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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 19.]

JULY, 1885.

[No. 7.

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The Sunday-School Banner

It is designed to afford aid to Sunday School Teachers and Heads of Families in the Religious Training of the Young, and to excite throughout the country a deeper interest in Sunday School Work.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. XIX.]

JULY, 1885.

[No. 7.]

"Call Them In!"

ANNA SHIPTON.

"Call them in!"—the poor, the wretched
Sin-stained wanderers from the fold,
Peace and pardon freely offer—
Can you weigh their worth in gold?

"Call them in!" the weak, the weary!
Laden with the doom of sin;
Bid them come and rest in Jesus,
He is waiting;—"Call them in!"

"Call them in!"—the Jew, the Gentile,
Bid the stranger to the feast:

"Call them in!"—the rich, the noble,
From the highest to the least,
Forth the Father runs to meet them
He hath all their sorrows seen;
Robe, and ring, and royal sandals
Wait the lost ones;—"Call them in!"

"Call them in!"—the broken-hearted,
Cov'ring 'neath the brand of shame;
Speak love's message, low and tender,—
" 'Twas for sinners Jesus came."

See! the shadows lengthen round us,
Soon the day-dawn will begin;
Can you leave them lost and lonely?
Christ is coming;—"Call them in!"

THERE is estimable blessing in a cheerful spirit. When the soul throws its windows wide open, letting in the sunshine and presenting to all who see it the evidence of its gladness, it is not only happy, but it has an unspeakable power of doing good. To all other beatitudes may be added, "Blessed are the joy-makers."

At One With God.

I AM no stranger by His bounty fed,
His own dear child:
I walk in paths He has before me set,
Nor wander wild,
And if His will ordains a lonely road,
I may not fear;
I know my Master, and the Father's hand
Is ever near.

I know His power, His grace, His truth, His
love,

And every day,
A gleam of sunshine from the home above
Cheers all the way,
And if His gracious care provides for me
A happy life
He knows my readiness, at any time,
To enter strife.

We are so close together, through the Christ
The Son of God,

I do not question, knowing for the best
Sceptre or rod,

I trust Him! what a world that covers o'er!
My sins forgiven

Tells of the purity of the life to come—
The life in Heaven.

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. I.

A BELL in the Sunday-school seems to be necessary at times; but pray don't make it an element of disorder, and a nuisance.

THE superintendent's hour ought to be at least fifteen minutes before the school opens. A little hand-shaking in advance has a wholesome influence.

Nazareth.

The hills which form the northern limit of the plain of Jezreel run almost due east and west from the Jordan valley to the Mediterranean, and their southern slopes were in the district assigned to the tribe of Zebulun. Almost in the centre of this chain of hills there is a singular cleft in the limestone, forming the entrance to a little valley. As the traveller leaves the plain he will ride up a steep and narrow pathway, brodered with grass and flowers, through scenery which is neither colossal nor overwhelming, but infinitely beautiful and picturesque. Beneath him, on the right hand side, the vale will gradually widen, until it becomes about a quarter of a mile in breadth. The basin of the valley is divided by hedges of cactus into little fields and gardens, which about the fall of the spring rains wear an aspect of indescribable calm, and glow with a tint of the richest green. Beside the narrow pathway, at no great distance apart from each other, are two wells, and the women who draw water there are more beautiful, and the ruddy, bright-eyed shepherd-boys who sit or play by the well-sides, in their gay-coloured Oriental costume, are a happier, bolder, brighter-looking race than the traveller will have seen elsewhere. Gradually the valley opens into a little natural amphitheatre of hills, supposed by some to be the crater of an extinct volcano; and there, clinging to the hollows of a hill, which rises to the height of some five hundred feet above it, lie, "like a handful of pearls in a goblet of emerald," the flat roofs and narrow streets of a little Eastern town. There is a small church; the massive buildings of a convent; the tall minaret of a mosque; a clear, abundant fountain; houses built of white stone, and gardens scattered amongst them, umbrageous with figs and olives, and rich with the white and scarlet blossoms of orange and pomegranate. In spring, at least, everything about the place looks indescribably bright and soft; doves murmur in the trees; the hoopoe flits about in ceaseless activity; the bright blue roller-bird, and the commonest and loveliest bird of Palestine, flashes like a living sapphire over fields which are enamelled with enumerable flowers. And that little town is *En-Nazirah*, Nazareth, where the Son of God, the Saviour of mankind, spent nearly thirty years of His mortal life. It was, in fact, His home, His native village for all but three or four years of His life on earth; the village which lent its then ignominious name to the scornful title written upon His cross; the village from which He did not disdain to draw His appellation when He spake in vision to the persecuting Saul. And along the narrow mountain-path which I have described, His feet must have often trod, for it is the only approach by which, in returning northwards from Jerusalem, He could have reached the home of His infancy, youth, and manhood.

Here the boy Jesus prepared Himself, amid a hallowed obscurity, for His mighty work on earth. His outward life was the life of all those

of His age, and station, and place of birth. He lived as lived the other children of peasant parents in that quiet town, and in great measure as they live now. He who has seen the children of Nazareth in their red craftans, and bright tunics of silk or cloth, girded with a many-coloured sash, and sometimes covered with a loose outer jacket of white or blue—he who has watched their noisy and merry games, and heard their ringing laughter as they wander about the hills of their little native vale, or play in bands on the hill side beside their sweet and abundant fountain, may perhaps form some conception of how Jesus looked and played when He too was a child. And the traveller who has followed any of those children—as I have done—to their simple homes, and seen the scanty furniture, the plain but sweet and wholesome food, the uneventful, happy patriarchal life, may form a vivid conception of the manner in which Jesus lived. Nothing can be plainer than those houses, with the doves sunning themselves on the white roofs, and the vines wreathing about them. The mats, or carpets, are laid loose along the walls; shoes and sandals are taken off at the threshold; from the centre hangs a lamp which forms the only ornament of the room; in some rooms in the wall is placed the wooden chest, painted with bright colours, which contains the books or other possessions of the family; on a ledge that runs round the wall, within easy reach, are neatly rolled up the gay coloured quilts, which serve as beds, and on the same ledge are ranged the earthen vessels for daily use; near the door stand the large common water-jars of red clay with a few twigs and green leaves—often of aromatic shrubs—thrust into their orifices to keep the water cool. At meal-time a painted wooden stool is placed in the centre of the apartment, a large tray is put upon it, and in the middle of the tray stands the dish of rice and meat, or *libban*, or stewed fruits, from which all help themselves in common. Both before and after the meal the servant, or the youngest member of the family, pours water over the hands from a brazen ewer into the brazen bowl. So quiet, so simple, so humble, so uneventful was the outward life of the family of Nazareth.—*Farrar's "Life of Christ."*

Teacher's Meeting.

THAT "Model superintendent," H. P. Haven, believed that a successful Sunday-school was impossible without a teacher's meeting, and both in his county and his city experience, he brought his full corps of teachers together every week. They met not to study the lessons, but to compare the results each had reached in preparing the lesson, to consider the best methods of teaching the lesson, and also to increase their stock of information regarding the subject in hand, and enlarge their store of general biblical knowledge. Such a meeting for advancement in Bible studies should be regarded vital to the interest of every Sunday-school.—*Union Bible Teacher.*

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Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, JULY, 1885.

Summer Assemblies.

THE ST. LAWRENCE CENTRAL CAMP-GROUND.

THIS spot is one of the most romantic and beautiful on the continent, on a rocky, tree-covered bluff commanding a magnificent view of the broad St. Lawrence. The grounds are open throughout July and August. The Rev. A. Andrews and E. A. Barnes, Esq., will conduct a Normal-Class Sunday-School Parliament from August 13th to August 24th. There will be a Congress of the Churches—Baptist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Methodist. A Children's Day, Temperance Day, Stereopticon entertainments, Band of Music, Lectures and Sermons by Chancellor Sims, Drs. Reid, Williams, Carman, Stone, Castle, Burns, Badgely, Austin, Galbraith, and a host of others. We strongly bespeak for the Sunday-school Parliament the hearty co-operation of all Sunday-school workers who can possibly attend it. Send to the Rev. S. Card, Brockville, for programme, giving full information.

**THE ONTARIO METHODIST CAMP-GROUND,
GRIMSBY.**

Under the energetic management of the Rev. Manly Benson, this favourite summer resort is becoming each year increasingly popular. It announces an excellent programme for 1885. It is open from July 1st to late in the summer. Among the subjects announced are the meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society, of the Ministerial and Local Preachers' Association, Sunday-school, Day and Summer School of Elocution, etc. Among the preachers and lecturers will be Bishop Foss, Chancellor Sims, Chaplain Searles, Drs. J. O. and G. W. Peck, of the United States, and a host of Canadians. The singing will be under the direction of the Whyte Brothers. The grounds are easily accessible and the entertainment is good and inexpensive.

THE Report of the Fourth International Sunday-School Convention held at Louisville, Ky., is a bulky book of 314 pages. It contains a verbatim report of all the addresses given. Sunday-school workers will find it a rich source of information, suggestion and inspiration. Though they may have been unable to attend this great Convention, they can enjoy its very cream and quintessence in this book. It may be ordered of Messrs. Biglow & Main, Publishers, New York and Chicago.

LET us have a grand rallying at the Sunday-school Parliament at the beautiful grounds of the St. Lawrence Central Camp, Aug. 14 to 20.

The entire course of the Chautauqua Normal Class subjects will be given in two sessions each day, at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Lecturers:— Rev. A. Andrews, Rev. W. C. Henderson, M. A., C. A. Barnes, P. S. I.

Board very reasonable at the restaurant on the grounds. We ought to have one hundred regular students. Come and get all the inspiration and help you can.

Sunday-School Reading.

WE have received from the well-known Edinburgh Publishing House, Olphant, Anderson & Ferrier, the following volumes. They are of far superior merit to the ordinary run of religious stories. They exhibit distinguished literary merit and are instinct with sound and wholesome religious spirit.

A Divided House. A study from life. By ANNIE S. SWAN. Pp. 250. Cloth extra, 2s. 6d. sterling. Miss Swan is well known as the author of those successful books "Aldersyde" and "Carlowrie," the former of which is such a striking story that it called forth a congratulatory letter to the author from the Premier of Great Britain. The present story is not so Scottish in colouring as the others, but is marked by the same graphic delineation of character and enforces the lesson, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

Edward Garrett needs no commendation to the vast circle of his admirers in two continents. The author of "Occupations of a Retired Life" has friends wherever the English language is spoken. Nor is the present volume likely to lessen his popularity.

At Any Cost (pp. 310), cloth extra, 5s. sterling, is a story whose scenes alternate from the North of Scotland to the City of London—the throbbing heart of the Empire. It presents life lessons which will be fraught with profit to every reader, and will enforce the motto, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

The Laird's Secret, by JANE H. JAMIESON (cloth extra, 5s. sterling), is another of those charming Scottish stories for the issue of which this house has become famous. It has already reached a second edition, a proof of its popularity and merit. It describes lowland Scottish life in a village near Edinburgh. One of the prominent characters is a Roman Catholic factor or agent whose sinister designs are of course frustrated. The sketches of peasant life, of the noble laird and of the bonnie Scottish lassies are as fresh and fragrant as the breezes from their heathery hills.

Jim Bentley's Resolve. A temperance story. By LYDIA L. ROUSE. Pp. 175. 2s. sterling. This is, we judge, the reprint of an American story, at all events the scene is laid in the State of New York. The book combines admirably lessons of temperance and religion.

Hester Glen's Holidays, by R. F. HARDY (cloth extra, 1s. 6d. sterling), will be welcomed by the many readers of that charming story, "Jock Halliday." It is intended for younger readers and a very dainty little book it is.

Shadowed Lives is another story by ANNIE S. SWAN, inferior in dramatic power to her "Aldersyde," but still an interesting little book.

Other Juvenile stories are *Grandma and Her Grandchildren* (1s. sterling); *Bess the Waif* (6d. sterling)—by Miss SWAN, a touching story of child-life; and the *Pearl Necklace*, by Miss HARDY (6d. sterling). These are suitable for junior classes.

Needs of the Sunday-School.

If we visit a nursery, and observe with what care the nurseryman tends the young trees, pruning them, grafting them, stirring up the soil, or

transplanting them, we shall be convinced that the labour is in prospect of the future. But why this tender watchfulness and assiduity in caring for the tender scion? Because the twig may be bent and become deformed in its after-growth; or it may be stunted, or die.

Have we not with us a far more important nursery, where vastly more precious trees are growing up for an immortal life, and for whom the Saviour gave His own blood, because nothing less could avail? Shall we then, who have charge of this nursery, be less diligent in our care of it than the husbandman in the case of his trees?

To drop the figure—the Sunday-school is the place where the young minds are instructed in God's own truth. Here they are taught how to attain the chief end of their being, and to become pure and happy in this world, and in that which is to come. What the child learns in the Sunday-school, goes with him through life; aye, into eternity. Let us beware then, that he learn not pride where he should learn humility; that he learn not levity, where he should learn seriousness; that he learn not distrust, where he should learn confidence.

What we want in the Sunday-school, first of all, is teachers who are willing to sacrifice personal convenience, if need be, in behalf of the school; teachers whose hearts are burning with the love of Christ, and the desire to advance His cause, and whose daily lives witness for the Master.

We want officers who feel their responsibility, and are willing to be found in their places at all times.

We want harmony. What would be the fate of an army, divided as to the plan of operations? Would not the enemy fall upon it unawares, and scatter it to the winds? The Sunday-school cannot contend against the evil surroundings of the outside world, if there is discord in its ranks.

We need the co-operation of parents, not only in sending their children regularly, but in supplementing the teaching of the Sabbath-school. For if there is no religious instruction at home, the work of the school is crippled. Christianity becomes a thing to be talked about on Sunday, and forgotten during the week; unreal and distasteful to the children.

Punctuality is an essential to the Sabbath-school. If the teacher is late, he loses the inspiration of the opening exercises. If the pupil is tardy, the teacher has to commence the lesson again; or the child loses the first part, and consequently becomes uninterested.

Most of all, we need the blessing of the Lord. Without it all our efforts will be like seed by the wayside. "Paul may plant, and Apollos may water," but it is God that "giveth the increase." With His blessing, "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice, even with joy and singing."

Canadian Normal Class Work for 1885.

BY THE REV. ALFRED ANDREWS.

NORMAL CLASS OUTLINE LESSON, No. 6.

PART I.—BIBLE SECTION: BIBLE GEOGRAPHY.

It is surprising how small a part of the world was known to the ancients. This will be seen by examining any good atlas. (The best we know for general students at a moderate price is Case's Bible Atlas, price \$1.00. A still better one is that of Dr. Harlbath, at \$3.25 and \$4.75, according to binding.)

If we take a map of the world and draw on it a square representing that portion known to the ancients, it will be found to be less than two-thirds of the size of the United States, of this about one-half was desert.

By using a blackboard we can easily copy off a sketch on it from a good map. And show (1) the countries as Armenia, Haran, Media, Persia, Chaldaea, Elam, Assyria, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Phoenicia, Syria, Canaan, Egypt.

(2) Mountain Ranges.—Tarsus, Ararat, Caspian, Lebanon, Sinai and Tagros.

(3) The seas known to them were Mediterranean, near Black, Red, Persian Gulf, Dead Sea and the Caspian.

(4) The principal cities were few—Nineveh, Babylon, On, Jerusalem and Tyre.

(5) Their rivers were the Nile, Jordan, Euphrates, Tigris, Hiddepel and the Orontes.

As to the location of Eden nothing positive is known, but the Bible account and the history of languages seem to point to a spot near the confluence of Tigris and Euphrates.

Nebuchadnezzar is said to have been the first who marched an army over the desert of Arabia.

A second chart should be drawn to represent the Roman Empire, showing the outline and situation of the fourteen provinces and the principal cities. Of the Roman Empire we note that there were (1) Many lands, but one government. (2) Many tongues, or dialects, but one language mainly prevailed—the Greek. (3) Many races yet among them, the Jews, preserved their national distinctions more clearly than others. They had been held long enough together to have their characteristics stamped upon them so that in after dispersion they could not be lost to view. (4) Many religions, yet the mass of the people had lost faith in all religions.

PALESTINE is of course the "Land of the Book." A small land compared with the rest of the world, yet a great part of the world's history was made here, and what took place here has affected the history of all lands to a very considerable degree.

A little study of the outlines of Palestine will soon enable us to draw a sketch on the board showing, first, the coast line, then the Eastern and other interior boundaries. Now draw the rivers and lakes. Next the mountain

ranges and principal peaks. Then locate the chief cities. To show the boundaries of the tribes a different colour of chalk is of advantage. As the map grows—in the sight of the class—the members will be questioned on every part until all becomes familiar.

In Palestine there is the most diversified climate. The rainfall has attained eighty-five inches in a single year. Its products are greatly varied, and its adaptability to defence is such that, had the people been united, no enemy could ever have subdued them.

The cause of their downfall was rebellion against God—SIN.

PART II.—SCHOOL SECTION: REVIEWS.

Three views may be taken of every lesson.

1. *Preview.* This is a brief view of the lesson on the Sabbath before you propose to teach it. The best teachers endeavor to find time for this, thus giving their scholars a little idea of what the lesson is to be.

2. *Direct view.* This is secured by the superintendent and school reading over the lesson in concert. When this is not done the teacher should have the lesson read over in his class before commencing to teach it.

3. *Review.* This is most important in teaching. It is looking over the ground you have travelled together. Let no one suppose that review can only be undertaken at the close of the lesson. Unconsciously the teacher should review each step taken, and after the lesson has been taught review the whole.

The superintendent or other suitable person ought to review every lesson taught before the whole school.

It is the only method of testing the value of the work we have been doing. It will give pleasure to the scholar to recall what he has learned. A complete view has then been taken of the whole work gone over.

WHEN SHOULD WE REVIEW?

1. As soon as anything is taught.
2. Before the next lesson begins review the last.
3. And after an interval, say of a few weeks, we should by all means have a quarterly review.

NEED OF REVIEWS.

1. Truths lie deep and often are difficult to get, and are easily forgotten, hence over and over again "Simplify and repeat." Solomon hit the mark exactly, "Line upon line."

2. The truths and teachings of our lessons are so related that they should be kept associated together in our study of them.

3. The practice of review will develop a habit of thought in the mind of the pupil we teach.

METHODS OF REVIEW.

1. *Interrogation.* Teacher asking questions, pupils answering. Scholars asking, and teacher answering. This serves as a stimulus to gain the attention of the scholars.

2. *Story telling.* Assign to each scholar

turn, or as judged best, the work of telling the story in the lesson to the class as he may be able.

3. Word picturing, e.g. I see a man in an Eastern city, streets so narrow that the houses almost touch one another. It is late at night and he stops before a door and knocks for admission; the door-keeper hears him but does not let him in. Now ask who was that? and get all you possibly can or have time for from the class about Peter and his wonderful deliverance.

4. Outline method. Ask a pupil beforehand to prepare and bring an outline of the next lesson. You must of course use the outline, even if not very suitable, then you can take your own plan after. This will not prove so difficult a thing as many think, and it will develop a habit of independent thought in the pupils.

