

on entering a village for the first time is to sing a hymn, and this collects a crowd, for the people, though unmusical, like to hear singing. They come out of their houses, and gather round with their children in a homely, sociable sort of a way. A little medicine is then given away, and perhaps a few teeth extracted; and by degrees the people become friendly disposed, and the visit is repeated at a future time."

The students and helpers are described as "intelligent fellows, intensely eager to convert their countrymen and shewing by their inquiries that they take an interest in what is taking place in other countries."

The following description of one of Mr. McKay's short evening services for the students and servants, will be read with interest: "I was pleased to see the reverence displayed. A portion of the Scriptures was read and expounded, the students taking copious notes. There were some fine, intelligent faces among them. One in particular attracted my attention—that of an elderly man with an intellectual expression. I found out afterwards that he was one of the most interesting of Mr. McKay's converts. First of all a Confucianist, he then embraced Buddhism, and was a vegetarian after the fashion of the strictest sect. After listening to Mr. McKay for two years he was received into the Church, and is now one of the most able and useful members, especially owing to his intimate acquaintance with the religious s. s. of the masses. He was spoken of as a thoroughly earnest and unassuming man, and was shortly to be placed in charge of a station where he would have opportunities for developing his powers as a preacher and evangelist. After service, a hymn was sung in Chinese, a translation of 'There is a happy land.' The effect was so curious that I could scarcely help a smile, for the Chinese language is decidedly not musical, no more are the people; indeed, it had been the work of years teaching them thus far. They sing with right good will, every one joining in to the best of his ability, a pattern for some English congregations. Mr. McKay teaches them to read music, and the tunes are written out in large characters and stuck up in each chapel. Only the very simplest can be acquired, and these must have something in them to catch the ear."

Along with Mr. McKay our author travelled over a portion of the island. On arriving at a certain place the following little incident took place, which, though trivial in itself, gives some insight into Dr. McKay's wonderful success as a missionary: "A young Chinese boy who was suddenly passing, recognized Mr. McKay, and seizing his hand, shook it warmly, and looking frankly up in his face with a pleased expression, said a few words in Chinese. Before I had time to make inquiries he gave me a similar welcome. After the boy had passed Mr. McKay told me that he had once given his mother some medicine, and the little fellow was very grateful for the kindness." We may add that this shaking of the hand is a custom introduced into Formosa by Mr. McKay himself.

Of one of the students, Tcheng by name, the following interesting story is related: "Some time ago he saved Mr. McKay's life in a very plucky manner. It happened thus. After a long and tiring journey in the early days of M.'s residence in the island, they stopped one evening at a village on the banks of a river, and M. went down to bathe. Tcheng accompanied him to the water, to point out the best place, and was then told to go back to the house where they were stopping. Meanwhile M. undressed and plunged in. Now it so happened that the lad had a sort of presentiment that something was going wrong with his master, for walking a short distance, he stopped and watched behind a tree, to see if he went in at the right place. It was fortunate that he did so, for the bank was steep, and the water deepened faster than M. expected, and before he was fully prepared he found himself out of his depth; and though a good swimmer, he lost his head, probably from exhaustion consequent on his fatigue, and fainted. The lad, seeing that something was the matter, ran down, and without a moment's hesitation, plunged in, swam out, and saved his master."

The author and Mr. McKay arriving at a certain village, the following experience is related. From it the reader may learn that scolding the minister for not visiting enough is not confined to Ontario. Our indefatigable missionary comes in for a share of it. The author says: "They all seemed very pleased, and one old lady began scolding McKay in good round terms for his long absence, having counted

each day since his last visit. Certainly I had no cause to complain of coldness or suspicion, and as regards their reception of Mr. McKay, it was more like children welcoming a father, than the so-called uninteresting Chinese meeting a foreign missionary."

"Mr. McKay pointed out one old man who, before the chapel was built, used to walk fifteen miles to church every Sunday."

