

used to come sweeping on in the thunderstorm, with the lightning as his gleaming arrow or flashing spear, and the thunder his voice. In the thunderstorm he came to the relief of the psalmist (Ps. 18), hidden in the cloud, it is true, but none the less darting out fiery death upon his enemies. In the temple, Isaiah saw the King of kings upon his throne, and even the courtiers who stand by him are fiery beings (the seraphim, Isa., ch. 6). And the vision of Ezekiel (chs. 1-3) is of a being so resplendent that the clouds cannot hide him. The glory of God is described in Ex. 24 : 16-18 as if it were a great fire breaking through the cloud that hangs over a volcano. I have seen it at Vesuvius by night. The Israelites got glimpses of this glory of the God of the bright heavens, and often Moses did, Ex. 33 :

17-23 ; 34 : 6, 7. And when God tabernacled among men his presence was on more than one occasion marked out by shining light and cloud. When Jesus was born "the glory of the Lord shone round about" the shepherds, Luke 2 : 9. When he was transfigured, his white and glistening presence was encircled by clouds. On the way to Damascus, Paul saw at midday a "light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun," Acts 26 : 13. The early Christians expected Messiah to come in glory,—that is, in dazzling splendor—on the clouds, Matt. 16 : 27. And in the heavenly city no light of sun or moon is needed, the glory of God doth lighten it (Rev. 21 : 23) ; even the citizens of that city would seem to have radiant, ethereal bodies, Phil. 3 : 21 ; Col. 3 : 4.

## THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON II.]

"Mount Hermon is the most conspicuous feature in the scenery of Palestine, rising 9,200 feet above the Mediterranean in a dome-like summit, usually covered with snow till late in summer. There are three low peaks on the top, with a connecting plateau. Lower down, the sides are covered with vineyards round the Druze villages. On the sandstones to the west there are still pines and firs, but the upper part is quite barren, and covered with snow-worn gravel between the cliffs. This mountain is the only place where the Syrian bear is known to exist. The view from the top is magnificent, including the Lebanon and the plain round Damascus. Towards the west Tyre and Carmel are seen, on the south the

mountains of upper Galilee and the plains of lower Galilee. The Huleh lake and the Sea of Galilee lie beneath as on a map. This view is, however, obscured in summer by the sudden formation of clouds on the summit.

"Hermon was perhaps the 'high mountain' of Matt. 17 : 1, and Mark 9 : 2 ('the mountain' of Luke 9 : 28) near Cæsarea Philippi, which was the scene of the Transfiguration and of the cloud which covered the disciples. In the Roman period it was a sacred centre, and small temples were built on the slopes on every side, while the highest point was encircled with a masonry wall, and seems to have supported an altar."—C. R. Conder, in Hastings' Bible Dictionary

## THE LESSON APPLIED

1. Christ chose twelve men to be his special companions, and to bear witness to him after he should leave them. But out of these twelve, he chose three to form an inner circle even amongst the apostles. It was likely no arbitrary choice, but one largely determined by the loyalty and devotion to himself which Jesus saw in these three men, Peter, James and John. And it was these three who were the witnesses of the marvelous incident which we call the Transfiguration. We need hardly be surprised at that. A well known writer has compared the Christian religion to a

grand cathedral with beautiful stained glass windows. These windows may appear striking enough when viewed from the outside, but the only adequate conception of their radiance and glory comes to those who are privileged to see them from within the cathedral. And so it is with Christ. There is a glory in him which cannot be seen by those without, but which is revealed only to those who know him best.

2. While Peter's rashness betrayed him into a rather foolish speech, as indeed it often did, yet there was a great truth in what he said : "Master, it is good for us to be here."