

street to form into rank; and the procession, three deep, extended for a quarter of a mile. It turned out of George street into Hanover street, and proceeded to Canon-mills, a spot on the north of Edinburgh, where a hall, the galleries of which were crowded with spectators when the processionists arrived, had been provided for their reception. Here the Moderator at once constituted the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland Free in the usual way, and the court proceeded to business.

The first item on the card was the election of a new Moderator; and by acclamation the choice fell on Dr. Chalmers, who, appearing in the Moderator's robes, took his place in the chair. He rose to give out a psalm for singing, and chose one which is a great favorite in Scotland—Ps. xliii. 3. As the opening words rolled forth,

'Oh, send thy light forth and thy truth,
Let them be guides to me.'

the sun, which had been struggling all morning in a dim and doubtful sky, broke through the clouds and flooded the building with its beams. It was a cheerful omen; and many remembered the text of the sermon with which the great preacher had encouraged the hearts of his brethren in the previous year, when they had met to come to a momentous decision—'Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.' The business of the Assembly proceeded day after day amidst much enthusiasm, but with order and dispatch. There was an enormous amount of it to do; for the whole mechanism of a Church had to be created out of nothing. But there were men of power in that Assembly equal even to the demands of such a crisis, and the genius of Dr. Chalmers had already called into existence the Sustentation Fund, which has ever since been the sheet-anchor of Free Church finance. On Tuesday, the names were admitted to the Deed of Demission, by which four hundred and seventy ministers signed away a joint annual income of a hundred thousand pounds.

They were sustained by each other's presence and by the sense that the eyes of the world were on them while these public proceedings lasted. But far more trying to many must have been the days which immediately ensued, when they dispersed from the capital, and each man by himself, in the solitude of his own parish, bidding farewell to the house of prayer in which he had preached the gospel and to the manse which had been his home, had to step down from the position of parish minister and to face a lot of uncertainty which might turn out to be one of poverty. But it is the unanimous testimony that the temper of the time was not one of depression and despair, but the very reverse. Men were carried forward on a wave of enthusiasm, and their losses were sweetened with the sense that they were borne for Christ's sake. The truth is, the Disruption was an ecclesiastical movement following in the wake of a great spiritual revival, by which it was produced and of which it formed part.

It will not be denied at the present day that the flower of the Scottish church came out. The name of Chalmers alone would have dignified the secession. But only less conspicuous were Candlish, Cunningham and Guthrie. Among the laymen Hugh Miller, the geologist and journalist; Sir David Brewster, the scientist; Mr. Dunlop and Sheriff Graham Speirs, the lawyers, may be mentioned. Robert Murray McCheyne and the group around him, which included the Bonars, laid, perhaps, a firmer hold on the heart of the country than even the great ecclesiastics. Nothing helped more to justify the Disruption in the eyes of the Christian world than the fact that it was joined by the entire foreign mission staff of the Church of Scotland, with Dr. Duff at their head. 'We did not come out,' said Dr. Guthrie, as Moderator of the General Assembly in 1862, 'a small and scattered band; but, on the day of the Disruption, burst out of St. Andrew's church as a river bursts from a glacier—a river at its birth. In numbers, in position, in wealth, as well as in piety, our Church, I may say, was full-grown on the day it was born. We numbered our ministers by hundreds, our elders by thousands, and our people by hundreds of thousands; and, with the representative of royalty, the high officers of the crown, and the population of a metropolis as spectators of the scene, we came out, if I may say so, with all the honors of war, carrying our arms,

drums beating and colors flying—with the old flags of Bothwell Brig and Drumclog waving over our heads.'

Sympathy poured in from every side, in the form of admiration and sometimes in the more substantial form of money, to aid the enormous initial expense of erecting churches, manse, and schools. From Ireland, America, Holland, Switzerland, Prussia, and many other quarters came deputations and pilgrims to see and congratulate. Since then the stream of panegyric has never ceased to flow; and it would be easy, were it necessary, from the speeches and writings of the most distinguished persons to weave a chaplet of praise for the Free Church. But the moral splendor of the act of sacrifice has long ago passed beyond criticism, and the memory of the heroism of those who participated in it may be said to have gone out of the possession of a single denomination into the keeping of the Church Universal.

