning of "feared the Lord" plain. Refer to last Sunday's Golden Text. He wanted to follow his father's advice and walk in God's ways. Therefore he feared the Lord and chose wisdom. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

11. How shall I choose wisdom? Take Jesus into my heart.

LESSON III—October 18th, 1896.

Solomon's Wealth and Wisdom. I KINGS 4: 25-34.

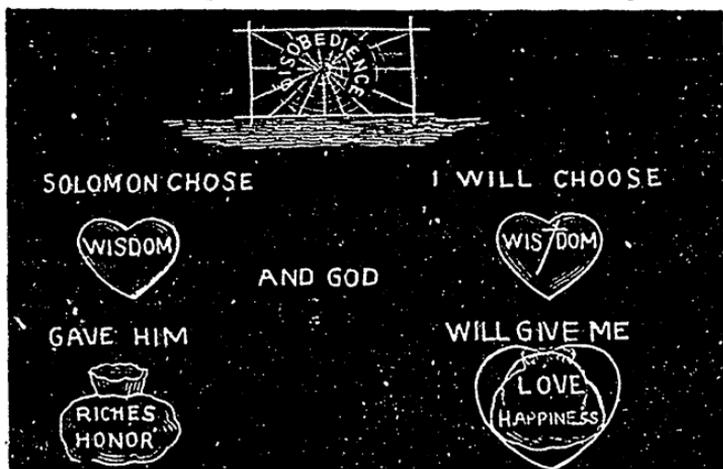
I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. I Sam. 2: 30.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Honor God.

III. REVIEW: What did Solomon do soon after he became king? What did God ask Solomon when he spoke to him in a dream? What did Solomon choose? How did God show that he was pleased with Solomon's choice?

IV. LESSON STORY: In to-day's lesson some of the things that God told Solomon about have come to pass. Peace was now in the land. The people were no longer obliged to live in fortified cities, for the enemies had been driven out and now they dwelt safely all over the country. They had their own homes and gardens, and cultivated the land and got plenty of food for their cattle. God was true to his word; he made Solomon a great king, and gave him much wealth. He was king over all the land; he had much gold and silver, and very many servants, and horses, and chariots, and beautiful cities and buildings. His own palace took thirteen years to build, and was of polished marble overlaid with cedar. He planted trees of all kinds, and

had vineyards, and gardens, and orchards, and so much and so many beautiful things that it would take a long time to tell all about them. God also gave Solomon the wise heart that he asked him for. He made him very wise, much wiser than any one else who lived in the world. He said many wise



things, which are called proverbs. He spoke of trees and all kinds of animals, and many, many other things. Kings and people far and near heard about him, and came to see and hear this great and wise king.

V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS FOR TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Have a picture of a spider's net on the blackboard beforehand.
3. Introduce the Golden Text.

4. Make plain the difference between honoring and despising God. We will not honor God except we love him. We despise God if we do not love him. We show that we do not love and honor God if we do not walk in his ways. Here the two pieces of paper which formed the cross in Lesson I. might be used to recall the teaching of "walking in God's ways." Satan says disobey and thus tries to get us to despise God and draw us into his net. We honor God by taking Jesus into the heart. We despise God if we keep Jesus out of the heart.

5. At this point review last week's lesson.

6. Result of Solomon's honoring God. God honored him. Made him great. Increased his knowledge and gave him great riches.

7. If we honor God by allowing Jesus to be king of our hearts he will make us truly rich. Draw with white chalk a bag of money. On it, as you speak of the wealth that Solomon received, write the word "riches" and then the word "honor." God has better things than money for those who honor him. Here is another bag of wealth. Draw a similar bag as that used on the other side, but instead of writing the word "riches" on it, write the words "love" and "happiness," and afterwards, with a piece of red chalk, form the heart as shown in the cut. Thus those who honor God will be honored by being made loving and happy; but those who despise him, those who are caught in Satan's net and disobey him, shall have none of these things.

LESSON IV—October 25th, 1896.

The Proverbs of Solomon. PROVERBS I: 1-19.