Many have no interest in the quarterly review day, and may be heard to say, "This is the dullest day we have." This is mainly because we do the least preparation for this lesson. Oh! it is only review next Sunday. No lesson needs more preparation than the review, and none should be more interesting.

P. S. This lesson completes the course that was agreed upon. We trust their perusal may have at least kindled a desire in some hearts to seek a better qualification for this great work of Sabbath-school teaching.

Book Notices.

Letters from Hell. A startling and thrilling book. With introduction by GEORGE MACDONALD. Price, cloth, \$1. New York: Funk & Wagnalls. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

This book was originally published in Denmark. In Germany it appeared very recently in a somewhat modified form, and has there aroused almost unparalleled interest, running through upwards of twelve editions in the course of a year. The present English version is made from this German version, the translator faithfully following the author's powerful conception, but pruning certain portions, recasting certain others, and omitting some less interesting to English readers, in the hope of rendering such a reception and appreciation as the book in itself deserves, yet more probable in this country. It may be interesting to know that the title is not quite a new one, for just before the death of Oliver Cromwell a book was published entitled "*Messages from Hell*"; or, "*Letters from a Lost Soul*."

"Its mission is not to answer any question of the intellect to please the fancy, or content the artistic faculty, but to make a righteous use of the element of horror; and in this the book is unparalleled."

The Companion to the Revised Old Testament. Showing the leading changes made by the Revisers, and the reasons for making them. By TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D.D. 12mo,

cloth, \$1. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, Publishers. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

Dr. Chambers was a most valued member of the Revision Committee, and is, besides, a ripe and accomplished scholar and Biblical critic. Moreover, he is thoroughly trustworthy, conscientious and painstaking in all his literary work.

"The Companion to the Revised Old Testament" discusses the need of a revision, and the method of making it; then considers the original text of the Old Testament, and follows this with a mention of the changes made, and the reasons for making them, from Genesis to Malachi, and concludes with a list of the Old Testament Revisers, British and American, and their Bibliography.

The work will be timely and welcome to all who purchase and desire to understand and appreciate the merits of the Old Testament Revision.

Pusey's Commentaries—The Minor Prophets, with a commentary explanatory and practical, and introductions to the several books. By Rev. E. P. PUSEY, D.D., regius Professor of Hebrew and Canon of Christ Church. Vol. I., Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah and Jonah; Vol. II., Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. Price \$3 per volume. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

This colossal work is justly regarded by scholars as the best commentary extant in the English language on the Minor Prophets. The author, in the preface, says: "In regard to the literal meaning of the sacred text, I have given that which, after a matured study spread over thirty years, I believe to be true, or in some cases the more probable only. In doing so I have purposely avoided all show of learning or embarrassing discussion which belong to the dictionary or grammar rather than a commentary on the Holy Scripture."

Pusey's Commentaries are free from those doctrines which are usually described by the name, Puseyism. The following are among the characteristic features of this standard work:

1. It is able, learned and instructive. The author's Hebrew scholarship and his acquaintance with theological literature, ancient and modern, are brought to bear upon the text in such a manner as to bring out the profoundest meaning in the simplest and most unassuming manner.

2. It is critical, in the sense of being discriminating, yet free from mere technical comments. Practical results are presented with unquestioning faith and humble reverence, and with a fearless devotion to the truth, controlled by safe and sound judgment.

3. It is orthodox and conservative in its tendency, though in no sense influenced by any narrow theological or ecclesiastical bias. Conforming to the mind of the Spirit, the author devoutly seeks the meaning of the Old Testament prophecy in its New Testament fulfilment.

The Church Nursery.

CHILDREN IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL SHOULD BE TRAINED FOR USEFULNESS IN THE CHURCH.

As a rule, they are the best workers in the Church who are home-bred. Old profligates may be converted, for a man can be born when he is old, but they seldom are of as much value, either for quality or quantity of service, as children trained to love and fear God, who consecrate an entire life to Christ.

Sunday-schools, therefore, should be spiritual birthplaces, spiritual nurseries, and places in which to teach and learn spiritual lessons; but they should be more, they should be recruiting stations in which to enlist youthful valiants for the sacramental host of the Lord's elect, training-places for Christian athletes, colleges for the equipment of preachers and teachers of the future, and schools in which to prepare many workers for many different classes of toil. The Church has the right to expect its schools to keep up a full and continuous supply of youths and maidens who shall be ready to carry on work, to fill posts, and step into vacant places.

The definite aim of teachers should be the salvation of scholars, but at the same time the teacher must work directly also with reference to the future character of each scholar as an active agent of usefulness in the Church.—*Wesleyan Methodist Sunday-School Magazine.*

Opening and Closing Services for Third Quarter of 1885.

OPENING SERVICE.

- I. Silence.
- II. The Doxology.
- III. Responsive Sentences.

Supt. Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. Psa. 78. 1.

School. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. Deut. 32. 2.

Supt. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. Deut. 30. 11, 14.

School. Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law. Psa. 119. 18.

Supt. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. John 5. 39.

School. But these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name. John 20. 31.

- IV. Singing.
- V. Prayer.

LESSON SERVICE.

- I. Class Study of the Lesson.
- II. Singing Lesson Hymn.
- III. Recitation of the Title, Golden Text, Outline, and Doctrinal Suggestion, by the School in concert.
- IV. Review and Application of the Lesson, by Pastor or Superintendent.
- V. The Supplemental Lesson.
- VI. Announcements (especially of the Church service) and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. Singing.
- II. Responsive Sentences.

Supt. Let us hear the conclusion of the Lord's matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. Eccl. 12. 13.

School. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil. 4. 8.

- III. Dismissal.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

Brief Practical Hints.

1. Love your work.
2. Be always in your place.
3. Be always in time.
4. Win the love of your scholars.
5. Keep order in your class.
6. Prepare the lesson.
7. Study the art of teaching.
8. Study simplicity of style.
9. Visit your scholars.
10. Pray for and with each scholar.
11. Aim at immediate conversion.
12. Be thoroughly in earnest.
13. Be blameless and harmless.
14. Be filled with the Spirit.
15. Study to develop your pupils, in all right ways, by word and deed.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER: THREE MONTHS' STUDIES IN THE KINGS.

B. C. 975.]

LESSON I. REVOLT OF THE TEN TRIBES.

[July 5.]

1 Kings 12. 6-17. [Commit to memory verses 6-8.]



6 And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solo-mon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people?

7 And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants forever.

8 But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him:

9 And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter?

10 And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little anger shall be thicker than my father's loins.

11 And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day.

13 And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

14 And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

15 Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people for the cause was from the LORD, that he might perform his saying, which the LORD spake by Ahiyah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat.

16 So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: be parted unto their own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents.

17 But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.

General Statement.

The son of Solomon was compelled to confront impending ruin before the crown had rested upon him. The empire won by the sword of David was composed of different nationalities, never welded into unity, and all ripe for revolt, with able leaders in Shechem, in Damascus, and in Edom, ready to lift the banner of revolution. The twelve tribes were disaffected toward the throne on account of the heavy exactions of Solomon, the general pressure of the times, the luxury of the nobles, and the poverty of the common people. The disloyal elements found a leader in Jeroboam the son of Nebat, a man of great ability and equally unscrupulous. The young king was compelled to come to Shechem, the very nest of treason, to receive the crown. They presented their demands, mainly just, though perhaps prepotent in manner, and the young king asked for three days in which to consider. He first called together the old statesmen who had strengthened the throne of his father, and asked their advice. With one voice they counseled moderation, gentleness toward the people, and a promise of reform. This would bind his subjects to his throne, and Rehoboam was bent on another course, dismissed these wise advisers, and summoned the youths who had been his companions in the palace to give their opinion. Ignorant of the true condition of affairs, and arrogant by their education, they bade him meet petition with threat, speak stern words to the people, and put down rebellion with a strong hand. The counsel was in accord with his own feelings, and he followed it promptly in word, but failed to act with vigor. Had he or instantly granted the demands of the people on one hand, the throne might have stood securely. But with bold words and weak acts, the hour was lost. With bold Solomon was rent into fragments, a rival throne arose almost within sight of the temple, and the opportunity for Israel to become the controlling power of the East forever passed away.

Practical Note.

few kind words from the king might have felled the plots of the disloyal, and brought the twelve tribes back to their allegiance. How different "might have been" the history! With Israel united the conquests of Assyria had been held, the rising power of David might have been dominant over all the nations of Asia, and a pure religion might have taken the place of the ancient forms of idolatry. (2) Fidelity to God and gentleness to men go together.

Explanatory and

Verse 6. King Rehoboam. The only son of Solomon named in the history, and inheritor of all his father's folly, but none of his wisdom. He is spoken of as forty-one years old at this time, but there is some reason to suppose the figures a copyist's error for twenty-one. Brought up in a harem, and utterly unacquainted with public life until the crown was placed upon him, it is not remarkable that he made serious mistakes which led to sad results. Consulted. Concerning the demands of the people for reform in the government. The old men. The old statesmen trained under David, and experienced in public affairs, were the fitting counselors for the untried young king. Some of their names are given in 1 Kings 4, 3-6. How do ye advise? His first conduct, in asking their advice, was good; and he had followed it, he might have stood in history as a worthy successor of his wise father. Answer this people. They had demanded some relief from the heavy burdens of taxation imposed by King Solomon. It is evident that the luxury and profligacy of his reign had brought on a financial crisis, or "hard times," from which the common people were suffering, as high prices bring poverty, where there is not sufficient work and corresponding wages for all.

7. They spake. Their counsel showed that they apprehended the temper of the people, and the reasonableness of their demands. If thou wilt be a servant. They did not recommend him to be a weakling, or a nominal king; but to obtain the good-will of his subjects by seeking their interests, and to master of the people is the one who serves them. Speak good words. That is, kind words, the soft answer that turns away wrath. They will be thy servants. A

Practical Note.

few kind words from the king might have felled the plots of the disloyal, and brought the twelve tribes back to their allegiance. How different "might have been" the history! With Israel united the conquests of Assyria had been held, the rising power of David might have been dominant over all the nations of Asia, and a pure religion might have taken the place of the ancient forms of idolatry. (2) Fidelity to God and gentleness to men go together.

8, 9. He forsook the counsel. Because it was not in accord with his kingly humor, which was bent on despotism. Consulted with the young men. They were his equals in age, and his associates in life; so that it was natural that he should incline toward them in public affairs; they had been brought up in the seclusion of the palace, and were without sympathy for the hard-pressed people for they had never felt their burdens. They were like the nobles of France under Louis XV, who said, "Let the deluge come—after us. What counsel give ye?" (3) People are very apt to ask advice which will suit their own inclinations.

10. The young men. The whole realm could not furnish more foolish counselors than these youths, yet theirs was the counsel which found favor. Thy father made our yoke heavy. The magnificent court of Solomon, his extensive buildings, and the luxury which he introduced, drained the treasury, and compelled heavy taxes. The poor were oppressed, and on his death clamored for relief. Make thou it lighter. By a less expensive government, and a return to the constitution of Samuel, which recognized the privileges

of the people as well as the prerogatives of the king. **My little finger shall be thicker.** He was recommended to meet the petition with a threat; to repress the growing disaffection by violent measures; and to make greater exactions than his father. History repeats itself, and we see the same plan pursued in the Russian empire of to-day.

11. I will add to your yoke. In the view of these young nobles, the people were slaves to be held in bondage, and not citizens to be governed. **I will chastise you with scorpions.** The prophet probably does not point to any form of chastisement, but is a figure of speech referring to harsh treatment.

12. Jeroboam. He was the leader of the people in the demand for reform, and afterward became the first king of the ten tribes. He belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, which was always jealous of the supremacy of Judah. In the reign of Solomon he conspired against the king, and was compelled to flee into Egypt. Here he remained secretly plotting, until the death of Solomon, when he returned to Israel. He was a thorough demagogue, using the cause of reform for the advancement of his own interests. **The third day.** The young king had asked for three days in which to consider the people's demand. **(4) It is well to take time for thought, but it is better to use it wisely.**

13. 14. Answered the people roughly. Hebrew, *hardly*, that is, in an imperious, despotic manner. How different from the manner of his grandfather David, who "bowed the heart of all" the people, and won them by his gentle words! **(5) Nothing is ever lost, and often much is gained, by a kind and courteous manner. Forsook the old men's counsel.** He determined upon a course of bravado and threatening, when he had no power to carry it out; since, after all, he was entirely dependent upon the people, for there was no standing army to compel obedience to his behests. **I will add to your yoke.** The mistake for Rehoboam was that of Saul, and also of Solomon, in trying to rule "like the kings of the nations around," as an absolute monarch, and not as the representative of God, whose will was to be interpreted by the prophets. **(6) It is never safe for God's people to copy after the customs of the world.**

15. The cause was from the Lord. It is not meant that God ordered the dissolution of the kingdom, and the breaking up of Solomon's empire, but that in these events, wrought out by human passion, ambition, and selfishness—in which Rehoboam, Jeroboam, and the people—all were guilty—God overruled for the accomplishment of his own spiritual purposes. He had fore-

seen the result, and provided for it, and predicted it by the mouth of his prophet. He did not make Jeroboam ambitious, nor Rehoboam tyrannical, but he ordained that through their acts his purpose of salvation should not be thwarted, but promoted. **(7) How fortunate for the world that an almighty hand and an omniscient eye directs it! By Ahijah the Shilonite.** This was a prophet, living at Shiloh, the ancient home of the tabernacle. He had foretold to Solomon the sundering of his kingdom, and to Jeroboam his coming royalty. Afterward he gave other predictions, less pleasant to Jeroboam, and wrote a history of Solomon's reign. See 1 Kings chaps. 11 and 14, and 2 Chron. 9, 29.

16. When all Israel. Here, as in many other places, "all Israel" means the ten tribes, as distinguished from Judah and Benjamin. We can trace this separation of interests at least as early as the reign of Saul (1 Sam. 18, 16), who was perhaps chosen as the result of a compromise between the two great tribes. David tried in vain to harmonize the tribal relations, and almost lost his throne in the attempt, for Absalom's rebellion arose on the side of Judah, and Sheba's on the side of Israel. Solomon eradicated boundary lines in his rule, but could not break down the old tribal feeling, a "state rights" sentiment, which finally severed the kingdom. **What portion have we in David?** The motto of rebellion sixty years before (2 Sam. 20, 1) was again the cry of the people. It meant, "We have no interest in the family of David." **The son of Jesse.** The name by which David was often referred to. **To your tents, O Israel.** A popular war cry, dating back to the time when the tribes were encamped in the wilderness. **See to thine house, David.** As the founder of the dynasty of his descendants, David is invoked in a tone of contempt to care for the interests of his house. **Israel departed to their tents.** The assembly broke up, and the representatives departed to their several homes among the tribes, not only without giving pledges of allegiance to the new king, but to organize insurrection against him.

17. The children of Israel which dwell in the cities of Judah. This is generally supposed to refer to such families of the ten tribes as had settled within the tribe limits of Judah, especially to the Simeonites, whose territory had been taken out of Judah on the south, and who, from their close connection with that tribe, and their separation from the other tribes, were compelled to submit to Rehoboam. Other families had come to Judah to be near the temple, and doubtless these also remained loyal.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Revolt of the ten tribes. 1 Kings 12, 6-17.
- Tu.* The revolt predicted. 1 Kings 11, 11-33.
- W.* The revolt of Sheba. 2 Sam. 20, 1-13.
- Th.* Abner's revolt. 2 Sam. 3, 6-21.
- F.* An undutiful son. 2 Sam. 15, 7-14.
- S.* The only true adviser. Psa. 118, 1-12.
- S.* The result of evil doing. Prov. 13, 1-25.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed. Prov. 13, 20.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 117, Dominion Hymnal.
My God! I am this hour so sweet,
From blush of morn to evening star,
As that which calls me to thy feet—
The hour of prayer?
- No. 122, Dominion Hymnal.
Be it my only wisdom here,
To serve the Lord with filial fear.
- No. 134, Dominion Hymnal.
I need thee every hour,
Most gracious Lord.

TIME.—B. C. 975.

PLACE.—Shechem, in Central Palestine.

RULERS.—Rehoboam, son of Solomon, King of Judah (B. C. 975-958); Jeroboam, son of Nebat, King of Israel (B. C. 975-954); Shishak, or Sesonchis, King of Egypt; Rezon, King of Syria of Damascus.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—God's overruling power.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Old Men's Counsel**, v. 6, 7.
Of whom did the king ask advice?
Concerning what action was the advice asked?
What counsel did they give?
2. **The Young Men's Counsel**, v. 8-11.
Who were these young men?
What did they advise?
Why did the king prefer their counsel?
3. **The King's Decision**, v. 12-15.
What was the king's answer to Israel?
In what spirit was it given?
4. **The People's Answer**, v. 16, 17.
What did Israel answer the king?
Of what prophecy was this a fulfillment?
Who remained loyal to Rehoboam?

Practical Teachings.

- Where in this lesson do we learn—
1. The power of the law of kindness?
 2. The folly of trusting rash counselors?
 3. That some mistakes are irretrievable?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **The Old Men's Counsel**, v. 6, 7.
Whose counsel did Rehoboam first seek?
What did he ask?
What advice was given him?
What will gentle words do? Prov. 15, 1.
2. **The Young Men's Counsel**, v. 8-11.
What regard had the king for the counsel of the elders?
Whom did he then consult?
What had the people asked of the king?
What did the young men advise?
Whose counsel showed the better spirit?

- 3. The King's Decision, v. 12-15.**
 Who came for the king's decision?
 After how long a time?
 How were they received?
 Whose counsel was taken?
 What reply was made?
 Whose plans was the king fulfilling?
- 4. The People's Answer, v. 16, 17.**
 What answer did the people make?
 Whither did they go?
 Who remained faithful to Rehoboam?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That kind dealing inspires friendship?
2. That a foolish heart rejects wise counsel?
3. That the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

When King Solomon died who took his place? His son Rehoboam.
 As the people were about to crown him, what did they ask him to do? Make their burdens lighter than Solomon had done.

What would they promise if Rehoboam would do this? To obey him always.
 What answer did he make? "Come again in three days and I will tell you."

What did the old and wise men counsel him? To speak kindly and tell them he would not be hard in his rule.

What did the young noblemen who had grown up with him say to do? Tell them you will not do as they ask.

Which advice did he take? That of the young princes. [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

When the people came again, what did he tell them? "My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it."

What more did he say? "He beat you with whips, but I will beat you with scorpions."

This made them so angry, what did they answer back? "We care nothing for you, if you are David's grandson."

What did ten of the tribes do? Left his rule and set up a kingdom of their own.

What was it called? The kingdom of the Ten Tribes, or of Israel.

Who was their king? Jeroboam.

Who stayed with Rehoboam? The tribe of Judah and a part of the tribe of Benjamin.

What name was given to them? The kingdom of Judah.

Words with Little People.

