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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXXII.

SEPTEMBER, 1898.

No. 9.

I Glean.

A plaint—a prayer; I scarce can tell
How on my ear the echo fell!—

"I glean! I glean! at my Lord's behest;

Not in the pasture my heart loves best,
Mine is a sterile and barren field,
Sparse is the handful my toil doth yield!

How will my pitiful gain appear,
When the Lord of the Harvest draweth near?

Barren pasture and alien race!
God, can this be my proper place?"

I heard, I gazed; the saddened tone
Came from a gleaner all alone,
Bending over her dreary toil:
Scarce an ear on the hardened soil!
Far from the land that gave her birth,
Far from the hearts that knew her worth,
She gleaned what the reapers glad
passed by—
The grain which else would but rot and die!

Yet her toil was part of a mighty whole,
For every ear was a deathless soul,
She could not guess, as her gain she sought,
The worth of the mighty work she wrought!

But, as I listened her plaint and prayer,
A voice came, lifting her load of care:
"Oh, happy gleaner, to thee is given
To gather store for my garner, heaven!

Rejoice! rejoice! for thy hands may hold
In their weary grasp full ears of gold!
And the priceless gain thy labour brings
May feed the nation and nurture kings—
Kings and priests who shall hold their sway,

In the kingdom for which thy faith doth pray!

Thy seeming failures my victories fill,
For in doing them thou didst my will!
Then smile, not mourn, as thou view'st the scene,

And shout with gladness, 'I glean! I glean!'

—H. A. B., in All the World.

Point Better than Points.

Point is better than points. If the selected lesson text is ten verses, and each verse contains two distinct facts or statements, there are many teachers who seem to deem it their duty to make twenty moral points in their half-hour's work. There are other teachers, much fewer in number, who understand the art of making the whole lesson converge to a common point. The result of the first sort of work is that the pupils have felt a pricking sensation covering considerable area of feeling. The result of the second sort is that the pupils are conscious of a single definite truth having gained a lodgement within them. A chestnut burr will prick and scratch the surface, but it will not sink very deep as an arrow-head.—
S. S. Times.

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Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1898.

Important Biblical Discovery.

Every biblical scholar knows that the Hebrew account of the Deluge found in Genesis has been paralleled by two Babylonian accounts, one that of Berosus, a Babylonian historian, whose narrative has been handed down to us by early Greek Christian writers, and the other that found on Assyrian tablets by George Smith. Both resemble, and yet both differ from, the Genesis story. Biblical critics have differed as to the age of the biblical story, the more conservative holding that, being written by Moses, it is older than his time and was incorporated by him into the Book of Genesis, while the newer school of critics were, until the discovery of the Tel-el-Amarna tablets, inclined to believe that the story was borrowed from Nineveh or Babylon at the time of the Captivity or not long

before it, at which time the Book of Genesis was written.

The discovery by George Smith of a full poetical account of the Deluge, on tablets in King Assurbanipal's library at Nineveh, was of immense interest; but it did not assure us of the age of the Deluge story among the inhabitants of the Euphrates Valley; for it was on tablets written in Assurbanipal's reign, that is, scarce six hundred years before Christ. The original Babylonian tablets, from which the Assyrian copies were made, were much desired.

Now Pere Schell has made the discovery. It is dated in the reign of Ammizaduga, King of Babylon; and we know that he reigned about 2140 B.C. That is, we have here a precious bit of clay on which was written a poetical story of the Deluge, seven centuries before Moses and about the time of Isaac or Jacob. That is enough to make the discovery memorable. We learn positively; that the story of the Deluge was familiar to the common people of Babylonia, and, therefore, of all the East from Syria to Persia. Pere Schell says this account is only a copy; and no one can say how many centuries one must go back before reaching the historic fact which lies at the base of this cycle of legends and the first narration made of it. The New York Independent gives a fac-simile of the inscription.

About the Child.

A child is a grander study than geology, as John's study of the Jasper and pearl of the New Jerusalem was grander than his contemplation of the rocks of Patmos. A child is a grander study than botany, as the living lilies at Jesus' feet were more beautiful for thoughts than the carved lily work of Solomon's temple. There is no machinery known to engineering so curious as a child's hand! no dome of St. Peter's, or the Capitol, so wonderful as a child's head; no instrument known to the science of optics so marvellous as a child's eye; and when the study is the child's soul, all sciences, all literatures, all arts are as nothing, for all sciences, and literatures, and arts spring from the soul, and the soul itself is, therefore, greater than them all.

No one can overestimate the amount of blessing children have brought to

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hearts and homes by the turning of minds aside from trouble and giving the cheer and consolation of a sweet and clinging love. They not only console our sorrow, but they most powerfully reconcile us to life's hardships. How many a mother struggles bravely on against hardship and poverty, toiling day and night for her little ones, and yet "thinks her lot divine" because she has them to toil for. How many a father, returning from the heavy labours and perplexities and cares of the day, has had his heart and hands strengthened and his soul cheered by the prattle of his little ones. Children cheat us of weary care and reconcile us to our lot in life. But they do more than reconcile; they gladden. Children are the flowers of life, the poetry of life, the music of life, the sunshine of life. Their loveliness surprises us into a pure and abounding joy. How poor, how dismal, how uninviting the world would appear were there no children in it! How dull social life would be if childhood's merry laughter were never heard, if childhood's lovely face were never seen, if childhood's winsome ways were never known. Children are the buds of promise, the emblems of hope, the source of untold delight and joy.

A child five years of age was brought by her Majesty's request into the presence of Elizabeth, Queen of Frederick II. of Germany. The father brought the artless little one into the royal palace. She approached the Queen with a graceful courtesy and kissed her robe. The Queen was dining with the ladies of her court, and they watched with interest to see the effect of so much splendour on a simple child. She looked carelessly upon the costly dresses of the guests, the gold and silver and porcelain upon the table, and the pomp in which all was conducted, then folding her hand she sang with a clear childish voice:

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness
Are all my ornament and dress,
Fearless with these pure garments on,
I'll view the splendours of thy throne."

Tears filled the eyes of the ladies, and the Queen said: "Ah, happy child, how far we are below you."

Did not Christ take a child and set him up in the midst of his disciples as an example of the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

Methodist Magazine and Review for August.

Of special interest in connection with the Hebrew and other ancient monarchies, which the Sunday-schools of Christendom are about to study, are two important articles in this magazine, "The Lost Empires of the East," by the Editor, with numerous illustrations, and "Babylon and Nineveh," by R. E. Sanderson, F.A.S. The never failing interest in the story of "Mary, Queen of Scots and Queen of Hearts," is revived by a brilliant article by Miss E. Sanderson, with numerous illustrations and quaint extracts from documents by Queen Mary and her contemporaries. "A Mysterious Murder" is the somewhat sensational title of a sketch of Pacific Coast life, by the Rev. A. Browning. "What the Deaconess says to the Churches" is a brightly-written paper by Miss Isabelle Horton, editor of *The Deaconess Advocate*, Chicago. "The Anglo-American Alliance" is a stirring article by the Rev. Dr. Reuben Thomas, of Boston, Mass. "The Depths of the Earth," by Prof. Nathaniel S. Shaler, is an interesting science paper. A paper on the Communion, by Rev. Dr. C. E. Mandeville, is an able treatment of an important subject. The Editor protests strongly against the present war, and all war, in an article entitled, "The More Excellent Way." An article on "The Forward Movement in New York," has an excellent portrait of the Rev. S. Parkes Cadman. Oriental finds, world's progress, current thought, are well sustained.

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My Teacher: A Reminiscence.

BY NEVIN W. M'KAY.

One of the sweetest influences that comes to me is that of a Sunday-school teacher of many years ago. I often think of her, and as often am impressed with nobler thoughts and feelings. I can see her now, seated in the class; around her half a dozen boys intent on anything but the lesson, and she, with

sweet temper and holy adroitness, endeavouring to gain our attention, to instil into our minds the precious truths of the gospel of love.

Her words have been forgotten, but not the teacher. She still lives in our memory and in our hearts. We cannot rid ourselves of the force of her example, constraining us now; nor would we if we could. She touched our lives with hers. Nay, she took us, and made us a part of her own life, brought us into her little world, lived contemporary with us and for us. She loved us in our roughness and dulness of heart.

Many years have gone by since we parted, but years are very short in the retrospect. When we begin to recall the incidents of the past, we become actors again in the scenes which come up before us. But how changed our parts! Then we were governed by impulse and environment, but now we would act with the experience which the events themselves have given us.

Hers was a noble life in the truest sense. At the last she will win the acnium of our Lord, "She hath done what she could." And surely nothing more can be said of any one. Six days in the week, from morning till night, she laboured to gain a livelihood, and on Sunday she taught us boys the word of life. Her sustenance was meagre, and yet, despite that, she had liberality beyond moderation. Many tokens of her generous nature are now in our possession, and, as we view them from time to time, we wonder at the sacrifices she made for us, but more at the noble spirit that prompted them. The gifts are sanctified by the giver.

Our hearts warm, our feelings are deeper than words may express, when we remember how devoted was her service to ground so unyielding. But love's labour is never lost. The harvest may be slow in coming, but it surely comes. Seeds of kindness may enter our cold and unresponsive hearts, but the time comes when, in the evolution of our better selves, they sprout forth with greater energy and rarer beauty because so long dormant.

To me there is no force so irresistible as love. Had our teacher been a mere perfunctory, drilling us orally in the Scripture truths, we should have forgotten her long ago, as we have forgotten others,—for we cherish memories of those only who have sacrificed for us. And she truly sacrificed for us; and, though in our thoughtlessness

we did not appreciate it then, now we see the unselfishness of her life, and are inspired and uplifted by her devotion.

We have all gone forth into the world, and are now in the fruitage season of life. For myself, I am a better man and a better Christian because of my teacher. I now teach others as I have been taught, and my admonition to my co-labourers is, Let us be as faithful to those whom we instruct now as others have been to us in the past. Let us teach the children with as much earnestness and love as we hope and expect will be expended upon our children and loved ones when they come to be taught about God and salvation and consecration and heaven.—S. S. Times.

The Home Department of the Sunday-school.

BY W. H. HALL,
Secretary of the International Home Department Association.

WHERE IT MAY BE USED.

A Home Department may be organized to advantage by all Sunday-schools, large or small, in city or country, and is so flexible that it is admirably adapted to the varied conditions and needs of different Sunday-schools and communities. A neighbourhood Sunday-school, holding its sessions in a small country school-house, and having a membership of only fifteen persons, has a good effective Home Department with two members. A large Sunday-school, connected with a strong, flourishing city church, having a salaried superintendent whose time and efforts have for years been successfully devoted to the work of visitation and the gathering in of new scholars, until the school has reached a membership of over eleven hundred, has, nevertheless, found an opportunity and a demand for a Home Department which already includes more than two hundred and seventy-five persons. And Home Departments of the Sunday-school are thus in operation in all sections of our land, ranging in size and condition from one of these extremes to the other.

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WHOM IT INCLUDES.

The Home Department is designed primarily for the benefit of those persons in the immediate community and elsewhere who cannot attend the regular sessions of the Sunday-school, but it may also properly include those who, for various reasons, are not disposed to attend. It has sometimes been tersely stated that there are two general classes of people who are eligible to membership in the Home Department,—namely, the "Cannots" and the "Will nots."

Persons of the following, classes or conditions have been brought into the membership of Home Departments now in existence: Children too young, and men and women too aged and feeble, to attend Sunday-school; invalids, or "shut-ins," the deaf, blind, dumb, and crippled; sailors on the seas, soldiers in the regular army, absent members of the church, congregation, or family, living on the frontier, and deprived of the privileges of the church and Sunday-school; commercial travellers, doctors, nurses, policemen, milkmen, employees on steam, electric, cable, and horse railroads; mothers kept at home by the care of young children, by household duties or the opposition of ungodly husbands, and the children in such families; those living at a great distance, having no means of conveyance; foreigners unacquainted with our language and customs; the indifferent, worldly, ungodly; those who hold aloof because of poverty or pride, or because of prejudice against the church, Sunday-school, pastor, superintendent, or some other member; and others whom there is no need of enumerating, but who may be included in the great company of non-attendants constituting such a large proportion of the population.

ITS PLAN.

The Home Department is simple in its plan and essential features. It really needs, for its successful working, simply a leader or visitor, a member or scholar, and a lesson to study. Those who become members are invited, and give their promise, to study the Sunday-school lesson at home, or wherever they may be, at least one half-hour during the week, preferably on Sunday. Of course, the very young, the aged and feeble, the blind, and some others, may not be able to study for themselves, but they may be interested in the lessons, and identified with the work, through the loving ministry of those who read and explain

the lesson to them, or seek in some such way to aid them.

OTHER DETAILS OF THE PLAN.

A Home Department may be conducted in as simple or in as elaborate a way as those at its head think best. It is often the case that the superintendent of the Sunday-school, or a regularly appointed Home Department superintendent, will have the visitors make out reports, on cards or in books made for that purpose, of the study that is being done regularly by the members of the department. A voluntary contribution of money by the members may also be a part of the plan, such money to be included in the regular offerings of the school. Cards, books, money envelopes, and similar printed matter that is of assistance in the work, are prepared by many of the denominational or general Sunday-school publishing houses. The unit in Home Department study is the individual, but in many cases two or more individuals study together in the home, or a group of individuals in a locality associate for study as a neighbourhood class. The number thus associated is sometimes so large as to lead to the organization of a neighbourhood Sunday-school. Young children may be helped by sending regularly to them pretty picture-papers or cards as tokens of remembrance, with an occasional simple message. They enjoy the pictures and cards, and their parents or older brothers or sisters will read the stories to them.

GAIN OF VISITATION.

Before the people whom the Home Department is designed to help can be secured as members, and even after this result has been achieved, there must be more or less of personal visitation and effort. In many cases, nothing can be said or done in reference to the study of the lessons at the outstart. Acquaintance must be formed and cultivated, confidence inspired, and barriers removed. And in many cases also, after a beginning has been made, important opportunities will arise for the encouragement and assistance of the members, not only in their study, but also in the promotion of their temporal and spiritual interests. Therefore it is apparent that the Home Department is of great value, not only in the promotion of Bible study, but also on account of the visitation and ministry of loving,

tactful, and persistent workers, which it necessitates and develops. Through its influence the church is brought into closer contact and stronger bonds of fellowship with the people in the community. It becomes also a fruitful source of Christian enterprise and effort, and a valuable instrumentality in the development of Christian workers.

SOME RESULTS.

The membership of the Sunday-school has been increased by the coming in of those who, first becoming interested in the lessons in their own homes, have found that the obstacles which in the past seemed to stand in the way of their attendance have vanished. The Sunday-school has gained as allies and friends those whom it has endeavoured to help, and has found that every line of effort and influence which it has extended to homes and hearts has proved also a channel for the return of precious blessings to the school. Classes and schools have been organized in destitute neighbourhoods, prayer-meetings have been held in school-houses and private dwellings, food and clothing have been provided for the needy, good reading has been wisely and regularly distributed, comfort and hope have been administered to the sad and discouraged, temperance work has been promoted, backsliders have been reclaimed, and sinners have been converted to Christ,—all through the instrumentality of the Home Department, which directs attention to the Word of God, and provides for those in need the Christlike ministry of personal fellowship and sympathy.

SOME EXAMPLES OF ITS WORKING.

A farmer's wife, living in a sparsely settled and hilly section, heard of the Home Department at a Sunday-school convention. She determined to try it. The next day she visited an old lady living all alone, and seldom leaving her home. She explained the plan to her, secured her promise to study the lessons, gave her a lesson-help, and recorded her name as a member. She had in reality inaugurated a first-class Home Department. The membership was subsequently increased by similar efforts, and the work was developed in various lines, but the foundation of it all was laid broad and deep on that first day.

The simplicity of it commends it to those whom it seeks to enlist. A man who has become a habitual non-attendant

at church and Sunday-school, and who, when invited to go, has always found some convenient excuse, is now regarded as an almost hopeless case. One day a lady who is a Home Department visitor calls at the home of this man, and, after a pleasant social chat, introduces the subject of home study of the Sunday-school lessons, and invites him to engage therein. It strikes him as a comparatively simple and easy thing to do. He really cannot find a convenient and plausible excuse for refusing the invitation. All that is required of him is to study the lesson at home for half an hour on Sunday. There is no necessity for dressing up, or getting a team ready, or for going from home, or departing to any considerable extent from his usual course on the Sabbath. And so, while he has no particular interest in, or desire for, Bible study, he accepts the invitation because it requires so little of him, and because he can really offer no good reason for not complying with the request of his friendly and agreeable visitor.

HOW TO FORM A HOME DEPARTMENT.

As to the method of procedure in organizing a Home Department in a Sunday-school, there is no rule or set of rules. Sometimes the proper preliminary step is a systematic, house-to-house visitation by persons chosen for that purpose. After these persons have secured a list of members, the work is organized by the election of officers and permanent visitors. In other cases, the officers and visitors of the Home Department are first chosen, and the members are secured by the visitors, to whom certain sections of the parish or community are assigned.

Some excellent Home Departments have been started in a small way by volunteer workers, and the formal organization has been a matter of subsequent development. The main thing is, that Sunday-school workers shall realize the great need of this work, the comparative ease with which it may be instituted and carried forward, and the grand results which are sure to follow every effort, however humble, which is made in the name and strength of the Master in behalf of those whom he loves.—Sunday-school Times.

Whenever you cannot see anything good in other people, you can make up your mind you need a revival in your own heart.

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A Lesson for Every Sunday.

A Bible-loving Sunday-school teacher said to the editor recently, "In our Sunday-school we lose practically three or four months of the year from the study of the Bible. For at least a month before Christmas the lesson is abandoned or shortened for the practice of Christmas carols. Then another month is lost before Easter; another month in the preparation of an elaborate Children's Day exercise. And we have this year added a harvest-home service, requiring more training and more time. Is there not some way to retain the lesson, and still hold special service on these occasions?"

We believe in observing special Sundays in the school, but we do not believe that it is ever necessary, not even on Christmas, to omit the lesson. The vital line, the spinal cord of the Sunday-school is the study of the Bible. In our judgment the lesson should never be wholly omitted at a regular session of the school. Rarely should it be abbreviated, though it may be on a neces-

sary occasion. Even when special services are held the lesson should be taught either in the class or from the desk. The superintendent who knows the value of time and understands how to use it, can always find opportunity to drill his school upon new music without infringing upon other duties. We know of Sunday-schools which observe all these special occasions—Easter, Children's Day, Rally Day, Christmas (not forgetting the collection for the Sunday-school Union)—and never cut down the lesson five minutes at any session while preparing for an entertainment.—Sunday-school Journal.

As in music, not only the notes but also the pauses, are accorded to the plan and mind of the composer, and instinct with the life and spirit which breathe through the whole, so the very omissions of Scripture are not the result of chance or of the accidental ignorance of the writer, but according to and in harmony with the wisdom of the eternal Spirit, who is the true author of the record.—Adolph Saphir.

ORDER OF SERVICES—THIRD QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

SCHOOL. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.

SUPT. For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off.

SCHOOL. But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

SUPT. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

SCHOOL. But these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.
- III. SINGING.
- IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.
- V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.
- VI. SINGING.

LESSON SERVICE.

- I. CLASS STUDY OF THE LESSON.
- II. SINGING LESSON HYMN.
- III. RECITATION OF THE TITLE, GOLDEN TEXT, AND OUTLINE by the school in concert.
- IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON by PASTOR OR Superintendent.
- V. SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON. [Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.]
- VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS [especially of the Church service and the Epworth League and week-evening prayer-meetings.]

CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.

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

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE TEN TRIBES.

LESSON X. THE DEATH OF ELISHA.

[Sept. 4.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. Psalm 116. 15.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read the whole chapter.]

2 Kings 13. 14-25. [*Commit to memory verses 20, 21.*]

14 Now E-li'sha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Jo'ash the king of Is-ra-el came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father! the chariot of Is-ra-el, and the horsemen thereof.

15 And E-li'sha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.

16 And he said to the king of Is-ra-el, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and E-li'sha put his hands upon the king's hands.

17 And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then E-li'sha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syr'i-a: for thou shalt smite the Syr'i-ans in A'phck, till thou have consumed them.

18 And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Is-ra-el, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.

19 And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syr'i-a till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syr'i-a but thrice.

20 And E-li'sha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Mo'ab-ites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

21 And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulcher of E-li'sha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of E-li'sha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

22 But Haz'a-el king of Syr'i-a oppressed Is-ra-el all the days of Je-ho'a-haz.

23 And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with A'bra-ham, I'saac, and Ja'cob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.

24 So Haz'a-el king of Syr'i-a died; and Ben-ha'dad his son reigned in his stead.

25 And Je-ho'ash the son of Je-ho'a-haz took again out of the hand of Ben-ha'dad the son of Haz'a-el the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Je-ho'a-haz his father by war. Three times did Jo'ash beat him, and recovered the cities of Is-ra-el.

REVISED VERSION.

14 Now E-li'sha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died: and Jo'ash the king of Is-ra-el came down unto him, and wept over him, and said, My father, my father, the chariots of Is-ra-el and the horsemen thereof!

15 And E-li'sha said unto him, Take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Is-ra-el, Put thine hand upon the bow: and he put his hand upon it. And E-li'sha laid his hands

17 upon the king's hands. And he said, Open the window eastward: and he opened it. Then E-li'sha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, The Lord's arrow of victory, even the arrow of victory over Syr'i-a: for thou shalt smite the Syr'i-ans in A'phck, till thou have

18 consumed them. And he said, Take the arrows: and he took them. And he said unto the king of Is-ra-el, Smite upon the ground: 19 and he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syr'i-a till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syr'i-a but thrice.

20 And E-li'sha died, and they buried him. Now the bands of the Mo'ab-ites invaded the 21 land at the coming in of the year. And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band; and they cast the man into the sepulcher of E-li'sha: and as soon as the man touched the bones of E-li'sha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

22 And Haz'a-el king of Syr'i-a oppressed Is-ra-el all the days of Je-ho'a-haz. But the

23 Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with A'bra-ham, I'saac, and Ja'cob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence

24 as yet. And Haz'a-el king of Syr'i-a died: and Ben-ha'dad his son reigned in his stead.

25 And Je-ho'ash the son of Je-ho'a-haz took again out of the hand of Ben-ha'dad the son of Haz'a-el the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Je-ho'a-haz his father by war. Three times did Jo'ash smite him, and recovered the cities of Is-ra-el.

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QUESTIONS.

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3. REWARD.

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Time.—Probably B. C. 838 (?). **Place.**—Unknown. **Rulers.**—Joash or Jehosh, grandson of Jehu, twelfth king of Israel; Amaziah, ninth king of Judah; Ben-hadad III, king of Damascus; Shalmaneser II, king of Assyria.

Home Readings.

- M.* Syrian oppression. 2 Kings 13. 1-9.
Tu. The Death of Elisha. 2 Kings 13. 14-25.
W. Death of Moses. Deut. 34.
Tu. Reward to the upright. Isa. 33. 13-17.
F. Christ in life or death. Phil. 1. 12-24.
S. Fear of death removed. 2 Cor. 5. 1-10.
S. A peaceful end. Psalm 37. 23-37.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 143, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
 Though pressed by every foe!

No. 146, New Canadian Hymnal.

God of my life, through all my days,
 My grateful powers shall sound thy praise.

No. 297, New Canadian Hymnal.

A few more years shall roll,
 A few more seasons come.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. A Lack of Faith, v. 14-19.

