

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

REVISED VERSION.

[We will from this time give the Revised Version of the lesson, believing that most schools have the authorized version in a different shape to which they can refer. We do not like the idea of scholars making their lesson slips a substitute for the Bible. The lessons should be taught out of the leaves of the Bible itself, and the scholars encouraged to familiarize themselves with it.]

THIRD QUARTER.

LESSON I.

July 2, 1882. [Mark 10: 1-16.]

A LESSON ON HOME.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 13-16.

And he arose from thence, and cometh into the borders of Judea and beyond Jordan: and multitudes came together unto him again; and as he was wont, he taught them again. And there came unto him Pharisees, and 2 asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. And he answered 3 and said unto them, What did Moses command you? And they said, Moses suffered to 4 write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. But Jesus said unto them, For your 5 hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of the 6 creation, male and female made he them. For this cause shall a man leave his father 7 and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and 8 the twain shall become one flesh; so that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What there- 9 fore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. And in the house the disciples 10 asked him again of this matter. And he saith 11 unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her; and if she herself shall put away 12 her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery. And they brought unto him little children, 13 that he should touch them: and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was 14 moved with indignation, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom 15 of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever 16 shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And he took them in his arms, and blessed 16 them, laying his hands upon them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I will walk with my house with a perfect heart."—Ps. 101: 2.

TOPIC.—True Family Religion.

LESSON PLAN.—1. THE LAW OF MARRIAGE. 2. THE BLESSING OF THE CHILDREN.

Time.—March, A.D. '80. Place.—Perea, on the way to Jerusalem.

HELPS TO STUDY.

INTRODUCTORY.—In passing from the last chapter to this, Mark omits many important events in the life of Jesus. For them see Luke 10: 25-18; 14 and John 7: 1-11: 57. From the feast of tabernacles (in October) to the Passover was about five months. Most of this time Christ spent in Perea. It was while he was going to Jerusalem for the last time that the events of this lesson took place.

I. THE LAW OF MARRIAGE.—(1-12.) Parallel passage, Matt. 19: 1-12. V. 1. TIENICE—Capernaum, the final departure from Galilee. THE FARTHER SIDE—the east side, Perea. HE TAUGHT THEM—his ministry in Perea is described in these general terms. TEMPTING HIM—trying to get him to say something that would bring him into difficulty. V. 3. HE ANSWERED—he exposed their false ideas about divorce by referring them to what Moses had said on the subject. V. 4. MOSES SUFFERED—see Deut. 21: 1-1. V. 5. FOR THE HARDNESS OF YOUR HEART—your low ideas of right and wrong. HE WROTE YOU THIS LAW—not as approving divorce, but to regulate it and to prevent still greater evils. BUT FROM THE BEGINNING—in the creation God embodied the idea of marriage as a life-union between one man and one woman. V. 8. ONE FLESH—with common and inseparable interests, aims, enjoyments and duties. V. 9. WHAT THEREFORE—since God in the creation showed his purpose to be the joining by marriage of two in one earthly life, let not man by this act break or loose that bond. The divine law of marriage is here declared to be the union of one man and one woman for life. Such a life-union should be formed only after the most careful consideration.

II. THE BLESSING OF THE CHILDREN.—(13-17.) Parallel passages, Matt. 19: 13-15; Luke 18: 15-17. V. 13. THEY—probably the parents, YOUNG CHILDREN—babes. Luke says "infants." TOUCH THEM—or, as Matthew says, "put his hands on them and pray." Placing hands upon their heads was a sign of blessing. They were not brought to be taught; they were too young even to understand what was done to them. HIS DISCIPLES REBUKED—thinking it an unseemly interruption, or a mere superstition on the part of these parents, as if their unreasonable babes could be in any way changed by Christ's touch. But Jesus did not look upon it thus. V. 14. HE WAS MUCH DISPLEASED—with the rebuking disciples. SUFFER—permit, referring particularly to those then present, but including the little children of the whole world. FORBID THEM NOT—do not prevent or hinder them in any way. OF SUCH—of little children and those like them. THE KINGDOM OF GOD—the Church on earth and in heaven. V. 15. AS A LITTLE CHILD—no one can come to Christ without having the childlike spirit of trust, dependence and humility. V. 16. TOOK THEM UP—every word of this verse is emphatic. BLESSED THEM—literally, "much blessed"; earnestly, fervently blessed them. How these particulars add to the tenderness of this scene and reveal the yearning love of Jesus for little children!

TEACHINGS: 1. Marriage was instituted by God in the garden of Eden. 2. It is a union for life, to be formed thoughtfully and held till death. 3. Husbands and wives should be united by mutual affection, and should live for each other's happiness.

