

A Child Sceptic.

BY PHILLIPS THOMSON.

Bright and early Christmas morning,
Little Jessie rose to see
What the contents of her stocking,
Brought by Santa Claus, might be.

Lavish gifts the saint had brought her,
Sparing from his ample load
Candles, dollies, books, and pictures,
Till both stockings overflowed.

How her laughing blue eyes sparkled
As she drew her treasures out!
How she danced with childish pleasure
When her toys lay spread about.

But a shade of disappointment
Stole across her chubby face,
And her merriment had vanished,
To reflection giving place.

What's the matter?" I inquired,
Prompt to ascertain the cause;
Then she said, with serious aspect,
"Pa, there ain't no Santa Claus!

'S'pose he did come down the chimney,
With the things upon his back,
How could he get in the stovepipe?
How could he pull through his sack?

And besides, I lay and listened,
Just to hear if he would come;
Who'd it waso' for 'rom m'dlight
Some one walked into the room

Came into the room like you would,
But I didn't dare to peep,
Lay down quiet kind of frightened
Made believe I was asleep.

So they came and filled the stockings,
And I'm sure that there were two,
For they whispered to each other—
Sounded just like ma and you.

Though the things are nice and pretty,
Still I'm awful sorry—'cause
Tien't Santa Claus that brings them—
You and ma are Santa Claus."

Thus through life the old illusions
Fade out slowly one by one;
Are we happier or better
When the last of them are gone?

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

LESSON XIII.—DECEMBER 26.

GOD'S LOVE IN THE GIFT OF HIS SON.

1 John 4. 9-16. Memory verses, 9-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3. 16.

OUTLINE.

1. The Gift of Love, v. 9-11.
 2. The Indwelling Spirit, v. 12-16.
- Time and Place.—Same as last lesson.

HOME READINGS

- M. God's love in the gift of his Son.—1 John 4. 9-16.
- Tu. The prophecy.—Isa. 9. 1-7.
- W. Visit of the magi.—Matt. 2. 1-10.
- Th. Herod felled.—Matt. 2. 11-23.
- F. The word.—John 1. 1-14.
- S. Message to the shepherds.—Luke 2. 8-20.
- Su. Simeon's prophecy.—Luke 2. 25-35.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Gift of Love, v. 9-11.
How did God show his love for us?
How is this stated in John 3. 16?
Golden Text.
What were we when God loved us?
Rom. 5. 8.
What were we made by Christ's love?
Rom. 5. 10.
Whose love came first, God's or ours?
What does Christ say in John 15. 16?
For what purpose did God send his Son?
What is "a propitiation"? A sacrifice which obtains favour.
How was Christ our propitiation?
How may we receive the benefit of his salvation?
Whom should we love? And why?
What is Christ's commandment?
John 15. 12, 13.
What is said in Eph. 4. 32?
2. The Indwelling Spirit, v. 12-16.
Has anyone ever seen God?
What did God say to Moses? Exod. 33. 20.
In whom may we see God? John 14. 9.
What privilege may we possess? Verse 12.

How may we have God dwelling in us?
How may we know this? Verse 13.
For what purpose did God send his Son?
How is this declared in John 3. 17?
May this Saviour of the world be our Saviour also?
What confession is spoken of in verse 15?
What do we need besides this confession? Rom. 10. 9.
What may every Christian be? Eph. 2. 22.
What personal knowledge is mentioned in verse 16?
How may we possess it?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

