

The Christ-Cradle.

THE OLD SAXON NAME FOR MINCE-PIE.

"Twas the time of the old Crusaders;
And back with his broken band,
The lord of a Saxon castle,
Had come from the Holy Land

He was tired of war and sieges,
And it sickened his soul to roam
So far from his wife and children,
So long from his English home.

And yet with a noble courage,
He loved for the Faith to fight;
For he carried upon his shoulder
The sign of the Red-Cross Knight

It was Christmas Eve in the castle;
The yule-log burnt in the hall;
And helmet and shield and banner,
Threw shadows upon the wall

And the baron was telling stories
To the little ones at his knees,
Of some of the holy places
He had visited over seas.

Then he spoke of the watching shepherds
Who saw such marvellous sights,
And the song that the angels chanted
The first of the Christmas nights.

He told of the star whose shining,
Outsparked the brightest gem;
He told of the magic cradle
They showed him at Bethlehem.

And the eyes of the children glistened
To think that a rack sufficed,
With only the straw for blankets,
To cradle the Baby Christ.

"Nay, dry up your tears, my darlings!"
Right gaily the baron cried;
"For nothing but smiles must greet me—
I'm home! and it's Christmas-tide!"

"Come, wife! I have thought of a cradle,
Another than this, I say,
Which thou in thy skill shalt make me,
To honour this Christmas Day.

We would not forget the manger,
So choose of thy platters fair,
The one that is largest, deepest,
And cover it in thy care—

With flakes of the richest pastry,
Wrought cunningly by thy hands,
That thus it may bring before us,
The wrap of the swaddling-bands.

"And out of thy well-stored larder,
Set forth of thy very best,
Is ought that we have too precious
To honour this Christmas guest?"

"Let raisins and figs of Smyrna,
That draw to the East our thought,
Let spices that call the Magi,
With their gifts, to mind, be brought.

Let sweets that suggest frankincense,
Let fruits from the Southern sea,
Be given ungrudging; remember,
His choicest he gave for thee!

Then over the piled-up platter,
A cover of pastry draw,
With a star in the midst, to remind us
Of that which the wise men saw

And ever, sweet wife, I pray,
With such thou wilt make us merry,
At dinner each Christmas Day."

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.

**LESSON III.—JANUARY 15.
CHRIST'S FIRST MIRACLE.**

John 2. 1-11. Memory verse, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And his disciples believed on him.—
John 2. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. The Marriage in Cana, v. 1-2
2. The Mother of Jesus, v. 3-5
3. The First Miracle, v. 6-10
4. The Manifested Glory, v. 11

Time.—The spring of A.D. 27. Four days after the last lesson, and probably on a Wednesday.

Place.—Cana of Galilee.

HOME READINGS.

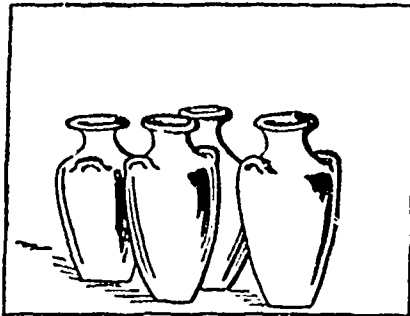
- M. Christ's first miracle.—John 2. 1-11.
- Tu. Customs of purifying.—Mark 7. 1-9.
- W. Miracles, proofs of authority.—Luke 7. 16-23.
- Th. Evidence of divinity.—John 10. 31-42.
- F. Good company.—Luke 24. 13-18, 25-27.

