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The Teachers' Monthly.

Vol. II.

JULY, 1896.

No. 7.

LINKS CONNECTING WITH THE LESSONS OF 1895.

Our last lesson from the Old Testament, December 15th, 1895, told the story of Jonathan's loving leave-taking of David (1 Sam. 20: 32-42). That was the turning point in David's career. For six years thereafter he was an outlaw. The leading events of these years were: (1) While at Naioth king Saul in frenzy tries to kill his son Jonathan; David at Nob receives sacred bread and Goliath's sword from Ahimelech the priest (1 Sam. 21: 1-9). (2) David escapes to Gath in Philistia, but being received with sullen suspicion, feigns madness and flies back again to Judah (1 Sam. 21: 10-15). (3) He takes refuge in a cave near Adullam, a little border town only two miles from the valley of Elah where Goliath was slain, and thirteen west from Bethlehem. Ancient wells and caves are here, one cave with ample accommodations for four hundred men, and the modern Arabic name is identical with Adullam. Here four hundred adventurers, tired of Saul's rule, joined the young captain (1 Sam. 22: 1, 2). They lived by forays on the Philistines, who at this time overran Judah, and by levies made on neighboring towns and planters as the price of David's protection. In this company were his nephews Joab, Abishai and Asahel, a young prophet named Gad, and a number of Canaanite warriors, such as Uriah, Zelek and Ithma. (4) It is interesting to note that according to the inscriptions of Psalms 6, 7, 11, 57, 59 and 142 they were all written after the outbreak of Saul's jealousy and before David's flight to Gath; Psalms 56 and 34 were written while he was there, and Psalm 63 after his flight to the wilderness of Judah. (5) When David's followers had increased to six hundred men (1 Sam. 23: 13) he marched around the lower end of the Dead Sea and left his aged parents at Mispah in charge of the kindly king of Moab, who probably remembered that David's ancestress was a Moabitess. About this time David made the friendship of Nahash, king of Ammon, also (2 Sam. 10: 2) and according to tradition wrote Psalm 27. (6) David returned to the forest of Hareth, probably in the Hebron mountains, near Adullam, where he heard of Saul's revengeful slaughter of the priests at Nob, and took Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, under his protection. (*Hurlbut's Notes*).

Hard as these years of exile were for David to bear, yet they were most fruitful years to him as his apprenticeship for the kingdom, as his "schools and schoolmasters." (1) By his exile among other nations he learned their characteristics and how best to deal with them. (2) He could contrast the effect of their religion with that of the religion of Jehovah, and thus become confirmed in true religion and patriotism. This led to the marvellous development of religious institutions and of the service of song under his administration. (3) The exile experiences preserved him from the dangers to which his sudden elevation to power and popularity would expose him. He learned his weakness and need of divine help. (4) He had the best of opportunities for becoming acquainted with the people, their grievances under Saul, their needs, their dispositions and tendencies. He understood their spiritual as well as temporal wants. (5) He had practice in the art of governing. (6) He gained experience in war. (7) He obtained a knowledge of the country. (8) In this school of fighting men were trained those generals and wise strategists who in the golden days of David's rule commanded his armies, and raised Israel from the obscurity of an "Arab" tribe, who with difficulty held their own among the ancient Canaanites, to the position of one of the great nations of the old eastern world. (Ellicott). (9) He had around him a trained band, like the "old guard" which enabled him to take immediate possession of the kingdom when the time came. (10) Many of his sweetest songs were wrought out by his long and hard experience for the comfort and hope not only of his own people, but for God's children in all ages. (11) In spite of his few lapses from faith and perfect truth, he grew in character and manhood, he became strong in faith and virtue, large-hearted, wise, noble, consecrated to God. (*Peloubet's Notes*).

Notes on the Lessons.

LESSON I—July 5th, 1896.

David King of Judah. 2 SAM. 2: 1-11.

(Commit to memory verses 5-7).

GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." Ps. 97: 1.

PROVE THAT—The Lord knows our hearts. Jer. 17: 10

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 65. *What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?* A. The fifth commandment forbiddeth the neglecting of, or doing anything against, the honor and duty which belongeth to every one in their several places and relations.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 126, 161, 139, 167.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* David King of Judah. 2 Sam. 2: 1-11. *Tuesday.* The first anointing. 1 Sam. 16: 1-13. *Wednesday.* The death of Saul. 2 Sam. 1: 1-12. *Thursday.* Lamentation for Saul and Jonathan. 2 Sam. 1: 17-27. *Friday.* Burial of Saul. 1 Sam. 31: 7-13. *Saturday.* A king's homage. Ps. 21: 1-7. *Sabbath.* The Son of David. Mark 11: 1-11. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

By Rev. JAS. A. BROWN, B. A., Agincourt, Ont.

INTRODUCTORY. In our last lesson in the study of the life and times of David, "David and Jonathan," we find an illustration of the spirit of unselfishness in the matter of true friendship unparalleled in O. T. history. David then became a fugitive and an outlaw. He first visited Nob, at that time the chief sanctuary of Israel, although the ark was at Kirjathjearim. Ahimelech the priest believing him to be on a royal mission gave him some of the sacred "shew-bread" and Goliath's sword (1 Sam. 21: 6; 22: 10). This act of kindness cost Ahimelech and 84 other priests their lives, led also to the destruction of Nob and all its citizens save Abiathar who escaped the fury of Saul. David for a season found shelter in Gath, where he feigned madness in the presence of Achish the king. Driven out he found refuge in the stronghold of Adullam. There he was joined by 400 discontents. His next act was to rescue Keilah from the Philistines. Fearing Saul he fled to Ziph. His whereabouts was made known to Saul by the Ziphites. Pursued by Saul and 3000 chosen men, he generously spared the life of Saul on this as well as on a later occasion. David and his men nobly defended those districts from the Amalekite raiders. Nabal a wealthy citizen of Maon "requited" David "evil for good" (1 Sam. 25: 21). David determined "to wreak a terrible vengeance," but his anger was appeased by the noble Abigail, Nabal's wife. Deserting Saul, David formed a feudal alliance with Achish, king of Gath, and was given the town of Ziklag, agreeing to pay tribute, and to render military service when required. The lords of the Philistines were bitterly opposed to David. Forced to quit the army, he found Ziklag in ashes, and the families of himself and followers taken captives by the Amalekites. With 400 men David pursued, overtook, routed and destroyed all the Amalekites save 400 slaves that escaped. Tidings of Saul and Jonathan's death grieved David exceedingly. The beautiful elegy he composed he bade the men of Judah learn by heart (2 Sam. 1: 19-27).

LESSON PLAN. I. Divine Guidance. vs. 1-3. II. David Anointed King of Judah. vs. 4. III. David's Reign at Hebron. vs. 5-11.

I. DIVINE GUIDANCE. In the death of Saul and Jonathan, the way to the throne was made clear for David. The time for decisive action had come. **After this**—The death of Saul and Jonathan, and David's grief for them assuaged. **Enquired of the Lord**—Through Abiathar, the high priest, respecting "the divine purpose he was chosen to fulfil, and the divine guidance he needed for its accomplishment." There is a divine purpose in the life of every man, which all should strive to realize. David would not choose his own way but entreated the Lord to direct his steps. **Cities of Judah**—The land of his nativity, the people he had deserted. **Go up**—Such as wait upon the Lord, will the Lord strengthen and encourage (Isa. 40: 31). **Unto Hebron**—20 miles south of Jerusalem; one of the oldest cities in the world, "named about 40 times in the Old Testament but nowhere in the New." **2. His two wives**—Bigamy and even polygamy were permitted, but not authorized, in Old Testament times, contrary to the whole spirit and teaching of scripture (Matt. 19: 5; Eph. 5: 25, 31). **3. And they dwelt in the cities of Hebron**—David and his wives, his warriors and their households settled down in the districts of Hebron, David making Hebron his headquarters, the seat of government.

II. DAVID ANOINTED KING OF JUDAH. **4. The men of Judah**—The tribe of Judah often stood by itself and resolved, whatever the other tribes might do, "that they would be ruled by him whom God had chosen." **Anointed David king**—He had been anointed privately by Samuel (1 Sam. 16: 13). The anointing by the elders of Judah "was his public solemn installation into the

royal office." It is supposed that he wrote the 27th Psalm about this time. David was anointed again king over Israel (ch 5: 3).