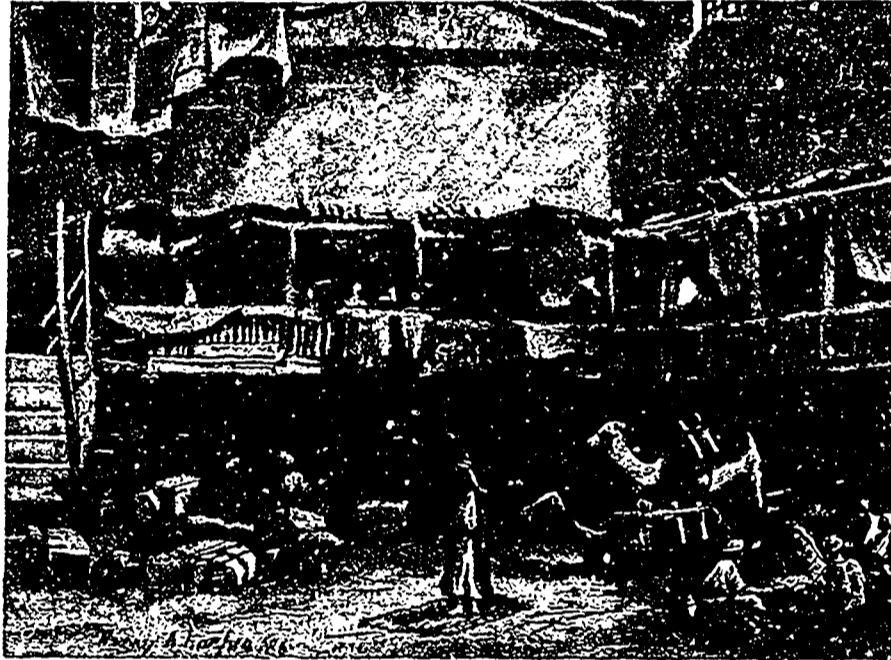
Where in this lesson do we learn—

1. That God loves us?
2. That God has redeemed us?
3. That we should love each other?

"INDIAN NO BREAK PROMISE."

Mrs. Caswell, a lady who spent many years among the Indians as a missionary of the Gospel, tells this splendid story of Indian fortitude:

"After much personal work and months



COURTYARD OF EASTERN INN.

of prayer and patience, a group of young Indians, who had been especially unrepentant and wild, came into the church and signed the pledge to give up tobacco and fire-water. To them the taking of the pledge meant the abandonment of all vice and living a clean life.

"One of these young converts was induced to join a company of white men to go 'rafting' on the Alleghany River. The raftsmen were freely addicted to liquor, and soon noticed that the Indian never tasted it.

"Why not?" they asked him.
"Me belong to temperance society," was the laconic reply. "Me promise not drink. Me keep promise."

"The raftsmen laughed him to scorn. 'We'll soon teach you, you miserable red-skin, how much such a promise is worth!'"

"These brutal fellows tempted the poor man day and night in vain. They held liquor under his nose; they threw it in his face. He would not yield. They then resolved to conquer his will. So one day they handed him a glass of whiskey, and when he declined it they pushed him into the river. The Indian swam to the edge of the raft, and begged his tormentors to let him come aboard.
"Yes," was the reply, "if you will drink the whiskey."



MANGER AND CATTLE IN EASTERN HOUSE.

"The Indian shook his head. 'Me no break promise,' said he.

"Then the men pushed him away from the edge of the raft. He was getting exhausted, and sank; but rising, he clutched the raft convulsively.

"Will you drink it?" came the last command.

"No break promise," gasped the Indian. "Me cannot."

"Then the brutes unloosed his fingers for the last time. The Indian sank, and rose no more. The young convert was a martyr to the truth. He was faithful unto death."

A NEW INVENTION.

A German inventor has discovered that a large window glass may be lightly coated with silver in such a way that it is transparent to the person within a room while at the same time it is opaque to the passer-by in the street. The oblique rays are reflected while the direct rays pass through the glass. The effect depends upon the proportion of light before and behind the glass.

NO ROOM FOR THEM IN THE INN.

The crowded Eastern inn, shown in our cut, is a type of the common caravansaries in the East. At times of such general travel as that described in the second chapter of Luke, it can easily be imagined how crowded the inn of Bethlehem would be. Joseph and Mary would, therefore, gladly seek refuge in the subterranean grotto in which the beasts of burden of the travellers were sheltered.

"THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THEM IN THE INN."

No room in the inn for Jesus,
No room for the Holy Child;
His shelter a stable, a manger his bed,
No silken couch for his sacred head—
No room, no room for Jesus!

No room for the Royal Jesus,
No room for the King of kings,
No open door for the Saviour of men,
In all the homes of Bethlehem—
No room, no room for Jesus!

No room for the Blessed Jesus,
No home for Israel's King;
The foxes have holes, and the birds have nests,
But the Son of Man had not where to rest—
No home for the Blessed Jesus!

The silver and gold are his,
The cattle on every hill;
Yet he was rich, for our sakes
he became poor,
That we by his grace might be
rich evermore—
O was ever a friend like Jesus?

And is there no room for Jesus
In these hearts so full of sin?
He is knocking! O let us open
the door,
And drink and feast till we hun-
ger no more,
A feast of love with Jesus!

O yes, there is room for Jesus,
In this sin-sick soul of mine;
Come in, blessed Saviour, and
with me abide,
And whatever befalls me, O let
me hide
In the clefted Rock, in Jesus!

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