It is not the intention of this brief paper to follow the history since 1843. The contemporary policy of the Free Church is of course open to the criticism which is bestowed in abundance and not, let us hope, without salutary results on the proceedings of all branches of the Church. But the members of the Free Church, in this jubilee year, are thankful for the grace of God by which their Church has been enabled, during fifty years, not only to maintain its position in the country; but to bear a part in the great work of evangelizing the lapsed at home and the heathen abroad; and, in spite of their many shortcomings, they are hopeful that the ship of their Church's fortunes may still be steered into the unknown seas of the future by the wise Providence under whose auspices it was launched at the beginning. In 1843 the number of ordained ministers was 474, at present it is 1,122. The income of the Church has steadily risen, from £300,000 per annum to over £600,000. The missionary income of the undivided Church in the seven years before the Disruption was £16,000 a year; that of the Free Church during the first seven years of its existence was £35,000 annually; and at present it averages about £100,000.

WHY DO THE OLDER SCHOLARS LEAVE?

BY L. SANDYS.

The question is often asked as to the best means of keeping the older scholars in the Sunday-school. I think the best way to answer this question is to look at the matter from another standpoint; namely, Why do the older scholars leave the school?

By way of illustration, take a new teacher who is given a class of little boys. Those boys grow to love, respect, and, above all, to trust their teacher. Her very appearance among them, with her Bible in her hand and words of counsel on her lips, has a power over them to lift their thoughts away from earthly things. To them she is different from any one else. They look up to her with something akin to reverence.

Now, we will suppose (as really was the fact in the case I have in mind) that her scholars were the children of fashionable parents, who took the first opportunity of introducing them to the world, and that at every entertainment they attended they met their Sunday-school teacher.

Well, did it make no difference? Could they feel the same reverence and trust in the gaily dressed girl who passed them in the dance or bent eagerly over the card-table as they had for the earnest, thoughtful teacher whom they had grown to love so dearly?

No. By one such meeting this teacher fell from a height in her scholar's estimation that she will never regain. She lost in that evening the influence that she had gained over them by years of patient teaching; and the scholars felt a keen disappointment, which they brooded over silently, realizing vaguely what they were ashamed to confess,—that they in their innocence had thought that what she was to them on Sunday she was in her everyday life.

But now they knew better, and, although she prepared her lesson as usual, and attended as regularly, they came to Sunday-school no more; for, with the keen perception of childhood (which she had lost) they saw the inconsistency of it, and naturally felt uncomfortable in her presence.

Now for the second instance. A young lady friend of mine kept her class together until they were about this age. She was a devoted teacher, very fond of her boys, and, although she had miles to come, never was absent except for some very grave reason. One day, to my amazement, she was alone. Not one of her scholars put in an appearance.

I, thinking it had only happened so, and by way of comforting her, pointed out, on our way home, how long they had continued coming, remarking that they were almost men.

'Why, yes,' she answered. 'I never realized it until last week. They were all at the ball. I danced with my Sunday-school boys nearly all night. It seemed so funny!'

Then I knew why her class was empty. I tell you, fellow-teachers, that a religion which allows you to live for the world six days of the week, though you devote the seventh to God's service, has no power to hold the class together when they come to an age to see how little your teaching influences your own life. And a person is not fit to teach (though she may have the Bible-class of the school), who, after faithful attendance for years on the part of her scholars, has not grown to love them and the truth she teaches them sufficiently to make her willing to give up a few paltry, worldly amusements, in order to retain her influence for good over them.

And in conclusion, I repeat that there is nothing that will so tend to keep the older scholars in the Sunday school, and draw them back again if they leave it, as the consistent, godly life of the teachers.—*Sunday-School Times.*

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

LESSON IX.—AUGUST 27, 1893.

PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA.—Acts 26: 19-32.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 22, 23.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i: 24.

HOME READINGS.