- What royal visitor wept over a sick prophet?
 What was his utterance of sorrow?
 When and where had these words been before uttered?
 How was the king bidden to arm himself?
 What three commands were then given?
 What interpretation did the prophet give of the action?
 What commands were then given to the king?
 How far did his obedience go?
 What rebuke did the prophet give?
 How did the king's action show lack of faith?

2. Divine Power, v. 20, 21.

- What event came to the prophet?
 Upon whose death does the Lord look with favor? GOLDEN TEXT.
 What enemies invaded Israel?
 What occasion for a hurried burial arose?
 What astonishing results followed?

3. Reward of Faith, v. 22-25.

- What ruler oppressed Israel?
 Why was the Lord gracious to Israel?
 Who succeeded Hazael as king of Syria?
 What prophecy was fulfilled in Hazael's death?
 2 Kings 8. 12.
 Who recovered Israel from Syria's power?

How many times was Israel victorious?
 What prophecy was thus fulfilled?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Good men are a nation's defense. Kings may well weep when a prophet dies. God's best gift to any people is a devoted, patriotic leader.
2. Doubt invites disaster and defeat. God's commands are imperative. To hesitate is to disobey. Cowards cannot be relied upon for victory.
3. "The good die not." Their influence survives. Their works follow them. Though dead, they yet speak. There was power in Elisha's bones. There is power in Elisha's example and holy memory.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Lack of Faith, v. 14-19.

- Who was dying?
 What king came to see him?
 Why was Joash so sorrowful?
 What was the significance of his exclamation?
 What did Elisha direct the king to do?
 What did Elisha mean by putting his hands upon the king's hands?
 Why was the arrow shot eastward?
 What explanation of the arrow did the prophet give?
 What was the king told to do?
 Why did he smite only thrice?

2. Divine Power, v. 20, 21.

- What occasioned the hurried burial?
 What occurred when the body touched Elisha's bones?
 What was its significance?

3. Reward of Faith, v. 22-25.

- What prophecy of Elisha was fulfilled concerning Hazael? 2 Kings 8. 12.
 Why did God preserve Israel?
 What other prophecy of Elisha was fulfilled?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That a good man's death is cause for lamentation?
2. That indifference to divine command brings disaster?
3. That none of God's words fail?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

How long had Elisha been a prophet? **About sixty years.**

- Who was now king of Israel? **Joash.**
 Whose grandson was Joash?
 What did he say to the dying prophet?

Do you know what he meant by these strange words?

Was Joash a good king?

In what did he fail? **He did not give his whole heart to God.**

Why did he weep over Elisha?

What do half-hearted Christians often feel?

A desire to belong entirely to God.

What did Elisha tell the king to do?

Which way did he tell him to shoot?

What did he call the arrow which he shot?

What did he mean? **That the Lord would give him victory over the Syrians.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. What did Elisha tell Joash to do? **"Take bow and arrows."**

2. When Joash had shot the arrow what did Elisha say? **"The arrow of the Lord's deliverance."**

3. Why was Elisha wroth when Joash stayed after smiting the ground thrice? **Because he had not smitten more.**

4. What did Elisha say to Joash? **"Thou shalt smite Syria but thrice."**

5. What happened to the man who was cast into the sepulcher of Elisha? **He revived.**

6. What is our GOLDEN TEXT? **"Precious," etc.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

27. What are the conditional benefits which flow from the Atonement?

The conditional benefits which flow from the Atonement are justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, and eternal glory.

1 Corinthians i. 30. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

Romans viii. 29, 30.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

BY J. L. HERLBUT, D.D.

The Man of God in Death.

I. HIS PUBLIC WORTH.

The chariot of Israel. v. 14.

Set thee over the nations. Jer. 1. 10.

Heved....by the prophets. Hosea 6. 5.

II. HIS PATRIOTIC INTEREST.

Thine hand upon the bow. v. 16.

Prosper that love thee. Psalm 122. 6-9.

Accursed....for my brethren. Rom. 9. 1-5.

III. HIS PROPHETIC FAITH.

The Lord's deliverance. v. 17-19.

The victory....our faith. 1 John 5. 4.

More than conquerors. Rom. 8. 37.

IV. HIS POWER AFTER DEATH.

1. *Elisha died....they buried him.* v. 29.

Prophets, do they live. Zech. 1. 5.

2. *Touched....revived.* v. 21.

Works do follow them. Rev. 14. 13.

V. HIS PROPHECY FULFILLED.

1. *The Lord was gracious.* v. 23.

A God like unto thee. Micah 7. 18.

2. *Recovered the cities.* v. 25.

Holden his servant. Luke 1. 54.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

BY ROBERT R. DOHERTY, PH.D.

The revolution in Israel wrought by Jehu did not at first result in prosperity. Jehu saw his kingdom stripped of its eastern provinces by the Syrians under King Hazael, and his son Jehoahaz was forced into the condition of a vassal to Syria. But the tide turned under the able rule of Joash, Jehu's grandson. We can well believe that in the breaking of the Syrian yoke and in the advancement of Israel the aged prophet Elisha was closely associated with the young king, and wrought hand in hand with him. Now the time has come for Elisha to die. Beside the couch of the venerable man of God Joash utters the cry which Elisha himself had lifted up when he saw his master Elijah ascending the skies, "My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." In the prophet of God was the true strength and defense of the land. But Elisha's last thoughts were not for himself. He ordered the window to be opened toward the land conquered by the Syrians. Placing his withered hand upon the king's hand, he bade him shoot the arrow which should betoken the coming deliverance. Then he commanded him to strike the arrows upon the ground. With hesitating faith the monarch smote only three times, and so lost his opportunity to destroy his ancient adversary. All these acts were symbols—prophecies of what was to come. After the prophet's death he thrice defeated the Syrians, who were no longer led by

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the great Hazeal, but by his weaker son, Ben-hadad, and won from their grasp all the lands which had been lost. The prophet Elisha, though dead, was still mighty, and the plans he inaugurated continued to influence the people. Nay, his very bones sent forth power; for when a dead man was laid beside them and touched them life seemed to shoot through the corpse, and it stood erect in the sepulcher.

Verse 14. Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. He was now fully eighty years of age. During his long life he had faithfully served both his God and his king. After the vision at Dothan, which we studied in our last lesson, the city of Samaria was besieged by the Syrians. Their armies surrounded it closely, and the agony and distress of the garrison and the inhabitants have seldom been surpassed. Even children were eaten, and the most repulsive articles of food were sold for fabulous prices. In his desperation the king sent to behold Elisha, but Elisha announced that within twenty-four hours the famine would be replaced by superabundance; and it was so. The whole story is full of suggestion. And now after more years of unrecorded goodness Elisha is dying. **Joash the king of Israel came down unto him.** Things had strangely changed in Israel since Elisha began his ministrations. The godly work of his predecessor, Elijah, had had deep effect on the national character and sentiment, and when Elisha as a young man picked up the older prophet's mantle and started on his career as the prophet of Israel it was quite another Israel from that which he was now about to leave. Then the influence of Ahab's family and the foul worship of Baal were felt everywhere; now Ahab's dynasty was no more, and Baal for a while was forgotten in Israel. It is true there was much of sin and some open idolatry. It is also true, however, that the most of the people accepted the true doctrine of Jehovah. For forty-five years and more Elisha has not been mentioned in the Bible record. Joash was a descendant of Jehu, who had usurped the throne and put to death all the representatives of Ahab's family that he could find. Vigorous as Jehu was, he had not been able to maintain himself successfully against the Syrians and Assyrians, but the kingdom had grown up to comparative strength again, and the influence of Elisha had come to be regarded by both king and subjects as one of the powerful forces working toward national prosperity. **Wept over his face.** The king's sorrow for Elisha's death was sincere, and it should have been, for he owed his royal inheritance to Elisha's influence and acts. **O my father, my father!** In all religions ministers have been addressed as "father." That is the ordinary title of a Roman Catholic priest. It is frequently

used by all sorts of Protestants. Padre and papa are the names that other nations give to the ministers of the Gospel, and the title pope has the same origin. **The chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.** A phrase equivalent to the standing army of the nation. It was a compliment of the highest sort, phrased in exactly the words that Elisha himself had used when his "father," Elijah, had been taken from him to heaven. It was more or less proverbial, and in any case carried the idea that no fortifications that Israel could construct were equal in their defensive power to one good man whose eyes were opened by the Spirit of God. That a king should visit a prophet was astounding, and in the East prophets were kept by kings as servants. The reverence of Joash for Elisha gives us a favorable view of some phases of the king's character.

15. Take bow and arrows. The East was the land of symbols, and when the prophet gave this command the king and the bystanders would know that a symbolic act was about to be performed. **He took unto him bow and arrows.** Very likely the king, whose faith was not of the strongest, was bored by the prophet's command.

16. Put thine hand upon the bow. "Hold it in position for shooting an arrow." **He put his hand upon it.** That is, he set the arrow, pulled the string, and took aim. **Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.** Elisha was the "man of God," and whatever he did was looked upon as being done by God. The bow and arrows represented the king's endeavors to conquer his enemies, and Elisha's hands put on them indicated that God was about to give power to the king's efforts. "Christ himself deigns to put his hand upon our hand in order that we may draw the bow aright. It is his arrows that must be shot, and it is we who must shoot them, but if we do our part with faith, earnestness, strength, and perseverance, we will have a blessing from him."—*Wordsworth.*

17. Open the window eastward. Windows in that day were not made of glass, but of lattice work, which could be opened and closed at pleasure. Of course Elisha's command was not addressed to the king, but to a servant. "Eastward" was in the direction of the territory which Hazeal, king of Syria, had wrested from Israel. Elisha was by prophecy about to

encourage Joash to take back the stolen countries, and therefore he chose for the symbolical act the window that looked toward them. **And he opened it.** "One opened it." **Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot.** Intent was the king on doing what the prophet told him, that he might have the assurance that would come from the parable he was helping to enact. **And he said.** That is, Elisha said. **The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria.** Substitute the name Jehovah for "the Lord." The meaning is, this arrow represents Jehovah's deliverance of Israel from its trouble, a deliverance from Syrian tyranny. **For thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.** So it is not merely deliverance after all, but victory. The army defeated shall be annihilated. **In Aphek.** A town three miles east of the Sea of Galilee, where once before the Israelites had routed the Syrians. There is no record of this second battle of Aphek, but we must assume that what was prophesied came to pass in history. The modern village Fik is on the site of the ancient Aphek.

18. He said, Take the arrows. And he took them. Elisha commanded the king to take the quiver into his hands, and the king did so, and doubtless held the arrows in a bunch. **Smite upon the ground.** It is not certain what this means, but the best authorities explain it as a command to strike with the arrows against the floor. **He smote thrice, and stayed.** The king struck the arrows on the floor three times, and then the apparent folly of the whole transaction coming upon him, he stopped, nor could he be induced to carry the symbolism further. He did not enter into its spirit at all. He was ready to fight, but this shooting looked like child's play.

19. The man of God was wrath with him. Indignant at his lack of faith and zeal. Furthermore he was conscious that there was more of real symbolism here than Joash understood. The same feebleness of character which led the king to strike three times in place of twenty would have the same results when the actual warfare began. **Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it.** "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." It is the zealous and energetic who conquer. Faith and zeal are at the bottom of every victory. "He was wanting in the proper zeal for obtaining the full promises of God."—*Keil.* **Now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.** The last verse of this lesson declares that this prophecy was exactly

accomplished. If Joash had had more reverent confidence in the work of Elisha, the conquests of the second Jeroboam might have been anticipated by him.

20. Elisha died, and they buried him. Very different from the fate of the man who was taken in a chariot of fire to heaven. Where Elisha was buried is not certainly known, probably near to Samaria. Josephus mentions the magnificence of his funeral. **The bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.** An evidence of the weakness of Israel, especially as the point where they were probably discovered was far from the national border.

21. As they were burying a man. That is, as some unnamed Israelites were burying a friend. **Behold, they spied a band.** The Hebrew has it "the band." An evidence that such bands were frequent. **They cast the man into the sepulcher of Elisha.** They had no place else to put him. There was no time for ceremony. They did not know whose Elisha's tomb was, but took the nearest. **And when the man was let down.** This is not in the Bible text. Elisha's tomb was not a pit dug in the ground like a modern grave. **Touched the bones of Elisha.** The one corpse, wound in its grave clothes, but uncoffined, was strongly pushed over to the other one, which was equally bound.

23. The Lord was gracious unto them. And therefore they were preserved. His covenant to Abraham was repeated to Isaac and Jacob, a promise that the children of Abraham should be preserved with gracious mercy. **Neither cast he them from his presence as yet.** The time came when they were cast away, rejected, but for that they and not God were responsible. The sad event came more than a century from this time.

24. So Hazael king of Syria died. This was the cruel king who so severely had punished the Israelites. **Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead.** Hazael, a usurper, gave to his eldest boy the name of the monarch he had dethroned and murdered.

25. Jehoash the son of Jehonhaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities. These had been captured from Israel by the greater Ben-hadad. **Three times did Joash beat him.** Thrice defeated, Hazael was forced to abandon his conquest in western Samaria. He retained, however, the trans-Jordanic territory, which was not recovered by the Israelites till the reign of Jeroboam II.

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CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

BY REV. S. J. HERBEN, LITT. D.

Elisha was now an old man, probably between eighty and ninety years of age. For nearly half a century there is no record of his work. This is unfortunate, because those years were probably illustrious with instances of his devotion to duty and fidelity to Jehovah. That he was still a man of great influence is clear from the homage paid to him by the king, and his interview with Joash shows that he still executed the functions of the prophetic office, and that he regarded his allegiance to Jehovah as paramount to his allegiance to Joash.

Verse 14. Joash. He is known also as Jehoash, and was the son of Jehoahaz, and the grandson of Jehu. He was a young man, and coming to the throne after the turbulent and disastrous reign of his father, he probably often received comfort and wise counsel from Elisha amid the distractions and intrigues of his royal court. **Wept.** Joash weeping at the bedside of Elisha presents a picture in striking contrast with Elijah fleeing from the wrath of Jezebel. The genuineness of the young king's sorrow is not to be doubted, for he had evidently a high regard and probably a filial affection for the venerable prophet, who had always sought to guide him, as well as his father and his grandfather, in the ways of righteousness.

15. Take bow and arrows. Probably in their conversation the anxiety of the king concerning the Syrians became evident to the prophet. The loss of this old friend and counselor would be a serious blow to the cause of Israel, and to reassure Joash the dying man, by means of symbols, would convince the king that the prayer of his father for the defeat of the Syrians would be fulfilled through him. **He took the bow.** Joash had complete confidence in Elisha, and was not likely to be influenced by the vagaries of a dying man. If there was any man in Israel who could help him in his dilemma, it was the prophet, and Joash believed in him.

16. Put his hand upon the king's hand. This no obsequious courtier would dare to do, but the prophet represented Jehovah, and Joash recognized this act as having divine significance. If God's hand shall direct him, the Syrians will not be able to stand before him. The practical teaching is plain. Paul expressed the thought that was probably in the mind of the young king when he said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." The power of God working through consecrated human hearts, minds, and hands is irresistible. Then the fact must never be lost sight of that there is a higher

power whose servants we should be, with which we must either cooperate, or, antagonizing it, be ultimately destroyed by it.

18. He smote thrice. Joash overlooked the fact that the supply of the arrows of the Lord's deliverance is inexhaustible. His own faith in the prophet should have encouraged him to smite until all the arrows had been used. He lost an opportunity to receive the largest and completest cooperation of God. Every arrow meant a triumph for the king, and so long as arrows remained there were promises of victory over the enemy. The mistake of Joash is a common one. Men are constantly setting a limit to the power and promise of God. We are encouraged to "ask largely," but when we do it is in a timorous and doubting spirit, as though the promise were simply a combination of words and not an emphatic, authentic, and sincere declaration of God.

19. Thou shouldst have smitten. It is not strange that the prophet was vexed at the failure of the king to grasp the full significance of this piece of symbolism. His failure placed a limit upon God's performances in his behalf. So, also, when Jesus "came into his own country" he found that "he could there do no mighty work, . . . because of their unbelief." The fact is, God places in the hands of men great instruments of usefulness, and gives them abundant opportunities to display their power, but we are divided in our belief in the potency of the instruments and question the timeliness of the opportunity and our own ability to meet it, and the result is that no mighty work is wrought by God through us because of our unbelief. When one thinks of what results may depend upon our use of these powers and opportunities his accusing conscience should arouse him to a greater degree of faithfulness.

20. They buried him. Though the old prophet had died and was buried, his name and fame still pervaded the land. His death was a source of genuine sorrow to the king, and it was only natural that he should give to the prophet's burial all the pomp and ceremony of a princely pageant. He was worthy of it all, and more; for he was a prince of God, and had greater claim to the homage of men than had any prince who sat upon a throne. It too frequently happens that honor and praise are withheld from those who really deserve it until they are beyond the reach of applause and the need of kind and encouraging speech.

21. The sepulcher of Elisha. This inci-

dent teaches not that there is any potency in prophets' bones, but that the influences of a good life do not cease with the closing of the earthly career. There is soundness in the suggestion of Kell, that through this miracle "God wished to show his people that the divine efficiency that was at work in Elisha had not disappeared from Israel with his death." The king might have seen in it an assurance that God would perform his promise with reference to the Syrians as far as the faith of Joash would permit him to do so.

25. Three times. The failure of Joash to follow up his victories over the Syrians justified the wrath of the prophet. The same spirit characterized the administration of Joash throughout his career, and the result was that Israel entered again upon a succession of unfortunate and bitter experiences. The king had the way of permanent success and greatness for himself and his country pointed out to him by the prophet, but he walked not therein, and disaster followed speedily.

Thoughts for Young People.

The Death of a Man of God.

1. The man of God is appreciated when he dies, if not before. Often men who have sneered at a Christian, and have seemed to despise him, in their hearts reverence him, and when he dies show honor toward him. Verse 14.

2. The man of God dies as he has lived. He who has spent his life in doing good thinks of others rather than of himself when he comes to die, and he who has lived for God enjoys God's presence in the dying hour. Verses 15-19.

3. The man of God when dying often possesses a strange insight into God's plans, and catches gleams of events to come, as if a light from heaven rests upon his face. Verses 15-19.

4. The man of God has power after death. The work he has done goes on; the influence he has exerted is not lost, and men feel his power when he has left this world. Verses 20, 21.

5. The true strength of a people is its godly men. Elisha was "the chariot of Israel" in his day, and the safety of our land to-day is in its men of God, who save the nation from the wrath of heaven.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D.D.

Joash, the king, wept over the face of the dying Elisha. Weeping was not and is not to-day considered unmanly in Bible lands. There was no mockish sentimentality which would require even a king to hide his grief and to avoid all public expression of it. In truth, tears were

even esteemed as well-nigh sacred, so that David prayed, "O Lord, put thou my tears into thy bottle." The figure would imply the tenderest regard for sorrow, as though God kept a bottle for the tears of his people, as in Persia to-day the custom is still to bottle up the tears which are shed in hours of great grief or of special mourning for deceased persons.

Ere Elisha should go hence he once more talked about the future of his people, with that species of object-teaching by symbolic action usual with oriental people, and he asserted that, though he should die, Jehovah would not die, nor Providence cease to administer judgment.

Verse 17. Open the window. This was not a window with a sash with glass, as now. The windows of Eastern towns for the most part look into a court at the back, so that in passing through the streets no window is seen, certainly not on the first or lower story, though sometimes they are found in the front in the second story. But little light is gained from them, since, though without glass, they are generally darkened by lattice. Open woodwork is a common feature. The windows are used but little after dark, except as they project into a sort of balcony and are occupied for sleeping. No light, of course, shines through them to cheer the street. Sometimes we do find windows with pointed arches and of various shapes on all sides of a public building. For the most part, throughout the land, the window is little more than a hole in the wall of the mud hut. In many instances the houses have no windows at all, and this is a common feature throughout large parts of the Eastern world. The ordinary house of the Hindus, for instance, is without windows, the door opening into a court, and the rooms being occupied merely for sleeping.

Verse 21. Burying a man. Just where the line originates which separates the nations which burn their dead from those which bury their dead is not known, but there is no instance of a nation having once accepted either of these practices to have changed from one to the other. The Hebrews were not a body-burning people, but a body-burying people; at least they have been so as far back as Abraham's day, when he bought his cemetery lot in Machpelah for the burial of his beautiful and beloved Sarah. The preparations for the burial were, as they are in India to-day, very simple. The Hindus place a board below and a board above the corpse, or frequently only one beneath the corpse, and wind a cloth around the body and the board, binding them solidly together. The Hebrews did not dig a deep grave in the earth, as we do, but only made a very shallow excavation, or

deposited the corpse in excavated rocks. The body was not covered with earth, the protection being obtained from the superstructure over the grave, generally composed of mud brick, plastered and whitened. Though graves were often numerous in a locality so as to make something of a cemetery or a graveyard, neither the grave nor the set of graves was fenced or otherwise inclosed. The beasts might roam over it and desecrate the place. Men might take all sorts of liberties with it as an open common. The custom at Gaza in our day is that men and women and children shall on Friday come to such grounds as these for a sort of holiday enjoyment, though others visit the place to weep over their dead. Little children are sometimes seen in gay dresses in the cemeteries. Mourning at the tombs of great prophets is a common practice, though they have died long ago. The custom is varied. Sometimes the visitors prostrate themselves in prayer as they come to the place and weep and take up dust from the tomb and throw it on their own heads, while women dishevel their hair and appear as unattractive as possible. The Bedouins have special dead saints, almost every tribe having some eminent person at whose grave they lament periodically. They prostrate themselves for half an hour or more on the grave, weeping, rise, join hands in a circle, and two of the number enter the ring and lead in a wild dirge, clapping their hands and mourning with loud lament. On almost every hilltop of Palestine is seen some tomb of sheik or prophet at which the people gather to lament. The influence of a powerful sheik, even after his death, is believed to extend for good or ill from ten to twenty miles around the tomb. It was "a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year." Judg. 11 40.

We may wonder that the dead body of the person being buried at this time should have touched the dead body of the prophet, but it was not uncommon for several persons to be buried in the same grave or vault in the rock which constituted the tomb.

The roving Bedouins of the desert coming down on the people to commit depredations is a picture of everyday occurrence in the East still. A traveler in Bible lands needs yet, in most parts, the protection of the Arab guides to save from violence and robbery. Of late years it is a little safer to travel over some parts, and the greater robbers arrange for safe-conduct with some of the more important guides, by their paying them a good sum for it, when the word is passed or a signal given which shows that

the party is not to be molested. On the appearance of a band like this these people precipitately abandoned the corpse of the man whom they were about to bury, opening the tomb of Elisha for the purpose of hiding the body for the moment, though it may not have been intended to bury him in that sepulcher. The miraculous result followed, and tradition still attributes similar wonders to the tombs of many, or even most, of the great persons at whose shrines they worship.

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

My father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." The prophet of God was of more value for the defense of the kingdom than an army with chariots. The value of a good man in a community is greater than we can compute. An earnest Christian man, whose life was very consistent and beautiful, took voyages on whaling vessels for his health. After he had taken two the captain said to him, "Whenever you want to go again I will gladly take you without any charge." When the passenger expressed surprise the captain added, "Your very presence is a good thing for us, and my sailors feel that no harm can come to us while you are on board."

