

## LESSON NOTES.

### FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL BY MATTHEW.

### LESSON XII.—MARCH 20.

#### JOHN THE BAPTIST BEHEADED.

(If used as a Temperance Lesson, read the account of Belshazzar's drunken feast, Dan. 5. 1-31.)

Matt. 14. 1-12. Memory verses, 6-10.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.—Prov. 4. 23.

#### OUTLINE.

1. The Prison, v. 1-5.
2. The Palace, v. 6-8.
3. The Sword, v. 9-12.

Time.—Early in A.D. 29, during the third preaching tour, and very soon after the Mission of the Twelve which we studied in Lesson VIII.

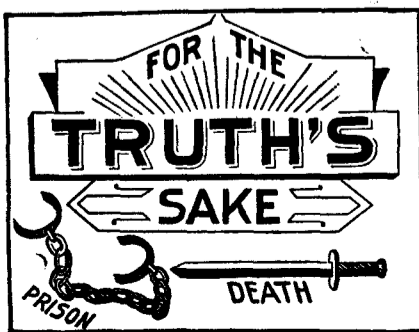
Place.—The palace of Herod was in Tiberias, a splendid city which he built on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. John was in Machaerus, a great structure—fortress, prison, palace, all in one—on the edge of Herod's kingdom.

#### HOME READINGS.

- M. John the Baptist beheaded.—Matt. 14. 1-12.  
 Tu. Herod mocks Christ.—Luke 23. 1-12.  
 W. Angry with the truth.—Jer. 26. 8-15.  
 Th. The searching word.—Acts 24. 22-27.  
 F. Boldness for truth.—Luke 3. 7-20.  
 S. Christ's testimony.—Luke 7. 19-28.  
 Su. The martyr's reward.—Rev. 20. 1-6.

#### QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Prison, v. 1-5.  
 By what official title is this Herod known?  
 What report came to him?  
 For whom did he mistake Jesus?  
 What did he say of John the Baptist?  
 What had Herod done to John?  
 For whose sake was John put in prison?  
 What unlawful act had he denounced?  
 Why did not Herod at once put him to death?  
 How did the people regard John?
  2. The Palace, v. 6-8.  
 What event on Herod's birthday pleased him?  
 What reward did he promise the dancer?  
 What did she ask?  
 Why did she make this request?  
 What is the Golden Text?  
 If Herod had obeyed it, would he have ordered John's death?
  3. The Sword, v. 9-12.  
 How was the king affected by the demand?  
 Why did he keep his promise?  
 What did Herod then do to John?  
 What was done with the prophet's head?  
 What was done with the body?  
 To whom did the disciples tell the story?  
 What relation was John to Jesus?  
 From whom are we sure of sympathy in all our sorrows?  
 What ought we to do with all our troubles? Psalm 55. 22.
- PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.**  
 Where in this lesson are we taught—  
 1. That a guilty conscience makes men fearful?  
 2. That sinners hate those who rebuke their sins?  
 3. That Jesus is the true Comforter of those who are in trouble?



### Who's Afraid in the Dark?

"Oh! not I," said the owl,  
 And he gave a great scowl,  
 And he wiped his eye,  
 And fluffed his jowl, "Tu whoo!"  
 Said the dog: "I bark  
 Out loud in the dark, Boo-oo!"  
 Said the cat: "Mi-ew!  
 I'll scratch any one who  
 Dares say that I do  
 Feel afraid, Mi-ew!"  
 "Afraid," said the mouse,  
 "Of dark in the house!  
 Hear me scatter,  
 Whatever's the matter,  
 Squeak!"  
 Then the toad in his hole,  
 And the bug in the ground,  
 They both shook their heads,  
 And passed the word round;  
 And the bird in the tree,  
 The fish, and the bee,  
 They declared all three  
 That you never did see  
 One of them afraid  
 In the dark!  
 But the little boy who had gone to bed,  
 Just raised the bedclothes and covered  
 his head.

Cork-raising is one of the industries of Spain and Portugal. To produce the best cork, trees have to be cultivated, for the bark of young or wild trees is not of much value. The tree grows from an acorn, and these acorns are good to eat, being something like our chestnuts. But the acorns are not all eaten. A great many are planted. Everywhere you will run across great orchards of cork trees that are being cultivated for the value of their bark. More than six millions of tons of cork are exported annually from the ports of the peninsula.