8 A visitor.—Rev. 3. 14-22.
51. Do ye now believe?—John 16. 25-33.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Marriage in Cana, v. 1, 2.
At what time did this marriage occur?
From what time is "the third day" reckoned?
What guests are named as being invited?
Give the names of these disciples.
J—, A—, P—, P—, N—, J—.
2. The Mother of Jesus, v. 3-5.
What lack arose at the feast?
What did Mary say to her Son?
What was his reply?
Was it disrespectful for him to call her "woman"?
What did he mean by "mine hour"?
What did Mary say to the servants?
3. The First Miracle, v. 6-10
What vessels were near at hand?
Why were such vessels needed?
Mark 7. 3.
What command did Jesus give about the vessels?
What did he direct the servants to do?
Who first tasted the wine?
What was the custom at feasts?
How did this occasion differ?
4. Manifested Glory, v. 11.
What does John say of the "glory" of Jesus? John 1. 14.
What was the effect of this miracle on the belief of the disciples? Golden Text.

learn the more we will trust Jesus. So we come back to our golden word, "Be-



lieve." Take Jesus at his word. He can change bitter things into something sweet and good for us. Here is Mary on a little white cot in a hospital. She has been hurt and will never walk again. Oh, how hard and sad, and the pain is so bad. But Jesus stands beside her. If she had not been hurt, she might have forgotten him, but she won't now. He gives patience in the pain, and teaches her sweet lessons she would never have known any other way. She lives to help others love Jesus. The pain is changed to blessing. Isn't this better than water turned to wine? Nothing is too hard for Jesus. He is with us everywhere and always, to make everything turn to good if we trust and obey.



THE ECLIPSE.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson are we taught
1. Whom to invite to share our joys?
 2. To whom to tell our wants?
 3. Whose manifested glory calls for our faith?

THE WATER POTS.

Here are the waterpots. Jesus says, "Fill them with water." The servants fill them to the brim. Jesus bids them take to the head man of the feast. How surprised he is at its goodness. He doesn't know where it comes from, but the servants who drew all the water for the jars, they know. Do we not want to be Jesus' servants, always near to him, doing as he says, and seeing his wonderful power?

How pleased the guests were! How they praise the wine! And it was nothing but water till Jesus changed it. None but he could do such a thing; so this is a miracle. Now his disciples, who knew before something of Jesus, know more and believe as never before since they knew him. The more we

Fasten in your hearts the golden word "Believe."

THE ECLIPSE.

There is to be an eclipse of the sun on January 11, but it will not be visible in Canada. Artist Brown's pictures of boys are simply inimitable.

The boys in our cut are looking at the sun through a piece of smoked glass. It was reported that there would be an eclipse of the sun, so they found a piece of broken glass and held it over a lighted candle that the surface of it might be coated with smoke in order that they might look at the bright sun without injuring their eyes.

An eclipse of the sun is caused by the moon coming between it and the earth. Sometimes it becomes so dark that persons can hardly see. The next time there is an eclipse of the sun don't fail to look at it though a piece of smoked glass. You will then see a dark object moving gradually upon the sun until that luminary is almost totally hidden. It will be worth seeing. Examine the

almanac, which will tell you when the next eclipse occurs, have your glass ready and you will see something you will never forget.

**Polly's Year.
JANUARY 1st.**

Come, sit in my lap, and let me hear,
Polly, my dear, Polly, my dear,
What do you mean to do this year?

I mean to be good the whole year long,
And never do anything careless or wrong.
I mean to learn all my lessons right,
And do all my sums if I sit up all night.
I mean to keep all my frocks so clean,
Nurse will never say I'm "not fit to be seen."

I don't mean to break even one of my toys,
And I never, oh! never, will make any noise.

In short, Uncle Ned, as you'll very soon see,
The best little girl in the world I shall be!

DECEMBER 31st.

Come, sit in my lap, and let me hear,
Polly, my dear, Polly, my dear,
What have you done in the course of the year.

Oh dear, Uncle Ned, oh dear, and oh dear!

I fear it has not been a very good year,
For somehow my sums would come out wrong.

And somehow my frocks wouldn't stay clean long,
And somehow I've often been dreadfully cross,

And somehow I broke my new rocking horse,
And somehow nurse says I have made such a noise

I might just as well have been one of the boys.

In short, Uncle Ned, I very much fear
You must wait for my goodness another year.

The soul on earth is an immortal guest,
Compelled to starve at an unreal feast,
A spark that upward tends by nature's force;
A stream diverted from its parent source
A drop dissevered from the boundless sea;
A moment parted from eternity,
A pilgrim panting for a rest to come,
An exile anxious for his native home.

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