Sometimes a little companion wants you to do wrong and he tells you "how nice you are," and, "it won't do any harm just this once." Look out! Some of the boys and girls at school copy from your slate, or get know some little boy who says bad words, or some little girl that says unkind things of another little girl. Look out! May be you know some little boy who goes off for a "good time," instead of going to Sunday-school. Look out for all of them. They are those who are meant in the GOLDEN TEXT. A companion of such shall be destroyed.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Whom did Rehoboam succeed as king of Israel? His father, Solomon.
2. What did the people ask Rehoboam to do? Make their burdens lighter.
3. What answer did Rehoboam give? "I will add to your yoke."
4. How did the people receive this answer? Ten tribes revolted.
5. Whom did the ten tribes afterward place over them as king? Jeroboam, the son of Nebat.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

19. What are we taught on this subject?

That the law requires complete obedience; so that who breaks one commandment falls into condemnation.

Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all.—James ii, 10.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Foolish King.

1. THE WISE COUNSELLORS.
 1. Consulted with the old men. v. 6.
 - "With the ancient for wisdom." Job 12, 12.
 - Be a servant unto this people. v. 7.
 - Chieftest... servant of all." Mark 10, 44.
 - Speak good words to them. v. 7.
 - "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Prov. 15, 1.
- II. THE FOOLISH COMPANIONS.
 1. Forsook the... old men. v. 8.
 - "Thy father's friend forsake not." Prov. 27, 10.
 - Consulted with the young men. v. 8.
 - Childhood and youth are vanity." Eccl. 11, 10.
 - Thus shall thou speak. v. 10.
 - "A fool's mouth is his destruction." Prov. 18, 7.
- III. THE KING'S ANSWER.
 1. Answered the people roughly. v. 12.
 - "A froward man soweth strife." Prov. 16, 28.
 - I will add to your yoke. v. 14.
 - Also a great oppressor." Prov. 28, 16.
 - Will chastise you with scorpions. v. 14.
 - "A fool's mouth... calleth for strokes." Prov. 18, 6.
- IV. THE KING'S LOSS.
 1. The people answered for the king. v. 16.
 - Troubleth his own... inherit... wind." Prov. 11, 29.
 - What portion have we in David? v. 16.
 - Soon angry, dealt foolishly." Prov. 14, 17.
 - See to thine house, David. v. 16.
 - "House of the wicked... overthrown." Prov. 14, 11.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from Rehoboam.

1. Every young man is a king, the inheritor of a throne, in mental power, in possibilities of his life, and in his influence upon others.
2. Every young man comes to his kingdom to face dangers. He finds that the mistakes of the past generation bring forth results of evil; that there are serious questions of life for him to face, and temptations for him to overcome.
3. The wise youth will seek to profit by the experience of those who have lived before him, and will seek counsel from age and experience. Even men who have lived foolishly, in sin and pleasure, are apt to give the young advice not to follow their errors; and rarely will old age counsel folly.
4. That youth is foolish who seeks his counselors among his own companions, young men like himself, without experience, and the mere echoes of his own opinion.
5. Young men need a sympathy with the people, the insight into their needs, the power to feel with them, so that they may be able to lift them up.
6. Young men should be courteous and gentle; for an imperious manner has led others, as well as Rehoboam, to ruin, and a kind spirit has helped to win and hold empire over the hearts of men.

An English Teacher's Notes on the Lessons.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

A FEW years ago there were two or three large and destructive fires in the neighborhood in which I am staying. Some fine tracts of moorland were ravaged by the flames, presenting afterward, instead of the beauty for which they had been celebrated, a

withered, scorched, and blackened appearance. In some cases outhouses were destroyed, and the fire approached dangerously near to several inhabited dwellings. One pretty chine leading down to the sea was traversed from end to end with the flames, which burned up trees, gorse, heather, and grass. What was the cause of this damage? The dry weather and the wind intensified and carried on the flames, the luxuriant vegetation fed them. But how did they begin? Some one had spread paraffine on the ground at a certain point, and had then set it on fire. But what was the reason for such a deed? It was evidently done out of ill-will. What could have aroused such ill-will? Some prohibition of the landlords against the unrestricted gathering of sticks was believed to be the cause. And further it might be asked, what induced the landlords to issue such a prohibition; but this I am unable to answer. Often in a catastrophe the course may be traced back step by step, and the farther and closer it is traced, the greater probability is there that such a thing may be guarded against in the future.

In our lesson for to-day we have the account of a terrible catastrophe, the rending asunder of a kingdom. Look at Israel in the time of Solomon, sending out her "boughs unto the sea and her branches unto the river" (Psalm 80. 11), her king reigning from Euphrates "unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt;" all the kings of the nations round about bringing their yearly tribute to him; Judah and Israel, "as the sand which is by the sea for multitude," eating and drinking and making merry, dwelling "safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree" (chap. 4. 20-25), enjoying peace and plenty at home, and admiration and respect abroad. And in a few short hours this glorious kingdom was rent in two, its strength and its splendor gone.

What was the cause of this catastrophe? First, the death of King Solomon, who had, but for the sin that marred the conclusion of his reign, ruled wisely and well. But there was no difficulty about the succession. By divine command the throne belonged to the house of David, and Rehoboam had no rival in his own family, as had been the case with Solomon at his accession. We must look further.

On his accession, Rehoboam met the heads of the people at Shechem, the chief city of Ephraim. This very circumstance shows the existence of something wrong, for they had gone to Hebron to make David king (2 Sam. 5. 1), while Solomon had been crowned at Jerusalem. The change was ominous, and shows that the ten tribes were determined to stand on their rights. In the time of David there had been a feeling of jealousy between them and their brethren of Judah (2 Sam. 19. 41-20. 1), and the burdens imposed upon them by Solomon (chap. 5. 13) had made them forget the peace and plenty they enjoyed under him. Yet their dissatisfaction might have been appeased, and we must look yet further for the cause of the catastrophe.

Look at the third verse. Their spokesman was one who was an enemy to the house of David.

Chap. 11. 26, etc. No doubt Jeroboam encouraged them in the demands they made to the king, and in their determination to brook no refusal. Yet had a conciliatory reply been made to their request, the evil day might at least have been put off.

But the reply was not conciliatory. Rehoboam received timely advice from the counselors of his father. Yet he cast it on one side, and his answer was haughty, scornful, and brutal. It was like the spark to the fuel, and out of it arose at once the flame of rebellion.

Why did he give such an answer? It was put in his mouth by the young men whom he consulted. But what induced him to follow such utterly foolish and wicked advice? These young men had "grown up with him." They were the associates of his boyhood and youth; and from the unhesitating and imperious way in which their counsel was given we may judge that they had obtained great ascendancy over him. Little did he think, as he gradually gave himself over to this companionship and influence, that it would cost him the larger part of his kingdom, and the destruction of the empire erected by his father and grandfather.

True it is that God permitted this catastrophe. Instead of averting it Jehovah allowed the evil which had shown itself first in Solomon (chap. 11. 1, etc.), and then in Solomon's son, to bear its proper fruit. But that did not make it less evil, nor Rehoboam less guilty. And, strange to say, Solomon, speaking by inspiration, had already predicted the consequences of bad company, as we learn from our Golden Text. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

And the consequences are just as sure now as they were in the days of Rehoboam. Many a sad catastrophe in the life of an individual, in the history of a family, may be traced down to bad company. That fascinating companion may drag a girl down to misery. That smart and clever acquaintance may turn a boy into a felon. Where shall protection be found from such peril? In the company of the wise; but the only sure safety is found in walking with Him who was wiser and greater than Solomon, who took our nature upon him that he might be our Saviour and our safeguard through life, and our guide to his own kingdom of glory.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON, M.D., D.D.

The Revolt of the Ten Tribes. 1 Kings 12. 6-17.

1. The value and authority of the Old Testament, upon whose study we again enter, according to absolutely competent and trustworthy criticism. Isa. 9. 6; John 16. 30; 2 Cor. 12. 1; Matt. 4. 4; Mark 12. 10; John 7. 42; Luke 21. 47; 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17; Prov. 6. 23; 1 Pet. 4. 11; 2 Pet. 1. 19; Heb. 3. 7.

2. It would be well in this connection to form at least a partial biblical acquaintance with the leaders of the fratricidal strife precipitated by the event forming this lesson—Rehoboam and Jeroboam. 1 Kings 12; 14. 21-31; 2 Chron. 10-12; 13. 7; 9. 31; 1 Kings 11. 28, 29; 12. 20, 26; 13; 14. 7, 19; 2 Chron. 10; 13.

3. Shechem, the place of the national gathering to confirm the new king, and to protest against grievous burdens of governmental imposition. (a) First mentioned, Gen. 12. 6; 33. 18, 19; 35. 4; (b) Jacob's purchase was near, Gen. 48. 22; Josh. 24. 32; (c) City of refuge, Josh. 20. 7; 21. 21; (d) A place of political rendezvous for the tribes, Josh. 24. 1, 25; Judges 9; (e) Here was Jacob's well, John 4. 5; Acts 7. 16; (f) Valley of, Deut. 27. 11-14; Judges 9. 7.

4. Old age, though not a stranger to weakness, has duties divinely imposed upon it, and is to be highly honored, vers. 6, 7. Eccl. 12; Psa. 90. 10; Titus 2. 2; Lev. 19. 32; Job 32. 6; Prov. 23. 22; 1 Tim. 5. 1; 1 Pet. 5. 5; Prov. 16. 31; 17. 6; 20. 29.

5. God, being no respecter of persons, was as ready to give wisdom to Rehoboam in this emergency as to Solomon in 1 Kings 3. 12; 4. 29. Gen. 41. 33, 38; Dan. 1. 17; 5. 14; 2 Pet. 3. 15; 1 Chron. 22. 12; 2 Chron. 1. 9, 10; Prov. 2. 3; James 1. 5; 1 Kings 3. 9; Eccl. 12. 11; Job 28. 28.

6. Rehoboam's stupid sin, to commit which he was advised by the rash impetuosity of official criminal youth, and yet for which he alone was responsible, was stubbornness, ver. 13. Neh. 9. 16, 29; Jer. 7. 24; 2 Kings 17. 14; 1 Sam. 8. 19; Zech. 7. 11; 2 Chron. 36. 13; Prov. 7. 11; 2 Pet. 2. 19; Isa. 42. 24; Psa. 78. 10; Deut. 31. 27.

7. The claim of Jeroboam in behalf of disaffected Israel was intrinsically right, and if Rehoboam had practically regarded it he would have shown both wisdom and art. Psa. 11. 7; Gen. 18. 25; Isa. 51. 1; Job 29. 14; 1 Kings 3. 6; Prov. 11. 5; 13. 6; 15. 1; Isa. 32. 17; Deut. 1. 16; 2 Sam. 23. 3; Ezek. 45. 9; Jer. 22. 15.

8. The cruelty of the official young men, and Rehoboam's valueless and impolitic folly, are both well explained by a study of the unrenewed hearts that governed them. Prov. 4. 23; 6. 16, 18; 12. 8; Eccl. 8. 11; 9. 3; Jer. 4. 14; 17. 9; Isa. 44. 20; Ezek. 3. 7; Mark 10. 5; Prov. 18. 12; Psa. 101. 4; 2 Chron. 26. 16.

9. Rehoboam, with an unequalled chance for continuous power and popularity, lost it, not only by criminal stubbornness, but because he was what God calls a fool. Titus 3. 3; Prov. 1. 7; 12. 15; 14. 16; 18. 6; 3. 35; 10. 8, 14; 26. 11; 27. 22; 28. 26; 15. 2; Jer. 4. 22; Matt. 23. 17, 19; Eccl. 10. 14; 7. 9; 10. 12.

10. The God of providence was in this needless reversion to overrule it to his glory, ver. 15. Prov. 16. 9; 19. 21; 21. 1; Gen. 50. 20; Phil. 1. 12; Exod. 3. 7, 8; Deut. 2. 30; 2 Sam. 24. 1; 1 Chron. 5. 26; Psa. 145. 17; Dan. 4. 37; Isa. 63. 13.

Lessons:

1. An illustration of the divine plan of visiting the sins of the father upon the sinning son.

2. The magnificence of the king means the impoverishment of his subjects. The material glory of the one involves the material degradation of the masses.

3. The pre-eminence of Solomon's criminal craft was purchased at the price of universal serfdom.

4. Not only soldiers but laborers were by this proud monarch unsparingly conscripted. 1 Kings 5. 13, 14.

5. Rehoboam being "young and tender-hearted" (2 Chron. 13. 7), aged 21, not 41, should have consulted and obeyed God, and not official old men, or officious young men.

6. If kings were not fools they would do right; then their subjects would be happy, and their own crowns secure.

7. If Israel had submitted to such an inhuman conclusion against them, there might have been a degree of propriety in calling them God's "sheep," but none whatever in calling them his people.

8. Hell in the heart, the absolute dominion of the devil there, is the only sufficient explanation of such horrid inhumanity, vers. 13, 14.

9. Some provocations are more than divine manhood can or will endure.

10. Many men are to-day ruled by more monstrous masters than Rehoboam.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Begin by drawing a rough map of Solomon's empire, from the Red Sea to the Euphrates. Then show the space occupied by the twelve tribes, and indicate the location of Jerusalem and Shechem... Bring out by questions the story of the lesson, and by lines on the map show how Solomon's empire was destroyed, and Israel divided... The Thoughts for Young People show one method of presenting the truths of the lesson, having for its central idea the *youth as a king*. What is his kingdom? What should be his aims? Whom should he choose as advisers? How should he treat others? How should he act toward his enemies?... A more textual treatment is suggested by the Analytical and Biblical Outline. If it be followed, let the texts be searched and read by members of the class... For analogies to the times of Rehoboam, see the history of England under Charles I., of France under Louis XVI., and of Russia at the present day.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. Here is a divided kingdom. The entering wedge is the folly of Rehoboam. He was not wise-hearted, and did not seek wisdom from God. After reviewing the points of the lesson, call the attention of the school to the evil effects of bad companionship. A man is known by the company he keeps. "Birds of a feather flock together."

DIRECTIONS. Draw the crown with yellow chalk in outline. Make the wedge with red.

Another illustration may be made by drawing a wheel, such as is used in steering a ship, and by writing the following words:

REHOBAM AT THE WHEEL.
REJECTED WISE [WHEEL] STEERED BY
COUNSEL, FALSE LIGHTS.
Weak and willful, he thought wit was wisdom, and his folly divided the kingdom.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

A conference with the new king, and grave old counselors are coming to it. Stately and slow, with gray heads and long gray beards, with faces thoughtful and far-seeing and kindly, they pass into the king's presence.

What will they say? Do they not bid him deal gently and tolerantly with the people? Watch the king's face, hesitating and querying what he shall do. Perhaps it softens and takes a kindly shade from the wise, gentle face it looks into. Another conference, and who comes now? Young men, swinging proudly their long robes, lifting faces of disdain, stepping forward as if kings to meet a king. What do they say? How shall Rehoboam treat the people? Ho, ho, they shake their heads, they give their black locks a haughty toss, and bid the king load on the people's necks a heavier yoke than Solomon's, and whip them with scorpions. Watch the king's face now. It hardens with those hard faces, it scowls, it threatens. A third conference and "all the people" hurry before the king at once. Do you not pick out from the people that tall, shapely man, vigor in his steps, fire in his eyes, force in his words? If mischief need a leader he will step into a front place. It is Jeroboam. To his and the people's petition for a redress of grievances, what will the king say? Watch once more his face. It is insolent with a sneer and cruel in its menace. A volcano is in his words. O the lasting consequences of one imprudent, violent speech! All the faces before him roughen and darken like the sea at the touch of the night-wind. An angry cry goes up from the multitude. It is the cry of defiance, of rebellion. The conference breaks up. The people sullenly scatter. David's kingdom is rent, and who can ever mend the rupture? Could the young men do it, they who tossed their heads in pride and cried, "Make of the scorpion a whip-lash for the people's back?"

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Folly of Pride.*

INTRODUCTORY. Open the Old Testament, and tell that we are going back now to that history. Ask a few questions about David and Solomon, and recall the story of Solomon's idolatry, and the judgment that the Lord pronounced upon him for his sin. Now that Solomon was dead, Rehoboam, his son, became the king of Israel. To be taught: 1.) How a wise king will rule. 2.) How a foolish king will rule. 3.) The result of folly.

1. Pin a paper crown to the board. When Solomon died, the people said, "We have no king." What would they do first? Look around for one. Solomon had a son named Rehoboam, and he, chosen king, went to Shechem to be crowned. People came there from all parts of Israel. Some said, "Rehoboam shall be our king if he will treat us more kindly than his father Solomon did, but if not, we will have another king." So they sent men to Shechem to ask him if he would take off some of their burdens. Talk about a wise king. Ask, Who is the great King? God. He has all power; he gives power to kings. If they love God, they will try to rule as he does. He is kind, just, patient, loving. So will a king be who feels that God puts the crown upon his head.

2. Make a great yellow sun on the board, by its side a little taper. Tell that compared with God the wisest and greatest king is as the taper compared with the great sun. Now, wouldn't it be a foolish little taper that would try to outshine the sun! But that is what a king does who tries to rule his people without trying to get help from God. A foolish king does not ask wisdom of God; he pleases himself first, not asking if God is pleased; he takes his own way, not looking for God's way. Tell the story of Rehoboam's treatment of the people, and ask if children think he was a wise king or not.



3. Make two roads meet—print on one, "God's way," on the other, "My way." Rehoboam came to such a place, where he had to choose. He chose his way. Tell the result of his choice. The kingdom that he threw away was an earthly kingdom. A heavenly kingdom is offered

to each one of us who will take God's way, and deny self. What shall we find in God's way? The Bible, prayer, good companions, etc. In our own way, bad books, bad companions, worldly pleasures, etc. Teach that we cannot choose too young. God says, "Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve."

B. C. 970.]

LESSON II. IDOLATRY ESTABLISHED.

[July 12.]

1 Kings 12. 25-33. [Commit to memory verses 28-31.]



25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Peorah.

26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David:

27 If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.

28 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

29 And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan.

30 And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan.

31 And he made a house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.

32 And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Beth-el, sacrificing unto the calves that he had made: and he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places which he had made.

33 So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Beth-el the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart: and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.

General Statement.

Our last lesson presented Jeroboam in the aspect of the popular leader, chivalrous and bold, attacking old abuses, demanding for the people their just rights, the idol of the commons, and the friend of the pure and godly prophets. The goal of his ambition is now reached, and at once Jeroboam throws off his disguise, and reveals his true character—a self-centered, self-seeking, unprincipled politician. He sits upon the throne of Israel, master of ten out of the twelve tribes,

from the very borders of Jerusalem up to Mount Lebanon, and from the desert to the Great Sea. It is well for him to fortify his capital, and to establish an outpost on the wilderness-border. But with the eye of a politician, rather than a statesman, keen to see the outward aspects of the time, but blind to the deeper realities of moral and spiritual truth, he beholds peril rising in the distance, when his subjects shall enter the courts of the Lord's house as worshippers. He resolves to in-

stitute a religion of his own, and for his own kingdom, with outward emblems of worship to attract the eye; with two temples in his own realm, instead of one outside of it; with a priesthood of his own followers, attached to his throne, in place of the Levitical order, which was dangerous to himself in proportion as it was loyal to God; with forms of service in which he could participate, standing crowned and robed before his own

altar. The plan was crafty and wise in this world, but it left out of the account Almighty God, and it came to naught. As a result, a people were turned toward idolatry, and its resulting crimes; his own house came to a speedy ruin; his throne was possessed by a new dynasty, and his name stands pilloried in Scripture as "Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin."