M. Acts 25: 1-12.—Paul's Appeal to Cæsar.

T. Acts 25: 13-27.—Festus and Agrippa.

W. Acts 26: 1-18.—Paul Before Agrippa.

Th. Acts 26: 19-33.—Paul Vindicated.

F. Acts 9: 19-32.—Paul's Early Ministry.

S. Luke 21: 1-35.—Christ Risen Indeed.

S. Luke 21: 36-53.—The Promise of the Father.

LESSON PLAN.

I. Paul and his Preaching, vs. 19-23.

II. Paul and Festus, vs. 24-26.

III. Paul and Agrippa, vs. 27-32.

TIME.—August A.D. 60, two years after the last lesson; Nero emperor of Rome; Porcius Festus governor of Judea; Herod Agrippa II. king of Trachonitis, etc.

PLACE.—Cæsarea, forty-seven miles north-west of Jerusalem.

OPENING WORDS.

Paul was kept a prisoner at Cæsarea for two years. The Jews renewed their charges against him before Festus, the successor of Felix, but no crime was found against him. When Festus proposed to transfer the case to Jerusalem, Paul protested against this, and appealed to Cæsar. Herod Agrippa II., king of Chalcis, with his sister Bernice, visited Festus a few days after and Paul made the defence before him, a part of which is the subject of this lesson. He first spoke briefly of his early life and religious training, of the strictness of his Pharisaical observances and his hatred and persecution of the followers of Jesus. He then recounted the circumstances of his conversion and call to the apostleship, repeating the precise words of the Lord Jesus who appeared to him. Our lesson passage continues his defence from this point.

HELPS IN STUDYING.

22. *Witnessing*—testifying for Christ, according to his command. 23. *Christ should suffer*—rise, show light—these three points Paul constantly dwelt upon as clearly revealed in the Jewish Scriptures. 24. *Thou art beside thyself*—Revised Version, Thou art mad. 25. *Soberness*—soundness of mind, the opposite of madness. 2 Cor. 5: 13. 26. *Not done in a corner*—not in an obscure place, but openly in Jerusalem. 27. *Believest thou*—implying that if he did, he must assent to the truth of what Paul had been uttering. 28. *Almost thou persuadest*—Revised Version, 'with but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian.' 29. *Such as I am*—wholly devoted to Christ and his service. 30. *They that sat with them*—the governor's council. 32. *If he had not appealed unto Cæsar*—though innocent, he must be sent to Rome for final hearing.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How long was Paul held a prisoner at Cæsarea? What new trial was given him? What did he say in defence? What did Festus propose? Who now visited Cæsarea? What account did Festus give Agrippa? What took place the next day? Title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. PAUL AND HIS PREACHING, vs. 19-23.—Before whom was Paul now speaking? What account did he give of his early life? Of his persecuting the disciples? Of his conversion? For what purpose did Jesus appear to him? What did Paul do? Where did he preach? What duties did he urge? Why did the Jews seek to kill him? From whom had he obtained help? To what had he borne testimony? What had the prophets said of Christ? What had they foretold about the Gentiles?

II. PAUL AND FESTUS, vs. 24-26.—What did

Festus say to Paul? What did Paul reply? Who of those present knew the truth of what he said about Jesus? Why could not these things be hid from him?

III. PAUL AND AGRIPPA, vs. 27-32.—What appeal did Paul make to Agrippa? What did Agrippa reply? What did Paul then say? What followed this defence? What was Agrippa's decision about him?

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED.

1. The Old Testament bears witness to the truth of the New.
2. Christ crucified is the great theme of the Gospel.
3. One may believe the truth, and yet wholly reject it.
4. We may be very near the kingdom, and yet never get into it.
5. Faithful Christians may appeal to the record of their own lives.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. How did Paul obey the heavenly vision? Ans. He preached Jesus, first to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles.
2. Why did the Jews seek to kill him? Ans. Because he witnessed to the fulfillment in Jesus of what was foretold in the Scriptures.
3. What had the Scriptures said of Christ? Ans. They had foretold that Christ should suffer and be the first to rise from the dead, and should be the Saviour of both Jews and Gentiles.
4. What reply did Paul make to Festus? Ans. I am not mad, but speak the words of truth and soberness.
5. What did Agrippa decide concerning Paul? Ans. This man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed unto Cæsar.