Vers 16. Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands. To teach him that God's power would work through the king's hands. A little child who wanted to drive a spirited team was allowed to hold the reins, but behind the child was the father's hand, which was really guiding all. God's power will work through our hands if we are in touch with him. Without divine help the king was as powerless to win victories for his kingdom as the engineer who would try to make his engine go by pushing it. The king, with God as his helper, is like the engineer whose hand touches the throttle, and who has thus multiplied his own strength a thousandfold.

God is pleased with large requests. In 1792 William Carey preached a great sermon, a direct result of which was the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society. His text was Isa. 54. 2, 3: "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." Under this he made two points: "Expect great things from God," "Attempt great things for God." When he first proposed to the ministers of his own denomination that a

mission should be founded in India the presiding officer said, "You are a miserable enthusiast." Let us see how Carey's faith was honored. A hundred years ago he was the only ordained Protestant missionary in India. Now there are more than seven thousand. Carey's single convert has had a following of over two thirds of a million of converts.

"According to your faith." When Xavier was preparing to go forth upon his mission his friend, who shared his apartment at Rome, was awakened in the night by his earnest exclamations. He would cry out in his sleep, "Yet more, O my God! yet more!" He afterward told what his vision had been. He saw in his slumber the barbarous islands and continents and mighty empires which he was to win to his faith. It seemed to him that storms and hunger and thirst were everywhere and death in many a fearful form, yet he shrank not back. He yearned for still wider fields of labor, and with an absorbing passion cried out, "Yet more, O my God! yet more!"—*Kip.*

Verses 20, 21. The incident of verses 20, 21 enforces the fact that the influence of our lives does not die with us. A man who felt when dying that his life had been wrong cried out, "Gather up my influence and bury it with me!" As impossible as to gather up grains of wheat which had been sown and had grown into harvests through successive years.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

I find many beautiful thoughts in our lesson to-day. The Bible is truly a delight when we learn how to read it. I wonder if you are realizing what a treasure you have. Every high, happy sentiment in which the world takes hope or comfort has its origin here. Wherever in literature you find a sweet blossom of thought its root is in this book. We have seen in the story of Elisha the fruits of a life filled with the Spirit of God. Such a life is worth living. You can ask no better gift for yourself than that which the prophet asked in his youth—a double portion, a full measure, of the Spirit of God. Young people are afraid to ask for it; they do not understand; they imagine that to be filled with the Spirit means to be "peculiar," very extremely and uncomfortably "good." This is a misapprehension. The Spirit of God is the spirit of "love, of power, and of a sound mind." If you would be at your best for yourself and for the accomplishment of great things, ask now, in your youth, for the Holy Spirit. He guides into all truth, and that covers the realm of useful

knowledge. No man in our own time has been more influential than Mr. Gladstone. He was a man of varied culture, strong as a statesman, a writer, and a personality; and it is said of him that it is impossible to think of him apart from his Christianity; that the secret of the humility which characterized him was his abiding conviction that other things were of no importance compared with the relation between God and the human soul. And his faith in the guidance of divine Providence was so settled that he was never disturbed by reverses, because he was sure God's hand controlled all that concerned him, and it would come right eventually, although not perhaps as he had himself planned. It is an inspiration to study such characters, whether we find them in the Bible or among the men and women of our own day.

The Bible gives us beautiful views of Christian dying. If we understand God's thought regarding it, death for the Christian loses its sting, and the pain of parting with those we love is greatly softened and sweetened. The Golden Text says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Then it is not an accident nor a misfortune; it is so precious in God's sight that it cannot occur without his permission or his presence. "Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he was to die"—so the text really reads. The time had come. St. Paul said, "The time of my departure is at hand." St. Peter said, "I am soon to put off this tabernacle as the Lord hath shown me." And St. Paul said, too, that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, and to depart and be with Christ is far better. Some one asked John Wesley what he would do if he knew he should die that day. "Just the same that I have already planned to do," he answered. And so Elisha, when Joash wept over him, made his last prophecy and calmly passed on to the other life. Only be sure the living is right, and we need have no fear of the dying.

A pilgrim, walking over a rough and weary road, came to an iron door, over which were inscribed the words "The Gate of Death." It opened; he passed through; and as he turned to look the door behind him was golden, and over its portals in glorious letters were the words "The Gate of Life." It is a legend, but it is Bible truth.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Review very briefly the principal events in Elisha's life, as (1) His call; (2) The ascension of Elijah; (3) His miracles; (4) His influence

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upon the kings and the people . . . Show now the contrast between king and prophet, old and young, dying and living, etc., and note that the true king of Israel, and the one most influential, was the dying prophet . . . Thoughts for young people about "The Death of a Man of God." . . . Show in the story the contrast between the faith of the prophet and the weakness of the king. . . . The story of Elisha's burial and the corpse which touched his may be used to illustrate the power of a good man after death. For example, we sing the songs of Bliss and Bradbury, of Wesley and Watts, long after the men who wrote them have passed away. . . . For the latter part of the lesson draw a map of Israel, and in a circle around Samaria show to what narrow limits it has been reduced. Then show the boundaries restored under Joash, as proving the truth of Elisha's prediction. . . . We may look to God's mercy and compassion as our hope. . . . A close study of the dying prophet reveals (1) His value recognized. His predecessor had been persecuted, but he is honored. (2) His patriotic interest. His last thought was not for himself, but for his people. (3) His mighty faith. Contrast the timidity and narrowness of the king's faith with the breadth and courage of the prophet's. (4) His prophetic insight. "The secret of the Lord" was his. (5) His influence after death. The man of the last part of the lesson is typical of influence exerted after death by every good man. No man's work stops when he dies. (6) His prophecy fulfilled. God remembers his covenant even when his people seem unworthy of it.

Before the Class.

BY GEORGE W. PEASE.

Introduction. The lesson for to-day gives us the closing glimpse of Elisha's life. This last glimpse is characteristic of the prophet, who during his entire ministry seems to have been the prophet of mercy, of beneficence. Here we find him giving the promise of victory to the king over Israel's old-time enemy, the Syrians. Thus he passes away conferring a blessing upon his people, although at the same time he was deeply grieved at the lack of earnestness displayed by the king. It might be well to review briefly the life of Elisha, bringing out in strong relief his many works of blessing.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject, "The Law of Victory," and the four divisions: 1. The dying prophet; 2. The divine message; 3. The king's zeal; 4. The granted victories.

1. *The dying prophet.* In the last moments of

the prophet his life's purpose—the blessing and helping of his people Israel—was strong within him. The visit of Joash, king of Israel, gave him a welcome opportunity to show again God's goodness and mercy to a stiff-necked people. Note in connection with this visit (a) The evident regard the king had for the prophet. Virtue and holiness were recognized even in a land of idolatry. (b) The position which Elisha occupied in the minds of the faithful, as evidenced by the cry of Joash. Elisha was the real helper of Israel.

2. *The divine message.* Note first the symbolic act which the king was directed to perform—the shooting of an arrow against Syria. Then comes an explanation from the prophet of this act. Note concerning this (a) It was to be the Lord's deliverance. Joash was to have a signal proof of the power of God and of his willingness to help his people Israel. (b) It was to be a particular deliverance, from a particular enemy at a specified place. Thus when the prophecy came to be fulfilled there could be no question of civil raised. (c) It was to be a deliverance in which human agency was to play a part—"Thou shalt smite." (d) It was to be a complete deliverance—"till thou have consumed them." So to-day our successes and deliverances are from the Lord, are particular in character, and will be complete if we play our part well.

3. *The king's zeal.* The prophet's command to the king was to smite the ground, the act symbolizing the smiting of an enemy. This was (a) A test of the king's zeal. Understanding somewhat of the meaning of the act, the smiting would show how earnest the king was in the desire to rid Israel of her great and ancient enemy. (b) A measure of his reward. "Now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice." Each stroke meant a victory. His zeal lagged; hence the victories were few. Note here the disappointment of the prophet and his merited rebuke of the king's lack of fiery earnestness for the welfare of Israel.

4. *The granted victories.* We pass over the incident at the tomb of Elisha as not being relevant to the subject. The last verse of the lesson gives us the fulfillment of the prophecy: "Three times did Joash beat him." God fulfills to the letter every word he speaks concerning his people. Here we have a lesson of assurance which will aid us to look forward with increased faith to the fulfillment of other prophetic utterances and divine promises.

Specific application. While the prophesied victory was from the Lord, still it was to be accomplished through the zeal of the king. This zeal was to be the measure of the victory. The ear-

nest desire of the king did not measure up to the divine willingness to bless, and hence there was but a partial success—three victories—where there might have been complete success. The law of victory to-day, from the human standpoint, is as it was then—largely a matter of earnest desire, of will. Victory is given those who, fighting in a righteous cause, for some righteous idea, enter the battle with the determination to succeed. Seek to impress the class with this great thought—the power of the human will, and its tremendous influence for good or evil. To a large extent man's will measures his victories.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

All people that on earth do dwell.
Come, thou almighty King.
There's a wideness in God's mercy.
My Shepherd's mighty aid.
Strike! O strike for victory.

The praying spirit breathe.
Forth in thy name.
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.
Hear thou my prayer.
Father, to thee.

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BY REV. S. G. AYRES, B.D.

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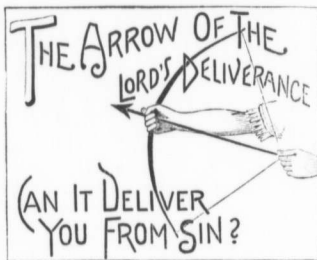
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Blackboard.

BY J. T. HARTNAGEL, ESQ.



LESSON XI. SINFUL INDULGENCE.

[Sept. 11.]

GOLDEN TEXT. They also have erred through wine, and strong drink are out of the way.

Isa. 28. 7.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[The Quarterly Temperance Lesson.]

Amos 6. 1-8. [Commit to memory verses 3-6.]

1 Woe to them that are at ease in Zi'on, and trust in the mountain of Sa-ma'ri-a, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Is'ra-el came!

2 Pass ye unto Cal'neh, and see; and from

REVISED VERSION.

1 Woe to them that are at ease in Zi'on, and to them that are secure in the mountain of Sa-ma'ri-a, the notable men of the chief of the nations, to whom the house of Is'ra-el come! Pass ye unto Cal'neh, and see; and from thence go ye to Ha'math the great:

thence go ye to Ha'math the great: then go down to Gath of the Phil-is'tines: *be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?*

3 Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near;

4 That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;

5 That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like Da'vid;

6 That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Jo'seph.

7 Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

8 The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord the God of hosts, I abhor the excellency of Ja'cob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.

then go down to Gath of the Phil-is'tines: be they better than these kingdoms? or is their border greater than your border? Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that devise for themselves instruments of music, like Da'vid; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Jo'seph. Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the revelry of them that stretched themselves shall pass away. The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord, the God of hosts: I abhor the excellency of Ja'cob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.

Time.—Perhaps B. C. 787.

Home Readings.

M. Sinful Indulgence. Amos 6. 1-8.

Tu. Be wise! Prov. 25. 15-23.

W. Walking wisely. Eph. 5. 6-21.

Th. Punishment of sin. Isa. 24. 1-12.

F. Given to pleasure. Isa. 47. 5-11.

S. Sin of worldliness. James 4. 1-10.

S. Love it not! 1 John 2. 12-17.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 213, New Canadian Hymnal.

Be it my only wisdom here,
To serve the Lord with filial fear.

No. 214, New Canadian Hymnal.

Oh, hear my cry, be gracious now to me!
Come, great deliverer, come.

No. 335, New Canadian Hymnal.

Homes there are of want and sorrow,
Where the sunlight ne'er appears.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. Recklessness, v. 1, 2.

- Who is the author of this lesson?
- What was his lineage and calling?
- During whose reign did he write?
- Upon whom is a woe here pronounced?
- What two kingdoms are included in the woe?
- What tour of inspection is ordered?

Locate the places named. What three kingdoms are designated?

How far and in what direction is the journey?

What questions of contrast are asked?

Is the kingdom of intemperance better or more prosperous than that of sobriety?

2. Luxury, v. 3-6.

What did these sinners put away from them?

What "day" is meant? See chap. 5. 18, 20.

What did they bring near?

What five marks of luxurious ease are named?

Which two indicate sacrilege?

To what national calamity were they indifferent?

What is meant by the "affliction of Joseph"?

3. Ruin, v. 7, 8.

What disaster is foretold?

What positive assurance of this evil was given?

Of what did God express his abhorrence?

What is meant by "the excellency of Jacob"?

What city was to be given up?

What indulgence brought this ruin? GOLDEN TEXT.

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. "Ease in Zion" invites woe to-day. Indifference to duty—neglect of opportunity—trust in self rather than in God—in policy rather than in righteousness—these challenge a woe from the God of hosts.
2. Self-indulgence invites ruin. Violence—luxury—effeminateness—these are successive steps. Intemperance means disaster and death.
3. Israel went into captivity. So do all sinners, led captive of the devil at his will. The ruin is complete. Shun the first step!

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Recklessness, v. 1, 2.

Who is the author of this lesson?

What was his business?

During the reign of what king of Israel did he write?

Upon what sort of people is the woe pronounced?

What two kingdoms are included in the woe?

To what places were the hearers of Amos invited to go?

What was the purpose of inspecting these great ruined cities?

What questions does Amos ask?

Is intemperance better than sobriety?

2. Luxury, v. 3-6.

What did these sinners put far away from them?

What "day" is meant? Read the next lesson.

What did they bring near?

What five marks of luxurious ease are named?

What national calamity did not grieve them?

What is meant by the "affliction of Joseph?"

3. Ruin, v. 7, 8.

What disaster is foretold?

What positive assurance of this evil was given?

Of what does God express his abhorrence?

What is meant by the "excellency of David?"

What city was to be given up?

What indulgence brought this ruin? GOLDEN

TEXT.

Practical Teachings.

Where are we taught the ruinous effect—

1. Of indifference to duty?

2. Of self-indulgence?

3. Of self-confidence?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was Amos? **A shepherd, or herdsman.**

What did the Lord call him to be? **One of his prophets.**

Why was this a great honor? **God only called good and true men to be his prophets.**

Where were the words of this prophecy spoken? **At Bethel.**

What did the people go there to worship? What had many of the Israelites forgotten?

That God hates sin.

Why is sin so hateful to him? **Because it kills the soul.**

Why did he send Amos to tell them of their sins? **Because he loved them and wanted them to be saved from sin.**

What are the first words of this lesson?

What do many people think? **"Happy are they that are at ease."**

What are many people always looking for? **A good time.**

What do lovers of strong drink imagine?

That the drink will make them happy.

Has it ever yet made one person happy? **Not one.**

What does the Bible say about the drunkard? **That he shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. How did the people of Israel show their wickedness? **By taking their ease while others were in trouble.**

2. What luxuries did they enjoy? **Rich homes, rich food, music, and drink.**

3. What did Isaiah say about them? **GOLDEN TEXT: "They also," etc.**

4. How did they regard the poor of their own people? **They were not grieved for their affliction.**

5. What awful thing does God say about this wicked, self-indulgent people? **I abhor their excellency and hate their palaces.**

6. What did he say should be their punishment? **The first families should first go into captivity.**

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

28. What are the conditions upon which these benefits are extended to all men through the Atonement?

The conditions upon which these benefits are extended to all men through the Atonement are true repentance and living faith.

Acts xx. 21.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Ease in Zion.

I. THOUGHTLESS EASE.

Woe to . . . ease in Zion. v. 1.

Rise up, ye . . . at ease. Isa. 32. 9-11.

Awake . . . that sleepest. Eph. 5. 14.

II. SELF-CONFIDENT EASE.

Trust in the mountain. v. 1.

Rejoice in a thing of nought. Amos 6. 12.

A covenant with death. Isa. 28. 15-18.

III. PERILOUS EASE.

1. *Thus ye unto...* and see. v. 2.
- Calno as Carchemish. Isa. 10. 9.
2. *Put...* away the evil. v. 3.
- Sentence...not executed. Eccles. 8. 11.

IV. SELF-INDULGENT EASE.

1. *Lie upon beds of ivory.* v. 4.
- Not provision for the flesh. Rom. 13. 13, 14.
2. *Eat the lambs.* v. 4.
- Eat, drink, and be merry. Luke 12. 19.
3. *Chant to...* the viol. v. 5.

Viol...in their feasts. Isa. 5. 11, 12.

4. *Drink wine in bowls.* v. 6.
- The drunkards of Ephraim. Isa. 28. 1-3.

V. INDIFFERENT EASE.

- Not grieved for the affliction.* v. 6.
- The hire...crieth. James 5. 4, 5.
- A swift witness. Mal. 3. 5.

VI. RUINOUS EASE.

- Shall they go captive.* v. 7, 8.
- Therefore shalt...serve. Deut. 28. 48.
- A yoke of iron. Jer. 28. 14.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The Book of Amos, from which our lesson to-day is taken, was the earliest written of all the prophecies. Historic allusions in it show that it was written during the reign of Jeroboam II, who was the grandson of Jehu; from about 783 to about 743. Jeroboam II was one of the greatest kings of antiquity, decidedly the greatest that ever reigned over the independent kingdom of Israel. With the exception of David no Jewish ruler can compete with him, if we measure his ability by the difficulties he met and the achievements he accomplished. He conquered his enemies on every border. He established a strong government and a general sense of security. He extended his political and mercantile influence through all Syria in the broadest sense. The wealth and luxury of the northern kingdom increased as never before. Then, too, Jeroboam was a worshiper of Jehovah; he was not in harmony with the Davidic thought of worship in the temple at Jerusalem, and therefore is branded as one of those who sinned according to the sin of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, but he at least held to Jehovah as the national God. But the worship of Jehovah in his time, while gorgeous in its ritual, was hollow in its life. There was insincerity everywhere. While this Napoleon of the East was establishing his government a rough shepherd, who added to his little income by pinching sycamores (the sycamore is a sort of fig whose fruit will not ripen until pinched or pressed), was praying and preaching godliness in the town of Tekoa, which stands about as far south of Bethlehem as Bethlehem is south of Jerusalem. If one studied the map, one would be apt to call that the very center of the land of Judah, but so strange is the formation of the land there that from Tekoa the wilderness sweeps away with a desolation and loneliness hardly surpassed in this world. It was in this lonely place that John the Baptist, centuries afterward, grew and waxed strong. It was here that our Lord was with the wild beasts while tempted by Satan. And here this shepherd and pincher of sycamores, Amos, spent his life, except when once a year he made his journeys among the markets of Israel to sell his wool. His whole book is a transcription of the sights and sounds that occupied him either in the wilderness or on his travels. He had sharp eyes, and he saw the evils of Israel with astonishment and horror, the pretentiousness of the rich, the woes of the poor, the wild religious zeal which kindled into drunkenness and lust on the steps of the altar, and though not a citizen of the kingdom, he boldly reproofed the wickedness of the government and priesthood. For this reproof he was forbidden to prophesy further, and being compelled to silence, he wrote a book. Our lesson is one of his prophecies.

Verse 1. Woe to them that are at ease in Zion. The sin and folly of which these are guilty is thoughtless self-indulgence. The "woe" or punishment is given by implication in the succeeding verse. "In Zion" makes the rebuke include the kingdom of Judah also, which shared in the sins of Israel. But Judah was at this time a very small principality compared with the imperial power of Israel or Samaria, and the rest of the prophecy refers chiefly to Samaria. **Trust in the mountain of Samaria.** "To them that are secure in the mountain of Samaria." Really the central part of the kingdom of Samaria and its capital were not so high as the mountain land

of Judah, but the reference here is figurative to the exaltation of the nation. **Which are named chief of the nations.** "The notable men of the chief of nations." The kingdom of Israel, because of its special dignity as the nation of God's choice, was the most exalted of the nations of the earth, and its princes were the most exalted in it. **To whom the house of Israel came.** "Come." That is, the glories of Israel, the law of Moses and the ritual of the Aaronic priesthood, the revelation of Jehovah and the favors which he bestowed on his chosen people—all these come by an inheritance to the noblemen of the chief of the nations. There are some who believe that

the word might well be translated "resort of the house of Israel;" the commonplace people of Hebrew blood and doctrine naturally turned to the noblemen as their exemplars and advisers.

2. Pass ye. The greatness of Israel and of Israel's aristocracy is now brought forward by a rapid view of the greatest of the governing nations of the earth at that time. South of Israel (if we include Judah) in all centuries was a great desert, in which no kingdom could well be founded, but east of it on the seacoast prospered Philistia and Phœnicia. North of it had been a succession of powerful empires, beginning with the dominance of the Hittites. East of it was also a succession of empires, each founded on the ruins of the other. Assyria was at this time rising in its strength and after a little to be conquered by Babylonia, which was in turn to be subjugated by the Medes and Persians. In these three directions the prophet turns his eyes—east, north, and west—and rhetorically asks his hearers to travel forth and examine the majesty of the chief cities in these kingdoms. **Calneh.** A center of splendor in the land of Shinar. It is mentioned in Genesis, by Isaiah (Calno), and by Ezekiel, and was famous in later years under the name of Ctesiphon. It is built on a peninsula, with the Tigris on three sides, and was called an impregnable fortress in the ancient days, but recently, very, very recently, not more than ten or fifteen years before this prophecy, this great fortress and metropolis had been captured by the Assyrians and its glories stolen to make more beautiful their city of Nineveh. We are asked to go to Calneh, fifteen years ago so strong and magnificent, and "see"—look at it now. **From thence go ye.**

The journey in Amos's day would have led through thick and prosperous communities, but now if one went the same road, it would be over rocks and stones which even the Bedouins avoid because of their sterility and loneliness. **Hamath the great.** A city on the Orontes around which a powerful kingdom had gathered. With our preconceptions of history, made from the careers of more recent nations, it is difficult to understand how in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor for centuries kingdom succeeded kingdom, the mass of the people being always of mixed blood, and yet each kingdom, though in some cases it lasted only for a century, having more or less of a distinct dialect and distinct religious habits, and more or less racial characteristics. The readiest illustration of this for the Bible reader is the kingdom of Syria, which was used by the Lord so repeatedly as a whip with which to chastise Israel. In the Scripture its capital was always Damascus, and a rapid

reader might suppose that the nation of Syria, with Damascus as its capital, was one consecutive nation, just as England has been for centuries, with London as its capital, but it was not so. Not only were successive dynasties entirely unrelated with each other, but the kingdoms themselves had hardly anything in common, except the undying beauty and fertility of the oasis in which Damascus stands, and the circumstances that made a kingdom there not only possible, but inevitable. The kingdom of Hamath was, in a broad sense, also Syrian. The crowd that listened to Amos (for he probably uttered this prophecy in the kingdom of Israel while the great conquering king, Jeroboam II, was on the throne) would welcome an allusion to Hamath, because their own king had devastated it as thoroughly as the Assyrians had devastated Calneh, and in the city of Samaria, at the very time that Amos was speaking these words, there were, doubtless, to have been seen uncounted trophies of stone and metal and drapery which Jeroboam had, in accordance with the customs of his time, stolen from Hamath for the enrichment of his own nation. Yes, slave men and women, subjugated citizens of Hamath, may well have been in the crowd when Amos spoke. Not very long after this the city was taken from the Israelites by the Assyrians. **Gath of the Philistines.** This city, which had in recent years become conspicuous for military strength, had been captured by Uzziah, king of Judah, and was the third neighboring capital, the devastation of which was a familiar fact to the citizens of Samaria. **Be they better than these kingdoms? That is, than Israel and Judah. Or their border greater than your border?** No; for they have been recently overthrown, and their border is turned to rags, and yet once, and only a few years ago, they were so much stronger that Israel and Judah trembled because of them. Probably the immediate thought of Amos is not that Israel will soon share the fate of these cities, but rather an emphasis and repetition of what was stated in the first verse—Israel and Judah taken together are the chief of the nations, the most powerful sovereignties. Dynasties have fallen, but the "border" of Israel and Judah has been extended.