III. DAVID'S REIGN AT HEBRON. 5. The men of Ja'besh-Gil'e-ad—Jabesh-Gilead, a city to the east of the Jordan. The first message David received when made king was a report of the kindness shewn to the memory of Saul by the valiant men of Jabesh-Gilead (1 Sam. 31: 12, 13). Blessed be ye of the Lord—David's first act as king was to send a message of thanks to the men that shewed kindness to Saul; assuring them at the same time that he would requite them well for it. Their conduct displayed (1) gratitude towards their benefactor; (2) Fidelity towards their king; (3) Reverence towards God. (Pulpit Com.) 7. Be ye valiant—Men of "valor" or "virtue." They had paid their last respects to Saul, and David desired to win them over to himself as Saul's successor. Anointed me king—The men of Judah through their elders anointed him king. It afforded the men of Jabesh-Gilead a favorable opportunity for joining David and acknowledging him as king. 8. Ab'ner—Cousin of Saul (1 Sam. 14: 50). "A prince and a great man" in the army of Saul (ch. 3: 38); "Captain of the host," that was Saul's. Ish-bo-sheth—This name signifies "man of shame." His real name was Ish-ba'al (1 Chr. 8: 33; 9: 39). He proved a weak and inactive king. Indeed he seems to have been little better than a puppet in Abner's hands. (P. Thomson). Ma-ha-na'im—"A walled city of Gilead east of the Jordan." 9. Made him king—Abner was determined to perpetuate the line of Saul on the throne, notwithstanding the Lord had rejected Saul from being king over Israel (1 Sam. 15: 26; 13: 14). Ishbosheth was called of man to be king; David was called of God. The divine calls and appointments in life are supreme. The Ash'ur-ites—Members of the tribe of Ashur in the northwestern part of Galilee. Jezreel was in the southern part, Ephraim in the mountains south of Galilee, and Benjamin, still further south on the borders of Judah. (Peloubet). 10. Reigned two years—Five years were spent in regaining possession from the Philistines. 11. Seven years and six months—the time of David's reign at Hebron.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

By Rev. R. G. McBRIDE, M. A., Winnipeg, Man.

I. *The evident repose and serene trust of David in the Lord.* This is evidenced by his waiting further instructions before taking further action. This waiting for orders would not (humanly speaking) be an easy thing. Events had been of the most stirring kind in this man's life. He had long since been designated to a kingship. Obstacles had been thrown continually in his way. But now the coast seemed clear. Saul was dead. David had poured out his soul in an elegy of magnanimous spirit for the mighty who had fallen. Yet the discipline through which he had passed had taught him not to anticipate and precede the purposes of God, but to wait patiently for him. Serenity was his frame of mind, "my times are in Thy hand" was his song. So should we at all junctures in life trust in the Lord and wait patiently for him.

2. *God reveals the pathway of life's duty to us one step at a time.* He does not open before us great stretches into the future, or place above us the numerous steps of ascending stairways. God mercifully veils the future from us lest its splendor should dazzle us, or its darkness appal us. But one step at a time he will open up the way. This method of God's cultivates our patience and tests as well as develops our faith in him. Our part is to do well our present duty. The issue will never disappoint us in the ultimate. He sees the end from the beginning. Let faith only be strong enough to step out into the seeming void and straightway we shall find the road beneath our feet. All history since the days of the pilgrim patriarch from the other side of the flood who went out not knowing whither he went, proves that. Let us not be too ambitious to discover the

plans of God, rather let us amid the uncertainties be satisfied to cry "keep thou my feet, I do not ask to see the distant scene—one step enough for me."

3. *The important thing is to lay our case before God and take our instructions from him.* It is well to feel that we should consult God about everything.

Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry,
Everything to God in prayer.

We all love to see the picture of the king in later days who took a letter received from another king—a letter which perplexed him sorely, and spread it out before God in the place of prayer and sought his counsel. But we are too prone to seek the advice and counsel of our friends and neighbors on such things. We have some perplexing problem and immediately we away to see some friend in whose judgment we say we have every confidence. This is well in its place. There are many we believe specially fitted by God to counsel others. But God's mercy-seat ought to be the first place sought. We should ascertain his will, praying that he may take away all selfishness and wrong motive and preserve us from being influenced by any considerations other than the highest. David perhaps had been advised by his followers to make some move to check any action being taken by Ishbosheth and Abner, but he wanted to know what God's will was in the matter.

4. *If we seek in the right spirit God will reveal his will to us.* We cannot tell in what way he will do this in each case, but we are

sure he will answer unmistakably. We do not know in what manner the answer came to David, but it was very clear and definite. Sometimes God answers us very distinctly through circumstances. He shuts us up to taking one of two ways by closing the other against us. He stops us in the way by obstacles that we may be led to consider our ways. Sometimes by some passage in the Scriptures flashing its light upon us, even while we speak with him, he tells us of our duty. Sometimes he sends a messenger—a friend or acquaintance at a critical moment to counsel in his name, and help us to a right decision. Many of us have had these experiences, and each can recall his own, but the point to be remembered is that God will reveal his way to those who earnestly seek to know it.

5. *We are shown the beauty of a magnanimous spirit.* David's commendation of the men of Jabesh-Gilead, and his invocation of blessing upon them, because they had given Saul a decent burial teaches this. The lesson is all the more beautiful when we remember the fairness with which David had treated Saul during his life time. Saul had chosen to show himself as an enemy, but David had not retaliated in kind. He had repeated opportunities of taking Saul's life had he chosen. Now that he was dead he displays the magnanimity of true greatness in blessing those who had performed the burial rites of his enemy. His spirit is commendable. Let us not be enemies towards those who may choose to make themselves enemies towards us. Let us see their good points and credit them for these while they live and have nothing spiteful to say of them when dead.

6. *The persistence of an enmity that has been cultivated.* Abner the great general of

Saul refused to be convinced by defeats or any other evidence of the fact of David's right to reign. He confesses (ch. 3: 10) that he had all along known that God would translate the kingdom from Saul's house to David's house. But he had been so trained to contend against David, and had so cultivated a spirit of enmity towards him, that against his own better knowledge he had persisted and made Ishbosheth king over Israel. We should be careful not to feed feelings of enmity and prejudice. Such feelings will grow into veritable clouds that will prevent us seeing the real facts concerning those whom we oppose and blind us to their just rights.

ADDED POINTS.

1. We serve God at times as well by passively waiting as by actively working. "They also serve who only stand and wait."

2. At pivotal points God-reliance is better than self-reliance.

3. It would be a foolish pride that would lead a traveller to take a wrong road rather than confess ignorance by inquiring. Let us understand the limitations of our knowledge.

4. Fair words as to the dead come most appropriately from those who have been fair to them in life. A flower given into the living hand is better than tons of wreaths on the coffin.

5. Before we enter on a divisive course like Abner's, let us think into what civil war and internecine strife we may be plunging those around us.

6. Let us dare to be honest even though it requires us to recede from a position taken openly at a former time.

7. God is not bound by human laws of primo-geniture.

THE BLACKBOARD.

By Rev. R. H. ABRAHAM, D. Sc., Burlington, Ont.

DAVID'S GREATNESS.

F ellowship with God.	vs. 1.
A ffectionate obedience.	vs. 2.
I nquiring the will of God.	vs. 1.
T houghtfulness of others.	vs. 6.
H umble acceptance of trust from God.	vs. 7.
F irm trust in God.	
U niform dependence on God.	
L oyalty to God.	

LESSON II—July 12th, 1896.

David King over all Israel. 2 SAM. 5: 1-12.

(Commit to memory verses 10-12).

GOLDEN TEXT: "David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him."
2 Sam. 5: 10.

PROVE THAT—The Lord rewards the faithful. Ps. 101: 6.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 66. *What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment? A.* The reason annexed to the fifth commandment, is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 127, 140, 107, 119.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* David King over all Israel. 2 Sam. 5: 1-12. *Tuesday.* The people's hero. 1 Sam. 18: 5-16. *Wednesday.* Seeking divine guidance. 2 Sam. 5: 17-25. *Thursday.* David's helpers. 1 Chr. 12: 16-22. *Friday.* Israel's king. 1 Chr. 12: 23-38. *Saturday.* Promises for David. Ps. 89: 19-29. *Sabbath.* The Lord our righteousness. Jer. 23: 1-8. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. In the civil war that followed, the two armies met for the first time at Gib'e-on, midway between Ma-ha-na'im and He'bron, Ab'ner commanding the forces of Israel, and Joab those of Judah. Abner was defeated—loss 360 men, while Joab lost but 20, his brother As'a-hel being among the slain. Ish-bo'sheth foolishly accused Abner of being guilty of treason. Abner deserted Ishbosheth and set to work to make arrangements with David "to bring about all Israel to him." Joab, in avenging the blood of Asahel, foully murdered Abner. In Abner's death Israel lost a great warrior, prince and patriot. Ishbosheth was cruelly murdered by two captains in the army. David ordered them to be executed. This leads us to the study of a new era in the gradual unfolding of the kingdom of God in the history of Israel. Study the 11th and 12th chapters of 1 Chr. Time, 1048 B. C. David 38 years old.