A cork tree is fifteen years old before its first coat of bark is taken off. This is usually done in July or August, as the bark comes off more easily at that time. The cork gatherers go into the orchards with long, two-handled curved knives, which are very sharp. Great gashes are cut around each tree, and the bark is divided lengthwise. After this it can easily be removed in sheets.

You may wonder why this barking does not kill the trees. It would if the trunk were stripped to the wood, but the bark grows in two layers, and it is the outer one that is valuable for cork. If this outer layer were not removed it



INNOCENCE AND GUILT.

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Do you think that the innocent babe in her sister's arms would ever become such a looking man as this is? See the old drunkard giving the baby some of the horrid stuff that makes him a sot. An artist once looked around for the finest face he could find for a picture. He saw a little boy, so beautiful and innocent that he thought he could not find a prettier face anywhere. He took the boy's picture and painted it. When he had finished it, he thought he would like to have a picture of the worst looking person he ever saw. It was a long time before he could find one to suit him. At last he saw a drunken man lying in the gutter. He looked so wretched that the artist said: "That is the picture I want." He went to work, and when the picture was finished, he placed it beside that of the little boy. A gentleman, who had known the little boy and the man, one day said to the artist: "Do you know that the man in the gutter was once that little boy whose picture is so beautiful? I have known him ever since he was a child." Now, look at the picture again, and resolve never to drink anything that can make you drunk.

### THE CORK TREE.

BY FRED MYRON COLBY.

Do you know where our cork comes from? It is the bark of a tree—a species of oak; although, unlike our oaks, it does not shed its leaves, but keeps green the year round. The cork tree is a native of the Spanish peninsula, and most of the cork in use is shipped from Lisbon and Cadiz.

would come off of itself in time as a useless appendage. So you see that gathering the cork from a tree does it no more harm than the clipping of its wool harms a sheep.

One has to be very careful, though, not to leave the inner tender bark exposed. The warm air from the Mediterranean seriously injures it, and so would insects were it not protected. To guard against harm in this respect, the sheets of cork are replaced on the trees from which they have been removed, and all the joints are covered with paper. When these are finally removed at the end of three months, a smooth new bark is seen, that is of much finer quality than if it had been left exposed to the air.

The sheets of bark, after removal from the trees, are soaked in water in order to swell them and make them elastic. They are then pressed under heavy weights, dried before a fire and packed in bales for exportation.

Cork is used for a number of purposes. On account of its lightness and buoyancy, it is valuable in the construction of lifeboats. It is also used in the manufacture of life preservers and cork jackets. It is most extensively employed, however, in the making of stoppers for glass bottles. Although it is so soft, it blunts tools very easily. The cork cutter is always sharpening his knife. This is because cork is a honeycomb of tiny cells in which are exceedingly hard crystals.

A cork tree lives to be more than a hundred years old, and will yield seven or eight clippings of cork. The second "barking" takes place eight or ten years after the first, and then the cutter waits as many more years for the third. The best quality of cork is taken from trees that have been stripped three or four times.—Westminster.

### HOW DR. MILBURN STUDIED.

Dr. Milburn, the blind chaplain of Congress, is a wonderful example of pluck under terrible difficulties.

At five years of age the sight of one eye went; with the other he could still see partially. How he managed to spell his way through school and college is a wonderful story.

When he made up his mind to enter the ministry, he was clerk in an Illinois store, with small means and smaller opportunities.

"Time was," he says, "when, after a fashion, I could read, but never with that flashing glance which instantly transfers a word, a line, a sentence, from the page to the mind. It was a perpetuation of the child's process, a letter at a time, always spelling, never reading truly. Thus for more than twenty years, with the shade upon the brow, the hand upon the cheek, the finger beneath the eye to make an artificial pupil, and with the beaded sweat joining with the hot tears trickling from the weak and painful organ, was my reading done."

Then what little sight he had steadily faded, until at last he was—as he has now been for more than half a century—totally blind, yet a man of great ability, and a power in the Methodist Church.

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