

CANAAN
 as expanded from time of
JOSHUA
 -BY-
DAVID'S CONQUESTS.

Scale of Miles

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 Longitude East 35 from Greenwich 37

THE VISIT TO THE KING.

I came from very far away to see
The king of Salem; for I had been told
Of glory and of wisdom manifold
And condescension infinite and free.
How could I rest when I had heard his fame
In that dark lonely land of death from whence I came.

I came (but not like Sheba's Queen) alone!
No stately train, no costly gifts to bring:
No friend at court, save One, that One the king.
I had requests to spread before his throne,
And I had questions none could solve for me,
Of import deep, and full of awful mystery.

I came and communed with that mighty king,
And told him all my heart,—I cannot say
In mortal ear what communings were they,
But would'st thou know, go too, and meekly bring
All that is in thy heart, and thou shalt hear
His voice of love and power, his answers sweet and clear.

O, happy end of every weary quest!
He told me all I needed, graciously—
Enough for guidance and for victory
O'er doubts and fears, enough for quiet rest,—
And when some veiled response I could not read,
It was not hid from him—this was enough indeed.

His wisdom and his glories passed before
My wondering eyes in gradual revelation;
The house that he had built, its strong foundation,
Its living stones, and brightening more and more,
Fair glimpses of that palace far away,
Where all his loyal ones shall dwell with him for aye.

True the report that reached my far-off land
Of all his wisdom and transcendent fame;
Yet I believed not until I came—
Bowed to the dust, till raised by royal hand.
The half was never told by mortal word:
My king exceeded all the fame that I had heard.

O, happy are his servants! happy they
Who stand continually before his face,
Ready to do his will of wisest grace!
My king! there is such blessedness to-day!
For I, too, hear thy wisdom; line by line
Thy ever brightening words in holy radiance shine.

O, blessed be the Lord thy God, who set
Our king upon his throne! divine delight
In the Beloved, crowning thee with might,
Honor and majesty supreme; and yet
The strange and godlike secret opening thus—
The kingship of his Christ ordained through love to
us.

—F. R. Havergal.

The price of the TEACHERS' MONTHLY in future will be 50 cents per year. School orders, of four or more, 40 cents each. This increase of price has been rendered necessary by the additional twelve pages and the insertion of a colored map. It is now better worth fifty cents than hitherto thirty-five. We are determined that it shall be second to no teachers' help published. If sufficiently patronized, it will be still further enlarged and improved.

A brick, from the wall of Babylon, has been exhumed, which bears the inscription of one of its mighty kings, and in the centre of the inscription, is a foot print of a dog that once wandered about the crowded streets of that city. It is evident enough, that when the brick was lying in its plastic state, it was trodden upon by a vagrant cur. Time has obliterated the name of the king but the "sign pedal" of that dog is perfectly distinct. How important to guard the plastic nature of childhood from evil influences so that the name of the KING may never be obliterated.

Deep on thy soul before its powers
Are yet by vice enslaved
Be thy Creator's glorious name
And character engraved.

A gentleman in Philadelphia, who has a golden-haired little daughter three years of age, took her to church for the first time the other day. At home she causes much amusement by attempts in cunning baby fashion to do just as her father does. It was an Episcopal church, and she sat through the service and sermon with mature gravity and sedateness. It happened to be communion Sunday, and being a communicant, her father went with others toward the chancel, unconscious that his little daughter was following him. As he knelt and bowed his head, she took her place beside him, and bowed her head upon her tiny hands. Those who saw the sweet and touching sight, it is said, were very much affected by it. Why a spectacle of this kind, or of a child taking upon herself the vows of the church, should always cause a suffusion of the eyes, we do not know, unless the hearts of those who behold it

are touched by the beauty and appropriateness of the scene. There is in it a suggestion of that tender moment when the Saviour took the children in his arms, and said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me; and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."—*Selected.*

PRICELESS WORDS.

A TRUE SKETCH.

A Sunday School teacher once took under her care a class of seven little girls, and among them her own little sister. They were bright and interesting, and she loved to see their happy faces as they came so punctually every Sunday.

"What can I do for these little ones?" was the thought almost constantly present with her. They were not old enough to study very deeply into the meaning of the sacred words, but they could lay them away in memory's store-house; so she required each one to learn the verses of the lesson by heart, and repeat them to her, word for word. It pained her to hear a careless half-repeated verse from the Bible, and she tried to impress it upon their minds that they were speaking words which God had spoken to man, and they were not at liberty to alter his message in the least, and that they were learning the holy words not for that time alone but for all their lives.

So they repeated to her Sunday after Sunday the precious words of God's holy book, seven verses a week, three hundred and sixty-five in a year. If nothing else had been done in the class during the year, the time would have been well improved, but the teacher also carefully explained every passage which they could understand.

Years passed away, and the happy teacher saw the last of her seven pupils received into full communion with the church. All her dear ones were true Christians she had every reason to believe. At first she felt that her work was done, and perhaps it was her duty to take a different class, but reflection told her that the lambs of the flock now needed more careful leading than ever before. They had just entered upon the Christian life; how could she help them to "grow in grace" and "go on unto perfection?"

Here again her only hope was in her Bible; they must study it more and more, they must

love it and rely upon it. To increase their interest in the daily reading, she proposed that each one, in turn, should select some chapter and they would all, herself included, read it every night during the week. This would involve some research, as each would desire to select a chapter of particular interest, and by reading of the same one several times in succession it would not only become perfectly familiar, but exceedingly precious, and any quotation from it in the sermon or in an exhortation would catch the attention at once, and come home with peculiar force. When the teacher's turn came, she selected the 103rd Psalm, and as she read it at night she rejoiced to think that her girls were receiving into their hearts the same priceless words.

A few weeks later, the young sister lay dying far away from her home. While on a visit she had been stricken with disease, and now the light of her life was fast going out. Around her knelt in anguish her parents and the eldest sister who had been the Sunday school teacher. Suddenly the dying eyes light up, and the pale lips move. The sister bends over her to catch the words, "As far as the east is from the west"—she pauses, and her sister adds, "So far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

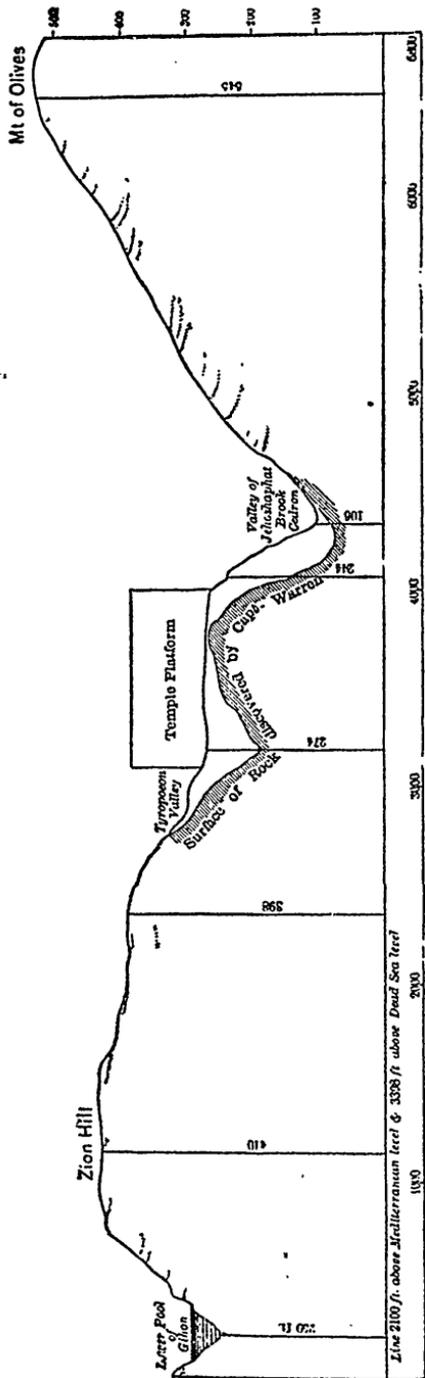
In a few moments she whispered again, "Like as a father pitieth his children"—and again her sister finished it for her, "So the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

Fainter still comes the whisper, "He remembereth that we are dust"—and soon the sweet spirit had fled.

Oh, holy words of consolation! Oh, faithful promises of our Father God!

Are you leading your children into the love of the truth, teachers? Oh, as this truth is precious to your own souls, strive to make it so to those under your care, and God will add his blessing.—*Selected.*

Primary teachers, lay aside your veils in Sunday school, for the little ones like to look right into your face and you want to look right into theirs.



Profile section (east and west) through Jerusalem to the highest point of the Mount of Olives, showing the comparative elevations of Zion, Moriah, and the Temple Platform and the Mt. of Olives; and the rock bed of the brook Kedron. The breadthwise distances are indicated, in feet, on the bottom line.

The Temple was built upon the summit of Mount Moriah, a spot already consecrated by the Trial of Abraham's Faith, and the sacrifice offered by David on the threshing-floor of Araunah. The rugged hill-top was levelled into a series of terraces, the peak being reserved as a foundation for the great altar of burnt offering. The surrounding courts occupied the receding levels from this central and most sacred spot. The precipitous sides of the rocky hill were faced with masonry, some of the stones of which were of enormous size, and are still in their original positions, bearing upon them the quarry marks of the Phœnician stonecutters. At the southeast corner this outer retaining wall rose from the Valley of Kedron to the dizzy height of 300 feet. Within these walls, and supported by massive arches, the solid floor of the temple court was laid, palaces and colonnades were erected and trees and shrubs planted. The diagram in the margin (taken from *Butler's Bible Work*) exhibits the comparative heights of Mounts Zion, Moriah and Olivet. The rock foundation of the outer wall of the temple platform is shewn, the line above it represents the present surface. Although no streamlet now meanders between Moriah and Olivet the true Kedron has been found still flowing over its ancient pebbles deep below the rubbish which now forms the surface of the ground. The Temple built by Solomon in B. C. 1005 was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in B. C. 588. The second temple was built under the superintendence of Zerubbabel in B. C. 516. This building, having become greatly dilapidated, was almost wholly rebuilt by Herod the Great, and was finally destroyed by Titus in A. D. 70.

"The sunbeam of the orient day,
Saw nought on earth more bright and fair
But desolation swept away
And left no form of glory there.

But God, who reared that chiselled stone,
Now builds upon a higher plan,
And rears the columns of his throne,
His temple in the heart of man."

Notes on the Lessons.

LESSON IX—November 29th, 1896.

The Fame of Solomon. I KINGS 10: 1-10.

(Commit to memory verses 6-8).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here." Matt. 12: 42.

PROVE THAT—God gives liberally. Jas. 1: 5.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 67, 68, 69.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 157, 29, 21, 164.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The fame of Solomon. I Kings 10: 1-13. *Tuesday.* Excelling in greatness. I Kings 10: 14-23. *Wednesday.* World-wide renown. I Kings 10: 24-29. *Thursday.* Unsatisfying. Eccl. 2: 1-11. *Friday.* Supremacy of God. Ps. 89: 1-8. *Saturday.* A greater than Solomon. Matt. 12: 38-42. *Sabbath.* The glory of Christ. Rev. 1: 9-18. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. We read in Lesson III. that "that there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." Our lesson gives an account of one of these royal seekers after wisdom. Parallel passage 2 Chr. 9: 1-12. Time, B. C. 992.

LESSON PLAN. What the Queen, I. Heard. vs. 1-3. II. Saw. vs. 4, 5. III. Said. vs. 6-9. IV. Gave. vs. 10.

1. And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon—Sheba embraced the greater part of Arabia Felix, or Yemen, near the mouth of the Red Sea. It's people were Semitic (1 Chr. 1: 17, 22). It is to be distinguished from Seba (Ps. 72: 10) an Ethiopian kingdom named from a grandson of Ham (Gen. 10: 7; 1 Chr. 1: 9). A confusion of these two names has led to the Abyssinian tradition that the queen referred to was the legendary *Maqueda*, sovereign of that country and ancestress of its kings down to the present Menelek who is proving such a valiant defender of his realm against the Italians. Moreover, the presents brought were Arabian, not African, products. The spices, &c. of Sheba are referred to in Jer. 6: 20; Ezek. 27: 22; Isa. 60: 6; Ps. 72: 15. In Matt. 12: 40 Sheba is spoken of as being in "the uttermost parts of the earth" which would well describe the extreme south of Arabia (See also Joel 3: 8). Its people are identified with the Sabaeans (Job. 1: 15). Arabian tradition, preserved in the Koran names this princess, *Balkis*. By many Ophir, from which Solomon obtained gold, is believed to have been a port of this country (Compare Ps. 72: 15; Isa. 60: 6) and, if so, we can easily understand how his fame would reach the ears of this exceedingly large minded woman. Concerning the name of the Lord—Lit. "in relation to" or "in connection with the name of Jehovah." Various meanings are attached to this obscure phrase. "The fame that Solomon had acquired through the fact that the Lord had so glorified himself in him." (Keil). "His religious fame, as distinct from his literary, military, or political fame." (Rawlinson). "The house built to Jehovah's name was the first and principal reason of Solomon's fame." (Zoeccker). But her object in coming was not to see the temple but to test Solomon's wisdom, we would, therefore, conclude that Solomon had taken care to let the whole world know that all his riches, and power, his magnificence and his wisdom, were gifts to him from the Lord. He gave God the glory in everything, so that the queen of Sheba desired to see and hear a man so highly favored. She came to prove him with hard questions—To test his wisdom and cleverness with the enigmas common, now as then, in eastern lands. We have an example of one of these in Samson's riddle (Judges 14: 12-14), and Prov. 30: 15-31 seems to contain answers to such questions. 2. And

she came to Jerusalem with a very great train—Heb. “with a very heavy force, or host.” This some understand to mean a large military escort. No doubt she had a sufficient number of soldiers with her for protection, but the principal part of her retinue would be the camels bearing provisions and presents and the necessary attendants upon the queen when travelling thus in state. The distance was 1500 miles across a desert and the journey would require about three months at the rate travelled by camels. The royal party must have been exposed to much hardship and danger. With camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones—The spices of Arabia have always been famous. The mariners at sea were said to be able to smell the perfume-laden air of Yemen. Milton speaks of

Sabaean odors from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest.