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 25. Jeroboam. The first king of the ten tribes, a worldly-wise statesman, but careless of moral consideration, and with an outlook for the present life only. See notes on Lesson 1, verse 12. **Built.** The place had been in existence since the times of the patriarchs, but he now fortified it and adorned it for his capital. **Shechem.** Now *Nabulus*, situated in the center of Palestine, between the mountains Gerizim and Ebal. Here the law was read by Joshua, and the people pledged themselves to the service of God. **Mount Ephraim.** The section of the mountain region to the middle of the land, named from the powerful tribe which occupied the territory. **Went out from thence.** Still holding it as his capital, and making it the base of military and political operations. **Built Penuel.** The place of Jacob's wrestle with the angel, Gen. 32. 31. Jeroboam took possession of this place in order to control the region east of the Jordan, and the caravan-route between Egypt and the Euphrates. (1) *Jeroboam forgot what Jacob learned at Penuel, that the strength of man is in God.*

26. Said in his heart. He reasoned with himself, but did not consult God, hence the horizon of his thought was narrow. **Now shall the kingdom return.** He could place no confidence in the people, for they might soon be as eager to dethrone him as they had been to crown him; and he did not know how to place confidence in God, though a sure house had been promised him if he would remain faithful to the true King of Israel, 2 Kings 11. 38. **To the house of David.** The name of David was still a power among the people. His achievements were recited, his psalms were sung, and he was the great national hero, with a name like Washington in America, or Napoleon in France. (2) *How weak is the king who cannot put his trust in God!* (3) *How unstable a foundation, is popular opinion!*

27. If this people go up to do sacrifice. The temple at Jerusalem was the center of the national religion, and three times in each year all the heads of families were called to celebrate the feasts at the altar. There were ties of race, of religion, of history, and of common interests binding the people together. **Then shall the heart of this people turn again.** There seemed just ground for this fear of a reaction in public sentiment; and Jeroboam's plan to prevent it was wise from the stand-point of worldly policy. But God had promised to keep him secure, and he could afford to trust, even in the face of danger. **They shall kill me.** His own death would be the inevitable accompaniment of a reaction; for he who takes part in a revolution does it with a rope about his neck. Only in recent Christian history, even, do we read of a change in government without the slaughter of vanquished leaders. (4) *Popular leaders must bear heavy burdens and take great risks.* (5) *In politics, as every-where else, it never pays to do evil that good may come.*

28. The king took council. Not with the Lord, nor with his prophets, but with the worldly, irreligious politicians of his own party. **Made two calves of gold.** He was indifferent to religion, except as it served his own self-interest purposes; he was familiar with the forms of idolatry in Egypt, where he had lived in exile; and the worship of the golden calves was no new thing in Israel. From the fact of its popularity, we infer that it had been maintained in secret during all the history of the people. **It is too much for you.** He appeals to their love of ease, as well as to their need of worship. "You must have some religion; take the one which will require the least exertion." (6) *There are some nowadays who will join the Church which makes the least demand upon their conscience their time, or their money. Bewildered they go.* It is suggestive of a previous acquaintance with this worship on the part of the people, to find that these were the very words spoken by Aaron

to the Israelites at Mount Sinai, when he made the golden calf. Exod. 32. 4. **Which brought thee up.** To the intelligent few, the image was merely a symbol of the invisible God; but to the ignorant mass of worshippers, it was the god, and regarded as divine. (7) *The golden calf, or gold in the place of God, has still many devotees.*

29. He set the one in Beth-el. A city ten miles north of Jerusalem, "the house of God," where Jacob saw the heavenly ladder, and where the prophets had a training-school. How the hearts of the faithful few must have sorrowed over their desecration! It was on the road to Jerusalem, thus intercepting the pilgrims on their journey to the temple. **The other put he in Dan.** Far in the north, at the foot of Mount Lebanon and the head of the river Jordan. Here there was already an idol-sanctuary, founded (strange to say) by the grandson of Moses! Its origin is related in Judges 17 and 18. The two calves were thus placed at the northern and southern boundaries of the kingdom, its guardians for a realm whose aims were all of this world.

30. This thing became a sin. It chimed with the idolatrous tendencies of the people, and led them to rush headlong in a career of evil; for the worship of idols was constantly associated with revelry, debauchery, and vile immorality. See an example of this in the earlier worship of the golden calf in Exod. 32. 6, 25. **Before the one, even to Dan.** So eager were the people for the new worship, that they flocked in throngs even to the more distant shrine at Dan, which was farther from them than Beth-el, or than Jerusalem itself. (8) *So people who live too distant to attend church are near enough to go to the theater or the skating rink.*

31. Made a house of high places. The author of this book will not call the building a temple, or a house of God, but gives it a contemptuous name; as "high place," after the building of the temple, was only used of idol-shrines. **High places** were originally elevated sites chosen for altars, whether to God or idols, but the word became more and more associated with idolatry. This "house of high-places" was at Beth-el, and stood as a rival to the temple in Jerusalem. **Priests of the lowest.** Literally, "From the ends of the people," that is, out of all the tribes, and not from the tribe of Levi, which had been set apart for the priestly office. The reasons for this institution may have been that he wished to organize a priesthood out of his own partisans, and allied to his own interests, or that the Levites generally had refused to forsake the service of God for idols.

32. A feast in the eighth month. This took the place of the Feast of Tabernacles, which was held in the seventh month (September or October). The pretext for the change of time was that the harvest was a month later in the northern kingdom. **Like the feast that is in Judah.** This was the great autumnal festival, when the people from all parts of the land visited Jerusalem for a week, and slept in huts or booths. **He offered upon the altar.** He did this in person, like the heathen kings, for he was the head of Church as well as State in his dominion. The kings of Judah made their offerings through the priests. **So did he in Beth-el.** This city became a great center of idolatrous worship. See Amos 7. 13.

33. Which he had devised of his own heart. "He was placed in difficult circumstances, but he met them with the arts of a politician, not with the single-mindedness of a saint."—*Ravenscroft.* (9) *See how sin finds birth to sin, and leads to a whole brood of evils.* (10) *How much harm a goddess man in high places can work!*

HOME READINGS.

- M. Idolatry established. 1 Kings 12. 25-33.
 Tu. A change of kings. 1 Kings 12. 18-24.
 W. The place of God's service. Dent. 12. 1-14.
 Th. Idolatry forbidden. Deut. 5. 1-10.
 F. The golden calf worshipped. Exod. 32. 1-10.
 S. The feast instituted. Lev. 23. 33-44.
 S. Punishment for sin. 1 Kings 13. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Exod. 20. 3.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 138, Dominion Hymnal.
 O worship the King all glorious above!
 O gratefully sing his power and his love!
 Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
 Pavilioned in splendour, and girded with praise.
- No. 140, Dominion Hymnal.
 I sing the almighty power of God,
 That made the mountains rise.
- No. 144, Dominion Hymnal.
 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
 Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.

TIME.—B. C. 970.

PLACES.—1. Shechem, in Central Palestine; 2. Penuel, on the brook Jabbok, in Eastern Palestine; 3. Dan, at the source of the Jordan; 4. Beer-sheba, on the southern border of Judah; 5. Beth-el, in the tribe of Benjamin; 6. Jerusalem, the capital of Judah.

RULERS.—See Lesson I.

CONNECTING LINK.—The tribe of Judah, under Rehoboam, undertook to make war upon Israel, but were forbidden by the prophet Shemlahai. 1 Kings 12. 21-24.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The one true God.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **Policy**, v. 25-27.
 What two cities did Jeroboam build?
 What did he fear that Israel would do?
 In what respect is shown his distrust of the Lord?
 What was his policy?
2. **Deceit**, v. 28.
 Of whom did the king take counsel?
 What false gods did he make?
 What was his pretense?
 Why did he select calves for idols?
 How did he induce the people to worship them?
3. **Idolatry**, v. 29-33.
 Where did he place the idols? and why?
 What was the result?
 Whom did he ordain priests?
 Why was this contrary to the law?
 What feast did he institute?
 Of what other sin was he guilty?

Practical Teachings.

- Where in this lesson do we learn—
1. The evil of trusting to our own wisdom?
 2. The deceitfulness of sin?
 3. The power of a wicked man's influence?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **Policy**, v. 25-27.
 Who was Jeroboam? 1 Kings 11. 26.
 What was his character? 1 Kings 11. 28.
 What two cities did he build?
 Who had previously destroyed Shechem? Judges 9. 45.
 Where did Jeroboam live?
 Of what was he afraid?
 What would lead the people away?
 What would then be his fate?
2. **Deceit**, v. 28.
 What sin did Jeroboam commit?
 What plea did he make to the people?
 What falsehood did he utter?
 What does the wise man say of deceit? Prov. 12. 22.
3. **Idolatry**, v. 29-33.
 Where were the idols placed?
 Which one did the people first worship?
 What commandment did they break? Exod. 20. 4, 5.

What idol-service did Jeroboam establish?
 What feast did he ordain?
 What was done at Beth-el?
 At whose suggestion was this evil done?

Teachings of the Lesson.

- Where in this lesson are we shown—
1. That self-interest leads men into sin?
 2. That excuses for wrong-doing are easily found?
 3. That the evil heart is a bad counselor?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Where did King Jeroboam make his home? In Shechem.

How did he strengthen his kingdom? He built walled cities and forts.

Where had the children of Israel worshiped? In the temple at Jerusalem.

Did Jeroboam want them to go to Jerusalem? No; he was afraid they would turn toward Rehoboam, and perhaps kill him.

After thinking it over, and talking with his wise men, what did he do? He made two golden idols in the form of calves.

What did he say to the people? "Behold the gods that brought you up out of Egypt."

What did he make them think? That it would be too much trouble for them to go to Jerusalem.

Where did he set up the idols for those who lived toward the north? At Dan.

Where for those who lived south? At Beth-el, on the road to Jerusalem.

What did he do for these idols? Built temples and made priests.

Did he follow God's commands in appointing the priests? No; he took them from any tribe, just as it happened.

Were they good men? They were very low and wicked.

When the people began to worship the idols, what commandment did they break? [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

Whom did God send to teach them the right way? His prophets; but they would not believe them.

Words with Little People.

"The Golden Text don't mean me this week, I know, for there are no idols near us!" Are you sure, dear little people? Let us see. Any thing we love better than we love God draws us away from God, and any thing that does this is an idol. Do little people ever love their own dear selves so much that they do very many wrong things to please self, and so forget to love God best? Do they ever think more of their pretty clothes than they do of Jesus? Do they ever care so much for play that they do not want God's day to come? Do you see now that self, dress, and play might draw you away from God, and become an idol? There are many other things besides these that may be idols if we love them better than we love God. Read 1 John 5. 21. Watch, and give Jesus your whole heart.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did Jeroboam fear should the people go up to sacrifice at Jerusalem? That they would return to Rehoboam.
2. What did Jeroboam do to prevent their doing this? Made two calves of gold for worship.
3. When he had done this, what did he say to the people? "Behold thy gods, O Israel."
4. Where did he set these golden calves? One in Beth-el, and one in Dan.
5. What did the people do? They worshipped them.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

20. What does every sin deserve?
 Every wilful sin deserves God's wrath and curse, both in this life and in that which is to come.

Cursed is every one which continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law, to do them.—Gal. iii. 10. The wages of sin is death.—Rom. vi. 24.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Sins of Jeroboam.

I. WORLDLY AMBITION.

Built Shechem....built Penuel. v. 25.

"Woe unto them....house to house." Isa. 5. 8.

"Who is the greatest?" Matt. 18. 1.

II. DISTRUST OF GOD.

Now shall the kingdom return. v. 26, 27.

"I will be with thee." 1 Kings 11. 38.

"Doth his promise fall." Psa. 77. 8.

III. WORLDLY POLICY.

The king took counsel. v. 38.

"Take counsel, but not of me." Isa. 30. 1.

"They walked in their own counsels." Psa. 81. 12.

IV. FALSEHOOD.

Behold thy gods, O Israel. v. 28.

"Workman made it.... it is not God." Hosea 8. 6.

"Their idols are silver and gold." Psa. 115. 4.

V. IDOLATRY.

He offered upon the altar. v. 32.

"No other gods before me." Exod. 20. 3.

"They that make them... like unto them." Psa.

115. 8.

VI. EVIL INFLUENCE.

This thing became a sin. v. 30.

"Drive Israel from... the Lord." 2 Kings 17. 21.

"The way of Jeroboam." 1 Kings 16. 19.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Some Members of Jeroboam's Church.

1. Jeroboam has his followers to-day in men who think only of themselves, their own interests, their own plans; in men who use the cry of "reform" to obtain office; men who use the Church and religion to promote their own influence.

2. Jeroboam has his followers in those who distrust God, and seek to advance their cause by worldly policy which ignores moral questions. Not "Is it right?" but "Is it expedient?" is their motto.

3. Jeroboam has his followers in those who place gold in the stead of God, and live for material and worldly interests only. The golden calf has many devotees in this age, who for it will renounce comfort on earth, and the hope of heaven hereafter.

4. Jeroboam has his followers in those who seek ease rather than duty in their religious life. "It is too much" (ver. 28) is their plea: too much to go to Church; too much to work in the Sunday-school; too much to give to the Gospel. Their Church is "a chapel of ease."

5. Jeroboam has his followers in those who would have a man made religion. Instead of one divinely-given, for example, the Positivists worshipping a god of their own conception; the Agnostics, leaving out a personal God, but substituting "a Great Unknown."

6. After all, Jeroboam's most numerous followers are those who spell the name of their god with the letters S-E-L-F. They worship themselves, like the man who always said his prayers before his looking-glass.

English Teacher's Notes.

I KNEW a lady whom I will call A, who once rendered a great service to another, whom I will call B. At a considerable cost of labor to herself A filled the place of B as teacher for some time, until the latter was able to return to her duties. When B returned, she made a handsome present, not to A, but to another person who had given some slight assistance. Toward A she expressed no particular gratitude. Most people would call B's conduct not only ungrateful, but mean and unjust. This is a true case. Let me suppose another.

Suppose A had hired a servant to do a certain work for her, and B had hired none. Suppose that

day after day this servant was found busy, not on A's work, but on B's. Such conduct would be worse than unjust, it would be dishonest. Let me suppose one more.

Imagine a child, brought up by loving parents, with every provision made for the supply of his wants, for his advantage, and for his enjoyment. Suppose that such a child, instead of loving his parents, were to bestow his affections on some other people, who had no claim upon him, and who had done nothing for him. Would such conduct be unjust? Would it be dishonest? It would be worse, for it would be undutiful.

Yet there is something worse than this going on commonly day after day. There is One who is the Father, the Master, the Benefactor of men. And thousands on thousands are giving to others the gratitude, the service, the love, they owe to him alone. What is the proper word to apply to such conduct? It is idolatry.

But I remember some people in straitened circumstances who, having received much kindness from two ladies of good means, made a show of gratitude by sending them costly presents at Christmas. The ladies had no need of these things and they were much vexed. The senders had consulted their own pleasure in the matter, and gratified their pride, instead of seeking really to please their kind friends. This was sham gratitude. And there is such a thing as sham service; you may see a servant doing the work of the mistress who has hired her, after her own fashion, instead of following her mistress's directions. And there is sham affection and dutifulness, like that of the son in our Lord's parable, who said to his father, "I go, sir," and went not. Matt. 21. 28, 30. In all such cases the end to be attained is not the pleasure of the person to whom the offering is supposed to be made, but the pleasure of some other, or of self. Such sham worship offered to God is idolatry.

This was the sort of worship established in the kingdom of Israel after its disruption from Judah. Jeroboam, whom the people made king over them, knew that he had been destined by the Lord for this position, and that Divine providence had preserved and exalted him. Chap. 11. 31, 40: 12. 15. We should naturally expect to find him full of gratitude and of zeal for the service of God. But soe what was the fact.

(1.) Here is an Israelite who wants to offer a sacrifice to God. He has sinned, and desires to confess his sin and have atonement made; or he has received some money and wants to offer a thank-offering. Lev. 6. 2-7; 7. 12, etc. By the law of God he must go up to Jerusalem with his offering. Deut. 12. 13, 14; 1 Chron. 21. 18; 22. 1. But the king's command is: No, Jerusalem is too far off; the sacrifice can be offered at Beth-el or at Dan.

(2.) At Jerusalem the worshiper would stand before the altar in front of the entrance to the holy place. And he knew that there, though hidden from his view, was the ark, the sign of God's presence, with the Shekinah, or cloud, resting on it.

What does he find when he comes to Beth-el? A golden calf set up for worship—set up to represent the majesty of Jehovah, of him who said: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness."

(3.) And who is to offer the sacrifice for him? The Lord had chosen the tribe of Levi for the service of the tabernacle, and out of it the family of Aaron for the work of the priest. Lev. 1, 5, etc.; 2, 2, etc. But the Levites could not obey the king's decrees, and they have all gone off to the land of Judah. 2 Chron. 11, 13, 14. The priests at Beth-el are men chosen by Jeroboam, just any sort of people he pleased to appoint.

(4.) The time for the great feast of tabernacles draws nigh. People used to go up in happy companies to Jerusalem to keep the feast. But no one is stirring in the kingdom of Israel. Their feast will be kept the following month, and they will not have to cross the border.

Could such worship please God? It was not what he had chosen. It was in direct defiance to what he had chosen. It was in direct defiance to what he had commanded. Why was it thus offered? Because of the king's orders. The king was obeyed; Jehovah was disobeyed. This was idolatry. And why had Jeroboam given such orders? Because he feared for his kingdom and his safety. Vers. 26, 27. He thought of himself first, not of God. This was idolatry.

How is God to be worshiped now? (1.) In the name of Jesus. Phil. 2, 10; John 14, 13. (2.) "In spirit and in truth." John 4, 24; 1 Cor. 14, 15. (3.) In sincerity of life. Matt. 7, 21; James 4, 3, 8. But if our own pleasure and convenience, or that of others, is put first, that is idolatry. And all, even professing Christians, need the warnings of Paul and of John: "My dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." 1 Cor. 10, 14. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." 1 John 5, 21.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

Idolatry Established. 1 Kings 12, 25-33.

After the revolt of the ten tribes Rehoboam, doubtful of the sincerity of their disaffection, sent his collector to secure the unusual tribute. (a) This official was named; (b) Rehoboam in great fear fled to Jerusalem; (c) Jeroboam was chosen king of the rebels; (d) Rehoboam raised 180,000 men to suppress this rebellion; (e) God, however, broke up his plan through one of his prophets.

