

God's Way.

Our way had been to smooth her upward road,
Easing the pressure of each heavy load,
Never to let her white hand know a toil,
Never her back to feel the ache of toil,
Could we have shielded her from every care,
Kept her forever young and blithe and fair,
And from her body warded every pain,
As from her spirit all distress and strain,
This had been joy of joys, our chosen way,
God led her by a different path, each day,
Sorrow and work and anxious care He gave,
And strife and anguish, till her soul grew brave,
Through weary nights she leaned upon His love,
Through cloudy days she fixed her gaze above,
Her dearest vanished, but in faith and trust
She knew them safe beyond the perished dust,
Refined by suffering, like a little child
She grew; into her Father's face she smiled,
And then, one day of days, an angel came;
In flute notes sweet, she heard him breathe her name,
Perhaps from out the rifted heaven she saw
Her mother's face look forth; in raptured awe
We caught the last swift glory in her eyes,
Ere, sleeping here, she woke in Paradise,
God's way was best, with reverent lips we say;
God's way is best, and praise our God today.

—Margaret E. Sangster.

Talking to Them.

There is a fish-dealer in New York who has a large number of rich customers. Once or twice a week his store can be found full of ladies who are doing their own marketing. The dealer is all smiles to his customers on such days, and very anxious to keep their good will and trade. For some time an Irishman had been coming in the place, and after going from stand to stand, and peering long and closely at the fish, he usually wound up by purchasing some cheap specimen of the finny tribe, and departing. This was annoying to the dealer, when his place was full of customers, and so one morning when the Irishman entered and began going from one stand to another as usual, he called out:

"Look here, my good man, what are you always smelling my fish for?"

The question was heard by every one, and they all listened for the answer.

"Faith, oim not smellin' thim; its talkin' to thim oi am."

"Talking, did you say?"

"Yis; sure oim askin' thim the news from the sea."

"Well," said the dealer, impatiently, "what did they say?"

"Sure, they didn't know, yer honor; they tell me they hadn't been there fer over a month."—Harper's Round Table.

The Oldest Rose Bush in the World.

The oldest rosebush in the world is found at Hildesheim, a small city of Hanover, where it emerges from the sub-soil, and the primitive stem has been dead for a long time; but the new stems have made a passage through the wall, and cover almost the entire church with their branches for a width and height of forty feet. The age of this tree interesting both to botanists and gardeners. According to tradition, the Hildesheim rosebush was planted by Charlemagne in 833; and the church having been burned down in the eleventh century, the root continued to grow in the sub-soil. Mr. Raener has recently published a book upon this venerable plant, in which he proves that it is at least three centuries of age. It is mentioned in a poem written in 1690, and also in the work of a Jesuit who died in 1673.—Scientific American.

Dogs in France.

In France there exists an order of merit, founded by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, of which the members are dogs who have distinguished themselves by deeds of bravery. A tastefully designed "collar of honor" is awarded to the nominees of the order. Among the animals already decorated in this way one of the most celebrated is Bacchus, a large bull-dog, whose specialty it is to stop run-away horses by jumping up and seizing them by the bridle. Bacchus' master resides in the Rue Bisconnet. It is calculated that the intelligent animal has already saved the lives of eight persons, if not more, in this way. Pauline, another bull-dog, received a collar in 1887 for saving his mistress from the attack of a footpad; and Turk, a splendid Newfoundland, has had a similar honor for saving three young children from drowning on different occasions.—Paris Letter.

Doing more than the average man does, is the duty of every man who is ready to do his duty at all. The average man never does his duty. He can only be relied on for not doing it. Hence the doing of what is necessary to be done depends on the extra doing of those who do anything. This truth must be borne in mind by those who would do their part in a contribution of time or money or effort in behalf of any cause that needs helping. "Our share" is always more than "an average share." Whatever is done by any church or community or set of persons is usually done by one-fifth, always by less than half the whole number of persons. Unless we are of the choice few, we are not entitled to be counted in with the doers or givers.—Sunday-school Times.

The Young People.

EDITORS, ———— (REV. E. E. DALEY,
A. H. CHIPMAN.)
Kindly address all communications for this department
to A. H. Chipman, St. John.

Prayer Meeting Topics for January.

C. E. Topic.—Our failures and successes, Luke 5:1-11.
B. Y. P. U. Topic.—The call of Matthew, Matt. 9:9.

B. Y. P. U. Daily Bible Readings.

(Baptist Union.)