3. Ye that put far away the evil day. While Amos would emphasize the strength and prosperity of Judah and Israel, he censures the evils and heedlessness that characterize their noblemen. They regard the day of judgment as far off. Just as impenitent sinners said of Ezekiel (Ezek. 12. 27): "The vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he prophesieth of the times that are afar off." Men whose sins

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are hastening on a crisis wish and fancy that crisis to be far away. **Cause the seat of violence to come near.** Violence enthroned is a figure of the most awful wickedness. Now, a king's throne was said to move with his conquests, as, for instance, Nebuchadnezzar established his throne at Jerusalem when he conquered that city. So these careless sinners, these notable men of the chief of the nations, bring the sovereignty of violence nearer and nearer. Believing the day of judgment to be far away, they bring oppression nearer. Postponement of judgment is an incentive to their recklessness.

4. Lie upon beds of ivory. Recline upon ivory divans. Samaria far more than Jerusalem was a center of trade; the luxuries of Hindustan brought across Persia enriched the homes of its aristocrats; especially was ivory valued, and the student will remember that Ahab had a palace so ornamented as to be called "the ivory palace." **Stretch themselves upon their couches.** A picture of luxurious sensuality. **Eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall.** The simple meaning is they feed on the choicest of lamb and veal, both of which were regarded as dainties. The phrase "out of" means "taken out of," for lambs and calves were regarded as too delicate to be left with the older animals and in the general flock. Even to this day there is a place railed off in oriental folds for their safety.

5. That chant to the sound of the viol. "Sing idle songs to the sound of the viol." The margin of our Authorized Version has "quiver." There is an allusion to the peculiar melodies of the Orient, and an indication that "the singers thought more of the sound than of the sense. Listlessness and effeminacy are indicated throughout."—*Gambell*. **Invent to themselves instruments of music, like David.** The word translated "instruments of music" may mean melodies, but the point is that while David used his musical talent for the glory of God, theirs kept time with their selfish indulgences.

6. That drink wine in bowls. "By waterpotsful." **Anoint themselves with the chief ointments.** This must be taken

in close connection with the next verse. **They are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.** The custom of anointing was usually suspended in time of mourning, but now, when there is abundant cause for mourning, these, so far from grieving, use the most costly unguents. What was the cause for mourning? Not so much what is revealed in the coming verses, the approaching captivity of the nation, as the present sufferings of the poor. These highstrung men draw their huge incomes from the strained resources of the poor, and pamper themselves when they should be sick at heart because of the misery of the mass of their nation.

7. Now shall they go captive with the first that go captive. That is, they shall not lose their prominence; since they have been foremost in luxury they shall be foremost in misery. **The banquet of them that stretch themselves shall be removed.** The best explanation of this is the Revised Version: "The revelry of them that stretch themselves shall pass away." It refers to verses 4, 5, and 6. The loungers on the beds of ivory, the feasters on delicate viands, the drinkers of wine in bowls, the singers and dancers, shall find their pleasure suddenly at an end.

8. The Lord God hath sworn by himself. "Because he could swear by no greater." **The Lord the God of hosts.** The first phrase, "Lord," is a title; this, as usual in the Old Testament, is the name of Jehovah. **I abhor the excellency of Jacob.** "I loath that in which the nation has its pride. Royal crown, priestly robe, ritual practice, temple, and all, they are emblems of what I love, but they are so corrupted I hold them in abomination." **Hate his palaces.** Because of the wickedness of the people who dwell in them. Read Psalm 87, 2 and 48, 3, 14, and think how much there must have been offensive to God before he could so change in regard for Judah and Israel. **Therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.** Which city, Samaria or Zion? Both, for both have sinned; and the wealth and population of both having been used as means to evil ends, must be given over to judgment.

• CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Jeroboam II reigned over Israel with such vigor that the government became firmly established, the borders were extended, and an era of general prosperity was inaugurated. The people began to give more attention to worship, but it was more ostentatious and perfunctory than sincere. With the return of prosperous

times came the accumulation of wealth, and this not only made it possible for many to lie "at ease in Zion," but opened the way for an invading host of various sorts of sins. Amos, an earnest soul, disgusted with the sinful tendencies of his generation, having a warning message from Jehovah, was brave enough to deliver it.

Without boasting of any special gift or training as with a prophet, he, a shepherd and fruit raiser, heard the divine call, began to prophesy, went to Bethel, the center of worship, and startled both priests and people with his denunciations and his predictions of the outpouring of Jehovah's wrath upon them and all Israel for their iniquitous conduct.

Verse 1. At ease in Zion. This expression had a peculiar significance to the Israelites. They recognized its force and winced under it. It has a different meaning with us, but it enforces the same principle. Ease is sure to encourage a careless spirit, and to thrust real duties into the background, and bring forth and magnify imaginary ones. A soul at ease in Zion is liable to fall an easy prey to the adversary, because ease is hardly compatible with earnestness, and victory over the world, the flesh and the devil is achieved only by the earnest soul. **Trust in the mountain.** It is more natural for those who are "at ease in Zion" to put their confidence in some "mountain of Samaria" than in the impregnable fortresses of Jehovah. Failing to recognize the Lord as the real source of their prosperity, they withhold their trust from him and repose it in what seems to them to be enduring, but what is really as unstable as the sands.

2. Pass ye. No better illustration of the awful results of sin can be presented than the careers of individuals or of nations, and yet the sinning man or nation is reluctant to believe the same results will obtain in his or its case. But the effects of sin are not essentially different in different persons. It is the same awful disease, and if not brought under the healing touch of the Great Physician, the same direful results will ensue.

3. The evil day. This cannot be put off. The word is, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and whenever a person commits sin "he wrongeth his own soul," and judgment is immediately visited upon him. Every day on which he commits sin is an "evil day" for the sinner, and if he imagines that he can defer the day of wrath and continue to sin with impunity, he grossly deceives himself.

4. Beds of ivory. To a humble and simple-minded herdsman from Tekoa indulgence in such luxuries must have seemed sinful. But because one can afford and does enjoy many comforts and conveniences of life of which another is deprived is no reason for denunciation. There are possibilities of evil in accumulated wealth, but these possibilities are also present where wealth does not exist. Indiscriminate denunciation of men of wealth is one of the high sins of

the present day. That many men of means are selfish, overbearing, and grasping is probably true, but there are many of them who are "grieved for the affliction of Joseph," and are constantly manifesting a spirit that must win the approval of Him who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

7. Go captive. The doctrine of divine retribution is clearly taught throughout God's word. Those who disregard God will be disregarded by God. This is a sentence that the sinner pronounces upon himself. He does not need to be told of the inevitable consequences of his sin; he sees them in his own life, and he easily recognizes the process of degeneration. If the body suffers from sin, so does the soul, and these marks of sin, together with the mysterious but potent influence of God's unflinching love, ought to lead the sinner from the way of death to the way of life. But if he disregards these signs and spurns this tender love, he will surely "go captive with the first that go captive." In a large measure, then, he holds his destiny in his own hands.

8. Deliver up the city. The prophet will not always stand among the people to plead and warn. There will come a time when the warning will be executed and the awful prophecy fulfilled. God said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." This is as true as any promise of God. Therefore "quench not the Spirit," but "let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Thoughts for Young People.

Practical Wisdom and Unwisdom.

1. One of the most frequent blunders made by men both in religious and in secular life is that of false security. Often confidence is one of the greatest evils of mankind. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Especially should those church members and those churches and those nations who regard themselves as being placed in the forefront of progress by God's providence keep humble and prayerful and await divine direction, for if they fall, great indeed will be the fall thereof.

2. It is wise humbly to compare ourselves with others. All comparison is good so long as it prompts to humility and faithfulness.

"Not more than others I deserve,
But God has given more;
For I have food while others starve
And beg from door to door."

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3. *There is danger in luxury.* Harps and cushions and dainties are not especially wrong. They may be employed for the honor of God or for the degradation of men. There is profound philosophy as well as sincere piety in John Wesley's prohibition of the amusements and luxuries that cannot be indulged in "in the name of the Lord Jesus." The greatest of blunders is to ignore the sufferings of the poor.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

As so many persons read the smaller prophets without apprehending their meaning and relation, we venture to compile a pen picture of the times of Amos to show the purpose of the book; Amos being the first prophet who reduced his prophetic utterances to writing.

Amos was a type of the prosperous farmer of his period, cultivating his fields, but devoting most of his attention to his flocks. Israel had slowly but surely become a community of farmers, and yet there was very great simplicity of manners among the common folk, whose dwellings were mere huts of sun-dried bricks, with only few and necessary furnishings, and having generally but two rooms. Barley cakes and milk were the ordinary diet of all classes. Meat was eaten on the rare occasions of national or family feasts. Even the rich landowner cultivated his fields like his poorest neighbor. Smiths and potters were the only artisans known. The people purchased from Canaanite peddlers what they could not make themselves. The transition from an agricultural to an industrial life scarcely began before the days of Solomon.

The Book of Kings abounds in references to the senseless luxury indulged in by Solomon and his successors. The taste for luxury was not even checked by the division of the kingdom. Israel was the more prosperous of the two, and became rotten with this social extravagance and indulgence, carrying it far beyond even that of Solomon. Wealthy nobles indulged in drunken orgies in the fortresses. They stretched themselves on ivory divans, or at least those inlaid with ivory. They sang "lean and flashy songs," in wretched parody of David's Psalms. Amos even mentions in censure the ladies of fashion, who encouraged their lords to acts of gross self-indulgence. All this affected the simple agricultural life of the earlier days. The civilization and commerce in the larger cities and towns adorned itself with art and refinement. The wealthy became unscrupulous in trade as their wealth increased. The agricultural classes were wronged and oppressed by princely landowners into a state of abject poverty. Not only, how-

ever, were they poor, but there was no redress from the continued injustice toward them as a class. The sharpest kind of commercial bargaining was resorted to to keep them in debt. The most oppressive laws were made, which reduced them to a species of personal slavery, for debts had to be redeemed by personal service. There was no escape from the injustice and wrong by any appeal to the processes of the courts of justice, for the wealthy and the noble contrived to become the judges in the courts and at the city gates. It was impossible that men so steeped in self-indulgence, with consciences so seared, should administer equitably to the poor who appealed against themselves. Amos says that persons were sold as slaves to recover small debts, and specifies that they had sold "the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes" (Amos 2, 6).

The prophet's description of their luxurious lives in verses 4, 5, and 6 not only contained references to the splendor of these palaces and the "ivory" divans on which they luxuriously lounged, but points to their loading their tables with delicacies of the land. They were not only self-indulgent in their food and drink, but in the delicate anointing of themselves with oils, costly with fragrant aromatic spices, the custom of using which is common now in all the wealthy classes of Bible lands as it was then.

Not only were these degenerate times, socially, commercially, and politically, but also religiously. As a poor man could get no redress at the hands of a judge without a present, so he could hope for but little at the hands of the priest. The sanctuaries were supported by the presents of the people, and the rich with their wealth having filled the places of justice themselves or with their craven tools, were soon able to command a like privilege from the priests. The luxuriousness of the palace was extended to Jehovah's temple, and the nobles and the wealthy in the growing cities of Israel held great sacrificial meals, which they taxed the people to support, and at which they themselves became drunken debauchees. Added to this, idolatrous worship abounded.

By Way of Illustration.

"Ye that put far away the evil day." There are still those who think that disbelieving in future punishment will keep the punishment away; that deadening the conscience will ward off the penalty of sin; that refusing to read the Bible will prevent its threatening from being fulfilled. Poor blind fools! as if tearing down the lighthouse would save the vessel from the

rocks; as if breaking the alarm bell would put out the fire; as if shutting the eyes to the precipice would make the path safe.—*Ploubet.*

"*That drink wine in bowls.*" The Arabs have a tradition that soon after the flood a spirit appeared to Noah (the Arabian Noah) and taught him the art of manufacturing wine from grape-juice. "This beverage," said the spirit, "is a liquid of peculiar properties. The first bumperful will make you as tame as a sheep. If you repeat the experiment, you will become as fierce as a rampant lion. After the third dose you will roll in the mud like a hog."—*F. L. Oswald.*

Indifference to claims of God and man. An atheist being asked by a worldly professor of Christianity how he could quiet his conscience in so desperate a state, replied: "As much am I astonished at yourself that, believing the Christian religion to be true, you can live so much like the world. Did I believe what you profess, I should think no care, no zeal, enough."

Prosperity is often the road to ruin. Mr. Cecil had a hearer who, when a young man, had solicited his advice, but who had not for some time had an interview with him. When Mr. Cecil met him he said, "I understand you are very dangerously situated."

His friend replied, "I am not aware of it, sir."

"I thought it was probable you were not, and therefore I have called on you. I hear you are getting rich. Take care, for it is the road by which the devil leads thousands to destruction."

Beecher wrote: "It is one of the worst effects of prosperity to make a man a vortex instead of a fountain, so that instead of throwing out he only learns to draw in."

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The history of nations and the experience of individuals prove the worth of God's word. He sees human life from a point of view very different from ours. He knows what the outcome in every case will be. He understands the relation of cause and effect, of condition and consequence. He tries by precept, illustration, warning, and commandment to make us realize that destiny is the outcome of character. Sorrow and loss are the product of sin in this life and in the life to come. Here is a faithful warning in our lesson to-day. It is a picture of luxurious ease, selfish enjoyment, degeneration of moral fiber, ultimate disappointment, sorrow, and shame. That is the logic of self-shame. I do pray that while you are young, and your habits are forming, you may see it in the true light, as God sees. O, do be warned against an ignoble, self-indulgent life! Is it wrong, then, do you ask, to possess riches and to enjoy the refinements

wealth and culture give? Certainly not, provided you recognize your obligations in having them. Woe to selfishness! is the message of the prophet. "At ease in Zion"—the Gospel with all its consolation, promise, and assurance of salvation, yours; abundance to eat and drink every day; homes of comfort, yes, even luxury; art; music; social pleasures; books; friends—think of it! and our good times are so absorbing that we forget the people who never have any good time; the very poor, the heart-broken, the lonely, and the ignorant—we are "not grieved for the affliction of Joseph," St. Paul said, "I am debtor to the Greeks and the barbarians, both to the wise and the unwise."

He was a debtor to everybody, because he had spiritual riches, which they had not, and the Christ-spirit within him would not suffer him to keep anything good for his own exclusive use. Wisdom owes a debt to ignorance; goodness to impurity; wealth to poverty. By just so much as God has given you more spiritual experience, brain power, social influence, money, or any other good thing, by that much are you indebted to your less fortunate friend or neighbor to help and encourage, and so equalize humanity's share of joy and sorrow. This is Christian socialism—universal brotherhood. Read all of this chapter in which our lesson is found, and you will see the inevitable outcome for the soul which weaves a net of possessions about itself in which to swing at ease only to be swept away by a breath. It is a captive in its own net; it has "rejoiced in a thing of nought."

"So is everyone that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Sympathetic helpfulness is the mark of a true Christian. I have read this story of an Arabian sheik who dwelt in an oasis near the edge of the desert. He had wealth in flocks and herds and gold. One night he could not sleep. To-morrow his servants would begin to gather his abundant harvests; but ten miles away his herdsman had found a traveler dead upon the parched sands of the desert. Yonder the desert and a dying traveler; here an oasis with living water. Then he arose and bade his servants fill two leathern water-bottles and bring a basketful of figs and grapes. The next day a caravan came to a booth protecting two water-bottles sunk in the sand. Beside them were lunches of fruit. On a roll were these words: "While God gives me life, each day shall a man be as springs of water in a desert place."

Let us be very thankful for every sweet oasis of comfort God gives us—but let us not forget the dying ones in the hot, parched desert all about us.

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The Teachers' Meeting.

Notice some of the evils condemned in this lesson: I. A treacherous case. Verses 1, 2. They were at ease while the suffering poor were beneath them and the Assyrians were menacing their kingdom. Like villages on the slope of Mount Etna; like people dancing on floors under which dynamite is stored. Are there not some likenesses to this condition in our own civilization? II. A pleasure-loving case. Verses 3-5. See the graphic picture of worldly pleasure in these verses—feasting, dancing, drinking. Are there not such around us? III. A drunken case. Verse 6. They are immersed in their own pleasure and indifferent to the wrongs of the hungry poor, "the affliction of Joseph." Joseph was the ancestor of two tribes in the northern kingdom—Ephraim and Manasseh. Even as there are rich merchants who think naught of their oppressed employees; mine owners and manufacturers thoughtless of those who toil for them; tenement-house proprietors in great cities who are careless of the death rate in their buildings. V. A fateful case. Their enjoyment was soon to be broken by invasion, anarchy, and captivity. The peace was soon to end in war and the terrors of destruction. Their calm was the lull before an awful storm. God's wrath may be delayed, but it is certain.

Before the Class.

Introduction. In beginning this lesson tell a little of the prophet Amos: (a) His home—Tekoa in Judah; (b) Occupation—a shepherd; (c) Prophesied during the reigns of Jeroboam II and Uzziah; (d) Prophetic life of short duration. Also something of the condition of the kingdom of Israel at this time: (e) Its great power which it gained under Jeroboam II; (f) Its great corruption, idolatry, oppression, vice, pride, and luxury. The burden of the prophet's message is a denunciation of the kingdoms around Israel, and of Israel and Judah themselves.

Development of the text. Place upon the board the subject, "Indulgent Idleness Condemned," and the three following divisions: 1. Israel's privileges; 2. Israel's perverseness; 3. Israel's punishment.

1. *Israel's privileges.* The prophet brings before the eyes of the people the surrounding kingdoms for comparison with the glories of Israel and Judah, and asks the question, "Be they better than these kingdoms?" Israel was greatly privileged both materially and spiritually, and much was to be expected of her, and rightly so. Responsibility is always proportioned to privilege. It was but simple justice to demand much

of the people of Israel, for to them much had been given. Impress this thought on the class, that God will require of everyone an accounting of the way his privileges have been used or abused. A nation to which great privileges have been given will be expected to use those privileges for the world's advancement, and will be punished as a nation for the misuse or wrong use of the same. All history illustrates this great truth. What is true of the nation is also true of the individual; the more we have the more can our fellow-men rightly demand of us.

2. *Israel's perverseness.* The sad side of the picture is now presented. Instead of using the great privileges bestowed upon her, Israel yields to idle indulgence in all sorts of luxurious pleasure and wantonness. Note here (a) That the evil day of judgment is put out of sight. This however, does not remove it, for its coming is inevitable. The day of reckoning will come to everyone, but men are just as prone to-day as in the days of Amos to blind themselves to this fact. (b) That violence and oppression of all kinds are indulged in when the restraining influence of certain punishment is lost sight of. There are men to-day who do right because of love of the right; there are others who are restrained from wrongdoing through the fear of punishment. (c) That Israel was repeatedly warned as to the consequences of her course, and urged again and again to turn to the Lord and render unto him the fruits which were his due. Repeated warnings come to us to-day [ask class to name some] and repeated urgings to use our talents in the service of God and the world instead of for self. (d) That Israel persistently refused to heed the warnings or give ear to the urgings, preferring to go on in her own perverse way, which finally brought ruin. The same fate awaits all who follow in the same course.

3. *Israel's punishment.* The prophet now presents the inevitable result—punishment; in this case, captivity. If Israel would not work the fields and vineyards of the Lord, they must be taken away from her and given over to others who would render unto the Lord the fruits thereof. Thus the great privileges which were originally bestowed upon Israel were taken away and given to others, even to the Gentiles. The Lord's work must be done; if one to whom some work is granted does not grasp the opportunity, the blessing is lost to him, but the work will be done by some one else. The punishment is more than a loss of the blessing, for it also includes a more or less complete captivity to the powers of evil.

Specific application. The specific application, apart from the suggestions in the text-develop-

ment, is clearly this—the condemnation of indulgent idleness. Talents, privileges, opportunities, are given us to use for God and our fellow-men; if such are used for self, or not used at all, condemnation and punishment are inevitable consequences. God punishes sins of omission as well as sins of commission. Thank God for talents, for privileges, for opportunities, and dedicate all to him and to the upbuilding of mankind.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

How good thou art to me.
Yield not to temptation.
Dare to do right.
Keep to the right.
We must work and pray.

Seek, my soul, the narrow gate.
Rally for the cause of temperance.
Help the erring.
Soldiers of Christ.
Ready to follow God's command.

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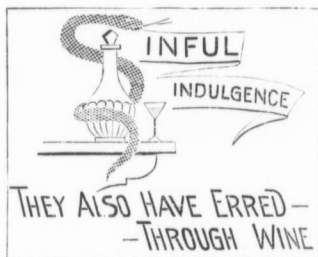
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Blackboard.



LESSON XII. CAPTIVITY OF THE TEN TRIBES.

[Sept. 18.

GOLDEN TEXT. If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever. 1 Chron. 28. 9.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read 2 Kings 17. 1-23; Amos 6: Hosea 5.]

2 Kings 17. 9-18. [Commit to memory verses 13, 14.]

9 And the children of Is-ra-el did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

10 And they set them up images and grooves in every high hill, and under every green tree:

11 And there they burnt incense in all the

REVISED VERSION.

9 And the children of Is-ra-el did secretly things that were not right against the Lord their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up pillars and Asherim upon every high hill, and under every green tree: and there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the nations whom the Lord carried away before them: and wrought wicked things to

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high places, as *did* the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger:

12 For they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

13 Yet the Lord testified against Is'ra-el, and against Ju'dah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

14 Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God.

15 And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them.

16 And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Ba'al.

17 And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.

18 Therefore the Lord was very angry with Is'ra-el, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Ju'dah only.

Time.—722 or 721 B. C. **Rulers.**—Hoshea, king of Israel, was personally a better man than some of his predecessors; but the nation was rotten. Hezekiah, a good man, was king of Judah. Sargon was king of Assyria.

Home Readings.

- M. Fruit of disobedience. 2 Kings 17, 1-8.
 T. Captivity of the Ten Tribes. 2 Kings 17, 4-18.
 W. Rejected of God. 2 Kings 17, 19-29.
 P. Prophecy of captivity. Hos. 10, 1-8.
 E. Consequences of sin. Isa. 1, 1-9.
 S. Punishment of pride. Isa. 9, 8-17.
 8. Sin of rejection. Matt. 21, 33-43.

Lesson Hymns.

- No. 98, New Canadian Hymnal.
 The Lord is my light, then why should I fear?
 By day and by night his presence is near;
 He is my salvation from sorrow and sin;
 This blessed persuasion the spirit brings in.
- No. 102, New Canadian Hymnal.
 What shall I do, where shall I flee?
 I have no refuge, dear Saviour, but thee;
 Let me approach thee, though sinful and weak.

- 12 provoke the Lord to anger: and they served idols, whereof the Lord had said unto them,
 13 Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the Lord testified unto Is'ra-el, and unto Ju'dah, by the hand of every prophet, and of every seer, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by the
 14 hand of my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their neck, like to the neck of their fathers,
 15 who believed not in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified unto them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the nations that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged
 16 them that they should not do like them. And they forsook all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made an Asherah, and worshiped all the host of heaven,
 17 and served Ba'al. And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him
 18 to anger. Therefore the Lord was very angry with Is'ra-el, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Ju'dah only.