1. The proper nouns, particular names of this lesson. (a) Bethel, Gen. 12, 8; Judges 1, 23; Gen. 35, 1-15; Josh. 12, 9; Judges 20, 26; 1 Sam. 10, 3; 7, 16; Jer. 48, 13; Amos 2, 14; 2 Kings 23, 13; (b) Dan, Judges 18, 29; Amos 8, 14; Ezek. 27, 19; (c) Ephraim, Isa. 11, 13; Jer. 31, 6; 50, 19; (d) Jeroboam (see last lesson); (e) Levi, Gen. 29, 34; Exod. 6, 16-20; Gen. 34, 49, 5-7; Dent. 33, 8-11; (f) Penuel, Judges 8, 8-17; Gen. 32, 30; (g) Rehoboam (see last lesson); (h) Shechem (see last lesson); (i) Shishak, 1 Kings 11, 40; 14, 24, 26; 2 Chron. 12, 2-9; 1 Kings 2, 1.

2. How hard it was for Jeroboam, and how hard for the human heart in all ages, to so believe in God as to trust in his promises in extreme peril, ver. 27.

1 Kings 11, 29-39; Psa. 89, 3, 4; Heb. 10, 23; Jer. 33, 14; 1 Kings 8, 56; 1 Tim. 4, 8; Isa. 26, 4; Prov. 3, 5; 1 Sam. 17, 38, 39, 45; Psa. 62, 8; 90, 7; Hab. 2, 18.

3. God had graciously promised to favor Jeroboam on condition of faithfulness, and his powerful providence would have prevailed against every form of opposition, ver. 27. Isa. 14, 27; 46, 11; Mic. 4, 12; Num. 26, 65; Josh. 21, 45; Luke 21, 32, 33; Deut. 2, 30; 2 Kings 12, 15; Prov. 16, 33; 19, 21; 21, 30.

4. "Jeroboam said in his heart," his reflection had been profound, his conclusion was final; for "out of the heart are the issues of life," ver. 26. Prov. 4, 23; Matt. 15, 18, 19; 1 Kings 8, 61; Psa. 66, 18; Gen. 6, 5; Jer. 17, 9; Isa. 44, 20; John 13, 2; Ezek. 14, 3, 4; Dan. 5, 20.

5. God would reign without a rival in every heart. He is entitled to such supremacy. He made man for his dominion, and man needs his sovereignty. Nahum 1, 2; Isa. 43, 10; 44, 6; Dent. 13, 4; Eccl. 12, 13; Job 32, 8; 1 John 3, 23; Gen. 17, 1; Exod. 9, 14; 2 Sam. 7, 22; 1 Chron. 16, 29-31.

6. Perhaps the motive of Jeroboam in making the golden calves was pure. It may be he innocently sought to assist in true worship by the introduction of material symbols. In fact, however, his deed was real idolatry, vers. 28-30. Exod. 20, 3, 4; Deut. 5, 8; Isa. 44, 17; Dan. 3, 5, 10, 15; 1 Kings 6, 23; Ezek. 1, 10; Exod. 32, 4, 5; 1 Kings 22, 5, 6; Psa. 106, 19, 20.

7. Idolatry, which dishonors God and defiles man, is the substitution by the creature, as supreme in personal affection, of something else than the Creator. Dent. 8, 19; Hos. 3, 1; Ezek. 14, 8, 4; Col. 3, 5; Phil. 3, 19; Matt. 22, 37, 38; 1 Tim. 1, 5; 6, 10; Matt. 16, 24; Luke 14, 26.

8. When Jeroboam thus sinned he lost his most valuable subjects. They would not abandon God, and hence they left his kingdom. The relation of godliness to national and municipal preservation. Gen. 18, 29-33; Jer. 5, 1; Ezek. 22, 30; Job 33, 23, 24; Isa. 1, 10-14; 50, 1, 2; Matt. 5, 13; 13, 43; Psa. 37, 25; Prov. 14, 34.

Lessons:

1. The official lives of Rehoboam and Jeroboam are a most impressive illustration of golden opportunities wasted.
2. The mother of Rehoboam was an Ammonitess; his blood, not his theology, governed him.
3. God affords many brilliant chances, but only personal righteousness can successfully prosecute them, ver. 25.
4. Jeroboam was wise enough to consider what most modern statesmen forget, that religion is vitally related to wholesome politics, ver. 27.
5. The Jews were accustomed to approach God in worship through the symbol of the cherubim, and Jeroboam, not unnaturally, thought the golden calves, while not sacrilegiously duplicating these, could be similarly used, ver. 28.
6. Jeroboam, however, sinned. If he had read the word, to which he had abundant access, he would have known better, and doubtless, he knew better.
7. It was Jeroboam's fault that Israel sinned, but Israel suffered for yielding to the temptation, v. 30.
8. It was not a modification of unessential theology that Jeroboam sought to bring to pass in Israel, but a duplication of their revealed devotional system.
9. Let neither king nor subject specifically venture but as God directs.

Bureau Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Review rapidly the facts of the last lesson. . . . Show the map, and locate on it Jerusalem, Beth el, Shechem,

Peniel, Dan.... Word-pictures of: 1.) Jeroboam as a builder; 2.) Jeroboam as a political schemer; 3.) Jeroboam as an idol-maker; 4.) Jeroboam as a priest....

The sins of Jeroboam are summarized in the Analytical and Biblical Outline.... Jeroboam founded a Church which is in existence still, and some classes among its members are named in the Thoughts for Young People.

.... ILLUSTRATIONS. "Bloody Queen Mary" is a name attached to one of the queens of England. There is a worse epithet, "Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin."

.... Contrast Jeroboam, forsaking God for worldly policy, with Luther, singing, "A mighty fortress is our God."... The name of David (ver. 26) was in Israel what the name of Napoleon became in France. It was said during the reign of Louis Philippe, "If some one would stand Napoleon's cocked hat on a stick on the shore of France it would cause a revolution."... Gibbon wrote of the various religions of the Roman Empire, "They were all considered by the people as equally true, by the learned as equally false, and by the rulers as equally useful." The latter was Jeroboam's conception of religion.

References. FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 25: How cities were "built," 366. Ver. 28: Calf worship, 138.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

There is a stir among the goldsmiths. They are melting the shining golden ore. They are refining it. They are shaping it. They are polishing it. It is something to stand before the nation, stimulate, guide, lead it forward. Will it stir the nation to thoughts of purity, honesty, self-denial, reverence, that in the day of duty shall give courage, in persecution give persistence, in temptation give victory? What will it be? The statue of the country's noblest, grandest man who fought down wrong ambition, controlled pride, rebuked cowardice, exalted reverence, led his country to greatest achievement and for his country was a sacrifice? No—only—a calf! There are two calves even! To these, the nation will bring offerings, will prostrate itself before them in worship, will cry out for their bovine blessing! O shame, shame! In all this wickedness, Jeroboam is a leader. He erects a calf in Bethel, a calf in Dan. He cries to Israel, "Behold thy gods!" There he stands before the stupid blasphemous substitute for the great Jehovah. He has builded an altar. He offers sacrifices. He burns incense. All the while the dead eyes of the brute he worships do not see. Its dead ears do not hear. The king's sacrilegious offering is greeted with a silly leer that will be on the creature's face to-morrow, next month, next year. What if the earth refuse to support this iniquity, open and receive to a hopeless grave this sacrilegious show!

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Putting God First.* Review the last lesson; make twelve small triangles on the board to stand for the twelve tribes of Israel. Set off two of them, and tell that these represent the tribes that stayed by Rehoboam, while the remaining ten tribes set up a kingdom by themselves, and chose Jeroboam to be their king. Jeroboam had far the larger country and the larger number of subjects. God had promised to bless him and make his kingdom strong if he would obey and serve him. Tell that Jeroboam walked in God's ways for a while; then he began to be afraid that some of his people would want Rehoboam for their king. Was he trusting God when he was afraid? No,

he began to put something ahead of God, when he began to plan how he should make his kingdom strong.

THE SIN IN THE HEART.

Tell that at first Jeroboam's sin seemed very small; it was only a thought in his heart. He thought, "I must look out for myself." Tell what plans he made, and what he did first. He was planning to give his own life, and his kingdom. Show that the idol in Jeroboam's heart was self. When it began to speak, he listened. "What should he have done? Shut his ears and said, "I will not hear you; I will hear what God says." Tell how self may speak in a child's heart. It may tell you to be proud of your nice clothes; or to want teacher to think you are better than you are; or to love play better than you love your lesson. Any thing that you love better than God is an idol, and at first it comes to you only as a thought in the heart. Put it out, by God's help, or it will grow as it did in Jeroboam's heart.

THE OPEN SIN.

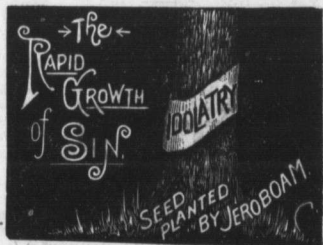


Teach that God can always see the sin even when it is hidden from the eyes of man. At first Jeroboam's acts may have looked right, but he was disobeying God, and that always leads to open sin. Tell how from setting up the calves as the symbols of God he went on to build temples and ordain

feasts, and finally to offer sacrifice himself to the calves he had made. Tell that the king did not mean to do so many wrong things, but the trouble came through breaking one of God's commands. Ask which one Jeroboam broke first, and teach that if we want God to be on our side we must put him first in all things. Show that an evil thought is like a serpent coiled up in the heart. Let it stay there and it will grow until it fills the heart. Who can kill the serpent sin? Only Jesus, the great Conqueror. If we pray to him, he will not only kill the sin, but he will come and live in our hearts to keep sin out.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. This diagram is intended to illustrate the rapid growth of sin. King Jeroboam planted the seed of idolatry; it quickly took root, and became a full-grown tree, hard to be overthrown, and bearing sinful fruit. The application to be made from this illustration is to warn the school of the danger of little seeds of sin that Satan sows in the heart. If not plucked up by the roots, they grow as rapidly as did idolatry in the time of King Jeroboam, and will become established.

B. C. 925.]

LESSON III. OMRI AND AHAH.

[July 19.]

1 Kings 16. 23-34.

[Commit to memory verses 30-33.]



23 In the thirty and first year of A'sa king of Judah began Om'ri to reign over Is'ra-el, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tir'zah.

24 And he bought the hill Sa-ma'-ria of She'mer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of She'mer, owner of the hill, Sa-ma'-ri-a.

25 But Om'ri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all that were before him.

26 For he walked in all the way of Jer'o-bo'am the son of Ne'bat, and in his sin wherewith he made Is'ra-el to sin, to provoke the Lord God of Is'ra-el to anger with their vanities.

27 Now the rest of the acts of Om'ri which he did, and his might that he showed, are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Is'ra-el?

28 So Om'ri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Sa-ma'-ri-a: and A'hab his son reigned in his stead.

General

The sun of Jeroboam, which had risen in splendor, set in disgrace and faded upon a people alienated from God and wedded to idols. The family fell from his throne, and an age of revolution followed, with frequent changes, and much bloodshed, until at last Omri grasped the crown with firm hands, and ushered in a new era in the history of Israel. Politically speaking, the reigns of Omri and the two succeeding kings were a period of success. The long war between the two kingdoms was ended, and peace and alliance and intermarriage between the royal houses took its place. The rising cloud in the north, the Syrian kingdom, was held in check, though constantly threatening danger to both the Israelite lands. Fraternal relations were entered into with Phoenicia on the shore of the Great Sea, bringing wealth in abundance to the ten tribes. Moab and Ammon on the east were tributary, and the new capital, Samaria, stood in strength. But there was another view, and a differ-

29 And in the thirty and eighth year of A'sa king of Judah began A'hab the son of Om'ri to reign over Is'ra-el: and A'hab the son of Om'ri reigned over Is'ra-el in Sa-ma'-ri-a twenty and two years.

30 And A'hab the son of Om'ri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him.

31 And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jer'o-bo'am the son of Ne'bat, that he took to wife Jeze'bel, the daughter of Eth'ba-al, king of the Zi-do-ni-ans, and went and served Ba'al, and worshipped him.

32 And he reared up an altar for Ba'al in the house of Ba'al, which he had built in Sa-ma'-ri-a.

33 And A'hab made a grove: and A'hab did more to provoke the Lord God of Is'ra-el to anger than all the kings of Is'ra-el that were before him.

34 In his days did Hi'e'l the Beth'-el-ite build Jer'i-c'ho: he laid the foundation thereof in A-bi-ram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Se'gub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Josh'u-a the son of Nun.

Statement.

ent standard, by which this age was not golden, but of baser metal. The great question is not as to how a people appear to themselves, and to their neighbors, but what is God's estimate of them. Measured by this test, the age of Omri and of Ahab was one of unmitigated evil. It saw Israel drift farther away from God, and not content with the worship of the golden calves, run wild in the debasing service of Baal, with all its hideous shame. It saw the king of Israel wedded to a foreign princess, whose strong will and wicked heart ruled his weaker nature. It saw the prophets of God persecuted to the death, slain with the sword, wandering in deserts, starving in caves, and the altars of God torn down to give place to the images of Baal. It saw violence and wickedness over-sweep the land, until the cup of iniquity was full, and the sword of vengeance was ready to be barred.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 23. Thirty and first year of A'sa. A'sa was the grandson of Rehoboam; and reigned prosperously in Judah. Began Omri. While the house of David sat secure in Judah, and three kings reigned successively in peace, six kings, representing four families, ruled in Israel; Jeroboam's son was murdered; the succeeding dynasty ended with another murder, and after a civil war Omri, the ablest man of the time, seated himself upon the throne, which was held by his family during four generations. Twelve years. His reign is here dated from his assumption of the throne, not from the death of his rival. In Tirzah. This was a place famed for its beauty (Song of Solomon 6. 4.) and situated in the region known as Mount Ephraim. The latest identification places it at Tel-asir, twelve miles east of Samaria.

24. He bought the hill Samaria. In most Oriental countries, the king is supposed to be the owner of all the territory, and absolute master of his subjects; but in Israel the rights of the people were guarded, and not even the king could rob them with impunity. (1) *The Bible is the fountain of constitutional law and of liberty.* Of She'mer. Who is unknown in history, except through the transaction. Two talents of silver. Between \$3,000 and \$5,000, which seems a high price, considering the fact that the money would purchase twenty times as much then as the same sum will now. **Built on the hill.** It is thirty miles north of Jerusalem, and six miles north-west of Shechem, upon a hill with steep sides, and a long, level summit. The city remained to the last. Capital of the ten tribes, and gave its name to the province. In the New Testament period it was called *Sebaste* (Greek for Augustus), and was the scene of Philip's labors. Acts 8. 5-9. It is now a wretched village, called *Sebasteiyeh*, Samaria. The word means "watching," or "watch-tower," which may have been another reason for retaining it as the name of the city.

25. Omri wrought evil. The tendency of sin is ever downward, and a man went with the current. Idolatry became more rife, and the people strayed still farther from God. "The statutes of Omri," named in Micah 6. 16, perhaps forbade the people from going to Jeru-

salem, and required idol-worship. **Worse than all that were before him.** Notice that the greatness of Omri, which is shown by the Assyrian inscriptions, is scarcely mentioned, while his character is dwelt upon. (2) *God cares more for goodness than for greatness, while men forget character in seeming success.* (3) *Wickedness has power of reproduction and growth, both in men and nations.*

26. The way of Jeroboam. (4) *Notice how vast and far-reaching may be one man's influence for evil.* Jeroboam stands in Scripture as "the man who made Israel to sin." **To provoke the Lord.** Our anger is often a petulant, personal feeling; God's anger is against wrong-doing, and is never severed from his justice. **With their vanities.** This term is generally applied in Scripture to idols and the worship of them. Idolatry is especially offensive to God, because it degrades the conception of his nature and character, and because it is always associated with wickedness. No idol-worshipping race ever elevated the tone of morals or the standards of character.

27. The acts of Omri. He was king when the new kingdom of Syria was just rising to prominence, and threatening to become dominant over Western Asia; and his reign was occupied in war with that power. **His might.** The Assyrian inscriptions of centuries afterward show his greatness, for they invariably call Samaria *Beth Khamki*, "the house of Omri," and its king "the son of Omri," long after his dynasty had ceased to rule. **Chronicles of the kings of Israel.** Not our book of Chronicles, which relates to Judah; but a collection of official records which has not been preserved.

28. Omri slept with his fathers. An expression referring to the sepulcher in the common earth, where king and commons are on an equality. (5) *Even a king must go to meet his judgment before the higher court of the King of Kings.* Ahab his son reigned. His reign is related with greater detail than that of any other king of Israel, because the greatest of the prophets flourished at his epoch.

29. Thirty and eighth year. If Omri's reign of

twelve years be reckoned from the thirty-first of Asa, in Judah, then Ahab could not have succeeded him at the date here given; but it is probable that Omri's reign is counted from an earlier date. Ahab reigned twenty and two years. He was a brave and successful warrior, holding in check the rising power of Syria; an able statesman, ending the long feud between Israel and Judah by an alliance which lasted for nearly a century; and a patron of arts, building palaces and cities. The misfortune was in marrying a heathen princess, whose force of character made him her tool and slave.

30. Did evil in the sight of the Lord. (6) *The true test of conduct is not popular opinion, but the standard set up by the Lord. Above all that were before.* Again we notice the growing tendency of evil—Jeroboam, bad; Omri, worse; Ahab, worst. The first step involves all its sequences, and the final leap into the gulf of destruction.

31. As if it had been a light thing. (7) *The great crimes of one generation are but slight things to the next, as they become more common. Sins of Jeroboam.* See how the sacred writer keeps in the foreground the initial wickedness which led to all the rest. He took to wife. Heretofore, the kings had married among their own people, thus keeping the nation distinct from the heathen peoples around; but Ahab broke down the restraints of the law, and thereby introduced a flood of iniquities. (8) *How important it is to choose a companion for life from God's people, rather than from the world!* Jezebel. She was the Lady Macbeth of her age, the power behind the throne, the real ruler of Israel. In character she was energetic, prompt, and bold, fearless of none, and feared by all, even by the prophet Elijah. She persecuted and slew the prophets of God, brought into Israel the wicked, and therefore fascinating, worship of Baal, which was far more corrupting than that of the calves; and was the central figure in the history for thirty years, long after her husband's death. In Jehu's revolution she faced death with a boldness

worthy of a better cause, and in her end won admiration even from her enemies. **Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians.** He is named in secular history as a priest of Baal who headed a revolution, seized the throne of Phœnicia, and founded a dynasty. He was an ancestor of Queen Dido, the founder of Carthage. **Served Baal.** Baal represented the sun, and was worshiped under various names and images. This form of idolatry was attended with great wickedness, and corrupted the morals of all who participated in it.

32, 33. Reared up an altar for Baal. Making the altar of Baal in Samaria the center of influence corresponding but opposite to that emanating from the altar of Jehovah in Jerusalem. **The house of Baal.** This was an idol temple in Samaria, which, with its out-buildings for the residence of the priests, formed almost a city. It was afterward destroyed by Jehu. **Made a grove.** This is an incorrect translation for the word **Asherah**, the female divinity associated with Baal. It probably refers to the image of **Asherah** (plural **Asheroth**), which may have been erected in groves.