Monday, Jan. 25.—Psalm 95. Your orders, (vs. 8).
Compare Mal. 3:10.
Tuesday, Jan. 26.—Psalm 97. The Lord is sovereign,
(vs. 1). Compare Psalm 67:4.
Wednesday, Jan. 27.—Psalm 98. Sing unto him a new
song, (vs. 1). Compare 1 Chron. 16:23.
Thursday, Jan. 28.—Psalm 99. For God is holy, (vs. 9).
Compare Pet. 1:15, 16.
Friday, Jan. 29.—Psalm 100 and 101. My behavior,
(101:2). Compare 1 Sam. 18:14, 15.
Saturday, Jan. 30.—Psalm 102. God's eternity a com-
fort, (vs. 12). Compare Heb. 1:10, 11.

Daily Readings on the Life of Christ.

No. 18.—The Perean Group of Parables.

Monday.—The Great Supper. How the Jews treated Christ's invitation, Luke 14:15-20; How His invitation was extended to the Gentiles, Luke 14:21-24; What all are to do before accepting the invitation, Luke 14:25-33.
Tuesday.—Three parables on the Restoration of the Lost. 1st. Jesus seeking the lost soul, Luke 15:1-7; 2nd. The church seeking the lost soul, Luke 15:8-10; 3rd. The Father welcoming the returning soul, Luke 15:11-24.
Wednesday.—Two parables of Trusteeship. The unjust steward, Luke 16:1-12; The rich man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31.
Thursday.—Two parables on Prayer. The unfortunate widow, Luke 18:1-8; The Pharisee and the Publican, Luke 18:9-14.
Friday.—Parable showing God is debtor to no man. Parable of the laborers in the Vineyard, Matt. 20:1-16.
Saturday.—Close of His ministry in Perea. His prophecy of the Betrayal, Crucifixion and Resurrection, Matt. 20:17-19; His rebuke of ambitious disciples, Matt. 20:20-29.
Truro.

H. F. ADAMS.

Sacred Literature Course, B. Y. P. U.

THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST.

Auxiliary Notes, Prepared especially for the
MESSENGER AND VISITOR

BY D. A. STEELE, D. D.

SECTION V.—THE PEREAN PERIOD.

Lesson 18.—The Perean Parables.

On the east of the lower Jordan, where Jesus spent some time before the last great week, a series of parables were uttered, which convey all-important lessons. You will find some of these in Luke only, whom we will follow for the present; "The Unjust Judge," being a notable instance. See if you can find other parables and other teachings which are given by Luke alone. Does any other evangelist give the story of "The ten Lepers?" You will find teachings that do not run into the form of parable, like that prophecy of the coming of the Kingdom in chapter 17:20 onward to 18:8. Note the question of the Pharisees, and remember that what follows is the answer of our Lord to that question. It bears upon the question with explicitness, and detail, though it is not clear to us what "coming" is meant. Our anxiety would better be concerning the hint in 18:8, which is the clinching-up of this teaching. That is applicable to any coming of the Son of Man. Shall I be of those who endure, who believe against appearances, who cry day and night for the full development of the Kingdom of God? We are invited, however, to the rich parabolic instruction of this Perean period.

THE GREAT SUPPER.

You will find meaning and point by keeping in mind the occasion on which it was spoken. With Testament open, go over Luke 14:1-24. The Lord had taken His place in the dining room of a chief Pharisee, and had healed a man of dropsy. Mark the day, recall similar instances. Jesus makes these onsets on the abuse of the Sabbath, and wants to clear it of accretions. "Man was not made" that the Sabbath might be an intolerable burden to him, but "the Sabbath was made" to be a day of delightful repose. If anyone was in trouble on that day, he ought to be helped. Read this matter leading up to the parable, in verses 7-11, noting the enforcement of previous lessons on modesty. We are reclining at table, and Jesus is talking about a fault (verse 7). Then he gives a piece of advice (verses 12-14) rarely followed, but worthy of being carried out, is it not? Now, at last, the Master takes the opportunity, in reply to a remark,

"Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God," to present to them, and to all the world, one of His matchless embodiments of a truth, alas! too common. People but imagine that they could enjoy the dainties of the King's table. But the feast is in some way different from what they expect. When they shall be bidden they will not appreciate the invitation. Ask these questions:

1. What does the Master mean by this Supper, and the invitation to it? Remember how it is started, "Blessed . . . in the Kingdom of God;" think of the company to whom Jesus was speaking, and you will get light upon it.