No. 333, New Canadian Hymnal.

When I walk in God's clear sunlight,
 With its beauty beaming fair,
 Or when shadows seem to gather,
 I may see him every where.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. The Beginning of Sin, v. 9-12.

- Against whom did Israel sin?
 What was their first step in idolatry?
 What was their second step? The third?
 Whose wicked example did they follow?
 Which commandment did they violate?
 What was God's feeling toward them?
 Toward whom is God always angry? Psalm 7, 11.

2. God's Warning, v. 13.

- By whom did God warn the people?
 Mention some prophets who warned Israel.
 What was the warning?
 What more is required than to "quit your meanness?"

3. The Warning Rejected, v. 14-17.

- How was the warning treated? Why?
 What did they reject? What did they choose?

What idols did they make?
 Who introduced these idols? At what places?
 See 1 Kings 12, 28.
 in what other idolatries did they engage?
 What prohibited acts did they practice?
 Whose worship was associated with fire?

4. God's Anger, v. 18.

What punishment came to Israel?
 Who only was left?
 How long did Judah survive his captivity?
 What warning had Israel of this result?

GOLDEN TEXT.

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. False creeds mean vicious lives. Error and evil are closely akin. "No matter what one thinks." That is untrue. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Take heed to your thoughts.

2. God will not tolerate idolatry. He must reign supreme in the heart. Mammon can have no place in his realm. He demands a whole heart.

3. The wages of sin is death. There is no reversal of that law. Penalty treads on the heels of wrongdoing.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. The Beginning of Sin, v. 9-12.

Of what sins had the children of Israel been guilty?

Where did they set up idols?
 Where did they burn incense?
 What provoked the Lord's anger?
 What forbidden thing did they do?

2. God's Warning, v. 13.

By whom had God warned the people?
 What had the prophet said?

3. The Warning Rejected, v. 14-17.

In spite of this what had the people done?
 What had they rejected, and what chosen?
 What false gods did they make and worship?
 To what evil did they compel their sons and daughters?

For what did they sell themselves?
 What warning is given to each of us? Luke 13, 3.

4. God's Anger, v. 18.

How did Israel's sin affect the Lord?
 How did he punish them?
 Who alone was left in the land?

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Israel's Downward Steps.

I. FORGETTING GOD.

Against the Lord... brought. v. 7.

Beware lest thou forget. Deut. 8, 11-14.

Remember... the way. Deut. 8, 2, 3.

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we shown—
 1. The power of evil associations;
 2. The nature of true repentance?
 3. That God hates sin?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What beautiful land did the Lord give Israel?
The land of Canaan.
 What did he ask them to do? **To serve and please him.**

What did he promise if they would obey him?
To keep them in all their ways.

What did he promise if they forsook him?
That he would drive them away.

What had the heathen nations done before them? **They had worshiped idols.**

What had become of them? **They had been destroyed.**

What had come upon Israel now? **The king of Assyria had driven them out of Canaan.**

What became of their beautiful homes? **They were torn down and burned.**

Had God given them time to repent? **Yes, he had given them hundreds of years.**

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. How had some of the Israelites sinned?
By worshiping God in a wrong way.

2. How had the rest sinned? **By worshiping false gods.**

3. To what does false worship tend? **To wickedness of life.**

4. What was the result of Israel's idolatry?
The Lord was very angry with Israel.

5. Who really removed the Israelites from their beautiful land? **Their offended God.**

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? **"If thou seek,"** etc.

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

39. What is true repentance?
 True repentance is a grace of the Holy Spirit whereby a sinner, from a sense of his sins, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it to God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after future obedience.

II. BAD COMPANY.

Statutes of the heathen. v. 8.

Will turn away thy son. Deut. 7, 1-4.

Turn away thy heart. 1 Kings 11, 2.

III. SECRET SINS.

Did secretly... not right. vs. 9-12.

Chaise... from secret faults. Psalm 19. 12.

A shame even to speak. Eph. 5. 11, 12.

IV. HARD HEART.

1. *The Lord testified.* v. 13.

Rising up early. Jer. 7. 25.

2. *Would not hear.* v. 14.

Hear... understand not. Isa. 6. 9-12.

V. REJECTING GOD.

Rejected... his covenant. v. 15.

Forsaken thy covenant. 1 Kings 19. 14.

Will not have this man. Luke 19. 14.

VI. OPEN WICKEDNESS.

Sold... to do evil. vs. 16, 17.

In every good... reprobate. Titus 1. 15.

Presumptuous sins. Psalm 19. 13.

VII. DESTRUCTION.

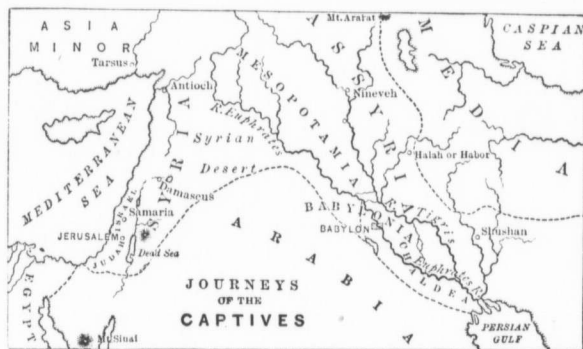
The Lord... removed them. v. 18.

Suddenly be destroyed. Prov. 20. 1.

Wages of sin... death. Rom. 6. 23.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The ruin of Israel was not quite so sudden as to us it seems. The nation had been forewarned with tremendous emphasis by the prophets Amos and Hosea. Repentance on the one hand and destruction by Assyria on the other had in the name of Jehovah been set before them as the only possible outcomes. But in spite of steadily-increasing manifestations of Assyria's power and cruelty Israel's rulers and people alike refused to repent. Not one of the nineteen kings forsook the sin of the first Jeroboam, except to plunge into outright idolatry. God's warnings were despised, his chastenings unheeded, his mercies unrecognized, his long suffering love trampled upon. And now for years Israel had been on the verge of anarchy. The reigns of its kings were short, and several of them were ended by murder. In 738, sixteen years before the final overthrow, the nation became tributary to Assyria; three years later Tiglath-pileser, one of the greatest of Assyrian conquerors, began a sweeping conquest of the northern part of the kingdom, and for two years steadily



took away by the thousands the inhabitants of the region afterward known as Galilee. About ten years after this came the attack of Shalmaneser and the complete and final overthrow by Sargon. Hoshea, Israel's last king, had been eight years on the throne when Sargon came. He was a better man than most of his predecessors, but the current toward ruin had too strongly set in to be resisted. No one knows the ultimate fate of the ten tribes. Most of them were lost in the mixed populations where they were settled. Our lesson to-day shows us that the sin of the nation was the cause of its ruin. "They obeyed not the voice of the Lord." The same road leads to the same end now as then—for individuals as well as nations.

Verse 9. The phrase the children of Israel has here the restricted meaning of the kingdom of Israel, "the northern kingdom." **Did secretly those things that were not right.**

Their national life had been begun wrong by an official abandonment of the temple in Jerusalem and of the priesthood of Aaron. This "sin of Jeroboam the son of Nebat" was open and

flagrant; but it was followed by religious obliquity immeasurably worse. Ahab and Jezebel introduced the beautiful but venomous worship of Baal—a moral poison of the deadliest sort; and not until Jehu had extirpated the foreign priests was its curse removed. Not even then, for idolatrous practices were covertly continued. True, the people turned again to a nominal worship of Jehovah; but the formal worshippers of the true God were really slaves of superstition and practitioners of vice. Bad as “calf-worship” was, it was not it which eventually destroyed Israel, but an omnipresent idolatry, as foul as that of Baal, and conducted by stealth, in darkened rooms and secluded woodland sanctuaries. **They built them high places in all their cities.** Instead of keeping to the one temple and the one altar commanded by God, they erected many of these. This does not seem to us at first glance to be a very heinous offense, so long as they worshipped the true God; but in times of relative ignorance, when the best means of worship were a series of symbols, types, or object-lessons, it was necessary that these symbols should be uniform; uniformity of priesthood and one central sanctuary were indispensable. That the God-fearing people generally recognized this is made evident by the fact that Jeroboam could secure no priests except from the offscourings of the nation. **From the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.** From the loneliest and most exposed place to the most crowded and best fortified.

10. They set them up images. “Pillars,” such as at the outset were devoted to the worship of Baal; and by means of these pillars, doubtless, Baal was still worshiped. But it is probable that many used these pillars in the worship of Jehovah also, observing rites invented by themselves rather than those commanded by God. Such rites must in the very nature of things be debased and debasing. **Groves.** Artificial structures, probably poles, devoted to the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth, which may in a rough and general way be said to have corresponded to the worship of Bacchus and Venus. These “images” and “groves” were placed in every high hill, and under every green tree; for it was on hilltops and in forests that the licentious worship of the ancient East was most indulged in.

11. There they burnt incense. Incense was the universal symbol of prayer; so regarded by heathen as well as by worshippers of the true God. But Moses restricted the burning of incense to the golden altar which was within the veil. The incense burned in “high places” with heathenish accompaniments could never be accepted by Jehovah. **The heathen whom**

the Lord carried away before them. Original inhabitants of the land, whose indulgence in foul practices in connection with their idolatrous worship was the chief cause of their providential overthrow by the Israelites. And now, strange to say, Israel copied their example, and, like them, wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger. Some of these “wicked things” are mentioned in detail in verses 15, 16, and 17. There were four notable stages in the downward career of the Israelites: First, false worship of the true God, engaged in merely for political ends; secondly, open worship of false gods; thirdly, a formal return to the true God, while the people in their hearts worshipped false gods with more energy than ever; finally, the lasciviousness, cruelty, and effeminacy developed by these false systems of worship entered into the nation's life, and amid the turmoil and anarchy of its closing years all sorts of crime were prevalent—oppression, drunkenness, robbery, and murder abounding in every part of the kingdom.

12. They served idols. The word for idols is “filths;” followers of the true God could not but regard with utter contempt these objects of false worship. **Ye shall not do this thing.** This was said by Jehovah in the Ten Commandments and in other places.

13. Against Israel, and against Judah. The kingdom of Judah had been perhaps a little more faithful to Jehovah's high ideals than the kingdom of Israel; at least they revered the temple, and the priesthood, and the royal line of David. But their morals, too, were rotten. God showed no preference for either division, but sent his prophets alike to Israel and Judah, and the gist of the message of every prophet is, “Ye shall not do this thing.” **By all the prophets, and by all the seers.** “Seer” was the older name. The words were nearly synonyms. To the kingdom of Israel these prophets had been sent: Aijah and Shilohite, in the first Jeroboam's time; Jehu, the son of Hanani, in Baasha's time; Elijah and Micah, under Ahab; Elisba, during the reign of Jehoram, Jehu, Jehozabab, and Joash; Jonah, Hosea, and Amos, in the reign of Jeroboam II; Ahed, under King Pekah. This list does not include those sent to Judah; and there were, doubtless, others whose names have not been preserved. **Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law.** This was the very essence of prophetic teaching, as may be seen from scores of passages; for example, Hos. 12, 6; 14, 2; Joel 2, 12, 13; Amos 5, 4-15; Isa. 1, 16-20; 31, 6; Jer. 3, 7, 14; Ezek. 14, 6; 18, 30.

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14. They would not hear. Familiarity with truth tends to harden the consciences of the disobedient. **Hardened their necks** is a Hebrew figure of speech for stubborn self-will. **Like to the neck of their fathers.** Doggedness of will and other moral characteristics are as hereditary as complexion or features. **That did not believe in the Lord their God.** Even some of those who formally worshipped him had no practical trust in him.

15. They rejected his statutes. They disobeyed the moral and the ceremonial law. **His covenant.** (See Exod. 19, 5-8 and 24, 3-8.) **His testimonies.** The testimonies of God are his commandments. **They followed vanity, and became vain.** Literally, "They followed nothingness, and became nothing." **Went after the heathen that were round about them.** They had conquered by moral rather than physical superiority; and always a nation is assimilated to the object of its worship. But now they followed the evil example of their inferiors, sunk to the same moral depths, and were about to meet the same ruin. **The Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them.** (See Lev. 18, 3, 30; Dent. 12, 29-31; 18, 9-14.)

16. They left all the commandments of the Lord their God. The ritual order being neglected, the stated feasts and sacrifices and even the Sabbath itself ceased to call the nation's attention periodically to spiritual truth. As a consequence lying, false swearing, stealing, drunkenness, adultery, and bloodshed became characteristic of Israel. **Molten images, even two calves.** These, as we have said already, marked the beginning of their downward career, although they represented not a false deity, but Jehovah. One of them stood at Dan, and the other at Bethel. They were held to be the deities of the nation, Bethel being called the king's

chapel. **Made a grove.** Pointing to the worship introduced by Jezebel, the grossest worship ever known in Israel. **All the host of heaven.** Not until now has Israel been charged with this criminal worship. Maussach introduced it into the southern kingdom from Babylon or Nineveh, perhaps from the Arabs; it was probably the "newest thing" in the morbid religious enterprise of the day. **Served Baal.** This is the climax. Jehu had destroyed the open service, but its evil rites had a lasting popularity, and we know that it continued to flourish in underhanded fashion down to the days of Hosea, who had died just before the captivity.

17. They caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire. This horrible sacrifice had only very recently been offered to Moloch by the northern kingdom, though the citizens of Judah had for years shared this most inhuman of Canaanitish customs. **Used divination and enchantments.** Reveled in superstition. By omens and magical practices of every sort they superseded their faith in God. Modern endeavors in the same direction and with similar evil results are spirit-rapping and theosophy.

18. Therefore. Because of all this departure the Lord (Jehovah) was very angry. Not irritated, but profoundly grieved. **Removed them out his sight.** As if Palestine was Jehovah's abode. Neglected privileges are taken away. **There was none left, but the tribe of Judah only.** God's peculiar people, the object of his love and his care, included both kingdoms; but the northern kingdom had so rapidly deteriorated that none was left for God to caress and prosper but Judah. And, sad to say, Judah learned no good lessons from her sister's overthrow, but sinned on till she too shared Israel's punishment.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

Among the treasures unearthed at Nineveh is the record of the subjugation of Israel as given by Sargon, who says: "I besieged the city of Samaria and took it. I carried off 27,280 of the citizens. I chose fifty chariots for myself from the whole number taken; all the other property of the people of the town I left for my servants to take. I appointed resident officers over them, and imposed upon them the same tribute as had formerly been paid. In the place of those taken into captivity I sent thither inhabitants of lands conquered by me, and imposed the tribute upon them that I require of Assyrians." Here is the fulfillment of prophecy and warning, and the legitimate fruit of long-continued disobedience of

God and of abandonment to sinful indulgence. Israel learned at last, in a terrible and disastrous way, that the "wages of sin is death;" and this awful but just penalty was paid by the Israelites individually as well as collectively as a nation. The people who will not listen to God's warnings and obey his laws must expect to suffer from the outpourings of divine wrath. Disobedience is the forerunner of death, and the calamity that overtook Israel is meted out in some measure to every one who disregards God's entreaties and shows contempt for his laws.

Verse 9. Did secretly. Israel sought to deceive God with a form of worship that had the appearance of being right, but which was simply

cloaked idolatry. The meaning may be, as suggested by some scholars, that the Israelites "decked out their worship, employed things alien to the simplicity of the Mosaic ordinances; such as high places, pillars, and Asherim." (See Psalm 90, 8; Eccl. 12, 14; Mark 4, 22.) **From the tower.** This is a proverbial expression, indicating that the entire city was given up to various forms of religious depravity. (See 2 Kings 18, 8.) Israel was full of deceit and hypocrisy.

10. Images. The commandment "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image," etc., was apparently forgotten, or at least regarded as a dead letter. (See 2 Kings 10, 26; Hosea 2, 8.) **Groves.** The word so rendered is "Asherim," the plural of the Hebrew word "Asherah," which is the name of a Phœnician goddess and idol. The translation "groves" is clearly incorrect, or at least unsatisfactory. The Revised Version retains "Asherim." The fact that the symbols of this goddess were erected "in every high hill, and under every green tree" shows how utterly Israel had renounced her God.

12. They served idols. This word for "idols" in the Hebrew is a term of base suggestions, and indicates that Israel had lost her self-respect. **Ye shall not.** (See Exod. 20, 4; Deut. 4, 16; 5, 8.)

13. The Lord testified. By the law and the prophets. But Israel only gave temporary heed to these warnings. For a time the voice of the prophet might be the dominant note, but once that voice was stilled the innate depravity of Israel reasserted itself, and the last condition was worse than the first. Therefore Israel, having her destiny in her own hands, was responsible for the calamities that overwhelmed her.

14. Would not hear. Their perversity and persistent preference for evil-doing enthralled them, though they knew that such wickedness could have but one result. Their stubbornness had "hardened their necks" against the persuasions of Jehovah and his prophets, and instead of profiting by the examples of their fathers, they outstripped them in wickedness and became like them, unbelieving, or took refuge in unbelief as a cloak for their sins.

15. Rejected his statutes. A sinful heart and unbelieving soul will deny the authority of God and reject his statutes. Israel even went so far as to violate her honor by rejecting the covenant made between her fathers and Jehovah at Sinai. (See Exod. 4, 8; 19, 4.) With this act of repudiation the whole structure fell, and, giving loose rein to their evil tendencies, they

naturally "followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the heathen."

16. They left all. By rejecting the commandments they became lawless and rushed into anarchy and degradation of the worst types. What they at first did secretly they now did openly and defiantly. Their natures became corrupted through familiarity with vice and crime, and the things from which they would have shrunk at first they now performed without compunctions of conscience, thus illustrating Pope's lines:

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

18. Therefore. The anger of Jehovah was clearly justifiable. Israel had dishonored Jehovah and had reaped the reward of her disobedience and sin. She was subjugated, expatriated, and obliterated.

Thoughts for Young People.

A Personal Application.

1. If Israel's rejection of God, under their imperfect light, brought such severe punishment, how shall he who, under the full light of the Gospel, rejects Christ hope to escape? *Am I rejecting God?*

2. If Israel's refusal to serve the God who brought them out of Egypt was base ingratitude, how shall we characterize the action of him who will not love and serve Christ who died for him? *Am I serving God?*

3. If Israel's neglect to hear God's prophets deserved such severe censure, what words can express the wickedness of those who will not listen to the Son of God himself? *Am I listening to God?*

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The ninth verse of this lesson signifies that on the sacred hilltops where the idolaters worshiped their gods the people of Israel "secretly" participated in the immoral rites of the Canaanitish idol-worship, with the pretense that they were honoring Jehovah, and even erected for themselves similar altars from end to end of the land. They not only set them up images and groves in every high hill and under every green tree, but they burned incense in all these high places as did the heathen.

We are learning almost daily, through antiquarian researches, something that sheds additional light upon the entire religious ideas and ceremonies of the Phœnician religions. The

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monuments, though they are few, of the Phœnician language yet show that it closely resembled the Hebrew, which Isaiah calls "the language of Canaan." It is certain that there were high places of Baal, with the primitive form of idolatry which the Hebrew copied at times, and that they extended divine honors to a calf; and Queen Jezebel recognized the worship of these strange divinities in Israel. The statue of Baal rode on bulls, and was represented with bunches of grapes and pomegranates in his hand. He was the god that brought all things to life everywhere; he was the god of fire; he was the sun god; he was represented also as sovereign of the heavens. Moloch, the god of the Ammonites, was represented by an image with the head of a bull and a human body, with stretched-out hands, into which children were laid and from which they fell into the fire below while the playing of a tambore by the priests drowned their cries. The laws of the Hebrews expressly prohibited the worship of Moloch, "the abomination of the children of Ammon." The valley of Topliet was dedicated to the bloody rites of this god. A perpetual fire was kept burning to consume the filth cast out from the city. To "pass through the fire" meant to be burned in the fire, so that some writers think that there were two motives in this worship—an expiatory offering and a religious consecration blended in the sacrifice of offerings to Moloch—and it is supposed mothers thought they were securing the eternal happiness of their children when they brought them to be consumed in these fires. It was because the children of Israel had "sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger," that he "removed them out of his sight, till there was none left but the tribe of Judah only," and they were driven away into various parts of the Assyrian empire as captive slaves. Through two years the Assyrian conqueror, Tiglath-Pileser, swept the northern parts of the kingdom of Israel and carried them into slavery. Ten years later followed Shalmaneser, and their complete and final overthrow was accomplished by Sargon.

By Way of Illustration.

"They did secretly those things that were not right." When a wound in a soldier's foot refuses to heal the surgeon examines it very minutely. Each bone is there and in its place. There is no apparent cause for the inflammation, and yet the wound refuses to heal. The surgeon probes until his lancet comes into contact with a hard foreign substance. "Here it is," he says; "a bullet is lodged here. This must come out or the

wound will not close." So secret sin works toward death.—*Spurgeon.*

Verse 13. Warned by the prophets. In every clock there is what clockmakers call the warning pin, which gives notice before the clock strikes the hour. So the prophets and seers gave warning before the hour of doom was struck for Israel. The historian Froude shows us that when the fate of the Roman empire depended upon Caesar's heeding his warnings he heeded them not. As he crossed the hall his statue fell and was shivered on the stones. Probably some servants had heard whispers, and wished thus to warn him. As he still passed on a stranger thrust a scroll into his hands and begged him to read it on the spot. It contained a list of the conspirators, with a clear account of the plot. He supposed it to be a petition and placed it carelessly among his other papers. And so Rome's great man fell because he did not heed his warnings.

Verse 15. God's people lived like the heathen who were round about them. Paul's exhortation is, "Be not conformed to this world." A young lady who had been in a company of gay, unchristian people for a week excused herself from a Sunday excursion because she was going to church. They protested, "But you went with us last Sunday instead of going to church!"

"Yes," she answered, "but this is Communion Sunday, and, being a member of the Church, I suppose I ought to go to-day."

She could not fail to see that they were greatly surprised. When she left the room one said, "Who would have dreamed that she was a Christian? I fail to see any difference between her and us."

Israel ravaged. It may be only a coincidence that Samaria, the place where Israel became a defeated and dispersed nation because they had neglected to worship the true God in spirit and in truth, was the place where Christ gave to the world his divine message concerning spiritual worship. How different the two scenes! "Then the king of Assyria went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years." A few words—but what a picture of famine and suffering and hate and anguish! Only they who suffered at Sebastopol or Paris can realize the horrors in those few words. But look through these other words: "Then cometh he to a city of Samaria. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink." Here is a picture as full of beauty as a September afternoon.

And how different the chief characters in these two scenes! In the one the ambitious Sargon, in

the other the lowly Jesus! In the one the trappings of royalty, in the other the garb of the peasant. In the one Israel's destroyer—in the other her Saviour! The king of war and the Prince of Peace. The one inflicting thirst and hunger upon Samaria's luckless inhabitants, the other bringing to the spiritually besieged everywhere the bread and the water of eternal life.—C. A. Dickison.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Israel was first among the nations, the chosen of the Lord; every blessing was promised, every opportunity offered. It was favored above all others; secure from all foes. And yet here we find the nation scattered, exiled, captive; the beginning of sorrows which we witness even in these late years in the persecution of the Jews in many lands, distinct from all people and yet with no country of their own. What made the change? Was it "fate," or "circumstances," or "misfortune?" Run your eye over the record of this chapter of 2 Kings, and you have the answer. Verse 9: They "did secretly those things that were not right." Verse 14: "They would not hear, but hardened their necks." Verse 15: "They rejected his statutes. They followed vanity and became vain." Verse 16: "They left all the commandments of the Lord their God." That is the straight road to ruin. You need not go to the rejected Israelites to prove it. Mrs. Bird's Gospel Mission on the East Side in New York has in it college-bred men who are now forsaken tramps, their opportunities, abilities, and friendships squandered because they chose these selfsame ways. Watch the boys and girls who do secretly things that are not right; who will not hear advice, but are self-willed and rebellious; who spend their time in vanity, foolish talking, empty reading, silly or sinful company; and who treat lightly the commands of God. It is a pitiful story! You need not go to Bible history or even to the tramps to find the outcome of such folly. Many a man and woman of thirty would give all they have to recover the lost opportunities of the past fifteen years. How very, very sad are the wrecks of body, mind, and soul from doing just what the Israelites did. The story is told for our instruction. God changes not. His moral laws are fixed. If we sow the wind, we reap the whirlwind. Will you heed the lesson? "Godliness is profitable unto all things; having the promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come."

