

SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 25.

MARCH, 1891.

No. 3.

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The Sunday-School Banner

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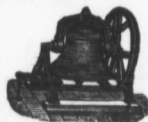
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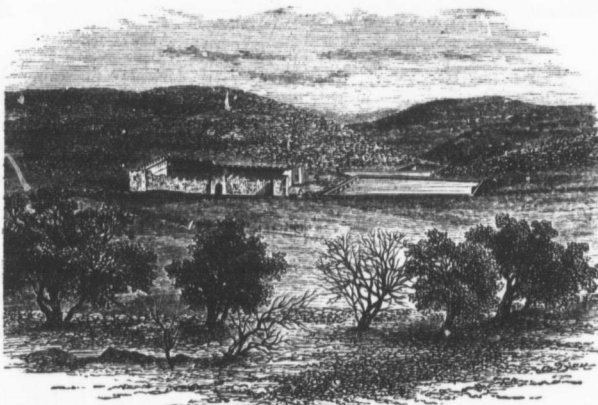
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SUNDAY SCHOOL BARBER for TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXV.]

MARCH, 1891.

[No. 3.]



POOLS OF SOLOMON WITH SARACENIC CASTLE.

Pools of Solomon.

BY THE REV. GEO. J. BOND, B.A.

THERE is little doubt that these are the pools mentioned in the Book of Ecclesiastes: "I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees." They are three enormous cisterns of marble masonry: the lower, 582 feet long, breadth at the east end 207 feet, at the west 148 feet, depth at the east end 50 feet. Dr. Thompson says: "When full it would float the largest man-of-war that ever ploughed the ocean." The middle pool is 248 feet above the lower one, its length 423 feet, its breadth at east end 250 feet, at west end 160 feet, its depth at east end 39 feet. The upper pool is 160 feet above the middle pool, its length is 380 feet, its breadth at the east end 236 feet, at the west end 229 feet, its depth at the west end, 25 feet. These enormous cisterns are in

splendid preservation, and the course of the aqueduct can still be traced by which they supplied water to the temple, a distance of some twelve or fourteen miles. To-day it is conveyed as far as Bethlehem, and close beside the time-worn aqueduct we now took our way toward that town.

A short distance below the Pools, in a valley richly fertile, lies the village of Urtas, which is supposed to occupy the site of Etham, where, as Josephus says: "Solomon was in the habit of taking a morning drive." If this be so, and it is more than probable, the fertile valley corresponds with the gardens of which he speaks. "I made me great works, I builded me houses, I planted me vineyards, I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted in them of all kinds of fruits;" and here are laid the scenes of the Song of Songs. An earthly paradise, indeed, must this valley have been, under the lavish wealth and taste and wisdom of the royal poet.

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Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, MARCH, 1891.

Centennial Numbers of the "Methodist Magazine."

WITH a view of bringing within the reach of every one at this important Centennial time the best survey we can of the great movement which twenty-five millions of Methodists will, in the month of March, commemorate, we have prepared three special Centennial numbers of the *Methodist Magazine*. They will contain articles by William Arthur, Dr. Douglas, Dr. Stafford, Dr. Potts, and many others, on different aspects of the great Methodist movement, and will have illustrated articles on the Footprints of Wesley, with good portraits and many other engravings and many other important papers.

Among the topics will be, Wesley and Voltaire; Wesley and the Moravians; the Development of Methodism; Methodism, a Power Purifying Society, etc.

The March number of this *Magazine* will be, even more than the others, a special Wesley Centennial number. It will give a very full and touching account of the last days of John Wesley, with fine portrait; also an estimate of his character by several of his contemporary "helpers;" a paper on the Mother of the Wesleys, by the Rev. Dr. Potts, Educational Secretary, with fine portrait; a noble Epworth poem; a fine paper on Wesley and the Eighteenth Century, by the Rev. J. O. A. Clarke; an illustrated paper on the Footprints of the

Wesleys, by the Editor; and some reflections on the social and religious influence of the Wesleys, founded upon Læky's History of the Eighteenth Century, besides other articles. Of this special number, enlarged to 112 pages, we shall print a very large edition, in expectation of a very large demand. These will give our Leagues and Young People's Associations, and Sunday-schools and others, ample material for Centennial addresses. These numbers will be sold at twenty cents each, or fifty cents—post free—for the three, January, February and March, containing 324 pages, with a dozen Centennial articles and a score of other papers, with nearly 100 fine engravings.

Wesley Centennial.

LET CANADA TAKE PART.

THE English Methodists purpose raising in connection with the centenary of the death of Wesley, a sum of about ten thousand pounds, to be applied in building a new and worthier tomb over Wesley's grave; to set aside Wesley's house as a museum for Methodist antiquities; and to thoroughly restore City Road Chapel, making it worthy of the mother church of Methodism. Among other proposed changes the present wooden pillars under the gallery are to be removed, and seven handsome marble pillars placed in their stead, each to cost about \$500. The Canadian Methodist Church is requested to contribute the amount necessary to supply one pillar.

Dr. Potts has consented to act as treasurer for this fund, and has already received several subscriptions. It would be a nice thing for our Sunday-schools and Epworth Leagues to have a share in this movement. Address Rev. Dr. Potts, Toronto.

How "Onward" is Received.

WE are constantly receiving very appreciative notices of *Onward*, of which the following from the Rev. W. J. Barkwell, of West Toronto Junction, is a specimen: "Accept congratulation on your successful effort to meet the need of our interesting young people. *Onward* is a superlative gem and fills the hill to a nicety. Such a bright, spicy paper, so vigorous and progressive and so wholesomely religious, cannot but appetize while it satisfies. May it have a wide circulation. Our order of seventy-five copies has been eagerly devoured and will have to be increased to one hundred."

These letters are a great encouragement. We shall spare no effort to make *Onward* as good as we know how. We want to be in every way helpful to our young friends, and especially to be religiously helpful. We esteem it a great privilege to be brought into weekly fellowship with so many thousands of the bright young

spirits of our country. We feel it also to be a great responsibility. We covet for *Onward* the position of a friend and counsellor and guide, that will religiously uplift and inspire with loftiest hopes and purposes its readers. We ask their sympathy, their prayers, their help.

For the low price of a cent a copy we know no such good value in any paper in the world. Give it a three months' trial.

Book Notice.

Honda the Samurai. By REV. WILLIAM ELLIOT GRIFFIS, D.D., author of "The Mikado's Empire," etc. With Illustrations and Illuminated Cover. Pp. 390. Boston and Chicago: Congregational Sunday-school and Publishing Society. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, \$1.50.

Though there are many books about Japan, very few of them are written from an inside point of view. It is only now and then that one of our own tongue can be found who is familiar enough with Japanese customs and ways of thinking to translate them for us. The author of this book is one of these exceptions. He is the only living American who saw the Japanese feudal system in operation, and who witnessed its downfall and formal burial. He lived in a daimio's capital, and as an organizer of a large school on the American method for Samurai young men, he became acquainted with hundreds of lads and their fathers when they wore the two swords and flowing dress with coats-of-arms which marked their class. Living for months under the shadow of a feudal castle, and not seeing a soul but Japanese, he became thoroughly familiar with the wonderful and curious customs of feudalism in that country, the life of its merchants, farmers, soldiers, fishermen, mechanics, high lords and ladies, beggars and street characters of all sorts. How well he used his opportunities and how keen were his observations are manifest in the story of "HONDA THE SAMURAI," in which the fiction bears a subordinate part, merely helping to give a personal interest to political movements which were really august. Nowhere else in so small a compass can one get so intelligent a conception of the causes which led to the revolution which has led Japan out of barbarism into civilization.

WE promised to increase the pages of the BANNER from 32 to 36, and we are more than keeping our word. The present number contains 53 pages, and we think the mechanical appearance and other qualities indicate generally a very marked advance. We are glad to know that a grand public meeting is to be held in Toronto, on March 2nd, the anniversary of the death of John Wesley, we hope similar meetings will be held in all our cities.

Opening and Closing Services.

FIRST QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

I Responsive Sentences.

Supt. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.

School. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee.

Supt. Peace be within thy walls, an prosperity within thy palaces.

School. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.

Supt. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good.

II. Singing.

III. Prayer.

IV. Reading Scripture lesson.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. Class Study of the Lesson.

II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

III. Recitation of 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. The Lord bless thee, and keep thee.

School. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.

Supt. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

III. Dismissal.

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.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

B. C. 895.]

LESSON IX. THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON.

[March 1.]

GOLDEN TEXT. The Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them. John 5. 21.

Authorized Version.

Revised Version.

2 Kings 4. 25-37. [Commit to memory verses 32-34.]

25 So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Ge-ha'zi his servant, Behold, *yonder is that Shu'nammite*:

26 Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, *Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child?* And she answered, *It is well.*

27 And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Ge-ha'zi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul *is vexed within her*: and the Lord hath hid *it* from me, and hath not told me.

28 Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?

29 Then he said to Ge-ha'zi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child.

30 And the mother of the child said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

31 And Ge-ha'zi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but *there was neither voice, nor hearing*. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked.

32 And when E-li'sha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.

33 He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord.

34 And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35 Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

36 And he called Ge-ha'zi, and said, Call this Shu'nammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.

37 Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

25 So she went, and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Ge-ha'zi his servant, Behold, *yonder is the*

26 Shu'nammite: run, I pray thee, now to meet her, and say unto her, *Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the*

27 child? And she answered, *It is well.* And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught hold of his feet. And Ge-ha'zi came near to thrust her away; but the man of God said, Let her alone: for her soul *is vexed within her*; and the Lord hath hid *it* from me,

28 and hath not told me. Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not

29 deceive me? Then he said to Ge-ha'zi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him

30 not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the

31 child. And the mother of the child said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not

32 leave thee. And he arose, and followed her. 31 And Ge-ha'zi passed on before them, and laid

33 the staff upon the face of the child; but *there was neither voice, nor hearing*. Wherefore he

34 returned to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked. And when E-li'sha was

35 come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in there-

36 fore, and shut the door upon them twain, and

37 prayed unto the Lord. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his

38 mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself

39 upon him; and the flesh of the child waxed

40 warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched

TIME.—About B.C. 895. **PLACE.**—Mount

Carmel and the home of the Shunammite.

RULERS.—Same as before. **DOCTRINAL**

SUGGESTION.—The power of prayer.

HOME READINGS.

M. The Shunammite's son. 2 Kings 4. 25-30.

Tu. The Shunammite's son. 2 Kings 4. 31-37.

W. Reward of hospitality. 2 Kings 4. 8-17.

Tk. The calamity. 2 Kings 4. 18-24.

- F. Raising the widow's son. Luke 7. 11-15.
 S. Power of faith and prayer. Matt. 17. 14-21.
 S. Our hope. 1 Thes. 4. 13-18.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 103, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Lord, I despair myself to heal.
 No. 147, New Canadian Hymnal.
 God kindly keepeth those he loves.
 No. 149, New Canadian Hymnal.
 I heard the voice of Jesus say.

DOMINION HYMNAL.
 Hymns, Nos. 252, 256, 260.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Mother**, v. 25-28.
 How far did the Shunammite woman come to Mount Carmel?
 What was the name of the man of God?
 What is shown by the question that Elisha sent Gehazi to ask?
 Did the Shunammite woman attempt to deceive Gehazi by her answer, "It is well?"
 Why did she persist in seeing Elisha personally?
 What do we learn from Elisha's words, "The Lord hath hid it from me?"
 What evidence of profound grief is to be found in her words and actions?
2. **The Servant**, v. 29-31.
 Why did the prophet tell his servant to "gird up?"
 What did the staff of a prophet typify?
 What reasons may there have been for omitting salutations on the road?
 What might be expected if the prophet's staff was laid on the face of the child?
 What did the childless mother say in her anguish?
 What was the result of Gehazi's mission?
 Did the phrase "awake" used by Gehazi mean that he thought the child was not dead?
3. **The Child**, v. 32-37.
 Where was the child?
 What did Elisha do first?
 What did he do next?
 Why did prayer precede the efforts he made for the restoration of the child's life?
 Why did he make any effort after he had prayed?
 When we pray for the recovery of our sick friends, should we make any effort also?
 What probable reason had Elisha to remit his efforts and walk "to and fro?"
 What indication did the child give of returning life?

What spiritual lessons may be learned from this incident?

Practical Teachings.

Wherein does this lesson teach—

1. That sympathy in trouble is a universal need?
2. That true friendship bears our burdens?
3. That God's business ranks first?
4. That formal Christianity is ineffective?
5. That prayer should not dispense with labor?
6. That God works by the use of means?

Hints for Home Study.

Find illustrations in other biblical incidents and teachings of the unusual features of this narrative:

1. The use of an article which had touched the miracle-worker's person (like a staff or handkerchief) to work a miracle.
2. The wearisome length of Oriental salutations.
3. The abrupt command of Elisha to avoid courtesies.
4. Gehazi's officiousness in thrusting the bearded woman aside.
5. Elisha's use of means in conjunction with his prayer.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **The Mother**, v. 25-28.
 What journey did this mother make, and why?
 Who saw her while yet a long way off?
 What did Elisha say to his servant?
 What was the mother's answer?
 What did she do when she met Elisha?
 What did Gehazi attempt to do?
 What did Elisha say?
 What question did the woman ask?
2. **The Servant**, v. 29-31.
 What four things was the servant told to do?
 What two things was he not to do?
 What did the mother say?
 What did Elisha do?
 When the servant laid his staff on the child's face, what happened?
 What report did Gehazi bear to Elisha?
3. **The Child**, v. 32-37.
 In what state did Elisha find the child?
 What was his first act when he came to the house?
 What did he then do to the child?
 What was the effect on the child?
 What did the prophet do?
 What was the effect of his second visit to the child?
 Whom did he then summon?
 What did he say to the mother?
 What did the mother do?
 Who alone can raise the dead? (GOLDEN TEXT.)
- Teachings of the Lesson.**
 Where in this lesson are we taught—
1. The duty of trusting God when in trouble?

2. The duty of praying when in trouble?
3. The power of God to help us in trouble?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find a case where Elijah brought a dead child to life.

Find a case where Jesus gave directions somewhat like these which Elisha here gives to Gehazi. Find cases where the touching of garments was sufficient to perform cures.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What was the prophet Elisha often called? **"The man of God."**

Who came to him one day at Mount Carmel? **A woman in trouble.**

Did Elisha know her? **Yes; she was his friend.**

What was her trouble? **Her only child had just died.**

Why did she go to Elisha? **She thought God would tell him what to do.**

What did Elisha tell his servant to do? **To take his staff and lay it upon the child.**

Did this satisfy the mother? **No; she wanted Elisha to go.**

What did Elisha do? **He followed her to her home.**

Had the prophet's staff brought the child to life? **No; the little boy was dead.**

Who went into the room with the dead child? **Elisha.**

To whom did he pray? **To the Lord.**

What else did he do? **He lay down upon the child.**

What came back to the child? **The life of the body.**

Who was then called into the room? **The mother.**

What did she do when she saw the boy alive? **She fell at Elisha's feet.**

What did the Shunammite find? **That it is well to serve God.**

Words with Little People.

A LIVING GOD.

People who believe that God is really alive, and knows all that they do, and cares about all their troubles, are happy people, for they know they have a Friend to help them in every time of need.

The Shunammite who believed this showed her faith by going to the prophet.

If we believe it, we can show our faith by going to Jesus, our great Prophet and King.

Whisper Motto.

"Jesus is the Life."

General Statement.

The loyal worshippers of Jehovah must have soon recognized how widely Elisha differed from Elijah. He was far gentler and more domestic in character than his predecessor. God wrought wonderful miracles by his hand, but his greatest work was neither in miracles nor in predictions, but in organizing and instructing the scattered people of God. Up and down the land he traveled, vigilant and incessant in endeavors to build up Jehovah's cause. In many a home, rich and poor, he was the most welcomed and honored of guests. Our lesson gives us a glimpse into the mansion of a wealthy lady of Shunem, a town on the slope of Little Hermon, and overlooking the plain of Esdraelon. This lady frequently entertained Elisha, and had provided for him a special chamber in her home. She had but one child, given to her in answer to the prophet's prayer. One day in mid-summer this little boy, grown large enough to play in the harvest-field among the reapers, received a sun-stroke and died. His mother laid him on the prophet's bed, and hastened across the plain to the foot of Mount Carmel in search of "the man of God." Elisha read her sorrow in her face, and heard it in her first words, and sent his servant forward with his staff to lay it on the dead child's face. Soon the prophet followed, and poured forth his mighty prayer. In the intensity of his feeling he laid his face on the cold face of the dead, lip to lip, brow to brow. The flesh grew warm, convulsive motion came, the eyes opened, and life returned at the prophet's call. In this miracle is illustrated the divine working by which the soul is brought from the depths of sin to the life of righteousness. God's goodness, God's power, and God's truth are the prominent points in the story.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 25. The man of God. "God's man," Elisha, who at this time was pre-eminently the prophet of Israel. **Mount Carmel.** A rocky range which crosses Palestine from east to west, south of the plain of Esdraelon. The Shunammite crossed the plain and rode about sixteen miles in order to reach Elisha's home. The twenty-fourth verse enables us to reproduce the scene. The woman wrapped in Oriental drapery riding on a donkey, while a slave behind runs at full speed, shout-

ing and prodding the donkey with a gad. **Saw her afar off.** His home on the mountain-side gave him a view of the plain. He knew that this unusual gallop (for it was neither "new moon" nor "Sabbath," verse 23) had a deep meaning. **Gehazi.** Elisha's attendant. A small-souled, disloyal man, who turned from the heritage of his master's spirit and got in its stead some gold, some rich robes, leprosy, and a name of infamy. (1) *How many throw away spiritual privileges for the sake*

of worldly gain, and lose both **Shunammite**. A resident of Shunem. The name of this woman is not known.

26. Run now. This direction shows Elisha's esteem for the woman. **Is it well?** A conventional Hebrew salutation. Turned into modern English the question would be, "How are you, and how are your husband and son?" And the answer would be, "Pretty well, thank you." There was no effort on the part of the Shunammite to deceive. She simply dashed aside an untimely courtesy, and pressed on to the man of God whom she sought. He was the one human being before whom she could unburden her heart's sorrow.

27. The hill. One of the lower hills at the base of Carmel. **Caught him by the feet.** A thoroughly natural gesture of agony and supplication. We of the great German and English races are almost the only human beings that shrink habitually from expressing our deepest feelings. **To thrust her away.** Gehazi was both unsympathetic and officious. **Let her alone.** (2) *Only a strong man can be gentle.* **The Lord hath hid it.** Prophets were far from infallible in their knowledge or judgment. See 2 Sam. 7. 8. (3) *Sympathy gives insight.*

28. Did I desire. Better never to have received this cherished boy than that he should be so soon taken. See verse 16. **Do not deceive me?** At the very first the promise had seemed too great for her to believe it.

29. Gird up thy loins. The loose flowing robes of the Oriental have to be confined by the tightening of his girdle before he can move rapidly. It is as if one of us said to a messenger, "Put on your coat and hat, and run." **Take my staff.** The badge of a prophet, as the scepter is the emblem of a king and the sword the emblem of a warrior. Elisha doubtless expected that his servant would have been, under God, the effective agent in working this miracle. It was not a test of the staff, for the prophet never dreamed that it had any miraculous power; it was rather a test of Gehazi. **Salute him not.** Oriental salutations take much time. Not merely was haste the cause of this caution; concentration of purpose is as needful to success in religious effort as it is in secular business.

30. As the Lord liveth, etc. A common form of oath among the Jews. **I will not leave thee.** Persistence is characteristic of strong desire. A mother's heart will take no denial. Staves and servants cannot satisfy this woman. She wants "the man of God." **He arose, and followed her.** (4) *Not a staff of office, but a soul of devotion and sympathy, is requisite for work in God's cause.*

31. Neither voice, nor hearing. (5) *The perfunctory performance of religious duties will save neither soul nor body.* **Went again to meet him.** Gehazi returning met Elisha and the mother on their way. This part of the story is a good figure

of what happens in every town in the land where ecclesiastical formality tries to bring dead souls to life and fails, and evangelical earnestness succeeds, (6) *Symbols are of no use where spirit and power are absent.*

32, 33. When Elisha was come. Their journey may have taken four or five hours. **Shut the door.** Not even the mother was present while the prophet called on G. d. **Prayed unto the Lord.** Thus had Elijah done (1 Kings 17. 21); thus did Peter (Acts 9. 40). But Christ spoke the word and it was done (Mark 5. 41; Luke 7. 14; John 11. 43). God alone giveth life, temporal or spiritual.

34. Lay upon the child. The power of faith must be supplemented by personal effort. (7) *Spiritual life comes from personal contact of the living earnest soul with the dead souls around it.* (8) *No man has a right to pray God for health in days of sickness except he also works.* It is as absurd to expect disease to fly before prayer without medicine as to expect hunger to fly before prayer without bread and beef. We are to use all means as if there was no help in prayer, and we are to pray as if we had no means to use.

35. Walked . . . to and fro. The lying upon the child and possibly assisting him by exhalation and inhalation to breathe (treating him much as persons who have been drowned are now treated); the gradually increasing warmth of the body as life slowly returned; the apparently consequent chill of the prophet, which may have led him to walk to and fro; the sneezing of the child, all are very natural episodes of this supernatural act.

36. Take up thy son. So Elisha delivered the risen son to his mother (1 Kings 17. 23); so did Jesus (Luke 7. 15); and so does God commit to us the care of those whom he has quickened to life that we may nourish and feed them (John 21. 15). Elisha's brief sentence reminds us that success is not voluble. A sham prophet who had tried and failed would have made a speech an hour long to explain his failure. This man's love was shown by his work, and since he restores the child to its mother, he can well spare adjectives.

37. The pathos and brevity of this verse make it one of the most beautiful in the entire word of God. Bishop Hall thus quaintly compares Israel's two great prophets: "Both of them divided the waters of the Jordan, the one as his last act, the other as his first. Elijah rebuked Ahab to his face; Elisha, Jehoram. Elijah supplied the drought of Israel by rain from heaven; Elisha supplied the drought of the three kings by waters gushing out of the earth. Elijah increased the oil of the Sareptan; Elisha increased the oil of the prophet's widow. Elijah raised from death the Sareptan's son; Elisha, the Shunammite's. Both of them had one mantle, one spirit; both of them climbed up one Carmel, one heaven."

CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

BY REV. JAMES HOPE MOULTON, M.A.

This beautiful story brings before us a woman of very marked character, who had achieved a position such as women could seldom attain. In his journeys between Samaria and Carmel Elisha was constantly passing by the dwelling where she and her elderly husband lived on the broad acres among their brethren, with only one sorrow to mar the contentment of their peaceful days. In her wealth she entertained Elisha with generosity which to a prophet's mind would recall the equally generous hospitality of Zarephath, to be rewarded now by the same divine gift of joy out of sorrow. He grants her a boon, but she needs no temporal gift, and the one thing she longs for is too great to ask, too great almost for belief when given. And now the precious gift has been snatched away by the fierce blaze of the morning sun. The mother lays the boy in the room hallowed by the prophet's exclusive use, and, with no word of explanation to the unsuspecting father, hurries to him who could help her even now.

Verse 25. Went. Riding on an ass, with a servant running by the side to guide the beast. Comp. 2 Sam. 15. 1; 1 Kings 1. 5. The journey would take five or six hours. It had evidently been made often before, as verse 23 suggests. The prophets, especially in the kingdom of Israel, seem to have freely undertaken the conduct of sacrificial and other ceremonies, by virtue of the peculiar inspiration which called them to their office. **Mount Carmel.** It is fair to assume that the scene of Baal's discomfiture before Jehovah was made a center of worship under Elijah's successor. **Afar off.** We may imagine Elisha on some hilltop in the Carmel range, looking along the lonely road to descry those who came to seek him. The welcome of the man of God reminds us of our Lord's picture of God's welcome to the seeker (Luke 15. 20); note that where the servant sends another with his greeting, the Master comes himself. **Gehazi.** See the third lesson this month. **Shunammite.** Shunem was in the plain of Jezreel, in the territory of Issachar (Josh. 19. 18). The beautiful Abishag came from this place, and this not very startling coincidence originated a Jewish tradition that Elisha's friend was Abishag's sister. Chronology was not a forte of the Jews, or they might have been surprised at two sisters flourishing at an interval of more than a century!