34. In his days. As an instance of the contempt for God and his law which was prevalent during the reign of Ahab, this act is cited. (9) *Wicked rulers are apt to hate godless subjects. Hit the Beth-elite.* A man otherwise unknown, who removed from Beth-el among the mountains down to Jericho in the Jordan valley. **Jericho.** A city north of the Dead Sea, destroyed by Joshua, and though rebuilt soon afterward, remaining unvalued 500 years, on account of Joshua's curse, until this unbelieving age of Ahab. **Laid the foundation.** Not of the city, but of its walls. In **Abraham his first-born.** It means, probably, that his eldest son died at the beginning of the work, and his youngest at its close; perhaps also that his other sons perished during the interval. According to the word of the Lord. (10) *God's word is sure; but let it comfort us that his promises are as sure as his threatenings.* **Spoke by Joshua.** See the account in Josh. 6, 24-26.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Omri and Ahab. 1 Kings 16, 23-34.
 W. Abijam's wicked reign. 1 Kings 15, 1-8.
 H. The revolution of Asa. 1 Kings 15, 9-24.
 Th. The acts of Nadab. 1 Kings 15, 25-34.
 F. The evil of Omri and Ahab remembered. Micah 6, 1-16.
 S. Baal worshiped. Judges 2, 1-13.
 8. God's displeasure with the wicked. Prov. 15, 1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord. Prov. 15, 9.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 112, Dominion Hymnal.
 Father, bless our school to-day,
 Be in all we do and say,
 Be in every song we sing,
 Every prayer to thee we bring.
- No. 116, Dominion Hymnal.
 Gracious Spirit, Love divine,
 Let thy light within me shine.
- No. 45, Dominion Hymnal.
 God has said, "Forever blessed
 Those who seek me in their youth."

TIME.—Omri's accession, B. C. 925; Ahab's, B. C. 913.

PLACES.—1. Tirzah, the second capital of the ten tribes, nine miles north-east of Shechem; 2. Samaria, six miles north-west of Shechem; 3. Zidon, on the Mediterranean Sea, near Tyre; 4. Jericho, in the Jordan Valley, near the Dead Sea.

RULERS.—Omri and Ahab, sixth and seventh Kings of Israel; Asa, third King of Judah; Ben-hadad I., King of Damascus; Eth-baal, King of Tyre and Zidon; Zerah, or Osorkon I., King of Egypt; Assurban II., in Assyria.

CONNECTING LINKS.—1. Jeroboam's worship of idols led to rebuke from a prophet of God. 2. After Jeroboam changes were frequent until Omri.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Sin's downward tendency.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- The Sins of Omri, v. 23-28.**
 How long did Omri reign?
 What city did he build?
 What was the character of his reign?
 For what wicked example did he follow?
 For what was he distinguished?
 Where was he buried?
- The Sins of Ahab, v. 29-34.**
 Who succeeded Omri?
 How long did he reign?
 What bad pre-eminence had he?
 What wicked alliance did he form?
 What strange god did he worship?
 What honors did he offer it?
 What bold wickedness was attempted in his reign?
 What was the result of it?
 What prophecy did this fulfill?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

- The evil of forsaking God?
- The effect of one man's sin upon another?
- That death follows disobedience to the divine command?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- The Sins of Omri, v. 23-28.**
 When did Omri begin to reign over Israel?
 How long did he rule?
 Where did he live during the first half of his reign?
 What city did he build?
 What was his character?
 Whose example did he follow?
 What sin had Jeroboam committed?
 With what was God displeased? Deut. 32, 16.
 Where was Omri buried?
 Who became king at his death?
- The Sins of Ahab, v. 29-34.**
 Who was king of Judah when Ahab began to reign?
 How long had he been king?
 What was the length of Ahab's reign?
 What was the character of his rule?
 Whom did he marry?
 What command did he disobey in this act? Deut. 7, 5.
 What idol-worship did he establish?

Who helped him in his wickedness? 1 Kings 21. 25.
 What city was rebuilt in his reign?
 What curse had been uttered against his builder?
 Josh. 6. 26.
 How was the curse fulfilled?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson is shown—

1. The power of an evil example?
2. The power of evil associations?
3. The divine displeasure against sin?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Were the kings of Judah good or bad men? Most of them were good.

How was it with the kings of Israel? They seemed to grow worse and worse.

Who was more wicked than any who had been before him? Omri.

What city was founded while he was king? Samaria, which became the chief city of the kingdom.

Who was most wicked of all the kings of Israel? Ahab.

Whom did he marry and let rule his kingdom? Jezebel, a very wicked woman.

What did she drive the people to do? Worship Baal, which was worse than worshipping the calves.

Where did she build a temple to her gods? In Samaria.

What did she do with God's prophets? She hunted them out, killed many, and made the rest hid-

Do you remember about the walls of Jericho falling down in the days of Joshua?

What curse did God say would come upon the man who rebuilt them? "He should lay the foundation in his oldest son, and set up the gates in his youngest."

How long was it before any one dared to do it? More than five hundred years.

While Ahab was king, who rebuilt them? A man from Beth-el, named Hiel.

Did the curse fall upon Hiel? It did; for when he began the wall his oldest son died, and when he huznz the gates the youngest died.

Do you think God is as true to his threatenings as he is to his promises?

Words with Little People.

If you abominate a thing you hate it, you turn away from it, you will not have any thing at all to do with it; that is just the way God feels toward sin. [Repeat Golden Text.] What then shall you do with all your sins, those you have forgotten, besides all you can remember, those you committed yesterday and to-day? "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Take them all to him.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What was Omri before he was made king of Israel? Captain of the host.
2. What kind of a king was he? A very wicked one.
3. Who succeeded Omri as king? His son, Ahab.
4. What did Ahab do? "Reared up an altar for Baal."
5. What was Ahab as king? More wicked than all those before him.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

21. Does the law of God promise the pardon of sin to those who have transgressed it?

No; pardon is only promised in the Gospel, and through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Like Father, Like Son.

I. OMRI'S WICKED REIGN.

1. Began Omri to reign. v. 23.
 "Removeth kings, and setteth up kings," Dan. 2. 31.
2. Wrought evil. v. 25.
 "Woe to them that... work evil," Micah 2. 1.

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3. Worse than all... before him. v. 25.
 "No fear of God before his eyes," Psa. 36. 1-4.
4. Walked in... way of Jeroboam. v. 26.
 "Returned not from his evil way," 1 Kings 13. 33.
5. Provokes the Lord God. v. 26.
 "With the works of your hands," Jer. 44. 8.
6. So Omri... was buried. v. 28.
 "Evil-doers shall be cut off," Psa. 37. 9.

II. AHAB'S WORSE REIGN.

1. Ahab, the son of Omri, reigned. v. 29.
 "Rebellious children... add sin to sin," Isa. 30. 1.
2. Did evil in the sight of the Lord. v. 30.
 "Heart... fully set... to do evil," Eccl. 8. 11.
3. Took to wife Jezebel. v. 31.
 "Be not... yoked... with unbelievers," 2 Cor. 6. 14.
4. Served Baal and worshiped him. v. 31.
 "Forgotten my name for Baal," Jer. 23. 27.
5. Made a grove. v. 31.
 "Served groves and idols," 2 Chron. 34. 18.
6. Did more to provoke the Lord. v. 33.
 "Evil men... worse and worse," 2 Tim. 3. 18.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Results of Forsaking God.

1. We see in this lesson a people who have forsaken God. One result of this course was disorder and anarchy; for when men renounce God, they sunder the ties that bind men together.
2. Another result of forsaking God is growth in wickedness. Sin never stands still, but goes on from worse to worse, from Jeroboam to Omri, and from Omri to Ahab.
3. We see too that there may be worldly prosperity while there is moral decay. Israel was most wicked while it was most powerful.
4. We see that those who forsake God seek worldly and wicked associations, which entangle them still worse in the toil of sin.
5. We see that those who forsake God learn to despise his commands. Hiel ventured to build the wall in spite of God's threatenings.
6. We see that the innocent children suffer with their guilty parents, as the result of sin. The drunkard's family bear the burden for his crime.

English Teacher's Notes.

I sometimes stand on a bright, sunny day, and gaze over the sea from the cliffs which rise above it. Every thing looks fair, and seems to promise a continuance of favorable weather. But an ominous sound spoils the prospect. A deep low roar issuing from the otherwise calm stretch of water warns the listener that the brightness is not to last. The sun may set in a cloudless sky, yet rain and probably stormy weather are sure to follow, for that sound is one which in this neighborhood never deceives. A stranger might say, "Fair Weather," but one acquainted with the place knows that there are storms approaching.

The greater part of our passage for to-day gives us a picture of prosperity. After days of war and tumult peace has come to the kingdom of Israel. Omri is king. And Omri is apparently all his life a successful man.

Where do we first see him? At the head of the Israelite army, which is besieging Gibeon, to

recover it from the Philistines. Josh. 19. 44. Suddenly the news arrives that the king is murdered and the murderer has usurped the throne. At once the army decides on making Omri king, and in a short time Zimri is vanquished, the leader set up as a rival to Omri is likewise overcome, and the latter remains in sole possession. By and by he looks about for another residence, and fixes on the finest situation in the whole land, and purchases the hill of Samaria, the "crown of pride," the place of "glorious beauty" (Isa. 28. 1, 3), and there builds his palace and city. Twelve years he reigns over Israel, in indisputed possession, strong and prosperous. Ver. 27. That is one part of the picture.

But is there nothing else? Whoever it was that wrote the records of that time was aware of a deep and ominous sound which, in spite of outward prosperity, was the presage of coming woe: "Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord." It is true we read of no judgment overtaking him. He is suffered to retain the kingdom till his death. But what then? Was there a peaceful committing of the soul to God—a bright hope for the future—a memory held in honor? Look at Psa. 73. 17-19, and see the end of the wicked. What was all Omri's prosperity worth when he closed his eyes in death?

But his son Ahab succeeded to the throne without opposition, and soon there was a heathen queen in Israel, a temple built for Baal the sun-god, and a grove for idolatrous worship—all this, for a time, with impunity. But the storm was ready to fall. If the generally received interpretation of ver. 84 is correct the outburst came upon an individual, the man who dared to brave the curse of Jehovah, and rebuild the walls of Jericho. Josh. 6. 26. Such an act of audacious rebellion could only have been the outcome of long years of idolatry, during which men learned to say: "How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?" Psa. 73. 11. Then followed the years of famine and distress (chap. 17. 1, etc.), and eventually the terrible fate of Ahab and all his house. Chap. 22. 34-38; 9. 24, etc.; 10. 6, 7.

1. *The hollowness of prosperity without godliness.* It is thought a fine thing to be successful. No doubt many looked up with admiration to Omri, who won and kept the kingdom of Israel. They would admire "his might which he showed." And others would look at his fine palace on the hill of Samaria, and perhaps envy him his splendor and luxury. Just so men now admire the smart, clever fellow who makes his way in the world. The man who acquires wealth and station is nearly sure to gain a good deal of respect with them. But suppose he has used underhand means to get on, taken advantage of his neighbor, thought only of himself, neglected the commands of God, what does the Bible say of his way? It is an abomination to the Lord (Golden Text). Men may admire it; God hates it. Men may praise it; God condemns it. Would any boy or girl seriously care to change places with the man or woman (Jezebel must have been a bright, clever, successful woman) whose way is abominable to the God who rules on high?

Would such prosperity be worth having if the Judge and Disposer of all frowns upon it?

2. *The certainty of God's judgment on the ungodly.* But Omri escaped all visible punishment? Yes; so far as we know. But the most dreadful judgment of all is to be let alone (Hos. 4. 17), allowed to go until the storm bursts. And if a man goes on till death, see what comes after. Heb. 9. 27. Of Ahab we shall yet hear more. Of Hiel we have heard already. Look at 1 Tim. 5. 24. Is it safe to go on in the dangerous path because the blow is withheld for a time?

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

Omri and Ahab. 1 Kings 16. 23-34.

1. The "Golden Text" of to-day's lesson is the eternal mind of God toward unrighteousness. Isa. 14. 19; 57. 20, 21; Ezek. 2. 6; Matt. 7. 26, 27; 23. 33; Luke 6. 43; Deut. 25. 10; Prov. 6. 16-19; Jer. 16. 18; Rev. 18. 5.

2. The kings of God's chosen people should have ruled in righteousness, for, doubtless, they have access to such instructions as Psa. 2. 10-12; 33. 16; Dent. 17. 18-20; 1 Kings 2. 3; 2 Sam. 23. 3; Prov. 8. 15; 14. 35; 16. 10, 12, 13; 17. 7; 25. 2; 28. 16; 29. 14; 31. 3, 5, 8, 9.

3. The parallel histories of Judah and Israel, governed as these kingdoms were sometimes by evil and sometimes by good monarchs, well illustrate the general inspiration that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." Isa. 1. 3-5, 16; 5. 4-7; Jer. 6. 12, 13; 2 Chron. 21. 12, 13; Lev. 18. 25; Ezek. 14. 11; 20. 11-13; Matt. 11. 21-24; Jonah 3. 10; Judges 10. 15, 16.

4. Sin, which is being in character and doing in conduct as God forbids in his word and in the constitution of the soul, has ruined our poor race. Would that the fatal malady had not spread beyond the kings of divided Israel! 1 Kings 8. 46; Job 11. 14; 15. 14; Psa. 51. 5; 90. 8; Isa. 1. 18; Jer. 44. 4, 11; Amos 3. 2; Ezek. 16. 52; Num. 32. 23.

5. Omri was wise in locating his capital. The site of Samaria was in some respects better than that of Jerusalem, its rival. Read its sad history; note the fruit of sin. 1 Kings 16. 32, 33, with 2 Kings 10. 18-28; 20; 22. 39; Isa. 9. 9; Ezek. 16. 46-55; 2 Kings 6. 24; 7. 1-20; 17. 3-6; Hosea 10. 5-7.

6. "For the statutes of Omri are kept" (Micah 6. 16), explains the hitherto unprecedented enormity of this ruler's sin, ver. 25. Whose statutes should be kept? Deut. 17. 18; 27. 26; Josh. 8. 34; Neh. 8; 2 Kings 23. 3; Gal. 3. 10; James 2. 10; Psa. 119. 14; 1 Cor. 7. 19; Mal. 4. 4.

7. "Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord." Perhaps he pleased his subjects. Omniscience is man's critic, ver. 25. Psa. 139. 1-6, 23; Prov. 5. 21; 17. 3; 1 Chron. 28. 9; Jer. 17. 10; Rom. 8. 27; Psa. 7. 9; 44. 21; Josh. 24. 19; Heb. 12. 22.

8. It was Elijah, the eminent prophet of God, that made the era of Ahab's reign memorable. 1 Kings 17-19; 21; 2 Kings 1; 2; 2 Chron. 21. 12-19; Luke 9. 28-35; Mal. 4. 5, 6; Matt. 17. 10-13.

9. God would have us familiar with Baal, whose worship won the heart of Ahab, and so he has recorded. Judges 6. 25-32; 2 Kings 10. 18-28; Jer. 50. 2; 32. 29; 2 Kings 23. 12; Num. 25. 3; Judges 2. 13; 8. 33; Hosea 9. 10; 1 Sam. 7. 4.

10. Men, and especially men in high position, cannot sin un influentially. Sin begets sin. Note this power of bad example. Prov. 2. 12; 1. 10; 4. 14; 19. 27; 1 Cor.

15. 33; Exod. 34. 12; Psa. 119. 115; Eph. 5. 7; Rom. 1. 32; Phil. 2. 5.

Lessons:

1. Omri sinned worse than any of his kingly predecessors. Man's sinning power strengthens by use, ver. 25.

2. The tendency in sinning, as in many other things, is not to imitation, but to originality, and, if possible, pre-eminence.

3. Men who sin, sin with the heart. God only can read the heart, ver. 25.

4. The anger of passion is sinful, but the anger of indignation against sin is lawful, ver. 26.

5. The sinning son imitating the sinning father is able to exceed him by the weight of his originality as a transgressor.

6. Ahab's peculiar guilt consisted in his choice of temptation. He actually married it! v. 31.

7. Man worships in the line of his material outlay. His supreme love is very expensive. Gladly he pays the cost of his real God.

8. Men verbally confess supreme affections—talk of their God.

9. All who indulge in Astarte, or licentiousness, in reality defy it, ver. 33.

10. Disobedience is idolatry. The rebuilding of Jericho proved that God had been forgotten. His prohibition was disregarded.

Herean Methods

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Find in this lesson *three persons*, and the wicked conduct related of each.... Find here *three places*, and a fact about each.... Find three kinds of buildings named in this lesson—who built them, and for what purpose.... An outline may be drawn, showing Tirzah, Samaria, Zidon, Beth-el, Jericho.... Show how this lesson presents the results of sin. (See Thoughts for Young People).... The *dangers* pointed out in this lesson: 1.) Worldly prosperity apart from God's service; 2.) Progress in evil-doing; 3.) Association with the wicked, especially in marriage; 4.) Contempt for God's word, and neglect of his warnings.... ILLUSTRATION. [From the *Sunday-School Times*, 1877.] "How God looks at it is the true test of conduct. College boys often think a thing is right because 'all the fellows do it.' They will even break their written promise to the faculty, or act a lie in recitation, or steal examination papers, or join in a class rebellion, without a twinge of conscience. Many a merchant or politician is sure there is no harm in a common mode of cheating, since no one in his business thinks it improper. There are very few people who do not count a kind or a place of amusement, a habit of life, or a style of speech, fairly correct when 'every body' says it is so. But, after all, if a thing is 'evil in the sight of the Lord,' no popular verdict can make it any thing else than evil at any time."—*Trumbull*.

References. FREEMAN, Ver. 33: *Asherah*, "grove," 222. Ver. 34: "Building" of Jericho, 366.

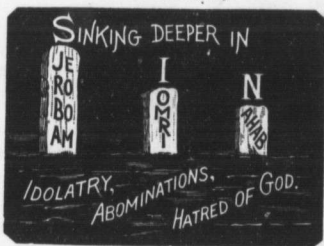
Lesson Word-Pictures.

There is a bustle among the carpenters and masons. The stones are coming together. The timbers are interlocking. The walls are rising. The new king, Omri, is building Samaria. Does he keep clear of idolatry, or does he encourage the practices that will be like millstones around the nation's neck, sinking it in depths of idolatry? And after Omri, behold a son like the father, even Ahab. Like the husband will be the wife. Who

shall reign with Ahab? One day there is the clatter of hoofs outside Samaria's gates. What a braying and neighing! What a great procession of horses, of asses, of camels, all from the sea-coast. And who owns the dark, evil eyes that peep out from that veil—some woman that is the imperial center of this retinue, the object for which it was gathered? She is loaded with jewels, but harder than her jewels is her hard face, and her heart is harder yet. The stout gates of Samaria open. The horses, the asses, the camels, the jeweled woman, all enter. The people shout. But O, at the entry of what a curse do the people lift up their stormy welcome! Did they see the idolatrous images she may have brought from Zidon? If she left these behind, she brought an idolatrous heart. An admitted evil worse than the plague. Did she bring an idolater's heart? Ahab has it also. It is like unto like. Do the people realize what a vindictive, blood-craving spirit, incarnate in that woman, has come to Samaria? Ahab is vindictive also. It is like meeting like. Ahab and Jezebel, they stand before their idols. They kiss their hands to the images. They make their offerings. The flames crackle and flare and smoke, while the idols grin senselessly at this impious display.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. The blackboard illustrates the downward tendency of sin. The three kings—Jeroboam, Omri, and Ahab—are represented by three pillars sinking in the mire of sin. In drawing them you can place a crown on each one. The longer that one remains in sin the deeper he sinks. You can leave off the sentence at the top, and when you review the lesson, first write the word KING, and then write the name, or names, immediately following. After speaking of their lives, write SIN just before the word king, and you will have it read, *Sinking Jeroboam*, etc.