The chief of these spices were “myrrh, opobalsam, frankincense, gum tragacanth and ladanum.” (This last is not *laudnum*, which is a preparation from the poppy, but the resinous exudation of a fragrant shrub called *lada*). Gold is not found in Arabia now, but ancient writers state that it was at one time (Ps. 72: 15). Strabo relates that the Sabaeans were enormously wealthy, and used gold and silver in a most lavish manner in their furniture, their utensils, and even on the walls, doors, and roofs of their houses. (Rawlinson). Amongst precious stones, the onyx, emerald and turquoise are still found in Arabia. In former times the variety was much greater. (Hammond). In making an ordinary visit, amongst orientals, it was, and is, customary to bring a present, the value of which would accord with the wealth and dignity of the host and his guest. And when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart—Doubtless they had frequent interviews, and besides exchanging riddles, they talked about the great questions of religion and statesmanship. “She knew that she could not every day meet with a Solomon, and, therefore, she makes her best use of so learned a master; now she empties her heart of all her doubts, and fills it with instruction.” (Bp. Hall). 3. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not anything hid from the king, which he told her not—We cannot suppose

that these “questions” were all, or mainly, curious puzzles invented only to display cleverness and tax mental ingenuity. Such royal trifling was scarcely worth such a journey, or an enshrinement in sacred literature. The numerous legends which profess to preserve some of the tests to which she put the wisdom of Solomon are no more likely to be true than the stories regarding the infancy of Jesus. The graver topics of religion, philosophy and statesmanship doubtless furnished the themes of their discourse. 4. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon’s wisdom, and the house that he had built—Solomon’s wisdom was displayed in a more practical manner than in solving riddles. There were evidences of his administrative ability on every hand. His palace particularly excited the queen’s admiration. It had occupied thirteen years in building and was probably situated at the south-east corner of the modern Haram area. It was doubtless the most splendid royal residence then in the world. Josephus says that she was specially astonished at the house of the forest of Lebanon. 5. And the meat of his table—Its quantity, variety, &c. (ch. 4: 22, 23). All the table service was of gold (verse 21). And the sitting of his servants—Here “servants” signifies the officers and distinguished persons who were privileged to sit at the king’s table, and were arranged according to rank, at the royal banquets. (Lumby). And the attendance of his ministers—Marg. “standing.” This refers to those who stood to serve the guests (Acts 13: 5). (Lumby). And their apparel—“There were numerous guests sitting, handsomely dressed in fringed robes, with armlets on their arms, attendants standing behind them, and magnificent drinking cups, evidently of costly metal, in the hands of the guests, which were filled from a great wine bowl at one end of the chamber.” (Rawlinson). The rich and costly dresses of eastern courtiers and attendants is sometimes furnished by the king (Gen. 45: 22; 1 Sam. 18: 4; 2 Kings 5: 5; Dan. 5: 7; Esther 6: 8). And his cupbearers—Those who served wine to the king and his guests (Neh. 1: 11; Gen. 40: 21). And his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord there was no more spirit in her—R. V. marg. “and his burnt-offerings which he offered in the house of the Lord.” If we take the

latter translation the scale of Solomon's sacrifices astonished her. The first is, however, generally preferred. Solomon's "ascent" was a private viaduct across the Tyropaeon valley from Mt. Zion. **6.** And she said to the king, it was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom—This frank confession shews that the queen was a generous minded woman, without a spark of jealous envy in her breast. **7.** Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard—Usually things are represented to us, both by common fame and by our own imagination, much greater than we find them when we come to examine them; but here the truth exceeded both fame and fancy. **8.** Happy are thy men—Lit. "O the happinesses of thy men" (as in Psalm 1: 1; 2: 12 &c.) The plural suggests the number and variety of the advantages enjoyed by Solomon's servants. Happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom—It is clear that the queen of Sheba valued wisdom

above riches and rubies. **9.** Blessed be the Lord thy God—It is not likely that the queen became a convert to the true God, she does not say "my God," she makes no offering to the temple; and it was quite consistent with a heathen belief to acknowledge Jehovah as the God of Solomon and the source of all his prosperity, without feeling under any obligation to worship him too, far less to accept him as the only living and true God (ch. 5: 7; Ezra. 1: 3). Which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel—She praises God for raising up such a king. Because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice—She congratulates Israel on having a ruler like Solomon. The compliment to her royal entertainer is a very graceful one. **10.** And she gave the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold—Over three million dollars, some say six. Compare Hiram's gift (ch. 9: 14). And of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon—With an exchange of costly presents this famous visit comes to an end.

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

1. What commercial relations did Solomon have with the countries on the Red Sea? (1 Kings 9: 26-28; 10: 15). Why was Solomon thus exalted? (Ps. 91: 14; 1 Sam. 2: 30). What similar honor is in store for christians? (John 12: 26). What lesson did Christ draw from this visit? (Matt. 12: 42). How earnestly should we search for wisdom? (Prov. 2: 4, 5).
2. What example does the Queen of Sheba here set to Christians? (Mal. 3: 16; Eph. 5: 19; 1 Thess. 5: 11). What kind of questions are profitless? (2 Tim. 2: 23). When shall desire for knowledge be fully satisfied? (1 Cor. 13: 12).
3. With what subjects is the christian's wisdom concerned? (1 Cor. 2: 6, 7). How does he acquire it? (1 Cor. 2: 10). What is necessary to receiving it? (1 Cor. 2: 14, 15; Prov. 28: 8; John 7: 17; 1 John 2: 27).
- 4, 5. Where did Solomon get gold? (1 Kings 10: 11). What display of it did he make? (ch. 10: 16, 17). What became of these shields? (ch. 14: 26). Mention some other articles imported by Solomon. Of whose glory is that of Solomon a type? (Isa. 60: 3, 6, 9, 17). When will this be fulfilled? (Rev. 11: 15).
- 6, 7. In what respect will the christian's surprise be as great as that of the Queen of Sheba? (1 Cor. 2: 9). Is man's incredulity in regard to spiritual blessings as excusable as that of the Queen of Sheba? (John 3: 11; 1 John 1: 1; Rom. 10: 9; Heb. 3: 19).
8. Against what kind of speech are we warned? (Eph. 4: 25). What important consequence depends on our speech? (Matt. 12: 37). What seasoning should be applied to our speech? (Col. 4: 6). How should our wisdom shew itself? (Jas. 3: 13).
9. From whom do rulers derive their authority? (Prov. 8: 15; Dan. 2: 21; Rom. 13: 1). What obligations does this lay upon us? (Rom. 3: 1-7; Eccl. 8: 2).
10. What present should we bring to Jesus? (Prov. 23: 26). What does he give in return? (2 Tim. 4: 8; 1 Pet. 5: 4; Rev. 2: 10).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

I. WHAT THE QUEEN OF SHEBA HEARD.

The visit of the queen of Sheba to Solomon was an event of very great significance. Other potentates sent embassies to congratulate him and solicit alliances for their mutual political and commercial benefit, but this noble minded woman came in person to hear with her own ears the wisdom of this gifted king and learn from him the solution of the great problems which divine revelation alone can explain. These, we take it, were the "hard questions" with which she wished to "prove" Solomon, not clever enigmas and puzzles befitting the hours of recreation.

1. *The fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the Lord.* It speaks well for Solomon that wherever his wisdom and wealth were renowned, men coupled his gifts and prosperity with the blessing of God. Courtiers take their cue from the king, and had Solomon been of like boastful mind with Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 4: 30) he could easily have put himself and not God in the foreground. He gave God the glory due unto his name and all the world looked with reverence towards His temple (ch. 8: 41, 42). As Christians it is our duty and privilege to hold up Christ as the author of all our blessings and so to use our gifts and opportunities that "men seeing our good works may glorify," not us, but "our Father which is in heaven." *She came to prove him with hard questions.* Long journeys have been undertaken for less worthy objects. For gold or silver or diamonds; for articles of commerce; in pursuit of scientific or geographical knowledge; or in the mere spirit of adventure, men have braved dangers and endured hardships in barbarous and inhospitable countries. Yet, there is a better motive still. The wise men came from the distant east in order to lay their offerings at the feet of Jesus, and missionaries travel further than either they, or Sheba's queen, to tell the story of that birth to nations that sit in moral darkness. We do not need to take long and expensive journeys to have our questions answered. We can bring them all to Jesus and his Word, and learn more than Solomon could ever teach. We may commune with Him of all that is in our hearts and He will leave no perplexity unsolved, no sorrow un-comforted.

II. WHAT THE QUEEN OF SHEBA SAW.

Had she visited Jerusalem from mere motives

of curiosity she would doubtless have seen much to excite her admiration. Not even Egypt, or more ancient Assyria, could have rivalled the land of Israel in interesting evidences of progress. It was the most "modern" kingdom of the age. On one subject alone the queen's attention was concentrated,—the wonderful wisdom of the inspired monarch. This was shewn in:

4. *The house that he had built.* This was probably the royal palace at Jerusalem which occupied thirteen years in building. It stands for all Solomon's architectural wonders, his cool retreat at the foot of Mount Lebanon and his gardens at Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The temple itself is not mentioned but the palace was on the temple platform and the queen's admiration probably embraced the whole of the structures crowning the artificial area on the summit of Mt. Moriah.

5. *The meat of his table &c.* The arrangements of Solomon's household were on a scale of magnificence in keeping with the splendor of his palaces. Lavish abundance, enjoyed with dignity and decorum was characteristic of his banquets, in striking contrast with oriental customs as exhibited later at the court of Belshazzar. *His ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord.* "She could not indeed enter the courts of the temple, or examine its molten sea, and its carvings of palm, lotus and cherubim, for she was a heathen; but she saw the golden shields carried before him, as he went thither in state, and the mound across the valley, and the gilded sandal wood staircase by which he ascended to the house of the Lord." (Farrar). She observed with what gravity, and seriousness, and an air of devotion in his countenance, he appeared, when he went to the temple, to worship God, with as much humility there, as majesty at other times. She observed with what a generous bounty he brought his sacrifices, and with what a pious fervor he attended the offering of them. Never did she see so much goodness with so much greatness. (Com. Com). This was the combination which filled her with astonishment and admiration. Such a union is as beautiful to-day as when Solomon lived. Too often an accession of good fortune is followed by neglect of religious duties and conformity to the world, the Bible is less read, closer devotions are curtailed, the prayer meeting is

set aside, the ordinances of religion are patronized rather than thankfully and humbly observed, and active christian duties are on one pretext or another given up.

III. WHAT THE QUEEN OF SHEBA SAID. Her language shews that she was a generous, broad-minded woman.

7. *The half was not told me.* Rumor generally exaggerates but in this case language had failed to convey an adequate idea of the reality. Those who come to the "Greater than Solomon," will find in their own blessed experience far more than others were able to tell them, or their own hopes anticipate. The better we know Christ the more we shall find in him to admire. A young man who had been a leader of gaiety came to a Scripture reading at the persuasion of a friend. There he heard of the joy felt by those who believed in Christ, and the word of God went like an arrow to his heart. But stifling the rising conviction, he went from the meeting to a festive gathering, and was asked to sing. In the midst of the song the words vanished from his memory and in their stead a verse of a hymn that he had just heard. Hurriedly he left his friends and hastened homewards. In the cool night air his cry went up to God, and the answer came without delay. From that very night he rejoiced in God his Saviour, and consecrated himself to his service. He found such joy that he felt the half of the blessedness of trusting in Christ had not been told him. He said "I never knew happiness before. My former pleasure seems as nothing compared to the joy of knowing that the Saviour of sinners is my Saviour, and that he loves me."

8. *Happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee.* "It is a great thing to be in close companionship with a good and true man. Here is one of the blessings of a noble friendship. Here is one of the gains of a good home, of a good church, of a good school, of a good neighborhood. We are too apt to forget our indebtedness to our best companionships. They are among our choicest and most influential advantages. What would this world be to us without them." (Trumbull). Be careful of the company you keep. Associate only with those whose language and behaviour will instruct and refine.

9. *Blessed be the Lord thy God.* "The queen of Sheba had the right idea of the order

of things. She didn't say that it was a great blessing to the Lord to have so wise a man as Solomon for a servant. She did say that the Lord ought to be thanked for consenting to use such a man as Solomon. How common it is to think of a man who is prominent in the Lord's work, as somehow being a great help to the Lord's cause; and how common it is to hear the suggestion, with regard to some prominent reprobate, that it would be 'such a gain' to the Lord's cause if *that* man could be enlisted in its behalf. It is a great honor for any man to be used of God for a good work. Thanks, not congratulations, are to be given to the Lord for what is accomplished by, or through, such a man." (Trumbull).