The following was the reception accorded the author and Mr. McKay on arriving at one of the chapels: "A number of the school children were waiting to receive him on the bank, and as we disembarked they ran up with frank, smiling faces, and seizing our hands, proceeded to escort us to the chapel. Here the native preacher and his wife received us, and presently more of the converts arrived. I was much struck with the bright, pleasant faces of the children; they seized my hand without the least sign of suspicion or distrust, and treated me as a father. The chapel had been built by the congregation, who are mostly small farmers. Presently one of them arrived with a bountiful supply of rice, fish, and vegetables for the students, who accordingly set to with a will, and did justice to the fare so liberally provided. Our party had been joined that morning by an aborigine, whose father was a savage, and had been in the habit of taking the heads and drinking the blood of Chinamen. This young man is now a student."

"What astonished me more than anything else," says the author, "in the course of our trip was the immense influence Mr. McKay had acquired over the people, and one can only attribute it to his brave, disinterested zeal and earnest devotion to his work. The students, though of a different nationality, regarded him with a sincere love and respect, amounting almost to adoration, and then there was a simple hearted kindness about them which one rarely meets with even in highly civilized communities, as well as an earnest desire to contribute to the mutual comfort and enjoyment of all; and notwithstanding that they were of humble origin, a certain degree of refinement and polish with all. Christianity with them was evidently no mere sentimental theory but a ruling principle which influenced their lives and actions; not a mere profession of certain doctrines on stated occasions, but a living power, which all the arguments of materialism fail to account for. The fact of these people adopting Christianity in the face of the revilings of their countrymen and the bitter opposition which encountered M.'s early labours, surely affords a practical answer to the scientists who sit comfortably at home, trying to argue away the evidences of Christianity. No rationalistic explanation will suffice to account for it. Christianity evidently meets a want in their lives which their own religious systems fail to satisfy."

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XVI.

April 17. } THE PHARISEES REPROVED. } Luke xi. 1881. } 37-47.

GOLDEN TEXT—"But do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not.—Matt. xxiii. 3.

HOME READINGS.

M. Luke xi. 1-13 Prayer Enjoined.
Tu. Luke xi. 14-26 A Dumb Man Healed.
W. Luke xi. 27-36 A Greater than Jonas.
Th. Luke xi. 37-54 Pharisees Reproved.
F. Matt. xxiii. 1-24 Blind Guides.
S. Matt. xxiii. 25-39 Whited Sepulchres.
Sab. Mark vii. 1-23 "The Tradition of Men."

HELPS TO STUDY.

The reproof administered to the Pharisees on this occasion is to be regarded as distinct from that recorded in Matt. xxiii. The latter was given in the temple at Jerusalem, only a few days before the Saviour's betrayal. The place where the episode of our present lesson occurred is unknown, and the time is doubtful. Most of the older harmonists date it a year before the events of our last lesson, but some (and the modern tendency is to agree with them) accept Luke's narrative as chronological. The following is from Gall's "Help to the Gospels":

"After delivering the parable of the good Samaritan [see last lesson], our Lord went up to Jerusalem, to the feast of dedication. On the way He lodged for a night at Bethany, with Martha and Mary (Luke x. 38-42). On arriving at Jerusalem He found the beggar who was born blind, and whom He restored to sight, and revealed Himself to him as the Messiah (John ix. 35-41). At the same time He delivered His discourse recorded in John x. 1-21, and answered the Jews who questioned Him in Solomon's porch. These Jews seeking to kill Him, He escaped from them and

fled to beyond Jordan, where He for some time abode (John x. 22-42). Here He taught His disciples to pray, and illustrated the importance of importunity in prayer, by the parable of the importunate friend (Luke xi. 1-13). Here also, after casting out a devil, the conversation took place, and the parables were delivered, recorded in Luke xi. 14-36. About this time He dined with a Pharisee, and denounced heavy woes against them and the scribes."

An analysis of the text of our present lesson gives the following divisions: (1) Fair Without but Foul Within, (2) Scrupulous in Trifles but Unfaithful in Essentials, (3) Ostentatious and Fond of Applause, (4) Dangerous because of Hidden Wickedness, (5) Exacting in Precept but Deficient in Example, (6) Pretending to Honour Dead Prophets but ready to kill Living Ones.

I. FAIR WITHOUT BUT FOUL WITHIN.—Vers. 37-41. Mark (vii. 3, 4) tells us that "the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the traditions of the elders;" in Matt. xv. 12 we find the scribes and Pharisees asking the Saviour "Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread;" and here we find a Pharisee, whose invitation to dinner Jesus had accepted, marvelling that He had not first washed before dinner. The question of cleanliness was not involved; it was altogether a matter of ceremonial observance, and as such the Saviour omitted it, perhaps intentionally and for the purpose of affording an opportunity for conveying instruction.

Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter. Thus the address opens—with a figure—but before the sentence is finished the figure is adroitly dropped, and the unvarnished truth driven home upon the man with terrible force. Your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. The word here translated "ravening" is in Matt. xxiii. 25, rendered "extortion." "Wickedness" may be understood in its widest sense. The Westminster Teacher says that the charge is, "Ye Pharisees make a great ado about unwashed hands, but are indifferent about unclean hearts."

II. SCRUPULOUS IN TRIFLES BUT UNFAITHFUL IN ESSENTIALS.—Ver. 42. Christ finds fault with the Pharisees, not for attending to little things (such as even the tithing of mint and rue) but for neglecting the more important things, judgment (the practical discerning of that which is right) and the love of God. These, He says, ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone. "The pharisaical spirit," says Vincent, "is apt to be scrupulous of external forms in proportion to their unimportance."

III. OSTENTATIOUS AND FOND OF APPLAUSE.—Ver. 43. Compare Matt. xxiii. 6; and see Prov. xvi. 18; Luke xiv. 8; Rom. xii. 10; Phil. ii. 3; 3 John 9.

IV. DANGEROUS BECAUSE OF HIDDEN WICKEDNESS.—Ver. 44. See Psalm v. 9; Matt. xxiii. 27, 28.

As graves which appear not. The "S. S. Times" says: "Either because they do not shew themselves above the surface of the ground, or because whitened and adorned (Matt. xxiii. 27) they do not shew themselves for what they are. In either case the effect is the same. In the one case men walk ignorantly over them, in the other, they approach them ignorant of their true character; in both places they unwittingly defile themselves by the contact of rottenness and corruption. In their contact with the Pharisees, unaware of their true character, they breathe in moral corruption, just as the contact with the sepulchre brings moral contamination."

V. EXACTING IN PRECEPT BUT DEFICIENT IN EXAMPLE.—Ver. 46. See Isaiah x. 1, 2; Gal. vi. 13; Isaiah lviii. 6.

Ye lade men. "Men in the East," says the "National S. S. Teacher," "are used for portage, and this metaphor is based on that fact. With burdens. They so presented the law as to make its precepts heavy and burdensome. Besides this, they added traditions and observances that in themselves were very exacting, but the reference here mainly is to their enforcement of the minute details of the law, as against its spirit."

VI. PRETENDING TO HONOUR DEAD PROPHETS BUT READY TO KILL LIVING ONES.—Ver. 47. "It is not an uncommon thing," says Meredith, "for men to honour dead and distant virtue, and yet display a practical dislike to the same thing as it lives and moves among them." Vincent speaks to the same effect: "The pharisaical spirit honours the faithful ones of the past, while it persecutes those of the present." The Pharisees whom Christ denounced, although they made a show of honouring the martyred saints of earlier times, were—not merely by descent, but also in spirit and principle—the children of those who had killed the prophets, and they shortly afterwards proved their lineage by accomplishing the death of the Saviour Himself.

THE FOLLY OF THE DAY.

There is a dreadful ambition abroad for being "genteel." We keep up appearances too often at the expense of honesty; and though we may not be rich, yet we must seem to be "respectable," though only in the meanest sense—in mere vulgar show. We have not the courage to go patiently onward in the condition of life in which it has pleased God to call us; but must need live in some fashionable state, to which we ridiculously please to call ourselves, and all to gratify the vanity of that unsubstantial, genteel world, of which we form a part. There is a constant struggle and pressure for front seats in the social amphitheatre; in the midst of which all noble, self-denying resolve is trodden down, and many fine natures are inevitably crushed to death. What waste, what misery, what bankruptcy, come from all this ambition to dazzle others with the glare of apparent worldly success, we need not describe. The mischievous results shew themselves in a thousand ways—in the rank frauds committed by men who dare to be dishonest, but do not dare to seem poor; and in the desperate dashes at fortune, in which the pity is not so much for those who fail, as for the hundreds of innocent families who are so often involved in the ruin.—Home Journal.