

and admonitions would flash across my mind, but I turned a deaf ear to these warnings. I taught school for sixteen years, and gradually began to sink deeper into dissipated habits, so that I had to give up my profession. On the 4th day of October, 1879, when over fifty years of age, and after a week's dissipation and idleness, without a serious thought about religion or anything tending that way, I took up the "Globe" newspaper to pass an idle hour. In looking over the paper, I came to the story of a wicked son and a praying mother. The mother was pleading with the son to come with her and leave his evil companions, declaring to him that she had prayed to God for him, and that she believed that God would answer her prayer. She entreated him to come away. The son turned to his mother and asked "when?" She replied, "For Christ's sake, now." After reading these four words I folded up the paper, laid it down, went away into the fields alone, and then ejaculated, "That is for you," meaning myself. I knew that God's holy Spirit had called me, that He had found me out alone, and I thought it was the last call I should ever have; nevertheless, the struggle was fearful. Long habit, the love of sin, Satan with all his forces fighting for my soul, my only prayer and all that I could say was "Oh Lord, leave me not." In this state of mind I continued till the next day, Sabbath afternoon, when Jesus was presented to my mind in words like these: "Here is the Saviour whom you have so long rejected and despised as able and willing to save you now as He was when you were a boy at your mother's side; will you accept Him as your Saviour?" I cried out: "Yes, Lord Jesus, for life and death." The Holy Spirit had made me willing. I was saved, and I knew it at once. My first words of thankfulness were: "Thank God, my mother's prayers are answered at last." I was lost in wonder at the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. I knew I was changed, and yet the same wonder, love and praise expresses my state. Now comes what some of my good Christian friends find harder to realize than my conversion. You must observe that all this took place between God and my soul alone. I had no counsel or advice of any kind. Before I left the field I remembered my besetting sin, the love of strong drink. On the same spot that Jesus spoke peace to my soul, I implored the Lord my Saviour to take from me the curse of my life. I had perfect faith in His almighty power. After what He had already done I thought this a small matter for Him to do, but I knew it to be of great importance to me. As the words "Go away, I have done this for you also," came to my mind, I rose from my knees and stepped out a free man in Christ Jesus and a soldier of the cross; and to-day I am preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified to all that I am able to reach with my voice as a Presbyterian missionary in Muskoka, and the Lord my Redeemer has been with me and kept me. The one hundred and twenty-first Psalm is my daily experience, and I pray my heavenly Father that He may spare me a little longer to preach to others the good news and glad tidings of a personal Saviour and a present salvation. Thank God for praying mothers!

THE WORK IN GLASGOW.—ESTIMATE OF A CORRESPONDENT.

All reflecting readers who have been at the Bible readings during the last fortnight must have discovered that Mr. Moody is far ahead of the rank and file of the Christian Church of the present day, both in doctrine and practice. That he has grown in experience and knowledge, grown in tenderness and spiritual power, makes itself every day more manifest; and the impression of *the man* is, to me at least, more striking even than his words. After all, next to the purely Divine element in such work, it is the *personnel* that tells. Even the east-end audiences of men who, in a transformed music hall, hung on the preacher's lips for the last ten days, have bent before his power. "I do not believe much in religion, but I believe in Mr. Moody," said an intelligent artisan to me at the close of the meeting the other night; and I fancy he was expressing a part of the feeling which induced many besides himself to remain to the after-meeting.

This east-end work has been one of the most remarkable features of the present movement. Hundreds have professed decision, and the sight of the hall after the main meeting is over is one never to be forgotten. From stage to gallery the entire building is crowded with little groups of men inquiring what

they must do to be saved. Here is a young convert who has brought two companions, and who is seeking some trusted worker to come and deal with them. There is another near the door pleading with a scoffer. All round the pit is a ring of standing figures, who, when asked to give an account of themselves, tell you that they received a blessing in this place two, three, four, five nights ago.