LESSON PLAN. I. David Anointed King of Israel. II. Seat of Government Changed. III. Development of the Kingdom.

I. DAVID ANOINTED KING OF ISRAEL.

1. Then—Marking the dawn of a new era in the national history of Israel. While David regretted the foul murder of Ishbosheth, still he turned to good account the advantage gained thereby. The goal to which Samuel had directed his eye was now reached (1 Sam. 10: 1). **All the tribes**—The twelve tribes through their representatives numbering 339,600 (1 Chr. 12: 23-37). **He'bron**—The seat of government during David's 7½ years' reign over Judah. "They came with a perfect heart to Hebron to make David king over all Israel" (1 Chr. 12: 38). **Saying**—Three reasons given for this action taken by the tribes: (1) David was of their kindred; (2) He had rendered valuable services in the past; (3) It was in keeping with the divine plan and purpose. **We are thy bone and thy flesh**—Denoting nearness and closeness of affinity; one people one race. 2. **In time past**—From the day that David slew Go-li'ath he became the hero of the nation. Saul hated David, but Jon'a-than and the nation loved him. Strong characters are developed amid the "refining fires" of the divine disciplinings. David's past services to the nation were made a ground for their ready acceptance of him as king. **The Lord said to thee**—There is a divine plan and purpose in every human life. The divine guidance is right guidance. The words of the Lord are of supreme importance. **Shalt feed**—"Shepherd," feed, not fleece. Not an owner but a steward. This is the first occasion on which we find the occupation of a shepherd made use of to describe the office of a king. (Pulpit Com.) In Old Testament times the pastoral office was that of the civil rather than the religious ruler. **Captain**—"Prince," (R. V.) 3. **Made a league**—"A covenant." The kings of Israel were not invested with despotic power. When Saul was appointed, "Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book." (1 Sam. 10: 25). An agreement was entered

into, in which David bound himself to govern according to certain laws; and the people pledged their allegiance to him. **Anointed David king**—This was the third time. It was one of the greatest days in the history of Israel. It was made the occasion of a grand national festival of three days rejoicing in Israel (1 Chr. 12: 39, 40). 4. **Thirty years old**—David began to reign at the same age as Jesus was when he entered upon his public ministry.

II. THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT CHANGED.

6. **Jerusalem**—When David was advanced over the larger kingdom he changed the royal residence, transferring it from Hebron to Je-ru'sa-lem. This expedition took place soon after David's coronation. Jerusalem was destined to become the seat of the Hebrew government and the scene of the most extraordinary events. It was subject to more strange and awful vicissitudes than any other city in the world, not excepting Rome. (Milman). **Jeb'u-sites**—The descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham, the inhabitants of Jerusalem. **Take away the blind and the lame**—This seems to be one of the dark sayings in which the Orientals took great delight. The teaching of the passage seems to be that it was a boastful defiance on the part of the Jebusites, thinking that their weakest men would be a sufficient defence against the army of David. Not unlike the taunts and sneers of Sanballat and Tobiah, when Nehemiah entered upon the work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 4: 1-3). The world manifests the same spirit of defiance towards the church to-day. **Thinking**—"saying," meaning thereby. 7. **Took the stronghold of Zion**—The hill on the southwestern part of the city, known afterwards as "the city of David." They miscalculated the strength of the attacking forces. "The Lord was on the side of Israel. 8. **Gutter**—"Watercourse" (R. V.) Josephus thinks the reference is to some underground passage or drain. The meaning of David's words is,

"Whoever will undertake this dangerous enterprise, let him try this underground passage, and when he has entered the fortifications by its means, let him smite the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul." He shall be chief and captain—is not in R. V. It is a quotation from 1 Chr. 11: 6. Possibly David desired some one to supersede Joab; but Joab, with a few men took the fortification. There are the blind (R. V.)—This became a proverbial saying for these poor cripples. 9. Dwelt in the fort—"The stronghold" (R. V.) The victory was David's, who made the citadel his palace, and immediately took steps to fortify the summit. Millo—The rampart or entrenchment of the citadel. (Bible Dictionary).

III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM. 10. Went on and grew—"Waxed

greater and greater" (R. V.) The beginning of a new era of increasing national prosperity and religious progress and activity. The secret of all this prosperity and progress was due to the fact that "the Lord God of hosts was with him." 11. Sent messengers—David being securely established in his kingdom, he opens up trade and commerce with Hiram, king of Tyre. Carpenters and masons—How degenerate Israel had become in skilled workmen, having to import them from Tyre. 12. Perceived—Whatever doubts and misgivings David may have had in the past, he now fully realized and appreciated the fact that he had been divinely called and appointed to rule over Israel. It is a good thing when men truly realize that they are in their right calling in life.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *The saying "Everything comes to him that waits" has much truth in it.* A great many people precipitate failure by "discovering" themselves rather than waiting to be discovered. The divinest right of kings to reign is the right consequent on merit and fitness. A long course of training had brightened and intensified all the splendid natural powers of David till the whole land came to recognise his peculiar fitness to be ruler over it. In the long run men find their level, or rather the world finds it for them. That being true, it becomes the duty of people who are religious patriots and who live under a representative form of government to see that their place in power over them only such men as will command respect, and whose ability and integrity ensure honest administration of public offices. If this were done men would not be seeking places and offices with the deplorable results we so often see, but the places and offices would seek and find the men who ought to fill them. We can all take part in such a christian citizenship movement as this. Religion and patriotism are concurrent, for we would doubt the religion of the man whose soul was so dead that he did not love his country.

2. *Work well done in subordinate positions paves the way for promotion.* David was now being rewarded for the toil and travail of his earlier life. "Thou ledest out and broughtest in Israel." Even though Saul was king the faithful and courageous conduct of his subordinate David was noticed, and ultimately secured practical and open recognition. So in every walk in life we best fit ourselves for a higher position by doing conspicuously well our part in the lower place. This thought should prevent us from feeling that any work however apparently menial is really so in any true sense. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Life has nothing more heroic to shew us than the sight of some man or woman in answer to the call of duty to God and man loyally treading day by day paths of apparent drudgery. Such faithfulness wins

approval from God and recognition (sure though sometimes slow) from the best elements in humanity.

3. *We have here in a figure a noble ideal of duty set before all in authority. Thou shalt feed (shepherd) my people Israel.* The peculiar governmental system of Israel may not be perpetuated, but what an excellent thing it is when the rulers of the people in civil affairs are also competent to be their leaders in religious life. Such men would realise that their sphere lies in the direction of this test—they would not feel that it is their business to get as much as they can out of the people during their term of office, but rather would realise that it is their duty to do as much as they can for the people. To be a good shepherd implies a love for the flock—a genuine interest in their safety and welfare. It involves a willingness to spend and be spent in their service and to count no work done for them as too arduous. Especially is it the duty of the shepherd to look well after the weaker and poorer members of the flock. It is not well for the ruler either in church or state to manifest great interest in the strong and influential people to the exclusion of the weak and the poor. It is more Christ-like to brave the dangerous road and the stormy night in looking for the one that is lost than to enjoy ease with the ninety and nine.

4. *David's capture of Jerusalem was possible only by the companionship of the unseen.* It seems quite clear that the Jebusites considered their position impregnable. In their opinion the blind and the lame could hold it against the trained soldiery of David, as a child in certain situations can withstand a mailed warrior. But the place was important from a strategic standpoint, while within the borders of Judah, it was far enough north to command Israel. Hence the value of securing it and in spite of difficulties "what ought to be can be" with the help of God. Many of the prevalent evils of our time, such as the liquor traffic, seem so solidly entrenched that their supporters laugh at all the efforts of God's people to

destroy them out of the land, but if we co-operate "in the right spirit with God, and fight with God-approved weapons, we shall become might through God to the pulling down of strongholds." Many are the obstacles barring the way, but if God be for us who can be against us? Let there be no faint-heartedness in the hosts of the church, for before its steady advance in Christ's name the sneering Jebusites in every land must give way.

5. *Courage and success will command the admiration of men and win their alliance.* David is scarcely well settled in Jerusalem when Hiram of Tyre sent his congratulations and proffered his valuable help in house-building. The world is not slow to recognise successful achievement. If we are valiant in our assault upon evils, we shall find that many of the lukewarm and the apparently uninterested will come into alliance with us. Enthusiasm and courage are infectious. We should not despise any help proffered unconditionally and in a good spirit, though we should never abate our efforts against evil in any measure to secure the assistance of any who desire and attempt cures that are not radical. Better ten thousand times to fight on single-handed than to make unholy alliances which though for the

time apparently helpful, will kill prospects of thorough and speedy success.

