

scarred and blemished by sin ; it is His purpose that it shall become once more the abode of righteousness. Paradise lost shall give place to paradise regained.

There is no joy like that of working together with God in making all things new. And none can do this more effectively or with greater assurance of success, than teachers of the young. To bring boys and girls in the fresh springtime of life to the great renewer, that they may receive His life-giving touch,—surely there can be no happier outlook on the New Year than that of those engaged in this blessed endeavor.

### Three Crowns

*By Rev. Professor James W. Falconer, D.D.*

Thrice were crowns offered to Jesus, but only on the last occasion did He accept the gift. His choice reveals the new ideal of sovereignty for which He stood.

The first crown was one of great worldly splendor, when, at the Temptation the devil offered Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof. His virtuous mind shrank, not from the responsibility of the task of universal lordship, but from the evil to which He must submit in reaching it. He must bow down and worship the devil. This implied such an alienation from the favor of God, His loving Father, that He revolted against the suggestion. He could not accept even the crown of world-wide dominion if it caused a momentary breaking of the bond of filial trust. This crown cost too much.

The second offer was made in the midway of His career when He had given a display of His miraculous power in supplying the needs of the five thousand. We read that, when Jesus perceived that they would use force to make Him a king, He departed out of their midst into a desert place alone. The dignity offered was unworthy of Christ. It was not the tribute He required. This was no offering of the heart or conscience. It did not grow out of faith. The motive that urged the crowd to make Him a king was selfish. They would use Him for their own comfort. It was merely a bread crown.

The Saviour of the world must look for some more noble recognition of His authority. This crown cost too little.

The last crown offered to Jesus was a crown of thorns ; and He who had refused all worldly honors where these implied ease and luxury, now accepts a crown that brings with it sorrow, shame and death. His royalty consists not in any outward pomp or ceremony, not in barbaric splendor, but in a love that sacrifices life itself for His brethren. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. Jesus would win us to Himself and rule over us by means of His love. With this crown of thorns Jesus has opened the gates of paradise, and left them open for all who take Him as their Lord.

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### The Lessons for 1914

The Lessons for 1914 are taken from the three Synoptic Gospels (so called because they agree in giving a "synopsis" or general view of the same series of events), Matthew, Mark and Luke. They cover a period of less than six months in the life of our Lord, leading up to His arrest, trial, death, resurrection and ascension.

The Lessons begin at the point reached a year ago,—the time of Jesus' final departure from Galilee, where He had been carrying on His ministry for nearly a year and a half. Just before this Peter and the other disciples had made their great confession of faith, which was closely followed by the Transfiguration.

The starting point of Jesus' journey from Galilee was Capernaum and its destination was Jerusalem. There were two routes open to Him,—one through Samaria and the other along the Jordan valley. He chose the way through Samaria. But having been rejected by a Samaritan village, He turned eastward toward the Jordan and crossed the river into Perea.

Through this province our Lord journeyed slowly southward. To this journey belong the events narrated in the Lessons of the first two Quarters of the year and those of the first two Lessons of the Third Quarter.

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