APPLICATION. The downward tendency of sin, now as well as then.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *How Sin Spreads.*

INTRODUCTORY. Divide the blackboard into two parts, one much larger than the other. In the smaller make two small triangles, in the other ten. Thus recall the division of the kingdom. Write "Judah" over one, "Israel" over the other. Get from class names of the first kings. Recall Rehoboam's pride and folly. Recall what children know of Jeroboam, his distrust of God, which led to the worship of the golden calves. Tell that fifty years had passed since these kings began to

reign. There had been other kings, some good, some bad. Tell that in the kingdom of Judah there had been good kings since the time of Rehoboam and his wicked son, who had led the people back to the Lord. But in Israel the kings had grown worse and worse. Show that evil grows very fast.

OMRI.



Use blackboard symbol. Omri was now king of Israel. He wore a crown, and rich robes. He was general of a great army. He built a great city named Samaria. He did many things that seemed wise and great in the eyes of men. Tell of the Moabite stone found in 1868 by a missionary, which tells about Omri's splendor and power. But all this time, while Omri thought himself so great, and men talked about his riches and wisdom, there was a chain which bound him fast in the service of a cruel master. God saw this chain, though men did not. "In the eyes of the Lord" Omri was bound with the chain of sin. Teach that no evil act is hidden from God's sight, and that when people think we are very good we may all the time be in Satan's chains. Make

large links of a chain on the board, and let children name them—Pride, Untruth, Self-will, etc. Show how the chain grows stronger with every new link added, and teach that only Jesus can break the chain.

AHAB.

Ask if children think that when Omri died his bad influence died with him. His son Ahab had learned to be wicked from his father. Teach that no one can keep evil shut up in his own heart. It will come out and spread. A little boy built a boufire in a meadow of dry grass. He thought he could keep it in a small place, but it spread over the whole field. So sin spreads. Tell how Ahab encouraged the people in idolatry by marrying a heathen wife. Ahab was worse than his father Omri. He married a bad woman, and she led him farther into evil ways than he had gone before. Talk about evil companions, and warn children not to associate with profane, untruthful playmates. Call for Golden Text, and teach that it is not much matter what men think, but we should care a great deal what God thinks of us. Warn against small beginnings of sin. Jeroboam thought the worship of the calves a small thing. Be careful not to let in bad thoughts, and remember only Jesus can keep them out.

B. C. 910.]

LESSON IV. ELIJAH THE TISHBITE.

[July 26.



1 Kings 17. 1-16. [Commit to memory verses 5-9.]
1 And E-l'jah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gil'e-ad, said unto A'hah, As the LORD God of I's-ra-el liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.
2 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,
3 Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cher'ith, that is before Jor'dan.

4 And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

5 So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cher'ith, that is before Jor'dan.
6 And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

7 And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.

8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,
9 Arise, get thee to Zar'e-phath, which belongeth to Zi-don, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

In the hour when the cause of God seemed at its lowest ebb, when the worst of kings was on the throne, and the bitterest foe of Jehovah sat as queen beside him, when Baal was in full power, and the ministers of God were persecuted to the death, in that hour arose the mightiest of all the Old Testament prophets—Elijah the Tishbite. We know nothing of his family, his ancestry, or his training, except that he had grown up in the free air of Gilead, and afar from the corrupting influence of the court. He came to stand as uncompromisingly for Jehovah as Jezebel stood for Baal, to match by his wings evil-doers, bearing comfort and support to the widow of Zar'e-phath, and every-where he appears as the man of fellowship with God, of faith, and of obedience.

General Statement.

the king, his rough mantle and un-horn hair marking a contrast with the jeweled and robed courtiers. His message is brief and terrible: no good tidings of mercy, but the warning of wrath. He does not even call to repentance, nor invite to faith. He simply forewarns of coming doom, and then stalks forth from the royal presence as suddenly as he came. It is as if a bolt of lightning had shot forth from the sky, and then folded itself away, so suddenly did the rough prophet drop out of sight. We see him again communing with God by the brook, feeding upon the slender store brought by his winged evil-doers, bearing comfort and support to the widow of Zar'e-phath, and every-where he appears as the man of fellowship with God, of faith, and of obedience.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 1. Elij'ah. His name means "Jehovah is my God," and the name expressed his character, which was uncompromising and radical in fidelity to the God of Israel. We know very little of his history and nothing of his ancestry. (1) Not "who" a man is, but

"what" he is, is the important question. The Tishbite. Perhaps indicating that he was a native of a place called Tishbi or Tishbeh, of which nothing is known. Gilead. The country on the east of the Jordan, a lofty table-land stretching to the Syrian desert, the home of

a rough, uncultivated people. It is noteworthy that the greatest prophets of the past, and the greatest preachers of the present, began life in the free air of the country. **Said unto Ahab.** For once the wicked king heard the voice of a man, and not of flattering courtiers. **As he heard of Israel liveth.** His mission was to proclaim Jehovah as against Baal, a living God against dead idols. **Behove whom I stand.** He stood before God as his servant, and in an age of persecution made a bold confession. (2) **Why should any follower of the living God be ashamed to own his service?** There shall not be dew or rain. Perhaps absolutely none, for then the country would become a desert; but a drought sufficient to convince king and people that it came from the hand of God. Baal was the god of nature, and such a test would show his utter impotence. **But according to my word.** This would prove that he spoke by a divine authority. "How big doth he speak when he speaks in God's name." (3) **See in this the fidelity, courage, faith, and obedience of God's prophet.**

2. The word of the Lord. How it came no one knew; perhaps by an inward impression which he recognized as divine. **Saying.** The object of the command was to protect him from the rage of Ahab, who would try to seize him, either to put him to death or to compel him to remove the curse from the land.

3. Turn thee eastward. From Samaria, where he had met the king. **Hide thyself.** (4) **There are times when God's servants must stand, and times when they may fly.** **The brook Cherith.** An unknown torrent running into the river Jordan from the mountain region. It has been supposed by some to be the *Wady Kelt*, near Jericho.

4. Thou shalt drink of the brook. Perhaps this brook would be kept running longer than others to supply his needs. **I have commanded the ravens.** Foul birds of prey were to be transformed in their nature and bring food to God's servant. Some would change the Hebrew *orebin* into *arabim*, "Arabians," and say that he was fed by wandering Arabs; but if we believe in miracles at all, why not accept the plain statement of Scripture? (5) **How precisely God directs the ways of the servant who trusts him.**

5, 6. So he went and did. Reason would have urged a thousand arguments against obedience, but faith "went and did." **Dwelt by the brook.** A lonely place, but Elijah by the brook, alone with God, was happier than Ahab in his palace with a troubled conscience. (6) **There are times for patient waiting as well as for active working.** **The ravens brought him.** Each day came food for the day, but none for tomorrow. (7) **From hand to mouth** is a comfortable way to live, if it be from the hand of God to the mouth of his child.

7. After a while. The time is indefinite, but some have supposed it to have been about a year. **The brook dried up.** Imagine how Elijah's faith was tested as he saw the rivulet gradually lessening in volume. (8) **May it be ours to dwell by the river of life which never runs dry!** **Because there had been no rain.** So that the fact which on one hand tried his trust was on the other a proof of his prophetic inspiration.

8, 9. The word of the Lord. It came to him from above; it comes to us from the written word; and ours is the more sure word of prophecy. **Get thee to Zarephath.** An ancient city, midway between Tyre and Sidon, now called *Surfend*. **Belongeth to Zidon.** Zidon, on the sea-coast, was the very headquarters of Baal-worship, and the home of Jezebel. A strange command: "as if one living from a lion was directed to seek refuge in a lion's den."—*Guthrie*. It was a journey through drought-smitten Israel, fraught with dangers, to a place more dangerous still. (9) **God's commands are not to be measured by worldly standards of expediency.** **Dwell there.** See how right under Baal's shadow God was raising up and preserving Israel's destroyer! (10) **God loves to show how impotent are human plots against his will.** **A widow woman.** The

condition of widows in the East is helpless in the extreme; so that to receive support from such a source was another trial to Elijah's faith. But then, Ahab would never search for the prophet in such quarters. **To sustain thee.** Yet in so doing she was herself sustained and blessed. (11) **They who contribute to God's cause receive more than they give.**

10. He arose and went. Notice throughout Elijah's history the promptness with which he obeyed the commands of God's Spirit. **The gate of the city.** An old tradition locates the very spot of this meeting south of the city. **The widow woman was there.** An unpropitious prospect, not encouraging to the fleshly nature, a support from a starving widow! "It was a pillar leaning his whole weight on a support as frail as a spider's web."—*Guthrie*. But Elijah knew that the thread of God's purpose, how frail soever it seems, is a cable that human strength can never break. **A little water.** He was thirsty from his journey; she was finished with hunger; "they shall do each other good, those two."—*E. F. Hood*. Two atoms with omnipotence behind them are mightier than two kingdoms in Baal's name.

11. She was going. In her own need she was mindful of another's need, and was ready to help to the limit of her power. **A morsel of bread.** It was not a selfish request, but was made under divine direction, to show the widow's want and awaken her faith. Perhaps, also, Elijah was not quite sure whether she was the one to whom God had directed him, and spoke to her as a test.

12. As the Lord thy God liveth. Her answer showed that she knew Jehovah, the God of Israel, and recognized Elijah as a worshiper, if not already as a prophet. **I have not a cake.** The word indicates "a round cake, baked in the ashes." **A handful of meal.** The meal was probably of barley, the common food of the lower classes. **In a barrel.** Rather, "in a jar," a long vessel of clay, such as is still seen in the East. **A little oil.** Olive oil in those lands takes the place of butter and lard, and is universally used in cooking. **In a cruse.** Rather, "a bottle;" though the form of the vessels used in the East varies greatly. **Gathering two sticks.** That is, "a few sticks, a handful." **Dress it.** In the East there is very little fuel used, and the cooking is exceedingly plain. **Eat it and die.** The prophet finds need instead of support; and must give before he can receive. Perhaps this was one lesson that he was to learn.

13. Elijah said. Elijah knew his God; he remembered Cherith and the ravens; he recalled the mamma in the wilderness, and he spoke to strengthen her faith. **Fear not.** How often we find this little sentence of encouragement in the word! **Make me . . . first.** This was not from a selfish desire for his own preservation, for he who had been fed by the ravens knew that God could and would care for him. He spoke by inspiration, to test and to strengthen the widow's faith. **Thy son.** There is an ancient tradition that this boy, brought back from death by the prophet's prayer, afterward became his servant, and was the prophet Jona.

14. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel. He was not sleeping, though he seemed to be; he was living, and at hand to verify the word of his messenger. **Meal shall not waste.** There was more than one lesson in this miracle; it showed the reward of faith, the care of God over his own, and it was a living picture of God's cause, slender and feeble, yet supported by divine power through the days of trial.

15, 16. She went and did. Her faith was as mighty as his, and nerved her to surrender her all at the summons of a stranger. Every line of her character as here drawn is fine and noble. (12) **May we be as ready to obey God's call, and give to his cause?** **Her house.** Possibly there were others in that household. **Eat many days.** It may have been two years, or even more. What a large reward for one act of faith! **Meal wasted not.** Matthew Henry remarks: "The meal and the oil multiplied, not in the hoarding, but in the spending."

HOME READINGS.

- M. Elijah the Tishbite. 1 Kings 17. 1-16.
 W. The miracle of Elshin. 1 Kings 17. 17-24.
 W. The prayer of faith. James 5. 13-20.
 W. Christ's words about Elijah. Luke 4. 16-31.
 F. The godly seer. Psa. 91. 1-16.
 S. Obedience of Abram. Gen. 12. 1-9.
 S. Promises to the obedient. Isa. 1. 10-30.

GOLDEN TEXT.

So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord. 1 Kings 17. 5.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 51, Dominion Hymnal.

Saviour, while my heart is tender,
 I would yield that heart to thee;
 All my powers to thee surrender,
 Thine, and only thine to be.

No. 91, Dominion Hymnal.

Hark! the voice of Jesus calling,
"Who will go and work to-day?"

No. 90, Dominion Hymnal.

There is work to do for Jesus,
Yes, a glorious work to do.

TIME.—B. C. 910-907.

PLACES.—1. Gilead, the land east of the Jordan;
2. Samaria, the capital of Israel; 3. The brook Cherith,
near Jericho; 4. Zarephath, a Phœnician village near
Zidon.

RULERS.—Ahab, seventh King of Israel; Jehoshaphat,
fourth King of Judah; Ben-hadad II., King of Damas-
cus and Syria; Yulnirari II., King of Assyria.
Athens was a republic, and Rome not yet founded.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION—God's care over his people.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. Before the King, v. 1.
From what part of the country did Elijah come?
What did he say to Ahab?
Why was the drought predicted?
When was it to end?
2. By the Brook, v. 2-7.
What did God say to the prophet?
Where did he go?
How did he obtain food and drink?
3. In the City, v. 8-16.
What occurred when the brook dried up?
Where did God command him to go?
How was he to be sustained there?
What did he say to the widow?
What was her reply?
What was his request and promise?
How did she show her faith?
What miracle sustained them all in the famine?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That wickedness is the cause of calamity?
2. That God provides for his children?
3. That faith receives reward?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Before the King, v. 1.
What visitor had Ahab?
Where did this prophet live?
What message did he bring?
2. By the Brook, v. 2-7.
Where was the prophet directed to go?
Where was he to hide himself?
What did Elijah do?
How was he fed?
What caused the brook to dry up?
3. In the City, v. 8-16.
To what city was he next directed?
By what other name was it called? Luke 4. 26.
Whom did he find at Zarephath?
What request did the prophet make?
What favor did he ask?
What was the widow's reply?
What did Elijah urge?
What promise did he make?
In whose name?
What followed the woman's obedience?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we see—

1. God's providing care?
2. Faith in God tested?
3. Faith in God rewarded?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- What is the first we know of the prophet Elijah?
He appeared to Ahab with a message from God.
What was the message? As sure as the Lord God
of Israel lives, there shall not be dew nor rain until
I call for it.
Why did God send such a message? He wanted to
bring them from their great wickedness back to him.

Where did God bid Elijah go as soon as he had
spoken? To the brook Cherith, by the river Jor-
dan. [Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT.]

How did he live there? The ravens brought him
bread and meat in the morning and evening, and
he drank of the brook.

Where did God send him after the brook dried up?
To a village named Zarephath, far to the north.

At the gate of the city whom did he see? A poor
woman gathering sticks to make a fire.

What did Elijah say to her? "Will you please give
me a cup of water, and a little piece of bread?"

What did she answer? "I've not a bit of bread,
and only a handful of meal and a little oil."

What was she going to do? Make a little cake for
herself and son, then die, because she had no more.

Then what did the good prophet tell her? "Fear
not; make me a little cake first, and after that
make one for thyself and son."

What had the Lord said? "The flour shall not
waste, nor the oil fail, until the rain cometh."

Did that poor woman have faith enough to obey?
He did; and for two years she, her son, and Elijah
lived on the flour and meal, and it failed not.

What happened to her boy while Elijah lived with
her? He died.

What did God give Elijah power to do? Raise him
to life again.

Words with Little People.

Perhaps some boy or girl who is studying this lesson
will say, "If God would only tell me what to do as plain
as he told Elijah 'all those things,' I would be glad to
do it." This little letter I am writing to you now is
speaking to you, although you cannot see my face or
hear my voice, is it not? God as surely speaks to you
in the blessed Bible. Every thing you ought to do you
can find there, and that you may understand it, he has
given you your parents and teachers to explain it. So
if you really want to obey, you can be as sure what he
wants you to do as Elijah was. Will you change John
2. 5, by putting me in place of you, and I will alter the *me*

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did Elijah tell Ahab there would be? A
drought.
2. What did the Lord say to Elijah? "Hide thy-
self by the brook Cherith."
3. How was Elijah fed while there? By ravens.
4. Who fed Elijah at Zarephath? A widow.
5. What supported Elijah, the widow, and her son
many days? A handful of meal and a little oil.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

22. Then what is the state of men who do not repent
of their sins, and obtain pardon?

All those who do not repent of their sins, and believe
in Christ as he is offered to us in the Gospel, must remain
for ever under the just sentence and condemnation of
God's holy law. Eph. ii. 3; Heb. ii. 3; x. 26.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Example of Elijah.

- I. AN EXAMPLE OF FIDELITY TO GOD.
The Lord God... before whom I stand. v. 1.
"Be thou faithful unto death." Rev. 2. 10.
"Be strong in the Lord." Eph. 6. 10.
- II. AN EXAMPLE OF BOLDNESS FOR GOD.
Said unto Ahab. v. 1.
"Be thou strong and very courageous." Josh. 1. 7.
"Cry aloud, spare not." Isa. 58. 1.
- III. AN EXAMPLE OF FAITH IN GOD'S WORD.
There shall not be dew nor rain. v. 1.
Thus saith the Lord. v. 14.
"Staggered not at the promise." Rom. 4. 20.
"Faith is... the evidence of things not seen."
Heb. 11. 1.
- IV. AN EXAMPLE OF COMMUNION WITH GOD.
The word of the Lord came unto him. v. 2.
"Endured as seeing... invisible," Heb. 11. 27.
"Secret of the Lord... them that fear him." Psa.
25. 14.

V. AN EXAMPLE OF Obedience to GOD.

Did according to the word. v. 5.

"By faith Abraham . . . obeyed." Heb. 11. 8.

"Do whatsoever I command you." John 15. 14.

VI. AN EXAMPLE OF TRUST in GOD'S CARE.

Dwelt by the brook Cherith. v. 5.

"Trust in the Lord and do good." Psa. 37. 3.

"The Lord preserveth the faithful." Psa. 31. 23.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Honors of God's Follower.

We see in Elijah a man who stood forth openly, avowedly, uncompromisingly, as a follower of God. He received for this great privileges, which we can have on the same terms.

1. There is the honor of insight into the divine purposes. He knew what others knew not, because, living in communion with God, the divine secret was with him. v. 1.

2. There is the honor of divine guidance. Every step was under God's direction, whether to Samaria, Cherith, or Zarephath, v. 2, 8, 14.

3. There is the honor of divine care. God's child is safe, for his Father's arm is around him. While others famish, he has food, even though birds may bring it. v. 6.

4. There is the honor of becoming a blessing to others. Not only is his own life preserved, but he becomes the means of preserving other lives. v. 13-16.

English Teacher's Notes.

