

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1880, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON XII

MARCH 21.] [About B. C. 4—A. D. 28.]

REVIEW—Matt. 2: 1-7: 25.

The lessons of this quarter may profitably be reviewed by considering them in two main divisions, thus:

JESUS: HIS EARLY HISTORY. JESUS: HIS SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Then the facts of the first division will be most easily recalled and impressed upon the mind by grouping them around the prominent persons and places of the history, with leading questions about each.

QUESTIONS.—Who wrote the book from which our lessons are taken? For whom was it primarily written? When? What place had been foretold as the birthplace of the Messiah? By whom? Where was it? What had brought Joseph and Mary there? Who was king at the time of Christ's birth? What year was this? Tell five facts about Herod. Who first told Herod about Jesus? Where were they from? Why had they come? Where did they first go? Describe Jerusalem. How did the wise men find where Christ was? Whom did they find him with? Who was she? What was her husband's name? Why did the holy family leave Bethlehem? Where did they go? What did Herod do? When did they return? Where did they settle? What do you know of this place? Why did they not go to Bethlehem? Who prepared the way for Christ's coming? Who were his parents? When and where was he born? What was his mode of life? The substance of his preaching? From where did he make his public appearance? Where did he preach and baptize? What was the Jordan? Whom did he rebuke? What do you know of each class? When did he baptize Jesus? What manifestation of God took place? Why was Jesus baptized? What became of John? When and where? Where did Jesus go after baptism? Why? Where was this? What did he do there? Who tempted him? How? How did Jesus overcome him? Why was the temptation? Give the principal events between the temptation and the Sermon on the Mount.

QUESTIONS.—Introduction.—Where was the Sermon on the Mount spoken? To whom? Recite the beatitudes. What seven blessings are promised? Why are Christians compared to salt? Why to light?

Explanatory.—What is meant by "the law and the prophets"? What is Christ's relation to them? Who professed to know the Scripture in Christ's day? What four specimens did we study of Pharisaic interpretation of the law? How did Christ interpret the law against murder? How say we should fulfill it? How did he interpret the law against swearing? How should we fulfill it? The law of retaliation? How shall we fulfill it? The law of love and its Christian fulfillment?

Practical.—What four duties are treated of in ch. vi? How was almsgiving regarded in the Jewish religion? How should beneficence be esteemed among us? Upon what does its worth depend? How did the Pharisees do? How should Christians do? How did the Pharisees pray? How the heathen? How should Christians? What is the character of the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer? Of the next one? Of the last three? What should be the spirit in which we work to make a living? What should be our most important work? Why need we have no anxious care?

The Sum.—What must be the spirit of all our judgments about our fellowmen? What is the Golden Rule? Against what kind of teaching and example are we warned? How can we recognize them? How will men know the reality of our professions? What is the great principle of distinction between the true and the false? What is life like? How so? The only true foundation? Is your life built upon it?

LESSON XIII.

MARCH 22.] A MISSIONARY LESSON. READ Matt. 10: 1-16; Luke 10: 1-12, 17-24.

GOLDEN TEXT.

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.—Acts 10: 38.

TOPIC.

Jesus our example in missionary work.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.—An interesting and profitable way of conducting a class exercise on the topic of missions is to adopt the conversational method. The teacher, however, should not do all the talking, and to help the scholars to say something which will aid in deepening their interest in missions, they may be divided into groups of twos and twos; each group of two being requested to come prepared to give information on some particular branch of mission duties and work.

The subject of missions may be treated under three heads:

- I. THE COMMAND FOR MISSIONS. II. THE FIELD OF MISSIONS. III. THE SUCCESS OF MISSIONS.

I. THE COMMAND FOR MISSIONS.—Some passages of Scripture can be read, setting forth the biblical idea of mission work, and the duty Christians to engage in it. In the younger classes this may be most effectively done by giving the names of those noticed in the Bible as engaged in missionary service, as Peter, Stephen, Philip, Paul, Barnabas, Mark, Timothy, Apollos, and especially the Lord Jesus. Call on the class to recite the Golden Text, the Topic, and the great command of Christ (Matt. 28: 19, 20). Give a brief sketch of the missionary labors of any of

the apostles or their co-laborers, noticing the encouragements and the great difficulties and discouragements they had as compared with modern missionary workers.