26. Well. Hebrew "peace." Elisha seems to have felt that something must be wrong. The woman's answer, as in verse 23, is meant to waive further inquiry, but we may fairly read into it the assurance that God would not mock her with such a gift, only to snatch it away.

27. Feet. Comp. Matt. 18. 29, and 28. 9.

Gehazi's unseasonable care for his master's dignity is more than once paralleled in the life of Christ; for example, Matt. 19. 13, *eg.*; 20. 31. **Her soul is bitter.** Hebrew. Comp. Ruth 1. 20; Job 3. 20, etc. With Elisha's lack of insight at the first we may compare Nathan's encouragements of David when he wished to build a temple (2 Sam. 7. 3, *eg.*).

28. Deceive. A milder word than in verse 16. It has been most prosaically assumed that these words conclude a full narrative of her trouble. But it is surely clear that the hint is sufficient to quicken the prophet's insight; the whole scene is before him in a moment.

29. Gird. The long robe of an Oriental makes rapid movement impossible until it is tucked up in the girdle. The phrase becomes a general one for energetic action of any kind; for example, Job. 38. 3. **Staff.** Perhaps the best explanation of this is to see here an example of the Spirit's gradual possession of the prophet's soul. Comp. chap. 3. 15. The greatest prophet perhaps in Scripture story, St. Paul, confessed that sometimes he spoke as a man (1 Cor. 7. 6; 12. 25). Here we see Elisha at first entirely as other men. With the cry of the mother comes the first impulse of the Spirit on him, and he knows all. But he thinks that power may come from the staff his hand has grasped, and he only gradually learns that death is not to be conquered but by a protracted struggle. Elijah, more fully possessed by the Spirit, raised the widow's son after a briefer effort; Peter (Acts 9. 40) and Paul (Acts 20. 10), in the fullness of the Pentecostal grace, could raise the dead after a prayer or a moment's embrace without visible prayer; while the prophet who was God as well as man spoke but two words of power, and prayed only to give thanks (Mark 5. 41; Luke 7. 14; John 11. 41-43). **Salute . . . not.** Comp. Luke 10. 4. It is not the mere "peace to thee" which is meant, but the prolonged ceremonial of the leisurely East, often detaining perfect strangers for over half an hour. Refusal to tarry would be at once understood.

30. The mother—there is a pathetic touch in repeating that title—cannot trust herself out of the presence of him who in God's name had bestowed and would restore. She may well have doubted the efficacy of Elisha's staff in the hands of one who showed so little of Elisha's spirit. **As Jehovah.** Comp. chap. 2. 2, and note. **Followed.** Clearly at once. The child died at noon, and it would be nearly sunset when she reached Elisha. They must therefore have been traveling through most of that summer night, guided apparently by the moonlight. Comp. verse

23. Nothing short of such a need could strengthen a woman for an effort so extraordinary.

31. Neither voice, nor attention. Hebrew. The recurrence of the same phrase in 1 Kings 18. 29, heightens the picture of the "dead god," whom no prophet's cry will wake from deeper death than that which here flees at the prayer of the living Jehovah's prophet. **Awaked.** Comp. Dan. 12. 2, etc., for this universal metaphor, which seems to witness the universality of man's dim hopes that there will be awakening.

32. The verse certainly need not do more than simply present the picture that met Elisha's eyes. He may have still cherished some hope that the boy might have revived since Gehazi left, and those who think so detect often a trace of reluctance to follow the mother to Shunem. But it is more likely that he realized the failure when Gehazi returned.

33. From this point the story closely follows that of Elijah's miracle (1 Kings 17. 21, *sq.*), with the striking difference already noticed. It was characteristic of Elisha to lean on his master's example wherever similar circumstances confronted him. **Shut the door.** The prescription of our Lord himself for the most intensely earnest prayer (Matt. 6. 6). Comp. also verse 4.

34. Went up. Comp. Psa. 132. 3, suggesting a high bedstead. The manner of the miracle is the transference of the prophet's superabundant life to the dead child.

35. In the house. Probably in the same room. The action shows us how all his physical and mental forces were strained in this great struggle. **Sneezed.** The margin makes far better sense, especially in the contrast of Elisha's sevenfold embrace with Elijah's three. But beyond the LXX. there seems hardly enough authority.

36. Take up. Comp. Luke 7. 15.

37. Fell. Comp. Luke 5. 8, etc. It was a motion of worship paid through the instrument to the God whom he served.

The Lesson Council.

Question 1. Can any reason be assigned for the comparatively large number of miracles in the epoch of Elijah and Elisha?

This epoch was a period of extraordinary wickedness and hardness. It was the age of Ahab, Jezebel, Abaziah, and their kind. If ever there was a time in Israel's history when the divine messenger needed divine indorsement, this was such a time. The people of God, weakened by sin, were in danger of being overcome by nations which were idolatrous. Monotheism was jeopardized as perhaps never before, and according to his custom in such emergencies the one true God came to the help of his imperiled cause by an extraordinary display of

miraculous power.—*Rev. Henry Tuckley, Lexington, Ky.*

Ahab and Jezebel had prohibited the worship of Jehovah and substituted the grossest idolatry, in which murder and licentiousness were practiced as religious rites. In such spiritual darkness and degradation there was a need of special manifestation of divine power to convince the people of their sin and to restore their faith in the one true God. The miracles wrought by Elijah and Elisha furnished the clearest evidence that Jehovah was God. The work of Moses could not have been done without similar supernatural manifestations. Jesus also used miracles as signs of his power and character.—*Rev. J. S. Davis, B.D., Milwaukee, Wis.*

In this epoch idolatry was everywhere countenanced and practiced. Jehovah was ignored save by a few obscure worshippers. The high places reeked with corruptions. Elijah and Elisha stood forth to avenge the righteousness of God. An effective agency must have divine sanction and be charged with omnipotence. Hence, to these prophets was given power to work many striking miracles, that the wicked might be dismayed and overthrown, the righteous encouraged and exalted, and the mighty and holy One of Israel duly honored.—*Rev. Fred Harrison Knight,*

Israel had grown prosperous as well as populous. Her intercourse with other peoples had strengthened her financial condition at the expense of the loss of her character. She had imitated their methods and corruptions and absorbed their idolatry. The worship of Jehovah was at a low ebb, while that of Baal and other gods was at flood-tide. In the sweep of this idolatry nature had become supreme, and it was therefore necessary that the God "that answereth by fire" should manifest himself. It was a time for object-lessons rather than verbal instruction.—*Rev. George S. Butters, Newtonville, Mass.*

The public worship of Jehovah, more or less prostituted under Jeroboam, had taken a decidedly idolatrous turn under Omri (1 Kings 18. 25, 26), and under the furious and licentious (2 Kings 9. 22) Jezebel the adulterous Phœnician worship had been established on a grand scale. The court of Ahab was polluted with idolatry. Sanctuaries to Baal and Ashtoreh and other divinities were established and numerous priests appointed and fed at the royal table (1 Kings 18. 19, and 16. 83; 2 Kings 10. 26-28). Bitter persecution of the prophets followed (1 Kings 18. 4; 18. 22, and 19. 10, 14; 2 Kings 9. 7). The worship of the true God was endangered. The crisis demanded a reformer like Elijah. He stood up alone against the tide. It was necessary that the faith of the nation in Jehovah as against pagan gods should be revived. God must not be turned out from his

chosen people. His right must be reasserted. This could only be done by a real demonstration. Hence Elijah precipitated the contest, and miracles were multiplied as the result.—O. A. Houghton, D.D., Auburn, N. Y.

Analytical and Biblical Outline.

A Godly Mother.

I. HER SOCIAL POSITION.

A great woman. 2 Kings 4. 8.

"Not many mighty, not many noble." 1 Cor. 1. 26.

"Have any . . . rulers . . . believed?" John 7. 48.

II. HER RELIGIOUS SPIRIT.

Neither new moon nor Sabbath. 2 Kings 4. 22, 23.

"Worship toward thy holy temple." Psa. 5. 7.

"Not forsaking the assembling." Heb. 10. 25.

III. HER SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT.

An holy man of God. v. 9.

"They took knowledge of them." Acts 4. 13.

"Shine as lights in the world." Phil. 2. 15.

IV. HER HOSPITALITY.

1. *Constrained him to eat.* v. 8.

"Some have entertained angels." Heb. 13. 2.

2. *Make a little chamber.* v. 10.

"Ye have done it un'to me." Matt. 25. 40.

V. HER HUMILITY.

I dwell among mine own people. v. 13.

"Be clothed with humility." Pet. 5. 5.

"Be content with . . . ye have." Heb. 13. 5.

VI. HER FAITH.

I will not leave thee. v. 30.

"Casting all your care upon him." 1 Pet. 5. 7.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord." Psa. 55. 22.

Thoughts for Young People.

Godly Womanhood.

The Shunammite woman, portrayed by the sacred penman, stands forth as a model.

1. *She was "rich toward God"*—generous toward his cause and helpful toward his workers.

2. *She was consistent*, and by her religion made her daily domestic life helpful and gracious. God was enshrined at her hearth as really as in the temple at Jerusalem.

3. *She was "strong-minded."* Burdened with the cares of wifehood and motherhood, her life is nevertheless instinct with a force which is felt in all directions. She is not "swamped" by domestic cares, but "nobly planned," she warns, counsels, and commands.

4. *She was humble*, and not ambitious of great things. If she had desired worldly glory Elisha could have secured it for her, but her heart's home was in Shunem, and she welcomed God's gift and loved her child.

5. *She was an attendant upon the means of grace*, going regularly to worship among God's people.

6. *In her troubles she sought the "man of God."*

7. *She had strong faith*, and believed that God could bring back her child from the dead.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Elisha is looking off from Carmel. He sees an object down in the road. It is something moving. It resolves itself into a young man driving an ass, and on the ass is seated a woman.

"Somebody who seems to be in a great hurry," Elisha notices. "Why, it is that Shunammite woman! What does she want, I wonder!"

He cries out to his servant Gehazi. He bids him run and find out if it be well with her and her husband and her child. To all this she responds, "It is well."

What! can she recall a certain little chamber on the wall at home, a room now closed and shaded, t'ink of the cold, white, still face of her boy on the bed, and say, "It is well?"

She does say it to the servant, and then alighting from her ass she hurries to his master, throws herself upon the ground, and convulsively grasps his feet. O, the heavy burden of her trouble bowing her down! The officious Gehazi, who knows when not to do a thing, steps up to her and would shove her away.

"Let her alone!" cries his more sagacious master. His sharp eye recognizes the fact of some trouble. What it may be he cannot say. God hides it from the prophet, but it is a reality. Hands off, Gehazi!

Almost in a word she tells her story:

"Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?" she asks.

Instantly Elisha thinks, "What! that boy dead?"

Looking afar he can see the white, cold, silent boy-face. And this mother at his feet is all broken up by trouble like the great sea beyond Carmel, when the storm-winds plow it up. Gehazi wants something to do, so Elisha gives it to him. Let Gehazi take Elisha's staff, go straightway, turn neither to the right nor to the left, speak to no one, and reaching that dead boy lay this staff on his face. Gehazi has gone, but that does not satisfy the woman. She wants the man who did not repulse her and drive her from his feet, which in her agony she clutched at and held tenaciously. Only Elisha can satisfy her. She mounts her ass. The young servant urges it off. Elisha follows. That Gehazi is some way ahead. He may say, "What good will this old stick do?" but he grips it and moves on.

"Hail, Gehazi!" some one may cry, but Gehazi is dumb.

"What aileth thee, Gehazi?" another may shout, but Gehazi is deaf. Holding on to that staff he

travels persistently, gains the Shunammite's door, goes within the house, enters the chamber of death, and lays the staff on the face of the child. Gehazi looks curiously down.

"I knew as much!" does he mutter?

There is no more response to that touch than if Gehazi had laid on the child his flabby, unsympathetic, covet-us hand. All in vain! Elisha's staff, but borne by Gehazi.

Elisha has come.

He wearily climbs the stair-way. How oft he had gone over those steps, but never on such an errand. He softly opens the door, enters with hushed feet, and then carefully closes the door again. Alone with that dead boy! How his heart must throb in pain! Alone with the dead? O, One other is there! Elisha is shut in with Elisha's God. His soul agonizes before that great, pitying Father. And then he lays himself upon the child. Mouth touches mouth. Eyes are pressing eyes. Hands have clasped hands. He stretches himself upon the boy, as of the very heat of his vitality he would empty himself, press it upon and force it into that cold form. And what? Is that a wave of warmth that thrills through the child's body? Elisha goes away as if to renew his force. He comes back. Again he stretches himself upon the child. They touch mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands. And, hark! Was that a sneeze from the child? Yes; again and again and again—seven times! He opens his eyes. Perhaps he smiles. Perhaps he calls the prophet's name. But where is that poor, heart-broken mother? Elisha summons her, points at the bed, and says, "Take up thy son!" Her heart is breaking now for joy. One moment at the prophet's feet in gratitude, and another she hurriedly bears out her child, her darling clasped to her breast, her own forever.

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

Verse 26. "And she answered, *It is well.*" In a time of cholera a mother lost her two children in one day. When at night her husband came from his business in the city, she said to him: "A friend lent me some jewels, and he now wishes to receive them again. What shall I do?" "Return them, by all means," said her husband. Then she led the way to another room and pointed to the silent forms of their little children.

Verse 30. "I will not leave thee." A miner having heard the Gospel preached, determined that if the promise of immediate salvation was indeed true he would not leave the presence of the minister till he possessed it. He waited after the meeting, and said to the minister: "Didn't ye say I could have the blessin' now?" "Yes, my friend." "Then pray wish me, for I'm not goin' awa' wi'-

out it." And they did pray, wrestling in prayer until midnight, like Jacob at Peniel, until the miner received peace. "I've got it," he cried, exultantly, while his face reflected the joy within. The next day there was an accident in the mines. The minister hurried to the dying men. The miner, he knew, was among them. There was recognition for a moment, and the miner said: "I don't mind, for I've got it—I've got it!" And so he passed to a royal inheritance, all by his believing grip on the word "now."—*Canon Wilberforce.*

Verse 33. "Prayed unto the Lord." Some one asked Professor Drummond: "What place has prayer for temporal blessings in your system of natural law in the spiritual world?" The professor replied by parables: A large, splendidly equipped steam-ship sailed from Liverpool to New York. A boy and girl, passengers, were playing about the deck and the boy lost his ball overboard. He ran to the captain, shouting, "Stop the ship, my ball is overboard!" The captain answered, pleasantly, "No, my boy, I cannot stop the ship and all these people to get a rubber ball." The boy went away grumbling and confided to the little girl that he believed the captain couldn't stop the ship. It was wound up, and had to run night and day, until she ran down. A few days later the children were playing on deck again, when the little girl dropped her doll down into the engine-room, and she, too, supposed it had gone overboard. She said, "I'll run and ask the captain to stop the ship and get my dolly." "It's no use," said the boy, "he cannot do any thing." But the little girl ran to the captain with her appeal. The captain came, peered down into the engine-room, and seeing the doll, said, "Wait here a minute." And while the ship went right on, he ran down the stair-way and brought up the doll, to the girl's delight and the boy's amazement. The next day the cry rang out, "Man overboard!" and immediately, by order of the captain, the great ship stood still until the life was rescued. Then she steamed on till she reached New York. When she was anchored the captain went up town and bought the boy a better ball than the one he lost. Each of these prayers was answered. The little girl received her request without stopping the ship; the boy by a little waiting received his also; and yet, for sufficient reason, the ship was stopped by a part of the machinery itself, not an after-thought, but something put into the ship when it was made.

Verses 34, 35. Elisha used means. Christ used clay to cure blindness, and James exhorted that if any were sick oil was to be used, and with it the prayers of the elders of the church. Two gentlemen in a row-boat were discussing the comparative value of faith and works. They appealed to the oarsman. He said, "I will name one of my oars Faith, and the other Works. Let us see what progress we shall

make with Faith alone." The boat went round and round. Then he tried Works alone, with the same result. Pulling both together, they flew toward their haven.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Have the class read the whole story of the Shunammite, beginning with verse 8.... Let the leader tell, as dramatically as possible, the story of the dead child, the hot harvest field, the cry "My head!" etc., and then let the class tell the story of the restoration to life.... Make outline-map showing Shunem, Samaria, Carmel.... Explain the Oriental features of the lesson: the prophet's chamber, the bed, the staff, salutations, etc.... A handy outline: 1. The eager mother. 2. The ineffectual effort. 3. The successful prayer. 4. The restored life.... The Shunammite's noble character. See verses 8, 9, 18, 23, 30. See also "Thoughts for Young People," Spiritual life imparted to souls dead in sin: 1. By earnest parents. 2. By earnest prayer. 3. By personal contact; not the staff, but the man, mouth to mouth, hand to hand. 4. By persistent endeavor. This an allegory of a soul's salvation. You are, more or less, in God's service. Are you Gehazi, with a prophet's staff in your hands that you cannot use; or are you Elisha, with personal power from personal holiness.... Connection between faith and life. Duties: to bring our sorrows at once to God; to claim God's promise; to be full of sympathy for every sorrowing soul, and refuse none; to give thanks for our answered prayers.

References.

FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 26: Formal salutation, 336. Ver. 29: The girdle, 314; omission of salutation, 767.... FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 11820, 7645, 7638, 7647, 7648, 7648, 11455, 11457, 11459, 11462, 11464, 11470, 5025-5043; Poetical, 1906. Ver. 26: Prose, 1007, 1008, 9787, 9790, 9792; Poetical, 987, 990. Ver. 30: Prose, 9875, 11098. Ver. 31: Prose, 622-625. Vers. 32-36: Poetical, 3398.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY MANTHA VAN MARTER.

LESSON THOUGHT.—*Life is God's Gift.*

Blackboard. Make a great many small squares to suggest a city; one considerably larger than the others for the Shunammite's home. Mark off a part of this for Elisha's room. At a little distance make Mount Carmel, where the Shunammite went to find Elisha.

The Story Told. Elisha was now the great prophet of Israel. Recall miracles that he had wrought, and make it clear that God did these wonderful works through his willing and obedient

servant. Make several small squares on the board between Mount Carmel and the city of Shunem. With crayon in hand, suggest to the children that they follow Elisha in one of his journeys through the land. If you can secure a piece ure of the prophet pin it to the board. Trace a line to one of the small squares, and tell what Elisha did at this place. Move on to others, telling how he went, with his servant, from one place to another, teaching the law of the Lord. When you have brought him to Shunem speak of the good rich woman who lived there, and who made a pleasant room in her house where the tired prophet could rest. She did this because she loved God and wanted to show honor to his servant. Tell how, through Elisha's prayer, a little son was given her as a reward for her kindness.

The children will be interested in the story of the little boy who went to the field one day to see the reapers at their work, and grew so ill while there that he had to be carried home to his mother, where he soon died. It will repay the teacher to study the story until able to present it in a vivid word-picture.

What did the mother do? She did not cry out or call her neighbors, or even tell her husband that their little boy was dead. She believed in Elisha's God, and she turned at once toward Elisha to tell her what to do. Tell how she went in haste, tracing the way as you talk, to Mount Carmel. Tell the conversation, the short and simple way in which she made known her trouble, and the refusal to return to her home without Elisha. Still another journey with the chalk, this time without making any stops, and the prophet enters his own room in the Shunammite's house, and finds the dead boy lying on his bed. Could Elisha bring the dead to life? No; but God could, and so Elisha shuts the door and prays that life may come back to the child, and it is done!



Make a circle on the board.

If you doubt your ability to make a perfect one on the spot, prepare it beforehand with a bit of string to help. Inside the circle print "Life."

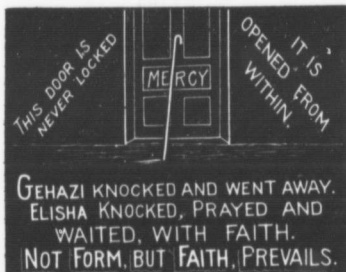
Tell the children that each life is complete; we can see neither the beginning nor the ending. It is from God, who has always lived, and who will live forever.

Show that the life of the body, beautiful and blessed as it may be, is but a little thing compared with the life of the spirit.

Can any thing destroy this beautiful life-circle? Satan is always seeking to break it! Warn against the little ways in which he seeks to tempt little children, and teach earnestly that the only sure way of keeping the life of the spirit is to be joined to Jesus.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION.—The design of the blackboard is to try to show the reason why G-hazi failed and Elisha succeeded in restoring the child to life. God is ever merciful. A servant, as well as a prophet, may ask and receive divine aid if he comes in the proper spirit. The door on the board is intended to represent the entrance to God's mercy; against it is leaning the prophet's staff, as though Gehazi had gone through the form of knocking with it and then hurried away because the door did not at once open. No one that the door of divine mercy is never locked, so that we need no key to unlock it. In fact, it cannot be opened from without; human strength cannot force it open; impatience cannot hurry it to open; and indifference will never open it. Yet God is always waiting with tender love toward us to open at the knock of the sincere seeker. The mere form of knocking will result in failure. Now look at the board. Why did Elisha succeed and Gehazi fail.

THE MOTHER'S VICTORY.	{ UNDOUBTED FAITH. PERSEVERING PATIENCE.
THE PROPHET'S MISTAKE.	{ TRUSTING TO AN UNWORTHY INSTRUMENT.

GEHAZI'S FAILURE.	{ FORMAL DUTY. WRONG SPIRIT.
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ELISHA'S SUCCESS.	{ TRUE FAITH. EARNEST PRAYER DID ALL HE COULD. WAITED.
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OPTIONAL HYMNS.

God hath sent his angels.
There is a Friend.
It is well with my soul.
Come unto me.
My Jesus, as thou wilt.
What a friend.
Trusting in his word.

The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who was dead? **The Shunammite's little son.**
2. To whom did she go for help? **To the man of God.**
3. What did Elisha send by Gehazi to bring the boy back to life? **His staff.**
4. Did this restore the child? **It did not.**
5. What did Elisha do? **He prayed.**
6. Did he stop there? **No; he made great effort.**
7. What was the result? **God restored the boy's life.**

CATECHISM QUESTION.

15. How does the Old Testament teach Christianity?
The Scriptures of the Old Testament were written by many holy men, who prophesied that the Christ was coming, and foretold also what He would suffer and do and teach.
1 Peter i. 10, 11.

B. C. 894.]

LESSON X. NAMAAN HEALED.

[March 8.

GOLDEN TEXT. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.

Psa. 103. 3.

Authorized Version.

2 Kings 5. 1-14. [Commit to memory verses 3, 14.]

1 Now Na'a-man, captain of the host of the king of Syr'i-a, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syr'i-a: he was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper.

2 And the Syr'i-ans had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Is-ra-el a little maid; and she waited on Na'a-man's wife.

Revised Version.

- 1 Now Na'a-man, captain of the host of the king of Syr'i-a, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the Lord had given victory unto Syr'i-a: he was also a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper. And the Syr'i-ans had gone out in bands, and had brought away captive out of the land of Is-ra-el a little maid; and she waited on Na'a-man's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were

3 And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Sa-ma'ria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

4 And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Is-ra-el.

5 And the king of Syr'i-a said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Is-ra-el. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

6 And he brought the letter to the king of Is-ra-el, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Na'a-man my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

7 And it came to pass, when the king of Is-ra-el had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

8 And it was so, when E-li'sha the man of God had heard that the king of Is-ra-el had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Is-ra-el.

9 So Na'a-man came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of E-li'sha.

10 And E-li'sha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

11 But Na'a-man was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12 Are not Ab'a-na and Phar par, rivers of Damas-cus, better than all the waters of Is-ra-el? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

13 And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

14 Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

TIME.—Not long after the last lesson; perhaps B. C. 894. **PLACES.**—Damas-cus, Samaria, the Jordan. **RULERS.**—1. The King of Syria, probably Ben-hadad; 2. The King of Israel, probably Jehoram. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The defilement of sin.

HOME READINGS.

