

ive in methods may be continued indefinitely, but one who will not grow in teaching should be retired—the eternal welfare of the little children demands it. It may be done in several ways: first, by a frank statement of the case if the primary teacher has grace to bear it; second, by asking that the lesson shall be taught by another person, while the old teacher continues in charge of the management of the class; third, by organizing a kindergarten department below the primary."

It is no light matter to separate persons from a work in which they have been long engaged. "But what keeps them in it?" is the question to be considered; is it force of habit, or is it real love for the work? If it is the former, the sooner the tie is cut the better; if it is because of love for the work, there should be a glad assent to pass it over to persons more competent.

## INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. FIRST QUARTER.

### LESSON I. (January 5.)

#### THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST. Luke 1. 5-17.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways" (Luke 1. 76).

#### Primary Notes.

BY MRS. J. H. POLIENUS.



[Print "Forerunner" on the board.] I once read a story of a beautiful house that for a long time had been shut up; no one lived in it, and the people to whom it belonged were in another country. At last a

gentleman came to stay in the house, and soon the doors and windows were thrown open, servants were seen cleaning and putting everything in order. The gentleman told what was to be done and saw that everything was prepared and ready for whom? For the family who were coming. This gentleman came before to prepare or make ready for those who would come; we might call him a forerunner, which means one who goes before.

Many years ago, when a king was going on a journey, men were sent before to prepare the way. These men would make the roads wide and smooth, would cut down even the hills that stood in the way, and fill up the valleys that the road might be level; every one who saw these men work knew that the king was coming. They were the king's forerunners, because they went before to prepare the king's ways.

You remember in our review lesson we talked

about three kings. Who were they? For the next six months we are to study the story of King Jesus as told by one of his dear friends named Luke; the story of how he left his heavenly home to come and live where?

Let us make a picture of the world. [Draw or uncover a globe.] What was the name of that part of the world to which Jesus came? [Outline Palestine on the globe.] In the same country where Saul lived, and in the same city where Ruth and David had their homes, Jesus was born. What city was it? We have just had the beautiful Christmas lesson that told how the Christ [print] child was born in Bethlehem.

Do you suppose Christ had a forerunner, some one sent before to prepare his ways? Yes, he had. Long years before he was born one of the prophets said these words. [Read Mal. 3. 1, first clause.] You will want to know his name, so we will print it over "forerunner." [Print "John."] Today we must learn all we can about John, so that we may better understand the lesson that tells us how he prepared the way for Christ.

There is a wonderful story in the Bible of what happened to John's father and mother before he was born. [Tell the events in Luke 1. 5-23.] While their parents were waiting in their home for the baby John to be born, in the village of Nazareth an angel came to Mary, who was Elisabeth's cousin, and told her that she too should have a baby boy, whose name should be Jesus; he told her how her cousin Elisabeth was to have a little boy, and this news made Mary leave her home and go to visit Elisabeth. I can imagine how these two talked of the angels they had seen and of the babies who were coming so soon.

The days went by, and at last the baby John was born. [Tell the events found in verses 53-66.] I suppose this baby looked like the babies who come into your homes, but this baby was to grow up to do a wonderful work; his Father was told about it. The Bible says the Holy Ghost made Zacharias able to see and tell of what would happen; he told how Jesus was coming, and he said of John that he should "go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways." For what did John come? To prepare his ways. [Print "came" on the right of the globe and "to prepare," etc., on the left.] How John did this we will learn another Sunday.

Zacharias said that Jesus was coming "to give light to those that sit in darkness and . . . to guide our feet into the way of peace," and this makes me think that if Jesus was like the sun, that lightens the whole world, John was like a torch, shining in the small place where he lived, and showing the way for others to find the true Light.

[Show a torch made of brown paper, with the end colored red, and ask the children to make one at home and print John's name on it.]