Israel's greatest condemnation was that the sins were committed against great light. All the prophets and all the seers were sent to warn and

turn them from their evil ways. God is love, and he cannot bear to give up his sinning children. Some day, when you have grown older and have learned better what love really is, you will realize what an unwise as well as really cruel thing it is to wound one who loves you. In the midst of their terrible wickedness we find from reading the prophet Hosea, chapter 11, verse 8, that God's heart yearned over them to save them if it were possible. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel?"

So God pleads with you and with me. How he longs to give us his best; to make the most of us; to save us from the fearful consequences of sin.

We may trace the sad fall of Judah and Israel to its beginning in a principle which is the root of all evil; the setting up of the human will against the divine command. God had said, "Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them." They thought it too much trouble to go so far as to Jerusalem to worship, so they suited their own convenience by setting up gods in various places. They wished to be friendly with the heathen around them, so they adopted their ways, although the Lord had charged them that they should not do like them. They feared the Lord and served their own gods. They were not heathen; O no, they were Israelites. But they would not be "narrow;" they would worship Jehovah and Baal too. Do you think there is anything like that in the Christian Church? Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters—ye cannot serve God and mammon." Let us be honest. If we are loyal to Christ, we cannot do "after the manner" of those who make no profession of love and service for him. Are you perplexed as to how far you may "do as the rest do" and yet be a loyal Christian? Let me give you a touchstone which will determine every question of conduct if you apply it honestly: " whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Try it, practically, this week, and see what it will do for you.

The Teachers' Meeting.

1. *The fall of Samaria.* Fix the city geographically. Draw out its relations to the country of which it was the capital, like the relations of Paris to France. Tell what you can about the last of its kings. Ascertain which great Assyrian monarch besieged the city and which captured it. A very brief résumé of the Israelitish kingdom, showing the three great dynasties, might be of advantage. 2. *The wholesale deporta-*

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tion of the Israelites ended their national existence. Make a sketch-map showing the regions to which they were probably taken. A word-picture of travel across the desert. 3. *The cause of the captivity.* The great difficulty with this lesson is the abundance of matter for explanation and application. We must adapt it to some single line of thought, selecting the lesson best adapted for each class, and adhere to that outline, or we shall lose much of value. The particular sins are (1) ingratitude; (2) disobedience; (3) disbelief. 4. *Apostasy of Israel.* 1. Its beginning. 2. Its growth. 3. Its result. 4. Its lessons. Trace in the lesson sins which are as modern as they were ancient: Forgetting the Lord (verse 7); evil companionship (verse 8); secret sin (verse 9); open sin (verses 10-12); refusing to listen to God's messengers (verses 13, 14).

Before the Class.

Introduction. The captivity of Israel, of which our present lesson treats, took place in the latter part of the year 722 B. C., when the capital city of Samaria, first besieged by Shalmaneser IV, was captured by his successor, Sargon. Hoshea was king at the time. The lesson text gives a summary of the downward course of Israel, and its prophesied end—captivity. The account of the fall of Samaria, as recorded on the recovered cylinder of Sargon, is one of the most striking confirmations of the truth and accuracy of the Bible in its general historical statements. A very brief presentation of the salient facts in the political history of Israel up to this time would be helpful. The moral degeneracy of the nation is the special theme of the lesson.

Development of the text. Write the subject on the board, "The Course of Sin," and the following divisions as they are developed before the class: 1. The beginning of sin; 2. The obstacles to sin; 3. The development of sin; 4. The punishment of sin.

1. *The beginning of sin.* The beginning of sin for the people of Israel was in the yielding to the influences of the tribes in the land to which the Lord their God had brought them. We have here a plain lesson of the effects of evil companionship. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Bring before the class the following facts: (a) The great things God had done for the Israelites in bringing them up out of Egyptian slavery; (b) The plain evidence they had of the utter impotence of the gods of the Egyptians and of the tribes of Palestine; (c) The

direct commands of God against idolatry. But they forgot all this and yielded to the influence of their surroundings. Note here that (a) God has done much for us; (b) We have abundant evidence that he is the only God; (c) We have his direct commands concerning the ways of evil. Are we better than the Israelites? Do we remember our God?

2. *The obstacles to sin.* God sent his prophets and seers to testify to Israel and Judah. He sent warning after warning, granted mercy after mercy, and in every way tried to oppose the development of sin in his people, and turn them back to allegiance to himself. But they would not heed the warnings nor be won by the mercies. God to-day is putting all kinds of obstacles in the way of the transgressor to make it hard for him to walk that way, and at the same time he is trying to draw such to himself by many expressions of love and mercy. Whoever is lost will be lost in spite of God.

3. *The development of sin.* Dr. Peloubet gives the following steps in the downward course of Israel; (a) Forgetfulness of God; (b) Worldly conformity; (c) Hypocrisy; (d) Idolatry; (e) Resistance to good influences; (f) Unbelief; (g) Disobedience, cruelty, crime. Question the class on the effect of each of these moral causes of captivity and make present-day applications.

4. *The punishment of sin.* "The Lord removed them out of his sight." The result of sin is the separation of the sinner from communion with God; this is spiritual death. The forgiveness of sin restores the sinner to his position as a son of God. There are other results of sin, physical, mental, and moral, but the loss of companionship with the Lord is the greatest punishment that can befall man. Sin separates from God; this is the final doom of the impatient sinner.

Specific application. There needs to be given but just a word to emphasize the two most important thoughts presented in the text-development. Watch the beginnings of sin; turn from a wrong course while there is time; the end is sure and cannot be escaped.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

I'm poor, and blind,
O for a heart to praise my God,
Saviour, listen to our prayer,
Keep thou my way,
Whiter than snow.

I bring my sins to thee,
Saviour, I come to thee.
To-day the Saviour calls,
I want a heart to pray.

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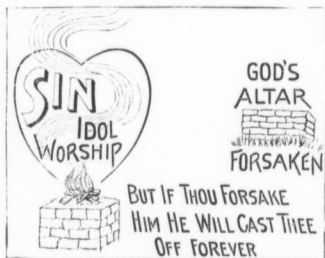
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FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 9, High places, 174. Ver. 10, "Groves" (*Asheroth*), 222. Ver. 16, Star worship, 189; Baal, 184; Calf worship, 138. Ver. 17, Molech, 163.

Blackboard.



THIRD QUARTERLY REVIEW.

Sept. 25.

Home Readings.

- M. The Kingdom Divided. 1 Kings 12, 16-25.
 Tu. Elijah the Prophet. 1 Kings 17, 1-16;
 W. Elijah on Carmel. 1 Kings 18, 30-39
 Th. Elijah's Spirit on Elisha. 2 Kings 2, 6-15
 F. The Shunammite's Son. 2 Kings 4, 25-37.
 S. Naaman Healed. 2 Kings 5, 1-14.
 S. Captivity of the Ten Tribes. 2 Kings 17, 9-18

Golden Text.

No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Psalm 84, 11.

Lesson Hymns

No. 358, New Canadian Hymnal.

O God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed.

No. 351, New Canadian Hymnal.

When times of temptation bring sadness
and gloom,
I will tell it to Jesus, my Lord.

No. 319, New Canadian Hymnal.

Called to the feast by the King are we,
Sitting, perhaps, where his people be.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Our Golden Text is a commentary upon the teachings of the quarter. The Lord's hand is full of good things; he is always reaching them out for us to take—not holding them back from us. God had made Solomon great; "he exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom." But he did not walk uprightly, he forgot the covenant he made with the Lord in the days of his youth; so the good things he might have kept were taken from him. So far as we know he died a disappointed, poor old sinner after all his glorious opportunities. Rehoboam and Jeroboam, by self-will, selfishness, and disregard of God's commands, brought evil upon themselves and upon their kingdoms, although God had promised good things for them if they would keep his statutes. But you recall Elijah, the stern denouncer of evil, the man who recognized God in all things. In drought God gave him refreshment at the brook Cherith, a home with the widow and her son, where he not only received sustenance, but had the joy of being made a blessing to those with whom he dwelt. On Carmel, you remember how he was honored in the

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presence of the priests of Baal, and how when he was weary and discouraged the Lord spoke to him in the still, small voice of love.

Elijah had a stormy life, but he walked uprightly, and no good thing was withheld. In contrast we had the story of the covetous, wicked Ahab and Jezebel, and their tragic and terrible end. They got what they coveted, but "good things" they never got. Elisha had the best that God could give. He was always the comforter, the helper, the healer. The little boy in the Shunammite's home came back to life because Elisha walked so uprightly that God could trust him with the answer to a mighty prayer. Naaman found his way to the healing waters of Jordan; angels surrounded and defended him; his old age was useful, his death peaceful, and his influence was felt long after he had gone—all because he walked uprightly. Our last two lessons taught us how good things are withheld from us by sinful, selfish living, and by wilful disregard of the commands of God. The lessons have been full of spiritual instruction, warnings against sin have been faithful and solemn, encouragements to integrity and holiness have been strong and persuasive.

The Holy Spirit has been speaking to us. I pray that you may hear the still, small voice in your secret soul, and that you may listen and obey. I covet for you the best gifts. You may have them if you will, for "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Before the Class.

Introduction. The lessons of this quarter present the truth embodied in the Golden Text selected by the committee for the quarter, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." The twelve lessons give us a glimpse of various ways in which the Lord blessed his people in the olden time, which blessings he is just as ready and willing to give to his people of the present day.

Lesson I. This lesson presents the blessing of opportunity for service. God in his love and wisdom has given to man the privilege of having a part in the upbuilding of the world in righteousness. He not only gives to men talents, but many opportunities to use those talents in the service of his fellow-men. As an opportunity for service is seen and grasped the one so doing grows in greatness in the eyes of the Lord. Service develops the giver and helps the recipient; thus both are blessed.

Lesson II. In the service of the Lord one can rest assured of divine care. This second lesson beautifully and emphatically presents this

truth. God's purposes are unchangeable; his methods of accomplishing them vary with the circumstances. God will care for all his workers to-day just as completely as he did for Elijah, although the methods and means employed may be different. The blessing of divine care is most assuredly a present-day blessing.

Lesson III. God is constantly manifesting himself to-day in various ways, and as clearly as in the days of Elijah. In times of doubt, of trial, of sorrow, of need, God makes himself manifest in different ways. The Bible record is attacked; a clay tablet, proving the correctness of the record, is unearthed. A servant of the Lord is in need; the need is completely supplied. The blessing of God's manifest presence in the world to-day is one which is constantly granted to his disciples.

Lesson IV. This lesson shows us one of the greatest blessings which the worker receives—the blessing of divine encouragement. The worker needs encouragement; God knows this and in many ways stimulates him to renewed activity. If we will but go through the world with our eyes open, reading aright the signs of the times, we shall find plenty to encourage us in our work for the Lord.

Lesson V. Some blessings are indirect; warnings are of this character. This lesson is a vivid warning against the cardinal sin of covetousness. "Thou shalt not covet." Guard the desires, for they may easily lead one into the sin of covetousness. Desire only those things which are right and noble and open to all to attain, and so escape the danger.

Lesson VI. The prayer of Elisha has been the prayer of many workers since. "Who is sufficient for these things?" The power of the Spirit is the only power which will prevail against the forces of evil. This blessing is granted by God to all who ask. "Without me ye can do nothing." The prayer of Elisha should be the prayer of every active worker for the Lord.

Lesson VII. This lesson shows us one of the ways in which God helps his people. The blessing of needed help is always given, but usually not directly, but through one of the Lord's servants, that thereby there might be a double blessing to the giver and to the receiver. We must always be ready to be thus used of God, else many blessings may escape us.

Lesson VIII. In this lesson we have presented perhaps the greatest blessing—the blessing of all-conquering life. We all have the element of death in us; only life can conquer this and cast it out. This life God, the source of life, gives us,

and gives abundantly, through Jesus Christ, his Son. His life in us transforms us into his image.

LESSON IX. We are in constant danger, seen and unseen. We do not know how much we are delivered from each day by our unseen defenders. The eyes of Elisha's servant were opened and he saw these heavenly hosts. Some time our eyes will be opened and we shall see the angels of the Lord encamping round about his people. All things are under the control of the Lord, and he is using his power for the benefit of man.

LESSON X. This lesson makes clear the law of victory. God grants victories, successes, but the number and greatness of them will depend upon the energy we put forth for their attainment. The blessings for which we strive are the blessings which develop us the most. Thus we are stimulated to increased activity, and hence increased development, by having the greatness of the returns depend somewhat upon our efforts.

LESSON XI. Another indirect blessing—a warning of the results of doing nothing for others, but sinfully indulging self. This is a much-needed lesson, for we are prone to think that it is only the sin of commission that merits and meets punishment. Indulgent idleness is also to be punished. The great lesson of the direct relations existing between privilege, responsibility, reward, and punishment must be learned, and thoroughly learned.

LESSON XII. Jesus came into the world as the "Light of the World." His life and teachings have made plain the way of righteousness, and have put beyond question that the "wages of sin is death." God has lined the broad way of unrighteousness with signboards, writ large, warning all who are walking therein of the cer-

tain destruction awaiting them. Let us heed the warning and pass it on to others.

REVIEW SCHEME FOR SENIOR AND INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Give the TITLES and GOLDEN TEXTS of each lesson.
2. Name the principal CHARACTERS in the lessons.
3. Make a list of the SUCCESSIVE KINGS of each kingdom.
4. Compare the DATES of the first deportation; the captivity of Israel; and finally of the captivity of Judah.
5. Make a list of the MIRACLES recorded in the lessons of the quarter.
6. What is the principal LESSON which you have learned from the studies of the quarter?

Blackboard.



REVIEW SCHEME FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

NO.	TITLES.	GOLDEN TEXTS.	WHAT ABOUT.	FOR ME.
I.	The K. D.	A soft answer turneth—	Sin divides.	Speak gently.
II.	E. the P.	And the barrel of—	Our Great Provider.	Look up!
III.	E. on C.	And when all the people—	God stronger than Satan.	Is the mighty God my Friend?
IV.	E's F. and E.	Rest in the Lord—	God thinks about me.	Angels watch about me.
V.	N's V.	Thou shalt not—	Self makes trouble.	"Love one another."
VI.	E's S. on E.	How much more shall—	The Holy Spirit.	"Thou in me."
VII.	The S's S.	Cast thy burden upon—	God the Life-giver.	My life is God's gift.
VIII.	N. H.	Heal me, O Lord, and—	God can make clean.	I may be "Whiter than snow."
IX.	E. at D.	The angel of the—	Safety in God.	"Fear not, little flock."
X.	The D. of E.	Precious in the sight—	Going home to God.	Is God my Home?
XI.	S. I.	They also have erred—	The demon that slays.	"Touch not, taste not."
XII.	C. of the T. T.	If thou seek him, he will—	Cost of disobedience.	"I will follow thee."

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RESPONSIVE SERVICE FOR THE THIRD QUARTER.

Supt. Give Title and Golden Text of Lesson I.

Teachers. The Kingdom Divided.

Scholars. "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger."

Supt. Lesson II.

Teachers. Elijah the Prophet.

Scholars. "And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord."

Supt. Lesson III.

Teachers. Elijah on Carmel.

Scholars. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Supt. Lesson IV.

Teachers. Elijah's Flight and Encouragement.

Scholars. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him."

Supt. Lesson V.

Teachers. Naboth's Vineyard.

Scholars. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house."

Supt. Lesson VI.

Teachers. Elijah's Spirit on Elisha.

Scholars. "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy spirit to them that ask him?"

Supt. Lesson VII.

Teachers. The Shunammite's Son.

Scholars. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."

Supt. Lesson VIII.

Teachers. Naaman Healed.

Scholars. "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved."

Supt. Lesson IX.

Teachers. Elisha at Dothan.

Scholars. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Supt. Lesson X.

Teachers. The Death of Elisha.

Scholars. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Supt. Lesson XI.

Teachers. Sinful Indulgence.

Scholars. "They also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way."

Supt. Lesson XII.

Teachers. Captivity of the Ten Tribes.

Scholars. "If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever."

Supt. What do we learn from Lesson I?

First Single Voice. Lesson I teaches us that we all, like King Rehoboam, come to turning points where eternal destinies depend on the choice we make. To decide aright is to gain a kingdom; to decide wrong is to lose it.

Supt. Lesson II.

Second Single Voice. Our daily bread is as really from God as were the oil and meal on which Elijah fed. The widow's unfailing supply reminds us of God's unfailing love and care.

Supt. Lesson III.

Third Single Voice. Elijah's victory at Carmel reminds us that one strong, earnest, wise, devoted character can produce a wonderful effect upon others. The God who answers by the fire of the Holy Spirit, purifying the heart and cleansing from sin—he is the true God.

Supt. Lesson IV.

Fourth Single Voice. Elijah learned at Horeb that he had applied wrong tests to his work. His real success was not to be measured by miracles and the shoutings of the people. God showed Elijah that his method of progress was by silent, invisible, but mighty forces.

Supt. Lesson V.

Fifth Single Voice. Covetousness is not a mere desire for more, but such a desire as would gain it by wrongdoing and deprive others of it. Covetousness is like drinking the salt waters of the sea, which only increase thirst. There is no permanent success through crime. "Be sure your sin will find you out."

Supt. Lesson VI.

Sixth Single Voice. Elijah proved to the people of his time that the soul lives beyond the earthly life. Those who have been faithful shall, like him, have an abundant entrance.

Supt. Lesson VII.

Seventh Single Voice. We learn from Elisha in the Shunammite's home that if we would revive dead souls we must put our living souls in close touch with them and pray mightily. The work is too great for human strength alone.

Supt. Lesson VIII.

Eighth Single Voice. We learn from Naaman being healed that the way of salvation is simple, and that God requires a proof of sincere and humble obedience.

Supt. Lesson IX.

Ninth Single Voice. From Elisha at Dothan we learn that God is interested in our daily needs. Just as a flash of lightning gives us knowledge of the all-pervading forces of electricity, so special acts of help from God are given to show that he is in all things.

Supl. Lesson X.

Tenth Single Voice. From the circumstances attending Elisha's death we learn that God is continually testing our willingness and fitness to receive. According to our faith it is done into us. We put our own limit to the blessings we receive.

Supl. Lesson XI.

Eleventh Single Voice. We learn from the prophet Amos that the decay of a nation begins with its morals. Only fools mock at sin. Wise men do not play with matches in a powder mill.

Supl. Lesson XII.

Twelfth Single Voice. From the captivity of the Ten Tribes we learn that God does all that is possible to save men from ruin, but there is a limit to probation. Men can disregard the laws of health up to a certain point and yet recover. But there is a point just beyond which are incurable disease and death.

ELLIPTICAL REVIEW.

This may be used in the class by the scholars writing in the missing words, or it may form a part of the public review.

I.

The kingdom divided under —'s son, whose name was —. There was none that followed the house of — but the tribe of —. Rehoboam was determined to fight against —, but the word of God came to —, saying, Speak unto —, that ye shall not fight against —.

II.

Elijah said to —, There shall not be — nor — these years. The word of the Lord came to him, saying, Hide thyself by the brook —, and I have commanded the — to feed thee there. When the brook dried up he went to Zarephath, and a — fed him. Her — of — wasted not, neither did her — of — fail until the Lord sent rain on the earth.

III.

Elijah took twelve — and built an —, and laid the sacrifice on it. He filled — with water, and poured on the — and on the —. This he did — times. In answer to —'s prayer the fire of the Lord fell and — the sacrifice and — the — that was in the —. The people said, The Lord, he is the God, Elijah — the prophets of —.

IV.

— sent a messenger to — threatening his life. — went into the — and prayed that he might —. The — of the Lord fed him. He arose and went to —, and there was a great — and an — and a fire, but the Lord was not in them. Elijah heard a — —. And when he heard it he wrapped his — in his —. A voice said, — — —? And he said, They seek my —, to take it away.

V.

Ahab was — because — would not sell his —. Jezebel wrote — in —'s name, saying, Set — on high, and bear witness against him that he did — God

and the —; and then — him. The men did us — said, and — was stoned. And — took possession of the — of —.

VI.

Elijah smote the river — with his —, and the waters were — so that he and — passed over on —. Elisha asked for a — of Elijah's —. While they talked there appeared — — — — and — of —, and Elijah went up by a — into heaven. Elisha plucked up the — of — and smote the —, and they — hither and thither and — went over. And the sons of the prophets said, The spirit of — doth rest on —.

VII.

The Shunammite met — at — with the message that her — was —. Elisha sent — to lay his — on the — of the child. But there was neither — nor —. Elisha went into the room and — unto the Lord. He laid upon the child, and the — of the — waxed —, and the child — seven times and — his —. Then Elisha called the mother and said, Take up —.

VIII.

Naaman, captain of the host of —, was a —. Naaman's wife had a little captive maid from the land of —. She told Naaman of the prophet —, who could cure —. When Elisha heard of it he sent for — and told him to wash in the river —. Naaman was angry and preferred two rivers of —, but his — advised him to obey the prophet. He dipped himself in the Jordan and was —.

IX.

The king of — warred against —. Elisha would warn the king of — of the movements of the army of —. The king of — heard that — was in —. The king — the city with horses and chariots by night. Elisha's servant was frightened. When in answer to —'s prayer the young man's eyes were opened, behold the — was full of — and — of — round about —. The — were smitten with blindness.

X.

— was dying and —, king of Israel, wept. Elisha told the king to shoot — eastward. And he shot. Then he told him to smite upon the —. Elisha was wroth that he smote only — times, and said he should smite Syria but —. Elisha — and was —. When the — buried a man in the — of — he revived. The king of — oppressed — all the days of —.

XI.

The prophet — pronounced a woe upon them that are — in —. He prophesied that they should be carried away —.

XII.

The children of — did those things that were not — against the Lord. They served idols and hardened their — against the message of the prophets. They rejected his — and his — and his — and served Baal. The Lord removed them out of his sight, except the tribe of — only.

PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

Primary Notes.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

WHAT did you bring back from your vacation trip? A healthier tint to your cheek, let us hope, and a quicker pace to your walk. But did you not also bring back some memories worth sharing with others? There was a rare mountain climb over the shoulders of big "Bear Hill," or a stroll along the seashore, out upon some rocks to the lighthouse at the "harbor's mouth," or a breezy ride across a wide, level prairie. It may be you are one of the lucky sightseers that can say they have had a glance at the curiosities of Europe. Now share what you have seen with your scholars. Open your memory-bag and pour out your treasures. There is always a power to the simple statement "I saw" or "I heard." Individual testimony tells. You can feather an arrow with it if you want to "send something" home, or, to change the figure, light up a point, and brighten some subject that will stand illumination. However, open that door of your treasure-house—memory—and share with others your vacation resources.

