



LESSON,—SUNDAY, JUNE, 6, 1909.

## The Power of the Tongue.

James iii., 1-12. Memory verses, 8-10.

### Golden Text.

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles. Prov. xxi., 23.

### Home Readings.

Monday, May 31.—Jas. iii., 1-12.  
 Tuesday, June 1.—Jer. ix., 1-8.  
 Wednesday, June 2.—Zech. viii., 9-17.  
 Thursday, June 3.—Psalm lii.  
 Friday, June 4.—Psalm xii.  
 Saturday, June 5.—Prov. x., 11-22.  
 Sunday, June 6.—Psa. xxxiv., 11-18.

#### FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Do you know why the doctor says 'Put out your tongue' when he wants to know what is the matter with you? Because that little tongue of yours, that helps you in so many ways, always feels it at once if you get ill, and it gets thick, or red, or dry, or gray looking, just according to what is wrong with your body. What else does your tongue do for you? Keep your tongue lying very flat and still down in your mouth, Jack, and try to tell me your name. You can't do it? Well, you try, Willie. It's no use, is it? I'm afraid none of you could tell me your names if you didn't have a tongue to help you do it. Of course, there are some words, 'baby' and 'mamma' for instance, that you can say without moving your tongues, and perhaps that is why a baby finds them so easy to say; he just has to use his little lips. But, apart from these few words, we couldn't manage to speak without our tongues, so they are very important. What is the title of our lesson to-day? 'The Power of the Tongue.' You remember that last Sunday we were studying what was written ever so many years ago in a letter from a man named James who knew Jesus when He was here upon earth. To-day's lesson is from another part of that same letter. To-day he is telling us something about these tongues that we all have. You all know what a tongue is, but can anyone tell me what 'power' is? When we say that a man is 'very powerful' what do we mean? We mean he is very strong. Do you think that your tongue is very strong? Feel it there in your mouth. It is quite soft and little. You could bite it right through and it couldn't get away from you. Does your tongue ever run away? Oh, but it does. Often and often it goes hurrying, running on in your mouth saying naughty things, saying unkind things, saying things that make you feel frightened and ashamed and sorry, and all the same it goes on saying them. If you could only stop your tongue and make it lie down still like Carlo does when father says 'Lie down, sir!' you wouldn't go on saying those naughty and unkind things, but somehow you just don't seem able to stop it. Why does Carlo lie down when he is told to? Because he has been trained to do it. Then why does not your tongue keep still when you really want it to? Because it hasn't been trained to do it. First of all when it said the first naughty little words, you just let it say them to see what would happen. That went on until now your tongue is quite strong, it has great 'power' as our title calls it, and runs away saying things that we often wish it wouldn't say, and we certainly know it shouldn't say. Let us see what James has to say about our powerful tongues.

#### FOR THE SENIORS.

The advice of James in the first verse of our lesson, to be careful how we assume a position of authority owing to the responsi-

bility that it carries with it, is one of the warnings that perhaps do not need so much emphasis to-day as they did in the time in which James wrote. At that time the natural Jewish love of authority against which Christ spoke so strongly (Matt. xxiii., 6-8, Mark xii., 38-40; Luke xxii., 25, 26), was detrimental to the church producing so many who were desirous of holding the chief seats and having the honor that was attached to the position of teacher, but nowadays the tendency is to shirk work and say 'Oh no, I couldn't think of taking that class, or leading a meeting. I don't feel able to. You had much better ask so and so.' To-day we might rather press home the words of Paul, his exhortation to desire greatly the ability to speak and teach for God (I. Cor. xii., 31; xiv., 12, 39). Nor do we suggest that in this case Paul is in any way opposed to the teaching of James any more than in the matter of faith and works, but 'circumstances alter cases'; the forward and self-assertive child needs checking, while the shy and retiring one needs the word of encouragement and the awakening of self-confidence. However, there are to-day, some who forget the responsibility that their office in God's church carries with it, and to these the warning of James is as suitable as ever. Work for God is never to be thoughtlessly undertaken. James's little talk on the 'unruly member' is of the greatest interest. The peace-loving, kindly, earnest man who presided over that first troubled council in Jerusalem (Acts xv.,) and earned for himself the title of 'the Just,' was no self-righteous being swift to condemn the failure of others, but included himself in the general indictment on the score of hasty speech 'In many things we all offend.' 'But the tongue can no man tame.' The strength, however, of which we so sorely stand in need, the apostle assures us is always at hand, 'If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not' (James i., 5; iii., 14-18).

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE.')

Verse 1. 'We shall receive heavier judgment.' The more thou knowest, and the better thou understandest, the more strictly shalt thou be judged, unless thy life be also the more holy.—Thomas à Kempis.