IV. WHAT THE QUEEN OF SHEBA GAVE. Her presents were in keeping with her rank and her estimate of Solomon, and with his royal dignity. We can give nothing to Jesus that is worthy of him, or can come up to a true and adequate estimate of his worth. But he is graciously pleased with whatever we present to him along with a loving and loyal heart. In the old schools of philosophy it was usual for the pupils to bring a present to their teacher at the commencement of each term. On one of the occasions when the disciples of Socrates one by one were going up with their gifts, a poor youth hung back. But when all the others had presented their gifts, he flung himself at the feet of the sage, and cried, "O Socrates, I give thee myself." And this is the gift the Lord Jesus asks of you. Give him your heart—yourself. Calvin's seal had engraven on it a hand holding a burning heart, with the motto, "I give Thee all; I keep back nothing for myself."

ADDED POINTS.

1. Test the truth of a rumor before you repeat it.
2. Be ready to give a Bible answer for everything you believe or do.
3. It is worth while taking trouble to find the truth.
4. Jesus can tell us all we want to know about duty, heaven and God. Commune with him.
5. Do not envy those who are more fortunate than ourselves.

6. Do not be jealous of, but imitate and learn from those who are wiser and cleverer. given us a queen who far excels Solomon in piety and moral greatness, and rules over a larger and richer empire.
7. Because God loved our nation he has

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

The Golden Text gives the cue to our treatment of the lesson from the superintendent's desk. The facts of the narrative may be grouped under the three heads *Came to, Learned from, and Told about, Solomon.* Then as you apply the lesson to

THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

CAME TO
LEARNED FROM
TOLD ABOUT

} SOLOMON.

"I greater than Solomon is here."

One Greater than Solomon, rub out "THE QUEEN OF SHEBA," and substitute JESUS for Solomon. Then change successively the three points to *Come to, Learn from,* and *Tell about,* closing with the thought that he is here, and now asking the question, which you will complete

on the board by writing WILL YOU, where "The queen of Sheba" was written, and placing a note of interrogation after JESUS?

LESSON X—December 6th, 1896.

Solomon's Sin. I KINGS II : 4-13.

(Commit to memory verses 9, 10).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." I Cor. 10: 12.

PROVE THAT—Idolatry is forbidden. Lev. 26 : 1.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 70, 71, 72.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 11, 131, 120, 122.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Solomon's sin. I Kings 11: 4-13. *Tuesday.* Ahijah's prophecy. I King; 11: 29-38. *Wednesday.* Wise counsel forsaken. I Kings 12: 1-11. *Thursday.* The kingdom divided. I Kings 12: 12-20. *Friday.* Danger of evil companionship. Deut. 7: 1-11. *Saturday.* Resisting warning. Jer. 44: 1-11. *Sabbath.* Idols of the heart. Ezek. 1.: 1-8. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. The Bible does not pass over the faults of the good men whose lives it records. It tells of Noah's drunkenness, Moses' loss of temper, David's sin, and Solomon's lapse into idolatry. "The Old Testament histories are not written to tell Israel's glories, or even, we may say, to recount its history, but to tell God's dealings with Israel—a very different theme, and one which finds its material equally in the glories and in the miseries which he sent to follow its obedience and disobedience. When one so greatly favored did not stand we need to take heed to ourselves lest we too "depart from the living God." Time, B. C. 990-975. Solomon's fall is not mentioned in Chronicles.

LESSON PLAN. I. Solomon's Sin. vs. 4-8. II. Solomon's Sentence. vs. 9-13.

4. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father--

The warnings of Ex. 34: 16, and Deut. 7: 3, 4 had been unheeded and the predicted consequences followed (See also Deut. 17: 15-17; Neh. 13: 26). As he was but 60 at the time of his death, "old" is here a relative term,

and must mean "toward the close of his life" *i. e.* when he was about 50 or 55. (Hammond). He should then have been in his mental and spiritual prime. The expressions "his heart was not perfect," and "he went not fully" (verse 6) are inconsistent with the idea of absolute heathenism. Yet the facts point to something more serious than weak permission of the foreign worship of his wives. They "turned away *his heart*," his affections were to some extent enlisted in the false worship. The language of the verse indicates, not that Solomon forsook for himself the worship of Jehovah, but that he was less earnest about it, and allowed side by side with it the temples of heathen gods to be erected, and their worship to be something more than tolerated, even perhaps to be abundantly supported from his means. (Lumby). The distinction, so far as *sin* is concerned, between this and actual idolatry, is a very fine one. It is not implied, however, that Solomon ever discarded the worship of Jehovah. To the end of his reign he would seem to have offered his solemn sacrifices on the great altar thrice a year. But his heart was elsewhere and he was trying to serve two masters (Matt. 6: 24; Josh. 24: 15). (Hammond). David sinned grievously but he served God sincerely with all his heart (ch. 8: 61; 9: 4). Doubtless Solomon's large harem was the result of political alliances to a large extent. It was also in conformity with oriental ideas of regal establishments. But the plain-spoken inspired historian tells us that Solomon "clave unto these in love" (verse 2).

5. For Sol'o-mon went after Ash'toreth, the goddess of the Zi-do'ni-ans, and after Mil'com the abomination of the Am'mon-ites—Ashtoreth is the same as Astarte, Aphrodite or Venus. Her rites were exceedingly impure. She represented the female sex and her symbol was the evening star, or the crescent moon in some places. Why Ashtoreth is here named "goddess" while the other deities are called "abominations" may be due to the greater intercourse between Sidon and the Holy Land than existed with other countries. The Phoenician workmen at the temple had perhaps caused the Israelites to become more accustomed to the name and worship of their deity; or perhaps because human sacrifices were not offered to her as to the others. (Lumby). Sidon was twenty

miles north of Tyre. Mil'com was the same as Mo'lech and Malcham (Zeph. 1: 5) *i. e.* "king," he was the god of fire and was worshipped with human sacrifices. There are numerous allusions in the Old Testament to the worship of this god, the phrase most common being "to make their children to pass through the fire to Molech" (2 Kings 23: 10, 13; 2 Chr. 18: 3; Jer. 7: 31; Lev. 20: 1-5; Jer. 7: 31). The tradition is that the statue of Molech was of brass with an ox's head, and the hands so arranged that the victim slipped from them into a fire which burned underneath. The Am'monites were descendants of Lot and dwelt on the east of the Dead Sea between the Ar'non and the Jab'bok.

6. And Sol'o-mon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father—"Did evil in the sight of the Lord" is the standing expression for "favored idol-worship" (Judges 2: 11; 3: 7, &c. Contrast Num. 32: 11, 12). To recognize idolatry and superstition by gifts and donations, by attendance at its services, or in any other way, is a sin against God (2 Cor. 6: 16, 17; 1 Cor. 10: 20, 21). David's sin was more directly against man, indirectly against God. But the sin of Solomon was against God directly. (Macdonald). The causes which led to Solomon's downfall were doubtless, the long peace, broken neither by war or other calamity, the great wealth, the extensive trade, the abundance by these means, of all objects of luxury possible and the voluptuous court life in consequence. All these conspired to bring about a general moral relaxation in the midst of which the heathen favorites of the harem could carry out their designs without opposition. (Baehr).

7. Then did Sol'o-mon build an high place for Che'mosh, the abomination of Mo'ab, in the hill that is before Je-ru'-sa-lem; and for Mo'lech, the abomination of the children of Am'mon—The tops of hills were originally favorite places for religious worship, hence a temple anywhere came to be called "a high place." Up to Solomon's time the worship of God at "high places" does not seem to have been condemned, because the central place of sacrifice had not yet been set apart (ch. 3: 2; 1 Sam. 9: 12; Gen. 12: 8). But inasmuch as such altars were stepping stones to idolatry, the Mosaic

law denounced them (Lev. 17: 8, 9; Deut. 12: 5, 6, 11, 13, 26, 27; Josh. 22: 29), and in all later times they are regarded as schismatic and semi-idolatrous. They were finally put down by Josiah (2 Kings 23: 19). Che'mosh was a war-god. He was also worshipped, by the Ammonites (Judg. 11: 24) He is depicted upon coins with sword, lance and shield and two torches by his side. His worship was similar to that of Molech. The name occurs upon the famous Moabite Stone and it is not unlikely that to this deity the sacrifice mentioned in 2 Kings 3: 27 was offered. His worship was very widespread throughout Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. His symbol was a black star. *Carchemish* means "the fort of Chemosh." The Moabites were descendants of Lot and lived on the east of the Dead Sea, south of the Ammonites. In Judges 21: 29 they are called "the people of Chemosh." "The hill that is before Jerusalem" *i. e.* the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem. It is said to be before it, or in front of it (Zech. 14: 4), because the Hebrews faced the east in naming the points of the compass (Green), or it may be because its height overshadowed the city. In 2 Kings 23: 13 the position of this "high place" is described as "on the right hand" *i. e.* at the southern spur of the mountain. In later times this hill was called, from this circumstance "the Mount of Offence." It was finally suppressed by Josiah (2 Kings 23: 13). That these shrines should have survived the reforms of Asa, Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah is supposed to be due to the fact that they were erected for foreigners, and were resorted to only by such. (Green). The village of Siloam, where Solomon is said to have put his "strange" wives, is situated on the north-west slope of the Mount of Offence.

8. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods—"Strange" here means "foreign" and is synonymous with "idolatrous." See the many references to "strange women" as a source of moral corruption. It is noticed that Pharaoh's daughter (see verse 1) did not ask for an Egyptian temple and there never was any trace of the idolatry of that country in Israel. By this exceedingly impolitic liberality Solomon shews that he had forgotten the wisdom which led him to inaugurate his reign by awakening at Gibeon a national religious sentiment, and by erecting

the temple to unite the often rival tribes to it as their common centre. Now the religious fervor had cooled, and false religions were respectable. Had Solomon been true to his first and wisest policy, rival fanes could never have been erected by Jeroboam at Bethel and at Dan.

9. And the Lord was angry with Sol'o-mon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Is'ra-el, which had appeared unto him twice—Solomon had justly incurred the divine displeasure. There is a holy antagonism, deep and eternal, between God and sin, but Solomon had been so signally favored that his lukewarmness was inexcusable. He knew all the kindness that God had shewn to David; he owned that he owed his throne to the promise made to him; his wisdom and prosperity were by the divine favor as he did not hesitate to let the world know. Twice God had spoken directly with him in words of rich promise and stern warning (ch. 3: 5; 9: 2). All these facts made his conduct the more inexcusable (Amos 3: 2; Luke 10: 12, 15). That God was angry with Solomon does not prove that he did not love him (2 Sam. 12: 24) but quite the reverse (Deut. 8: 5; 2 Sam. 7: 14; Ps. 89: 30-32).

10. And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he kept not that which the Lord commanded—Twice the direct command was uttered (ch. 6: 12; 9: 6), but in the law he had read his duty and was warned by the pictures therein of unworthy sovereigns (1 Sam. 8: 10-18; Deut. 17: 14-20).

11. Wherefore the Lord said unto Sol'o-mon, farasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant—This communication was doubtless made by Ahi'jah the prophet (verse 29). Here the root evil of all the national corruption and oppression is pointed out and denounced. The disruption of the kingdom and the moral ruin of the covenant people is traceable to the failure of Solomon to maintain the purity of that worship which he had established in such magnificence. The "bitter bit" in his punishment was that an underling and not one of the seed royal should succeed him (Ecc. 2: 18). The reference is to Jeroboam whom

Solomon had made overseer of the levy of workmen from Ephraim and Manasseh (verse 28). In some way Solomon learned of Ahijah's designation of him and acted towards him as Saul did to his father David (verse 40).

12. **Nothwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for Da'vid thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son**—The threatening had two gracious and merciful limitations, (1) The blow should not fall until after his death (ver. 34; ch. 21: 29; 2 Kings 22: 20), and (2) The disruption should be but partial. There should be a remnant (Rom. 9: 27; 11: 5). (Hammond). For a similar postponement of the penalty see 1 Kings 21: 29. God's mercy is shewn to children for their parents sake (Ex. 20: 6).

13. **Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for Da'vid my servant's sake, and for Je-ru'sa-lem's sake, which I have chosen**—The house of David was preserved in order that the promise to its founder might

not fail (2 Sam. 7: 13; 1 Chr. 17: 11-13). The reference is to the tribe of Judah, from which the southern kingdom took its name. Benjamin which went with Judah was so small as to be hardly worth accounting of, and Simeon was also absorbed in Judah. One reason for the close union of Benjamin with Judah was that the territorial division between the two tribes was such as to make the temple the common property of both. The city of the Jebusite, which David conquered, and all the ground north of the valley of Hinnon was in the tribe of Benjamin. (Lumby). And now the storm clouds gather around the sunset of Solomon, and his day ends in darkness. "So long as he walked with God he was of importance for the historians; but as soon as he forsook God, and was consequently forsaken of his wisdom, he becomes as insignificant as an empty vessel which has once held sweet perfume, or a piece of carbon through which the electric current has ceased to flow. Never was there a sadder eclipse." (Maclaren).

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

4-8. How long did Solomon reign? (ch. 11: 42). Was polygamy forbidden in the law? (Deut. 17: 17). What does Jesus say about it? (Mark 10: 6-9). What was said regarding marriages with the heathen? (Deut. 7: 3, 4). What New Testament precept bears upon this question? (2 Cor. 6: 14). How many wives did Solomon have? (vs. 3). Solomon forgot one of his own precepts (Prov. 1: 10). A warning to Christians. (Eph. 5: 11). He tried to serve two masters. (Matt. 6: 24; Josh. 24: 15). By whom were these high places destroyed? (2 Kings 23: 13).