M. Naaman healed. 2 Kings 5. 1-7.
Th. Naaman healed. 2 Kings 5. 8-14.

with the prophet that is in Sa-ma'ria! then
4 would he recover him of his leprosy. And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Is-ra-el.
5 And the king of Syr'i-a said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Is-ra-el. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. And he brought the letter to the king of Is-ra-el, saying, And now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have sent Na'a-man my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the king of Is-ra-el had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? but consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. And it was so, when E-li'sha the man of God heard that the king of Is-ra-el had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Is-ra-el. So Na'a-man came with his horses and with his chariots, and stood at the door of the house of E-li'sha. And E-li'sha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. But Na'a-man was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Ab'a-na and Phar'par, the rivers of Damas-cus, better than all the waters of Is-ra-el? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

W. Christ's reference to Naaman. Luke 4. 21-30.
Th. Healed by Christ's touch. Luke 5. 12-17.
F. A leper's gratitude. Luke 17. 11-19.
S. Free cleansing. Isa. 55. 1-9.
S. Prayer for cleansing. Psa. 51. 10-27.

HYMN.

Jesus, in whom the Church's rays
Beam forth with mildest majesty

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 223, New Canadian Hymnal.
Come, my soul, thy suit prepare.
- No. 224, New Canadian Hymnal.
My faith looks up to thee.
- No. 231, New Canadian Hymnal.
Oh, happy day that fixed my choice.
- DOMINION HYMNAL
Hymns, Nos. 132, 129, 72.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Captive Maid, v. 1-4.

What is a captain of the host?
What does "a great man with his master" mean?
What is the meaning of "by whom the Lord had given deliverance?"

Was there ever a person whose favorable circumstances might be written down in a long list without the use of the word "but"?

- How did the Jews regard the lepers?
Whom did the Syrians capture?
How was the girl employed?
What wish did she express?
To whom was this wish told?

2. The Royal Letter, v. 5-8.

What does "go to" mean?
How much was this present probably worth?
Why did the King of Syria send a letter to the King of Israel?

Had the King of Israel any reason to misunderstand the message of the Syrian king?

Who was there in Israel who could do what the king could not?

3. The Angry Leper, v. 9-13.

Where did Naaman stand with his horses and his chariot and his leprosy?

Why did Elisha send a messenger, and not come out himself?

What was the sense of washing in Jordan seven times, or even once?

Had Naaman reason for his anger?

Was his expectation of Elisha's conduct unreasonable?

Were not Abana and Pharpar really better than the Jordan, and more likely to heal diseased flesh?

If Naaman made any mistake in getting angry, what was his mistake?

4. The Miraculous Cure, v. 14.

What came as a result of washing in Jordan?

Of what spiritual truth is this miracle a figure?

Practical Teachings.

Wherein does this lesson teach—

1. That Providence chooses the right place for us?
2. That it pays to teach children about God?
3. That spiritual ignorance is powerful?
4. That externals are no index to true greatness?
5. That the very simplicity of the Gospel is a stumbling-block to the proud?

Hints for Home Study.

1. Ascertain the peculiarities of the Israelitish law concerning leprosy.
2. Find what you can concerning captivity and slavery in the ancient days.
3. Find a singular legend connected with the name Naaman.
4. Were prophets usually paid for their miracles?
5. Collect illustrations and incidents from the Bible on the typical meaning of numbers, especially of the number "seven."

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Captive Maid, v. 1-4.

Of what man of valor does the lesson tell?
Why was he held in honor by the king?
What affliction was on him?
What captive had the Syrians taken?
To whom was the maid a servant?
What did she say to her mistress about Naaman?
What report was borne to Naaman?

2. The Royal Letter, v. 5-8.

What did the Syrian king say that he would do?
What present did he send to the King of Israel?
What was the letter which was sent?
How was the King of Israel affected by the letter?
What question did he ask?
What did he think was the purpose of the letter?

3. The Angry Leper, v. 9-13.

Who heard of the king's distress?
What message did he send to the king?
What did Naaman then do?
What message did Elisha send to him?
How did Naaman receive this message?
What did he expect Elisha would do?
What did he ask about the rivers of Damascus?
What did his servant say to him?

4. The Miraculous Cure, v. 14.

What did Naaman finally do?
What was the effect on his leprosy?
Who alone can cure both body and soul? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That a child can serve God?
2. That God can bring good out of seeming evil?
3. That God can work great results by small means?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Read the commands concerning lepers and leprosy given by Moses.

Find the case of a boy, captive in a foreign land, who stood up nobly for God's cause.

Find the case of a little boy whom God selected to be his messenger.

Find as many cases in the New Testament as you can where men in excited feeling rent their clothes.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

In what army was Naaman a general? **In the Syrian army.**

What had he to make him happy? **He was rich, noble, and beloved.**

Was he happy? **No; for he was a leper.**

What little girl lived in Naaman's house? **A little slave-girl.**

From what land had she been taken? **From Israel.**

What did she tell Naaman's wife one day? **That the prophet in Samaria could cure Naaman.**

To whom did the King of Syria send Naaman? **To the King of Israel.**

What mistake had he made? **He thought it was the king who could cure leprosy.**

Who was much troubled by this? **The King of Israel.**

What did Elisha do when he heard of it? **He sent for Naaman.**

What did he tell him to do? **Go wash in Jordan seven times.**

Why did this make Naaman angry? **He thought it too small a thing to do.**

What happened when he obeyed the prophet? **His leprosy was cleansed.**

Was it the waters of Jordan that cured him? **No; it was the Lord.**

Could he have been cured without dipping in Jordan? **No; he had to believe and obey.**

Words With Little People.

The leprosy of sin makes ugly spots upon human souls, and it will kill the soul if it is not cured. Where is the **JORDAN** in which it may be cleansed!

"What can wash away my sin?"

Nothing but the blood of Jesus!"

Whisper Motto.

"Believe and obey."

General Statement.

Elisha's life was one steady forth-putting of divine power, constantly affecting men by his force of character, and sometimes exerting miraculous potency. Shortly after the raising of the Shunammite's son from the dead Elisha prevented the evil effects of poisonous greens which had been accidentally gathered for food during the dearth or famine in Gilgal. During the same famine he fed one hundred men with a meager portion of barley loaves and ears of corn. Next comes the story of the miraculous cure of Naaman's leprosy, which, perhaps, has been oftener read than any other portion of the Old Testament. How easy to reproduce it: We see the great captain robed in purple, riding in state through the streets of Damascus, but pitted by all because of his living death as a leper. We hear the simple words of the captive maiden which brought tremulous hope to his troubled heart. We watch the splendid caravan as it moves over the uplands of Elishan and across the Jordan valley in search of health for the Syrian soldier. We behold the terror that whitens the king's cheek, and the calm and confident behavior of the prophet when Ben-hadad's strange letter is read. We watch the procession wind its way between the hills to the prophet's lowly home, and hear his command to wash in the Jordan seven times. But the nobleman has thought out a better plan for the miracle than this, and gives way to passion. Better counsels, however, prevail. He bathes, and is renewed in flesh and spirit. Let us read this Old Testament story in the light of its New Testament teachings concerning the diseases of sin and the divine Healer, man's helplessness and God's love for every race and individual of mankind.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. Naaman. One of the greatest men of the time, but he would never be heard of now but for this record. (1) *How small and transient is earthly honor.* A Jewish legend identifies Naaman with the man who drew a bow at a venture and secured a deliverance for Syria by slaying Ahab (1 Kings 22. 24). More likely, from indications on the Assyrian monuments, he gained independence for his country in an Assyrian war. **Captain of the host.** Commander-in-chief. **King of Syria.** Ben-hadad II. Syria was a nation immediately north of Israel, and its rival. **Great man with his master.** A phrase which, incidentally, points to the fact that official eminence in the East is due to royal favoritism. Mere wealth or popularity could never of itself secure it. **And honorable.** Very rich. **The Lord had given deliverance.** It is of interest to remember that the **LORD** stands for the proper name Jehovah, and that while the Jew who wrote

these words may have looked with characteristic contempt on the heathen, he, nevertheless, regarded Jehovah as the real deliverer of Syria as well as Jewry. **Mighty man in valor.** Personally brave. He merited his honors. **But.** "Every man has some 'but' in his character, something that blemishes and diminishes him, some alloy to his golden grandeur, some damp to his roseate joy. He may be very happy, very good, but in something or other not so good as he should be, nor so happy as he would be. Naaman was as great as the world could make him, but the meanest slave in Syria would not have changed skins with him."—*Bishop Hall.* **A leper.** Clearly in Syria there were no such regulations of leprosy as were enforced among the Jews. See Lev. 13. 14. And not improbably this leprosy was of a less malignant type than that most frequently alluded to in the sacred writings. (2) *Leprosy is a significant type of sin and spiritual impurity.* (3) *Naaman's*

greatest misfortune, was about to work out for him his greatest blessing. It is often so.

2, 3. Syrians had gone out. There was chronic hostility between Israel and Syria. **By companies.** Little marauding parties. **Brought away captive.** If one doubts the steady progress of the world in virtue and humanity, one has only to spend an hour with history, sacred or profane. The horrors of antique war were indescribable, and immeasurably worse than the worst brutality of modern times. **A little maid.** A most important link in all this chain of events was this little girl. Notice: 1) Her forgiving spirit and generosity toward those who had wronged her. 2) Her fidelity, even though her service was forced. 3) Her sympathy, the most Christ-like of virtues. 4) Her simple faith. (4) *How much good even a child can do!* (5) *Trouble is the door which opens into the roomiest usefulness.* **She said.** How valuable is a well-spoken word! What if she had not said? Notice: 1) The power of speech. 2) The power of one in the lowliest social condition. 3) The power of a child. 4) The power of God. **The prophet that is in Samaria.** Not the capital city; rather the country to which it had given its name. Elisha's fame as a wonder-worker was spreading. (6) *God knows the best place for us.* (7) *How important are opportunities to do the most trifling good.*

4, 5, 6. His lord. Ben-hadad. **Go to.** Or, as we would say, Come now. **A letter.** Great effects come from small causes. A little girl speaks a word of sympathy, and there follow: 1) A royal letter; 2) an imposing caravan; 3) alarm at a foreign court; 4) a great miracle; 5) a considerable spiritual change in a Syrian noble; and 6) the widely extended glory of God in that and all later generations. (8) *Let us be careful of our words.* **Silver....gold....raiment.** Treasure which has been variously estimated at from \$20,000 to \$60,000. Orientals are very fond of rich dresses, and they have in the East a sort of standard of value unknown here. **The king of Israel.** Probably Jehoram, the grandson of Ahab. **Thou mayest recover him.** Doubtless Ben-hadad had many magicians drawing rich salaries at his court, and in their supernatural power he had a good deal of superstitious faith. But they were not able to heal Naaman. His rival king, Jehoram, was lucky enough, as he supposed, to have a magician able to perform this cure, and as Ben-hadad's prophets did as he ordered them so far as they were able, it seemed but the courteous thing to ask Jehoram to ask his prophet to cure Naaman. (9) *How little the world can comprehend the true character of divine power!*

7, 8. Rent his clothes. An Oriental gesture of sorrow or terror with which Bible-students are familiar. (10) *Kings have all the troubles of common men, and more.* **He seeketh a quarrel.** He honestly supposed that this embassy was a mere pretext for a new invasion. Ben-hadad had been a

course to Israel for years. He was a man full of deceit, so Jehoram had some reason for his terror. **Elisha the man of God.** Ben-hadad was a beggar; Jehoram was a slave; Naaman was worse off than either; and Elisha is the only king in this chapter. **Let him come now to me.** He knew the might of the Arm on which he leaned.

9. With his horses and with his chariot. Seven words of the most vinegary sarcasm. The rich uniforms, splendid caparisons, and Oriental ostentation of this procession were like the hollow pride and affectation that sometimes surround funerals in our own land; in the midst of all was a leper. (11) *Things are not what they seem.* **The house of Elisha.** Where it was is not known.

10. Elisha sent. There were many reasons for Elisha's austerity of manner. The ceremonial law should be kept by him who was a sort of model for the rest of the people, and that law forbade personal communication with lepers. Besides, Elisha stood for God; he was "the man of God," and to a very peculiar degree he at t'is juncture owed personal dignity to his divine Master. **Go and wash.** A simple command, for God makes no conditions or compromises with suppliant sinners. **Flesh shall come again.** In leprosy the flesh decays and drops away in running sores, and the cure consists in the renewal of the flesh.

11, 12. Naaman was wrath. He did not like to be treated like a common outcast. (12) *Pride keeps many from eternal life.* **I thought.. Dr. Lange says:** "'I thought' is the most mighty of all mighty things on earth. If it is not the most ruinous of all ruinous things, it is certainly the most unfortunate of all unfortunate things. 'I thought' brought into this world sin and misery and death. 'I thought' prevents redemption from sin and death in the case of thousands. These thousands, if they perish in their evil opinions, will begin the next life with 'I thought.'" **The Lord his God.** Jehovah was Elisha's God; up to date Rimmon was Naaman's. **Recover the leper.** Naaman wanted to get rid of the leper while preserving the grandeur of the captain. **Abana and Pharpar.** The Barada and the Awaj, two crystal streams which wind in their beauty around Damascus and contrast sharply with what Dr. Robinson calls the "deep, sluggish, discolored" Jordan, which pours uselessly through desolate jungles. "But these men look upon Jordan with Syrian eyes," says quaint old Bishop Hall. (13) *To un sanctified eyes worldly morality, cold ceremony, and intellectual culture are more attractive than the simple Gospel of salvation.* **Damascus.** The capital city of Syria, one of the oldest towns in the world, proverbially beautiful in its surroundings. Mohammed is said in a religious frenzy to have galloped away from it, saying, "Man can have but one paradise, and mine is not on earth." **Went away in a rage.** There are plenty of men now living like Naaman.

13. His servants. Who knew that there was much of good sense and worth underneath his hot temper. (14) *Have a little patience with quick-tempered people.* **How much rather then.** Why should any hesitate to obtain salvation?

14. Went he down. From the mountains of

Syria to the valley of the Jordan. **Dipped himself seven times.** Obeyed the command, precisely as every sinner should do who will be saved. **A little child.** Gone the chalky, clammy flesh; in its place the glowing purity of childhood. Naaman is now a new creature.

CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

The kind-hearted, impulsive soldier whom we meet to-day is described to us in words which bring home with unique power the vanity of earthly advantages. He was not merely the commander-in-chief of a mighty nation's army. He had been the hero of a great national deliverance, and enjoyed, from king and people, the gratitude and honor which fall to the Washingtons and Nelsons of every age. Could human wishes soar higher than such a lot? One day this favored being finds a white spot on his body which he understands only too well. It is the sentence of death, though years of ever-increasing wretchedness may delay the oft invoked release. Where now are riches, honor, power? Already the unhappy man had resigned himself to a fate no human skill could avert, when help came through a most unthought of channel, his own kindness to a Hebrew slave-girl. His case was to be one of those precious indications that the love of God was wider than the bounds of one people, chosen to be the channel through which all mankind should be refreshed. Our Lord fixes on this as the one great lesson of Elisha's life, the catholic prophet granting to a Gentile's faith what the unbelief of sufferers in Israel had never cared to ask.

Verse 1. Jehovah. Written, of course, from an Israelite point of view. But we may well note the broad tone of this prophetic narrator, who has advanced so far beyond the narrow nationalism of his people that he can conceive the God of Israel giving deliverance to Israel's constant foe. **Victory.** The word generally connotes deliverance in defensive warfare, and though this is by no means decisive, it seems most natural to refer the occasion to the late incursions of Assyrian forces into Syria. Jewish tradition, repeated unquestioningly in Josephus's account of the battle of Ramoth-gilead, asserts that Naaman was the unnamed archer who slew Alahab. But Jewish identifications are so numerous, and often so obviously absurd (see, for example, note on verse 25 of last chapter), that we need give no heed to it. **Mighty.** The leprosy was evidently in its very first stages, or he could not have remained a soldier. Note, there is not a trace of the seclusio enforced in Israel—a system which could add horror even to leprosy—and the leper is not regarded as endangering the community in which he moves. Clearly, then, the Mosaic regulations were not framed for sanitary but for symbolical reasons, though of course some amount of separation was desirable on grounds of health. A finer parallel of the loathsomeness of sin could not be found.

But he was. The Hebrew is very striking in its omission of these words; in simple co-ordination with the other items in the description comes at the end this one word that blasts the whole.

2. These marauding incursions were the anticipations of the work Syria was appointed to do under Hazael, to execute Jehovah's punishment on idolatrous Israel. **Bands.** Plundering parties, as opposed to hosts of ordinary warfare.

3. Would God. Better translated, "O that," as in Psa. 119. 5, the only other place where this interjection occurs. One is tempted to conjecture it a word from the common people's vocabulary, adopted in the psalm either through changed usage of later times or simply because it suited the alphabetic arrangement. **In Samaria.** Elisha's life in the city stands in suggestive contrast with his predecessor's constant choice of deserts and solitudes.

Recover. An expressive word, suggesting the "gathering" of the outcast leper to his people again.

4. Versions differ on the persons meant in this verse. The LXX. says Naaman's wife told her lord, that is, Naaman; the Authorized Version and Revised Version that "some one" told "his lord," probably the king. The Revised Version margin, with the Vulgate, makes Naaman himself go and tell his lord, the king. This is much the most probable.

5. Go to. The expression suggests the king's eagerness to avail himself of the chance. **Letter.** The king's action is perfectly natural. His commander-in-chief could not well enter a rival king's capital on a mission to any but the king himself, and the Syrian monarch could reasonably assume that a king who commanded a servant of such extraordinary power would grant his request by simply demanding the prophet's services. **The king.** Probably Jehoram, but the history of Elisha seems arranged unchronologically, and "the king" is usually, as here, unnamed. **He departed.** This certainly reads most naturally if we suppose that verse 4 tells us of Naaman's going to the king, whom he now leaves. **Took.** As presents to Jehoram. Where presents were necessary for the humblest visit, those made on visiting a king were naturally magnificent. They consisted here in bars of precious metals and in gorgeously robes. A talent weight of silver is said to be about \$1,800, and a shekel weight (see margin) of gold may have been worth some \$10. There would be no coinage at this time.

6. Saying. The meaning, of course—the text

as it stands is not clear, and is, perhaps, not correct — as that these words form the letter itself, the irrelevant compliments, e. c., at the beginning omitted. The Revised Version, "and now," brings out the fragmentary nature of the quotation.

7. Jehoram's terror well illustrates the lack of faith which allowed Elisha to live among them so long without healing one 1 per. It simply never occurred to him that Elisha's help was being asked for, and so he thought his powerful neighbor was seeking a pre-text for breaking the peace by asking an impossibility. **To kill.** Comp. Deut. 32. 39; 1 Sam. 2. 6. **An occasion** (margin). Comp. Judg. 14. 4.

8. A prophet. In the fullest sense—a representative of Him whose it was "to kill and make alive."

9. Chariots. Of course, the general would bring a military suite.

10. Elisha's discourtesy was about as glaring as it could have been. Had a beggar come to his door, Eastern manners demanded that the master of the house should attend to him in person. And surely God's prophet is bound to be a gentleman far above the world's standard! It was deep spiritual insight that prompted action apparently so inconsistent with the perfect courtesy of the sequel. Naaman was to be blessed not only in body, but his pride needed humbling to make the cure itself possible. Moreover, the prophet would show him that it was no mere man who wrought the marvel. **Seven.** The sacred number, serving here as a climax of his trial—the tedious journey to the river, followed (we may suppose) by six resultless plunges in those muddy waters. **Be thou clean** (margin). Comp. Matt. 8. 3.

11. Naaman's thoughts are an apt parable of the instincts of a human soul in its dealings with God. How does every man choose to be healed in a way of his own choice—which has, perhaps, actually been the experience of some other—ignorant that nothing but a treatment contrary to his choice can ever thoroughly restore him! It would be a fine spectacle, worthy of Naaman's dignity as Syria's chieftain, for the prophet to bid the leprosy depart before the eyes of Israelite and Syrian by one impressive prayer and one dramatic gesture! To bathe in lonely Jordan was any thing but heroic.

12. Abanah. This river, now named *Barada*, runs through the city, while *Pharpar*, now *Awaj*, passes at some distance. Both rise in mountains, Anti Libanus and Hermon respectively, and after a short course lose themselves in marshes east of Damascus. In rapidity and fullness of stream they are very superior to the muddy Jordan.

13. Servants. In what relation they stood to him we do not exactly know; the word might possibly denote interior officers of his suite. **My father.** A form of address not found elsewhere, and most simply explained as a Syrian peculiarity.

Elisha's address to Elijah, and Jehoram's or Josiah's to him (chap. 2. 12; 6. 21; 13. 14), are not true parallels, as the idea of spiritual fatherhood comes in. **Some great thing.** One more profoundly true parable. Hindu asceticism, popish penances—yes, and much among our orthodox selves which would astonish us if we knew—spring out of this universal trait of human nature, which to win peace of mind will do or suffer any thing except the one thing God demands—submission!

14. We cannot but admire the readiness with which the impetuous soldier yielded to plain common sense. He was not the man to persist in a foolish action in order to be consistent. **Went down.** From lofty Samaria into the deep Jordan valley. **According to.** The essence of the cure thus was a literal and unquestioning obedience, which would have produced the same effect if the command had had no sort of connection, symbolical or real, with the thing to be effected. **Child.** Instead of the foul and decaying flesh of the leper there was a purity and healthfulness even beyond that of a strong and healthy man. There is ever a prodigality in God's healing.

The Lesson Council.

Question 2. *What spiritual lessons may be drawn from the healing of Naaman?*

1. The value of religious testimony. The Jewish maiden's expressed faith in God was the means of bringing a leprous man to the fountain of healing.

2. Leprosy, as the emblem of sin, teaches that sin disfigures and pollutes and destroys.

3. Sin, like leprosy, can be cured only by the Great Physician.

4. The sin-sick man must come with humility, for he can be healed not in his own way, but in God's.

5. The part of wisdom is to obey the command of the physician rather than to speculate about the philosophy of the method. Elisha said, "Wash;" Jesus says, "Believe."

6. The prophet would accept no reward. The gifts of God are free. Christians work not to pay God, but to help men.—*Rev. J. S. Davis, B.D.*

1. Sin is loathsome and destructive. A few years of apparent health, months of battling with first symptoms, years of living death, one last moment of utter despair—such is leprosy and such is sin.

2. God's way of saving the sinner. One prophet, one river, humble obedience, one God working through all, and Naaman is cleansed. One atonement, one way of penitence and faith, a life of humble obedience, one Christ in it all, and the sinner is saved, saved completely, saved forever.—*Rev. Fred. H. Knight.*

1. The means most despised may be God's opportunity for salvation. The rivers of Damascus might

be more attractive, but the despised Jordan was to be the medium of his cleansing. He would have purchased his restoration, but he learned that "to obey is better than sacrifice."

2. Little and least duties may bring the greatest blessings.

3. The most diseased sinner may be "washed whiter than snow."

4. There are no difficult cases or incurable diseases in God's practice.

5. The man thoroughly cleansed is only a babe in Christ prepared for healthy growth and development under proper conditions.—*Rev. George S. Butters.*

1. The sinner's hopelessness aside from the one cure. 2. His natural aversion to the simple remedy of the Gospel. 3. The inexorableness of God's plan for saving us. 4. The necessity of faith. 5. The faith which saves must show itself in works. 6. God's plan, when fully tested, never fails. 7. True salvation makes us perfectly whole and also transforms the life. 8. Salvation is free. 9. The saved one will be grateful, not only to God, but to the human agent.—*Rev. Henry Tuckley.*

Leprosy, the most loathsome and fatal disease known to man in many respects, is a type of sin. The great lesson that it teaches is that of the self-avenging power of sin. Sin itself pollutes, disfigures and destroys the moral nature, as leprosy destroys the body. Only God could heal a leper. Only God can cure sin.

The power of prejudice is illustrated in Naaman's case. God's prescription did not conform to his preconceived opinions of what constituted a proper remedy. Thus it is that men cast aside the Bible, which is God's treatise on the nature, ravages, and cure of sin. Let them rather apply the scientific method and test the remedy before they condemn it.

It is the lesson of humility. Naaman's pride well-nigh sealed his doom. It is when we crucify pride and accept God's methods in humility that we find the last and sweetest lesson of all; namely, God's power over the natural and moral effects of sin in the healing of the soul and body.—*O. A. Houghton, D. D.*

Analytical and Biblical Outline.

Sin and its Cure.

I. THE LOATHSOME DISEASE.

1. *Naaman.... was a great man.* v. 1.

"God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10. 34.

2. *But he was a leper.* v. 1.

"All have sinned." Rom. 3. 23.

II. THE SIMPLE REMEDY.

1. *A little maid.* v. 2.

