

# Notes on the Lessons.

## LESSON X—June 6th, 1897.

### Sins of the Tongue. James 3: 1-13.

(Commit to memory verses 11-13, and read chapter 3).

**GOLDEN TEXT:** "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." Ps. 34: 13.

**PROVE THAT—**Our heart controls our words. Luke 6: 45.

**SHORTER CATECHISM.** Quest. 105. *What do we pray for in the fifth petition?* A. In the fifth petition (which is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*), we pray that God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

**LESSON HYMNS.** *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 159, 154, 222, 114.

**DAILY PORTIONS.** *Monday.* Sins of the tongue. Jas. 3: 1-13. *Tuesday.* Laws against falsehood. Lev. 19: 11-18. *Wednesday.* Punishment of deceit. Jer. 9: 1-8. *Thursday.* Gehazi's falsehood. 2 Kings 5: 20-27. *Friday.* The deceitful tongue. Ps. 52. *Saturday.* The proud tongue. Ps. 12. *Sabbath.* True and false. Prov. 10: 11-22. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

### EXPOSITORY NOTES.

**INTRODUCTORY.** The aim of the Epistle of James is to correct a prevalent Jewish error, that an orthodox creed would cover a worldly or selfish life. For this heresy our Saviour denounced the Pharisees and it was above all necessary that it should find no place in the christian church. Our lesson deals with sins of the tongue, and is full of splendid illustrations.

**LESSON PLAN.** I. The Power of the Tongue. vs. 1-4. II. Turned to Evil. vs. 5-8. III. Meant for Good. vs. 9-13.

1. **My brethren, be not many masters** (R. V. teachers) knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation (R. V. heavier judgment). "Be not" is rather, "become not, seek not to be, many of you, teachers." "Let not that state of things prevail among you in which you become many teachers." (Alford). The warning is against the eagerness of many to gain the position, without consideration of their fitness; and against the danger of assuming it without fitness. (Dean Scott). Leadership is a responsibility which ought not to be thoughtlessly assumed. Be humble and modest one with another (Matt. 23: 8-14; Rom. 12: 20, 21; 1 Pet. 5: 3). "Knowing that" has the force both of "inasmuch as ye know" and "for ye ought to know." It is both argumentative and hortative. One who leads others astray deserves a more severe punishment than another who only goes astray himself (Luke 6: 37).

2. **For in many things we offend all** (R. V. we all stumble). If any man offend not (R. V. if any stumbleth not) in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body—This is explan-

atory of the last sentence. Where all are sure of stumbling somewhat each one should avoid a path he is unfit to travel. "I never did see a perfect horse, or a perfect man. Every head has a soft place in it, and every heart has its black drop. Every rose has its prickles, and every day its night. Even the sun shows spots." (Spurgeon). The word for "all" is a strong one, "all without exception," and "many things" occupies the emphatic position in the sentence (1 Kings 8: 46; 2 Chr. 6: 36; Prov. 20: 9; Ecc. 7: 20; 1 John 1: 8, 10). The man who controls his tongue so well as never to trip with even an unfit, illtimed, or unkind word may be set down as a perfect man, able to control every other organ of his body. James thinks of the mouth and its speech as the chief outlet for the weaknesses and follies of vain thought, and for the ebullition of the heart's bad passions. (Cowles). A "perfect man" is one who has attained full spiritual and moral developement, who is "perfect and entire, lacking nothing" (1: 4). He is no longer a babe, but an adult; no longer a learner, but an adept. He is a full and complete man, with perfect command of all the faculties