9-13. Do special privileges imply special obligations? (Luke 10: 12-15). Will misuse of privileges lead to their forfeiture? (Matt. 25: 28). What other examples of a sentence suspended in mercy? (ch. 21: 29; 2 Kings 22: 20; 2 Pet. 3: 9).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

I. **SOLOMON'S SIN.** Solomon's writings reveal three stages of spiritual experience. His songs, written in the fervor of youthful piety, disclose an ardent devotion to the God of his father; the Proverbs, contain the wisdom of riper years and base all prosperity on the foundation of godliness; and Ecclesiastes, breathes throughout the spirit of sad regret and unavailing repentance over wasted opportunities and abused blessings.

4. *When Solomon was old.* Age should have brought wisdom, but Solomon had not moral firmness proportionate to his practical sagacity. Several causes conspired to bring about his downfall. (1) His devotion to

schemes of material grandeur,—buildings, gardens, troops, equipage, &c., secularized his mind. How often we see the same effect on prosperous business men of middle age. (2) He disobeyed God's commands in what he may have thought important matters and in regard to which he may have silenced conscience with plausible reasons. (a) He "multiplied horses to himself" (Deut. 17: 16). He may have said "we live in a different age, horses are necessary now, we must not be tied to a slavishly literal interpretation of Scripture." So men speak in regard to street cars and newspapers on Sunday. (b) He "multiplied wives to himself" (Deut. 17: 17).

Polygamy upset the divine ordinance regarding the family and so sapped the root of national morality. But Solomon may have said "My social position demands that I should conform somewhat to the customs of others like me. Nobody respects a king who has not an extensive Harem." Or he may have said "In politics we have to do many things that we don't quite approve of, and this is the recognized way of forming alliances with other sovereigns." So men to-day excuse censurable customs of "society," and all sorts of political abominations. (c) He "greatly multiplied to himself silver and gold" (Deut. 17: 17). God gave him wealth to use for the glory of Israel and Israel's God, but he made the people groan under intolerable burdens to increase his wealth and magnificence. So rich men to-day "grind the faces of the poor," or rob the community by legalized fraud in order to amass wealth and defend themselves in the doing of it by various plausible arguments—the number they keep employed, the money they put in circulation, the credit they do to the national reputation &c. God will judge them as he did Solomon and wealth gotten by "sweating" or abused franchises, or soulless combinations will not be atoned for by endowing colleges, building hospitals and public libraries. (d) He married "strange women." "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," was a command emphasised by the cataracts of the deluge and reiterated again and again in the sad experience of the people of God down to apostolic times. Alas, that it should be so often disregarded now. Never enter into the marriage relation fancying that you are going to be a home missionary for one. The unbelieving husband or wife is far more likely to lower the tone of piety in his or her life's partner, than be inspired by the other's faith and good works. Never give your heart to one whose heart is not given to the Lord. (d) His exalted position gave him an influence for good. Had he proved worthy he would have been supported by the whole moral strength of prophets, priests, and people. As it was they followed his example, encouraged his folly and sin and so facilitated his downward course. Every one who pursues a course of life at variance with true godliness will find others influenced by it, who in turn will encourage their leader and eventually support one another against the warnings and dis-

approval of those whom they sneer at as "Puritanical" and "unco' guid." Every Christian is a "light," "a hill-top city" and should walk circumspectly for his own sake as well as for that of others. Here it is only just and proper to refer to the immense influence that Queen Victoria has wielded upon the morals of the court and nobility of Great Britain. This has extended downwards through all ranks of society.

6. *Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord.* That means that he connived at and even favored the worship of false gods. The secret of his defection was that he "went not fully after the Lord." Half hearted service of God is the most oppressive slavery, whole hearted consecration the truest liberty and abounding joy. It is of vital importance to the young that they hold back nothing from God. There is an oriental legend that in Solomon's staff on which he leaned, was a worm gnawing secretly, so that at last the rod fell asunder. A fit emblem of his character. The unsundered inclination, temper or affection is a foothold for Satan. "What a wicked man that Solomon was! We don't go after those divinities. Oh, no! We don't build high places to gods and goddesses with any such outlandish names as those. There is were we have the advantage of Solomon. But, after all, those *names* are not of so much account as the things they signified. Those were the divinities of lust, light and power. Do we never turn away from God in pursuit of these objects of desire? When it comes to be a question of serving God wholly, serving God only, and being led away of lust, or being drawn after mere learning and knowledge, or being tempted to crave power, are we always sure to choose the Lord's service? If we are, then we have an advantage, so far, over Solomon. But how is that?" (Trumbull). A man in much distress of mind, being unable to find peace, sought the help of his minister, who after some conversation, which seemed fruitless, said, "Let us pray." They knelt together, and the minister said, "O Lord, help us to trust thee with our souls." "Amen," responded the man. "O Lord, help us to trust thee with our bodies." Again came a hearty "Amen." "O Lord, help us to trust thee with our business." This time no response, and on looking up, the minister found that this was the stumbling-block to the

consecration of the man, for he was a brewer, and was not satisfied that his business was "holy unto the Lord." So anything, whether it be money, or business, or pleasures, or companions, if we are not willing to give up these for Christ, if they come before him, they become idols set up in our hearts as surely as the images before which Solomon bowed.

II. SOLOMON'S SENTENCE. The sentence reveals the enormity of the crime and at the same time points out its inevitable consequences. Solomon had alienated the affections of the pious and exhausted the patience of the oppressed. He had conciliated the heathen but he taught his people to look with tolerance upon, and share in the "vile affections" (Rom. 1: 26), horrid cruelty, and diabolical revelries of devil-worship. He forgot the watchword of Israel "The Lord our God is our Lord" (Deut. 6: 4) and gave His glory to another and His praise to graven images (Isa. 42: 8; he degraded "the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man" (Rom. 1: 23). The "Mount of Corruption" was an insulting defiance of Mount Moriah.

9. *The Lord was angry with Solomon.* We don't think anybody need apologize for the Lord under the circumstances. There are times when not to be angry is to be false to all that is pure, and holy, and good. A story is told of the late Dr. Spencer of Brooklyn that he was met by a parishioner hurriedly urging his way down the street one day; his lip was set, and there was something strange in that gray eye, "How are you to-day Doctor?" he said pleasantly. He waked as from a dream and replied soberly "I am mad!" It was a new word for a mild true hearted Christian; but he waited, and, with a deep, earnest voice, went on, "I found a widow standing by her goods thrown in the street. She could not pay the month's rent; the landlord turned her out; and one of her children is going to die, and that man is a member of the church! I told her to take her things back again. I am on my way to see him. Solomon had been richly endowed, often warned, and well knew the evils resulting from his evil conduct. Yet let us not condemn Solomon without remembering our own greater guilt if we are faithless to our better light and less perilous surroundings. God is "slow to anger" but the wrath which flamed out at Solomon will not slumber if we are ungrateful for our mercies and do not

improve our privileges. We too have a covenant to keep, sealed to us in baptism, let us not be faithless to it but remember that we are the Lord's by covenant bonds which only apostasy can break.

12, 13. *Notwithstanding. . . . Howbeit.* What gracious words! In wrath mercy is remembered (Hab. 3: 2). Solomon did not deserve this, but there were the original parties to the covenant, David and David's God. This covenant must stand for in it is bound up the eternal purpose of God's grace to sinful men. The unworthiness of one must not break the hallowed entail until the second "David" shall come with Hosannas to Jerusalem. To Solomon time was given for repentance which he doubtless improved, for Ecclesiastes does not end in despair. Yet there has always been doubt upon this point. Farrar tells us that in his great picture in the Campo Santo at Florence, Orcagna represents Solomon rising slowly and painfully out of his sepulchre at the archangel's trumpet, ignorant whether to turn to the right or to the left, uncertain whether his place is to be among the saved or among the lost. Was his lot to be with Jerusalem or the Hill of Sandal? Is he to count as a servant of the Lord or a votary of Molech fires and Ashtaroth abominations? On the other hand, the great poet of the Divine Comedy was no lenient judge, and he places the soul of Solomon in Paradise among the souls of the greatest teachers. However that may be, "He stands out to kings as a conspicuous warning against the way in which they should *not* walk. He found a people free, he left them enslaved; he found them unburdened, he left them oppressed; he found them simple, he left them luxurious; he found them inclined to be faithful to one God, he left them indifferent to the abominations of heathenism which they saw practised under the very shadow of his palace and his shrine; he found them occupying a unique position as providential witnesses to one saving truth, he left them as a nation like other nations, only weaker in power and exhausted in resources." (Farrar). The practical lesson of such a fall is that perseverance in God's service is not a matter of course with any of us, but that it is a distinct gift or grace of God, to be secured by watchfulness and prayer. We who are neither kings or sages may well take warning by this history of the wisest of kings. Let us

watch the issues, we can never fully explore the depths of these hearts of ours. Let us grasp the hands that were pierced in mercy for us on the cross. Let us look constantly, humbly, to God as the source of our strength. (Liddon).

ADDED POINTS.

1. If grown people are in danger how much more the young and inexperienced.
2. Trees that break in a storm are usually decayed at the heart.

3. What we set our hearts upon is an idol if we love it more than God and duty.
4. The good example and pious teaching of parents makes our misconduct inexcusable.
5. Make no partnership where God cannot be one of the firm.
6. God wants the whole heart or none.
7. God cannot but punish sin.
8. He gives ample warning.
9. He is very merciful.
10. His promises cannot fail.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

When did Solomon begin to forget his duty to God? Write *Old* on the board. This was a very foolish thing for an old man to do, yet what was Solomon famous for? Write *Wise*, and dwell upon his experience and wisdom as reasons for fidelity to God. Review the events

NO ONE IS
TOO OLD
WISE
GOOD
TO BE IN DANGER.
"My Son give me thine heart."
—S. S. Times (adopted).

at Gibeon, and his prayer at the dedication of the temple and the statement that God loved him (Neh. 13: 26), and shew that he was at one time a *Good* man. Then point the warning by adding the words on the board. The trouble with Solomon was that his heart went wrong. He knew

well enough how he ought to behave, but he preferred to act wickedly and foolishly. He kept God out of one corner of his heart, and Satan took possession of that corner and made it a basis of operations against the whole territory. The following illustrative story will fix the closing thought. A colored man came to a watchmaker with two hands of a clock, saying: "I want yer to fix up dese han's. Dey jess doan keep no mo' kerec' time for mo' den six monfs." "Where is the clock?" saked the watchmaker. "Out at de house on Injun Creek." "But I must have the clock." "Didn't I tell yer dars nuffin de matter wid de clock 'ceptin de han's, an' I done brought 'em to you. You je'ss want de clock so you kin tinker wid it and charge me a big price. Gimme back dem han's." And he went away angry. He was no more unreasonable than you if you are trying to regulate your conduct by merely avoiding bad habits. Put your heart into the care of the great Watchmaker, do not fear his charges, they are blessings, and he will give you a new heart (Ezek. 36: 26) (A. C. M.)

LESSON XI—December 13th, 1896.

Cautions Against Intemperance. PROV. 23: 15-25.

(Commit to memory verses 19-21).

GOLDEN TEXT: "For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Prov. 3: 21.

PROVE THAT—We should avoid bad company. Prov. 4: 14.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 73, 74, 75.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 5, 116, 173, 40.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Cautions against intemperance. Prov. 23: 15-25. *Tuesday.* "Who hath sorrow?" Prov. 23: 29-35. *Wednesday.* Woe to the drunkard. Isa. 5: 11-19. *Thursday.* God's anger against sin. Isa. 5: 20-25. *Friday.* Wine a mocker. Prov. 20: 1-11. *Saturday.* Avoiding evil-doers. Ps. 26. *Sabbath.* Be separate. 2 Cor. 6: 11-18. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. Not long ago in one of the towns in the United States a travelling menagerie was exhibiting its collection of fierce and of curious animals. In order to attract the crowd a young lion was chained near the entrance. It was believed to be perfectly tame and harmless and its keeper was by its side. Nevertheless the wise gave it a wide berth and contented themselves with admiring at a distance. A little girl, however, innocently ran up to it and before anyone could interfere the ferocious nature of the animal awoke, and seizing the child, as a cat would a mouse, he shook her and crushed her to death in an instant. The frantic mother could hardly be restrained by force from throwing herself on the savage beast. Like this young lion, as soon as the cub of the drinking habit has become full grown, it will assert its power, destroy self-control and hurry its thoughtless victim to disgrace and death.

LESSON PLAN. I. True Wisdom. vs. 15-19. II. Self Control. vs. 20, 21. III. Filial Piety. vs. 22-25.

15. My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine—Solomon uses the term son, but the same advice and instruction may apply to a daughter, for he would not teach that no care or thought should be bestowed upon her, or that she is without her duties or responsibilities, either to parents or to others, or in no need of preparation for a future life beyond this. While there are many temptations surrounding the young man, that little affect a young woman, there is much need of watchful care, that she avoid all those evils which would destroy her wholesome influence. (A. C. M.) The heart is the seat of wisdom according to the Hebrew conception. The brain does not appear to have been thought of as the throne of the mind. Only in the Book of Daniel is the "head" mentioned in connection with mental activity, and there it is in connection with "visions." In Eph. 1: 18 we find the phrase "the eyes of the heart." As the heart in the body is the fountain and centre of natural life, so the word was employed to designate the centre of all the conscious activity of the man. Love, hatred, anguish, joy, imagination, memory, reflection, judgment, resolution, understanding, will, belief, are all predicted of the human heart. "Out of it are the issues of life" (ch. 4: 23). (Terry). To have a wise heart means to regulate the life by the principles of God's word. To have the thoughts pure, the aims of life noble, and the plans pursued honorable. "Be wise" is rather "becometh wise." Wisdom

is not a natural gift but the result of discipline and experience. The emphatic repetition "even mine," or, literally, "even I," is very pathetic. There is no greater joy to a parent than to see a child honorable and pious, respected and beloved, and the deepest shame of which many evil doers are conscious is that they have disgraced their father's name.

16. Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things—The "reins" are the kidneys. Here, and elsewhere, being the most inward of the "inward parts" of the body they are looked upon as the seat of the deepest and strongest emotion. (Plumptre). The parents joy is deep and real. The utterances of the lips shew the wisdom of the heart. Our words shew what we are (Luke 6: 45).

17. Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long—Do not be emulous of them and imitate them because you desire their pleasures (Ps. 73: 3-12, 16, 17-20). The feeling which looks half longingly at the prosperity of evil doers is sinful. (Plumptre). Have a constant mind, a heart always in tune with the ways of the Lord. Be devotional, be prayerful, be obedient and submissive, so that no desire for evil can have place, no dissatisfaction with God's plans and providences. Let the thoughts be exalted to the Lord. Be in the fear of the Lord as in thy element, thy natural place. (A. C. M.)

18. For surely there is an end; and thine expectations shall not be cut off—

For "end" the R. V. has "reward" and in the margin "sequel, or future." It is literally "latter end." Every course of life has its inevitable consequences; these, to the righteous, are a reward, to the wicked, a punishment (Ps. 37: 1-37; Luke 16: 25). The final, or "end," result is reached in the next world. This is one of the few passages in which Solomon distinctly refers to a future life, the others being ch. 11: 7; 14: 32; 24: 14. The true Christian will not be disappointed at last (Ps. 34: 9; John 10: 28).

19. **Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way**—Our fallen nature inclines to self-indulgence, but practice self-control. Keep the desires directed towards worthy objects. This requires an effort, and only steadfast principle will gain the mastery over the fleshly lusts which war against the soul (1 Pet. 2: 11). "The way" here means the manner of life. "Let thy heart go straight forward in the way" *i. e.* the way of understanding (ch. 9: 6; Matt. 7: 14). The gospel was also called "the way" (Acts 9: 2; 19: 9, 23).

20. **Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh**—"Winebibbers" are those who are always "tippling." We are to think of gluttons who, at their carousals, with much wine consume also much flesh. (Baehr). In ancient Palestine animal food did not enter into the ordinary diet of the people, and when at an occasional banquet it was served with lavish hospitality and in inviting variety, there was great temptation to indulge in excess. The "riotous" feature of ancient feasts, in both Europe and Asia, astonishes students of history. (Hurlbut). The warning is against "revelling and banqueting" (1 Pet. 4: 3) and the sort of company one meets with at these feasts.

21. **For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags**—The drowsiness referred to is the stupidity that results from a night of debauchery. Of three thousand persons admitted to the workhouse in Salem, Mass., the superintendent states that in his opinion, two thousand nine hundred were brought there directly or indirectly by intemperance. The superintendent of the alms house in New York states that the number of male adults in the house is five hundred and twelve, of which number there are not

twenty that can be called sober men; that the number of females is six hundred and one, and that he doubts whether there are fifty of them that can be called sober women. On one occasion a deputation waited upon Lord John Russell, respecting the taxation levied on the working classes, to whom he said, "You may rely upon it, that the government of this country durst not tax the working classes to anything like the extent to which they tax themselves in their expenditure for intoxicating drinks."

22. **Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old**—As no conduct is more beautiful in youth than respectful and affectionate regard for a parent's wishes and comfort, so nothing is more indicative of future sorrow than the opposite behaviour.

23. **Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding**—To buy the truth is to purchase a true and saving knowledge of God and his will concerning thy salvation upon his terms. (Benson). (2 Tim. 3: 15) It is acquired by labor, exertion and sacrifice (ch. 4: 5, 7; 16: 16; Matt. 13: 44, 46). Although received as a free gift (Isa. 55: 1) we surrender for it the sinful desires of our fallen nature (Gal. 5: 24; Eph. 4: 22). Wisdom is the right use of the truth. Instruction implies advancement in wisdom. We are to grow in grace and in knowledge of Christ. Understanding, or discernment, is clear perception of duty, an opening of the spiritual vision. The true cure for intemperance is found in the saving knowledge of Christ and a life filled with worthy ambitions guided by right principles.

24. **The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice, and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him.**

25. **Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice**—Wise, sober and God-fearing children are the crown of the parent's life, but dissipated and undutiful ones bring down their grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. The late Principal Cairns of Edinburgh related the following anecdote: "In the north of England region, in a largely filled railway carriage, I took part once in a general debate on the shutting up of public houses by act of parliament. Many spoke, but the brightest remark was made by a Scotch workman, who said, "The best shutting" up act is to shut your own mouth.

BIBLE SEARCH LIGHTS.

15. What is the beginning of wisdom? (Ps. 111: 10). What is the highest object of knowledge? (Job 22: 21). What does the heart of the wise discern? (Eccl. 8: 5). From whom does heart wisdom come? (John 14: 6).

16. Where do wisdom and truth dwell? (Ps. 51: 6; Job 38: 36). How did David regard the danger of imprudent speech? (Ps. 39: 1; 141: 3). What does Solomon call the mouth of a righteous man? (Prov. 10: 11, 20, 21, 31, 22; 15: 4). What does he say of fitly spoken words? (Prov. 5: 11). What does Jesus say of the value of words? (Matt. 12: 37; Luke 6: 45). What does Paul say? (Eph. 4: 29). What does James say? (Jas. 3: 2, 13).

17. What constitutes the whole duty of man? (Eccl. 12: 13; Deut. 10: 12; Micah 6: 8; Heb. 12: 28).

18. When will the final award come? (Luke 16: 25). In what other passages does Solomon shew his knowledge of the doctrine of a future life (ch. 11: 7; 14: 32). What further assurance of reward have we in the New Testament? (Heb. 3: 6; Matt. 7: 14; 10: 22; Rev. 2: 10).

19. What is the way in which the heart is to be guided? (Luke 16: 25; Acts 9: 2; 19: 9, 23). With whose help can we best guide our hearts? (John 16: 13).

20, 21. What was the punishment of drunkenness and gluttony under the Mosaic law? (Deut. 21: 20). What warning have we of the danger lurking in the wine cup? (Prov. 20: 1; 21: 17; 23: 29-32; Isa. 5: 11, 22; 28: 7; Hos. 4: 11). What warning against teaching others to drink? (Hab. 2: 15). Will drunkenness exclude from heaven? (1 Cor. 6: 10; Gal. 5: 21). What New Testament warnings against self indulgence? (Luke 12: 19; 21: 34; Phil. 3: 19; 1 Tim. 5: 6; 1 Pet. 2: 11; 4: 3; 1 John 2: 15-17).

22. What promise is given to filial piety? (Ex. 20: 12; Eph. 6: 2, 3). On what grounds is this duty urged? (Eph. 6: 1; Col. 3: 20; 1 Tim. 8: 8). What penalties are attached to unfilial conduct? (Prov. 20: 20; 30: 17).

23. What price is asked for the truth? (Isa. 55: 1; Rev. 3: 18). What is the value of discipline? (Rom. 5: 3). In what parables does Christ repeat the thought of this verse? (Matt. 13: 44-46).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

I. TRUE WISDOM. Total abstinence from intoxicating liquor should be inculcated upon the young, but our lesson goes deeper and touches the fundamental weakness which makes drunkenness possible.

17. *Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.* Many motives to sobriety may be urged but this is the supreme one. Drunkenness is sin. There is much that is attractive in the society and surroundings of the lovers of strong drink. When one is exhausted with the day's labor even nature lends her aid to the seductions of the tempter. A victim of intemperance, who struggled bravely to overcome his besetting sin, told the writer that the only time he was in danger was when coming home to his evening meal. Another, in every other respect an exemplary christian, for a long time found it impossible to resist the inclination "to take his dram" when returning from his work, and in the exhausted state of his body the effects of it were shamefully ap-

parent. Young men living in city boarding houses, with no place in which to spend their evenings in genial companionship are peculiarly exposed to the attractions of the brilliantly lighted saloon and billiard parlor. We need the support of divine grace "all the day long." Morning resolves will be broken if we do not summon to our aid the strongest motives and the most potent aid. A gentleman going into a merchant's office, was struck with the following inscription on a postal card nailed to his desk:

WHICH?
WIFE OR WHISKEY?
THE BABES OR THE BOTTLE?
HOME OR HELL?

Where did you get that, and what did you nail it up there for? he asked the merchant. "I wrote it myself and nailed it there. Some time ago I found myself falling into the drinking habit. My business faculties were becom-

ing dulled, my appetite failing, and I constantly crave alcoholic stimulants. I saw tears in the eyes of my wife, wonder depicted on the faces of my children, and then I took a long look ahead. I sat down, and half unconsciously wrote that inscription. Its awful revelation burst upon me like a flash. I nailed it there and read it a hundred times that afternoon. That night I went home sober. I have not touched a drop of intoxicating liquor since. You see how startling is its alliteration. I have no literary proclivities. I regard that card as an inspiration. It speaks out three solemn warnings. One from the altar, one from the cradle, and one from—" Here the man solemnly shook his head and resumed his work. (A. C. M.)

II. SELF-CONTROL. That is the meaning of the Latin word from which temperance comes (*temperantia*). It means holding all the appetites and impulses of our nature under the restraint of reason and conscience. One of the curses connected with the use of intoxicants is that they weaken the will-power and make self-control impossible.

20. *Be not among winebibbers.* Not necessarily "rum-soakers," but those who are sipping all the time, never "drunk" perhaps, but partaking freely and so leading others to acquire their evil habits. Cyrus, the great king of Persia, when a boy, being at the court of his grandfather, Astyages, engaged to perform the office of cup-bearer at table. The duty of this office required him to taste the liquor before presenting it to the king; but, without performing this duty, Cyrus delivered the cup to his grandfather, who observed the omission, which he imputed to forgetfulness. "No," said Cyrus, "I purposely avoided it, because I feared it contained poison; for lately, at an entertainment, I observed that the lords of your court, after drinking it, became noisy, quarrelsome and frantic." Here are some cases counted in one common lodging-house in London, all victims of drink:—A paymaster of the Royal Navy; two men who had been college chums at Cambridge, and who met accidentally here one night, both in the last stage of poverty; a physician's son, himself a doctor,—when lodging here he sold fuses in the Strand; a clergyman who had taken high

honors, —last seen in the Borough drunk, followed by jeering boys; a commercial traveller, formerly the superintendent of a Sunday School; a member of the Stock Exchange, found to be suffering from delirium tremens, removed to the work-house.

III. FILIAL PIETY. The following beautiful story is told of Archbishop Tillotson, who was the son of a plain Yorkshire farmer. Shortly after his elevation to the see of Canterbury he was visited by his father, who enquired of the liveried servant who opened the door whether John Tillotson was at home. The servant, indignant at what he thought was insolence, drove him from the door, but as the old man was turning sorrowfully away, the Archbishop himself entered the palace and recognizing his father exclaimed "It is my beloved father," fell on his knees and asked his blessing. He then rebuked the astonished servant for his discourtesy to the aged. The late Mr. Spurgeon tells the following story, "When I go to Monaco, the grounds of the gambling hell there are the most beautiful in the world, but I never go near them, and why? Not because I think there is any danger of my passing through the gardens to the gambling tables. No! but a friend of mine once related the following incident to me: "One day M. Blanc met me and asked me how it was I never entered his grounds. 'Well, you see,' I said, 'I never play, and, as I make no return whatever to you, I hardly feel justified in availing myself of the advantages of your grounds.' 'You make a great mistake,' said M. Blanc. 'If it were not for you, and other respectable persons like yourself, who come to my grounds, I should lose many of my customers who attend my gambling saloons. Do not imagine that because you do not play yourself, you do not by your presence in the grounds contribute very materially to my revenue. Numbers of persons who would not have thought of entering my establishment feel themselves quite safe in following you into my garden, and from thence to the gaming table, the transition is very easy.' After I heard that I never went near the gardens." So moderate drinking and its social allurements are the garden which surrounds the drunkards place of bondage and ruin.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

Let us learn to day how *Happy Homes* are made. When father and mother are glad then there is sunshine at home. You can make them happy or sorrowful for they love you above

everything else in the world. What is the first thing that makes the father glad? Set down

RIGHT WORDS
REVERENT HEARTS
RESTRAINED APPETITES

MAKE

HAPPY
HOMES

Right Words on the board and shew how kind, gentle, loving, respectful, thoughtful words make everyone happy. There is something else needed to make the home happy all day long, what is it?

Write *Reverent Hearts*. It is sweet to live like Jesus, never grieving a loving Father by doing wrong. When Jesus lives in the heart and in the home there all will be peace and joy. There is something which makes many unhappy homes. Refer to strong drink and its consequences and write *Restrained Appetites* on the board and complete the sentence by writing *Make* between. We need the help of the Holy Spirit to overcome the evil nature. We must give our hearts into Christ's care if we would have them guided in the way.

LESSON XII—December 20th, 1896.

The Birth of Christ. MATT. 2: 1-12.

(Commit to memory verses 10, 11).

GOLDEN TEXT: "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Luke 2: 10.