"Revealed.... unto babes." Matt. 11. 25.

2. *Am I God.... to make alive?* v. 7.

"Who can forgive sins but God?" Mark 2. 7.

3. *Let him come now to me.* v. 8.

"Come unto me.... that labor." Matt. 11. 28.

4. *Go and wash in Jordan.* v. 10.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 16. 31.

5. *Rivers of Damascus better.* v. 12.

"Howed out cisterns." Jer. 2. 13.

III. THE PERFECT CURE.

1. *Then went he down.* v. 14.

"Humbly himself.... exalted." Luke 14. 11.

2. *Dipped.... seven times.* v. 14.

"Endureth to the end.... saved." Matt. 10. 22.

3. *Flesh came again.* v. 14.

"A new creature." 2 Cor. 5. 17.

4. *Like.... a little child.* v. 14.

"As little children." Matt. 18. 3.

5. *He was clean.* v. 14.

"Washed.... sanctified.... justified." 1 Cor. 6. 11.

Thoughts for Young People.

Some Slanting Rays of Truth.

1. *Remember the two "buts" of the lesson.* Naaman was rich and honorable, *but* a leper. The little maiden was a slave, *but* had at command the cure of leprosy. We all have our hard earthly conditions; but are they as hard as her's? Is there not a "but" in our case as favorable as in her's? Is it not possible that we have as wide means of doing good as had she? Uncounted sermons have been preached about the discount on the happiness of the Syrian general and on ours; let us not forget the premium on the Hebrew maiden's lot and on ours.

2. *We should all benefit our betters.* Every body knows that old folks should care for the young, that rich people should help the poor, that wise men should advise the foolish, and so on. Of course. But here was (1) a little girl guiding a mature and experienced man; a slave by her spiritual knowledge and homely common sense securing the greatest of blessings for her high-born master. (2) When this great man had followed the direction of his slave-girl, and had come up to the very doorstep of salvation, he would have lost all if other inferior advisers had not again guided him. Let your light shine "in your little corner," as the hymn says, and its rays will brighten and gladden many hearts.

3. *It is very easy to be diverted from the end to the means.* Very many people start out to perform some great thing, but get more enthusiastic about their plans than they do about the outcome. Many a general has fought harder to have his own way among his allies than to whip his enemy. Many a church member will exert more force in getting a majority vote in a teachers' meeting or a trustees' meeting than he will in securing the glory of God. Naaman really sought salvation, but he wanted to obtain it in his own way, and, until his servant advised him, he was in danger of losing the end by his close adherence to the means that he had chosen.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Morning in the home of Naaman, the great captain. It is a fine house in which he sits, and an honored name he carries, but, alas! he is spotted from head to foot! Who can wash away a leper's spots?

But can you not hear a childlike voice up in the mistress's room? It is a little maid from Israel, a child-slave, and with a happy thought her bright eyes sparkle like diamonds in the sunlight. If Naaman could only see the great prophet in Israel! He would heal Naaman! All this goes as on bird's wings to the ears of the king, Naaman's master. Indeed! If that be so, then Israel shall have a chance to try its hand at washing out the leper-spots. There is the loading of chariots, there is a prancing of horses, and off goes Naaman, a big present at his side.

"What!" cries the amazed King of Israel, reading the letter and tearing his fine purple robes, slitting from collar to the hem of the skirt, "am I God, to kill and to make alive?"

He looks as if he had been attending the funeral of all his kingly hopes, for Syria, he thinks, is just picking up a pretext for a big quarrel.

But there is one person who keeps cheerful and does not tear his clothes. Let Syria's leper come to Israel's prophet, is Elisha's bidding to the king. Why did they not send that little maid with the leper, to be his guide-board to Elisha's house? But he's there at last, with all his fine horses and big flock of servants and a resplendent chariot, and all the gold and silver and costly garments. He is looking up to the prophet's house, any moment expecting him out and down also at his feet. Of course Elisha has heard of great Naaman "my lord," the famous captain. What! not come out? Only a servant making his obeisance, and bringing such a receipt for the leprosy: Go wash in that dirty little Jordan seven times? If Naaman were white before with leprosy, he must have been red with wrath now. He fumes. He sputters. He boils over. He roars out his preference for Damascus' waters! To think of it; the man did not come out to this great captain and say some fine cabalistic words over his leper-spots, but sends him to that miserable Jordan! Naaman fumes, sputters, and boils over again. But —but, "my father!" His servants cry that. They come up timidly, softly, deprecatingly, and venture to suggest whether he would better not try Jordan. He scowls, shakes his head, frowns again, and concludes to try a bath in the Jordan. Away they go, the wheels clattering and rattling over the country, all the attendants flocking after Naaman, and a fine, proud show it makes, setting the gossips to talking for miles around. If those leper-spots had not disfigured him, Naaman would have enjoyed the fuss he was making. And to be riding toward that mean little river! But he is at Jordan at last, and

if he were red with wrath at Elisha's door, he is white enough now. O, those hateful spots! Who will get them off? He is by the water, great Naaman, like a boy to take a bath at his mother's hands. Up on the bank all his people are watching. May be they are laughing. Ridiculous! This Jordan! Still, he will try it. He cautiously steps out farther, farther, farther, looks around, a wondering look on his face, and down he goes! Up, now! Then down again! Up, down; up, down, like a saw, seven times! If there were a smile on his face he is very sober now, for, look! those spots are gone! Ah, he is as clean as he ever was when a boy he came from a bath at his mother's hands. Like a lamb from the washing!

By Way of Illustration.

Verse 2. A little maid. Though among the pagan Syrians, she did not forget God or his servant. A gracious Christian is like gold. Cast gold into fire or water; cast it into the ash-heap or the kennel; cast it among the poor or the rich, and it is still gold. So a genuine Christian placed in any company or condition will retain his purity.

He was a missionary without knowing it, spreading good news—the Go-pel of healing. Admiral Foote invited the King of Siam to dine with him on board his flag-ship, and asked a blessing on the food as was his custom. And when the king said, "You do just like the missionaries," the Christian commander beautifully replied, "Yes; I, too, am a missionary."—*A. T. Pierson.*

*Verse 7. Man's power is very mighty, I know; but it stops short of giving life. Place a fossil bone before him, and from it he can construct a massive elephant. By clock-work or galvanism he can make the limbs move; but he cannot draw down the vital breath. His province is combination and embellishment. Life belongs only to God. "Am I God," said the frightened King of Israel, "to kill and to make alive?"—*W. M. Punshon.**

Verse 10. "Thou shalt be clean." The Gospel offers a new life. Never offer men a thimbleful of Gospel. Do not offer them merely joy, or merely peace, or merely rest, or merely safety; tell them how Christ came to give men a more abundant life than they have—a life abundant in love, and therefore abundant in salvation for themselves, and larger in enterprise for the alleviation and redemption of the world.—*Prof. Henry Drummond.*

Verse 11. "Naaman was veroth." If we want to be saved we must abandon our self-made schemes of salvation. A young man who had sought for peace by works of righteousness went to his pastor and said: "When shall I find Christ?" "Just that minute when you put away self," was the answer.

Behold the camps of the Israelites in the wilder-

ness! A young Hebrew youth has been bitten and just heard that Moses has lifted up the brazen serpent, bidding all to look and live. He says: "If I understood the philosophy of it, I would look; but this is such an unrea-onable thing. If God had said, Take the brass and rub it into the wound, there might be something in the brass that would cure the bite. Or, if the Lord had told Mo-es to get some herbs and stew them and take the decoction as a medicine, there would be something in that. But it is so contrary to nature to do such a thing as look at the serpent, that I cannot do it." And he dies because he wants a human plan of salvation.—*Moody.*

Thousands have stumbled over the simplicity of the Gospel. They want salvation to be an imposing ceremony such as Na-man planned. To the ceremony-loving Jews it is a stumbling-block, and to the cultured Greeks it is still foolishness; yet its very simplicity is one of the elements of its power.

Verse 15. "Behold, now I know." A business man confided to his pastor that he wanted to be a Christian, but did not want any one to know it. The minister replied: "Jesus Christ will not take a silent partner. He wants your name publicly coupled with his, or he will deny you before his Father and the holy angels of heaven."

Verse 16. Naaman's gifts were valuable only as showing a thankful heart. A physician discovers the condition of the heart by the pulse and not by what the patient says. So, gifts to God and his servants are the pulse of the heart.

The Teachers' Meeting.

PRACTICAL OUTLINE: 1. The captain. 2. The captive. 3. Two kings. 4. Two messengers. 5. The servants. 6. Analogies....Or, treat it in a series of pictures: 1. The leper. 2. The captain. 3. The journey. 4. The prophet's command. 5. The cure....On a sketch-map trace Naaman's journey from Damascus to Samaria, to Elisha's home, to the Jordan, back to Damascus. In teaching this lesson we should trace the analogies between the physical and spiritual world. Many lessons will come to mind....Take leprosy as a symbol of sin. 1. Its heredity. 2. Its contagion. 3. Its loathsomeness. 4. Its deceptive and almost painless character. A leper hardly realized his condition at first. 5. No physician on earth could cure it. 6. It leads toward death....The symbol of washing in the Jordan: 1. A simple act. 2. A self-denying act. 3. An act of obedience. 4. An act of perseverance. 5. An act of faith....Evils of pride.... Naaman's pride nearly cost him his cure. The same pride keeps souls from salvation....Faith cometh by hearing....The child pointed Naaman to God.

References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 5: Presents, 64; Gift- of raiment, 93; letters, 381 ... FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 2523, 4932, 9358, 9355. Ver. 1: Prose, 5770, 9356, 9357, 10199. Vers. 1-15: Poetical, 3812, 3813. Ver. 7: Prose, 3590, 4831, 4835. Ver. 10: Prose, 5169. Vers. 11, 12: Prose, 4112, 4118; Poetical, 2370. Ver. 13: Poetical, 954; Prose, 5436, 10383. Ver. 14: Prose, 7391.

Blackboard.



Leprosy is a type of sin; therefore the board sets forth the cleansing power as bestowed on Naaman, who was seeking to be saved from a leper's death, and on a sinner seeking to be saved from an endless death. The way of salvation for either is so simple that it is no wonder that Naaman could not believe in it, and that sinners doubt it. Yet there is but one way, and that is God's way, and whosoever will may come to him and be cleansed, "like a little child," for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

DIRECTIONS FOR COLORS.—The heart outline in red; over and around it outline a fountain with blue, touching it up with white, and, if you can draw it, represent with the white chalk a cross inside the fountain.

WHO CAN CURE IT?

SIN, { BEGINS SMALL IN MAN.
LIKE { GROWS WORSE IN MAN.
LEPROSY, { RUINS LIFE OF MAN.
{ IS INCURABLE BY MAN.

JESUS ONLY.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Cure for Sin.*

Introduce the lesson by singing a verse of "What can wash away my sin?" Say that this is a story of the washing away of uncleanness. The man who was unclean was a great man. He had command over many men. I will let you tell what you think he was. [Pin up a gilt paper crown, a paper sword, and a small flag.] "A king," some one says. No; but we shall hear about a king in this lesson. "A

general." Yes; that is right. He is called a captain here, but he was the commander of the Syrian army. I will print his name here—over the sword—"Naaman." He had led his army out to fight the people of Israel, and he had won a great victory. This pleased his king, and he put great honor upon Naaman. [Print "King of Syria" over the crown.]

You think Naaman must have been a happy man. He was rich, honored, and powerful. But he was very unhappy. I know a little boy who has a beautiful home, kind parents, servants to wait upon him, all the toys and pleasures that a child can have. But he is not happy. Do you know why? Because he is self-willed, and greedy, and proud. What is it in his heart that makes him so? Yes; Sin, that evil thing which always makes people unhappy.

Naaman had in his body that disease which is the outward sign of sin. He was a leper. Leprosy is a disease which grows from a very little spot into great sores which cover the body, and grow deeper and more painful all the time. You know that sin grows in that way. Have you ever seen a dreadful looking drunkard? When you look at one next time think that once this man was a sweet little child, and that it is sin that has made this sad change.

Then a leper could never be cured by any doctor. Only God could cure leprosy. And only God can cure sin. We will sing another verse of our hymn, "For my cleansing this I see," etc. [Other points of resemblance may be brought out if the teacher think best.]

But Naaman was a heathen. He did not know the true God who has all power. Do you think then that he cannot be cured?

A servant of God was in Naaman's house. She was a little captive maid of Israel. She waited on Naaman's wife, and she pitied her poor master. She was not a selfish girl or she would have been thinking about her own sorrows—a captive in a strange land. She could not cure her master, but she knew who could, and so she told her mistress about the prophet Elisha. Now she had done her duty; she had told the story of love and power, and any child who knows the story can do as much.

The king heard of it and he wanted Naaman to be cured, so he sent him to the King of Israel with many rich presents. But the King of Israel could not cure a leper, and Elisha said, "Let him come now to me."



The proud captain [what was his name?] came riding in his chariot to Elisha's door. Elisha told him to go to the river Jordan and wash in it seven times. This made the great man angry. What a silly little thing to do, he

thought. He was going home in a rage, but one of his servants urged him to do as the prophet said. And then the great captain, when he obeyed like a little child, found himself cured of his dreadful disease.

It was not Jordan's water that cured Naaman; it was the God of the Jordan and Naaman's God. But Naaman could not have been cured if he had not obeyed.

Two lessons for me:

1. A child may show a wise man the way to Jesus.
2. Obedience is the straight path that leads to God.

OPTIONAL HYMNS

Deep are the wounds,
Depth of mercy.
I lay my sins,
Happy day.
All for thee,
Lord Jesus, I long.
Seeds of promise,
Jesus bids us shine.

The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. What great sorrow had Naaman in the midst of his wealth and honors? **He was a leper.**
2. Who told Naaman's wife about Elisha? **A little captive maid.**
3. To whom did the King of Syria send for help for Naaman? **To the King of Israel.**
4. When at last Naaman came to Elisha, what did the prophet send him word to do? **To wash in Jordan seven times.**
5. How did that impress Naaman? **He became very angry.**
6. Who persuaded him to follow the prophet's advice? **His servants.**
7. What was the result? **He was made clean.**

CATECHISM QUESTION.

16. What has our Lord said about the books of the Old Testament?

He calls them the Scriptures, says that they testify of Himself, and that they will not pass away. Luke xxiv. 44, 45; John x. 35; John v. 39; Matt. 17, 18.

B. C. 894.]

LESSON XI. GEHAZI PUNISHED.

[March 15.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Be sure your sin will find you out. Num. 32. 23.

Authorized Version.

2 Kings 5. 15-27. [*Commit to memory verses 25-27.*]

15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that *there is* no God in all the earth, but in Is'ra-el: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.

16 But he said, *As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none.* And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

17 And Na'a-man said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord.

18 In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, *that* when my master goeth into the house of Rim'mon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rim'mon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rim'mon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing.

19 And he said unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.

20 But Ge-ha'zi, the servant of E-li'sha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Na'a-man this Syr'i-an, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

21 So Ge-ha'zi followed after Na'a-man. And when Na'a-man saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, *Is all well?*

22 And he said, All *is* well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount E'phra-im two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.

23 And Na'a-man said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid *them* upon two of his servants; and they bare *them* before him.

24 And when he came to the tower, he took *them* from their hand, and bestowed *them* in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.

25 But he went in, and stood before his master. And E-li'sha said unto him, Whence *comest thou, Ge-ha'zi?* And he said, Thy servant went no whither.

26 And he said unto him, Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? *Is it* a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?

27 The leprosy therefore of Na'a-man shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence *as white as snow*.

Revised Version.

15 And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Is'ra-el: now therefore, I pray thee, take a present of thy servant. But he said, As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused. And Na'a-man said, If not, yet I pray thee let there be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth; for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord. In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant; when my master goeth into the house of Rim'mon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rim'mon, when I bow myself in the house of Rim'mon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing. And he said unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.

20 But Ge-ha'zi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared this Na'a-man the Syr'i-an, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

21 So Ge-ha'zi followed after Na'a-man. And when Na'a-man saw one running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from the hill-country of E'phra-im two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of raiment. And Na'a-man said, Be content, take two talents.

And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of raiment, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. And when he came to the hill, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. But he went in, and stood before his master. And E-li'sha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Ge-ha'zi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he said unto him, Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and men-servants and maid-servants? The leprosy therefore of Na'a-man shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence a leper *as white as snow*.

TIME.—Same as before; probably B. C. 894.
PLACES.—Same as before. **RULERS.**—
 Same as before. **DOCTRINAL SUGGES-**
TION.—Sin in the heart.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Gehazi punished. 2 Kings 5. 15-19.
- Tu. Gehazi punished. 2 Kings 5. 20-27.
- W. Achan's covetousness. Josh. 7. 20-26.
- Th. Ill-gotten gains. Prov. 13. 1-11.
- F. Danger. Prov. 21. 1-8.
- S. Covetousness condemned. 1 Tim. 6. 6-12.
- S. Better treasure. Matt. 6. 19-23.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 98, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Depth of mercy, can there be.
- No. 102, New Canadian Hymnal.
 What shall I do, where shall I flee
- No. 105, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Would Jesus have the sinner die?

DOMINION HYMNAL.
 Hymns, Nos. 246, 261, 266.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. The Grateful Syrian, v. 15-19.**
 What did Naaman discover by bathing in the Jordan?
 How did his miraculous cure serve to convince him that Jehovah was the only real God in all the earth?
 What is the meaning of a "blessing" here?
 Why may Elisha have refused to take this present?
 Why did Naaman desire as much earth as two mules could carry?
 What did his promises about burnt-offering and sacrifice really mean?
 What did Naaman ask to be pardoned for?
 Who was Naaman's master?
 Why did he lean on Naaman's hand?
 Why did Naaman feel that it was his duty to bow in the house of Rimmon?
 Why did he feel that this required pardon of God?
 What did "go in peace" mean?
- 2. The Greedy Servant, v. 20-27.**
 What may we understand from Gehazi's use of the phrase "this Syrian"?
 What conclusion may be reached as to the general moral tone of the Israelites from the frequency with which others were on their lips?
 What did Naaman's ready alighting from his chariot indicate?
 Did the ancient Hebrews deem it sinful to lie?

Practical Teachings.

- Wherein does this lesson teach—
1. That the works of God justify his claims?
 2. That gratitude should take practical form?
 3. That religion should never be made a stepping stone to temporal gain?
 4. That grace transforms pride into humility?
 5. That sin's worst victims scruple at nothing?
 6. That one sinner destroyeth much good?

Hints for Home Study.

1. Give from the Bible incidents where the first sin of a class was punished with exceptional severity.
2. Write down other reasons for the severity of Gehazi's punishment.
3. Write down your conception of the moral character of Naaman's request concerning the house of Rimmon.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Grateful Syrian, v. 15-19.**
 Where did Naaman go as soon as he was cured?
 What did he say to Elisha?
 What was Elisha's answer?
 What request did Naaman then make?
 Whom only did he say he would worship?
 Yet for what act did he ask pardon?
 What did Elisha reply?
- 2. The Greedy Servant, v. 20-27.**
 What said Gehazi about Elisha refusing gifts?
 What did he resolve to do?
 What did Naaman do when he saw the servant?
 What excuse did the servant give for following?
 What gift did he ask?
 What did Naaman urge him to take?
 By whom did he send back the gifts?
 Where did Gehazi conceal his treasure?
 What question did Elisha ask on his return?
 What was the servant's answer?
 What question did Elisha then ask?
 What punishment did he pronounce?
 What sorrow came on the servant?
 Of what may every sinner be sure? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Teachings of the Lesson.

- Where in this lesson may we find—
1. A warning against greed?
 2. A proof that man cannot deceive God?
 3. An assurance that sin will be punished?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

- Read the story of the man who wanted to buy the power of working miracles for money.
 What did Jesus say about helping afflicted people freely? You will find it in the tenth chapter of Matthew.
 What does Paul say about the love of money?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What did Naaman want Elisha to take from him? **A present.**

Why did Elisha refuse? **He did not want riches.**

Whom did Naaman say he would henceforth worship? **The God of Israel.**

Why did he say he must still bow down before idols? **To satisfy his king.**

What did he fear? **That God would be angry with him.**

What did Elisha say to him? **"Go in peace."**

Who heard Elisha refuse to take Naaman's gift? **Gehazi.**

What kind of a heart had Gehazi? **A covetous heart.**

Why did he follow Naaman? **To get a present.**

What did he tell him? **That Elisha had sent him.**

What did Naaman do? **He gave him more than he asked.**

What did Gehazi think? **That Elisha would not know it.**

Who had showed it to Elisha? **The Lord.**

What dreadful punishment came upon Gehazi? **He became a leper.**

What are the only true riches? **God's love and favor.**

What should we always remember? **"Thou, God, seest me."**

Words With Little People.

THINGS TO REMEMBER.

Sin in thought will some day become sin in act.

One sin always leads to another.

"Be sure your sin will find you out."

Sin will always be punished.

Whisper Motto.

"God sees me."

General Statement.

The cured captain returns in gratitude to the man of God, and makes his solemn avowal of belief in the divinity of Jehovah: "There is no God in all the earth, but in Israel." Reverentially his servants stand around as he declares that henceforth he will worship none but the Lord. With a full heart he offers gold, silver, and costly apparel to the prophet; but that rigid man refuses, and Naaman reluctantly goes his way, having asked for a portion of Israelite earth as a memento of his visit. Just after he has left the house of Elisha, his body glowing with new vigor, his heart with new impulses of love to God and gratitude to his prophet, the covetous Gehazi pursues him, intent on gaining some of the treasures he has seen. He frames a lie to make his application plausible, and not simply falsifies and steals, but commits the awful crime of sacrilege in pretending to work by the order of God's inspired servant. Naaman doubts the gift asked for. Gehazi eagerly follows Naaman's servants with the treasure to the tower where he hides the goods, and then, with an effort to appear innocent, stands in the attitude of obedience before his master. One lie leads to another, and when Elisha asks him where he has been, he makes a false response; then the prophet, speaking for the Lord, passes over to Gehazi the curse of Naaman. We can only understand this narrative when we have a clear recognition of its typical meaning.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 15. Returned. What a glad journey up the sloping meadows to the city gate! **Came, and stood.** There is no pride now in his heart. **Now I know.** That bath in Jordan had given him a serviceable theological education. **There is no God . . . but in Israel.** "A few hours before he had boasted of the rivers of Damascus. Now he cannot even reverence her gods."—*Terry.* **A blessing.** By a figure of speech this phrase is used to indicate the gifts which were supposed to bring blessings with them. (1) *To-day the world has better circumstantial evidence to support God's claims than Naaman had in his healed body.* (2) *If you really are grateful, show your gratitude.*

16. As the Lord liveth. This was a common Hebrew oath. No one seems to have seen any evil in colloquial swearing till Jesus told his disciples to refrain from it. **I will receive none.** Prophets and wonder-workers of every nation were heavily rewarded by those who believed themselves

benefited by them, and there are cases where the biblical prophets accepted presents from those who con-ulted them. See 1 Sam. 9. 7. But there were evidently deep reasons for refusing this gift. "It was a time of hypocrisy, and there were many false prophets in the northern kingdom. This had brought the prophetic office into disrepute and contempt."—*Terry.* Besides, Elisha must have known that he was being mentally contrasted by Naaman with the greedy heathen priests of Damascus. They pretended to a certain power which was marketable, just as medical and legal skill are sold to-day; but the Hebrew prophet was a mere instrument in the hands of Jehovah. Naaman's gratitude was not due to Elisha, but to Elisha's God. **He urged him.** His whole-souled gratitude was sadly disappointed. (3) *He is a double-dyed sinner who makes his religion a means of securing temporal gain.*

17. Two mules' burden of earth. What Naaman wanted this for we cannot tell. It has

been guessed that he desired to use it in the construction of an altar to the God of Israel; that he desired to spread it in some portion of his mansion so that he could worship the Jews' God on his own soil; "that he wished when faraway from Jordan to have the earth of Palestine to rub himself with, for the Orientals often use sand as a substitute for water;" that he regarded it as holy, and desired it for his nightly pillow. In any case, it was a superstitious de-ire, but natural in a heathen.