How important are the missions of this Church that you love and labor for, and that loves and labors for you! Will it, though, cease its active interest there? Is our religion a stream of vast and beneficent power whose usefulness is limited to those living on the banks of the river? Is the world without to be forgotten? Never. But how will the Church get its money for the work and also its workers? It looks to the children in your class. Let them grow up in a mission atmosphere. Train them to consecrate their nickels and dimes to the work. A child's nickel will grow to an adult's dollar. Tell them about missions and the enthusiasm of mission workers. The fire will spread. Some one from your very class may, years hence, bear out the Gospel's torch to the dark corners of the earth.

Here is one teacher's way of spreading the fire:

"I recently organized the primary class of our Sunday school into a little missionary society. Last year my class contributed five dollars through the Sunday school missionary society, and I thought that they deserved to stand alone. Our colored badges bear the words, 'Sunbeam Mission Band; motto, Let your light

shine.' We wear these badges on the day of meeting, which is the first Sabbath of each month. The time of meeting is the hour of our regular Sunday school, and during the hour usually devoted to the lesson we have a missionary chalk-talk, varied by stories and recitations. The president's term of office is three months, while the secretary is appointed each meeting until they "learn how" a little better. Our ambition is to increase our offerings to ten dollars this year."

You have a stack of guns for various foes. Have you not a rifle sure to hit and demolish a black bottle? Temperance is always in order, because something is ever in disorder through intemperance. And can you begin too soon with your boys and girls in this great work of making temperance fighters? It is a great thing to anticipate, to preoccupy, to make sure of vantage-ground. Your scholars are not too young to be influenced by an unwise parent at home and a foolish, perhaps wicked, companion without. To any student of the evil of drink it is astonishing how early children are approached upon this subject. Their consciences are tampered with, their appetites solicited, and their steps wrongly, if not perhaps fatally, directed for life. Get your flag out as soon as possible. Plant it squarely before the young. Let it fly, and "Touch not, taste not, handle not," be its motto.

About Birthdays.

JULIET DIMOCK DUDLEY says:

"Make much of the baby's birthday. Encourage those who have new babies at home to bring pennies for them also; announce their names and pray for them in the class. The little ceremony may take time, but never mind; leave out something else and condense the program if necessary, but celebrate these anniversaries that mean so much to the little folks."

The *Evangel* calls attention to birthday cards. Primary teachers are always glad to hear of something new and helpful:

"Our primary workers who have long been searching for suitable birthday cards will welcome the new series of birthday letters already prepared by Mrs. Josephine T. Atwood, of the Boston Union, and now in the hands of Mr. Henry D. Noyes, of Boston, for publication. The cards are to be gilt-edged, the size of an or-

dinary note envelope. On the face of the cards will be the head of Hoffmann's 'Christ in the Temple,' inclosed by the words:

"May Jesus Christ, whose face you see,
In all things your example be."

"On the other side of the card will be the birthday verses suitable for different ages in series 1, 2, 3, and 4, in separate or mixed packages, the price not exceeding five cents a card. The verses, written by Miss E. H. Atwood, on the cards in series 1 and 2 are:

BIRTHDAY LETTERS.

No. 1.

"To kind and loving parents
Four years ago to-day
God sent a darling baby,
Here in this world to stay.
His love and care were round her,
And year by year she grew,
Until—O, yes, you've guessed it—
That little girl is—you.
Through this new year before you
He'll love and keep you too—
Will you not try to please him
In all you say and do?"

No. 2.

"A happy, happy, birthday
I wish my little one;
Another year is ended,
Another has begun.
May He who spared our [name]
For five long years to-day,
Watch over her and bless her
Through all her life, we pray.
O, may she follow Jesus,
The children's truest Friend;
And always love and serve him,
Till life on earth shall end."

"The verses in the other series, 3 and 4, are for the older children respectively. We owe Mrs. Atwood a vote of thanks for helping us to supply this long-felt want."

One Way to Conduct a Primary Review.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

THERE are so many ways to conduct reviews that few teachers use the same, and most change their own plans repeatedly. Among many ways here is a very simple one which I have used effectively. Plans tried and proved may be passed on, at least by way of suggestion:

Having the B division of the primary depart-

ment, plans must be suitable to the wee ones who belong to it, for here is where the children begin at the beginning. I make much use of the picture roll in the lessons as they come. The scholars are asked their opinion of what each picture represents; they give names to the figures as far as possible, and as many details as may be are brought out by questions and close scrutiny.

The leaf for the day is not turned till the point in the lesson where it fits in is reached, and there is a little expectation about it beforehand. The edge of interest is not dulled by familiarity with the picture before the time. Sometimes a scholar will wish to "peep" before the time, but this is pleasantly prevented if possible, and the final turning of the leaf is made much of, as highly important, and thus attention is likely to be arrested and held.

All this is preliminary to the review, for it is one of the fundamentals, as everyone knows, that there must be a view before a re-view, and something must be called before there can be a re-call. A review is the growth of a quarter. Children can't be crammed for it a Sunday beforehand any more than they can eat twelve dinners in a day, elastic as a child's capacity is supposed to be.

We call our review an examination, as the children are marked upon their lessons, together with other things, the proper average securing a quarterly certificate, four of which will entitle to a diploma at the general graduating exercises of the school. Sometimes the superintendent or the assistant superintendent comes in to hear the examination and to decide what the percentage of the class will average.

When I give a picture-roll review I turn the back of it to the children, and, beginning at the first one, describe each one as vividly as I can—giving figures, colors, attitudes, and other particulars of the illustration—going on till the scholars recognize it and give either the title of the lesson or the name of the picture. There is some emulation about being the first to discover the hidden picture from the description. Then I give the first two words, perhaps, of the Golden Text (they are wee ones, remember), and the class will finish reciting it. A question or two about the lesson story suffices to show their recollection of it, and now and then we stop to repeat some formula of a special lesson, as, in a lesson about influencing others, we had three "don'ts" and one "do," which we went over again and again; if a thing is wrong, don't do it. If you are not sure it is right, don't do it. If it hurts anybody else, don't do it. Do as Jesus would have you do. Or the ladder

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of repentance—using the fingers to indicate the rounds: First, feel sorry; second, say so; third, "Please forgive me;" fourth, turn right around; fifth, follow Jesus.

In connection with each review should be a little map exercise, if it be no more than pointing out the divisions of the land of Palestine—a few cities, Jordan, Sea of Galilee, and Dead Sea, or naming these as the teacher points to them.

Such a review consumes fifteen minutes, or twenty at the utmost if very full.

I have used this plan in reviewing the other division of my department, which meets in another room and has its separate exercises and lesson teaching, but the little written review is preferred for scholars from nine to ten, and they fill out in their own handwriting the Golden Texts and lesson truths called for in blank pages left for these in their quarterlies. Nothing is comparable to a written review for fastening lessons in memory and proving what is fastened there; so that as soon as a child begins to write, which is early nowadays, it is well to require something simple which can be done at home.

It would seem to be almost a vain repetition to say that reviews require peculiar energy, enthusiasm, alertness, vivacity, and variety in their conduct, with the quick seizure of essentials and the dropping of minute details that would lengthen the lesson to the point of weariness.

In these quarterly exercises, as well as in weekly lessons, the value of word-pictures is very great. It is often well to use the present tense, and to invite the class to journey together to the distant scene—taking a thought journey, it may be called—and then describing as graphically as possible the events of the lesson or series of lessons, calling attention to the various particulars as if they were visible to all; always, in lessons about our Lord, avoiding anything irreverent. If the story is real to the teacher, her involuntary motions and attitudes will impress her small hearers. If she kneels and listens, they will listen, and if she seems to see what she portrays, they will see it too.

Verily there is not a faculty of mind or body not laid under tribute in the primary class.

The Child's Idea of God.

BY ALICE MAY DOUGLAS.

"God is a spirit." But what is a spirit? We are embodied spirits, yet not one of us can explain what our own spirit is; how, then, can we hope to explain what is a disembodied spirit, especially the greatest of all spirits—the Father of all?

The mind of a child is so limited, so undevel-

oped, and contains so few ideas that to it many things appear visionary which to the minds of adults are perfectly clear. There are many, O so many, images in the little mind, whose outlines are so indistinct, and among these alien images over which the little one must muse is the image of God. Since a child is so used to objects that cannot be explained to him satisfactorily, he experiences no alarm at finding God among this number. He takes for granted that there is a God and that God is God. This is all that he knows and all that he cares to know. Would that we were as content with our study of God as is the little child! But our maturer minds, so used to comparing one object with another, too often refuse to allow our imagination even one dimly-outlined object, and because we cannot explain who or what God is we sometimes, by act, if not by word, doubt his existence.

One of the first questions that a child will ask is: "What is God?" While, of course, we all believe in a personal God, it is generally better to give the idea of his personality by means of the pronoun instead of by telling the child directly that God is a person.

When a child asks who God is it is well to tell him to try to find out for himself, and then he can tell you. If he asks how he can find out, tell him that he can best find out about anyone by looking at one's work, and that God's work is everything—the flowers, trees, birds, etc. In this way he can learn from the broad sky the greatness of God, from the flowers God's goodness in sending us these gifts of love. He will thus learn many a lesson, doubly valuable since discovered by the child himself.

Children enjoy contemplating upon such great truths. A few days ago a little child said at the table, "Papa, God made the sun and moon and the pretty clouds." "He made the twinkling stars, too," added the mother. "Yes, and the twinkling stars, too," repeated the child. "God did well, didn't he?" How sweet and naive was that concluding remark!—the child being in the same frame of mind as was the Creator who, contemplating the same objects, pronounced them good.

Neimeyer's way of unfolding to the child's mind the idea of the Creator is so excellent that we copy thus liberally from it:

"As soon as the years of mere and almost animal existence are passed the understanding and reason, though slowly and weakly, begin to develop in an observable manner, and the child shows signs of good susceptibilities, tendencies, and feelings, and especially of having an awakened conscience. It is at this time that the first

endeavor should be made to awaken an interest in the supersensual.

"This may be done by frequently leading the mind from what is visible, limited, and variable to what is invisible, infinite, eternal; from the love of parents to that of God, who is himself love. They should be told, in terms intelligible at their age, that all good comes from God; that he loves only those who are good, and that they only are permanently happy; that his holy law speaks to us through our consciences and demands and deserves an unconditional obedience.

"There is in the nature of children a natural aspiration after the supersensual; and the reason, when awakened and curious to learn the causes of things, will find in these instructions the easiest solution of whatever it cannot otherwise explain; and thus children, penetrated by the love and goodness that are all around them and that rule over them, accept with pleasure the idea of a highest and infinite God. Surrounded by all the greatness and magnificence of nature, they will, without any doubt, receive the idea of a creator of the world; and the more they become acquainted with the laws of nature and second causes the more willingly will they seek and find in his infinite power the origin of whatever remains incomprehensible to them, and what is most important of all, will recognize in the voice which they hear so loud within them when they do right or wrong, the voice of a holy God.

"The maturer age of those thus taught will be peculiarly capable of receiving the beautiful religious characteristics of a self-sacrificing faith, a profound love, and a confiding hope."

Forcing Buds.

BY MABEL E. HOTCHKISS.

"O SEE," said a voice in gleeful, childish treble, "I made it open."

A child of perhaps three years held up for my inspection a somewhat mutilated scarlet tulip, her chubby fingers thrust into the depths of the bright cup.

The thought of the childish despoiler recurred to me that sunny afternoon in the Sunday school. The interest of a boyish group was being held by the strong, tender magic of John's message about sin and salvation. A bright-winged butterfly flitted over the sill of the classroom window, then back into the sunshine in evident surprise at the lack of attention vouchsafed him.

"My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not. And if any man sin, ye have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ

the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

"That means us and everybody, don't it?" broke in one of the boyish number.

"Doesn't it, you mean; do you not, dear?" corrected the teacher.

The child looked conscious and a little confused, and his attention strayed to the persistent butterfly.

It is the little peculiarities of love—our sensitiveness to correct syntax, our love of order, our ambition for these children, perhaps, that we thrust as awkward fingers into the awakening buds of thought and feeling. "Why cannot we keep from untwisting the morning-glory, and let the sunshine do it?"

God forbid that we should hold up to him any of our mistaken handiwork, saying simply, as the child, "Dear heavenly Father, I made it open."

Help from the Home.

THE home may be, and often is, a wonderful aid to the Sunday school. How?

1. By securing prompt and regular attendance.
2. By securing good will toward teachers.
3. By aiding the children, and stimulating them in the study of the lesson.
4. By encouraging the teachers and aiding those who are trying to help the children or older ones of the home.

5. By having the same aim for which the Sunday school exists; that is, the development of an intelligent faith and life.

Bishop Vincent says: "If everybody went to church and Sunday school, a little school at home beside, for Bible study, would be in order.

... But then not everybody does go to church and Sunday school, and to him who does not go the school at home becomes invaluable. He will be more likely to go. And he will get some good—great good—until he does go. He will get a taste at home of the precious things they have in the sanctuary. Sometimes people who want to go cannot. Distance hinders. Weather hinders. Illness hinders. To those people the Home Department is a blessing. It passes the time away swiftly and pleasantly. It takes people out of themselves. It prevents gloominess and melancholia. It brings good company into the home—prophets and apostles, kings and angels, and the Christ himself. It opens great windows that give far-reaching perspectives. A Sunday school at home is a great thing for a home. Let us have a country full of such departments."—*Selected.*

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INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.
THIRD QUARTER.

LESSON X. (September 4.)

THE DEATH OF ELISHA. 2 Ki. gs 13.
14-25.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Psalm 116. 15.

Primary Notes.

BY MARTHA VAN MAETER.



Bruce Hastings had one birthday present which pleased him very much. It was a bow and arrows, given him by his Uncle Fred. He soon became quite a good marksman, and he was proud of his skill. One day he was shooting when some of his boy friends came along. He wanted to show them how well he could shoot, but to his surprise found that his arrows were all gone. He had sent the last one into the treetops, and could not get it back. When he told the story to his father that night Mr. Hastings said: "It is wise to have your quiver full of arrows, my boy. If you do that, you will be ready for whatever may come." If you will study this lesson, you will learn what Mr. Hastings meant.

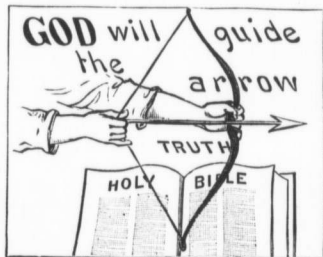
Review. [In reviewing a lesson let the children do as much of the work as possible. In this case the story is so full of incident and interest that the children may be depended upon to recall it with little help. Different parts of the story may be assigned to different children, taking care not to call only upon the ready ones. Let some of the timid ones have a chance, and encourage them to do what they can.]

The lesson story. How many have seen a very old man? How does he look? [Let two or three tell.] Talk about the beauty of a truly good life, and ask what the children think the old age of a man like Elisha would be. Now he was very old, and about to die. Had he helped the kingdom of Israel? Who can tell some way in which he had helped? [Encourage a little talk about Elisha, and the good work he had done.] It is no wonder the king came to see him as he was about to die. Perhaps the king wondered what he should do without the good prophet to pray to God for him and for the people. When he came and saw that Elisha was surely going to die soon he forgot his own high place and power, and cried, just as you might do if your own dear papa was dying. What did the king say as he wept? What did he

mean by the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof? I will tell you something about this king. His name was Jehoshaphat, or, as it was often called, Joash, which means "gift of God." He was the grandson of Jehu, and was a young king. He had a great deal of trouble, for the Syrians had kept coming into his kingdom and carrying away his soldiers, until now he had only a weak little army left! No wonder he wept when he saw the prophet going away! He knew it was sin which brought so much sorrow to his land, and he thought that if Elisha was not there to teach them and to pray for them, it would be still worse.

But Elisha knew that God could use this young king to bring peace to the kingdom, and so he gave him an object lesson. [Tell the story of the bow and arrows, and show that Elisha wanted to see the king have faith and courage enough to use all the strength and skill which the Lord had given him, and tell how after Elisha died Joash did indeed smite the Syrians three times, and drove them out of the land of Israel, but that if he had been more courageous, he might have utterly destroyed them.]

Arrows for us. Elisha used the bow and arrows to teach the king that he could overcome his enemies if he would use all the helps that God gave him. We are only little children, but we have each one a little kingdom to guard, and we have strong and powerful enemies who are bound to conquer our kingdom. Do you know what the little kingdom is which we have to guard? You know Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you," and it is this kingdom of the heart which we have to keep clean and pure for the King. But how shall we do it? Where shall we find the arrows with which to slay our enemies? [Show the blackboard, and print "Truth" above the arrows.] Where may we find truth? [Read from the Bible and have children repeat many



times "Thy word is truth." We may have all the arrows of God's truth we want, for we have his book from which to get them. Every Golden

Text may be used to slay some enemy if we have it ready, and if we have faith and courage to use it. A little girl once saw a wicked man who looked so sour and unhappy that she wanted to help him. "I will say my text to him," she thought, and she went to him and said, softly, "May I say my text to you? 'God is love,'" and then she went away. But this was the arrow which slew the bad spirit in the man. [Print "God will guide the arrow," and encourage children to learn Bible verses, and use them.]

Kindergarten Hints.

BY MRS. MARY J. CHISHOLM FOSTER.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Last of the Story of Elisha. 2 KINGS 13, 14-25.

GOLDEN TEXT. "I go to prepare a place for you." JOHN 14, 2.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, 2 Kings 13; Rev. 22; *Yesterday, Today, and Forever* (Bickersteth.)

ATTENTION STORY.

Do you remember the first part of the story of Elisha? He was plowing in the field with many oxen when he saw the good Elijah, and we remember that he wished to say good-bye to his father and mother before going away with his new friend. This shows us that he was a good son. He made a good-bye feast for the people living near him, and so we think of him as a kind neighbor. When he was with Elijah he showed himself to be a dear friend, and when he preached to the people and taught them how to be good and to do good he was a faithful minister. He was a helper and a comforter to those who were sick and in trouble, and all the time he was God's child, pleasing his heavenly Father in all these ways. By and by his work was done, and then came the end of the story of his life. Sometimes the life story is very short, as where the little baby goes away to the better country; but sometimes it is very long, as when a dear grandpa or grandma walks for many years in the way which leads to the land Beautiful. When it came time for Elisha to go away the king came to see him, and he was so sorry to see Elisha sick, and to think that he was going away, that he cried. [Read 2 Kings 13, 14.] Elisha told the king to do his work well, and to remember God. Everyone knew that Elisha had been good and how helpful he had been, and all loved him—the little maid who served, and the king on the throne.

OUTLINE.

On Sunday use all the points possible in the time the teacher has, and show upon the days of the week that truth and goodness attract and win and help always.

The different points of character may be summed up in showing that Elisha was industrious, loving, and helpful as a good son, neighbor, friend, and minister. Review the story of his life. The first scene is found in 1 Kings 19, 19, 20.

The story of the little maid may be retold (2 Kings 5, 1-14.) The teacher who is imaginative and winsome may find the spiritual nature of the children by leading them to think of our Father and of the heavenly home to which the little play-mates and friends and the dear ones from the earthly home are going all the time.

We cannot see the messenger who comes to say that the place [refer to the Golden Text] is ready, but they leave the earthly home and the body which they wore, and they go to the Father's house, the "beautiful Zion." Lead to the thought that the other, the unseen, life does not stop, for life goes on. Get the idea of life before the little ones, for, though its mystery cannot be explained, they may be satisfied to know that the secret of life is with God. Jesus said, "I am the life," and he came to give us life "more abundantly," a better and fuller life. Elisha went away from this world to the better one, where he had more life and where he enjoyed his friends more.

NATURE WORK. Teach reverence for life. This is God's gift, and never should we for sport kill a harmless insect or injure an animal. We cannot give life to the tiny creature. Humanness may be cultivated, for children are cruel naturally, and they should be encouraged to have a fostering care for helpless dumb animals. Sympathy with these and a fondness for pets may be strengthened by games imitative of different animals.

THE TRANSITION CLASS. The larger children may write out some part of the Elisha story and bring it next Sunday. The little children may with their tiny hands follow a dictation of some object made in paper or in drawing to fasten their thought on some portion of the story.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH THE MOTHER. The idea of being busy and helpful all through life may be a topic for thought. Elisha cared for the sick, the helpless, and the weak. Dwell upon his industry. The little people and the big people going from this bright world to a better and brighter one have a sweet welcome in that home where the gates are open and the loving Father waits for us. There, like Elisha, every little child finds friends and many to love.

"They pass o'er rugged mountains,
But they climb them with a song.

And we may join the pilgrim band
That journeys toward the light;

For the golden gate of that happy land
Stands open day and night."

—*Junior Hymnal*, page 61.

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LESSON XI. (September 11.)

SINFUL INDULGENCE. Amos 6. 1-8.

GOLDEN TEXT. "They also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way." Isa. 28. 7.

Primary Notes.



Joe and Julia were studying their Sunday school lesson together. Suddenly Joe, who was bending over his large-print Bible, grew very red in the face. "What is it, Joe?" asked Julia. "Why, it's this verse; I never saw it before: 'Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink.'" "Well, what of it?" asked Julia. "Nothing, only I was thinking how I coaxed Sammy Bell to drink a glass of cider, and he said he had signed the pledge. But I told him that he couldn't break his pledge by drinking cider! Just now when I saw that verse I thought about Sammy, and it made me feel bad. I wish I hadn't coaxed him!" If you want to feel good in your heart, find out what God says, and do it!

The foolish people. After Elisha died the people of Israel became very wicked. God had given them great riches, but they did not try to help other people with their plenty. They tried to see how much pleasure they could get for themselves. They drank wine and strong drink, they made great feasts, they wore beautiful clothes and ate rich food, and thought nothing about the poor and suffering. Perhaps they thought they were God's chosen people, and so they could do as they pleased—God would not punish them! Suppose a naughty child should say, "My mother loves me, and so I can do just as I please." It would be a bad mother who did not punish such a foolish child: do you not think so?

The wise prophet. There was a good man named Amos who lived on a farm near Bethlehem. He was one of the prophets whom the Lord had called to speak his words to the people. God told him one day to go to Bethel, where the people of Israel went to worship, and to tell them to turn from their wicked ways. Maybe you wonder that they cared to go to worship God when they were so wicked. They believed in God with their heads, but not with their hearts, and they went to Bethel as we sometimes go to church, with hearts far from God.

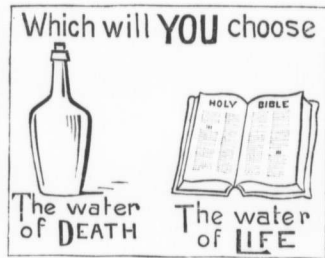
Do you ever wonder why God does not send prophets now to tell us what to do? You know we have the Holy Bible, but he does send good people to show us the right way. Have you a good minister? He is your prophet. Have you

a faithful Sunday school teacher? That is another prophet, and surely your Christian father and mother, who tell you what is the best way to live, are God's own teachers sent to you.

Amos went to Bethel and told the people what the Lord told him to say to them. Very likely they were not pleased to be told that God would punish them for the selfish, wicked lives they were leading. He told them that they would be taken away captive, and it came to pass as he said. You will learn about it in next Sunday's lesson.