ADDED POINTS.

1. "We are thy bone and flesh." Blood is thicker than water. In Christian work all men are our blood relations—all made of one blood.
2. "The Lord said to thee." In spite of enemies and obstacles God's people will come into their own.
3. Enduring relations must be based on mutual covenants.
4. Those who enter into covenants "before the Lord" should understand the religious nature of the obligation.
5. Maclaren bids us watch the water-courses—the unguarded gullies through which our enemies approach us.
6. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
7. "Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord."
8. Before the steady advance of God's people mountains will become plains and seas will divide.
9. Nothing succeeds like success.

THE BLACKBOARD. THE GREAT KING.

DAVID

 CALLED OF GOD.
 CHOSEN OF THE PEOPLE.
 ANOINTED OF GOD.

GOVERN GOD'S PEOPLE.
LEAD THEM TO VICTORY.
DEVELOP THE KINGDOM.

JESUS

 DECREED OF GOD.
 ANOINTED OF GOD.
 CROWNED OF GOD.

GOVERN }
DEFEND } HIS PEOPLE.
REWARD }

"King of Kings, and Lord of Lords."

LESSON III—July 19th, 1896.

The Ark brought to Jerusalem. 2 SAM. 6: 1-12.

(Commit to memory verses 11, 12).

GOLDEN TEXT: "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." Ps. 84: 12.
PROVE THAT—We must worship God with reverence. Ps. 89: 7.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 67. *Which is the sixth commandment?* A. The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill. 68. *What is required in the sixth commandment?*

A. The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life, and the life of others.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 1, 28, 116, 104.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The Ark brought to Jerusalem. 2 Sam. 6: 1-12. *Tuesday.* The Ark described. Exodus 25: 10-22. *Wednesday.* Captured by the enemy. 1 Sam. 4: 1-11. *Thursday.* Obedience needful. 1 Chr. 15: 1-3, 11-16. *Friday.* David's psalm of praise. 1 Chr. 16: 7-22. *Saturday.* The psalm continued. 1 Chr. 16: 23-36. *Sabbath.* Acceptable worship. Heb. 12: 18-29. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. At the time David was advanced to the larger kingdom, the Philistines ruled the greater part of the country west of the Jordan. They viewed with alarm "the consolidation of the tribes under one able ruler." They resolved to crush David and prevent his independence. In this they were disappointed, as David proved too powerful a foe. The Philistines were routed and put to flight. It was probably at that time that the brave deed of three of David's heroes was performed, in breaking through the Philistines' garrison at Bethlehem and bringing him water thence (ch. 23: 13, 14; 1 Chron. 11: 17-19). David's next step was the restoration of the worship of Jehovah. To-day's lesson begins the study of the revival of religion. Parallel passages 1 Chron. 13: 15, 16. Time 1042 B. C.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Ark Sought After Long Neglect. II. The Ark on the Way. III. The Ark Brought to Zion.

I. THE ARK SOUGHT AFTER LONG NEGLECT. 1. Again—After the great assembly for his coronation, or after the Philistine war, "he assembled them again for the peaceful purpose of bringing up the ark to Mount Zion." In this he had a twofold object. (1) A religious—"testifying David's gratitude to God;" (2) Political—hoping in that way to bind the tribes more closely together as one people. **Chosen men**—denoting usually picked men, but here referring to the representative men of the tribes. **2. All the people**—Having duly consulted with them (1 Chr. 13: 1). **From Ba'ale of Judah**—The old Canaanite name for Kir-jath-Je'a-rim (Josh 15: 9, 60). "From" should read "to," as in the parallel passage in 1 Chr. 13: 6. **The ark of God**—"The ark of the covenant," "the ark of the testimony," so called as it contained the two tables of stone upon which were written the ten commandments. It also contained the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded (Heb. 9: 4). In the tabernacle it belonged to the holy of holies. It was a chest made of acacia wood (Ex. 25; 10). The ark was the central point of religious worship, the symbol of the true religion, and the sign and manifestation of the divine presence. After the children of Israel crossed the Jordan the ark was at Gil'gal for a season. Thence it was taken to Shi'loh, where it remained between three and four hundred years. The sons of Eli carried the ark into the field of battle, where it fell into the hands of the Philistines (1 Sam. 4). The Philistines took it to Ash'dod and placed it by the side of Da'gon. In consequence of the severe judgments of God they were compelled to release the ark to the children of Israel, who lodged it at Kir-jath-Je'a-rim (1 Sam. 7: 1). There it was allowed to remain in obscurity till David, with sacred ceremonies, removed it to Jerusalem. David recognized two things as being necessary to the elevation of his people. (1) "Vigorous, enlightened statesmanship; (2) fidelity in all things to their covenanted God." (Pulpit Com.) **Whose name**—The literal rendering is, "upon which is called the name, the name of Jehovah of hosts, who sits upon the Cherubim." (Bible Com.) **Cherubim**—Placed on the mercy seat at either end facing each other. From between them God was pleased to speak in making his will known. Here was the abiding manifestation of his presence.

a new cart—Contrary to the Levitical law, which required that only the Levites bear the ark (Num. 4: 15). The Philistines handled the ark (1 Sam. 5: 1, 2), and no evil seemed to come to them for so doing. **Abin'a-dab**—The house of Abinadab, called by his name. The ark lodged there 70 years. **The sons**—"Sons" in Hebrew is used in a large sense. They were probably the sons or grandsons of Eleazer, the son of Abinadab. It was natural that they should desire to accompany the ark by the way. Uzzah and A-hi'o drove the new cart with the ark of God, Ahio going before it and Uzzah walking by its side. **5. Played**—Denotes in Hebrew "to dance and rejoice to music, vocal and instrumental" (1 Chr. 13: 8). It is supposed that David wrote the 68th Psalm on this occasion. **Fire wood**—"Cypress." **6. Na'chcn's threshing-floor**—"The threshing-floor of Chidon" (1 Chr. 13: 9). **Took hold of it**—An intended precaution but an inexcusable transgression. "Good intentions do not justify forbidden actions. Two things make a good christian—good actions and good aims." The Philistines were men "without law." Uzzah was a man "under law." **Shook it**—(R. V., "Kicked, broke loose, or stumbled." You must rather leave the ark of God to shake, if it so please God, than put unworthy hands to hold it up. (Bacon). **7. The anger of the Lord**—Not passion but righteous indignation. **Smote him**—Judgment followed closely on the heels of the offender. **Error**—"Rashness" (R. V. marg.), because he put his hand to the ark (1 Chr. 13: 10). **And there he died**—Suffered the penalty of his disobedience. Uzzah ought to have understood the law more perfectly. **8. Was displeased**—"was angry." Probably because his plan of procedure, so far successful, was now broken, and his march intercepted. "When we lie under God's anger we must keep under our own." (Henry). Wrong thoughts about God and his word lead to acts of disobedience. **9. Was afraid**—Anger gives way to fear. His fear was a superstitious dread, rather than "an enlightened, submissive and becoming reverence." **10. Would not remove the ark**—He realized that something radically wrong had been done. Lest another mistake be made, he will seek to know the right thing to be done. **The house of O'bed-Edom**—Uzzah treated the ark with irreverence, David regarded it with dread, but Obed-Edom, the Gittite,

II. THE ARK ON THE WAY. 3. Upon
(137)

welcomed it into his house. Oh, the courage of an honest and faithful heart! (Hall). He was a Levite, of the sons of Korah. "The ark in the house of Obed-Edom may be considered as representing religion in the home, and wherever it truly dwells there is (1) A consciousness of the presence of God; (2) Obedience to his commandments; (3) Confidence in his mercy; (4) The enjoyment of his fellowship; (5) Repose under his protection; (6) The reception of a blessing, "and the Lord blessed Obed-Edom and all his house;" (7) And the promotion of his glory and honor." (Pulpit Com.)

III. THE ARK BROUGHT TO ZION. 12.

It was told—Religion cannot be hid. Like a mirror, the Christian is a reflector of Christ's life and character, "from glory to glory." **Hath blessed**—Every blessing is of the Lord, and those that honor him will the Lord abundantly bless more and more. **Brought up the ark**—The noble conduct of Obed-Edom cheered and encouraged David, and led him to renew his effort to bring the ark to Zion. **To the city of David**—It was one of the greatest days in David's life. It was made an occasion of great gladness. "It was the inauguration of a new and better era in religion." Read I Chr. chapters 15 and 16.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *No nation or man can long remain without religion and feel satisfied.* The exceptions to this statement will be found only in cases where there has been such persistent neglect and defiance of God that the very voice of conscience has been, so to speak, silenced. In the present case, one of the first needs realized after the country had settled down, was the want of a settled religious life and practices. Accordingly the ark which was the symbol of God's presence, and the most concrete emblem of religion, and which had been for seventy years practically forgotten, was remembered. Steps were at once taken to bring it back and arouse the spirit of worship. Thus have we known people in our own time who carrying secularising movements to the extreme, banished the very name of God from their educational system. But the effect on the national life was found to be so disastrous that a return to the religious was sought for in the interests of the general weal. Our hearts and flesh cry out for the living God. Certain parts of the nature, mental and physical, may find employment without religion, but the soul—the man as a whole craves for communion with the infinite, and our instincts of worship will not down at our bidding without great protest.