18. My master. Ben-hadad II. **The house of Rimmon.** The temple of the Syrian deity. **Leaneth on my hand.** This phrase is indicative of Naam n's high position in the state. Oriental monarchs leaned on the arms of their chief viziers. **I bow myself.** Assumed an attitude of reverence. Dr. Clarke believes that this phrase should be read in the past and not in the future tense, thus, "The Lord pardon thy servant because when my master *has* gone, and *has* leaned, I *have bowed*," etc. But it is more probable that with the low religious views of his day, Naaman desired to maintain an exterior of reverence to Rimmon for prudential reasons, while at heart worshiping Jehovah. (4) *How much greater our responsibilities than Naaman's!*

19. Go in peace. This was simply, Farewell. The prophet has sown good seed, and waits to let it bring forth its fruit, expressing no opinion on the point which Naaman had raised.

20. Servant of . . . man of God. The guilt of Gehazi is here indicated. Honored by association with the holy man, holding toward him a relation similar to that which Elisha once held to Elijah, with the prospect of some day succeeding him in the prophetic office, Gehazi turned from the eminence of privilege to the depths of sin. **This Syrian.** This foreigner. To Gehazi it seemed no crime to plunder an alien. **Not receiving.** His sordid soul can see no grandeur in the freeness of the captain's cure.

21, 22. Lighted down. A remarkable evidence of Naaman's reverence for Elisha. He would do honor even to his servant. **Is all well?** Again the Eastern formula of salutation. "Is it peace?" **My master hath sent me.** Notice the steps of Gehazi's guilt. First is the wicked impulse, then the deliberately expressed purpose, then the speedy execution of his guilty plan, and then a lie to help it along. **Mount Ephraim.** Rather, the mountains of Ephraim, the mountain-

ous district in the center of the kingdom. **Talent of silver.** Worth from \$1,500 to \$2,000. A propitious present to ask in behalf of two young men of the common people who had devoted themselves to a semi-monastic life. It is impossible to tell how much harm Gehazi may have done by this lie; for Naaman may have seen through the flimsy story and misjudged the prophet and his religion.

23. Be content. We would say, Please. **Take two.** Though a talent was a large sum to ask for as aid to the prophet, it would appear but little to the man who had brought ten times as much with him, in addition to gold and raiment. Hence he gives him twice what he asks. **In two bags.** In accordance with the Oriental custom of carrying money in bags, each holding a certain sum. **And laid them.** The money and costly robes.

24. Tower. Or, hill. **They departed.** But Gehazi's crime did not depart with the Syrian servants, and its results are galloping down on him faster than Naaman's chariots are going in the opposite direction.

25. Stood before his master. With an innocent face and a guilty heart. **Whence comest thou, Gehazi?** The prophet to whom God had already given the power of miraculous insight would test this man's honesty and give him a chance to return. **No whither.** You cannot tell one lie successfully without the help of another.

26. Went not mine heart. The seer's inward glance had followed every step of the secret errand. **Oliveyards and vineyards.** While bringing his treasures of wickedness home Gehazi had evidently been planning for a grand estate, with orchards of olives and bowers of grapes and fat oxen and servants and maids; but he must have been astonished to find his dream repeated by the prophet.

27. Leprosy of Naaman. The promise of a life-time is blasted in one fatal hour. Not by one sinful act, but by the tendency to sin which that act discovers. And yet our scholars should have the truth firmly impressed upon their minds that single sinful acts may often be the hinges on which their lives will turn from good to evil. This man, who might have sat down in "the goodly fellowship of the prophets" in the words of the Te Deum, must instead sit down in the loathsome company of the lepers.

CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

The effusive gratitude of Naaman, the uniquely liberal spirit of Elisha, and the awful judgment on the man whom the prophet seems to have expected to succeed him, but who ranged himself with Iscariot in the ghastly band of the victims of avarice, all contribute to make this passage one of exceptional interest and importance. Each subject will, how-

ever, be most suitably treated as it comes in the text.

Verse 15. But in Israel. We can hardly expect one born and bred in heathenism to realize all at once what the masses in Israel itself did not comprehend—that Jehovah was not merely a territorial Deity, whose Godhead differed in degree only

from that of the other national gods. That the river of Israel had wrought his cure proved that the God who dwelt in Israel was mighty beyond all others. **Present.** Literally, "blessing." Comp. 1 Sam. 30. 26, etc. The sense of indebtedness to the prophet himself suggests this as an outlet for his gratitude, which was really directed to the divine Healer.

16. Elisha again seeks to efface himself as merely the instrument. Jehovah's prophet would never copy the greed of heathen priests. He would show that the gifts of his Lord were free, because no conceivable offering could ever repay the debt.

17. This idea of holy soil to build an altar on may be often paralleled in the history of human superstitions. We note that Elisha makes no attempt to enlighten Naaman. Many centuries were to pass before men could learn that the All-Father's worship could not be localized; that "spirit and truth" are the only shrine in which he will be adored. As in many other cases, Elisha's tolerant spirit readily permits much that an ordinary Israelite would have been shocked at. Naaman's proposed sacrifices were utterly irregular and involved a very imperfect knowledge of God. But Elisha's truly evangelical principle was to accept the imperfect and let it grow toward perfection.

18. Jehovah pardon. Naaman knew the "jealousy" which distinguished Israel's God from others, and he declared to the prophet that his worship of Rimmon would henceforth be purely formal. It was a wonderful revolution in a Syrian's mind that could make him not only acknowledge another nation's God—that was comparatively a small thing—but abjure his own. **Rimmon.** The name occurs elsewhere only in proper names. Comp. 1 Kings 15. 18, and Zech. 12. 11. The latter of these, denoting a place in Palestine, would seem to suggest that his cult had at some time invaded Israel. The name means "most high." **Leaneth.** As chief of the court he must attend the king in state ceremonies of religion.

19. Go in peace. Elisha does not approve of this outward show of worship to Rimmon, but he will not by rebuking it risk discouraging one in whose soul Jehovah was working. Those were not the times for a public protest against idolatry in a heathen city, for Judaism was not yet ready to be a missionary religion. Only Messiah could make it such. **Little.** Evidently not far, or Gehazi could not have caught up with him. Probably he would travel in a leisurely way, halting in shady places during the heat of the day.

20. This Naaman. The air of contempt with which Gehazi speaks of this "bought heathen" shows him a true spiritual ancestor of the Pharisee or the medieval Jew. That the Gentile was an inferior animal especially created for the Jew to rob and then thank God for his own spiritual elevation above him is a creed that has ever since Gehazi's

day found abundant subscribers. **As Jehovah liveth.** A mocking parody of Elisha's asseveration in verse 16. **Run.** From this passage and chap. 4. 29, we may suppose that Gehazi was remarkable for fleetness and endurance.

21. Lighted down (or "sprung down"). On recognizing Elisha's servant, who had perhaps brought the message of verse 10. The extraordinary condescension of the Syrian general brings out the intensity of his gratitude. **Is all well?** Hebrew, "Is it peace?"

22. Even now. Just after Naaman's departure. **Hill-country.** Beth-el and Gilgal were both included in this district, and members of the prophetic communities would frequently be coming to ask Elisha's counsel and help. The story was extremely plausible. **Talent.** This large sum would be intended to assist the whole of the brotherhood, who were naturally poor. Compare the borrowed ax in the next chapter and other indications. The raiment would of course be for the young men themselves. Note the cunning moderation with which Gehazi asks for only a small part of what he knew Naaman meant originally to bestow on Elisha. True, we do not know how much of the presents mentioned in verse 5 was given to the king.

23. Be content. "Be willing;" much like our "please." Naaman's delight at the chance of doing something for Elisha would evidently have blinded him had Gehazi's story been far less skillful. **Bags.** The word, translated "satchels," is found in Isa. 3. 22; it would seem to be an ornamental bag, into which the mass of silver was placed and the mouth then tied up. The weight is illustrated by there being two men to carry them.

24. Hill. A doubtful word, often used of a part of the fortification of Jerusalem (2 Chron. 27. 3), and applied by Micah (4. 8) to Mount Zion. Perhaps it simply denotes an eminence just above Elisha's house, from which it would be possible for Gehazi to carry the heavy mass of silver down hill to his own chamber. Chap. 6. 33, intimates that the house was in a low-lying part of the town. He would naturally wish to get rid of the men before they came in sight of the house.

25. Gehazi's cunning seems to forsake him in the prophet's presence. He must have been absent some considerable time, and to say he went "no whither" was a very stupid lie for the man who had so cleverly concocted a story for Naaman.

26. Went. It is doubtful whether this can be got out of the Hebrew as it stands, but the LXX. makes it likely that this was the sense of the original text. Note that in Hebrew "heart" does not describe so much the emotions as the intelligence. **Is it a time.** Comp. Eccl. 3. 6. The inopportune-ness of Gehazi's greed lay in its risking the lesson which Elisha wished to teach Naaman by his studied self-effacement. **And oliveyards.** That is, "that thou mightest buy....," as the Vulgate

actually translates. Gehazi's dream was to set himself up as an independent householder, instead of being merely the servant and contemplated successor of a prophet! It should be added that the LXX. and Vulgate agree in reading, "Now therefore thou hast received money....; but the leprosy...."

27. Of Naaman. The nemesis of coveting Naaman's wealth was to receive the curse which had made Naaman, and would now make Gehazi, eager to part with all if only it could be removed. **Thy seed.** For leprosy is hereditary, as we might expect. Of course, it does not follow that Gehazi's race lasted long. "Forever" merely means "as long as thy seed shall continue." **Went out.** Even as his evangelic counterpart "went out" into the night, with Satan in his soul (John 13. 30). **As snow.** Comp. Num. 12. 10. The inserted words, "as white," rather spoil the comparison, which includes also the idea of a sprinkling incrustation covering the body as completely as the "new-fallen mask of snow" covers the fields.

The Lesson Council.

Question 3. *What was Gehazi's crime deserving so severe a punishment?*

Gehazi's crime was covetousness joined with treachery and falsehood. In spirit he was a liar, a traitor, a thief. By his wickedness Naaman's soul is endangered, seeds of a false mercenary view of religion are sown in the heart of a heathen nation, and God's fair work is sadly marred. By as much as Naaman's sincerity and obedience are rewarded, Gehazi's treachery and disobedience are punished. God's ways are equal.—*Rev. Fred Harrison Knight.*

I do not know. My supposition is that his act was a lie to God as well as to man. Such conduct in the Bible always meets with the severest punishment. To Naaman both Gehazi and Elisha were not so much men as representatives of the Lord who had healed him. His gratitude to them went beyond them to Jehovah of hosts. Gehazi took advantage of his credulity and by his act misrepresented the Lord. His conduct was a contradiction of the truth which was being taught by prophet and priest, that salvation is not to be purchased, but is "without money and without price." Gehazi's crime was not only a misrepresentation of Elisha, but of Elisha's God, and was therefore blasphemy implied and deceitfully expressed.—*Rev. George S. Butters.*

He was willing to sell the free gift of God. Naaman's healing was an act of the divine mercy. To have its proper effect religiously, it must stand as such both before Naaman himself and his idolatrous countrymen. This necessity was fully appreciated by Elisha; but Gehazi, thinking more

of himself than of the cause of God, concluded to make money out of the transaction. Against society his crime consisted in lying and theft; against God, in the purpose he showed to sacrifice the divine honor at the shrine of his own covetousness—an awful sin well meriting a dreadful punishment.—*Rev. Henry Tuckley.*

Gehazi was avaricious. Avarice, a very common "root of all evil," led him to lie both to Naaman and to his master. It led him to treachery and slander. He compromised Elisha and virtually slandered him to Naaman. He betrayed the religious trust committed to him, as the helper of Jehovah's prophet. His crime was something like that of Ananias and Sapphira, in which avarice resorted to falsehood even in a holy presence; even where God had manifested his beneficent power.—*Rev. J. S. Davis, B.D.*

It is very easy to detect in Gehazi's conduct and words the meanest sins. Inordinate covetousness, profanity, falsehood, deceit, and hypocrisy are all there. But was not Gehazi a prototype of Judas? He was associated with Elisha as was Judas with Jesus. He had every opportunity of holy instruction and of becoming a man of God. He perverted his blessings and became hardened in sin, and was guilty of the most shameful treason to God and his country. He would neutralize the instruction received by Naaman as to the nature of the true God and sell his master Elisha for gold. By his sin Elisha's motives were impeached and Naaman relieved of a just debt of gratitude that the prophet would impose upon him for the protection of the kingdom and the honor of God.—*O. A. Houghton, D.D.*

Analytical and Biblical Outline.

The Fruit of Covetousness.

I. THE LUST.

1. *Gehazi....servant of Elisha.* v. 20.
"Much is given....required." Luke 12. 48.
2. *I will take somewhat.* v. 20.
"Lust....bringeth forth sin." Jas. 1. 15.
3. *Followed after Naaman.* v. 21.
"Thou shalt not covet." Exod. 20. 17.

II. THE LIE.

1. *My master sent me.* v. 22.
"Lying lips....abomination." Prov. 12. 22.
2. *Give....silver....garments.* v. 22.
"Love of money....all evil." 1 Tim. 6. 10.
3. *Bestowed....in the house.* v. 24.
"Their works are in the dark." Isa. 20. 15.
4. *Stood before his master.* v. 25.
"Mouth....love,....heart....covetousness."
Ezek. 33. 31.
5. *Went no whither.* v. 25.
"Lying lips....deceitful tongue." Psa. 120. 2.

III. THE LEPROSY.

1. *Leprosy . . . cleave unto thee.* v. 26.
"E. ten the fruit of lies." H. s. 10. 13.
2. *Thy seed forever.* v. 26.
3. *"Troubleth his own house."* Prov. 15. 27.
3. *He went out . . . a leper.* v. 27.
"Sin will find you out." Num. 32. 23.

Thoughts for Young People.

Lessons from Gehazi's Fall.

1. *Environments do not make character.* The highest privileges or the most godly companionships will not, of themselves, make a man good. Obadiah feared God in the court of wicked Ahab; Gehazi served Satan in the house of holy Elisha.
2. *Sin links on to sin.* One sin surely leads to another and a greater. A man cannot break one commandment and then stop at the edge of another.
3. *Sin brings its punishment in its train.* Not always as swift as Gehazi's, yet always as sure. "God is not mocked."
4. *The harvest of sin is always greater than the seed.* A man sows the wind and reaps the whirlwind.
5. *Life is a training-school.* The leprosy, though terrible, may have proved merciful if it saved Gehazi from something worse—the destruction of his soul.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Gehazi with a sneer is looking at Naaman's chariot just about to roll away from Elisha's door. To think that his master would not take any compensation for healing that leper! A pity that all that treasure should go back to Syria untouched! Naaman wanted to leave it, too. He would take it as a favor to part with a portion of it, at least. Any one looking? The master's sharp eye at any door, any window? No-body sees Gehazi, and he concludes on his own account to take something from Naaman.

O! He runs.

Naaman sees him. He stops his chariot, for that urgent haste of Gehazi must mean trouble.

Up comes Gehazi, panting, breathless, heated, flushed. Any body watching? Any body listening? Is Elisha near? Gehazi turns, looks every way, and then faces Naaman.

"Is all well?" the late leper would know.

"All is well," Gehazi assures this man made whole, and a grateful man.

All is well, but—O, false tongue! O, tricky hands! O, black heart! Elisha wants money and garments for two poor young prophets just arrived! Naaman suspects nothing. One talent only wanted! Take two, Gehazi, urges the grateful captain. He will have it so. Those poor fellows must be cared for. Yes; he loads two servants, each

with a bag of silver and a change of garments, and they bear them before Gehazi. The late servant is now a master. He never felt so grand in all his life, walking off in this fine fashion. Elisha might have had Gehazi's chance. Foolish Elisha! Is he anywhere near, looking, searching, inspecting? Of course not!

This procession of two treasure-loaded servants and the august Gehazi reaches the humble quarters of Elisha. It would be just as well not to let Elisha see them; is his far-seeing eye at any door-crack or window-lattice? No one detects Gehazi, and the treasure might be borne anywhere, Gehazi may reason, but—for—safe—keeping, Gehazi packs his booty away in a snug and secret nook!

The servants have gone.

Gehazi is alone.

He stops a few minutes to get his breath in order, adjusts his robes, slips off his sandals, composes his features, gets up a calm, sedate, holy smile, and presents himself before Elisha.

The prophet looks up.

What searching eyes he has!

"Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" he asks in incisive tones.

Gehazi has gone "no whither." He says it in such guiltless tones.

"Went not mine heart with thee?" asks Elisha.

How cold and curling those tones, how heavy and how far down in Gehazi's soul they sink! However, the servant then may think that Elisha does not know anything definite, and Gehazi will go out calm and triumphant, his face flushed with the thought of victory.

But Elisha tells Gehazi where he has been and what he has received! Gehazi is in a paralyzing awe. And what? Gehazi is to become a leper! His face is ashy pale.

His eyes stare as if turned to stone. His voice is frozen in his throat. He turns to go out, but the pallor in his face is spreading over his body. He goes out white as snow—leper-white. O, Gehazi! Gehazi!

By Way of Illustration.

Veres 20-24. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." I used to think in my early Christian life that if I were able to stand for twenty years I need fear no fall. But the nearer you get to the cross the fiercer the battle. Satan aims high. He went among the twelve and singled out the treasurer, Judas, and the chief apostle, Peter. I am told that the only side upon which Edinburgh Castle was successfully assailed was where the rocks were steepest, and where the garrison thought themselves secure. If any man thinks he can alone resist the devil at any one point, he needs special watch there, for the tempter comes that way.—*Moody.*

Gehazi could not have been a very bad man or he would not have been Elisha's servant. His only sin may have been covetousness. A slip may be sound in all save one little spot. At that spot the water enters, and soon the slip sinks. As long as there remains one weak place where Satan can effect an entrance, we are as weak as that one place.

A bridge which is a foot too short fails to reach across a chasm. A race may be lost by a length as well as a mile. The Lord Chamberlain of England was sent to examine the cellars of the House of Commons, and returned with the report that he found there five and twenty barrels of gunpowder; that he had removed ten of them, and he hoped the rest would do no harm! The man who thinks to serve God and mammon, and divides his time between the Lord and the devil, will be found to have made a great mistake.

Verse 26. Gehazi forgot that God's eye was on him all the while. General Lafayette has told how at one time he was confined in prison, and in the door of his cell there was a little hole just large enough to permit the eye of a man when placed at it to command a view of the whole cell. At that door a sentry was placed, his eye at the hole, following the prisoner's every movement. Sentries came and went, but night and day he felt that an eye was upon him. Lafayette was a man of great mental power, yet he tells us that that eye constantly glaring upon him was horrible, unbearable, maddening. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

Verse 27. "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." The bean contains the plant and the flower and the pod in embryo; and I am sure when I plant it that it will produce them and nothing else. Every action of our life is embryonic, and according as it is right or wrong it will surely bring forth the sweet flowers of joy or the poison fruits of sorrow. " whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Verse 27. "The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee." Herod the Great, the first persecutor of Christianity, was overwhelmed with agonizing disease, and his numerous family was extinct in a hundred years. Pontius Pilate, who condemned Christ, was soon after expelled from office and committed suicide. The persecutor Nero, after slaying thousands of Christians, among them Peter and Paul, attempted to take his own life, but failing through cowardice, called others to his aid. The persecutor Domitian was murdered by his own people. So were the Emperors Caius, Severus, and Heliogabalus. Scarcely one of the prominent persecutors of the Church escaped signal retribution. The Emperor Claudius was eaten by worms. Maximinus put out the eyes of thousands of Christians;

soon after a fearful disease of the eyes broke out among his people, of which he himself died in great agony. Valens, who caused eighty Christians to be sent to sea in a ship and burned alive, himself defeated by the Goths, fled to a cottage, where he was burnt alive.—*Foster's Cyclopaedia.*

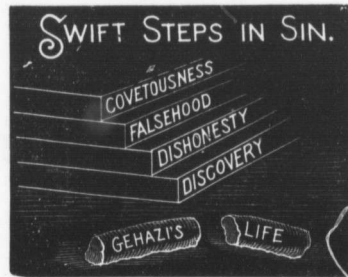
The Teachers' Meeting.

Review time, place, and environment.... Get explanations of the phrases, "servant of Elisha," "this Syrian," "talent of silver," "be content," "tower," "no whither," "oliveyards and vineyards," "thy seed."... Sins committed by Gehazi. Covetousness, disloyalty, lying, theft, etc., etc.... Views taught by the lesson: 1. Concerning God. 2. Concerning sin. 3. Concerning punishment.... Trace the growth of Gehazi's sin. Are such sins committed now?... A lesson picture, or series of pictures, can be made an effective conveyer of the spiritual truths of this lesson.

References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 18: Rimmon, 337; etiquette, 337. Ver. 21: Mark of respect, 35.... FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 594, 947, 958, 2745, 9281, 9282, 5307; Poetical, 2676. Vers. 20-27: Prose, 6641, 9255. Ver. 22: Prose, 7904, 7751, 10367, 10369, 10371, 3744-3754. Ver. 26: 1566, 9284, 9289, 5050, 5054, 9256; Poetical, 2675. Ver. 27: Prose, 10199.

Blackboard.



The swift steps of sin! how quickly they lead down to destruction. Would it were possible for the blackboard to set forth the hatefulness of sin, and how much God abhors all sin. There is no such thing as passing over little sins. If it were not for the little sins there would be no great ones. Gehazi's downfall no doubt commenced with a little greed for gain. Then came covetousness, that corrupts the soul, and he took his first step. What was that? Then the second, and so on down to the bottom. The broken column represents his ruined life broken by the fall. More steps than are shown

in the diagram may be drawn, and all the successive steps from a bad thought, down to the last act may be shown.

SIN RUINED GEHAZI'S LIFE.
WILL RUIN MINE.
GOD ABHORS IT. SHALL I LOVE IT!

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Sin a Disease.*

Review. Call back the last lesson. Pictures help greatly in reviewing lessons. The teacher who has a "collection" of pictures ready for use will seldom fail to find something suggestive. Lesson helps and picture papers are so abundantly illustrated these days that with a little thought and care such a collection may easily be made.

A picture of a leper, a chariot, the little maid, the river Jordan—any of these would recall the interesting story told in the last lesson.

To be taught: 1. That God's gifts are free. 2. That to covet riches is a sin. 3. That sin must be punished.

1. Tell every child to take a deep breath. Explain that we could not live without the air all around us both day and night. God gives it to us. It costs us nothing. Birds and animals and plants all breathe it. Tell that there are places where the air gets poisoned. Then it hurts us to breathe it. But there is plenty of sweet, pure air to keep us well and strong if we will only breathe it.

Teach that God's love and grace are free, like the air. They are for every body, without money and without price. The reason why so many are not strong and well in their spiritual life is because they do not breathe the pure air of God's love; they go where the air is poisoned with sin.

Recall the great cure that was wrought for Naaman. He wanted to pay for it. Tell of the rich gifts he brought. Why would not Elisha accept them? All that God wants in return for his gift of healing is a loving and obedient heart. Tell how Naaman showed that such a heart had been given to him.

2. Who was Elisha's servant? Print "Gehazi" on the board. Would Gehazi hear about the true God from Elisha? Yes; and he knew the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet." But he only knew it to say with his lips. He did not know it in his heart, so that he could act it in his life. Teach here and always that only those truths are truly known which are acted out in the life. Tell how Gehazi wanted some of the rich gifts which Naaman brought, and do not fail to show that his spirit was the very same that leads a child now to want some pretty toy or something delicious to eat so much that he will lie and deceive to get it. Let children tell which one of Jesus's disciples loved riches, and the awful sin to which it led him.

Use lesson symbol here. At the top of the board



make a sun, with rays falling down upon and all around the heart. Explain that they cannot get in because the heart is closed by the love of money.

3. Tell story of a little girl who stole a five-cent piece and bought candy. 'She deceived her mamma, but was so troubled when she woke in the dark night, feeling ill and unhappy, that she confessed it all to mamma, and asked to be forgiven.

Tell the story of Gehazi's covetousness and sin. Show how it made him lie and deceive. Teach Golden Text. God can see all we do and think. Elisha's eye did not see Gehazi take the silver from Naaman, but God's eye did, and God told it to Elisha, for sin must be punished. Tell the sad punishment that came to Gehazi. Recall the teaching about leprosy. It is the picture of sin.

Sin in the heart is like leprosy of the body. Some day it is sure to come to sight and show the ugly marks where all can see them.