Verse 5. 'The tongue is a little member.' Don't say, What can a word do? It takes so little to help a soul.

Don't say, It was only a word. It takes so little to hurt a soul.

To block the waggon down hill, to prop the waggon going up, needs only a pebble.—Charles Wagner, in 'The Better Way.'

Verse 8. 'The tongue is full of deadly poison.' The story of the bees is thus described by Mr. F. A. Root in his work 'Bee Culture': 'After a bee has stung you and torn itself away from the sting, you will notice, if you look closely, a bundle of muscles near by, partly enveloping the poison bag. Well, the curious part of it is that, for some considerable time after the sting has been detached from the body of the bee, these muscles will work with a kind of pumping motion, working the sting farther into the wound, as if they had a conscious existence and burned with a desire to wreak vengeance on the party attacked.' Words have a life of their own. Many a harsh word, many a vicious lie, many a scandal from a gossip's tongue has thus worked its 'sting farther into the wound' and continued to ply its poison, even after its author has forgotten, and sometimes after the grave has closed over him. And like the bee's sting, the lie or the scandal can not be drawn back after it has been flung at a fellow mortal.—'Homiletic Review.'

The ill-timed truth we might have kept—  
 Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung!  
 says Edward Rowland Sill, and then he continues.

The word we had not sense to say—  
 Who knows how grandly it had rung!

We may bear false-witness by our silence as well as by our speech, we may hurt others by withholding the just word of praise as well as by uttering the unjust word of criticism, we may sin in not speaking the kind word of encouragement as well as in voicing the unkind word of discouragement.

They that love to hear themselves talk do

not consider what work they are making for repentance.—Matthew Henry.

### Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, June 6.—Topic—How to have peace with God. Rom. v., 1-9. (Consecration meeting.)

### C. E. Topic.

Monday, May 31.—My father's love. Luke xv., 11-32.

Tuesday, June 1.—My Saviour's search. Luke xv., 1-7.

Wednesday, June 2.—Need of compassion. Luke x., 30-37.

Thursday, June 3.—Which am I? Luke xviii., 9-14.

Friday, June 4.—My pounds. Luke xix., 11-27.

Saturday, June 5.—Earnest in prayer. Luke xviii., 1-8.

Sunday, June 6.—Topic—Life lessons for me from the Gospel of Luke. Luke vi., 20-38. (Consecration meeting.)

### Seeing One's Own Self.

(H. E. Tralle, in the 'Sunday-School Teacher's Pedagogy.')

Oftentimes a teacher exclaims, with a note of despair, 'I wish I could teach as that good teacher teaches.' Suppose the teacher could teach as another teacher teaches, it would be a mistake for him to try to do so. No matter how good the way of the other teacher, it is not the way of this teacher; and it would, therefore, be a bad way. He must not be an imitator, but an originator. He must put his own individuality into his teaching, he must have his own plan; and his own plan will differ, in some respects at least, from the plans of others. It will differ also from his own plans, the plans he has used on other occasions.

The teacher must be original. In order to be original, he must know how others teach, he must study principles and methods, and he must get suggestions from others; but, in his own teaching, he must do the work in his own way. This originality in the teacher will beget variety. He will begin the lesson one time in one way and at another time in another way, but always it will be his way, and not another's way. The teacher would better be his own little self than to try to be a big somebody and succeed in being only nothing. Let the teacher dare to be just his own best self.

### Lead Them Straight.

At the struggle at Tel-el-Kebir there was a midnight assault. The British had not sufficient plans of the ground, and yet the Highland Brigade had to be led by the light of the stars round a dangerous semicircle in order to be at their post. Lord Wolseley selected a young naval officer, who had taken the bearings of the enemy, and he said to young Rawson:

'I leave you to guide the Highland Brigade by the light of the stars to the post where they will be wanted at such an hour.'

The brave young fellow put himself at the front of those hardy men, and there, in silence, led them round the enemy, till he got them to the position where Lord Wolseley wanted them to be; and then the enemy's fire opened, and men fell all around, and Commodore Rawson was one of the first to fall. When the shout of victory went up, Lord Wolseley, in the midst of all the responsibility and excitement of his position, was told that Rawson lay dying. He left his men and galloped across the field to the spot where the young man was lying that he might have one word with him before he passed away. Entering into the little tent that they had drawn over him, the dying man knew him, and a smile came over his pale face as he held up his trembling hand to the general; and looking into the face, he said:

'General, didn't I lead them straight?' By-and-by, Sunday school teachers, you will meet the great Captain of our salvation, and I pray that when that day comes you may look Him in the face, and say, as you think of your class:

'Captain, didn't I lead them straight?'—Selected.