2. *In succeeding ages God taught religious truth by symbols and types suited to the capacity of the race to understand.* The world of humanity was God's kindergarten, and nothing is more characteristic than the loving and, so to speak, the painstaking way in which he led men on from step to step to behold spiritual truths. The ark of which we here read is an evidence of that. Its several parts as constructed as well as its contents all spoke certain truths in so simple a way that they could be understood in the very childhood of the race. As time advanced and fuller revelations of God were made by law and prophecy, the need of symbols and object lessons became less pronounced, till finally when Christ came the ceremonial law was abrogated, and all passed away fulfilled in him. The hour came when the world no longer needed a central shrine of pilgrimage or some one place of worship, but when men everywhere might in the

name of the great Antitype, worship in spirit and in truth without these aids. The need for this method of teaching had its seat in the fact, that while we are still in the flesh we need the help of some visible signs to convey through the senses a clearer perception of spiritual truth. Hence we find that element in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ. Apart from these in this dispensation we need no elaborate ceremonial in church service, and these who demand it thereby confess a spiritual childhood, and their need of mechanical aids to the religious life.

3. *The large number of people from the whole land bringing the ark was a recognition of the unifying power of a common religion.* Like a wise ruler David did not go with a small body-guard, or one tribe, but apparently with a body representative of the advance parts of the nation, so that the movement would be a national one and have a unifying influence. This too is quite clear in God's training of his ancient people. Amid prevailing polytheism, he retained the purity of monotheistic faith, largely through the influence that meeting at one common altar had upon them. The same thing obtains in our day. The unifying factor in the present age is Jesus Christ, through faith in a common Lord people of the most diverse cast in race and country, and education, meet on a common platform. It is because of the Christ element we have in common that so many churches of different outward form can unite in using the same hymns, studying the same sabbath-school lessons, and belonging to the same great non-denominational organizations. It is also evident from recent events that faith in a common Lord is the strongest factor in maintaining "peace on earth" between the nations.

4. *Our emotional nature allowed full play in religion may produce enthusiasm at the expense of reverence.* This seems to be taught us here in the case of both David and Uzzah. The former in well-meant hurry being led to adopt inconsiderately a wrong way of transporting the ark, and the latter being so carried away that he thinks he must interpose his hand to

save the ark of God from destruction. It was expressly commanded that the ark should be carried by the Levites, and there was a direct prohibition even against those who carried it touching it on pain of death (Num. 4). Perhaps as one says, the ark had been so long in the house of Abinadab, that Uzzah had become very familiar with it and forgot its awful sanctity as representing the presence of God. We should guard against emotional enthusiasm leading us to over familiarity with holy things. Amid the enthusiasm of conventions we have heard people speak of God and pray to God in exceedingly familiar and colloquial terms. We should not forget as Uzzah did the supreme holiness and majesty of the Almighty. Neither should we essay by unscriptural methods (however well-meant) to support the church and the work of God.

5. *The house of Obad-Edom blessed through the presence of the ark, is a standing argument for religion in the home.* Evidently the household had appreciated the privilege they enjoyed, and hence had reaped the benefit. As there is no mention made of the household of Abinadab profiting by the ark having been with them, we have another illustration of the way in which privileges may be made good use of or not. A family Bible on the centre-table

may look well, but if it is not used in the right way it brings no blessing to the home. What a blessing family religion is! It unifies and solidifies the household—it makes the joys of life brighter—it makes the sorrows easier to bear—it sanctifies all trial and all trouble, and ennobles the whole round of living. Let us seek to have the presence of God bless our homes as it blessed the house of Obad-Edom.

ADDED POINTS.

1. Augustine prayed: "we were made for thee O God and our souls are restless till they find thee."
2. Religion overflows into music. Infidelity has no song.
3. Severe diseases require severe remedies. Grave offences bring great punishments.
4. David got into a better frame of mind when he confessed personal unworthiness.
5. It was wise to leave the ark until the law of God concerning it could be learned and followed.
6. Religion ennobles whatever it touches.
7. If religion was good for the house of Obad-Edom it was good for all Israel. If it is good for others it is good for us.
8. Only the religious soul can understand the religious joy of others.

THE BLACKBOARD.

THE ARK OF GOD A SYMBOL OF TRUE RELIGION.

NEGLECTED—

BROUGHT

OBSERVED—

DEATH

|

BLESSING

UZZAH.

to

OBED-EDOM.

Brings

SORROW.

JOY.

SADNESS.

GLADNESS.

DEATH.

LIFE.

RELIGION A BLESSING TO THE **H**OME.
HEART.

LESSON IV—July 26th, 1896.

God's Promises to David. 2 SAM. 7: 4-16.

(Commit to memory verses 12, 13).

GOLDEN TEXT: "In thee O Lord, do I put my trust." Ps. 71: 1.

PROVE THAT—The Lord's kingdom is everlasting. Ps. 145: 13.

SHORTER CATECHISM Quest. 59. *What is forbidden in the sixth commandment? A. The sixth commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbor unjustly, or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.*

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 129, 179, 91, 167.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* God's promises to David. 2 Sam. 7: 1-16. *Tuesday.* David's response. 2 Sam. 7: 18-29. *Wednesday.* The promise remembered. 1 Chr. 28: 1-10. *Thursday.* The promise fulfilled. 1 Kings 8: 12-21. *Friday.* Precious promises. Ps. 132. *Saturday.* A firm covenant. Jer. 33: 14-22. *Sabbath.* The established throne. Heb. 1: 1-12. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. After the ark had lodged three months in the house of Obed-Edom it was taken to Jerusalem. On this occasion it was carried, not on "a new cart," but on the shoulders of the levites. David was dressed in a priestly robe called the ephod. The ark was carried along with, song, music and dancing, in which David took a most enthusiastic part. When Michal, David's wife, who had been brought up in a court where heart-religion was little cared for, saw the procession, and what she considered David's undignified conduct, "she despised him in her heart." David was in no way discomfited, but with solemn and befitting ceremonies set the ark up in a tent prepared for it on Zion. It is generally believed that Ps. 24 was written for this festive procession. Parallel passages 1 Chron. 17: 1-27. Place, Jerusalem. Time, 1043 B. C.

LESSON PLAN. I. A Forbidden Purpose. vs. 4-11. II. A Kingdom Promised. vs. 12-16.

I. A FORBIDDEN PURPOSE. When David thought of the lowly abode of the ark of the Lord, a frail tent, in comparison with his own stately palace of cedar, he resolved to build a splendid and desirable temple "for the name of the Lord, the God of Israel" (1 Kings 8: 17, R. V.) With this noble purpose in view he took counsel with Nathan the prophet.

4. That night.—"The same night." (R. V.) that David had been speaking with Nathan. **The word of the Lord.**—In a night vision (v. 17). **Came unto Nathan.**—It is evident that not all the words spoken by the prophets of the Lord were inspired. It was only on great and solemn occasions that they spoke under the direct influence of the spirit of God. Nathan's words, as recorded in v. 3, were spoken rashly and unadvisedly. How differently did he speak of the same purpose when under the direct influence of God's spirit, as seen in our lesson. "Nathan spoke the words in v. 3 not in God's name but from himself; not as a prophet, but as a wise and good man, but God soon rectified the mistake." (M. Henry). **Nathan.**—A distinguished prophet that lived in the reigns of David and Solomon.

5. Go and tell.—Nathan was divinely commissioned to bear a message from the Lord to David. **Thus saith the Lord.**—Whatever advice men may give, it is the Lord's word that bears the stamp of authority and is of supreme importance. **Shalt thou build me?**—The answer implied is "Thou shalt not" (1 Chr. 17: 4). The reason why is given in 1 Chr. 28: 3. David's purpose was worthy but unseasonable (1 Kings 8: 18; 2 Chr. 6: 8).

6. I have not dwelt.—In any fixed place because of the unsuitableness of the times, and the unsettled condition of the nation. **I have walked in a tent.**—Literally, "I have walked continually; that is, I have ever been a wanderer, first in the wilderness, and subsequently at Gilgal, Shiloh, Nob and Gibeon." (Pulpit Com.) **In a tent.**—referring especially to the outward coverings of skins. The tabernacle had special reference to the framework of boards and its general structure.

