



LESSON,—SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 1908.

Jesus and John the Baptist.

John i., 25-34. Memory verses 29, 30. Read John i., 19-34.

Golden Text.

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John i., 29.

Home Readings.

- Monday, January 6.—John i., 19-34.
- Tuesday, January 7.—Luke i., 5-20.
- Wednesday, January 8.—Luke i., 59-80.
- Thursday, January 9.—Matt. iii., 1-17.
- Friday, January 10.—Matt. xi., 1-19.
- Saturday, January 11.—Isa. xl., 1-17.
- Sunday, January 12.—Mal. iv., 1-16.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

Can any of you tell me what it means when our golden text speaks of 'the lamb of God' and to whom it referred? Yes, it is Jesus of whom the text speaks, and we have to look back into the Old Testament to see why He is called 'the Lamb of God.' (Speak of the old temple service about which they should remember something from last year's lessons.) So now we see that all these many years the Jewish people had been sacrificing animals for their sins as a prophecy of the coming of Christ to die for the sins of everybody in the world. They did not know this and, as we learnt in our last lesson, they did not know Jesus when he came. So who was it that found this out and knew Jesus when He came? It was John the Baptist, and he was such a wonderful man that Jesus himself said that no man had ever been greater. (Pass in quick review something of the birth of John and his life in the wilderness.) Now John was a grown up man, over thirty years old, and all that time he had been looking forward to Christ's coming, and lately had been telling the people about it. God had been teaching him and John was very ready to learn.

Pass over as thoroughly as possible, not giving this too much time, John's popularity, how he met Christ first at his baptism, and how in this lesson he is willing to lose his own popularity if the people will only turn to Christ, then come back to the main thought that lies in the golden text.

FOR THE SENIORS.

This lesson is no whit behind last Sunday's for its interest and abundance of material for study. It is as though the Apostle John had so much to say that he could do little more than touch on the channels of thought that branched from his main theme. That, however, is never neglected. He is summoning together the witnesses to Christ and the truth of his claim, and never forgets his purpose (John xx., 31). The class of man John the Baptist was and the immense hold his rugged power had taken on the people had been set forth by the other gospels (Luke xx., 6). To John he was 'a man sent from God,' and St. John had been one of his disciples. A study of John the Baptist and his personality is tempting, but cannot be entered into deeply. Enough must be said, however, to understand the value of this important witness to our Lord. The personal evidence of all Christ's disciples was brought forward in the last lesson (verse 14), to-day it is the evidence of one man. The lesson offers for study the question of Old Testament prophecy, how far it was understood, in what it was misunderstood, and how John the Baptist received the clearer

light. Doubtless hearing from his parents the message given at his birth (Luke i.), and feeling the power of God upon him he had chosen to go into solitude and there study the Holy Scriptures for light. Absolutely fearless he was ready when God gave the word. The origin and the rite of baptism, its meaning and value, the gift and visible descent of the Holy Spirit, why in Christ's case it was necessary seeing he was the Son of God himself, the manifestation at this time in the form of a dove, when later tongues of flame (Acts ii., 3) were used to express His power, the difference between John's and the Christian Baptism, the meaning of baptism 'with' or 'in the Holy Spirit' as the Revised Version reads—what an impossibility to cover all possible lines of study in this lesson. The teacher must choose those best suited to his class.

(SELECTIONS FROM TARBELL'S 'GUIDE'.)

To be the first to recognize a dawning superiority in some one who stands near us is not only to give our own nature a beautiful and worthy expression, but to share in the development of a new and inspiring gift. The power of appreciation is itself a beautiful gift, and its culture means the possession of a talent as generous as it is beautiful. To possess it is to drive out the shadow of envy, and to give swift hospitality to truth and beauty. We reveal our own natures by our attitude towards superiority in others.—H. W. Mabie, 'Works and Days.'

A Christian who is strong in his faith would naturally be courageous in his confession of Christ. Am I? Am I ready and willing to tell others about the musician who taught me how to play, the artist who taught me how to draw, but unwilling to acknowledge the Christ who taught me how to live?

If you and I have not seen God, we can not bear witness to God.—Lyman Abbott.

Men are not saved by the sacrifices they make, but by accepting the Sacrifice God makes for them.—C. M. Lamson.

FROM PELOUBET'S 'NOTES.'