PROVE THAT—If we come to Jesus he will receive us. John 6: 37.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 76, 77, 78.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 17, 66, 233, 21.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday*. The birth of Christ. Matt. 2: 1-12. *Tuesday*. The sojourn in Egypt. Matt. 2: 13-23. *Wednesday*. The angel choir. Luke 2: 8-20. *Thursday*. Simeon's prophecy. Luke 2: 25-35. *Friday*. Filled with wisdom. Luke 2: 36-40. *Saturday*. Sent to save. I John 4: 7-14. *Sabbath*. The incarnate God. John 1: 1-14. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. Again the joyful season has come round when nearly the whole christian world remembers the birth of Jesus: As we gather in spirit around his manger-cradle let charity and love reign in our hearts. We can best celebrate the visit of the wise men who brought costly gifts to the Babe of Bethelhem by giving freely to those whose homes are less comfortable and whose lives are not so bright as our own. If Christ was born on the 25th December, the Presentation in the Temple would have taken place on February 2nd, forty days after, and the visit of the wise men was probably shortly after that. Had they come before with their costly gifts, it is not likely that Mary would have made the offering of the poor when she presented him to the priest.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Child Sought. vs. 1-2. II. The Child Feared. vs. 3-8. III. The Child Worshipped. vs. 9-12.

1. Now when Je'sus was born in Beth'lehem of Ju-de'a in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Je-ru'sa-lem—Bethlehem is so called (Judges 17: 7) to distinguish it from another Bethlehem in Galilee, about six miles West of Nazareth, in the tribe of Zebulon (Josh. 19: 13). The Herod here mentioned was surnamed "the great." The wise men, or magi, formed a sacerdotal caste amongst the Persians. They devoted them-

selves to the study of science, especial, astronomy, astrology and medicine. Daniel was at one time their president (Dan. 2: 48). From their three-fold gifts tradition has made them three in number, and from supposing that they fulfilled such prophecies as Ps. 68: 30, 32; 72: 10; Isa. 49: 7; 60: 3, 10, they have been called kings and their names even are given. No doubt they were men of rank and wealth and travelled with a considerable retinue, for their visit and questions attracted the attention of

Herod and he treated them with much show of respect. Here in the capital city they would expect to find the king.

2. Saying, where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him—The Jews expected that the birth of the Messiah would be heralded by a star, interpreting literally Num. 24: 17 and Isa. 60: 3. These wise men may have possessed traditions from the time of Daniel, or may have got their knowledge from the Jews of the dispersion. Many commentators maintain very strenuously that the "star" was a brilliant conjunction, or apparent blending, of the two planets Jupiter and Saturn, afterwards joined by Mars. The objections to this view are, (1) these planets never came so close together as to blend their rays; (2) the calculations do not meet the date exactly; (3) the Greek word means a single star, not a "conjunction;" (4) if the planets pointed towards Bethlehem when the Magi set out from Jerusalem, they would be some distance to the east of it when they arrived there about two hours afterwards: (5) no heavenly bodies at an elevation of 57 degrees above the horizon could point out a spot near the spectators, yet this star indicated precisely the very house in which the child was. "In the east," *i. e.* when in eastern lands, see verse 9. Some translate the words "in the rising." They were not guided by the star all the way, but what the star meant was revealed to them. They then set out for Jerusalem using the ordinary means of information as to the way. Hence their joy in verse 9. It was not unfitting that a star should be the sign to these astronomers that Jacob's Star had arisen. "To worship him," to do him homage, religious adoration.

3. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Je-ru-sa-lem with him.—Herod's family was not of the royal line. They were Idumeans of Philistine descent. He reigned by grace of the conqueror. A legitimate heir to the throne of David might dethrone him. He was well enough acquainted with the prophecies to know that such a prince was promised. The people were afraid of the cruel measures which Herod would adopt in order to retain his power.

4. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the peo-

ple together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.—Herod summoned the high priests and those who had filled that office, with the heads of the twenty-four courses (1 Chr. 24: 6-18) and scribes learned in the law. It may have been a full convocation of the Sanhedrim or great council of the Jews. (Mal. 2: 7.) Herod's question was a simple one and easily answered. It is not likely that he condescended to give them any reasons for asking. By asking about "the Christ," (R. V.) he showed that he quite understood what sort of a king the wise men were looking for.

5. And they said unto him, in Beth-le-hem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet:

6. And thou Beth'le-hem, in the land of Ju'da, art not the least among the princes of Ju'da: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Is'ra-el.—See Micah 5: 2. Read John 7: 42; 5: 39, 40. "Art in no wise the least," (R. V.) is a common rhetorical figure (*litotes*) for "art celebrated." Bethlehem is not even named in Josh. 15: 59. For "princes," Micah says "thousands" *i. e.* the central towns were the heads of "thousands," or princes, resided. These were subordinate divisions of the tribes—"Chiliads." See Judges 6: 15 (margin). "Rule," (R. V.) "be shepherd of, rule in love and mercy," (John 10: 11; Isa. 40: 11; 9: 7.) This was the primitive idea of a ruler. Homer calls his chiefs "shepherds of the people." Compare 2 Sam. 5: 2; 7: 7; Jer. 23: 2.

7. Then Her'od, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.—*i. e.* privately. He did not wish any of the Jews to suspect what he was plotting, and he trusted to the guilelessness of these Eastern sages so far as they were concerned. "Inquired diligently," *lit.* "ascertained accurately the time of the appearance of the star," *i. e.* how long since the star first appeared. He supposed, but erroneously, that this would fix the date of the birth.

8. And he sent them to Beth'le-hem; and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.—R. V. "search out carefully concerning" the young

child. He cannot say "king." Herod dissembles successfully before strangers. No Jew would have placed much faith in the sincerity of his pious professions. He had a heart like Judas, he would pretend to worship while he meant to kill. He would make spies of these simple men to aid him in his murderous designs.

9. When they had heard the king, they departed: and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy—They travelled by night to avoid the extreme heat of the day. Evidently they had not seen the star since they left home. "Went before them."—The star therefore moved southward as they did. This shews that it was a wholly miraculous luminary since the stars apparently move from east to west. This view is further confirmed by its coming so near the earth as to indicate a single house in a village.

11. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Ma'ry his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh—"The house," *i. e.* the house

indicated by the star. Not the stable, or cave, of the nativity. The crowd of visitors had by this time left, and better accommodations were found. Joseph is not mentioned. He may not have been at home. No homage is paid to Mary. "Treasures," the bales or chests containing their gifts. "Gold," the tribute due to a king (Ps. 72: 15). "Frankincense," a resinous gum obtained from a tree growing in Arabia and India, giving out a fragrant odor when burnt. It is still used in religious rites and is symbolical of prayer. Hence the gift is taken to be emblematic of Christ's divinity. "Myrrh," a resinous production obtained from a tree growing in Arabia, India and Africa. It was mingled with the wine given to Christ on the cross (Mark 15: 23). Used also in embalming the dead (John 19: 39). The poetic mysticism of the early church saw in this gift a prophecy of his death.

12. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Her'od, they departed into their own country another way—The words imply that they had asked directions. They had some suspicions in regard to Herod. They went directly to the Jordan valley instead of returning through Jerusalem. There is no plot of villainy so secretly laid but God knows all about it and can frustrate it.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

The world never wearies of the beautiful lessons of Christmas-tide. The echo of the angels' song is heard anew, we gather with reverent joy around the manger cradle, and the bright stars above us are dearer because one of their number led the wise men to Bethlehem long ago.

There never was a story so full of dramatic interest as this, apart altogether from its bearing upon our Salvation. No fairy tale or fable, most cunningly invented, will enchain the hearts of children as it does. Tell it over and over again and they revel in this delightful narrative. The simple shepherd, the white-robed angels, the gentle Mary and her babe, the bearded magi

THERE SHALL COME A STAR OUT OF JACOB.



I AM THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR.

and their gifts, the grave Sanhedrim, the guiding star like the lamp of an angel, and, in the background, the terrible Herod and the murdered innocents. We should not confine ourselves closely to the lesson text, but talk about the whole story. Help the little ones to love the Christ-child, and teach them to make others happy because Jesus has made them glad. Like these wise men bid them come to Jesus, lay their offerings at his feet and worship him.

LESSON XIII—December 27th, 1896.

REVIEW.

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

PROVE THAT—We should tell others of Jesus. Matt. 28: 19.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Review Questions 79-81.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 5, 189, 249, 211.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* 1 Kings 1: 28-39. *Tuesday.* 1 Kings 3: 5-15. *Wednesday.* 1 Kings 5: 1-12. *Thursday.* 1 Kings 8: 54-63. *Friday.* Matt. 2: 1-12. *Saturday.* 1 Kings 9: 1-9. *Sabbath.* 1 Kings 11: 4-13. *Monday.* Acts 1: 1-14. *Tuesday.* Luke 24: 44-53. *Wednesday.* Heb. 10: 1-13. *Thursday.* John 16: 1-11.

REVIEW CHART—FOURTH QUARTER.

LESSON.	TITLE.	GOLDEN TEXT.	LESSON PLAN.	TEACHINGS.
I. 1 Kings 1: 28-39.	S. A. K.	Keep.....	K. P.—K. I.—K. S.	God's king will reign.
II. 1 Kings 3: 5-15	S. W. C.	The fear.....	S. P.—G. A.	We need God's guidance.
III. 1 Kings 4: 25-34	S. W. W.	Them that.....	S. W.—S. W.	God prospers the upright.
IV. Prov. 1: 1-19.	P. S.	My son.....	W. W.—W. W.	Take your parents' advice.
V. 1 Kings 5: 1-12	B. T.	Except.....	S. R.—H. R.	We should be friendly.
VI. 1 Kings 8: 54-63	T. D.	The Lord.....	D. P. F.—D. P. I.— D. S. E.	Remember God's goodness.
VII. 1 Kings 9: 1-9.	G. B. S.	The blessing.....	T. P.—T. W.	God hears prayer.
VIII. Prov. 3: 1-17.	R. O.	In all thy.....	R. O.—F.—L.—P.— W.	Trust in the Lord.
IX. 1 Kings 10: 1-10	F. S.	Behold.....	W. Q. H.—S.—S.—G.	Seek the company of the wise and good.
X. 1 Kings 11: 4-13	S. S.	Let him.....	S. S.—S. S.	Idolatry is forbidden.
XI. Prov. 23: 15-26.	C. I.	For the.....	T. W.—S. C.—F. P.	Avoid bad company.
XII. Matt. 2: 1-12.	B. C.	And the.....	O. S.—C. F.—C. W.	Jesus will receive us.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

PERSONS. Who was Solomon's mother? Who was his teacher? What high priest was disloyal to him? What high priest was loyal? Who was captain of David's body guard? Name some of the wise men with whom Solomon is compared. What heathen king assisted in building the temple? What queen visited him?

PLACES. Where was Solomon anointed? Where was he when God appeared first to him in a dream? Which were accounted the most learned nations in Solomon's time? Whence were timber and stone for the temple procured? What were the two chief cities of Phoenicia? From what country did Solomon's royal visitor come? What heathen worship did Solomon encourage at Jerusalem?

EVENTS. What led David to give orders for Solomon's anointing at this time? How would it be evident to all that what was done was in accordance with the king's wishes? What was Solomon doing at Gibeon? How did the Lord appear to him? What did he choose? What did he not choose that others might have preferred? What was the state of the country under Solomon? How many proverbs and songs did he write? On what other subjects did he speak? What was the chief event of his reign? Why was Hiram so willing to assist him? How was the timber conveyed to Joppa? What did Solomon pay to Hiram for his help? What part did Solomon take in the dedication of the temple? When did God appear the second time to Solomon? What calamities did he threaten in case of apostasy? For what purpose did the Queen of Sheba visit Solomon? What evidence of the wealth of her country did she bring with her? What was Solomon's sin? What was its punishment?

TEACHINGS. How did David shew his faith in God's promise regarding Solomon? How did Benahath shew his devout spirit? Why did Solomon choose wisdom? What did God give him in addition? How was his wisdom shewn in his management of his affairs? Why did he write the book of Proverbs? What does he say regarding obedience to parents? Why should we not listen to those who tempt us to do wrong? What does the co-operation of Gentiles in building the temple suggest? What testimony does Solomon give to God's faithfulness? To what does he exhort the people? on what condition did the prosperity of the nation depend? What is promised to those on whose hearts the law of wisdom is written? What is promised to those who honor the Lord with their substance? Why should we not despise the chastening of the Lord? With what is wisdom contrasted in nature? What does she offer? What are the results of drunkenness and gluttony?

Primary Department.

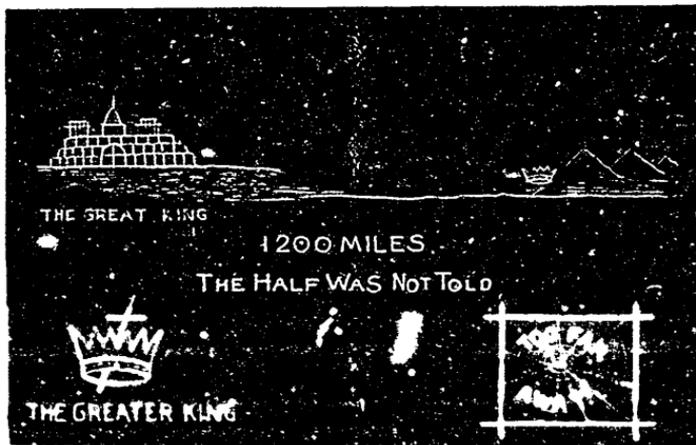
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LESSON IX—November 29th, 1896.