Only Jesus can cure the sin that we think is out of sight. He will cure it freely and gladly for us if we will ask him and do what he bids us.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

I am poor and blind.
Rock of ages.
Lord, I hear of showers.
Is this thy time.
I heard the voice.
Jesus, my all.
Dare to do right.

The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. What did the grateful Naaman ask Elisha to accept? **A costly present.**
2. For what did Naaman ask Elisha's pardon? **For bowing to a false god.**
3. How did Gehazi secure part of the present that Elisha had refused? **By telling a lie.**
4. How did Elisha see things done in his absence? **By God's power.**
5. How was Gehazi punished? **He was made a leper.**

CATECHISM QUESTION.

17. Is this the reason why we believe the Old Testament?

There are many other reasons, but this is the chief reason. Our Lord honoured the Old Testament, and we must honour it, and receive it as the word of God.

B. C. 893.]

LESSON XII. ELISHA'S DEFENDER.

[March 22.

GOLDEN TEXT. Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. 2 Kings 6. 16.

Authorized Version.

2 Kings 6. 8-18. [Commit to memory verses 15-17.]

8 Then the king of Syr'i-a warred against Is'ra-el, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Is'ra-el, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syr'i-ans are come down.

10 And the king of Is'ra-el sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.

11 Therefore the heart of the king of Syr'i-a was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not show me which of us is for the king of Is'ra-el?

12 And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king; but E-li'sha, the prophet that is in Is'ra-el, telleth the king of Is'ra-el the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber.

13 And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Do'than.

14 Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

15 And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, a host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

17 And E-li'sha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about E-li'sha.

18 And when they came down to him, E-li'sha prayed unto the Lord, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of E-li'sha.

Revised Version.

- 8 Now the king of Syr'i-a warred against Is'ra-el; and he took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp. And the man of God sent unto the king of Is'ra-el, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syr'i-ans are coming down. And the king of Is'ra-el sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of; and he saved himself there, not once nor twice. And the heart of the king of Syr'i-a was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not show me which of us is for the king of Is'ra-el? And one of his servants said, Nay, my lord, O king; but E-li'sha, the prophet that is in Is'ra-el, telleth the king of Is'ra-el the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber. And he said, Go and see where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Do'than. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host with horses and chariots was round about the city. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And E-li'sha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about E-li'sha. And when they came down to him, E-li'sha prayed unto the Lord, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of E-li'sha.

TIME.—B. C. 893. **PLACE.**—Dothan, a city north of Samaria. **RULERS.**—Probably Jehoram, King of Israel, and the King of Syria, probably Ben-hadad II. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The ministry of angels.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Elisha's defenders. 2 Kings 6. 8-18.
 Tu. The mighty helper. Deut. 4. 32-40.
 W. Joyful trust. Isa. 27. 1-8.
 Th. "I am with thee." Isa. 43. 1-7.
 F. A safe refuge. Psa. 91. 1-12.
 S. A sure defense. Psa. 125.
 S. A present help. Psa. 46.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 67, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Not all the blood of beasts.
 No. 66, New Canadian Hymnal.
 The great Physician now is near.
 No. 72, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Arise, my soul, arise.

DOMINION HYMNAL.

Hymns, Nos. 161, 282, 30.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.**1. Elisha's Enemies, v. 8-15.**

Who was the King of Syria?

Who was the King of Israel?

Who was the man of God?

What does the statement of the King of Syria, in verse 8, mean?

How did the man of God know that the Syrians had come?

Why did the King of Israel send to the place that the man of God had warned him of?

What did the King of Syria suspect?

How may his servants have known of Elisha?

How could the Syrian king suppose that the capture of such a wonder-worker would fetter him?

What startling discovery did the servant of the man of God make early in the morning?

What quality prevented Elisha indulging in fear?

Have we as good reason for confidence as he?

2. Elisha's Defenders, v. 16-18.

What did the young man see?

Why did Elisha wish them blinded or confused?

Did Elisha lie?

Is a lie ever justifiable?

Practical Teachings.

Wherein does this lesson teach—

1. That it is foolish to put confidence in human power?

2. That our best safety is in the guidance and protection of God?

3. That nothing can be hid from omniscience?

4. That faithfulness to God may get us into temporary difficulties?

5. That faith takes away all fear?

6. That we have unseen allies?

Hints for Home Study.

1. Make out a complete list of the angelic visits and visions recorded in the Bible, classifying them:

1.) As defenders.

2.) As messengers.

2. Indicate the appearance, so far as you can, of these angelic visitors.

3. What is the teaching of the Bible concerning the ministry of angels?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.**1. Elisha's Enemies, v. 8-15.**

Who waged war against Israel?

Who warned the King of Israel of the enemy's plans?

What was his warning?

What did the King of Israel do when warned?

How was the Syrian king affected by these results?

Who did he think had revealed his plans?

What did a servant say about Elisha?

What command did the Syrian give?

What was he told?

What preparation did he make for taking the prophet?

What did Elisha's servant see in the morning?

What did he say to his master?

Who protects God's people from their enemies? (Psa. 34. 7.)

2. Elisha's Defenders, v. 16-18.

What assurance of safety did Elisha give his servant? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

What prayer did he offer for the servant?

How was the prayer answered?

What did Elisha ask for his enemies?

What answer to this prayer came?

To whom should we commit punishment? (Rom. 12. 19.)

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That God knows men's thoughts?

2. That God can defeat wicked men's plans?

3. That God can protect us from all our foes?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find the story of an angel that a donkey saw but a man could not see.

What prophet saw a splendid vision of four chariots with horses?

Find a text in one of the psalms about the encampment of the angel of the Lord?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who made war upon Israel? **The King of Syria.**

Whom did he plan to take prisoner? **The King of Israel.**

Who made this plan known to Elisha? **The Lord.**

What did Elisha do? **He warned the king.** Did this happen more than once? **Yes; several times.**

What did the King of Syria ask his servants to tell him? **Who the traitor was.**

What did they tell him? **That Elisha made known his plans.**

What did the king say? **"Go and spy where he is."**

What did he want to do? **Take him prisoner.**

Where was Elisha? **At Dothan.**

What did the king send there to take him? **A great host.**

Who was frightened when he saw the army? **Elisha's servant.**

What did Elisha tell him? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

What did the servant see when the Lord opened his eyes? **Horses and chariots of fire around Elisha.**

What did Elisha ask the Lord to do? **To make the Syrians blind.**

Who is the Deliverer of his people? **The Lord.**

Words with Little People.

God's angels are all around us, though we cannot see them with our eyes of flesh. How they want to save us from harm, especially from the worst of

harm, Sir! Do we believe this? God says so. Read Matt. 18. 10. Real faith gives open eyes. Elisha was not afraid, because he believed God.

Whisper Motto.

"I will not fear."

General Statement.

Ben-hadad II., of Syria, was Israel's implacable foe. He inherited great power from his royal father, and brought thirty-two vassal kings with him when he first besieged Samaria (1 Kings 20. 1). Ahab was forced to submit to him as a vassal, but afterward, under prophetic direction, fought and utterly destroyed a great Syrian army, and was sharply censured for sparing the life of the merciless Syrian king. Ben-hadad did not venture to renew the war while Ahab lived, but lost no time in attacking his successors—King Ahaziah and King Jehoram. Probably truces—such as that during which Naaman was healed—were frequent, but guerilla warfare seems to have prevailed most of the time on the frontier. God, who had kept from Elisha's knowledge the sorrow of the Shunammite woman, revealed to him all the plottings of the Syrian king as soon as his own council knew them, and more than once Elisha warned the King of Israel against a coming attack. His fame had already filled Damascus, and Ben-hadad, with the same low estimate of a Hebrew prophet that had characterized his attempted negotiations in behalf of Naaman, determined to rob his rival of a seer with such marvelous powers and attach him to the company of astrologers and soothsayers which doubtless surrounded his throne. Learning that he was at Dothan, on the edge of Mount Carmel, he sent thither by night a detachment of soldiers to seize him. The morning dawned and revealed a cordon of glittering armor and a forest of spears encircling the city. Such a sight might well spread terror; but Elisha was calm, for he knew that with God on his side he was more than a conqueror. In answer to the prophet's prayer his servant's spiritual eyes were opened, and he saw—what his master had seen all the while—the hill surrounded by fiery warriors protecting the man of God. No wonder that with such defenders Elisha walked forth to meet his enemies. God blinded their eyes, and the host that came forth as conquerors were at the prophet's mercy.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 8. Then. Better, now. **The king of Syria.** Ben-hadad II. The Syrians do not seem to have been quite as clearly defined a race as the Hebrews or the Hittites. Damascus was so located as to be always of prime importance. Whenever a great tyranny like that of the Assyrians or the Egyptians or the Babylonians dominated Asia Minor, Damascus became the head of its chief western province. Whenever such tyrannies decayed an independent kingdom sprang up around Damascus, and that kingdom was called Syria. **Warred against.** War was the normal condition of ancient nations, as usual as peace is now. **Took counsel with his servants.** Consulted his aids-de-camp. **My camp.** Rather, my ambulance, the point where I will make an unexpected attack. Very likely he hoped thus to capture Jehoram.

9. The man of God. Such was Elisha, pervaded by God's Spirit, enlightened by God's wisdom, protected by God's power, fulfilling God's will. **Sent unto the king.** Elisha stood in far friendlier relations with the Israelitish kings than Elijah had done; nevertheless there are indications that the peace between them was that of armed neutrality rather than that of friendship. **Beware.** A fine old English word, that simply means, Be aware, or, as we would now say, Look out. God might have saved Israel from its enemies by raising mighty armies or inspiring great generals, but that all might

see that salvation was due to the God of Israel it came through the man of God. **Are come down.** Are coming down. Josephus makes the scene dramatic by telling us that the King of Israel was starting on a hunting-party when Elisha warned him. (1) *It is safe to keep away from places of temptation and danger.* (2) *He who is guided by God's wisdom is well guided.*

10. Sent to the place. Sent spies there, or possibly sent troops to frustrate Ben-hadad's plans. **The man of God told him.** (3) *The State has no better friends than the ministers of God. Saved himself there.* Literally, he was "wary;" he followed Elisha's directions. (4) *It is well to follow the counsels of a man of God.* (5) *Heeding advice is as important as hearing it. Not once nor twice.* A phrase meaning many times.

11. Sore troubled. Ben-hadad had cause for anxiety. Unprecedented military tactics were being used by his foes. **His servants.** His aids, his counselors, as above. **Which of us.** A tyrant naturally suspects treason; but Ben-hadad could hardly have done a more foolish thing than to thus blurt out his suspicions.

12. The prophet that is in Israel. Great deeds and great character soon make a man known. He could not be "hid" (Mark 7. 24). **Thou speakest in thy bed-chamber.** Words which have remarkable force when we remember the privacy and seclusion of an Oriental harem. (6) *God*

hears and sees our most carefully hidden words and actions.

13. Go and spy. The King of Syria supposed that Elisha was a magician of uncommon skill; and magicians by turn exhibited marvelous power and marvelous weakness, else he would not have entertained the idea that he could capture him by surprise. To take such a magician personally to his court would be as great an achievement as to capture the King of Israel. **Dothan.** A village on the southern border of the plain of Esdraelon, about twelve miles north of Samaria; the place to which Joseph went in search of his brethren.

14. A great host. A force much larger than would ordinarily beset to capture one man; but this man was a magician. **By night.** But he who had been aware of Ben-hadad's plans in Damascus was not left ignorant of his night march in Dothan. **Compassed the city.** Dothan was evidently unguarded. (7) *How often men form their plans without taking God into account.*

15. The servant. One who had recently taken the place of the disgraced Gehazi. He had only a limited acquaintance with the prophet's power. **Risen early.** Perhaps aroused by the noise of the marching Syrians. **A host.** Not a camp, but an army ready to make an attack. **How shall we do?** The young man with quick wit knows why these Syrians have come. They are not ordinary marauders, who seem for once to have outwitted his prophetic master. (8) *How much of anxiety comes from ignorance and want of faith!* (9) *If you are always faithful to God you may expect attacks from the ungodly.*

16. Fear not. God and God's ministers were

kept pretty busy in Bible times saying these two words, and to this day Christians hardly recognize how sinful it is to be afraid. The omnipotent God is our guard. **They that be with us.** Any body could see the Syrians. It took eyes of faith to see the army of angels. **More than they that be with them.** "One with God is a majority." Dr. Terry stoutly maintains the real existence of this host of angelic warriors and army of heaven.

17. Elisha prayed. In behalf of his servant. (10) *Grace never shuts up the heart against affection.* **Opened the eyes.** "For he stood in blank bewilderment, terrified at sight of the enemy, not knowing what to make of his master's words."—Terry. What wonders we should see if God's veils were taken down! **The mountain was full.** The whole hill-side was blazing with divine majesty. (11) *Never forget that we have unseen allies.* **Round about Elisha.** The most natural meaning would be that the angelic army was an inner circle standing opposed to the Syrians.

18. When they came down. The Assyrian host. Doubtless Elisha and his servant, "encouraged by the heavenly vision," went forth from the city, and the Syrians started to capture them. **Blindness.** Probably not a conscious obscuration of sight, but rather a mental blindness and confusion. The object was not to do them harm, but to make them realize their helplessness when antagonizing Jehovah. Read in the succeeding verses how they were led captive to Samaria, how they were saved and restored by their captors, and how a happy result followed.

CAMBRIDGE NOTES.

We have no means of knowing whether this event took place after or before that of chap. 5, as the history seems to be arranged without regard to chronology, merely presenting a series of pictures from the life of Elisha. If after, we must assume it was considerably later, under a new king, and certainly with a different commander-in-chief. It is fairly clear that chap. 8, 4, *et.*, must come before chap. 5, as a leper could not in Israel thus hold converse with a king. The purpose of the present narrative is to show that the "angel of Jehovah encampeth around" his servant—not only the great Elijah, a man great almost beyond the measure of men, but also the humbler successor, the most intensely human of all the prophets, has this divine munition ever around him, unseen by all but the illuminated of heaven.

Verse 8. Syria. On the whole it seems most likely that Ben-hadad is meant (verse 24), but we have too scanty material to bring into order what we are told in these chapters of the relations between Syria and Israel. **Warred.** A guerilla

warfare is described here, predatory bands being dispatched into Israel to inflict damage where they could by ambuscades and forays. **Camp.** Josephus and the Vulgate support the interpretation of this (with a slight change of text) as a direction to set an ambush, the former adding that it was intended to entrap the king while he was on a hunting expedition.

9. If this king was really Jehoram the interposition of Elisha on his behalf is a striking exhibition of the divine mercy. Comp. verse 32; chap. 3, 13, 14.

10. Sent a messenger to see if Elisha's words were true, or, perhaps, sent a force strong enough to dislodge the enemy. **Not once.** The Syrian king renewed the attempt at other times and places, only to be repeatedly foiled.

11. Which of us? The LXX. and Vulgate read, "Who is betraying me to the king?"

12. Elisha. That these Syrian courtiers know so much about Elisha is a point somewhat in favor

of placing this event after the healing of Naaman, before which he was unknown in Syria. **Bed-chamber.** Comp. Eccl. 10. 20.

13. Evidently the spies of Syria were tolerably free in their movements about Israel. The king may have thought that the prophet would enter his service and assist him with this miraculous clairvoyance. **Dothan.** Said by Jerome to lie twelve miles north (? N.-E.) of Samaria. It is mentioned in Gen. 37. 17, and elsewhere only in the book of Judith.

14. Host of foot-soldiers besides the chariotry. It was of course expected that the townfolk would attempt a rescue. The town was built on a hill, and the Syrian army surrounded the walls so that no one could leave. Every preparation was made to ensure the success of their expedition.

15. Servant. Better, as margin, "minister." The word appears also in chap. 4. 43, and seems to describe an attendant differing in function from Gehazi. It describes Joshua's relation to Moses, and the verb usually is applied to the worship of God. So, though such exceptions as Esth. 2. 2; 1 Kings 1. 15, make it uncertain, we should expect it here to denote a closer and more personal service.

Gone forth. Out of the house, to which he would hasten back when he suddenly saw the Syrian host. The subsequent vision was perhaps seen from the housetop.

16. Comp. 2. Chron. 32. 7; Rom. 8. 31.

17. Open his eyes. It was a revelation of a state of things already existing, like Jacob's dream (Gen. 28. 12)—note the order, "ascending and descending"). Those "ministering spirits" are nearer to us ever than we have grace to see. **Mountain.** On which the town was built. The ring of angel warriors encircled the crest of the hill where Elisha dwelt and shut out the view of the enemy below. **Fire.** A pointed reference to chap. 2. 11. The host encompasses Elisha because it is he who is being encompassed by earthly foes, who seek to capture him.

18. When they. The text as it stands is barely intelligible. We must assume that Elisha and his servant went down the hill through the Syrian host, who only found them out when they had got below them. A simple correction, supported by the Syrian Version, makes all clear—"when they came down to them"—that is, the beleaguering host. **People.** Perhaps connecting "heathen nation." **Blindness.** Comp. Gen. 19. 11. In both places the word describes a kind of mist or illusion. They could see Elisha, but could not recognize him nor the place he led them to. His words that follow mean, "This is not the road, nor this the city, where you are to find Elisha." Their incapacity to recognize ordinary objects round them is strongly contrasted with the supernatural clearness of vision granted to Elisha's servant in the use of the same words of prayer (verse 20).

The Lesson Council.

Question 4. *What was the relation between the prophet and the king in Israel?*

This question does not give any period, so that the answer must be general. The germs of the prophetic and regal order are found in the Mosaic law, but they were not developed until there was a demand for them. Originally the priests taught and ruled the Jewish people in things spiritual, but they became corrupt, and in Samuel's time the prophetic office was instituted, or rather evolved, to supplement and complete the work of the priest. Samuel was the reformer of his time, and it was by his institution that Israel had the school of prophets who were to be so necessary to their education and training. During this time Israel demanded a king who "should lead the people to battle in war and execute judgment and justice in time of peace." The people looked to him, but he was supposed to get his instruction from the prophet, who was in an especial sense the servant and messenger of Jehovah. The faithfulness of the prophet and the character of the king determine the relation at different periods.—*Rev. George S. Butters.*

The prophet was the representative and mouth-piece of Jehovah, and was so regarded, for the most part, by the national conscience. Originally God himself was king over this people, and, though now they had a human monarch, the Almighty still claimed their allegiance and still voiced to them his will. The prophet was the king's Bible, so to speak—a living epistle to him of the divine purposes. In this lesson he successfully guides the king in military affairs; at other times he speaks, with equal authority and effect, to condemn and punish both king and people.—*Rev. Henry Tuckley.*

The government in Israel was a theocracy. The king reigned by permission of God, who was the Lawgiver and the Supreme Ruler. The prophet was the spokesman for the King of kings, to counsel and reprove those who sat on the throne. Samuel had the right to direct and rebuke Saul; and Nathan, without fear, spoke God's truth to David. As Israel wandered from God the prophets became more zealous in denouncing kings and exhorting the people. Many of them, "of whom the world was not worthy," were driven to "deserts and mountains," to "dens and caves of the earth;" but, though "destitute, afflicted, tormented," they were superior in God's government to reigning kings.—*Rev. J. S. Davis, B.D.*

The prophet was in a high sense the representative of the will of God and the vindicator of his righteousness. Both prophet and king derived their authority from the same source, but the prophet exercised his authority upon a higher plane. He was the constant quantity in the Jewish polity, for

the king or against him, his most powerful ally or most determined opponent, according as the king was true to God or false to duty.—*Rev. Fred Harrison Knight.*

The prophet called of God was the medium of communicating his will to the people. Accepted as such by the nation, he was strongly entrenched in his religious character and divine call, and hence served as a check to the king in any tendency to depart from God's commandments. He anointed the king, thus adding the outward and visible call to the inner call of the Spirit. He rebuked the king and pronounced the judgments of God upon royal wickedness. The prophetic office was the safeguard of the kingdom. So is the living pulpit of to-day the safeguard of the nation.—*O. A. Houghton, D.D.*

Analytical and Biblical Outline.

The Man of God.

I. HIS CHARACTER.

- 1. Patriotism.** "*Sent unto the king.*" v. 9.
"Be subject unto the higher powers." Rom. 13. 1.
"To the king as supreme." 1 Pet. 2. 13.
- 2. Courage.** "*Fear not.*" v. 16.
"The righteous...bold as a lion." Prov. 28. 1.
"Will fear no evil." Psa 23. 4.
- 3. Faith.** "*More...that be with us.*" v. 16.
"The angel...encampeth." Psa. 34. 7.
"If God be for us, who...against." Rom. 8. 31.
- 4. Prayer.** "*Lord, I pray thee.*" v. 17.
"Prayer of a righteous man." Jas. 5. 16.
"Beginning of...supplications...came." Dan. 9. 23.
- 5. Mercy.** "*Blindness.*" v. 18.
"Lord, open the eyes." v. 20.
"Set bread and water before them." v. 23.

II. HIS POWER.

- 1. To know.** "*Thither the Syrians.*" v. 9.
"Know the mind of the Lord." Rom. 11. 34.
"Revealed...by his Spirit." 1 Cor. 2. 10.
- 2. To help.** "*Saved himself there.*" v. 10.
"Bless them that bless thee." Gen. 12. 3.
"God hath given thee...with thee." Acts 27. 24.
- 3. To encourage.** "*Opened the eyes.*" v. 17.
"Be thou...very courageous." Josh 1. 7.
"Be strong in the Lord." Eph. 6. 10.

Thoughts for Young People.

Plans in Life.

1. "*Remember thy Creator.*" In forming our plans in life it is a great mistake to reckon without God, for such plans will surely come to naught (verse 8).

2. *Consult good men.* Those plans are well undertaken which are by the advice of a man of God, for those who live in fellowship with God are safe counselors (verse 9).

3. *Avoid harmful associations.* In our plans it is wise to avoid all places, all men, and all acts which are dangerous. The king was wise not to pass "where the Syrians are come down" (verse 10).

4. "*No weapon formed against thee shall prosper.*" The plans of worldly and wicked men against God's servants and God's cause are sure to fail, however strong they may seem to be (verse 18, 14).

5. "*How blest a foundation!*" He who dwells in the arms of God is safe against earthly enemies, and surrounded by angelic guards (verse 15-17).

Lesson Word-Pictures.

The King of Syria is in a quandary. He walks in perplexity his palace floor. All in vain! He marches his troops against Israel. He pitches his camp. He plans his battles. Lo, Israel understands all those movements and nimbly avoids his Syrian pursuers.

"*Treason, treason!*" concludes Syria's king. "Let me hunt up the traitor who runs and tells all my plans!"

He calls his counselors. He states his perplexity. He makes his charge of treason. Who will produce the traitor?

There is none in Syria, somebody tells him. The traitor-ears, the traitor-lips are over in Israel. Has not the king heard of one Elisha, the great prophet? Elisha's ears are in the chambers of Syria's palace; Elisha's mouth is in the council-hall of Israel's king.

Ah, it is a mystery no longer to the King of Syria. That Elisha! He was the one who healed Naaman. He is doing measureless harm now to Syria's king, who says, "I will hunt down, seize, and confine Elisha. Then I have in my hand all Israel. Now a cage for that meddlesome prophet-bird!"

Where will the king find this meddlesome bird? In Dothan, he is told. Then Dothan shall be the cage in which that evil bird shall be made a prisoner. Away rush the horses! Off rattle the chariots! A great host of warriors the king also sends, and they go in pride to cage Elisha. To make it absolutely sure they swoop down upon Dothan in the night. Nobody will know of their coming. Nobody will see them, and nobody shall hear them. The men hush their voices. The horses are driven carefully. The chariot-wheels go softly. Ha-ha! Elisha is in a pen, a trap, a box, a cage! Caught at last! Caged, and only Syria's king can let him out!

All this time Dothan sleeps. Elisha sleeps. Elisha's servant sleeps. Who has had any ugly dreams? No one, certainly, under Elisha's roof.

