

THE CHILD AND THE YEAR.

BY CELIA THAXTER.

SAID the child to the youthful year:
"What hast thou in store for me?
O giver of beautiful gifts, what cheer,
What joy dost thou bring with thee?"

"My seasons four shall bring
Their treasures: the Winter snows,
The Autumn's store, and the flowers of Spring,
And the Summer's perfect rose.

"All these and more shall be thine,
Dear child—but the last and best
Thyself must earn by a strife divine,
If thou wouldst be truly blest.

"Wouldst know this last, best gift?
'Tis a conscience clear and bright,
A peace of mind which the soul can lift
To an infinite delight.

"Truth, patience, courage and love,
If thou unto me canst bring,
I will set thee all earth's ills above,
O Child, and crown thee a King!"

"GOD BE WITH THEE."

IT is related by travellers as an instance of how little the customs of Eastern nations have changed during many hundreds of years, that in the fields of Palestine the very same words may be heard now as in the days of Boaz and Ruth. When the master enters the harvest-field he salutes the reapers just as Boaz did, "The Lord be with you," and the peasants respond always in the words, "God bless thee!" It is a happy custom that may well see no change. We would all do well to use from the heart this ancient salutation, "The Lord be with thee."

Edison is credited with the statement that the latest electrical phenomenon is a live fish swimming in a tub of clean water, having swallowed a bait consisting of a little incandescent lamp. When the current is turned on the fish is lighted up so that you can see through him and observe the circulation of the blood.

LESSON NOTES.

A.D. 58.] LESSON VII. [Feb. 15.

PAUL'S DEFENCE.

Acts 22. 1-31. Commit to memory vs. 18-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And I said, What shall I do, Lord? Acts 22. 10.

OUTLINE.

1. The Persecutor, v. 1-5.
2. The Penitent, v. 6-16.
3. The Preacher, v. 17-21.

TIME.—A. D. 58.

PLACE.—The stairs leading from the temple to the Tower of Antonia, at Jerusalem.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Men, brethren*—Literally, men who are my brethren. *Fathers*—Probably men of age and office, members of the Sanhedrin were present. *Hebrew tongue*—Probably because it was deemed more appropriate to the temple, and also to secure the attention and sympathy of the Jews. *This way*—As yet Christianity had received no permanent name, and hence this vague phrase. *High-priest*—Probably Theophilus. *Estimate of the elders*—The Sanhedrin. *A great light*—The Shekinah or divine lustre of the glorified Jesus. *Wash away thy sins*—Baptism the outward symbol expressing the work done by the Spirit. *The Lord*—Jesus, who appeared to him on the way to Damascus. *Martyr*—This word is pure Greek, and means witness, but was applied to those dying for their testimony, as confessor designated the faithful who survived persecution.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

- Where in this lesson are we taught—
1. That a man can be zealous in a wrong cause!
 2. That God overrules the designs of the wicked!

3. That obedience to the heavenly call brings light and peace!

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Why did the people pay the more attention to Paul's speech? Because he spake in the Hebrew tongue. 2. What happened to Paul on his way to Damascus? A great light shone round about him. 3. What did the voice say to Paul? "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" 4. What did Paul say when the voice made itself known? "What shall I do, Lord?" 5. What did Ananias of Damascus say to Paul? "Arise, and be baptized."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The ascended Saviour.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

7. What was the Spirit's work of inspiration?

He moved and guided the writers of the Bible, so that they truly recorded the truth of God. 2 Peter i. 21.

[2 Samuel xxiii. 2; Acts iv. 25. xxviii. 25; 2 Timothy iii. 16.]

8. What was the Spirit's work as to the person of Jesus?

He brought into being the human nature of our Lord, so that He was born without sin; and gave to Him as the Christ (or the Anointed) wisdom and grace without measure for His redeeming work. Luke i. 35; Luke ii. 52; Isaiah lxi. 1.

[Matthew xii. 18; Luke iv. 18; John i. 33, 34, iii. 34; Acts x. 38.]

A.D. 58.] LESSON VIII. [Feb. 22.

PAUL BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

Acts 23. 1-11. Commit to mem. vs. 9-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul. Acts 23. 11.

OUTLINE.

1. A Brave Rebuke, v. 1-5.
2. A Great Dissemion, v. 6-10.
3. A Divine Friend, v. 11.

TIME.—In the spring of A. D. 58, on the day after the events of the last lesson.

PLACE.—The hall of the Sanhedrin, in Jerusalem.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Council*—The Sanhedrin, the highest court of the Jews, summoned by the commander of the garrison. *Lived*—Administered mine office for God. *Ananias*—The son of Nebedæus, appointed to the high-priesthood by Herod. *Smite him on the mouth*—An insult. "He that strikes the cheek of an Israelite, strikes, as it were, the cheek of the Shekinah." *Whited wall*—A whitewashed wall, a phrase like whited sepulchre, used of the hypocrite. *Wist not*—Some understand that Paul in his haste did not consider the position of Ananias; others that so many changes had been made that Paul was ignorant as to the present incumbent. *I am a Pharisee*—In so far as he believed in the resurrection and existence of spirits. His object in so declaring himself was doubtless to divide the Sanhedrin, as he feared he would not have a fair trial and a just decision. *Stood by him*—Whether in a dream or a vision in a waking state, is not stated. *Good cheer*—An assurance that he was not forgotten or forsaken by Jesus.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. Respect for rulers?
2. Boldness for the truth?
3. Safety in true service?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What were the Sadducees? A skeptical school of Judaism. 2. What were the Pharisees? The orthodox party in Judaism. 3. To which of these parties did Paul belong? To the Pharisees. 4. What did the Pharisees say concerning Paul? "We find no evil in this man." 5. What did the Lord say to Paul the night following? "Be of good cheer."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The resurrection of the dead.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

9. What does the Spirit perform for the Church?

He calls and qualifies men, from time to time, to preach the word and administer the sacraments; makes their preaching effectual to the conversion of sinners, and the edification of believers; and is present as the representative of the Lord Jesus in all the ordinances of public worship. Acts xx. 28; 1 Thessalonians i. v; John xvi. 7.

[Acts xiii. 2, 4, vi. 10; 1 Peter i. 12.]

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