The Fame of Solomon. I KINGS 10 : 1-10.

- I. GOLDEN TEXT : "Behold, a greater than Solomon is here." Matt. 12: 42.
- II. PREVIEW THOUGHT : Seek a greater than Solomon.
- III. REVIEW : Where do we find God's law? What should it be to us? How should we treat this guide? What does Solomon say is "better than gold?"
- IV. LESSON STORY : People in countries far away from Palestine heard about the great king Solomon, and our lesson story to-day is about one of these. The Queen of Sheba, who lived away down in Arabia, a long way from Jerusalem, had heard about this wonderful king and all his wisdom and magnificence, and wanted to see for herself if all was true. So, with a train of servants and many camels laden with spices, and very much gold and precious stones, she left her home, and after a long and tiresome journey through the wilderness, came to Jerusalem. Solomon was very kind to her and answered all the questions she asked him, and showed her his fine buildings, the temple, and his own beautiful palace, and all the others. He showed her, too, the nice kind of food he had to eat and drink, and showed her his servants, and cupbearers, and their costly clothes, and many, many more beautiful things. Then the queen said to Solomon : "In mine own land I heard a lot about all your greatness, and I would not believe it until I came and saw it with mine own eyes ; but the half was not told me

of all your wisdom and prosperity. How happy your servants must be to have such a wise master." Solomon must have told the queen that all this wisdom and greatness had been giv-



such a wise and good king." The queen gave Solomon lots of presents, gold and spices, and precious stones that she had brought from her own country ; and Solomon gave her everything that she wanted that she saw in his kingdom. Then she went home.

V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON :

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Have a picture of a spider's net drawn on the blackboard beforehand.
3. I want to tell you a story about a queen.
 - (a) Her home was in Arabia, 1,200 miles away.
 - (b) The reports she heard about king Solomon.
 - (c) Her servants, her camels, her spices, gold, and precious stones.
 - (d) Her journey across the desert—long and tiresome.
 - (e) Her reception by Solomon.
 - (f) What she saw—Solomon's magnificence and wisdom.

(g) What she said—"The half has not been told."

As the story is told, draw roughly the mountains in the distance, and Jerusalem near at hand. As the journey is made, move the queen's crown towards Jerusalem.

4. Review Satan's nets that we have been learning about this quarter, and tell of another. Satan says to us "Jesus is too far away; you cannot see him." The Queen of Sheba was 1,200 miles away from Solomon, yet because she wanted to see him she travelled all that long way over the desert. But listen to our Golden Text.

5. "A greater than Solomon is here." Who is greater and wiser than Solomon? Jesus, our king. Here show the crown and the cross, and write the words "the greater king." Speak of the greatness of Jesus as compared with that of Solomon. When the queen saw the magnificence of Solomon she said the half had not been told. No one can tell of the greatness of Jesus. Once upon a time in Germany there lived a blind boy. The cottage in which he lived was situated on the hillside, and below was stretched a beautiful valley with a river winding in and out. The boy had always been blind. One day a physician said to his mother, "I can cure your boy." An operation was performed, but the eyes had to be covered for several days after. When the time came for the covering to be taken from his eyes, the mother took him to the door where they had sat so often together. As she had often described to him the beauties all around, and had tried hard to tell him how wonderfully God had made everything, we can imagine her feelings as she listened to the first words the boy uttered, "Oh, mother, why didn't you tell me it was so beautiful!" The half had not been told him. If we would see Jesus we must take him into our heart, for he is very near, and each day he will become more beautiful and precious to us.

LESSON X—December 6th, 1896.

Solomon's Sin. I KINGS II: 4-13.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." I Cor. 10 12.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Take heed lest ye fall.

III. What queen did we learn about last Sunday? Where did she go? What did she do? What did she say?

IV. LESSON STORY: Some time ago we learned that God spoke to Solomon in a dream and told him that if he would follow and obey him he would be with him and bless him and his kingdom; but if he forgot him, and worshipped other gods, he would destroy his kingdom. For a time Solomon remembered these words, and all went on well. But after a while, although God was still giving him everything his heart could wish, Solomon forgot God. He did not walk in

heathen wives, who worshipped false gods. Solomon, too, worshipped these gods and made temples for them. Then God was angry with Solomon and told him that as he had said when

he spoke to him in a dream long before, he would surely take his kingdom from his house and give it to another; for the sake of David his father he would not take his kingdom away while Solomon lived, but when the next king, his son, reigned, all the kingdom except one

LET HIM THAT THINKETH

HE STANDETH

TAKE HEED

LEST HE FALL.



tribe should be rent away from him. What a sad ending to the reign of the wise and great king! Though he was so wise and so great he allowed Satan (who is always waiting for a chance) to creep into his heart. He had forgotten God who had been so good to him. Let us not forget God. Let us not forget the words of the Golden Text: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.

2. Have a picture of a spider's net drawn on the blackboard beforehand.

3. If there is one net more than another in which Satan catches those who love Jesus it is this one "good enough." He caught Solomon in that net. Solomon thought he was very wise and very strong, but when he wasn't taking heed Satan caught him, and he fell. Just at the very time we feel we are pretty good will be the time to look out for the danger. Once upon a time I saw a great big tree. It looked grand and strong, but I think it was a very proud tree, for about a week afterwards it had fallen down. I looked at its roots and I saw the worms had been eating and had made great holes right through them, and just at the time when the leaves were all out and it looked most beautiful the storm came and it fell with a crash.

4. Introduce Golden Text.

5. One more illustration. Once upon a time in the middle of a small village, by the side of the great ocean, there stood a little stone church. On the top of the church stood a tall spire, and on the top of the spire stood a gilded weathervane. Most of the men of the village earned a living for themselves and their wives and little ones by going out in sailboats to the deep waters of the sea and catching fish, which they took to a neighboring city and sold for money. Each morning these fishermen would come out of their huts and, shading their eyes from the bright sun, would look up at the gilded weathervane on the tall steeple of the little stone church. If it turned towards the sea they knew that the wind was favorable and would fill their sails and would help them to get out to the deep water, where there was good fishing. If, however, the weathervane turned towards the land, they knew that the mighty wind was blowing away from the ocean, and it would be useless to try to get out that day. So they would turn their boats upside down and stop the leaks which had begun to let in the water, or they would otherwise occupy themselves on land until the wind changed. The little gilded weathervane noticed that each day the fishermen looked up to him to see whether he pointed out to sea or in towards the land, and that they seemed to obey his slightest direction, so he began to feel that he was the most important thing in the village. Therefore one night, when the great wind came rushing down from the high mountain tops, and over the hills and plains, and reached the little weathervane, it said in a deep, strong whisper, "Turn, turn to the sea." "No," said the little weathervane, "I am not going to mind you any longer. I am the most important thing in this village, why should I mind you? I shall turn which way I please." The great strong wind blew stronger still. There came a cracking, snapping noise, and in a moment more the little gilded weathervane was lying broken on the ground below, and the mighty wind had swept far out on the ocean. The next morning when the fishermen came out they looked as usual to the top of the church spire, but the little weathervane was gone. So then they looked at the boughs of the trees and saw that they were all pointing towards the deep waters of the ocean. Then they got into their boats and went off to fish, and the foolish weathervane was left unnoticed on the ground.

6. The wise king says "take heed lest we fall." Hold up the envelope and draw out the paper on which the central truth is printed. Satan is trying to catch us by making us think we are good enough, but take heed, lest like Solomon, and the tree, and the weathervane, we fall.

LESSON XI—December 13th, 1896.

Cautions Against Intemperance. PROVERBS 23: 15-25.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Prov. 23: 21.

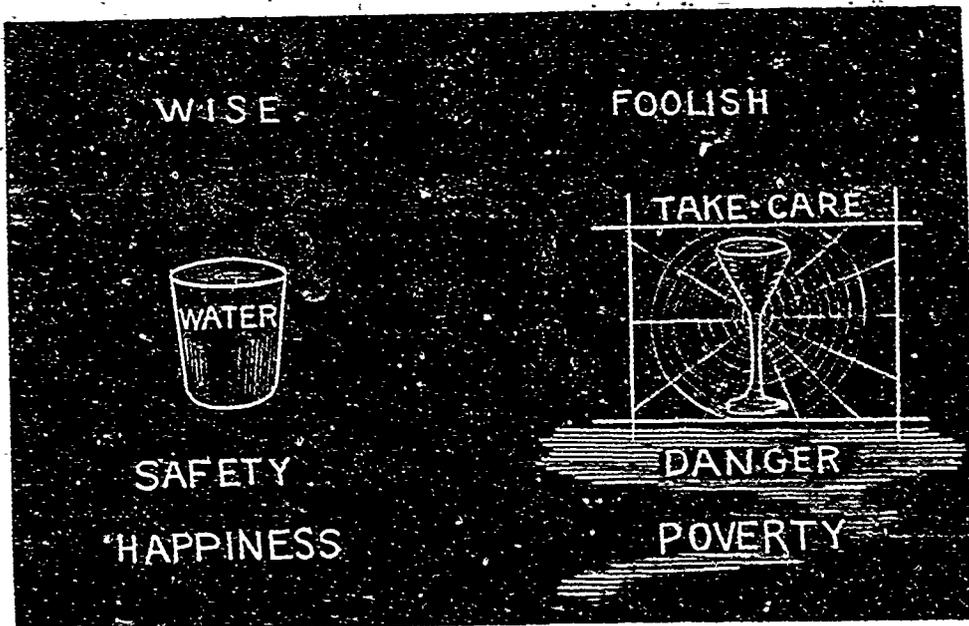
II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Be temperate.

III. REVIEW: What did God say to Solomon in a dream, as we learned last Sunday? Did Solomon do as God wished him? How was his sin punished? What was last Sunday's Golden Text?

IV. LESSON STORY: In our eleventh letter from Solomon, the wise king says, "My son, be temperate." He means that we should be temperate in all things, that is, we should never eat too much, or drink too much, or play too much, or do anything more than is really good for us, no matter how much we should like to do so. When Satan tempts us to eat what is not good for us we should be able to say "no." When he tempts us to drink what is not good for us we should be able to say "no." He will tempt us to drink wine and that is not good for us, though it may look very pretty in the glass. Solomon says "the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." Sometimes young people think they know better than those who are older than they are, but the wise man says "Hearken unto thy father and despise not thy mother when she is old." If we listen to their advice we show that we are wise, and a wise child makes the heart of father and mother glad. Listen to the voice of the wise man, for he says truly, "the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty."

V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Have a picture of a spider's net drawn on the blackboard beforehand.
3. Our lesson to-day is about wise and foolish people. Do you know any wise people? What makes you think they are wise? Do you know any foolish people? Here is the advice of Solomon the wisest man. Hold up the envelope on which is printed the central truth. We know foolish people by their actions.
4. Satan is trying to catch foolish people in his net. Wise people are not caught in Satan's net. Here is one way Satan catches foolish people. Pin a wineglass over the net. Suppose you saw a fly going into a spider's net, what would you say? "Take care! danger!" So when I see a boy or a girl, a man or a woman foolishly getting caught in this net of Satan's I say "Take care! there is danger!"
5. If we are wise, Solomon says, we will not be among wine-bibbers. Better drink the clear, cold water than wine, for in the water there is no danger but safety.
6. Introduce Golden Text. It says "the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty." As you talk about the poverty of the drunkard unpin the wineglass and take it in the hand. The symbols representing wine and water should be made of two-ply of paper. The words "poverty" and "happiness" should be printed on separate pieces of paper and then folded and loosely put inside the wineglass and water glass, so that they might be drawn out



as the teacher speaks of the result of the use of wine and water. This appeals to curiosity characteristic of the child if well used. Reference to wrong eating, as well as wrong drinking should be made in the teaching of this Golden Text. It would be well to review Lesson five at this point

and emphasize the teaching there given. Right eating and right drinking will make the body wise, strong, and useful. Wise people listen to the wise man when he says "be temperate."

LESSON XII—December 20th, 1896.

The Birth of Christ. MATTHEW 2: 1-12.

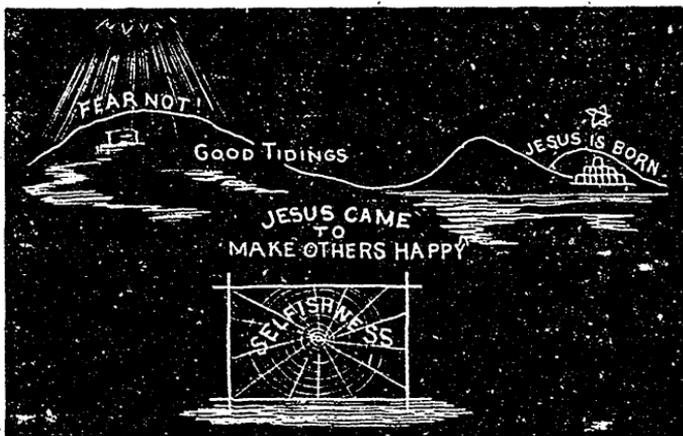
I. GOLDEN TEXT: And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Luke 2: 10.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Make others happy.

III. REVIEW: What did Solomon mean when he said "be temperate?" Who does not like us to be temperate? What was last Sunday's Golden Text? What net of Satan's did we learn about last Sunday?