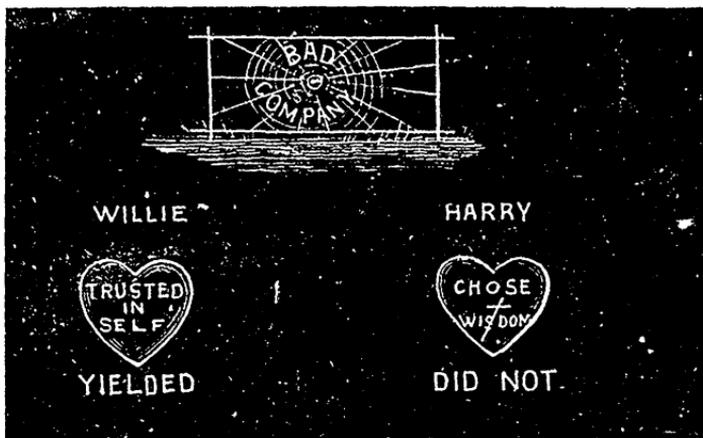
I. GOLDEN TEXT: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Prov. I: 10.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Yield not to temptation.

III. REVIEW: Were there any enemies in the land when Solomon became king? About what two things (beginning with "W") that God gave Solomon did we learn last Sunday? What do we call some of the wise things that Solomon spoke? How wise was Solomon?

IV. LESSON STORY: We are told in the Bible that Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs were a thousand and five. Many of these are in one of the books of the Bible called "the Book of Proverbs." These proverbs are wise sayings of the wise king Solomon. Why did Solomon write all those wise things? It was to make people—to make us—wise. To show us how we should live, what we should do, and what we should not do: so that we may keep out of nets that Satan spreads to catch us in. He spreads many of these nets and is always trying to get us to do wrong. Sometimes he makes wrong things look nice

and tempting and seem almost as if they were right, but we must be very careful and wise, as Solomon tells us, to know what is right and what is wrong, so that we may not be caught in Satan's nets. We must not do wrong although it seems very nice; must not yield to the temptation of Satan—the evil one.



Our good fathers and mothers are much wiser than we are, and know the ways of Satan better than we do, so Solomon tells us to listen to the instruction—the wise

teachings of father, and not forget or neglect to do the good things that mother teaches us. This wisdom is better than gold or silver, and shall be as an ornament of grace unto our heads and chains about our neck.

V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS FOR TEACHING THE LESSON :

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Have a picture of a spider's net drawn on the blackboard beforehand.
3. Begin with the Golden Text.
4. The wise man says, "My son, yield not to temptation." Hold up the envelope and draw out the paper on which the central truth is printed.
5. Satan is trying to catch boys, and girls, and men and women, through bad companions, so we will call the net to-day "bad company." If sinners, if bad company, entice thee, consent thou not."
6. Consent not, "Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin, Each victory will help you, some other to win." I want to tell you about two boys, one named Willie, another named Harry. As you speak of them and write their names, pin to the board two hearts. Make these of white paper folded so they may be opened. Have printed upon them beforehand the words "Trusted in self," "Chose wisdom," as shown in the cut. When you pin these to the board have the printing on the inside so that it cannot be seen. Willie yielded, Harry did not. Why? How can we find out? God looks into the hearts when he wants to find out about us. It is easier for God to look into the heart of a boy or a girl than it is for me to look into this heart. As you speak thus unpin the heart and open it. Without letting your scholars see the printing you thus appeal to their curiosity and for a minute or two can speak to them effectively. Now turn the heart so that the printing can be seen. Willie yielded to the bad company because he "trusted in self." Harry did not yield because he had chosen wisdom, had taken Jesus into his heart, and Jesus kept him out of the net that Satan had spread for him.

NORMAL DEPARTMENT.—We regret that owing to the unexpectedly large space occupied by the other departments we are obliged to omit Prof. Ross's summary of "Christian Evidences" this month. We shall give it the more space in November and December so as to complete it within the year.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

- Be in your place before any of your scholars. Late teachers—unruly scholars.
- Give each scholar a hearty welcome.
- Provide for the physical comfort of the scholars.
- Keep the room well ventilated.
- Have hooks to hang children's wraps upon.
- Have the seats low enough, so that the feet of the children can reach the floor.
- If possible seat the children so that the light will not shine in their eyes.
- Through the eye to the heart, is the easiest way.
- Suffer not the eye to wander as you teach.
- Froebel says. The child-mind ripens and unfolds to the abstract truth only by and through the concrete illustration.
- Keep out of ruts.
- Would you know how to lead the child in this matter?
- Observe the child and he will teach you what to do.—*Froebel.*
- Alas for the teacher who does not learn more from his children than he can hope to teach them.—*Hall.*
- Be sure you understand the child before you reprove him.
- Many children have our love, but few have our sympathy.
- Beware of trying to teach too much.
- Little things with God make great men and little men with God make great things.