I do not know whether cricket is as common a game in America as it is in England, but if not there is doubtless some other game which takes its place and which will serve as well in illustration. A cricket-field, to any one entirely ignorant of the game, presents a scene of curious confusion. Bats are raised and lowered, balls are pitched about, some are running as if for their lives, some standing on the alert as if watching for a foe, movements are begun and suddenly withdrawn again. A stranger might say: "Whatever are these boys about?" But if he inquires he will find they are acting according to rule—a strict, unbending rule—the law of the game. This accounts for their motions, slow, swift, sudden, or wary. This accounts for the place that each occupies, and the place to which each returns after some sudden departure. All is done according to rule. And not only play, but work also, requires to be done according to rule. Without some standard of reference even the common life of mankind would go on in a strange, haphazard way. Each place and nation has its rule or custom according to which the business, the pleasure, the life, goes on.

But there is a rule or measure laid down for us in the Golden Text which is meant for every place, nation, age, or rank, and which is equally suitable to all: "according to the word of the Lord." And as, in the passage for reading, these words occur twice over, so we get in the passage a twofold application of them.

First we see the word of the Lord as a rule. Here is a man who is ordering his conduct by it—Elijah the Tishbite. For years the word of the Lord has

been cast off by the rulers and by the nation as a whole. And, as the Lord's servant, Elijah has stepped boldly forth and announced the Lord's judgment upon the land. This very judgment threatens and endangers himself. How is he to be supported during the famine? And how is he to escape the wrath of the king? One would think the safest place for him was out of the country altogether. In Judah, surely, he might have found both the shelter and sustenance.

But instead of that, where does he go? First down to the lowly brookside on the farther bank of Jordan, to pass his days in solitary concealment. Later on to "Zarephath which belongeth to Zidon," actually into the country of Jezebel, the heathen queen of Israel, the slayer of the Lord's prophets. And not to some home of plenty, but to the dwelling of a poor widow, reduced as it seemed to her very last meal.

This appears strange conduct. What is the reason of it? It is no haphazard course. It is ordered by a strict principle. Elijah went and did "according to the word of the Lord," a rule altogether unpopular and out of fashion at the time.

If the matter were judged according to human calculations we should say that Elijah was in danger in both these places. A whole year, probably, he was on Israelitish ground, and another year he was in a heathen land, the country of his bitterest enemy. Quite within the reach of his foes, we should have concluded. And within the reach, also, of starvation, either in the lonely wilds near the Jordan or as a suppliant for food in a strange city.

But we have to look at the word of the Lord as a standard of reckoning. There had been commands given to others as well as to Elijah: "I have commanded the ravens to feed thee." "I have commanded a widow woman to sustain thee." Very incapable were both the ravens and the widow to perform the task of themselves, but in this matter they were the Lord's stewards, and were to draw from his resources. And they were not only incapable of themselves, but they were unconscious. When the hungry birds secured more than enough food to supply their own need in order that Elijah might be fed, they did not know whose word they were fulfilling. Nor did the widow know when she received the stranger who came to her door to what high honor she had been appointed. But God's word to Elijah could not be broken. "Go and hide thyself," said Jehovah to him, and he remained undiscovered by his enemies. "I have commanded," etc., again said the Lord, and day by day the bread and meat was brought to the brookside, and day by day the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil held out, sufficing for the wants of the prophet, of his hostess, and of her child, "according to the word of the Lord."

That standard of reckoning still holds good. The Lord's stewards, conscious or unconscious, still have orders to sustain every trusting servant who may be in need. "I have nothing wherewith to

procure my next meal, and no power to get any thing," such a one might say. "Then you'll starve," would be the correct answer according to human reckoning. But faith's answer runs thus: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord." Deut. 8. 3.

But he that would enjoy the benefit of this standard of reckoning must first take it as his rule of life. Order your life "according to the word of the Lord," and according to that word you shall not lack any good thing. *Pea.* 34. 10; 84. 11. See what the psalmist thought of it: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." *Psa.* 119. 9. And he prays that according to that word he may be quickened, strengthened, comforted, visited by mercies (vers. 25, 28, 41, 77, 107, 154); and he is able gratefully and triumphantly to declare: "Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word." *Vcr.* 65. If you walk by this rule men may think your conduct strange, because they do not understand its hidden law. No matter; you will have the full benefit of it as the standard of reckoning.

Bible Reading Lesson Analysis.

Elijah the Tishbite. 1 Kings 17. 1-16.

1. "So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord." The duty, wisdom, and beauty of obedience, ver. 5. *Deut.* 4. 35; 13. 4; 1 *Sam.* 15. 22; 2 *Chron.* 34. 30. 31; *Isa.* 42. 24; *Jer.* 7. 23; *Acts.* 5. 29; 2 *Cor.* 10. 5; 1 *Pet.* 1. 1-14; *Psa.* 103. 30.

2. Elijah's character was sublimely courageous, faithful, determined, self-sacrificing, and zealous for God. 1 *Kings* 17. 1; 21. 19; 2 *Kings* 9. 36; 1. 3. 16; 1 *Kings* 18. 18; *Luke* 9. 54; 2 *Chron.* 21. 12-15; 1 *Kings* 19; *Rom.* 12. 2; 1 *Kings* 18. 15; 19. 10.

3. Elijah, with great boldness and suddenness, introduced himself to Ahab, and to mankind, in a prophetic salutation—an explanation of the point he made, ver. 1. *Gen.* 27. 28; *Deut.* 28. 22, 23; 33. 13. 28; *Psa.* 110. 3; 133. 3; *Prov.* 19. 12; 2 *Sam.* 1. 21; *Jer.* 14; *Zech.* 14. 17; *James* 5. 17.

4. A miracle is the will of God executed by him in an unusual way, that is all, ver. 6. *Exod.* 4. 6, 7; 17. 11-13; *Matt.* 8. 14, 15; 21. 19; *John* 3. 2; 7. 31; 21. 6; *Acts* 3. 12; 14. 3; 15. 12.

5. God does not exempt his own people from disciplinary severities in the present life, vers. 3, 7. *Exod.* 15. 23-25; *Deut.* 8. 2; *Ezra* 9. 13; *Job* 23. 10; *Psa.* 23. 4; 65. 10; *Jer.* 24. 5, 6; *Lam.* 3. 33; *Rom.* 5. 3; 1 *Pet.* 4. 13, 14.

6. Be reimpressed with the timeliness and munificence of God's promises, ver. 4. *Gen.* 3. 15; 9. 8, 9; 13. 14, 15; 26. 2-4; 28. 13; 2 *Sam.* 7. 11; *Psa.* 91; *Exod.* 23. 25; 1 *Kings* 8. 56; *Jer.* 33. 14; 2 *Pet.* 1. 4.

7. Other demands made by God upon human faith, ver. 13. *Matt.* 14. 29; 21. 19, 20; *Mark* 1. 15; 11. 23; *John* 14. 1; *Acts* 20. 21; 24. 14; 25. 27; 1 *Tim.* 1. 18, 19; *Heb.* 11. 13.

8. God's objects in departing from his usual order for what we call the "miraculous," v. 14. *Deut.* 11. 1-3; *Isa.* 29. 14; *Exod.* 4. 1-5; *Matt.* 11. 4-6; *Mark* 16. 20; *John* 5. 36; 7. 31; 11. 4; 20. 30; *Heb.* 2. 4.

9. We have our part to do before God will, or, better,

before God can, do his part. God dispenses his favors on conditions, ver. 15. *Nun.* 21. 8, 9; *Josh.* 6. 6-20; 2 *Kings* 5. 10, 14; *Mark* 16. 16; *Acts* 2. 38; 3. 19; 11. 21; 18. 9, 10; 28. 5; 2 *Thess.* 2. 13.

10. We must give of our abundance, or of our penny, would we be personally enriched by God, vers. 15, 16. *Lev.* 25. 35; *Deut.* 16. 10, 17; *Isa.* 58. 7; 1 *Cor.* 13. 3; 16. 2; 2 *Cor.* 8. 9; 9. 7; *Rom.* 12. 13; *Heb.* 6. 10; 13. 10; *James* 2. 14-16.

Lessons:

1. Prosperity, wealth, power, are the natural, as well as gracious, fruits of righteousness.

2. A righteous people cannot long remain poor.

3. Conscientiousness should always be as bold in denunciation of sin as is consistent with wisdom, or tact, ver. 1.

4. Our work, let us not for a moment forget, is not to announce, as prophets, God's will, but, as evangelists, to labor for the salvation of redeemed sinners.

5. Men are able to know that it is God when they are addressed by him, ver. 2.

6. To-day God usually, but, possibly, not always, speaks to men in the Scriptures, ver. 2.

7. God's commands in his word are as explicit, and as severe, as when addressed to men directly, ver. 3.

8. God in "natural law" is as hard to explain as God in a miracle. Ultimate facts are without a philosophy, ver. 4.

9. It is God's commands we are to obey. We all know his commandments when we see them, they reveal their origin, ver. 3.

10. God afflicts sinners to punish them; he afflicts his own people to train them, ver. 7.

11. God can speak to man, ver. 8.

12. God has small as well as great purposes, ver. 9.

13. It is God under another name that changes the handful of seed into the harvest in the order of nature; why think it so strange that he should do the same thing with the handful of meal in the order of the miraculous? ver. 14.

14. We must use our powers would we have them multiply, ver. 15.

15. Constant and large expenditures, as God commands, is the wisest way of economizing and investing, ver. 16.

Berean Methods.

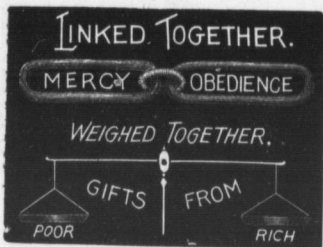
Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Begin with a picture of the times when Elijah appeared: Baal-worship, Ahab, Jezebel, Hiel (last lesson), persecution (1 *Kings* 18. 4), few worshippers of God, altars destroyed, etc. . . . Next the reformer, his coming, acts, traits of character, etc. . . . Draw a map, and trace Elijah's journeys: 1.) Gilead to Samaria, and the meeting with King Ahab, 2.) Samaria to Cherith, near Jericho, and the lessons of faith and God's care. "Cherith to Zarephath, and the meeting with the widow. . . . The two aspects of the lesson are the human and divine, one the traits of character shown by Elijah (see Analytical and Biblical Outline); the other, the privileges which he enjoyed as a follower of God (see Thoughts for Young People). . . . Another subject in the lesson is the widow of Zarephath, showing: 1.) Maternal love; 2.) Faith in God; 3.) Self-denial; 4.) Generous giving; 5.) The rewards which she enjoyed.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 10: Sticks for fuel, 307. Ver. 12: The "barrel," 308; The "cruse," 306; "Two sticks," 678. Ver. 13: Bread-making, 11.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. This is a double illustration, one being entirely separate from the other, but both are intended to be placed at once on the board. The first one illustrates the Golden Text, and shows that the mercy of God and the obedience of Elijah were linked together. If Elijah had disobeyed God, and had no faith, God's merciful plans on his behalf could not have been carried out. We should link our faith with divine mercy, and he that commanded the ravens to feed the prophet will take care of us. The second illustration touches on that part of the lesson where the poor widow gave to Elijah all the food she possessed. It was not much, but God weighs the gifts of the rich and the poor together, and the little of the needy one balances the greater gift of the rich.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Who is this before the king? Some sturdy man, alone, in simple prophet's garb, startling a wicked king by a message—a prophecy of drought—from the Lord God of Israel. Now flee, Elijah! There is a brazen sky overhead, but more cruel than any fiery heavens is the wrath of the king. Flee, flee! There is a brook to give thee drink and a cave to give thee shelter, but both are "before Jordan." He reaches them. He drinks of the tinkling stream of crystal, he lies down in the cool gray shade of the cave. But food, where is that? It may be morning. He has risen and gone to the brook, but where is breakfast? O that empty, hungry land! Elijah may have said, "Where is God's promise?" See, though. There are birds flying up the valley. They wheel above the prophet's head, open their beaks, and drop his breakfast. He may make it last for dinner. But what of supper? Birds again, flying up the valley, their wings making a tuft of black cloud on the sunset-glory in the west. They fly above the prophet's head, open their beaks and drop—his supper. Each day the raven-carriers come. The sky though grows hotter and dryer, the brook runs slower and feebler and thinner, and at last there is no music in the brook-channel. Now flee again, Elijah! From the wilderness, go to the homes of men. But where? To Israel's cities? No, to Zarephath, a city of strangers. He is nearing the city's gate. One might well have said, "A prince will come out to feed Elijah." Before the city-gate, a woman is hunting for sticks. Poor, starving soul, how feebly she moves! She bows and hunts, creeping about—but a stranger speaks! She looks up. "Water," does he ask for? She will bring it, but turns to hear him ask for—"bread?" How can she give it? Only one "handful of meal in a barrel" has she, and "a little oil in a cruse," and two mean

little sticks will cook this, and after those few mouthfuls there is nothing more. Starvation—death—next, for her and her child. The boy may be at the gate, with hungry, hollow eyes watching his mother. What does the stranger say? Feed him first, and God will not permit a wasting barrel and falling cruse? O faith that takes hold of God, makes its pitiful fire, cooks its scanty meal, gives to a stranger's hunger, and then looks into the barrel! Lo, it wastes not. And the cruse, it does not fail.

Primary and Intermediate.


BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Blessings of Obedience.* This lesson abounds in material for word-pictures. They can only be effectively drawn by teachers who have prepared themselves by thorough study, so that they seem to see the scene they would reproduce. We can only make children see what we ourselves see clearly. This is true, not only in bringing mental pictures before the eye, but also in conveying spiritual truth to the heart.

THE OBEDIENT PROPHET.

Describe Elijah, God's servant—tall, strong, wearing a girdle of skin around his loins and a mantle of sheepskin, and with long hair falling upon his shoulders. Tell how he was sent to Ahab, the worst king Israel had ever known. He came out of the wilderness in his rough dress, and with strong, plain speech, warned Ahab of the judgments of God. He told him that no rain or dew should fall for these years. How did Elijah know? God had told him so. Elijah prayed for Israel, and God sent him to them with a message? Was God unkind to punish Israel? No, a good father punishes his child who does wrong. Was it easy for Elijah to go to Ahab? No, but he was willing to obey God, even if he had to do hard things. If we want to be God's children, we must be obedient, as Elijah was.

THE OBEDIENT RAVENS.



Who made the birds? Talk about them, their ways, how God feeds them, teaches them to build their houses, to find their way from one part of the country to another, etc. Tell that when the drought came upon the land of Israel the Lord told Elijah where to go and hide. He knew that Ahab would be angry with the prophet and try to kill him. He went to a wild place, away from men and their dwelling-places. How should the prophet be fed? God always provides for his obedient children. Tell how he sent the ravens to feed Elijah. Could not God as well teach the birds to do this as to build their houses? etc. Yes, our God is the God of the birds too.

THE OBEDIENT WOMAN.

Tell where the Lord told Elijah to go next. The woman to whom he was sent was a widow with an only son. Talk about the famine. The rain did not fall and nothing could grow; so the people were starving. Elijah asked for the last bit of food the poor woman had. Why did she give it to him? Because she believed in God, and she knew that Elijah was his prophet. Teach that she showed her faith in God by giving him the last food she had, and that blessing came to her through her faith and obedience.

Talk about obedient children. God speaks to children as well as to prophets. The child who obeys him

will be taken care of as certainly as Elijah and the poor woman were. God cared so much about Elijah's obedience, that he sent birds to feed him. He will provide for all our wants in the same way. Let us obey him and follow him in all things.

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 AUG. 23. Elijah at Horeb. 1 Kings 19. 1-18.
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God Will Do It.

AFTER Dr. Morrison, the Nestor of missionaries to China, had paid his passage-money to the captain of the ship which was to take him to his chosen field, the rough seaman, with a sardonic grin, and in a sneering tone, said: "And so, Mr. Morrison, you really expect to make an impression on the idolatry of the great Chinese Empire?"

With impressive dignity, Morrison replied, "No, sir; I expect God will!"

This expectation has been honoured, as we know. And if the workers in the vast Sunday-school work, when challenged as to its bringing the youth of this generation to Christ, will learn to reply in the spirit of that great missionary, "We expect God will do it," that expectation will give nerve to their arms, and efficiency to their labours, and bring such a measure of the Spirit on their efforts as will crown them with success.

Yes, God will do it!—*S. S. Journal.*

An Invaluable Suggestion.

EDITOR *Christian Advocate*: A correspondent suggests in your last issue to insert a few questions and answers of our Catechism into the *International Lesson Leaves*, in order to promote the systematic study of the doctrinal truths as held by our Church. The method followed in our school for the last seven years is: The superintendent has assigned to the assistant superintendent the duty of catechising the children. The Sunday previous he gives out the number of questions to be studied. In the beginning about four, and now from seven to ten, according to difficulty. All pupils are supplied with Catechisms, and were at first expected to study the same at home. The pastor announced the questions to be studied for the afternoon Sunday-school in the morning service; and the Lord prospered our work, so that the first year we went through the whole Catechism twice, and now from four to five times. There are whole classes in our Sunday-school who know it by heart from beginning to end. The time allowed for its study is five minutes after the study of the *International Lesson*, and is announced by the superintendent by a tap of

the bell. The greatest satisfaction for their faithful labours the children received three years ago at the hands of Bishop Harris, who declared that in all his travels around the globe he had never come across a Sunday-school so well trained in the doctrine of Methodism. They had, without faltering, answered in one stretch 44 questions, or nearly one-half of the whole Catechism. Try it, brethren, with patience, love, forbearance, system, prayer, enthusiasm, plentiful supply of Catechisms, regularity in giving out the questions a week ahead and asking them the next Sunday, and you will soon be surprised at the result.—*F. F. Veling, in Christian Advocate.*

The Worth of Study.

THE teacher who has ceased to be a learner for himself, might as well cease to be a teacher of anybody else. If his mind is not taking in fresh truth, it is not likely to give old truth as if it were fresh. A reservoir that receives nothing from a flowing stream, soon has nothing but stagnant water to give, even though it be well filled, and that from original sources of purity. The accumulated supply soon spoils when the feeding stream is cut off. There must be a constant running into, as well as running out of, if the reservoir is to be kept full of fresh supplies.

A college professor may fail to interest and instruct his pupils, in the science he espouses, simply because he is not in full sympathy with the enquirer after truth. He is perfectly familiar with the sciences, and does not make an effort to keep the supply pure and fresh.

This is a great trouble with Sunday-school teachers—not that they are not learned, but that they are not learners. If a teacher learns something fresh about a theme which he studied long ago, all that he knew before receives new life from his new acquirement. There are many learned men who are still learners. They are the best teachers, they have all the acquirements of former years made available through acquisitions. They have sympathy with those who would learn, and they have the ability to aid them.

These truths are not always borne in mind by Sunday-school teachers, nor yet in the selection of teachers. It is often thought that one who is a natural Christian, a pillar in the Church, well instructed in doctrine, will make an excellent teacher of young people. But unless that man is a growing Christian, a present student of truth, he will never prove much of a teacher. Teachers of little folks too frequently deceive themselves with the thought that they know so much more than their scholars they can surely teach them something, even if they have not studied recently. The difficulty is, however, to teach anything while one is not a learner. On this account many Sunday-school teachers are practical failures.—*The Evangelical Sunday-school Teacher.*

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