7. In all the places.—"In all places" (R. V.) During their wanderings in the wilderness, as well as the period of their unsettled condition in the promised land in the time of the Judges. **Any of the tribes of Israel.**—In 1 Chr. 17: 6 it reads "the Judges" for "the tribes." The meaning of the passage seems to be that from

the time they entered the promised land, when first one tribe and then another held "a temporary ascendancy," to none of them did God give command to provide a settled place for his worship, nor did any one of the Judges conceive the thought of making his tribe permanently the chief by providing a fixed abode for the ark and for God's worship within its borders. (Pulpit Com.) **To feed my people Israel.**—The shepherd was the ruler, and to feed was to govern, yet in a kindly way like a shepherd, leading the way. **8. I took thee from the sheeppcote.**—"The meadow." Observe the gradual unfolding of the divine plan and purpose, and his direct and absolute control. "I brought up the children of Israel" (v. 6). "I have walked in a tent" (v. 6). "I commanded to feed" (v. 7). "I took thee from the sheeppcote" (v. 8). "I will appoint a place" (v. 10). Nothing could be clearer than that these strange and mysterious movements were fulfilling the divine purpose. **To be ruler.**—David was divinely called from being a shepherd lad in the pasture fields of Bethlehem-Judah, to be a "shepherd-ruler" over the chosen people of God. **9. I was with thee.**—Many a time David had been in great peril, he suffered many a privation, experienced bitter trials, yet he was spared and sustained because the Lord was with him (1 Sam. 18: 12). **All thine enemies.**—Because they were the enemies of God and of his kingdom. **A great name.**—One of the greatest names among Old Testament worthies is David's. "The fame of David went into all lands" (1 Chr. 14: 17). **10. I will appoint a place.**—Some read "have appointed." This became an accomplished fact, when all the tribes were consolidated into one kingdom. **Dwell in a place of their own.**—They were now to enter into their rightful possession of the promised land. Henceforth the royal palace and the tabernacle were to continue in a fixed place. Jerusalem was to form the grand centre of the national and religious life of the people. **Afflict them.**—Oppression and conquest were impossible so long as they remained loyal and obedient unto the Lord. **11. Since that time.**—Referring to the troublous times and servitudes of Israel during the period of the Judges. **Caused thee to rest.**—After the times of war and disquietude came times of peace and rest. After the storm comes the calm.

II. A KINGDOM PROMISED. 12. When—From recounting past mercies, the prophet proceeds to speak of one of the most important prophecies in the Old Testament. **Thou shalt sleep**—Death is often spoken of in the Bible as a sleep. David, in common with all true believers, was to enter heaven through the portal of death. **Thy seed**—In one sense referring to Solomon, David's son and successor, and the builder of the temple; but in a deeper and grander sense does it refer to Christ and his eternal kingdom (Acts 2: 30, 31). 13. **Establish the throne**—Solomon's temple

finds its true explanation in Christ's kingdom. The temple says Kiel, was a symbol of Christ's incarnation. 14. **His Father . . . My Son**—The oneness of Christ with the Father (Ps. 2; John 17: 21). **Commit iniquity**—refers to Solomon, but in no sense to Christ. 15. **Before thee**—Not in point of time, but in thy presence. The sceptre did not depart from Judah till Shiloh (Jesus) came. 16. **Thy kingdom**—The kingdom of Christ is an everlasting kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb. 12: 28).

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *There are apparently times when it is necessary to have conflicts to gain peace.* In the opening words of this chapter that lesson emerges. Electrical storms are violent and oftentimes dangerous, but they clear the atmosphere. In that view there have been wars on which God has unmistakably set the seal of his approval. The ideal is peace, and God would have us keep that as a goal before us, but to reach it we have sometimes to pass through conflicts. Let us be careful however that we do not seek conflicts to gratify our own pride, or feed our own vanity. But we are not to shrink from them if we realise that the cause of God requires us to enter upon them in order that the world with which we have to deal may become "first pure, then peaceable." David had contended valiantly for the truth amid many discouragements, but now the din of fight was becoming less distinct and "the Lord gave him rest round about from all his enemies." No one who fights for God will fail of reaching the ultimate rest.

2. *The contrast, wherever seen, between the magnificence of private residences and the poverty-stricken appearance of God's house should affect us.* In the second verse we see how it affected David. It made him feel ashamed to think of his living in a cedar palace erected by the skilled workmen from Tyre, while the ark of God was resting only under the shelter of the curtains in the tent of meeting. There are many people who do not seem to be affected in that way. They want upholstered furniture in their own homes, but think that cheap wooden chairs are good enough for the house of God. The contrast above spoken of when seen ought to move us either to reduce our own luxurious surroundings, or make the house of God more in keeping with our own. This opens up the whole question of church buildings—what degree of elegance, comfort, etc., should, they have? We cannot enlarge here, but a safe general principle seems to be that the church ought to be in keeping with the rest of the district in which it is situated. We do not honor God by leaving his house neglected and shabby. Haggai's great question was: "Is it time for you, oh ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses and this house lie waste." At the same time an over-

anxious spirit to appeal to the æsthetic is not commendable. Our worship of God is not dependent on our surroundings in that sense.

3. *The desire to honor God is commendable whether we are able to accomplish it in the way we intend or not.* Some one has well said that it is a beautiful thing to see a son in such harmony with his father that he is always desirous of doing something to please him, yet the father while greatly pleased with the son's desire, might not think it wise for all concerned that the son should carry out that desire in the particular way he wished. That was the position here. It was pleasing to God to know that David was desirous of doing everything that would honor him, but he did not desire David to build the temple then and there. A more opportune time would come, and even a more fitting instrument. We should not think that when God thwarts our desire to do some special thing for him, that he is therefore displeased with us. He may be and is always pleased with the feeling that prompts our desire, but he may judge that it is best to have it carried out by someone else at a more fitting time.

4. *Even those who are near to God may mistake his mind in special cases.* Nathan in the third verse seems to have spoken as if on impulse from his general knowledge of the fact that God was with David, and that David was striving to be in harmony with the purpose of God. But Erdmann says that "by the conversation held with David during the day, Nathan's soul with all its thoughts and feelings was concentrated on David's great and holy purpose; this was the psychological basis for the Divine inspiration" which appears, when on the following night Nathan returned to David with a special message in the form of a question, whose form requires a negative answer. Yet the sequel proves that those who are loyal to God, and who wait in the hush of their spirits for the command of God will have his way made clear to them, even though it may come in some way that will turn them away from cherished and (in the proper time and place) good purposes. "He that believeth shall not make haste."

5. *When God blocks our good aspirations in one way, he opens up some more splendid way*

to their realization. David sought with the best motives to build a house for God instead of the tabernacle. God blocked his way, but opened up to him in the promises made an infinitely greater vista filled with more glowing visions of a kingdom's glory. To build a temple for God would have been a great privilege and honor, but to become the great head of a house in which the greater "Son of David" was to appear was an infinitely larger honor and mark of God's favor. Our prayers are not always answered in the way and at the time we ask. God's ways are not our ways always. He sees the end from the beginning, and with the Divine conceptions of life knows how to bestow the best things. In our own experiences we shall realise that however our desires seem to be unnoticed, they are not so in reality. "Think not you the father hath not heard your prayer. You shall have your desire *some time, some where.*"

ADDED POINTS.

1. David's anxiety to perform religious reforms was good. Let us not be weary in well doing.

2. But we are not to anticipate God's leading and go before his plans.

3. David's promotion from the sheep fold to the throne was a warrant of God's presence. The past is a guarantee of the future in this way.

4. The servants of God win eternal fame. "I have made thee a great name."

5. Even righteous wars may become a barrier to participants in them being made workers in the temple of the Lord. David had shed "much blood."

6. The work will go on though the workers fall. David's successors would carry it forward.

7. It is a mark of true righteousness to accept the fact that we cannot see the victory soon and at the same time cheer with one last word our surviving comrades to win it.

8. Victories are won by the occupants of unnamed graves as much as by the surviving hero whom the nation decorates.

THE BLACKBOARD.

GOD'S PROMISES

TO

DAVID.

GREAT NAME.

TEMPORAL KINGDOM.

DIVINE . . .

HIS FOLLOWERS.

GREAT HONOR.

SPIRITUAL KINGDOM.

PRESENCE.
PROTECTION.
PEACE.