Mr. Sankey, who has gallantly headed a charge on his own account this week, has abundant reason to be satisfied with the experiment. His voice has been in splendid condition since its enforced rest, and immense crowds have been attracted to hear his powerful vocal method of presenting the Gospel. The inquirers at all his meetings, in which he is worthily helped by accredited evangelists, have been innumerable—the circus meetings perhaps being especially productive. The new "Songs and Solos" are finding their way into favour rapidly. Some of the airs are exceedingly beautiful. Surely no evangelistic movement has ever given to the religious public such a priceless legacy of sacred song.

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THE Internal Presbyterian Conference of Australia, which is held every other year, meets in Sydney this month. The meeting of the General Assembly of Australia will not, therefore, take place till March, 1883.

Mr. Mackay, of the Nyanza mission, writes: "Drink is the curse of Africa. Go where you will, you will find every week, and where grain is plentiful, every night, man, woman and child, reeling from the effects of alcohol."

THE veteran African missionary, Dr. Robert Moffat, is still in good health, though in his eighty-sixth year. He was compelled to leave London recently and go into the country, being overrun with callers, who taxed his strength too much for endurance.

DR. TAYLOR, of New York, referring to the Chinese question, recently said in one of his sermons: "There is no form of aristocracy quite so despicable as the aristocracy of race, and the selfishness, cruelty, and unchristian character of this spirit was never shown more strikingly than in this instance."

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XVI.

April 23, 1882. } CHRIST WALKING ON THE SEA. { Mark vi. 45-56.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."—Isaiah 43: 2.

TIME.—Night following the day of last lesson.

PLACE.—The Sea of Galilee.

PARALLELS.—Matt. 14: 22-36; John 6: 15-21.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 45. "Straightway:" immediately after feeding the multitude; "constrained:" the disciples did not want to leave the Master; "other side:" of the Lake, from whence they had come, though not exactly to same place; "to Bethsaida:" marg. "over against." We agree with Meyer as against Lange, that it was the western Bethsaida. John says (6: 17) Capernaum and the places were nigh.

Ver. 46. He needed rest, but sought it in prayer rather than sleep. He would not even have His disciples with Him in His communion with His Father. Do you need strength for your work? seek it as the Master did.

Vers. 47, 48. "When even was come:" the second evening—the first commenced at 3 o'clock, the other at sunset. "In the midst—sea." John says, 6: 19, that they had rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs, about three miles; "toiling in rowing—wind contrary:" Rev. "distressed in rowing"—lit. tormented—wind violent, sailing out of question. It is supposed they had been seven hours rowing that short distance. "Fourth watch:" which began at 3 a.m. and ended at 6 a.m. This was the Roman division of four watches—formerly the Jews had three. "Cometh:" the night had not hidden them from Him, nor were they for a moment beyond His care. "Walking upon the sea:" a new miracle, one that would come to the disciples with as mighty a force as stilling the storm; "would have passed:" to let them call for Him; so the two disciples—Luke 24: 28.

Vers. 49-51. "A spirit:" a phantom; Rev., "apparition." Their fears were excited, and in the darkness and tempest they did not recognize the dim outline of the Master; besides, walking on the sea was thought impossible, and was, in fact, the old Egyptian symbol for an impossibility. Their

weak faith made the approach of their Deliverer the climax of their fears. "Be of good cheer:" take courage; "it is I:" and there need be no fear where I am. They might mistake the form of Jesus, but they could not His voice and words of cheer. "The wind ceased:" there is present deliverance with a present Christ. "Amazed—wondered." Should this have been? How "slow of heart to believe!" John adds (6: 21) that they willingly received Him, and immediately the ship was at the port where they went. Safety and success with Christ.

Ver. 52. "Considered not:" did not understand or value as they should have done; "for their heart:" not now alone, but through the life of their Master, right along there was dulness, hardness, unbelief.

Ver. 53. "The land of Gennesaret:" a small strip at the north-west end of the lake, embracing Capernaum, said to be at that time very fertile.

Ver. 54. "When they—" Jesus and the disciples; "straightway they:" the populace.

