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"The 'Messenger' is far superior to anything I know of for the Sunday School."—W. Ruddy, Toronto, Ont.

A Lad and a Heathen Priest.

... And now, "Wisdom Seeker," see that your school lessons are well prepared, and obey the teacher; and you, "Virtue Seeker," look after the sheep till I return and help your brother; and if I hear any complaints of either of you—well, just wait till I come back!

'All right, father; you set your heart at rest, and the Lord give you protection on the way.'

The father of the two lads with the awkward-looking names (which are only two syllables each in Chinese and not at all awkward, but quite commonplace) has hired and borrowed about twenty donkeys in addition to his own, and each donkey is laden with panniers full of the far-famed Kuangning pears, and the long string sets forth from the mountain passes of home to go far north and east to such destitute places as Moukden, Kirin, Kuanchengtzu, and even the now famous Harbin, where they are a welcome treat, though I fear an Irish boy would scarcely think them worth climbing for unless he was told not to.

The father was convoyed a short distance by his two sons, and then, with respectful salutations and the wish that the Lord would give peace, the lads returned. The words at parting indicate that they are Christians.

'Virtue Seeker' is about fourteen. He turns out at once with his charge of sheep, and

wanders far with them in the early winter days in search of grass, dry as it is and scanty and sometimes difficult to find. But experience teaches, and he knows where the choice spots are; he has already selected a nicely-sheltered valley where on the slope fac-

ing south is a temple and some trees; the uncultivated foothills around give a lot of good grazing. He directed the sheep to this place, and seats himself under a tree while they browse around.

Then from somewhere out of his clothes he produced a little booklet and read slowly, repeating each sentence over and over until it was 'ripe.'

For the preacher expects him to have a certain amount prepared for next Sabbath, and he will have 'no face' if he cannot repeat his answer in turn.

The little book is a catechism, shorter and easier than the Shorter Catechism with which you are all so familiar. This also gives the elementary facts and doctrines of Christianity in the form of question and answer, and is a most valuable introduction.

The old priest of the temple has already seen the lad several times about, and has observed the use he has made of his time, and wonders what the lad is conning so constantly, and why. For the priest knows he has never 'learned to read.' So he walks toward him to satisfy his curiosity.

'What book is that?'

'Oh, it is the Catechism of the true religion.'

'The true religion! and what may that be?'

This very natural question happens to be the first in the Catechism. So the lad replies—

'Why, it is God's way.'

'God! who is God?' And the boy answers this (the second question). 'God—why, it was He who created heaven, earth, and all things.'

'I suppose that is who your father goes to worship in the Jesus religion place? I went in one day myself but saw no image of Him.'

Now the boy had simply to continue quoting his little catechism, for all these ap-



VIRTUE-SEEKER STUDYING HIS CATECHISM.



THE PRIEST SOON CAME FORTH.