WEIGHTS AND WINGS.—A Christian physician, whose career had been full of faith and noble ministry, gives this experience: He was a poor boy, and a cripple. One day he was watching some other boys on the ball field. They were active, strong and wealthy. As he looked on, his heart grew bitter with envy. A young man who stood beside him noted the discontent on his face, and said to him: "You wish you were in those boys' place, don't you?" "Yes, I do," was the answer. "I reckon God gave them money, education and health," continued the young man, "to help them to be of some account in the world. Did it never strike you that he gave you your lame leg for the same reason—to make a man of you?" The boy gave no answer, and turned away; but he did not forget the words. They stayed in his heart until they kindled hope and courage there, helping him to rise above his deformity. He soon learned that what was true of his lame leg was true also of all the difficulties, hindrances and hard conditions of his life—they were all God's gifts to him to help him to be of some account in the world—to make a man of him.—*S. S. Times.*

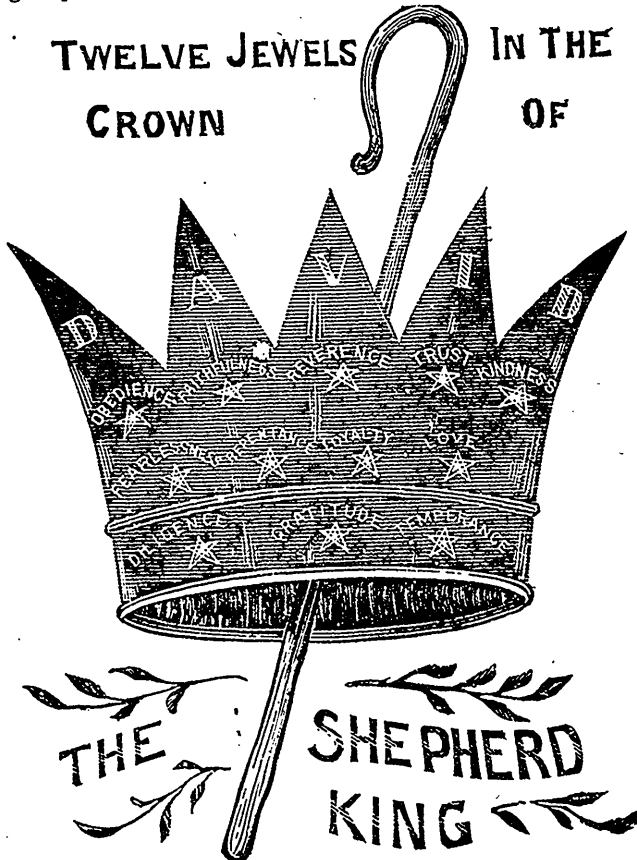
Primary Department.

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

PRIMARY PREVIEW—THIRD QUARTER, 1896.

The lessons of the Third Quarter are all about David. They may be grouped in a very interesting and attractive way, as suggested in the cut. For this purpose use a spare blackboard and have drawn on it, with yellow chalk, an outline of a crown, and with brown chalk a shepherd's crook. This, with the words "David, the shepherd-king" printed with red chalk, may be made ready for the 1st lesson and kept in view throughout the whole Quarter. As each lesson is taught one jewel should be added to the crown. These may be made of pieces of tin or gilt foil crumpled up and roughly shaped and pinned to the crown, with the name written over or under each one. They should at least be one and a-half inches square and might be larger. As a help to attract and keep the attention of the children in review, and on Review Sunday it might be well each week to prepare an abstract from the past Sunday's blackboard lesson. Put the abstract on an ordinary piece of plain white writing paper about six or eight inches square, fold it up and pin it underneath the representation of the jewel, so as to be hidden or nearly hidden from sight. For example: Lesson I—the abstract might be a pen and ink sketch (no matter how roughly made) of a Bible, with the words "I will enquire and obey." Lesson II—a sketch of a crown and a cross, with the words "I will grow like Jesus." Review each Sunday as time will permit, occasionally unpinning the jewel and showing the picture. On Review Sunday review the whole.

TWELVE JEWELS IN THE CROWN OF



LESSON I—July 5th, 1896.

David the King of Judah. 2 SAM. 2: I-II.

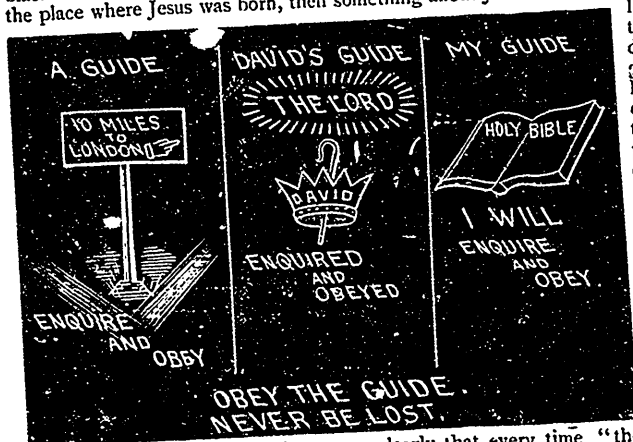
I. GOLDEN TEXT: "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." Ps. 97: 1.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: David, the Obedient King.

III. REVIEW. How many times did Jesus appear to his disciples on Resurrection day? How did he prove to them that his body was not that of a spirit? What did Jesus do before he left his disciples? From what mountain did Jesus ascend into heaven? What was my prayer last week? (See *Primary Quarterly for Little Folks*).

IV. LESSON STORY: David, the shepherd, is made king in our lesson story to-day. All this Quarter we are going to learn about him and call him the shepherd-king. In the last lesson story we had from the Old Testament we learned about the parting between the two loving friends, David and Jonathan. For six years after this David wandered about from place to place to escape and hide from the wicked Saul, who was trying to kill him. Sometimes he had no better home than a cave, and often found it hard to get enough to eat and drink, but all the time God took care of him. Saul and Jonathan both died in battle. When David heard of this, and knew that he need not hide any longer for fear of Saul, he asked God where he should go. God told him to go to Hebron. He obeyed God, and with his family and men who were with him went and lived in Hebron. There the men of Judah came and made him their king. After the death of Saul the men of Jabesh Gilead cared for the body of Saul and buried it. When David heard this he sent kind messages to these men, blessing them and wishing that God would show kindness to them, as they had shown kindness to their king. Abner, the captain of Saul's host, took Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, who was then forty years of age, and brought him to Mahanaim and made him king over all the rest of Israel, except Judah, and he reigned for two years.

V. HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON STORY: Draw an outline of the map of Palestine on the blackboard. Mark Bethelcm, Jerusalem and Hebron. Speak of David's home, Bethlehem, the place where Jesus was born, then something about Jerusalem, as it is the centre of so many



lessons. Tell how, after the death of Saul, David did not know where to go and asked God what he should do. David obeyed God and went to Hebron. Have prepared a shepherd's crook and a crown (made of cardboard and gold paper). First show the crook and move it from place to place until Hebron is reached. When he is made king show the crown and fasten the two together, and tell the children that our lessons for this Quarter are about David "the shepherd king."

It would be well to explain here very clearly that every time "the crook and the crown symbol" is shown it means David, "the shepherd king." Be sure that the children know something about David, do not take too much for granted. Perhaps it would be well to repeat the 23rd Psalm together and speak of it. Indeed it would not be amiss to repeat it every Sunday for the Quarter.

VI. HOW TO TEACH THE APPLICATION: David did not know what to do or where to go. Once upon a time a man came to a place where two roads branched. He did not know which way to go, but he saw a guide post like this one. (Here pin to the board or draw roads and a

guide post). When the man saw the way the guide post directed him he obeyed it, and it brought him safely to his journey's end. So David enquired of his guide, who was "the Lord," and when he was shown where to go he obeyed and was made king. We, too, have a guide (pin symbol of Bible to blackboard). We read it very often, but if we do not obey it we will not keep on the right road, as the traveller did, nor be made truly great as David. Obey the Guide, never be lost!

LESSON II—July 12th, 1896.

David, King Over all Israel. 2 SAM. 5 : 1-12.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "David went on and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him." 2 Sam. 5 : 10.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: David, the Loving King.

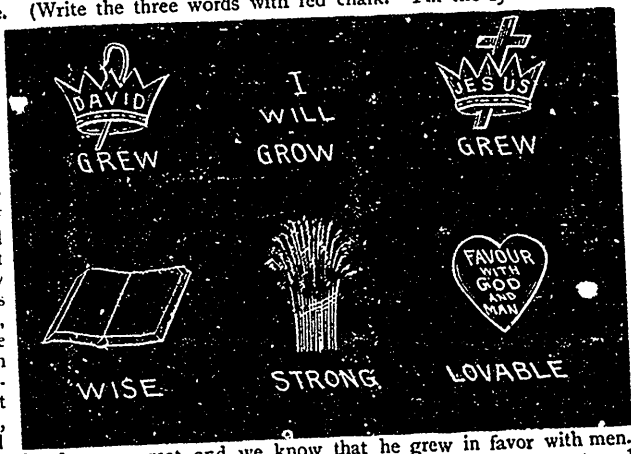
III. REVIEW: Who are we learning about in our lesson stories this Quarter? By what name are we calling him? After the death of Saul where did God tell David to go? What took place there? What was my prayer last week? (See Primary Quarterly for Little Folks).