As for any fear of the Syrians, not a Dothanite but that despises them. Dothan has Elisha. He will keep the enemy at a distance. In this calm confidence Elisha's servant walks out early in the morning. He steps to the walls. He looks off upon the outside country. What? He steps back in affright! O, the chariots, the horses, the tents, the men, stretching all around the city, one strong girdle of hate and cruelty and death, a vise soon squeezing closer and closer, a cord around the neck of Dothan that will be drawn tighter and tighter, strangling all its life! And not the least of the evils is this, that Elisha is in a cage of which the enemy is the keeper, in a jail of which the Syrian army is the jailer! The servant of the prophet hurries away from that awful sight. He runs, he flies, and reports to Elisha. But the master is not disturbed. He cries to the servant, "Far not!" And then lowly and in faith he cries to God, and beseeches him to open the servant's eyes. And God opens them! What a splendor like the morning breaks upon the servant's vision! All about Dothan, all above the idolater's camp, lo! the host of the living God! Rank upon rank, chariot after chariot, column succeeding column, a vast array of fire! There is no stir of voice or weapon. There is no clash of spear and shield, no roll of chariot-wheel. It is one glorious, silent war-host in the canopy of heaven, and amid awful stillness above the heights of Dothan, halting in long, fiery battle-line.

Elisha is safe.

By Way of Illustration.

Verses 13, 14, 15. Elisha's persecution brought out a glorious revelation. The very fact that you have troubles is a proof of His faithfulness, for you have got one half of his legacy and you will have the other half. Christ's last will and testament has two portions in it: "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" you have got that. The next clause is, "In me ye shall have peace;" you have that too. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world;" that is yours also.—*Spurgeon.*

During Dr. Payson's last illness a friend, coming into his room, said: "Well, I am sorry to see you lying here on your back." "Do you know what God puts us on our backs for?" said Dr. Payson, cheerily. "No," was the answer. "In order that we may look upward."

Should the native of some distant world on which the sun always shines visit our globe, he would be filled with dismay as he beheld the sun disappear, and darkness envelop nature as in a funeral pall. How would his astonishment increase as, amid the increasing darkness, myriads of worlds of which he never dreamed blazed forth upon his vision. Thus, often adversity affrights us; but instead of con-

tracting our blessings, it reveals to us new sources of comfort, worlds of joy hidden while the veil of prosperity hung about us.

Golden Text. One would feel safe behind the lines of the Union army stretching continuously from sea to sea. How much more behind God's universal hosts stretching across illimitable fields of the universe! How apparently insignificant is man! At Sirius a hair's breadth covers and hides the whole solar system, which with its diameter of 6,000,000,000 miles is but a speck in illimitable space! Yet God condescends to array himself on the side of one of its worlds, and a single soul in that world, and to pledge all the power of his protection to one humble believer on that insignificant planet. What an astounding revelation of grace! John Knox, the leader of the Scottish Reformation, adopted as his maxim, "One with God is a majority."—*A. T. Pierson.*

Verses 17. A girl of sixteen years had all her life been a victim of a blemish in her eyes that hindered perfect vision. Finally, a surgical operation was performed, and she was kept within the house till her eyes gathered full strength. Some time elapsed before she went into the open air after nightfall. One evening she rushed into the parlor with face aglow with excitement. The joy of a great discovery illumined every feature. "O, come out quickly to the lawn," she exclaimed, "and see what beautiful things have appeared in the sky!" Her friends followed her out hastily. They saw nothing. "What do you mean?" they asked her. "Look!" she said, pointing eagerly heavenward. "Don't you see those bright things up there—and there—sparkling all over the sky?" "My dear child," said her mother, "those are the stars." Friends could hardly take in the fact that for all the years of her life this child had been moving through God's world with a limited vision, seeing only what lay close around her, utterly oblivious that there were hosts of stars all over the sky, and all so beautiful. How strange it seemed! I think of something far more strange, more pitiful. O, souls of men! heaven is full of shining lights that God has hung out to charm the pathway to his eternal home, to lure you upward, to show you how far heaven rises above earth in value and glory. Yet your eyes are still withholden. You are blind toward heaven.—*Dr. H. C. McCook.*

At the Paris Exposition I saw ranged around the room many people, their elbows resting on the velvet cushions, their ears at the telephone-receivers, listening to concert or lecture, while those in the room without this connection heard nothing. "So," said I, "the Christian hears what the worldling cannot, because he has no connection with the heavenly laud."—*Hannah Whitehall Smith.*

Teachers' Meeting.

It would be well to draw a map showing the relation of Israel and Syria, and containing the cities of Damascus, Dothan, and Samaria.... Tell the story, or call it forth from the class by questions. It will make the story more graphic to draw a line representing the march of the Syrians while describing it, and a ring around Dothan indicating the Syrian host. Inside this ring draw another in bright red or yellow chalk, representing the divine protectors around Elisha. Then draw the line of march to Samaria, and give an account of the blinded army, then the line of their journey back to Damascus. What story did they tell when they reached home? What was its effect upon the people?... Show from this the ways in which God takes care of his own. 1. By giving them knowledge. 2. By giving them defenders. 3. By answering their prayers. 4. By giving them power over men.... Does God help his people now in the same way?... The Thoughts for Young People suggest some principles concerning conduct and character.

References.

FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Ver. 15: Poetical, 3389. Ver. 15: Prose, 1434, 1436, 2259. Ver. 16: Prose, 9813, 9054, 9537, 7926, 11256, 11257, 7713, 7928-7930, 11357, 11561; Poetical, 119-126, 131-137, 3391, 3392. Ver. 18: Prose, 7951, 11267, 11269, 11271, 11273.

Blackboard.



DIRECTIONS.—Fasten a piece of white chalk to a string. Hold the other end of the string against the board with the left hand where you want the center of the circle to be. Draw the two circles with the chalk in the right hand.

APPLICATION.—God's protecting care is ever around us. It is endless, without a break. To harm us evil must first break through that circle, and, "if God be for us, who can be against us?"

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Our Father's Care.*

Preface this lesson with a true story of a little girl in Australia who was sent one day to carry her papa's dinner to him as he was working in the forest. Somehow she lost her way, and for nearly four days wandered about in the great forest. When the dark night came she would ask God to send his angels to guard her, and he did. One night she lay down to sleep in the shelter of a great log. Suddenly she was awakened by a strange noise, and opening her eyes saw two big black creatures looking at her. Her first thought was of the gentle cows at home, and she began calling, "Come, Cherry! Come, Sweet Lips!" The wild bears looked at her a little while, and then trotted away. They could not hurt her, for God was taking care of her.

Ask who remembers what country Naaman was of. The King of Syria sent his army to Israel again to fight the king of that country. Pin up a gilt crown. Talk about the king of a country. He is the leader of the people—something like a great father. Should he die, or be made captive, the people are in great trouble. The King of Syria wanted to take the King of Israel prisoner. But every time he came to the place where he expected to find him, the king was gone! Elisha had sent word to him to flee.

How could Elisha know what the King of Syria was going to do? Explain that a prophet knew what would happen the next day or the next week or hundreds of years after. A prophet was a true servant of God, to whom he could speak. No one but God knows what will happen in the future; but he can tell his servants if he chooses to do so.

Tell the king's plan to take Elisha, when he found who it was that told his plans to the King of Israel.

Make many little squares for the city of Dothan on a mountain-side. Lower down some little tents to indicate the army of the Syrian king. Elisha and his servant were in Dothan. In the night the King of Syria sent a great many soldiers to surround the city. Some rode in chariots, and they looked very strong and war-like. Elisha's servant looked out in the morning and saw them. The sight made him afraid. But Elisha was not afraid. Let children tell why. He believed that God would take care of him, even if enemies came against him. Open the big Bible and read from it some promises of God's protecting care.

Elisha wanted his servant to learn how to trust God. So he prayed that God would open his eyes. When the servant looked out again he saw the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire! God had sent them to protect his servant Elisha. But the King of Syria and his soldiers could not see these horses and chariots of fire. Their eyes

were not open—the eyes of faith and love. They did not believe in the God of heaven.

Now the Syrian army began to move toward the city to take Elijah. They thought it would be easy. As they came near, Elisha prayed again. He asked the Lord to make them blind, and they were smitten with blindness.

Practical Application. As Elisha had enemies who wanted to destroy him, so have we. Satan keeps his evil spirits busy trying to take us captive.



Tell what Satan's "darts" are like—selfish thoughts, angry feelings, etc. Where shall we hide from our enemy?

As soldiers seek safety in a fortress, so must we in our Fortress—God. As a child runs to a parent for safety when some outward harm threatens, just so God's children may run to him in faith and prayer when Satan comes to tempt them.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Though troubles assail.
Precious promise.
O holy Saviour.
Take the name of Jesus.
In the secret of His presence.
All the way.
Never alone.
In some way or other.

The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. Who told the King of Israel the plans of the King of Syria? **Elisha.**
2. What did the Syrian king send to capture Elisha? **A great host with horses and chariots.**
3. What did Elisha's servant discover early in the morning? **That they were surrounded by an army of enemies.**
4. What did Elisha pray? **That the Lord would open the young man's eyes.**
5. What did the young man then discover? **That they were surrounded by a greater army of angels.**
6. What is the **GOLDEN TEXT**? "**Fear not,**" etc.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

18. How does the New Testament teach His religion?

It contains the history of His life and death, the record of His teaching while He was among men, and the doctrine which He taught the Apostles by His Spirit after He ascended into heaven.

image of fallen Adam, destitute of original righteousness. (Gen. 3. 3.)

36. What are the miseries of this condition? **All mankind being born in sin, are by nature under the wrath of God.**

FIRST QUARTERLY REVIEW.

March 29.

HOME READINGS.

M. 1 Kings 12. 25-33. *Tu.* 1 Kings 17. 1-14. *W.* 1 Kings 18. 30-39. *Th.* 1 Kings 21. 1-16. *F.* Heb. 9. 6-15. *S.* 2 Kings 4. 27-37. *S.* Matt. 28. 1-10.

REVIEW SERVICE FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY.

1. These lessons cover at least eighty-two years, include the geography of the whole of Palestine, and deal with many remarkable characters: Each of these particulars should be studied in the review.
2. Write the names of three unusually decisive characters whose lives were spent in this period.
3. Write the names of two unusually vacillating characters.
4. Make a list of the decisive battles that were fought in this period.
5. Commit to memory all the **GOLDEN TEXTS**, and repeat them every day.
6. Repeat daily the **Titles and Doctrinal Suggestions** of the quarter.
7. Write a brief history of the life of Elijah.
8. Write a history of Elisha.
9. How many kings reigned over Israel in this period.
10. Make a list of the kings of Judah.
11. Here is a series of pictures. Recall a lesson by each:
 - Fifty men looking across a river.
 - A woman gathering sticks.
 - A man hiding in a cave from an earthquake.
 - A man pouring salt into a spring.
 - A prophet pouring water on a sacrifice.
 - A king dedicating an altar.
 - An angel feeding a weary man.
12. Make some word-pictures yourself which will recall to your minds Lessons XII, IV, IX, I, II, III.
13. Here are a few symbols; each one should recall a lesson:
 - A raven.
 - A juniper-tree.
 - A scorpion.
 - A cruse of oil.
 - A golden calf.

14. Write down all the prophets who are mentioned in these lessons.
15. What was Jeroboam's great mistake?
16. Read over afresh all Practical Teachings, and commit to memory those which touch your life.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

I. TITLES AND GOLDEN TEXTS.—Recall by the aid of the following catch-words the TOPICS of the lessons, and also the GOLDEN TEXTS of each:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The K. D. | Pride goeth before— |
| 2. I. in I. | Thou shalt not make— |
| 3. G. C. of E. | They that seek the Lord— |
| 4. E. and the P. of B. | How long halt ye— |
| 5. E. at H. | Fear not, for I am— |
| 6. A. C. | Take heed, and beware— |
| 7. E. T. to H. | And Enoch walked— |
| 8. E. S. | Not by might, nor— |
| 9. T. S. S. | The Father raiseth up— |
| 10. N. H. | Who forgiveth all— |
| 11. G. P. | Be sure your sin— |
| 12. E. D. | Fear not: for they— |

II. THE LESSON STORY.—Recall as fully as you can the lesson story as suggested by the following hints:

1. A pleading people; a haughty king; a lost inheritance.
2. A distrustful king; false gods; wicked priests.
3. A king rebuked; a prophet fed; a widow blessed.
4. False prayer and failure; true prayer answered.
5. A fearful prophet; a divine supply; a vision and its teachings.
6. A peevish ruler; a wicked woman; a cowardly murder.
7. Two travelers; a divided river; an ascending prophet.
8. A prophet honored; a fruitless search; a miracle wrought.
9. Great sorrow; great faith; a great blessing.
10. A hopeless sufferer; a helpful message; a perfect cure.
11. A grateful man; a greedy man; a just punishment.
12. A king thwarted; a prophet in danger; an army made blind.

III. THE LESSON TEACHINGS.—State from each lesson one duty or one doctrine taught therein:

1. About the control of our tongues.
2. About worshipping false gods.
3. About our daily bread.
4. About answers to prayer.
5. About the triumph of God's cause.
6. About coveting our neighbor's goods.

7. About persevering prayer.
8. About the reward of faithful service.
9. About trusting God in trouble.
10. About children serving God.
11. About greed and deceit.
12. About the safety of God's friends.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Can you repeat the GOLDEN TEXTS:

**Pride goeth before—
Thou shalt not make—
They that seek—
How long halt—
Fear not, for I am—
Take heed, and—
And Enoch walked—
Not by might, nor—
The Father raiseth up—
Who forgiveth all—
Be sure your sin—
Fear not: for they that be—**

LESSON I.—Who became King of Israel when Solomon died? **Rehoboam.** What did he refuse to do for the people? **Make their burdens lighter.** What was the result? **The kingdom was divided.** What were the two kingdoms called? **One was Israel, the other Judah.**

LESSON II.—Who was made King of Israel? **Jeroboam.** What did he fear the people would do? **Forsake him.** What did he set up for them to worship? **Golden calves.** Whose law did he break in doing this? **The law of the Lord.**

LESSON III.—Who was a great prophet of the Lord? **Elijah.** How was Elijah fed in time of famine? **By ravens.** Where was he next sent? **To Zarephath.** Who took care of him there? **A poor woman.** For whose sake did she do this? **For the Lord's sake.**

LESSON IV.—Who was an idol-serving King of Israel? **Ahab.** To what place did Elijah tell him to call all the people? **To Mount Carmel.** Who offered sacrifices there? **The prophets of Baal, and Elijah.** Which god answered by fire? **The God of Israel.**

LESSON V.—Who said she would kill Elijah? **Queen Jezebel.** Where did he flee? **Into the wilderness.** Who came and fed him? **An angel.** How did the Lord speak to Elijah there? **In the still small voice.** What did he tell him to do? **Return to his work.**

LESSON VI.—What did King Ahab covet? **Naboth's vineyard.** Who procured it for him? **Queen Jezebel.** How did she get it? **By having Naboth killed.** What message did Elijah bring to Ahab from the Lord? **"In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood."**

LESSON VII.—How was Elijah taken to heaven? **In a chariot of fire.** Who saw him go? **Elisha.** What was given to Elisha? **A double portion of Elijah's spirit.** Why was it given to him? **Because he wanted it, and asked for it.**

LESSON VIII.—What fell from Elijah as he went up to heaven? **His mantle.** Who caught it? **Elisha.** What did he begin to do? **Miracles, as Elijah had done.** How did he heal the bitter waters of Jericho? **By putting salt in the spring.**

LESSON IX.—Who was Elisha's friend in Shunnam? **A rich woman.** What great sorrow came upon her? **Her only child died.** What did Elisha do? **He restored him to life.**

LESSON X.—Who was Naaman? **A Syrian**

general. What was the matter with him? **He had the leprosy.** Who told him to wash in Jordan seven times? **Elisha.** What followed? **He was healed.**

LESSON XI.—Who was Gehazi? **Elisha's servant.** What did he hear Elisha refuse? **A gift from Naaman.** What did he determine to do? **Get the gift for himself.** Who made known Gehazi's sin to Elisha? **The Lord.** What punishment fell upon Gehazi? **He became a leper.**

LESSON XII.—Who tried to take Elisha prisoner? **The King of Syria.** What did he send to Dothan? **A great host.** Who was afraid? **Elisha's servant.** What did the Lord let him see? **Horses and chariots of fire sent to save Elisha.**

B. C. 760.]

TEMPERANCE LESSON.

[March 29.]

GOLDEN TEXT. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. [Isa. 4. 6.]

Authorized Version.

Isa. 5. 11-23. [Commit to memory verses 11, 20.]

11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, *All* wine inflame them!

12 And the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

13 Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

14 Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

15 And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:

16 But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

17 Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.

18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-ropes:

19 That say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!

20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

22 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

23 Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

Revised Version.

11 Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame

12 them! And the harp and the lute, the tabret and the pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but they regard not the work of the LORD, neither have they considered the operation of his hands.

13 Therefore my people are gone into captivity, for lack of knowledge: and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude are perished with

14 thirst. Therefore hell hath enlarged her desire, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth among them, descend into

15 it. And the mean man is bowed down, and the great man is humbled, and the eyes of the lofty are humbled: but the LORD of hosts is exalted in judgment, and God the Holy One is sanctified in righteousness. Then shall the lambs feed as in their pasture, and the waste places of the fat ones shall wanderers eat.

18 Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope: that say, let him make speed, let him hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!

20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

22 Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: 23 which justify the wicked for a reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

TIME.—About B. C. 760. **PLACE.**—Probably Jerusalem. **RULERS.**—Azariah, King of Judah; Pekah, King of Israel. **DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.**—The holiness of God.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* The drunkards of Israel. Isa. 5. 11-23.
Tu. Death through drunkenness. Lev. 10. 1-11.
W. The godly and the ungodly. Psa. 1. 1-6.
Th. Warning against neglect. Prov. 1. 20-33.
F. Results of impenitence. Jer. 5. 1-6.
S. The lack of knowledge. Hos. 4. 1-9.
S. The apostle's counsel. Eph. 5. 11-19.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 271, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Arise, go forth to conquer.
 No. 339, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Give thanks unto God, who is able and willing.
 No. 338, New Canadian Hymnal.
 See, the Church of Christ arises.
DOMINION HYMNAL
 Hymns, Nos. 226, 239, 241.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. The Drunkard's Feast, v. 11, 12, 22, 23.
 On whom does God's prophet pronounce a woe?
 What sin in modern life is followed most nearly uniformly with immediate temporal punishment?

What reason can be given for the fact that men who drink intoxicants as a rule do not regard the work of the Lord?

What were some of the social conditions of Hebrew life at the time of this prophecy?

2. The Drunkard's Woe, v. 13-21.

Why did God permit the Israelites to be taken into captivity?

What is meant by "honorable men" and "multitude?"

What is the meaning of the awful image, in the fourteenth verse, of the mouth of hell?

What is the meaning of the seventeenth verse?

What class of people are characterized in the eighteenth verse?

Is it right to indulge in the use of intoxicating liquors?

If that be wrong, is it right to sell them?

If that be wrong, is it right to grant permission to other people to sell them?

If that be wrong, is it right to vote for men who when in office will grant that permission?

Practical Teachings.

Wherein does this lesson teach—

1. That the beauty and splendor of social feasts

cannot blind God to the odious sin of intemperance?

2. That no false argument concerning liquor-drinking or selling can alter facts?

3. That those who will not listen to reason in regard to this evil will hereafter reap an awful punishment?

4. That it is a sin to license sin—"to justify the wicked for reward?"

Hints for Home Study.

1. Find cases in the Bible of men whose success in life was thwarted by their habits of indulging in strong drink.

2. Gather together all the reasons that you can think of for maintaining that the drinking habit now is morally much worse than it was in Bible times.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Drunkard's Feast, v. 11, 12, 22, 23.

Upon what early risers is woe pronounced?

What music do they have at their feasts?

For whom have they no regard?

What doom is in store for all such? (See Psa.

28. 5.)

Upon what mighty men is there a woe?

Of what injustice are they guilty?

How does God regard such people? (Prov. 17.

15.)

2. The Drunkard's Woe, v. 13-21.

Why did captivity come to God's people?

What happened to their men of honor and the multitude?

What is said of their doom?

Who would be humbled in that day?

Who would then be exalted?

What is said of the waste places?

What is said of such as sin with vanity and boldness?

What challenge did they give to the Almighty?

What woe is pronounced on those who pervert language?

What upon the wise and prudent?

What is a wise man's warning against self-conceit? (Prov. 8. 7.)

How may we avoid the drunkard's woe? (Prov. 23. 31.)

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That wine-drinking is a curse?
2. That drunkenness leads to other vices?
3. That God will surely punish the drunkard?

Home Work for Young Bereans.

Find the words of a wise man concerning the drinking of wine.

Find a curse pronounced upon the man who gives strong drink to his neighbor.

Find a text about drinkers and the kingdom of heaven.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who is an enemy of strong drink? **The Lord.**
 What does he say of those who are ruled by it?
"Woe unto them."

What are they always seeking? **Pleasure.**
 What do they not consider? **The work of the Lord.**

What do such people show? **Lack of knowledge.**

Into what are they led? **Into captivity.**
 Who leads them captive? **Satan.**

Whither are they going? **To dwell with Satan.**

Who looks with sorrow upon the evil caused by strong drink? **The holy God.**

What does he say of proud sinners? **"Woe unto them."**

What does he say of sinners who think themselves wise? **"Woe unto them."**

What does he say of those who are mighty to drink wine? **"Woe unto them."**

What does he say of those who mingle strong drink? **"Woe unto them."**

What does he say of those who justify evil-doing? **"Woe unto them."**

Who has the right to pronounce these woes? **The great God.**

Words With Little People.

"WHO HATH WOE?"

The man or woman or child who forgets God and denies his word.

He says the wonderful bodies he has given us are to be kept clean and pure for the Holy Spirit to dwell in.

Can the Holy Spirit dwell in a body corrupted by strong drink?

Whisper Motto.

"Ye are the temples of God."

General Statement.

These words were probably uttered about one hundred and thirty years after the date of the last lesson. Pekahwas King of Israel, and Azariah King of Judah. Both nations had sadly declined in religious force and good morals; but Jerusalem was still the stronghold of the sacred priesthood. The spirit of prophecy (or, in plain modern English, of divine guidance) was not now so often shown in miraculous deeds, startling their beholders into a recognition of the presence of the invisible God, as in bold, straightforward appeals for reform and distinct threats and promises of God's management of public and private affairs. No voice rang out in warning or cheer with such eloquence as that of Isaiah. Himself related to the kings whose wickedness he denounced, he stood forth for years as the incarnation of aggressive righteousness in the midst of "a crooked and perverse generation," and no statesman of ancient or modern times has risen to sublimer oratory than his. The passage from which our lesson is taken is full of suggestion. The prophet in superb poetical diction describes himself as walking out from the crowded thoroughfares of Jerusalem into the "vineyard of the Lord." There he observes "wild grapes" where choicest clusters should have grown, and these wild grapes "he catalogues into a series of woes, fruits, all of them, of love of money and love of wine"—avarice and drunkenness, appropriation of the soil, and indulgence in strong drink—sins which are as common and fruitful of evil in modern days as in the corrupt civilization of ancient Judah. "Every civilized community develops sooner or later its drink question and its land question."—*G. A. Smith.*

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 11. Woe. We are so accustomed to regard God's "woes" as threats and anathemas that we are apt to forget that they are also statements of the steady working of what is often called "natural" law. He who does the misdeeds here mentioned always as a consequence has the woe.

Rise up early. Showing that in their case intoxication was not merely a degrading incident of revelry, but an end which was sought after.

Strong drink. In Bible times there were no distilled liquors and no systematically corrupted liquors. **Continue until night.** Set aside all duties for the purpose of "getting drunk." The world has turned around a good many times since Isaiah's day, and no men could now hold their position long in the best society and habitually run to such excess; no individuals could, and, so far, there is improvement. But nations to-day are immeasurably more guilty in their support of the drink habit than ever before. **Till wine inflame**

them. Burn them up. Even the purest wines and beers are destructive flames, consuming body and soul.

12. Harp... viol... tabret... pipe. The commonness of music at ancient feasts is seen from chap. 24. 8, 9; Amos 6. 5, 6. The harp is one of the most ancient of instruments. The viol was something like the lyre, but with twelve strings. The tabret was probably a kettle-drum or tambourine. The pipe may have been a flute or flageolet. These musical instruments stand for the dance and other light-hearted amusements with which the banquets were enlivened. The people enjoyed these luxuries, but regarded not God's work. **Regard not the work of the Lord.** No pampered man does. **Neither consider.** God always regards lack of consideration as a crime. Nothing kills conscience like the steady drinking of intoxicants. **Operation.** Workings.