LESSON X.—SEPTEMBER 3, 1893.

PAUL SHIPWRECKED.—Acts 27: 30-44.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 42-44.

GOLDEN TEXT.

'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.'—Psalm 46: 1.

HOME READINGS.

M. Acts 27: 1-26.—Paul's Voyage.

T. Acts 27: 27-44.—Paul Shipwrecked.

W. Mark 14: 22-36.—Christ in the Storm.

Th. Mark 4: 35-41.—Christ Stilling the Storm.

F. Psalm 89: 1-10.—The Ruler of the Storm.

S. Psalm 93: 1-5.—Mightier than the Waves.

S. Psalm 107: 21-35.—The Storm a Calm.

LESSON PLAN.

I. The Apostle's Help, vs. 30-38.

II. The Wreck of the Ship, vs. 39-41.

III. The escape of All on Board, vs. 42-44.

TIME.—About November A.D. 60: Nero emperor of Rome; Porcius Festus governor of Judea; Herod Agrippa II. king of Trachonitis.

PLACE.—St. Paul's Bay, in the island of Malta.

OPENING WORDS.

Soon after his defence before Agrippa, Paul, with other prisoners, was put in charge of Julius, a centurion of the Augustan cohort, and sent to Rome. The voyage and shipwreck are described in the chapter of which our lesson passage is a part. Study carefully the entire chapter.

HELPS IN STUDYING.

30. *Let down the boat*—which had been taken on deck at the beginning of the storm. See verse 16. 31. *Except these abide in the ship*—the promise that all should be saved (verse 22) would be fulfilled in the use of means. The sailors must remain on board and do their work. 33. *Taken nothing*—eaten no regular meal. 38. *Lightened the ship*—that it might draw less water and be brought nearer the shore. 39. *Crack with a shore*—Revised Version, 'bay with a beach.' 40. *Taken up*—Revised Version, 'casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea.' 40. *Loosed the rudder bands*—the paddle rudders, one on each side of the ship, like long oars, had been hoisted up and lashed. 41. *A place*—the northern shore of St. Paul's Bay, as it is now called. 42. *To kill the prisoners*—it was a capital offence for a Roman guard to let a prisoner escape. 44. *All safe*—two hundred and seventy-six in number (verse 37). Thus Paul's threefold prediction (verses 22-26) was fulfilled: 1. They were wrecked upon an island; 2. The ship was lost; 3. The lives of all were saved.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—What followed Paul's defence before Agrippa? At what places did they touch? What happened after they sailed from Crete? What cheering words did Paul speak? How did he know this? What did they find out on the fourteenth night? Title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. THE APOSTLE'S HELP, vs. 30-38.—What were the sailors about to do? What did Paul say to the centurion and soldiers? How were the sailors prevented from leaving the ship? What did Paul do at daybreak? How long had they been without their regular meals? What promise did Paul give? What example did he set? What did he do before eating? What effect had Paul's words and example? How many were there in the ship? What did they do after their meal?

II. THE WRECK OF THE SHIP, vs. 39-41.—What did they see at daybreak? What did they undertake to do? How? What was the result?

III. THE ESCAPE OF ALL ON BOARD, vs. 42-44.—What did the soldiers advise? Why did they give this advice? Why were the prisoners saved? How many persons escaped to land? How?

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED.

1. Confidence in God gives peace in danger.
2. While we trust in God, we should work with all our powers.
3. Though we trust and work, our salvation is of God.
4. We should always take time to thank God for our food and all our mercies.
5. All Christ's people shall reach heaven: not one shall be lost.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. What did Paul say when the sailors were about to leave the ship? Ans. Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.
2. How were the seamen kept from deserting the ship? Ans. The soldiers cut the ropes of the boat and let it drift away.
3. What did Paul do toward morning? Ans. He prevailed upon them all to take food, and assured them that they would be saved.
4. How many persons were there in the ship? Ans. Two hundred and seventy-six.
5. What was finally done? Ans. They ran the ship aground, and all safely escaped to land.