IV. LESSON STORY: David, the shepherd, was crowned king of Judah in our last lesson story. In to-day's we learn that he was made a still greater king, for after the death of Ishbosheth, all the tribes of Israel came to Hebron and made him king over all Israel. Now he was a great king. He and his men went to Jerusalem. This city David wanted for his capital, for it was well suited for that purpose; but some enemies, the Jebusites, lived there. So David and his men had to fight against them and drive them out. Mount Zion, the highest part of the city, was a fortress surrounded on three sides by deep valleys. This fortress the Jebusites held, and thought there would be no fear of David and his men taking it; but he did, and drove them all out, and lived there himself and called it the city of David. He afterwards build round about it and made it a beautiful city. Hiram, king of Tyre, sent messengers to David with cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons, and they built David a beautiful house. David grew greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts was with him.

V. HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON STORY: Reproduce the map used last week. Show that David had been made king only of a small part of the country. Pin "the crook and the crown symbol" and mark out the territory he reigned over. Now tell how the people came from the other parts of the country from all the tribes of Israel, and made him their king.

VI. HOW TO TEACH THE APPLICATION: When Jesus was a boy we are told he grew wise, strong and lovable. (Write the three words with red chalk. Pin the symbol of the

cross and crown to the black board). What made Jesus grow wise? He loved nature, he read good books, he studied the scriptures. So should we. (Pin or draw Bible). What made Jesus grow strong? Good food, plenty of sleep, exercise and cleanliness. What made Jesus grow lovable? He was loving, he was obliging, he was obedient, he was kind. Although David, "the shepherd-king," lived a great many years before Jesus, he too grew wise, and our golden text tells us he also grew great, and we know that he grew in favor with men. What made him grow like that? Our golden text says "David went on and grew great, and the Lord of hosts was with him."



LESSON III—July 19th, 1896.

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem. 2 SAM. 6 : 1-12.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "O, Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee." Ps. 84 : 12.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: David, the Worshipping King.

III. REVIEW: Where did we find the shepherd-king in our lesson story last Sunday? What took place there again? Where did David and his men go? What took place there? What was my prayer last week? (*See Primary Quarterly for Little Folks.*)

IV. LESSON STORY: When David, the shepherd-king, made Jerusalem his capital and did so much to make it beautiful, he did not forget to have a place there for God's worship. He set up a tabernacle and thought it was now time that the ark of God should be brought into his house again. The ark was a chest of wood about four feet long and two and a-half wide, plated within and without with gold. The lid, or cover, was of solid gold and was called "the mercy seat." Upon it two golden figures of Cherubim faced inward and covered it with their wings. Seventy years before this the ark had been taken from Shiloh, had been captured by the Philistines, then given back by them again to the Israelites, who took it to Kirjath-jearim, where it had remained ever since. David gathered the people together and went with them to Kirjath-jearim to get the ark. They set it on a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab. The two sons of Abinadab, Uzzah and Ahio, drove the cart, and David and the people played on musical instruments. When they came to the threshing-floor of Nachon, Uzzah disobeyed God's command and took hold of the ark and God smote him and he died. David was afraid and said, "How shall the ark of the Lord come to me?" and would not bring the ark into the city, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom. There it remained for three months, and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his house. When David heard this he went up and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with joy.

V. APPROACH TO THE LESSON: Our lesson story to-day is about a great procession. For the sake of system and order in our teaching, suppose we divide our lesson into three parts, and say to the children that we want to tell them to-day about three processions. 1st. Whoever saw a procession? As the children tell you, or as you tell them, or perhaps both, make some rough marks on the board to represent men, and horses, and wagons, and chariots, etc., etc. Anything seen in a procession.

VI. HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON STORY: 2nd. Show a picture of the ark and pin it to the board. Tell about it. Make some marks in the distance on one side for Kirjath-jearim; then on the other some more marks for Jerusalem. Now picture as vividly as possible David, the shepherd-king, and his thirty thousand men, marching from Jerusalem to Kirjath-jearim, and returning with the ark. Make an Oriental ox-cart out of paper and pin it to the board, under the ark. Now move both along to about the centre of the blackboard.



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VII. HOW TO TEACH THE APPLICATION: Tell of the

thoughtlessness of Uzzah and his punishment. Also of the blessedness of Obed-edom and his house, making the lesson a warning against irreverence and thoughtlessness. As you speak of these two men, draw below the two hearts, and as a concluding thought, speak of the third procession, men and women, boys and girls, some thoughtless, some blessed. To which company in the great procession do you belong?

LESSON IV—July 26th, 1896.

God's Promises to David. 2 SAM. 7 : 4-16.

I. GOLDEN TEXT : "In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust." Ps. 71 : 1.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT : David, the Trusting King.

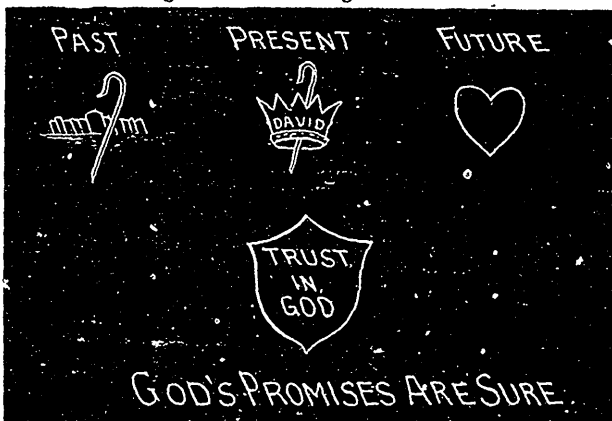
III. REVIEW : What did David not forget to do when he made Jerusalem his capital? What do you know about the ark? Why was Uzzah smitten by God? What did David do with the ark? What was my prayer last week? (See *Primary Quarterly for Little Folks*).

IV. LESSON STORY : When David, the shepherd-king, brought the ark to Jerusalem he placed it in the tabernacle on Mount Zion. From the time the Israelites left Egypt, as they wandered about from one place to another, they could not have a temple or a church as we have to worship God in, but had to have a large tent or tabernacle, so that they could "pitch it" or put it up when they stayed at a place and take it down and carry it with them when they left for another. It was in such a tabernacle the people worshipped God in Jerusalem, and there the ark of God was placed. As from his own magnificent palace of cedar David looked upon this tabernacle, he perhaps thought to himself, Why should my house be so much more beautiful than God's house? Then he purposed to build for God a beautiful temple made of gold, silver, brass, iron, timber and stone, where the people could worship him instead of worshipping in the tabernacle as they did now. Although this wish of David's was good and right and pleasing to God, yet God did not see fit to grant it just as David had purposed. He told David that he could not build his house, for he had been a man of war, and much blood had been shed in his reign. Beside this he wanted him to do many other things for him, and told him that he could get all the materials ready for the temple and that Solomon, his son, who should come after him, whose reign should be one of peace, should build it. God also made many other kind promises to David and said, "Thy house and thy kingdom shall be established forever."

V. HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON STORY : As we tell of David wanting to build the temple, show picture of the ark (used last week), the tabernacle and the temple. Dwell upon the difference between the two places of worship. Tell of Nathan's visit to David, and his message that it was Solomon, and not he, who should build the temple.

VI. HOW TO TEACH THE APPLICATION : Our object to-day is to teach "trust in God." Show a shield and speak of truth as being a shield from danger. Tell how God reminded

David that in the past he had been with him, and taken care of him, and shielded him. The reason of this is shown in the words of the golden text, "In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust." Make a picture of the sheep-fold, put the shield of trust over it. If you have a picture of a lion and a bear pin them to the board. Make a long stroke for a giant. As each one of these is pinned on the board cover them with the shield and teach that as David trusted in God so God shielded him from each danger. As in the past so in the present. David, the shepherd-king, was shielded from his enemies. Cover "the crook and crown symbol" with the shield. As in the past and present, so in the future, as with David. God will shield us if we trust in him. Trust in God, his promises are sure!



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 SOCIAL EFFECTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

(Continued.)

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 Island 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 admirable outline of CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES by Professor Ross, which is concluded in this number will be repeated in monthly instalments during the remainder of the year. It should be read in conjunction with the text-book, Redford's "Primer of Christian Evidence." The price is 50 cents and copies may be obtained through any bookseller, or by remitting the money to the convener, or the vice-convener, Rev. W. Farquharson, Claude, Ont.