II. THE FIELD OF MISSIONS.—The scholars will be glad to look up and group the facts under this head. For example, one group of two scholars may be asked to ascertain the number of professing Christians in all the churches of this country. From this it will be partially seen how large is the field of home missions.

But to complete the view, another group of two may be required to ascertain the probable number of scholars in the Sabbath-schools of this country, and how many are not yet gathered into them. This will show the extent of the Sunday-school mission field at home. A third group of two may present facts to show the extent of the mission field in Europe, Asia, and Africa; another group, the same facts in regard to North America and South America, and still another, the mission field of the Islands of the Sea.

III. THE SUCCESS OF MISSIONS.—The gleanings of facts respecting the success of missions will be a most interesting work for older scholars. One can gain the results of home mission work for the past year, or for ten years; another, those of any one of the leading foreign missionary societies, or all the principal ones; another, those of the chief British missionary organizations; a fourth, those of Continental societies; while a fifth may give some special facts as to the remarkable results of missions in the Sandwich Islands, or in Madagascar.

THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.

Sixteen American societies have more than 7,575 missionaries, besides 5,000 native helpers; and expend upwards of \$1,800,000 annually in their work. Seventeen Continental societies sustain about 580 missionaries, and over 2,000 native helpers, and receive for the yearly support of missions \$300,000. Twenty-one British societies are represented in the foreign mission field by 1,078 missionaries, and over 10,000 native helpers, and expend in work on mission fields abroad not far from \$3,000,000. All these bodies have 500,000 church members, and 400,000 pupils in schools.

LESSON I.

APRIL 4.] THE POWER OF CHRIST.—Matt. 8: 18-34. [About A. D. 28.]

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 23-27.

18. Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

19. And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

21. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

23. And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves; but he was asleep.

25. And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us; we perish.

26. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

27. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

28. And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed of devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

29. And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

30. And there was a good way off from them a herd of many swine feeding.

31. So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32. And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine; and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33. And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told everything, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.

GOLDEN TEXT.

What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him!—Matt. 8: 27.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Christ has divine power in himself.

NOTES.—SCRIBES, a learned order among the Hebrews. We cannot tell from the Bible the exact nature of their duties but it is known that they were both lawyers and school masters, whose duty it was to make transcripts of the law, to expound its meaning, and to teach its doctrines. SHIP, a small fishing boat. GERGESENES, the inhabitants of the country lying on the eastern border of the Sea of Galilee.

DEVILS, demons or unclean spirits. Persons possessed with demons were often afflicted with some bodily diseases; the exact nature of "demonical possession" is not definitely known. Whedon says of the demoniac of Gadara: "It is impossible to account for his strange consciousness of a wonderful power in Jesus, or for the utterance of a language which comes, as it were, from a being within the man, or for the departure of the devils out of the man, into the swine by the express permission of Jesus, on any other hypothesis than the existence of beings superinduced upon men."

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Find and read the parallel accounts in Mark and Luke. Find on a map of the Holy Land the sea of Galilee and the country of the Gergesenes. Think of a "whole city" praying Jesus to leave the place! What would be the condition of your own city or town should Jesus take his departure—to have no church, no Sunday-school, no Sabbath? Would you be glad to have it so?

EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) POWER OVER MEN. (II.) POWER OVER NATURE. (III.) POWER OVER DEMONS.

I. POWER OVER MEN. (18-22.) Now, toward evening on the day in which Jesus spoke the parables; GREAT MULTITUDES, who thronged about Jesus to be healed and to hear his gracious words; GAVE COMMANDMENT, to his disciples; OTHER SIDE, east side of the Sea of Galilee; CERTAIN SCRIBE, probably one of his disciples (see v. 21); SON OF MAN, Jesus, not where, no place, a homeless pilgrim; ANOTHER, Lango suggests that the scribe of v. 19 is Judas Iscariot, and the disciple of this verse Thomas; this, however, is speculation; SUFFER, allow; BURY MY FATHER, among the Jews it was considered the duty of sons to bury their parents; DEAD BURY THEIR DEAD, "Let those who are dead in spirit bury those of their relatives who are dead in body."—Schaff

II. POWER OVER NATURE. (23-27.) HIS DISCIPLES, the twelve; FOLLOWED HIM, "there were also with him other little ships" (Mark 4: 36); GREAT TEMPEST, terrible wind-squall; COVERED, waves beat into the ship; HE WAS ASLEEP, tired like other men; CAME TO HIM, not knowing what else to do (see Ps. 55: 15); SAVE US, no other power could; INTENSE ANXIETY; REBUKED, first the disciples, then the wind and waves; GREAT CALM, perfect quiet; fear and danger depart; MARVELLED, wondered; MANNER OF MAN, a problem they could not then solve; WINDS... SEA, the elements serve the Lord.