4. Parents should bring their children to Jesus for his blessing. 5. He claims them as his own, and parents should train them up for him. 6. Children dying too young to exercise faith are saved for Christ's sake and renewed by the Holy Ghost. 7. If children dying in infancy may enter heaven, they may be baptized. Their personal faith is no more essential to their baptism than to their salvation. 8. Only those who are like children can get to heaven.

REMEMBER that your baptism in infancy was not an unmeaning ceremony, that it brought upon you solemn obligations. Thank God that he has given you Christian parents and a Christian home, and so improve these privileges that you may have a home in heaven.

LESSON II.

July 9, 1882. [Mark 10: 17-31.]

THE RICH YOUNG MAN.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 21-24.

And as he was going forth into the way 17 there ran one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good save one, even God? Thou knowest 18 the commandments. Do not kill. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Do not defraud. Honor thy father and mother. And he said unto him, Master, all 19 these things have I observed from my youth. And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and 20 said unto him, One thing thou lackest; go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. But his countenance fell at 21 the saying, and he went away sorrowful, for he was one that had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and saith 22 unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were amazed at his words. 23 But Jesus answered again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through 24 the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonish- 25 ed exceedingly, saying unto him, Then who can be saved? Jesus looking upon them saith, 26 With men it is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God. Peter be- 27 gan to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee, Jesus said, Verily I say 28 unto you, There is no man that hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundred- 29 fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life. But many that are first 30 shall be last; and the last first.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"One thing thou lackest."—MARK 10: 21.

TOPIC.—The Condition of Discipleship.

LESSON PLAN.—1. ALMOST A DISCIPLE. 2. THE HINDRANCE OF RICHES. 3. THE REWARD OF SELF-DENIAL.

Time.—March, A.D. '80. Place.—Perea, on his way to Jerusalem.

HELPS TO STUDY.

I. ALMOST A DISCIPLE.—(17-22.) V. 17. THERE CAME ONE—a rich young ruler. RUNNING—as though to overtake him, thus showing his earnestness. GOOD MASTER—most excellent Teacher. WHAT GOOD THING—he was evidently sincere. HE FELT THAT SOMETHING WAS YET LACKING. V. 18. WHY CALLEST THOU ME GOOD—since you regard me only as a great teacher, why do you address me in language that can be used to God only? V. 19. THE COMMANDMENTS—the ten given on Sinai, and forming the moral law. V. 20. ALL THESE—that his claim was sincere is shown by the fact that Jesus, beholding him, loved him. But how little he knew of his own heart and of the extent of the law! V. 21. ONE THING THOU LACKEST—not that he had done all except this one duty, but a test is given to prove that his whole obedience lacked the proper motive. SELF-DENIAL—EVER THOU HAST—Jesus knew that his heart was set on his wealth. V. 22. WENT AWAY GRIEVED—he could not give up his idol even for his soul.

II. THE HINDRANCE OF RICHES.—(23-27.) V. 23. HOW HARDLY—with what difficulty. THAT HAVE RICHES—who live for riches, and make them their trust. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN—where the poor in spirit are welcome. V. 24. TRUST IN RICHES—of any sort. V. 25. EASIER FOR A CAMEL—a proverbial expression to denote something impossible. V. 26. WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED—if the rich cannot, who can? V. 27. WITH MEN—as far as human power or is concerned. WITH GOD—God's grace can save the most hopeless cases, even rich men. Acts 2: 45; 4: 34-37. Note Abraham, Joseph of Arimathea and others.

III. THE REWARD OF SELF-DENIAL.—(28-31.) V. 28. THEN PETER—he spoke, as usual, for all; what he said was true, as Christ's answer shows, and not a mere boast. It is right to think and talk of our final reward. V. 30. NOW—in this life blessings a hundredfold greater than the sacrifice he is called to make. V. 31. FIRST—in the enjoyment of outward privileges and blessings. LAST—in Christ's honor, because they have not improved those blessings. The rewards of the kingdom are finally given on the scale of grace alone.

TEACHINGS: 1. The most important of all questions is, What must I do to be saved? 2. Eternal life cannot be gained for our morality or good works. 3. If we have not faith in Christ, we lack the one thing needful. 4. Riches often keep men from Christ.

REMEMBER that you must be willing to give up everything for Christ. The reward of such self-denial is great and sure. If you have riches use them as God's stewards and for his glory. If you have them not, be content with your lot.

A CRITICAL MOMENT.

I was talking a few weeks ago with a clergyman at the West who said that he returned to his father's house in Boston, and his brother, a son in the family, came in intoxicated, and he said when the intoxicated son had retired: "Mother, how do you stand this?" "Oh," she replied, "I have stood this a good while, but it don't worry me now. I found it was worrying me to death, and I put the whole case in God's hands, and I said: 'O God! I cannot endure this any longer; take care of my son, reform him, bless him, save him,' and there I left the whole thing with God, and I shall never worry again." "The next day," said the clergyman who was talking to me in regard to it, "I met my brother, and I said: 'John, you are in an awful position.' 'How so?' said he. 'Why, mother told me that she has left you with God; she doesn't pray for you any more.' 'Is that so?' Well, I cannot contend with the Lord; I shall never drink again."