In the mountain regions, the washing of the hillsides by the heavy winter rains destroys, each year, a large portion of the best-laid roads. In the desert region the shifting sands, and in the more fertile regions the abundant growth of weeds and shrubbery, make Eastern roads well-nigh impassable, unless care is exercised for their frequent or special clearing. In many parts of the East the ancient roads were prepared or repaired only at the special call of the king, for his special service on an exceptional occasion.—H. C. Trumbull, D.D.

'What is all this for?' 'Who is coming?' would be the question on every lip.

The preparation of the way was of itself the announcement of the coming of the king.

'During my stay in Cairo, one of the commonest sights was a carriage of a pasha preceded through the crowded streets by one or more forerunners, calling aloud for the clearing of the way. And when our little party rode out along the banks of the Nile, a handsome young 'Saïs' (forerunner) bedecked with scarlet and blue and green and gold, ran before us at top speed calling for a clear path for us among the loaded camels, and the ambling donkeys, and the toiling foot-passers.'

The gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was the first great and most manifest expression of this power which Christ gave and which has been with the church in various degrees down all the Christian ages.

The effect of this gift of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles was a wonderful change in them. It was almost a transfiguration experience. So the dead wire is thrilled with electricity, and bursts out into light and power. They were common men no longer. As Mosheim says, 'Their ignorance was turned into light, their doubts into certainty, their fears into a firm and invincible fortitude, and their former backwardness into an ardent and inextinguishable zeal.'

The fruits of the Spirit, shown in individual

Christians and in the development of the nations which accept Christ, in the wonderful progress of missions, are a voice from heaven sounding through the ages.

BIBLE REFERENCES.

- Isa. liii., 5-7; Mal. iii., 1; iv., 5; Deut. xviii., 15; Matt. iii., 16, 17; I. John ii., 2; iii., 5; iv., 16; Luke iii., 4-6; Rev. vii., 10; I. Pet. ii., 24; Rev. v., 9; I. Cor. x., 24; John v., 33, 35, 36; Matt. xxi., 24-26.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, January 12.—Topic—The true centre of life. John xv., 1-10.

C. E. Topic.

Monday, January 6.—His birthday. Luke ii., 1-7.

Tuesday, January 7.—The shepherds story. Luke ii., 8-20.

Wednesday, January 8.—His dedication. Luke ii., 25-32.

Thursday, January 9.—Visit of the wise men. Matt ii., 1-11.

Friday, January 10.—How Jesus grew. Luke ii., 40.

Saturday, January 11.—His visit to Jerusalem. Luke ii., 41-44.

Sunday, January 12.—Topic—The boy Jesus in His Father's house. Luke ii., 45-50.

Cause of Failure Among Sunday School Teachers.

It Takes You too Long to Get to Work.—Immense concerns hang upon that thirty or forty minutes. It is business for eternity, remember. It may be your last chance for souls. You can't spare time to wake up and yawn.

If your lesson is—well, say about Philip and the eunuch, you haven't time to try to find out how fast Philip ran, or whether the eunuch wore eyeglasses. Without preliminaries, seize some of the roots of the lesson; personal effort, e.g., searching the Scriptures, teachableness, faith, prompt obedience, adaptation of the Gospel and its ordinances to all men under all circumstances, joy of the new life, etc.

Look the matter over carefully, and you will find other causes hidden away. Drag them forth, put them under foot, keep them there, and, by the grace of God, you may be one of the most successful and happy teachers in your school.

You Are Too Easily Induced to Be Absent, the most successful and happy teachers in your place. This always works mischief against you.

If you care for the good opinion of your class—and they want to regard you as the best of teachers—don't let a little toothache keep you away from your class. Stand in your lot, if you must do it like my friend—a most successful teacher—on his crutches.—'Evangelical Sunday School Teacher.'

Our Hand In It.

And gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes (v. 19). A poor field negro with a wooden leg hobbled up to the collection table to lay his offering upon it. He took from a pocket a handful of silver, and said, 'That's for me, massa;' from another pocket, another handful,—'That's for my wife, massa;' and from still another pocket yet another handful,—'That's for my child, massa.' The pastor remonstrated with him for giving so much. 'O massa,' said he, 'God's work must be done, and I may be dead.' Ida Moulton, telling this story of sacrifice and devotion, suggests this motto for all of us: 'God's work must be done, and I will have a part in it.' Jesus honored his disciples by giving them a part in the distribution of his mercy and love to the multitude. Let us seek it as life's richest privilege, that we may have a part in feeding this hungry world the bread of life.—'S. S. Times.'