

# The Home Study Quarterly

Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, M.A., Editor  
Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D., Associate Editor

Vol. X.

April, May, June, 1904

No. 2

## MEMORIZING A GOSPEL

A teacher in one of our Ontario Sabbath Schools is in a curious puzzle. One of her scholars has already recited the Shorter Catechism with proofs, and also memorized the General Assembly's Memory Verses for the past three years, and has received the Diploma with two seals. "What next, and what more?" the teacher asked of the Editors. The suggestion given may perhaps be helpful elsewhere: to commit to memory a gospel, preferably the gospel according to St. John, which would be a lifelong possession of inestimable value.

"A whole gospel!" cries some one in dismay. "Would you load down the poor child in that dreadful way?" Dear Sir, or Madam, your pity is quite misplaced. Children memorize as easily as they eat, and take as much delight in it. What is thus stored up in their minds, is like the strength stored up in their bodies in youthful days: it is something to draw upon for a lifetime.

## A BOY'S FRIENDS

*By W. L. Grant, M.A.*

"A man is known by the company he keeps," says an old proverb. This is still more true of boys, whose impulses are so quick and generous, and their characters so easily influenced. I have known two boys to become friends, and within six months the better of the two had lost his frankness, his clear eye was becoming furtive, his whole appearance showed a loss of courage and of self-respect. I have known two others form an intimacy, and ere long a boy I had disliked had learned from his comrade

such truthfulness and honour, that all the evil in him seemed to be sloughed off, as a snake sloughs his skin. "Iron sharpeneth iron," says the wise man; "so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

How then should we choose in a matter so important, and which will have so great an influence upon our lives? Many of us choose our friends more carelessly than we choose our neckties. For this there is a reason. To some boys we feel drawn involuntarily; we take to them naturally; their qualities seem to suit our own, so that we grow into friendship with each other, without asking how or why. Just as animals by instinct choose suitable food, so a healthy boy by instinct chooses suitable friends.

But, after all, our reason is the greatest gift which God has given us, and we must use our reason as well as our feelings in this important matter. On what principle shall we go? I have heard of a celebrated professor at Oxford who, from his boyhood, chose his friends with a view to the aid they could give him in getting on in life. To all who had money or influence he was gracious, to all others cold and repellant. Merely to hear of such a man, is to be disgusted with his selfishness, to feel that, however much his rich friends may have helped him, he lost far more than he gained. How such a man must have stifled his best instincts; how he must have restrained and suppressed his generous feelings; how cold and calculating must his nature have been!

How then should we choose? Let me distinguish between "being friendly," and "making friends." We should be friendly to all; welcome their advances; show them