13. Therefore. Because of their systematic

ignorance of truth, **Are gone.** The prophet sees the future as if it were present. **Into captivity.** Their captors are wine and strong drink. **No knowledge.** They learn neither by their own experience nor by that of others. **Honorable men.** Aristocrats. **Multitude.** Common people. All alike are brought into distress. And yet it is questionable if these sinners suffered more than those who habitually drink intoxicants now, whose physical torments pass description; or if the misery which these drunkards brought upon the innocent people of Samaria because of their excess was as great as the unspeakable misery brought to thousands of innocent hearts to-day by relatives whose appetites turn them temporarily into idiots and lunatics.

14. Hell. The unseen realm of spirits, rather than the place of torments. **Hath enlarged herself.** As if the power of darkness were not prepared for such a wholesale turning to evil. It is one of the strongest possible figures of speech. Death and hell are throughout the Scriptures represented as yawning ferociously for the souls of men; but in this case the frenzied sinners of Israel are trooping so eagerly to destruction that the very appetite of hell has to be enlarged for the consumption of the unanticipated spoils of strong drink. "When our judges tell us from the bench that nine tenths of pauperism and crime are caused by drink, our physicians that if only irregular tipping were abolished half the current sickness of the land would cease, and our statesmen that the ravages of strong drink are equal to those of the historical scourges of war, famine, and pestilence combined, surely to swallow such a glut of spoil, the appetite of 'hell' must have been still more enlarged, and the mouth of 'hell' made still larger."—*G. A. Smith.*

15. The mean and mighty alike are humbled. The scene in verses 14 and 15 needs only to be pictured clearly to our classes to produce a lasting effect. Death rapidly enlarges her bottomless pit for the unwonted harvest of souls while they with insane revelry indulge in their glory, their multitude, their pomp, and their song, dancing in merriment into destruction.

16. Exalted. In the view of mankind the righteous judgment of God will be indorsed. **Sanctified.** Regarded as holy. We could not revere God in our hearts if he tolerated sin.

17. After their manner. At their own will. The fences are all down, the rich gardens and farms are all desolate, and the lambs grown wild are heedlessly permitted to feed among the vineyards and orchards and gardens of those who have been deported as chained captives to Nineveh. **Waste places of the fat ones.** The deserted lands of the rich. One of the incidental evidences of the awful condition of poverty of the masses in the antique world is found in the Bible and in pro-

fane writings by the constant allusions to the richer classes as the fat ones, and to the peasantry as men lean and poor in vi-age; the fact being that the millions under the sway of Nineveh and Egypt and Rome lived and died in hunger.

18. Draw iniquity. It should be "draw punishment." They harness themselves like horses to a cart—a cart loaded with punishments for themselves—and eagerly drag it along. They strain every nerve in sin.

19. A verse full of defiance to God.

20. This woe is directed against those who confound the distinction of right and wrong.

21. A woe against those who, nerved by strong drink, assert themselves in state affairs. One cannot help longing for an Isaiah to speak out in our own Senate halls.

22, 23. Intemperance, like every other sin, is but a link in the chain. These rich revelers are sordid bribe-takers, justifying the wicked, for they are paid to do so, and tempting the righteous to do wrong by offering a bribe to him.

Thoughts for Young People.

On God's Punishment of Sin.

1. *There can be no law without penalty.* The evil results of sin are as truly its natural consequences as broken limbs are consequent on violent falls.

2. *Fate cannot be ignored by blinding one's eyes.* These merry-hearted revelers who danced into destruction were as really destroyed as if they had mournfully moved thither in funeral robes. There is no iniquity hidden from God. These bribe-givers and bribe-takers, these under-handed as well as out-spoken sinners, were all under the immanent eye of their almighty Judge, and so am I, and so are you.

3. *God's love is shown in punishing iniquity as really as in rewarding good.* Were there no divine court of appeals to which we could turn with confidence—had we not as full faith in God's justice as in his love—the moral universe would be turned into chaos.

4. *In the midst of all scenes of sorrow we may look up to God with confiding love.* He takes no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. He hates sin, but loves sinners. His judgments are always measured, but his mercy is immeasurable.

By Way of Illustration.

A generation of children are growing up with an hereditary taste for strong drink. Many a man sits down to write his will and says, "In the name of God. Amen. I will and bequeath to my children my property, share and share alike. Signed and sealed in presence of witnesses." But he does not know that he is at the same time making a double

will, and that he might say, "In the name of disease and sorrow and death. Amen. I will and bequeath to my children my appetite for drink and my prospects of a drunkard's grave. Signe! and sealed in presence of the astonished hosts of heaven and the jubilant harpies of hell."—*T. D. Talmage.*

The saloon must have boys or it must shut up shop. Can you furnish one? It is a great factory, and unless it can get two million boys from each generation for raw material some of these factories must close and the rum-sellers be thrown on a cold world. One family out of every five must contribute a boy to keep up the supply. Have you helped to keep up the supply? If not some other family has had to give more than its share.—*Economics of Prohibition.*

For every one dollar paid for the support of the Gospel in the United States five dollars is paid to support and clear criminals, ten dollars for lawyers, and fifty dollars for intoxicating beverages.

A Congo native who had been taught to read and write sent a letter, his first, to the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is as follows: "Great and good chief of the tribe of Christ, greeting. The humblest of your servants kisses the hem of your garment and begs you to send to his fellow-servants more Gospel and less rum. In the bonds of Christ, UGALLA."

Missionary Lesson.

Stanley's Testimony. Those who sneer at missions are usually those who in slippers and dressing-gown, in a comfortable study at home, write their facetious squibs which are enjoyed so much by enemies of the Gospel. Those who have been on the field and have seen the power of the grace of God in the savage heart tell a different tale. This is what Stanley says of some of the native Christians of Equatorial Africa in a letter to Livingstone's son-in-law: "I take this powerful body of native Christians in the heart of Africa (who prefer exile for the sake of their faith to serving a monarch hostile to their faith) as more substantial evidence of the work than any number of imposing structures clustered together and called a mission station would be. These native Africans have endured the most deadly persecutions; the stake and the fire, the cord and the club, the sharp knife and the rifle bullet have all been tried to cause them to reject the teachings they have absorbed. Firm in their convictions, they have held together stoutly and resolutely."

Paul said, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks and barbarians," not because he had received anything from them, but because he had received something for them.—*Dr. W. M. Taylor.*

In Belfast a little chimney-sweep happened to be attracted by missions and contributed twopence—no small sum for a chimney-sweep. One afternoon

a friend met him going along the street in an unusual condition—face and hands washed clean and dressed in his best. "Hallo, where are you going?" "O, I am going to a missionary meeting." "A missionary meeting! What for?" "Well," said the sweep, "you see I have become a sort of partner in the concern, and I am going to see how the business is getting on." If you lack interest in missions give something of money or labor, and you will find that "where the treasure is there will the heart be also."

The Teachers' Meeting.

Draw from class facts concerning Isaiah, his family, his rank, his place of residence, the character of his prophecy, the men with whom he had to deal....Date of this lesson. Who were kings of Judah and Israel? What was the relative strength of the neighboring powers? How was the destruction here threatened to be brought to pass....Prevalent iniquity of Israel and Judah nobles. The land question and the liquor question....Enumerate the woes of the lesson. Strong drink, defiance of God, the obliteration of the distinction between evil and good. Self-conceit and bribery....Trace the historic fulfillment of this prophecy....Draw application to modern life.

References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 12: The harp, 51; the viol, 432; the tabret, 61; the pipe, 290.

Blackboard.



DIRECTIONS FOR COLORS.—*The shield.* To get it in proportion first draw faintly a letter T the size of the shield, then make the sides by drawing curved lines from the ends of the cross-piece down to the end of the down line. The colors suggested are light blue for the shield, and white for the letters on it. *The banners:* Draw the staves with bright yellow; outline the flags with white, and make the letters scarlet or pink. Make the words over

the banners white, so that they will read in conjunction with those on the shield, "This school for God and home."

A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

LIQUOR-DEALERS' EXCHANGE.
HOME, HEALTH, SOUL, AND SAVINGS
 EXCHANGED FOR RUM.

Primary and Intermediate.
Temperance Lesson.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Strong drink a poison serpent.*

Blackboard. Print "Love, Honor, Truth, Justice, Mercy, Purity;" draw a large heart around them. Over it print "God's Vineyard." Make a snake, coiled like letter S. Make another large heart, in which print "Hate, Dishonor, Falsehood, Injustice, Cruelty, Vice." Cover the two hearts and the serpent with separate pieces of paper, uncovering only as needed.

This lesson might be well introduced by showing two pictures, cut from illustrated papers: one the face of an innocent little boy, the other of a repulsive drunkard; showing that this is what the heart—in the beginning God's vineyard—may become if the evil spirit is allowed to gain possession.

Uncover the first heart. Who gives these good things? Yes; all these come from God. Let us see what God says about these lovely fruits in his vineyard. "God is love." "Love is of God." "Them that honor me I will honor." "Thou desirest truth." "The path of the just is as a shining light." "He delighteth in mercy." "The pure in heart shall see God."

Tell that the little boy had these good things in his heart. He went to Sunday-school, and heard about God's dear love. His mother taught him at home to do right, to fear God and pray to him. How much was done to keep this heart-vineyard pure and clean!

Uncover the second picture. A poison snake crawled into the beautiful vineyard. What letter of the alphabet does this snake look like? And what does S stand for? (Make the S in snake form the first letter in Sin, Saloon, and Strong drink.)

Tell some of the ways in which the snake found his way into the heart-vineyard—self-indulgence, disobedience, bad company, brandy-drops, cigarettes, etc. He did not come all at once. O, no; the little boy never meant to let the vile creature get in. Tell of the boy's struggles, his good resolutions, his efforts, all made in his own strength, to be rid of the evil thing. He did not go to the place of safety, and hide from danger. Where did the last lesson tell us to seek refuge?

Speak of the downward steps, and uncover the last picture. The beautiful vineyard is spoiled. Love has become hate; honor, disgrace, etc. Illustrate from the career of the drunkard. Real life, alas! furnishes far too many illustrations.

Read selections from the lesson to show what God thinks of it all.

Practical Application. Are children in danger now of being bitten by this serpent? O, yes! He is hiding in the drug-stores, in the groceries, in the candy shops, sometimes even in the pies and puddings on the table!

How is he going to be driven out? There is an army of temperance people after him. The children can fight in this war. They are coming. Nearly a quarter of a million children in our country are pledged in the *Loyal Temperance Legion* to purity, temperance, and truth. All over the land they are singing, "Tremble, King Alcohol, we shall grow up;" and, "Saloons, saloons, saloons must go."

Take this opportunity to teach a spirited temperance song, and, if time permit, to show how alcohol burns or hardens the white of an egg or causes a delicate flower to droop and die.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Come, said Jesus' sacred.
 In thy cleft.
 Yield not to temptat'on.
 Rescue the perishing.
 No compromise.
 We'll help the cause along.
 God speed the right.
 The sparkling rill.

The Lesson Catechism.

[For the entire school.]

1. On whom does the prophet pronounce a woe? **On those that follow strong drink.**
2. On whom is a second woe pronounced? **On those that justify sin.**
3. On whom is a third woe pronounced? **On those who will not be taught their duty.**
4. On whom is a fourth woe pronounced? **On those that justify wickedness for a reward.**

Topics for the Young People's
 Prayer-Meeting of the
 Epworth League.

- March 1. Satan Overcome.** Eph. 6. 11; 2 Cor. 6. 7; Neh. 4. 9.
- March 8. The Touch of Jesus.** Luke 5. 13; 6. 19; 8. 45, 46.
- March 15. Soul-Winners.** Dan. 13. 3; Prov. 11. 30; Jas. 5. 20.
- March 22. Danger of Indecision.** Acts 24. 25; Prov. 1. 24-32; Luke 17. 32.
- March 29. The Power of His Resurrection.** Phil. 3. 10; 2 Tim. 2. 11; 1 Thess. 4. 14.

Responsive Review Service for the First Quarter.

LESSON I.

The Kingdom Divided.

Supt. Who was king over all Israel?

School. Solomon's son, Rehoboam.

Supt. What did his people ask him to do?

School. To make the taxation and the service lighter than Solomon had made it.

Supt. Whom did Rehoboam first consult in this crisis?

School. The old men, who advised Rehoboam to serve the people and speak good words to them.

Supt. Whom did he next consult?

School. The young men, who advised that the service be made heavier than before.

Supt. Whose advice did he follow?

School. The young men's advice.

Supt. What was the result?

School. Ten tribes revolted and chose Jeroboam king.

Supt. Have great men always been the servants of their generation?

School. They have, and the Greatest of all said, "I am among you as he that serveth."

Supt. What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

School. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

LESSON II.

Idolatry in Israel.

Supt. What did Jeroboam fear might happen if his ten tribes were allowed to go up to Jerusalem to worship?

School. That the hearts of the people would turn back to Rehoboam.

Supt. How did he hinder their going?

School. He made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "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."

Supt. Who had used these words before?

School. Aaron, when he made the golden calf in the wilderness.

Supt. Show how one sin led to many.

School. The making of the calves led to the worship of them. Then, a house of high places, priests of the lowest of the people, and idolatrous feasts and sacrifices.

Supt. What did Jeroboam do so that he might be as religious as well as civil ruler?

School. He took the place of a high-priest, "offered upon the altar, and burnt incense."

Supt. Are we in danger of worshipping idols?

School. Yes; unless we "put God first."

LESSON III.

God's Care of Elijah.

Supt. How was Israel punished for idolatry?

School. Dew and rain ceased to fall.

Supt. Why was Elijah ordered to hide by the brook Cherith?

School. Ahab held him responsible for the drought, and would have killed him.

Supt. What brought him bread and flesh to eat morning and evening?

School. Ravens.

Supt. When he went to Zarephath, who fed him?

School. A widow shared her last handful of meal and little oil with him.

Supt. How long did the meal and oil last?

School. "Many days." Until the Lord sent rain on the earth.

Supt. What does the lesson teach?

School. God's care for his children.

All. "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON IV.

Elijah and the Prophets of Baal.

Supt. How long did the prophets of Baal call on their god?

School. From morning till evening.

Supt. When there was no answer, what did Elijah say to them?

School. "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked."

Supt. When Elijah had prepared his sacrifice, what did he pour on it?

School. Twelve barrels of water.

Supt. Let us repeat together Elijah's wonderful prayer.

All. "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."

Supt. When the fire fell from heaven, what did it consume?

School. The burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

Supt. What was the effect on the people?

School. They fell on their faces, saying, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

D V V V N

"Dare to do right."

LESSON V.

Elijah at Horeb.

Supt. Why did Elijah go into the wilderness?

School. To escape Jezebel, who had threatened to kill him.

Supt. Who fed and comforted him when he was ready to die?

School. An angel.

Supt. When Elijah reached Horeb, what was his cry?

School. "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

Supt. What manifestation of power did God show to Elijah?

School. He sent a great and strong wind, an earthquake, and a fire.

Supt. What did God tell Elijah to comfort him?

School. That seven thousand in Israel had not bowed unto Baal.

Supt. When we get discouraged over the slow coming of Christ's kingdom, what will comfort us?

School. God's word: "Fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee." (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON VI.

Ahab's Covetousness.

Supt. When the rich King Ahab could not buy Naboth's vineyard, how did he act?

School. He laid upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

Supt. What did Ahab's wife Jezebel do to get the vineyard?

School. She wrote letters in Ahab's name to the elders and nobles against Naboth. And she set two sons of Belial to witness that Naboth blasphemed God and the king.

Supt. When the elders heard these things, what was done to Naboth?

School. He was stoned to death.

Supt. When Ahab heard thereof, what did he do?
School. He took possession of Naboth's vineyard.
Supt. Were Ahab and Jezebel punished for this sin?
School. Jezebel was eaten by dogs; and in their place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth they afterward licked the blood of Ahab.
Supt. Is covetousness a prominent sin of to-day?
School. Yes.
Supt. Give two commands against it?
School. The Ten Commandments say, "Thou shalt not covet;" and Christ says, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness." (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON VII.

Elijah Taken to Heaven.

Supt. How many persons knew that Elijah would be taken to heaven by a whirlwind?
School. Elijah, Elisha, and the sons of the prophets.
Supt. When Elijah and Elisha were taking their last journey together, how did they cross the Jordan?
School. Elijah smote the waters with his mantle, and they divided thither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.
Supt. What last request did Elisha make of Elijah?
School. That a double portion of Elijah's spirit might be upon him.
Supt. On what condition was it granted?
School. On condition that he would stay with him to the end and see him taken up.
Supt. How did Elijah go to heaven?
School. There appeared a whirlwind of fire and horses of fire, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

LESSON VIII.

Elisha's Successor.

Supt. How did Elisha cross the Jordan?
School. He smote the waters with Elijah's mantle, and they parted as before.
Supt. When the sons of the prophets saw Elisha, what did they say?
School. "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha."
Supt. When the sons of the prophets sent fifty strong men to search for Elijah, what was the result?
School. They sought three days, but found him not.
Supt. What did Elisha say of the search?
School. "Did I not say unto you, Go not?"
Supt. What miracle did Elisha perform at this time?
School. He healed the bitter waters of Jericho by casting salt into the spring.
Supt. What can accomplish more than might or power?
School. The Spirit of the Lord.

HYMN.

"Come, Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire,"

LESSON IX.

The Shunammite's Son.

Supt. Who came to Elisha, and what was her message?
School. A woman from Shunem, who had often cared for Elisha, saying that her son was dead.
Supt. When Elisha sent his servant Gehazi to lay his staff on the face of the child, what did the mother say?
School. "As the Lord liveth... I will not leave thee."
Supt. When Elisha started for the Shunammite's house, who did he meet?
School. Gehazi, who told him, "The child is not awaked."
Supt. When Elisha saw that the child was dead, what was the first thing he did?
School. He went into the room where the dead child lay, shut the door, and prayed unto the Lord.
Supt. What means did he use to restore the child?
School. He stretched himself upon the child till his flesh grew warm.
Supt. When the child opened his eyes, whom did Elisha call?
School. The mother, saying to her, "Take up thy son."

Supt. How did the Shunammite express her gratitude?
School. She fell at the feet of the prophet and bowed herself to the ground.
Supt. Who gave Elisha power to raise the dead?
School. "The Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them." (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON X.

Naaman Healed.

Supt. What can you tell me concerning Naaman?
School. He was captain of the host of the King of Syria; a great man, but a leper.
Supt. Who told Naaman that Elisha would heal him?
School. A little captive girl.
Supt. When Naaman came with his horses and chariots to Elisha's door, what message did Elisha send?
School. "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean."
Supt. Why was Naaman wroth?
School. He thought Elisha disrespectful.
Supt. What did his servants advise?
School. If the prophet had asked a great thing you would have done it. Why are you not more willing to do a simple act?
Supt. What was the result when he obeyed the saying of the man of God?
School. He was healed.
Supt. What assurance have we that God will heal the leprosy of sin?
All. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases." (GOLDEN TEXT.)

LESSON XI.

Gehazi Punished.

Supt. When Naaman saw that he was healed, what did he say?
School. "There is no God in all the earth, but in Israel."
Supt. When Elisha refused to receive any of the gold or silver or raiment which Naaman had brought, who determined to get some for himself?
School. Elisha's servant, Gehazi.
Supt. After Naaman had given him two talents of silver and he had hidden it, who accused him of the wrong?
School. Elisha, who said to him, "The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and unto thy seed forever."
Supt. Recite the GOLDEN TEXT.
School. "Be sure your sin will find you out."

LESSON XII.

Elisha's Defenders.

Supt. Why were the Syrians not successful in their attacks on Israel?
School. Elisha warned the king.
Supt. When the King of Syria thought one of his own men must have told the King of Israel, what did the servants say?
School. "Elisha the prophet telleth the king of Israel the words thou speakest in thy bed-chamber."
Supt. When did the King of Syria do?
School. He sent a great host to Dothan where Elisha was.
Supt. When Elisha's servant was alarmed, what did Elisha say to him?
School. "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." (GOLDEN TEXT.)
Supt. When Elisha prayed that the young man's eyes might be opened, what did he see?
School. "Behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."
Supt. The second verse tells us why a heavenly host was commissioned to help Elisha.
School. He was "a man of God."

HYMN.

"Since Jesus is my Friend,"

New Sunday-School Books.

FROM the Wesleyan Conference Office, London, Chas. Kelley, we have received a number of well-printed, well-illustrated juvenile books. One of these is a very practical story called *Clerk or Carpenter*, by HARRIET BOULLWOOD, is especially appropriate in these days of difficult choice of employment in the crowded avenues of trade.

Windmill House, by EDITH CORNFORTH, is another book of that wholesome religious character which we have learned to expect every volume, bearing the imprimatur of the Wesleyan Conference Office. Dr. Kelley has rendered admirable service to the Sunday-school world, by issuing such excellent books in such attractive forms.

The Happy Valley: Our New Missionary Garden in Uva, Ceylon. By REV. SAMUEL LANGDON. London: C. S. Kelly.

This is another outcome of missionary labor in foreign lands. It is akin, in some respects, to the author's previous volume, "Our Missionary Garden." It exhibits a keen sympathy with the luxuriant tropical nature, but most of all it is devoted to the religious interests of the important mission of Uva. The sketches of this "Happy Valley," a perfectly idyllic scene, are charmingly set forth. We especially commend this book for mission circles and Sunday-schools. It is copiously and well illustrated.

When His Years Were Few. By EDITH CORNFORTH.

This is another of the charming juveniles issued by the Wesleyan Conference office, from the pen of an accomplished writer. The glimpses of sea life it contains will give it an interest for boys as well as for girls.

Aunt Hannah and Martha and John. By PANSY (MRS. G. R. ALDEN), and MRS. C. M. LIVINGSTONE. Pp. 432, 12mo. London: Chas. Kelley. Toronto: William Briggs.

The experiment of joint authorship is not a new one, but the respective shares of the authors are generally concealed. Here they are distinctly defined. It would be a very pleasing study to note the diversity of style in the treatment of the same story. "Pansy" needs no introduction on either side of the sea, and Mrs. Livingstone bids fair to be an equally welcome visitor. There is a distinctly religious element in this book which commends it strongly for the use of Sunday-school libraries.

Miss Dunmore Bryant. By PANSY. Pp. 243, 12mo. London: Chas. Kelley. Toronto: William Briggs.

There is, probably, no more popular author for young people on this continent than Mrs. G. R. Alden. She has made a specialty of

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Under the Lantern at Black Rocks. By REV. EDWARD A. RAND. Pp. 347. New York: Hunt & Eaton.

A book by that accomplished story teller, Mr. Rand, needs neither introduction nor commendation, especially when, like this book, it deals with shipwreck, a sea-side adventure, lighthouse experiences, and the like. One of the strongest features of the book is its vigorous portrayal of the evils of intemperance and the inculcation of the principles of total abstinence.

The Perseverance of Ohryssa Arkwright: A Lesson in Self Help. By ELLA V. TALBOT. Pp. 266. New York: Hunt & Eaton.

This is a story of a young girl who, with her family, are plunged from affluence into comparative poverty. By her moral energy, courage and perseverance, the heroine not only developed heroic qualities, but achieved very tangible material results.

Orders of Worship for the Sunday-school. Arranged by D. E. CURTIS. Pp. 45. Boston and Chicago: Congregational Sunday-school and Publishing Society. Price, \$12 per 100 copies.

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The Children of the Kalahari: A Story of Africa. By ANNIE M. BARNES. Pp. 352, 12mo. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication. Toronto: William Briggs.

Miss Barnes is the editor of the juvenile missionary periodicals of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. She is an enthusiast in missionary advocacy. The purpose of this book is to direct attention to the inner life of the people of the Dark Continent; their domestic, social and moral condition, of the superstitious practices of their present religious status under the fast spreading influence of the Gospel. It is a story of missionary adventure, trial and triumph, that will interest every young reader, and will foster a sympathy with missionary operations.

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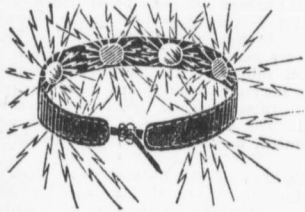
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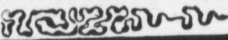
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SPECIFIC POISON In the Blood that must be **DESTROYED**
before Asthma can be

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