Vers. 55, 56. These two verses describe a state of intense excitement attending the movements of Jesus right through the district. The description is most vivid, and can easily be made telling by a skilful teacher. For "streets," the Rev. reads "marketplaces," the special places of resort in Eastern towns. "Might touch—but the border:" as chapter 5: 27, "touched him," or "it," i.e., the hem. So *Engel*.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—Ver. 49, if not guarded, will be an open door for a profitless talk on apparitions, ghosts, etc. Children are fond of the marvellous, and are as fond of telling as of hearing. The wise teacher will check this, and save the precious time for more profitable talk. So verse 48. Don't let your scholars for a moment imagine that there was anything unkind or deceptive in the action of Jesus.

Topical Analysis.—(1) Jesus alone in the mountain (vers. 45, 46). (2) The disciples alone on the sea (vers. 47, 48). (3) Fear, recognition, safety (vers. 49-52). (4) The Healer at work (vers. 53-56).

On the *first* topic—Jesus had taught His disciples that prayer was to be in secret—that they were to enter into their closet (Matt. 6: 6); and often do we find Him practising what He thus taught. He made the desert His closet—the mountain His secret chamber. Even Jesus felt constantly the need of being alone—of communion thus with His Father in heaven. Man He was, truly and really; and as man He needed the support and strength that God alone can give. So we may teach, that as the Master, is the disciple. If we would do the work we have been given to do—if we would be strengthened for the trials and battles of life—we must go where alone strength can be found—in lonely intercourse with God. Public prayer is right—ought never to be neglected (Jesus set us an example there); but it is in the special needs that every soul feels, and in the way of receiving, that we come into special sympathy and fellowship with our elder brother.

On the *second* topic—The teaching here is in some respects similar to that in Lesson X., yet there are points of difference you may note. In that, Christ was with them, but asleep; in this, He is absent, but through the darkness sees them toiling and rowing. In both trials they were crossing the sea by His command, and should have felt that in that was safety. In the first miracle they went to Him in their danger; in this they do not appear to have thought of Him, and did not recognize Him even when He came to their help, as He did. We may teach from these verses that though, while in the path of duty, we may be overtaken by trials and danger, yet the eye of our Lord is upon us, and we must toil on, as did the disciples—sure that Christ will come, and watch for the coming.

On the *third* topic we can show how the very methods God uses to aid and bless us are sometimes so strange to us that we cannot understand them. The coming of Jesus, which was really the safety of the disciples, was a cause of terror to them. They were "troubled," and "cried out." They never thought of the Master coming to them thus. Weak faith, like blind unbelief, is sure to err. But there came recognition. The blessed "It is I" was heard through the darkness and storm; and it told them that they might banish fear, for He who had before stilled the storm was with them now. But they knew the voice; and we must teach that if the voice of Jesus is to bring comfort, we must have come to make Him our Saviour—to love and to trust Him. Those only who are Christ's know His voice (John 10: 4, 27). Doubtless there were other boats out in that storm; they shared in the safety, as the world shares in the blessings Christ gives to His people, but they had not the comfort of His voice and presence.

The *fourth* topic is a wonderful picture of the healing power of Jesus. Show that "whithersoever he entered" there came healing, recovery of the sick, and a blessing to the place. So we may point out, wherever His gospel enters to-day, it carries blessing—it enlightens the dark and ignorant, heals the soul-sick, and gives life, even life everlasting. Pray and strive that your scholars may touch and be made whole.

Incidental Lessons.—That even the Master needed His seasons of retirement and prayer, and do not His servants?

That Jesus sometimes leaves His people to themselves, that they may find their own weakness.

That the path of duty is not always the path of ease, or even of safety.

That an absent Christ always means a present storm.

That we may be sure the eye of Christ is upon us in our hour of darkness and danger (Acts 7: 56).

That "man's extremity is God's opportunity."

That He will come to our help in His own way. Our duty is to wait and watch for the coming.

That the presence of Jesus brings deliverance and peace.

Main Lessons.—We are all upon the journey of life, and need the presence and guidance of the Saviour (Ex. 33: 13-15; Deut. 32: 10-12; Ps. 31: 3; Luke 1: 78, 79); Jesus is still a present help in time of need (Rom. 8: 6, 13; Eph. 2: 18; Heb. 4: 14, 16; 7: 25; Is. 63: 9).