III. POWER OVER DEMONS. (28-34.) TWO, Mark and Luke only mention one; they specify the boldest one; TOMBS, natural or artificial caves; NO MAN, people were afraid of them; THEY CRIED, men completely under the power of demons; SON OF GOD, the devils recognized the divinity of the Lord; TORMENT US, drive us out of men; GOOD WAY OFF, on the mountain-slopes adjacent; SWINE, to the Jew an unclean animal; DEVILS, their number was legion; FLED, the swineherds hastened to the city with the strange news; WHAT WAS BEFALLEN, how they were in their right mind; WHOLE CITY, great numbers of the inhabitants; RESORTING... DEPART, more concerned in the loss of swine than in cure of demoniacs.

THE RECRUITING SERGEANT.

Our recruiting-sergeant has been so busy with other matters during the last two months, that he has been unable to give due attention to the new volunteer regiment. But he has now woken up to his duty and proposes to devote special attention to it. In the last number of the NORTHERN MESSENGER for 1870, the MESSENGER army was first mentioned. It was then stated of this army that "unlike other armies, we want the younger soldiers to be the officers, and the greatest innovation, we want the ladies and little and big girls to do some of the fighting. We will allow anybody who likes to enlist to be a private, and we expect all our soldiers to be abstainers from intoxicating liquors and tobacco. This army is like the other ones, in that promotion is gained by good service and good conduct. Our good service is to be work. When any member of this volunteer army gains two new subscribers to the MESSENGER he will be promoted to a corporal, and be sent a New Testament. If he should gain four new subscribers, he will be made a sergeant and be presented with a beautiful pyramid ink-stand. The next highest office is an ensign, which may be gained by obtaining five subscribers, when he will be presented with a portrait of the Marquis of Lorne, or the Princess Louise. A lieutenant must obtain ten subscribers, when he will be entitled to the two pictures, or one of Queen Victoria. A captain must raise a company of twenty to obtain his position, when he will be rewarded by a beautiful pocket Bible, or any prize of the same value he may choose."

The following is the list of officers so far:—CORPORALS:—S. H. Flayler, Wellington, Ont.; (promoted) Eveline Varcoe, Ont.;

Victoria Dalmas, Ont.; Maggie McKinnon, N. S. (died Jan. 6th 1880); R. H. Baker, Ont.

SERGEANTS:—Maggie Brown, Ont.; Alice West, N. S.; W. R. Howell, Mich. U. S.; Taylor Crowe, Ont.; S. H. Flayler, Ont.

ENSIGNS:—Josephus Yourex, Ont.; Alfred P. Fisher, Ont.; John Graham, Ont.; Malcolm Bruce, Ont.; R. D. Hanson, N. B.

LIEUTENANTS:—Maria L. Potter, Fulton Co. N. Y. U. S.; Robert Storie Jr., Ont.; John Robertson, Ont.

THE PRIZES.

GENTLEMEN,—I received your very handsome Bible, and am well pleased with it. It is far better than I expected, and I would recommend any one getting up a club, to get one like it. I feel that my labor in getting subscribers is well repaid; and all those who have received the papers are highly delighted with them. My father has taken the WEEKLY WITNESS eight years and the MESSENGER fourteen, and he thinks the WITNESS is the cheapest and best paper in Canada. I will try and get some more subscribers for your valuable papers. Wishing you success. I remain

Yours truly, MALCOLM BRUCE.

Berkeley Ont.

DEAR SIR,—I had much pleasure in receiving the prize you kindly sent. It is splendid for school and I think it is one of the handiest penholders ever invented. It is very useful for rubbing out marks, and the knife is very useful too. I will ask you how many subscribers it will take to get the WEEKLY WITNESS. We have taken the MESSENGER for eleven years, and want to take it as long as we can, and get all to take it we can. I wish it would come every week; it is a very good paper. I will get all the subscribers I can for you, to help it to increase as fast as it can.

Yours truly, ELMER MILLER.

Pelham, Feb. 9th, 1880.

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