2. What is the meaning of the universal assertion? (ver. 18). Did the people whom He was addressing, as a class, refuse the invitation?

3. Who were, or are, brought into the Supper? verses 21, 23. Who are meant by these?

4. You can place these last by looking carefully at the awful conclusion, (verse 24). Compare Luke 11:37-54. Make a paraphrase of your own of the parable, like this: The Pharisees, and other heads of the Jewish people, were invited to the great Supper of the gospel, but, they all refusing, the Lord sent forth His ministers to bring in all poor out-siders, Jews and Gentiles. And do not close the consideration of this solemn, searching story, without one more question. Do we need to indicate it? *Have I accepted the pressing invitation, and am I eating bread in the Kingdom of God?*

We have thus shown you the way to deal with these wonderful representations of truth by the Divine One, and must content ourselves with a brief treatment of the other parables spoken at this period.

TWO PARABLES OF WARNING.

1. *The acule Steward.* Is it his honesty or his shrewdness that is commended? The lesson is (Luke 16:9) that we are so to use our means that others may be helped into heaven; when we leave this world we shall be welcomed by those we have benefitted by a right use of our money. Note the bearing of the parable, and how it affected the parties spoken of in the Great Supper, (Luke 16:14).

2. *The Rich and the Poor.* (Luke 16:19-31). Differences in life, and death, and afterward. Can you have any better way of bringing before your minds the difference between him that serveth God, and him that serveth Him not?

Again, ask yourself: Had the Saviour His eye upon any special class? Read the verses immediately preceding the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and connect all together. You may be sure that Jesus did not mean to convey the isolated idea that a rich man is lost, and a poor man saved. The light is reflected backward.

THE LAST FIRST AND THE FIRST LAST.

This testing story is another spoken in the time we are now considering. The occasion of it is the discussion on the rich man's refusal to follow Jesus (Matt. 19:16; Luke 18:18; Mark 10:17). "It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven," Peter, as usual, interprets the idea of the Twelve, namely, that they are all poor for Jesus' sake, and therefore surely will be rewarded. This is the point on which the discussion turns. "Certainly," the Teacher says "you shall be spiritual kings; vast, prolonged dominion shall be yours. All who have made sacrifices for me will be abundantly rewarded. (Notice Mark's way of stating this, 10:30, 31). Then, with a different note, one of solemn caution, Jesus brings on the story of *The Laborers in the Vineyard*. (Note the connection of Matt. 19:30, and 20:16). Though such a reward is before those who have suffered for Him, yet after all it is a matter wholly with Himself, as to how He shall reward each one. The Householder can give to the last comer the same as to the first. There is nothing gained by grumbling at this. (Consider attentively verses 13-16, and write out in your own language what the Householder says). Is it a law of the courts, or a larger law? Cannot any man do what he likes in the matter of paying? If he chooses to give so much to one man, what cause for annoyance is there to the other? Return to verse 1 and again see what it is that Jesus is illustrating, and remember that in the Kingdom of Heaven in its final form (compare Mark 10:30) "many that are first shall be last, and the last first," whether we can understand it now or not.

THE TRIPLE REPRESENTATION OF LOST AND FOUND.

In Luke 15, we have the crown of parabolic teaching. We have *The Lost Piece of Silver*, *The Lost Sheep* and *The Lost Man*. The larger story is like a clear lake, in which is reflected the sinner satiated, suffering, and returning to the Father, who waits with open arms to receive Him. The shorter parables are like smaller lakes, only less beautiful because they have no room for the details of the larger. The coloring is superb, and the shading is perfect. Do you know that in all literature there is nothing that can match this cluster of stories? What is the meaning? Is it that *One is looking after the lost, and that however far we may have wandered, God welcomes us back?* For whose benefit are these three stories? verses 1 and 2.

POINTERS.

1. These studies will necessitate work; but there is no other way to understand the teachings of Jesus. In order to help, the suggestion is here offered, that groups of two or more can pursue the lessons to advantage, by one reading the lesson while the others turn up the references, and in turn read them aloud. But, in any case, you will not gain much light, unless you read the Scripture referred to, and follow carefully the connection. Use Revised Version, or the Interwoven Gospel.

2. Read Chancellor Wallace's lessons in the Union, and his Life of Christ, Mr. Adam's daily readings in MESSENGER AND VISITOR, and anything else bearing upon the topics; but do not fail to peruse carefully and repeatedly the sacred text. THE WORDS THAT I HAVE SPOKEN UNTO YOU ARE SPIRIT, AND ARE LIFE.