

V. ITS HOPE : CHILDHOOD.

They brought young children to him. v. 13.

"Children are a heritage of the Lord."

Psa. 127. 3.

VI. ITS WORK : SALVATION OF CHILDREN.

Suffer the little children... unto me. v. 14.

"Out of... babes... perfected praise."

Matt. 21. 16.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Thoughts upon Family Life.

1. The enemies of true religion strike at the family, and give their influence toward its destruction. v. 2-4.

2. The family is under the divine protection, and is by the divine order. v. 5-9.

3. While laws concerning the family may differ under various conditions of society, the principles underlying those laws are unchanged. v. 5, 6.

4. The family is not created by the State, but by the divine law. v. 6, 7.

5. The family is protected by the Gospel more securely than under the law. v. 5, 9, 11.

6. The bond which constitutes a family is life-long, and does not depend upon congeniality or affection. v. 11, 12.

7. The family should bring its children to Christ for his blessing. v. 13-16.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

44. *What were their peculiar laws, considered as a nation?*

The laws which God gave the children of Israel, and which were peculiar to them as a nation, were such as related to their peace and wars, to their house and lands, to their wives and servants, to their lives and limbs.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

WHEN quite a child I was taken one day with my brother to the British Museum. I did not know much about it, but believed it to be a place well worth seeing, and great was my disappointment when it appeared that I was under the age for admission, and I was consequently excluded, while my brother was allowed to enter.

What was the reason of this exclusion? The museum was considered a place unfit for small children, and its attractions beyond their power to appreciate. And doubtless their presence would have been deemed an annoyance to the other visitors. They would have been in the way.

We read to-day of a place open to all, attractive to all, and where none, even the youngest, is considered in the way.

The Lord Jesus was on the point of departing from "Judea beyond Jordan," or

Perea, where, as formerly in Galilee, great multitudes had followed him. A last favour is sought of him before the final farewell. "They brought unto him little children," or, as Luke informs us, their babes, "that he should touch them." The "kingdom of God," in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, had come nigh unto them, and now they wanted to see their little ones made partakers of it with themselves. Notice

(1) *What the mothers thought about the matter.*

Was it a desirable thing that their children should enter the kingdom of God, and that they should be brought into actual contact with the Lord Jesus, and be numbered among his people? Evidently they thought it was. They did not imagine the blessing of Christ to be a thing good for older people only. They did not consider entrance into the kingdom which he preached a doubtful privilege for being so young. They did not suppose their children would grow dull, or sad, or morose, because they had been brought to him. They did not think it well to wait till the children were older, and could judge for themselves. So great a privilege as the blessing of Jesus must be sought at once. And they seem to have had no doubt that he would receive them.

How many of those who know this story almost by heart are as wise and discerning as the people of Perea? How many young people, far beyond these "babes" in age, think themselves not yet old enough to come to Jesus! They are afraid of being converted—afraid that the power of the Holy Ghost may overcome them and they may get new hearts, and become the disciples of Christ. They fancy his blessing will make them unhappy! They think that he who made this beautiful world, and gave himself for them, wishes them to be dull, and sad, and wretched! They think he does not know what is good for them nearly as well as they know themselves, although he made them. Let them learn a lesson from these Perea parents, who brought their children to Jesus. Notice

(2) *What the disciples thought of the matter.*

I do not suppose they had a doubt about the desirability of coming to Jesus—about the privilege of entering the kingdom. They thought the blessing too great, the privilege too extreme, to be extended to those little ones. They were mistaken both as to the privilege itself and as to those who were fit recipients of it. To be partakers of the kingdom of heaven was indeed a high privilege, so high that not the best and purest of mankind could of himself obtain it. The marvel was that it was offered to sinners at