IV. LESSON STORY: Again we have come to our Christmas lesson. We always love to learn about the little babe whose birthday we celebrate at this time. Soon after Jesus was born, wise men came from the east to Jerusalem and said, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and have come to worship him." They perhaps thought that Jesus was going to be an earthly king, and would likely be born in the royal palace in Jerusalem. When Herod the king heard what the wise men asked, he was troubled, fearing that this new king would come and take his place. So he called all the chief priests and scribes together and asked them where Jesus was to be born, not knowing that he had been born already. They told Herod that the Bible said that Jesus should be born in Bethlehem. When Herod heard this he privately called the wise men and asked them when they had seen the star, and told them to go to Bethlehem and search for the young child, and when they had found him to tell him, so that he might go and worship him too. Then they went to Bethlehem, and the star which they had seen in the east went before them until it stopped

over the place where Jesus was. They were very glad, and when they went into the house and saw Jesus and his mother Mary, they fell down and worshipped Jesus, and opened their treasures, and gave him gifts of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Being warned of God in a dream not to



go and tell Herod where Jesus was (for he was a wicked man and did not want to go and worship Jesus but to kill him), they did not do so, but went home to their own country by another way.

V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. Have a picture of the spider's net drawn on the blackboard beforehand.
3. Next Friday will be Christmas day, and I am sure we will be all thinking about the happy time we are going to have, and perhaps about the presents we hope to get. Satan is going to be very busy this week spreading nets. He is going to try and make boys and girls think about themselves rather than about others. He wants them to forget the words that Jesus spoke "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

4. Tell the story of
 - (a) The shepherds.

- (b) The heavenly host.
- (c) Their message—the Golden Text.
- (d) The birth of Jesus in the stable.
- (e) The visit of the wise men, guided by the star.
- (f) Herod's plot.

As you tell the story put a few marks on the board to represent the hills, and pin to the board three or four pieces of paper cut in the form of crooks to represent the shepherds. Make some white or light yellow lines to represent the light shining down from heaven. On the hill to the right make a few marks to represent the stable, and then pin to the board a small white paper cross for Jesus. Use a star to show how the wise men were guided, moving it till it stands over the place where the young child lay.

5. Unpin the cross from the board and hold it as high in the air as you can, and tell the gospel story.

(a) Of Jesus in heaven and

(b) His coming to earth. What for? To make others happy. One time when Jesus was a man, Satan tried to catch him in his net. The same net that he is going to use to try to catch us this week. But Jesus said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." He did not think of himself, but of others. So we, if we would be like Jesus, should think more of others this week than of ourselves. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

For REVIEW see the October MONTHLY, page 216.

SUGGESTED COURSE OF STUDIES FOR A PRIMARY UNION.

- I. Regular weekly exposition and illustration of the International Lesson.
- II. Conferences on methods and plans of work.
- III. Supplementary Lessons.
- IV. A course in blackboard lettering and drawing.
- V. A course in child nature study.
- VI. Normal Lessons as follows:
 - 1. The Art of Illustrating.
 - 2. Stories.
 - 3. Word Pictures.
 - 4. Object Teaching, uses and abuses.
 - 5. Symbols, " "
 - 6. Blackboard Teaching.
 - 7. Lesson Preparation.
 - 8. Mothers' Meetings.
 - 9. Record Keeping.
 - 10. Jesus the Model Teacher.

A GREAT MISTAKE OF THE PRIMARY TEACHER.

There is perhaps no more common error, none more easily made, than to be constantly teaching the child to try—try—try to do right. It is an easy thing to get the assent of the child "to try." The resolution means very little, and is made again and again and little result comes therefrom. The great truth of the gospel is to give up the will, to surrender the heart, the life to God and to "walk in his ways." To put the self-life under the guidance, direction, management of God. This great truth the primary teacher, and indeed all teachers, must seek to leave with the child-heart. Indeed we must go one step further and seek for a definite action, a positive and permanent committal of the child's life to God, guiding them into giving up their will to God and letting him control their lives. This is trusting in contradiction to trying. Trying that comes before this trusting, trying that does not follow trusting, will end in failure and nothing else. Therefore let us make this great truth a prominent one in our teaching. "Trusting," first committing our life wholly to God's guidance. Surrender of the heart, life and will to his management first, and then "trying."

Teacher Training.

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

TEXT-BOOK: REDFORD'S "PRIMER OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES."
ANALYSIS, NOTES AND ADDITIONS, by Rev. Professor Ross, B. D., Presbyterian College,
Montreal, Quebec.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN MAN.

That Christianity is true appears from the effects which it produces on the heart and life of the man who believes it and lives it.

I. CHRISTIANITY MAKES A GREAT CHANGE IN A MAN'S CHARACTER AND LIFE :

In contrast with other men and with his own previous life the following advantages of a true Christian may be noted :

1. *He is delivered from the power of sin.* Drunkards and other slaves of vice have often tried in vain to reform themselves, but the submission of the heart and life to Christ immediately set them free. 2. *He has obtained a higher ideal of life.* It is not the standard of worldly honor or conventional morality, but the life of the perfect man Jesus Christ. As the Christian grows his ideal grows before him. 3. *He has a more sensitive conscience:* (1) To the evil of sin. He shrinks now not only from the act, but from the very thought of evil. (2) To moral obligation. All his duties are a loving response to a personal benefactor. 4. *He has a fuller and richer joy.* (1) His sense of guilt and consequent fear of punishment have been removed by the atonement. (2) He has constant fellowship with the purest, wisest and most loving of beings. (3) His earthly trials are an apprenticeship for higher service and happiness. "His worst sufferings here are only growing pains." (4) Death is his final deliverance from all evil and his introduction to inconceivable blessedness. 5. *He is much better able to serve others.* (1) His Christ-like spirit is itself a blessing to those around him. (2) Christ has given him a much higher idea of the value and possibilities of every man. (3) All his mental and material possessions are held as a stewardship to be administered for Christ in the service of man. (4) His own experience enables him to be helpful to all earnest seekers after truth.

II. THE NATURE OF THIS CHANGE SHOWS THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN PRODUCED BY TRUTH:

1. It is in opposition to the inclinations and tendencies of his own nature. These made him what he was before his conversion. 2. It is opposed to all the influences which surround him. These shape the world whose spirit is very different from his. 3. Its tendency is upward while the tendency of every falsehood is downward. Truth manifests itself in holiness, self-sacrifice and inward peace; falsehood, in wickedness, degradation and remorse. 4. It has been wrought on men in all ages, nations and circumstances. (1) In ancient times such men as Paul and Augustine had the current of their lives changed by Christian truth, and they mightily changed the thought of their time because they believed on Jesus. (2) In modern days a host of such men as Bunyan, Newton, Finney, and Jerry McAulay have been delivered from iniquity, and made illustrious helpers to others. (3) Among the lowest and vilest of the heathen, Christian truth hath won many such trophies as Africaner, a monster of every kind of wickedness, who became a saint under the preaching of Moffat. 4. When it is fairly understood a Christian character is looked on by the men of every country in the world as the highest moral ideal.

III. THE CHRISTIAN HIMSELF IS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT THE CHANGE HAS BEEN WROUGHT BY GOD:

1. He knows that he did not of himself remove his original enmity to God. 2. He recognizes in the effects produced on his heart, intellect and conscience, the operations of the Being described in the Scriptures. 3. The increasing life within him is an irrefutable evidence of the reality and truth of the Christianity which gave rise to it. It proves that the redemption promised by the gospel is a fact. 4. He is further assured of the truth of Christianity by repeated answers to his prayers. (1) These are too manifold and various to be merely coincidences. (2) Throughout the history of the race these answers to prayer are as wide-spread and continuous as a law of nature. (3) Then there must be a sphere from which these answers come. Thus while the Christian life is an evidence of the truth which all can examine, the Christian himself has a verified knowledge of all the leading truths of Christianity.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

The spread of Christian thought in society has produced results which bear the seal of divine truth.

I. CHRISTIANITY INTRODUCED A NEW AND HIGHER IDEA OF THE INDIVIDUAL MAN :

In heathenism the individual was nothing unless he possessed power, wealth, or learning, which distinguished him from the crowd. Christianity assumed that there is something in every man much more valuable than anything which is peculiar to a few.

1. *It recognized all men as essentially equal before God.* (1) All are guilty of sin. (2) All possess some traces of the image of God, such as conscience and the power of affection. (3) All will live hereafter. (4) Christ died for men of all classes. So it seated the slave and his master at the same communion table and refused to see any difference between them. 2. *It taught that the individual man has a place in the thought of God.* It emphasized this by showing the stupendous character of the provisions made for his redemption. (1) The eternal and unchangeable plan of redemptive love in which the individual has a place. (2) The incarnation and death of the divine Son. (3) The new revelation of God conveyed to angels and other beings by the redemption of the individual man. 3. *It appealed to the voluntary choice of every man.* It laid upon every conscience the responsibility of accepting or rejecting Christ. This way of treating humanity was radically different from driving them in herds into the religion of their rulers.

II. CHRISTIANITY ELEVATED AND PURIFIED FAMILY LIFE :

We can learn its beneficial effects here only by contrasting the present state of things among us with pre-Christian society.

1. *It forbade polygamy.* (1) Monogamy marked a distinct advance on Old Testament legislations. (2) It gave new sanction to the marriage tie and removed many discords. (3) It emphasized the necessity of personal purity. 2. *It assigned a higher place and enlarged opportunities to woman.* (1) In most heathen nations she was little more than a slave; Christianity everywhere makes her the equal of man. (2) This has added new dignity and nobility to man. (3) It has had an incalculably beneficial effect on children. 3. *It added to childhood a sacredness hitherto entirely unknown.* Any Roman father could expose or murder his child if he wished to do so. The greatest names in classic literature approved of this practice. The horror with which the worst men among us regard such a thing shews the change which Christian teaching has produced.

III. CHRISTIANITY TRANSFORMED SOCIETY BY EXEMPLIFYING THE TRUE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN :

1. *It made every Christian the guardian of his brother's welfare.* By serving others he can most acceptably respond to the redeeming love of Christ. (1) It is his duty to make every man a sharer in his own spiritual heritage. (2) To help those less fortunate than himself. (3) To warn the tempted, strengthen the weak, and reclaim the fallen.

2. *It caused new interest to be taken in the suffering and the poor.* (1) Charity in the proper sense is the child of Christianity. (2) All hospitals and asylums are fruits of the Christian spirit. (3) Even the criminal classes are now recognized to have claims to good treatment and ceaseless efforts for their reformation.

3. *It changed the legal and social status of the slave.* (1) It did not preach a crusade against slavery, but it everywhere recognized the slave as a man. (2) It gradually mitigated the severity of slave laws, and very much bettered his condition wherever it had influence. (3) The growth of the Christian spirit finally made slavery impossible in every Christian land.

4. *It gave a new emphasis to the social rights of the freeman.* (1) His right to an equitable share of the profits of his labor. (2) His right to the utmost opportunity possible for developing all his faculties. (3) His right to enjoy the social and political privileges which ought to be common to all.

5. *It has lifted some of the lowest tribes to a fair position of civilization and morality.* As examples, the natives of the Fiji Islands and of the New Hebrides, as well as a number of African tribes, might be mentioned.

IV. CHRISTIANITY HAS CIVILIZED THE RELATIONS OF NATIONS :

1. *It created the modern obligations of one nation to serve another.* (1) It furnishes the clearest evidence of the unity and solidarity of the race, so that the injury of one nation is the injury of all. (2) Therefore the strong are bound to help the weak and the civilized to develop the savage. (3) The citizens of one nation must be protected in another and the interests of justice in all nations furthered.

2. *Its spirit is profoundly opposed to war and has done much to soften its horrors.* (1) Prisoners of war are now generally well treated, instead of being tortured and massacred. (2) The persons of ambassadors, heralds, and of women and children are now always held inviolate. Generally before bombardment warning is given that the weak and defenceless may be removed. (3) It is now generally held that all differences between civilized peoples ought to be settled by arbitration.

3. *It has given to the world a new hope of the unification and progress of the race.* (1) There was a constant, haunting fear of anarchy in ancient times. Nations had prospered through force; by force they might be overthrown. (2) In contrast to this every Christian always believed that Christianity would be finally victorious, and that its victory would be an unspeakable blessing to the world. (3) The vision of universal peace and holy brotherhood, although still unrealized, seems much nearer realization than ever before. Some may say "Many of these things are the results of advancing civilization." It may be asked in reply "What are the forces underneath civilization and what causes it to advance?"

The first Christian Emperor may claim the honor of the first edict which condemned the act and amusement of shedding human blood; but this benevolent law expressed the wishes of the prince, without reforming an inveterate abuse which degraded a civilized nation below the condition of savage cannibals. Several hundred, perhaps several thousand, victims were annually slaughtered in the great cities of the empire, and the month of December, more peculiarly devoted to the combats of gladiators, still exhibited to the eyes of the Roman people a grateful spectacle of blood and cruelty. Amid the general joy of the victory of Pollentia, a Christian poet exhorted the emperor to extirpate by his authority the horrid custom which had so long resisted the voice of humanity and religion. The pathetic representations of Prudentius were less effectual than the generous boldness of Telemachus, an Asiatic monk, whose death was more useful to mankind than his life. The Romans were provoked by the interruption of their pleasures, and the rash monk, who had descended into the arena to separate the gladiators, was overwhelmed under a shower of stones. But the madness of the people soon subsided; they respected the memory of Telemachus, who had deserved the honors of martyrdom, and they submitted, without a murmur, to the laws of Honorius, which abolished forever the human sacrifices of the amphitheatre.—Gibbon,