A great enemy. What was it that made the people of Israel so willing to put self before God? They had fallen into evil habits. They did many bad things, but the one, perhaps, from which most of their evil deeds sprung was the habit of using strong drink. God had told them many times not to take it. He had said that it was like a serpent—that it would sting and poison them; but they liked to taste it, and so they kept on, not thinking but they could stop when they pleased. The habit of pleasing self is one that grows very fast. [The old illustration of the threads is a good one to use here. With fine thread tie some child's hands together and let him break the bands. He will do it quickly, and laugh to find it so easy. Wind the same fine thread around two or three times, and he will break it again. Wind it a good many times, and then he will not be able to break it. This simple illustration of the power of habit to bind is one that always produces a strong impression.] You would not think the little thread could make you a captive, would you? It is the many little threads together that do it, and just so the many little acts of self-indulgence will become a strong cord to bind you fast.

[Show the blackboard with only the objects drawn. Talk a little about alcohol, its evil ef-



fects, etc., and print "Water of death" on it. Then show the Bible and let the children help tell

what it is, after which print "Water of Life" on it. "Which will you choose?" may be strongly impressed from the board).

Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. How to Treat God's Temples. 2 Cor. 6. 16-18.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Ye are the temple of the living God," 2 Cor. 6. 16.

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. New Testament, Matt. 18. 1-6; Old Testament, Prov. 20. 1-13; 23. 20-35.

ATTENTION STORY.

There was once a man who lived in a beautiful house which had been given him to use and enjoy as if it were his own until the kind owner came back. Do you not think he would be very careful and try to keep the house clean and sweet? But he did not. He brought unclean and evil things into the beautiful house, and he treated it so badly that when the owner came to look at it he had to drive the foolish man away! Was he not silly? He might have lived there all his life and been very happy and useful if only he had done the things which he knew very well he ought to do. The lesson to-day shows how wrong and foolish it is to abuse the beautiful houses God has given us to live in—our bodies—and to what such sin and folly will lead. Amos was one of the Lord's prophets, and God used to tell him what to say to the people of Israel. The Israelites thought they were the people whom God had chosen to be his people, and that it made no difference if they did not live good lives. What a sad mistake that was! They forgot the Bible verse, "Thou God seest me." One of the ways in which they did wrong was in using wine and strong drink. A great many people sin in this way now. If we live in houses which the good God has given us—God even calls them his temples—we should be glad to learn what the evil things are which he tells us not to even let come into our house!

OUTLINE.

In the Sunday talk dwell especially upon the temple thought. God himself has told us in his book that we are his temples. What a clean, sweet place a temple should be! How dreadful a thing to bring into it anything evil! Once some robbers broke into a church, and there in the nighttime they drank whisky and gambled. All good people were shocked when they heard of it. They could never have done such a wicked thing if they had not first made vile the houses which God had given them for their own!

God sent word to his people by Amos of the sorrow that would be sure to come through the use of strong drink. He sent word, too, by other good men. God cares a great deal about these bodies which he has made, and he wants his children to know how to care for them. Amos says that the people who do not obey God, but who drink wine in bowls, and just live to please them-

selves, will be made captives. Yes, Satan will get his chains fastened on them so tightly that they will not be able to get away from him! He said that will be, for Satan is a very hard master!

NATURE WORK. Show some barley, and tell that this is a good grain which God made to give strength to his creatures. But men have found that they can use it to make strong drink. They mash it up and let it decay, and the evil spirit (El Gohol) comes into it, and then people think it is good to drink! This evil spirit, which we call Alcohol, comes into the good apples [show an apple] when they are ground fine and left to decay. It is so with the delicious grapes [show a bunch], from which men make wine. God gave us all these good things to do us good, and not harm, and they never harm anyone until they are first spoiled.

A lasting impression may be made upon little minds and hearts by two or three simple experiments. To show the effect of the alcohol [which is in all kinds of strong drink to some extent] upon the brain, pour a little alcohol into a saucer and break an egg into it. The children will wonder to see how quickly the albumen of the egg hardens. Tell them that the brain—the part which thinks in our bodies—is so much like albumen that the effect of alcohol upon it is to harden it. No wonder that a drunkard grows more and more stupid all the time! Pour a little alcohol upon a delicate flower, and let the children see how suddenly it is wilted and spoiled. Burn a little of the spirit in a spoon, and ask the children if they would not be afraid to put such fiery stuff into their stomachs.

God knows what is good for these bodies which he has made, and when he tells us how bad strong drink is how quickly we should turn away from it!

LESSON XII. (September 18).

CAPTIVITY OF THE TEN TRIBES. 2 Kings 17. 9-18.

GOLDEN TEXT. "If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." 1 Chron. 28. 9.

Primary Notes.



[Show a paper chain. Tell a little about the making of chains, and say that children can make chains to bind themselves with. Illustrate in some such way as this: Arthur did not like to go to school

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afternoon to go fishing with a naughty boy who ought to have been in school. He knew he had done wrong, and that he ought to confess it at home, but instead he talked about the school as if he had been there. Arthur was helping Satan that day to make a chain to bind himself with! He helped that day to make two links—Disobedience and Deceit. Another day a boy knocked Arthur's hat off in play. It made Arthur angry, and he called the boy hard names and tried to harm him in every way he could. That day he helped to make a link which we call Hate. If Arthur does not let Jesus break the chain which he is helping Satan make, it will some day be so big and strong that Satan can lead him away into captivity by it!]

Review. How many lessons have we had this quarter? Yes, this is No. 12. The first lesson was about the divided—what? Who was the first king of Israel after the kingdom was divided? [Make a long line, at one end of which print "Jeroboam," and at the other "Hoshea." Above the line print "Israel—245 years." Explain that during all these years Israel was going away from God, and that now the time had come when they had to go away into captivity for their sin. Recall the warning in the previous lesson by the prophet Amos, and tell that God had sent many warnings to them during all these long years, but that the people did not mind what the prophets said, just as we sometimes pay no attention to what our parents and teachers say.]

The downward path. Which is easier, to go down hill or up hill? To go down hill, you say. That is what the people of Israel found.

They were like children running down a long hill, who would not stop, even though they knew that there was a steep cliff at the foot of the hill, and that they might go over it and be killed. They enjoyed running down the hill, and so they kept on, and did not listen to the prophets who told them of the danger which lay just ahead.

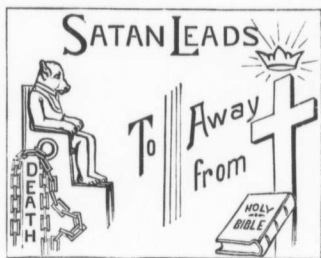
Captivity. What lay at the end of their downward path? The heathen king of Assyria came with a great army, carried them away to a strange land and made slaves of them! To be sure they tried to fight the heathen king, but they could not conquer him, for God did not fight with them. He could not save them from the evil effects of their sin, for that would not have been right. So the chains which they had been making for themselves with the help of Satan were put on them, and they were taken away into captivity!

The lesson for us. The same evil spirit is alive to-day, and wants to get all the children to help him make chains to bind themselves with. [Show the blackboard.] Just as the people of

Israel did not care to hear what the prophets had to tell them, so some children do not want to hear what God has to tell them in his holy word. They do not want to go to Sunday school, or if they do go, they do not listen to teacher, but look around and play. They do not want to bother to learn the Golden Text or even the little Tiny Text. They cry if mamma wants them to go to church, and say it lasts so long, and they can't understand what the minister says. Satan is leading them away from the Bible, which is God's word to us.

It is in the Bible that we read about the cross which Jesus bore for us, and learn that if we want to live with him in heaven some day, we must bear the cross with him here. That means that we must give up our own way when it is not his way, and learn to do the things which he says. Satan wants to lead us away from the Bible, from the cross, and from the crown of life which is given to all who follow Jesus.

To what will Satan lead us? To choose the things we like. The Israelites liked to worship idols. The thing we put before God is our idol. He will lead to captivity, and at last to death! Who wants to serve Satan?



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Result of Sin. 2 Kings 17. 9-18.

GOLDEN TEXT. "If thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever." 1 Chron. 28. 9.

ATTENTION STORY.

Do you remember the farmer-prophet, who was sent to Bethel to talk to the people of Israel? They had gone there to worship the golden calves which they had made. Was it right to worship these images? No, it was very wrong. Who can say the commandment about worshipping images? When God gives a command he wants us to obey it. But the people of Israel had forgotten to worship the only true God, and thought it might help them to worship these images! These foolish people had been doing wrong for a very long time now, and because they had not

been punished they thought God did not care if they did do wrong! Perhaps they thought they were his children, and he would not let trouble come to them. They forgot that God's promises of health and blessing are made to his loving and obedient children. The naughty children cannot expect to have all the good things that are given to be good children. How sad you would feel if you had to go away from your dear home with strangers, not knowing if you could ever come back again! And how much worse it would be if you knew that you were sent away because you had been such a bad child! This was what came to the people of Israel. They had been bad children of the heavenly Father so long that he could not bear with their sin any longer. So he let their enemies carry them off to be slaves in a strange land far away. Do you not think it made God sorry to have to do this? To be sure it did, for God loves his children too well to be glad to see them suffer.

OUTLINE.

Dwell especially upon the thought of God's love for his children, even the naughty ones. Tell the true story of a little girl who told her brother that if he did a certain naughty thing, his father would not love him. The father in the next room heard her, and calling her to him, he told her that she must never say that again. He said that he *must* love his children because they were his children and he was their father. He said that when they were naughty he loved them with a love that hurt, and when they were good he loved them with a love that made him happy. Then he said that this is the way God loves his children.

Associate with this lesson the thought of the beautiful land of Canaan, with its green trees, its lofty hills, its singing streams, and noisy waterfalls. God made all the beauty in the whole world. When we see the lovely clouds, or the smiling sunshine, when we smell a sweet flower, or hear a charming bird song, do our minds and hearts go out to God, who gave them all to make us glad? How sad and strange that the people of Israel, who lived in a land of such light and beauty, could forget that God gave it all to them, and make idols to worship, and sometimes worship the stars in the sky! We think we should not do anything so foolish and wicked, but do we ever put our play, our pretty clothes, or good things to eat in the place of God? Think about it very soberly, and if you find that there are things which make you forget God, as the people of Israel did, ask him to forgive you and to help you to remember him every day and all the time.

For work at home the child may be shown how to cut a paper chain, and to print on the large links of the chain some of the things which led the people of Israel away into captivity. What does a chain remind you of? Yes, of a

prison. Did you ever think that you can help to make the chain which will bind you in your prison-house? Jesus does not want you to do that, and he is ready and willing to help you build a beautiful house of life, instead of making an ugly chain to bind you down! But how can he help you? He will show you! Once a little boy was very cross and unhappy. He felt naughty, and acted just as he felt. All the time he knew he was doing wrong. He went out of the house and looked up at the beautiful sky, and thought how good of God to let him live and have good friends and a beautiful world to be in. Then he looked up and just said, "Lord, help me!"—and at once a sweet, kind feeling came into his heart, and he knew that God heard his prayer. Do you ask God to help you?

LESSON XIII. (September 25.)

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5, 16.

Primary Notes.

God is the great Light from whom comes all the light that cheers and blesses the world in which we live. It is God who has told us to let our light shine, and all through the last quarter we have been learning lessons about different lights, and how they shone or went out in darkness. God has been shining all the time upon all the people of whom we have learned, and if some of them have let their light go out, it is because they have not looked to God, the great Light, to get their little candle lighted.

1. [A paper crown, torn into two parts, may recall the first lesson. Recall as much of the detail of the lesson from the children as seems best, but by no means allow the detail to crowd out the spiritual truth. Ask if children think Rehoboam's "light" was the light of God, or the light of self, which is "darkness!"]

2. [A picture of a bird and a little bundle of sticks will suggest the next lesson.] It was a dark time for Elijah. Why? But did he hide his light or put it out because all seemed dark? [Show that the time when the light is most needed is in a time of darkness.]

3. Perhaps some one says, "I can't let the other children know that I am trying to be a Christian. They would laugh at me." Elijah did not feel so! When the laughing, jeering people were all together was the very time he took to show them that his God was alive! How did he do it?

4. But even a bright light gets dim sometimes.

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11. Of our tem farmer, l him. So ful, and ance war 12. Of rael? H

Elijah's did at one time, and the story is told here so that no one may ever feel that God's love and care for his children cease when they are tired and discouraged. Has an angel ever come to feed and comfort you when you felt badly? But you did not know it was an angel, because it came in the form of your mother or your father, perhaps!

5. [Show a bunch of grapes, and let some child tell the story of poor, selfish Ahab! Where was his light? He had never let it be lighted in his dark heart! Or if it was lighted there, he put it out by his selfishness. This lesson ought to make every child afraid to be selfish. Be sure that nothing will put out the light of love so soon as selfishness!]

6. A real light of God shines on other people, and often kindles a light in them. [Tell how Elijah's light was shining on a great many people, and how sad they felt when the time came for him to go away from them. Upon whom did his mantle fall? What did this mean? That his light would shine where his master's had been shining.]

7. [Recall the little room prepared for the prophet in the house of a good woman.] Why did she like to have him in her house? We always like to be where a pleasant light is shining. When trouble came, what did the good woman do? Why was Elisha able to bring her boy to life? He let God's light be in him.

8. This is the story of a little girl who let her light shine in a very dark place. Who was she? Where did she come from? Why was she in this dark place? Can you think of any place you could ever be in where it would be so hard to stand up for Jesus as the place this little girl was in?

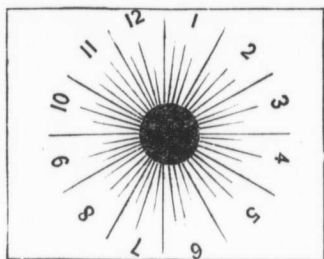
9. The prophet was not afraid of his enemies because he could see God's angels all about him. Why was the servant afraid? Because he could not see! Who can open our eyes to see how our Father cares for us? Elisha prayed to God to open his servant's eyes, and he did. Have we asked God to open our eyes?

10. [Make a picture of an arrow, and thus recall the last work Elisha was able to do for his people.] This lesson teaches not to be afraid to fight our enemies, and that God will drive the arrow to the mark if we send it in his name.

11. Of what does a bottle remind us? Yes, of our temperance lesson. Amos was a plain farmer, but God called him to give messages for him. So he calls every child of his who is faithful, and so he calls you to help in the temperance war.

12. Of what did Amos warn the people of Israel? He was not the only one sent by the Lord

to warn the people of what would follow sin! Now the punishment has come! Let us listen to the word of God while there is time to escape!



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. A Review Lesson.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Let your light....shine before men." Matt. 5. 16.

ATTENTION STORY.

[Call some child to come and make as many figures on the blackboard as there have been lessons in the quarter. Let the children count "one, two, three, four," as the figures are made, and leave it with them to stop the child when enough have been made.] Have you thought that each one of those figures stands for a story told us by God himself? Have we listened to all of them and tried to remember them? If we have, we can help to make this Review Lesson very interesting and helpful.

[Some simple symbols will help to recall the lessons to the memory. For instance, a crown cut from paper may call back the first lesson of the quarter.] Of what does a crown remind you? Yes, of a king. Can there be a king without a kingdom? There was trouble in the kingdom of Israel and it was—what? [Tear the crown into two parts.] Yes, divided. One part was called Israel and the other part Judah. What divided this kingdom? Yes, sin. Does the same thing divide hearts now?

We will print here the name of a good man, of whom we have learned several wonderful stories. Mary may tell the story of Elijah and the ravens. Do you think God sometimes feeds people now? Who can tell the story of the widow and her little boy who took care of Elijah for a while? Both these stories are in Lesson II, and they teach the same lesson—that God can use what he will to feed his children.

There is a wonderful story about Elijah on Carmel, and the way he showed the people that God is really alive, and sees and hears us. Who can tell it? Who would believe that such a brave, good man as Elijah would ever become sad and discouraged? But he did, and God pitied him, and sent an angel to feed and comfort him. When you are tired and hungry perhaps the Lord sends your mamma in place of an

angel to comfort you. Have you not often been fed and warmed and comforted when you felt sick and sorry?

Does this bunch of grapes remind you of one of the lessons? Who was the king that wanted a vineyard which belonged to another man? What do you think of such a selfish heart as that?

Freddie may tell how the good prophet went to heaven when God sent for him. Who picked up the mantle that fell from him as he went away?

Was the new prophet, Elisha, as good and as great as Elijah? The first story we learn about him shows what a kind heart he had. What little boy became sick in the field one day, and what did the prophet do to comfort the mother when the child died? In what way had the mother of the boy showed kindness to the prophet? God teaches here how wise it is to be kind.

Who would think that a little slave girl could be used to help a great captain! God gave the little maid of Israel this work to do, and she was glad and willing to do what she could. God never asks a child to do work which is too hard for it to do. If you have a willing heart, he will teach you.

Who was taken to heaven by a chariot and horses of fire? We have another lesson in which we see fiery chariots. God showed them to Elisha, and he even let his servant, who was afraid, see them. God pities the children who are timid, and if they will look to him, he will let them see some beautiful sign of his love and power.

Of what does this arrow remind you? Who can tell how Elisha helped the king of Israel even when he was dying? If we have faith, we may use the arrows of God's truth, and be sure that he will send them to the right place. How many of you know where to find these arrows?

One of the lessons told what loving self would do for us. It is loving self that makes all the drunkards and gluttons in the world. It is loving self that makes all the cross and unhappy people. How can this trouble be cured? Just in one way—by loving God!

The last lesson is a sad one. It tells what must happen to all the people in the world who will not obey God. They become captives of Satan. But there is a way to get away from him, and only one way—it is to run to Christ! Have you? Will you?

Whisper Songs for September.

TENTH LESSON.

When the evil and the snare
Gather round thy heart and home,
Like an arrow through the air
God's deliverance will come.

ELEVENTH LESSON.

When the tempter to thy soul
Offers sin, thou needst not fear;
Turn thee from the poisoned bowl,
God's deliverance is near.

TWELFTH LESSON.

If thy feet should wander wide
From thy heavenly Father's home,
Look to Jesus crucified,
And deliverance will come.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Third Quarter.

DOXOLOGY.

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!"

Teacher. Praise ye the Lord.

Class. Praise God in his sanctuary.

T. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

C. Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

SINGING. "Little children, praise the Lord."

Teacher. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him.

Class. To all that call upon him in truth.

CONCERT RECITATION.

"Lord, we come before thee now,
At thy feet we humbly bow;
O do not our suit disdain;
Shall we seek thee, Lord, in vain?"

[PRAYER by teacher, closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert.]

Teacher. Why should we give to the Lord?

Class. (In concert.)

"We give thee but thine own,
Whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is thine alone,
A trust, O Lord, from thee."

T. Blessed is he that considereth the poor.

C. The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.

Offerings received, followed by consecration prayer.

BIRTHDAY OFFERING.

SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.

REST EXERCISE.

I will raise my right hand,
Upon both feet I will stand;
I will turn quite around
Without making a sound,
Then raise left hand—so,
And twinkle fingers slow;
Both hands out I hold,
Then arms I will fold,
And quietly hear
What says teacher dear.

LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

Last words with the children, distribution of papers, etc.

CLOSING CONCERT PRAYER.

"Saviour, who thy flock art feeding
With the shepherd's kindest care,
All the feeble gently leading,
While the lambs thy bosom share;
Now these little ones receiving,
Fold them in thy gracious arm;
There we know, thy word believing,
Only there, secure from harm."

The Children.

All day, about the house, from floor to floor,
 We heard the patter of their restless feet,
 The clatter of their toys, as o'er and o'er
 They mimicked life in pastime quaint and sweet,
 But when the summer day drew on to night,
 Ere the spent sun couched, golden, in the west,
 Still clasping precious dolls and horses tight,
 With pretty, drowsy smiles, they sank to rest.
 Here, dreaming of that heaven they late forsook,—
 With emptied hands, they lie in poppled calm.
 So, Father, may our marble faces look
 When "sleep that sleep may rest in" brings in balm,
 And from our listless hands we drop away
 The cherished playthings of life's little day.

While It Is Yet Day.

BY IDA REED SMITH.

In a certain church, which shall be nameless,—it is a real church, though, and the incident I am about to relate actually happened,—there is a dear old saint, who, by his love for the services of God's house, and his regularity in attending them, preaches every week a sermon as effective as any his pastor delivers. Sunday morning, and Sunday evening as well, he is in his place in one of the front pews. He is a member of the Bible class, whose presence and interest the teacher can depend on. He is an honoured and cherished member of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, and his serene presence and gentle voice are a benediction to the eager, restless young lives he touches there.

The faithful ones at the mid-week prayer-meeting listen with respectful and loving attention to the testimony of one who, for nearly seventy years, has proved true God's gracious promises.

He recognizes no peculiarities of weather. Clear or stormy, cold or warm, wet or dry, it is the Lord's sending, but not meant to keep him from his house. His faithfulness is a beautiful object lesson to all who know him, strengthening with its own strength the weaker devotion of his brethren.

Not long ago he was eighty-three years old, and the superintendent of the Sunday-school, a wise and kindly man, who believes in the doctrine of showing appreciation while it is still of worth to its object, planned a little surprise in his honour. The school was opened in the usual way, but, when the little people of the primary department started to march to their room, they halted by the way in front of the Bible class. Then, as the superintendent gave the signal for the school to rise, a tiny boy, carrying a big ribbon-tied bunch of roses, stepped forward, and, in a few simple, childish words, told the white-haired man how glad the children were that he had been so long with them and that they hoped he would be with them for many years to come. As the child handed him the lovely flowers, a hundred snowy handkerchiefs fluttered the beautiful "Chautauqua salute," while tears of tender feeling sparkled like jewels in the eyes of the older "children," pastor, and people, who felt that they could say "Amen and amen" to every word of the loving little speech.

"I didn't know they loved me so much," said the gentle old man afterwards; "but I'm very glad,—very glad!"

Ah, the "very-gladness" of the aged! What a precious, sacred thing it is! But do we do all in our power to bring it to their hearts? We know "the night cometh," when all our tributes of affection will be powerless to reach those gone beyond it into the eternal morning. So let the love-light shine brightly on this side of the shadows. Let us show our tenderness "while it is yet day."—S. S. Times.

The Home Department report of the Tabernacle Presbyterian Sunday-school, Indianapolis, for the quarter ending December 31, 1897, showed that 97 out of 181 members studied every lesson in the quarter. The contribution was \$30.25 for the quarter, and 1,645 lessons were studied. The department now has 208 members.

God Be With You Till We Meet Again.

W. G. TOMER.

1. God be with you till we meet a - gain; By his counsels guide, uphold you,
2. God be with you till we meet a - gain; 'Neath his wings se - cure-ly hide you,

With his sheep se - cure-ly fold you; God be with you till we meet a - gain.
Dai - ly man - na still di - vide you; God be with you till we meet a - gain.

CHORUS.

Till we meet, . . . till we meet, Till we meet at Je - sus' feet;
Till we meet, till we meet again, Till we meet;

Till we meet, . . . till we meet, God be with you till we meet a - gain.
Till we meet, till we meet a - gain.

3 God be with you till we meet again;
When life's perils thick confound you,
Put his arms unfailling round you;
God be with you till we meet again.

4 God be with you till we meet again;
Keep love's banner floating o'er you,
Smite death's threatening wave before you;
God be with you till we meet again.

J. E. Rankin.

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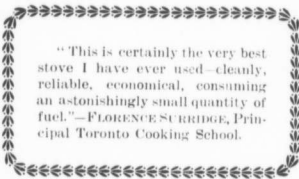
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