He never did drink again. He went to the Far West, and at a banquet in St. Louis given to him, a lawyer just come to the city, there were many guests, and there was much wine poured, and they insisted that this reformed lawyer should take his glass of wine, and they insisted until it became a great embarrassment, as they said to him: "Ah, you don't seem to have any regard for us, and you have no sympathy with our hilarities."

Then the man lifted the glass and said: "Gentlemen, there was in Boston some years ago a man who, though he had a beautiful wife and two children, fell away from his integrity and went down into the ditch of drunkenness. He was reformed by the grace of God and the prayers of his mother, and he stands before you to-night. I am the man. If I drink this glass I shall go back to my old habit and perish; I am not strong enough to endure it. Shall I drink it? If you say so, I will."

A man sitting next lifted a knife and, with one stroke, broke off the bottom of the glass, and all the men at the table shouted: "Don't drink it, don't drink it!"

Oh! that man was a hero. He had been going through a battle year after year; that was a great crisis. What a struggle! I tell you this incident because I want you to know that there are a great many men in peril, and when you are hard in your criticisms about men's inconsistencies you do not know what a battle they have to fight; a battle compared with which Austerlitz and Gettysburg and Waterloo were child's play. —Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage.

PICTURE BOOKS.

A pretty boy of eight years had in his possession a magazine filled with coarse and disgusting pictures. His teacher, discovering the fact, took the book away and scolded him sharply.

"I knew it wasn't the right book to have," he said, apologetically, "but I have never had a picture book of my own," and the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"What do you mean, child? Surely you have had pictures in the books your father has given you from time to time."

"My father never gives me any books," consulting with the child's father (he had no mother), it was found to be a fact that with the exception of his school books, the boy did not own a book. "I do not believe in buying books of children," he said, "wait until they are old enough to appreciate a book."

So while he was waiting for his child to grow into a man, the child was helping himself to picture books which proved his utter downfall as the years passed by.

Ah! dear father, dear mother, buy the little ones the pretty, uplifting, educating picture books and papers. It will take a little hard cash to be sure, but it will tell on your darlings' characters as the days roll on. They beside this, it may save you many tears of agony; many heart-pangs, many bitter wails as the birdlings leave the home nest to care for themselves. The poor father who recently paid a heavy bill for his wayward boy, had never fortified the lad with any help toward strengthening character. He did not believe in "wasting money on trash" (calling thus good reading), and so the boy secretly obtained papers—abounding in foolish and horrible stories, interspersed with pictures, dreadful enough to sicken one, until his moral nature was undermined and he became a wreck.

Church and Home.

HINDU SCHOOL RHYMES.

The accompanying rhymes are an attempt to give to English readers some idea of what a Hindu school-book is. These moral maxims, 108 in number, were written by a female, reputed to be the sister of the famous author of the Kural, Tiruvalluvar. Her name was Avviar, or the mother. It is a curious thing that both these authors were Pariahs, and yet their books are universally read, Avviar's in every school and the Kural by every one who claims to be a Tamil scholar.

The maxims are many of them good and inculcate sound morality. Unfortunately for the boys, they are written in a high dialect, wholly unintelligible to them, and the masters never think of enlightening them. They are learnt off, parrot-like, by the lads.

"Give charity willingly; Give, then, dine heartily; Keep down an angry thought; Impatiently say not aught; The giver thou hinder not. Thine own wealth trumpet not. Say not 'Tis impossible'; Stout-hearted, thou art able Walk thou most orderly; Study thou steadily. Learning do not despise And in youth become wise. In season sow and till; Live not on wrested soil. Speak thou to edify; Do what will dignify. Mother and father feed; Remember a kindly deed. Test, ere thou make a friend; Made, hold on to the end. Sleep on silk-cotton feed; Rest not too long thy head. Do well whate'er you do; Enter'd on, carry through. Speak not deceitfully. Hard words, not angrily. Speak not the mal-velous; Eschew the gambling-house. Waste not thy property; Spoil not thou greedily. Stand in the royal way, And with the learned stay, Cleave to thy kith and kin; A house that's large live not in. What you see that only say; With a serpent do not play."

R. R. MEADOWS.

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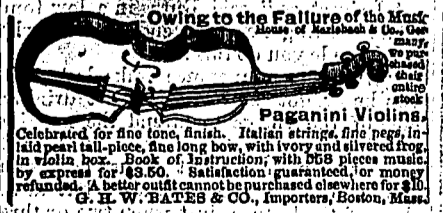
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