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In all the hurry and worry, Wherever our busy lives go, There's a rest we may take in the harness, Though tolling the while; for we know That only a veil doth divide us

For the gates of that upper city Are not shut at all by day; And the "songs in the night" that "He giveth," But songs overheard are they From the sinless inhabitants yonder

But as on "that other disciple" The light of his coming brake, The glorious light of his staying Is present to eyes that wake; And wherever our earthly dwelling, Or wheresoever we roam, Just over our time-held eyelids, Hovers eternal home.

The Sabbath-School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON. Fourth Quarter-Lesson X. - Dec. 8

SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.

GOLDEN TEXT.—She came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. —Matt. 12: 42.

THE FAME OF SOLOMON.—Ver. 1. The fame of Solomon's wisdom extended throughout the then known world, and from all countries came persons to hear him and to see his works. The magnificent temple Solomon had built in the name of the Lord, was the chief occasion of his fame. It was recognized that his wisdom and knowledge were the gift of God.

THE QUEEN OF SHEBA COMES TO SEE SOLOMON.—Vers 1, 2. And when the Queen of Sheba, Sheba or Sabea, was a wealthy region in Southern Arabia, on the southeastern shores of the Red Sea. It was reckoned to be the richest, most highly favoured land in the ancient world, and therefore was given the name of "The Happy." Josephus calls this Queen "the Queen of Ethiopia and Egypt," and the Abyssinians claim her as theirs. It is possible that her kingdom may have extended to both sides of the Red Sea, and thus included part of Africa.

ROYAL GIFTS.—Vers. 10-13. And she gave (see under ver. 2). The navy also of Hiram Hiram was king of Tyre, and with him Solomon had a joint commerce. Gold from Ophir. It is perhaps impossible to identify this place with any degree of precision. The opinions of scholars may, however, be practically reduced to two. The first would place Ophir in India; the second, in Southern-Arabia. In favor of India is the three years' voyage most of the other treasures brought back by the fleet, exclusive of gold, are Indian products.

SOLOMON'S WISDOM.—Vers. 3-5. And Solomon told her all her questions, etc., i. e., answered all her questions without any exception. The reader may be entertained, if not instructed, in seeing what kind of problems are conceived by the Orientals to have been submitted to the sagacity of Solomon. According to their accounts, the princess sent ambassadors with a letter to Solomon before she went herself. With them she sent five hundred youths dressed like maidens, and the same number of maidens like young men, with instructions that they were to behave accordingly in the presence of Solomon. She sent also a closed casket, containing an unperforated pearl, a diamond intricately pierced, and a goblet of crystal. The letters thus referred to these things: "As a true prophet, thou wilt no doubt be able to distinguish the youths from the maidens; to divide the contents of the enclosed casket; to perforate the pearl; to thread the diamond; and to fill the goblet with water that hath not dropped from the clouds, nor gushed forth from the earth."

When they reached Jerusalem, Solomon told them the contents of the letter before they presented it, and made light of their mighty problems. He caused the slaves to wash

themselves, and from the manner in which they applied the water, detected their sex. He directed a young and fiery horse to be ridden through the camp at the top of its speed, and on its return caused its copious perspiration to be collected in the goblet. The pearl he perforated by a stone occultly known to him. The threading of the diamond puzzled him for a moment, but at length he inserted a small worm, which wound its way through, leaving a silken thread behind it. Having done this, he dismissed the ambassadors without accepting their presents. This, and the reports her emissaries brought, determined the queen to visit Jerusalem in person. When she came, Solomon, who had heard a piece of scandal about her, no less than that she had cloven feet,—first of all demonstrated his sagacity by the mode in which he tested this report. He caused her to be conducted over a crystal floor, below which was real water, with a quantity of fish swimming about. Balkis, who had never seen a crystal floor, supposed there was water to be passed through, and slightly lifted her robe, enabling the king to satisfy himself that she had a very neat foot, not at all cloven. When the queen placed two wreaths before the monarch, and asked him to tell which was real and which artificial, he opened a window, and a bee alighting upon the natural wreath, told him what he wished to know. "What is that," the queen asked, "which comes like dust from the earth, whose food is dust, which is poured out like water, and which illuminates the house?" "Naphtha," came the ready answer. An example of his wisdom in dealing with the difficult cases which came before him as a judge may be seen in his decision as to the ownership of the child claimed by two persons (1 Kings 2: 15-28). Solomon wrote three books of the Bible. We are told that he spoke 3000 proverbs and 1000 songs. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom &c., the many different things which manifested his wisdom &c.

THE EFFECT ON THE QUEEN.—Vers. 5, 9. There was no more spirit (breath) in her. A phrase used in Hebrew to describe an overpowering emotion. It was a true report. She is not hindered by personal or natural pride, from frankly acknowledging Solomon's superior excellence. Houbert, I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and behold the half was not told me. This confession of the queen of the richest and most famous country in the ancient heathen world was the greatest homage Solomon had ever received. Happy are thy men. Not because of their fine clothes, their high position, &c., but because they could always listen to his wisdom. It is a great advantage to have opportunity of frequent converse with those that are wise and good. Blessed be the Lord thy God. The queen understood Solomon to recognize all his wisdom and wealth as the gift of God. It is possible, as Jewish writers claim, that she was converted to the true God through Solomon's influence. The Lord loved Israel forever: God's love is everlasting love. We live under its influence. Therefore made he thee king. This was the highest possible compliment to Solomon.

How Many Plums were in the Basket? A lady of rank and wealth, says a German writer, was wooed by three lovers, and she proposed to them the following problem, offering her hand as the prize for a correct answer. I have here in my basket, said she, a gift of plums for each of you. One of you shall have half and one more, the second shall have half and one more, and the third shall again have half and three more. This will empty my basket. Now, how many plums are in it? The first lover — no arithmetician — in hopes to make a lucky hit, said three-score. No, answered the lady, but if there were as many more, half as many more, and a third as many more as there are now in the basket, with five more added to that, the number would by so much exceed three score as it now fall short of it. The second lover bewildered, then made the wild speculation and said, forty-five. Not so, replied the calculating damsel. But if there were a third as many more, half as many more, and a sixth as many more as there are now, there would be in my basket as many more than forty-five as there are now under that number. The third one was equal to the occasion. He named the correct number, and so obtained the ingenious questioner for his wife. How many plums were in the basket? —Southern Churchman.

Without Him You Can Do Nothing. A little boy once said: "How hard it is to do right! I've tried and tried, and there's no use trying any longer." But one day, after reading his Bible, he said: "Why, I've been trying to change myself all the time, and here I read that only God can change me. I can no more change my heart than a colored man can make himself white. How foolish I have not been to ask him!" And he was right. Are you trying to change your own heart? You can never do it. It will get worse and worse until you ask Jesus to give you a new heart.

Application. (1) Christ expects to receive gifts from everyone he saves. We are to give Christ our hearts, our lives, our money, our service. And we are to give freely, gladly, and not for the sake of any reward. (2) Christ always returns more than he gets. Even Solomon acknowledged that long ago (Prov. 11: 25). Jesus made it sure (Luke 6: 38). Our Lord gives love, and peace, and intimate companionship, joys and hopes, comforts and blessings of rich experience: he adds

health and strength, thrift and success, with contentment and satisfaction. Christ gives "according to his riches in glory" (Phil. 4: 19); "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3: 20). "A cup of cold water only" he will abundantly recompense.

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