

remember correctly, shortly after the incident related, and therefore never had the pleasure of reading Mr. Whittier's beautiful lines, which first appeared, I think, in the Atlantic of October, 1863."—N. Y. Sun.

A RESPONSIBLE WORK.

We are seeing more clearly that he who undertakes to teach divine things, whether in the pulpit or the Sunday-school, has taken a duty of the greatest responsibility. The consequences are momentous. The schools are purging themselves of the teacher who comes to pass away an idle hour; of the teacher who uses the Sunday-school to make acquaintances; the teacher who goes to oblige the superintendent; and, I hope, of the teacher who goes in the spirit of dull, unpleasant, wearisome, but necessary duty; the teacher who does not feed the lambs entrusted to him, but gives them the dry husks of religious platitudes. Such teachers would do the Church a service by staying away; for the children would get less harm by being untaught than by being disgusted.

There is the ignorant Christian, the man who neither reads nor thinks; he believes that nothing is wanted but exhortation. Instruction he cannot give. It may seem hard to say, but this man is really out of place, for he may be doing harm that would grieve him, if he only knew it. It would sadden him if he thought that the impression he gave his class was that the weekday teachers were educated, able men and women; but that the Sunday-school teacher was a poor thing, making blunders which even the children recognized. He would be sorry to create the impression that religion was rather a stupid thing, for any one was good enough to teach it. It would sadden him to hear his own ignorance contrasted with the knowledge of the secular teacher, who perhaps did not care to conceal his disbelief in revealed religion. What must be the child's conclusion, but that his Sunday-school teacher believed the Bible because he was not clever. A state of feeling may be induced by the clumsy and ignorant handling of God's Word, which found expression in the schoolboy's definition of faith. "Faith," said he, "is believing what you know isn't true." And then consider the loss incurred. The lesson could have been made so interesting; something that was to recur to the child's mind with pleasure. But the poor thing was only bored. Interest is catching. If we take a true interest in our work, those that hear us will get interested too. It is said of the present Duke of Devonshire that he once yawned in the middle of his own speech; it was so utterly uninteresting to himself! Do we ever yawn mentally in our teaching.

It is possible I may meet with the objection that, after all, spiritual instruction is the object of our teaching, and that therefore spiritual preparation is the only thing needful. "I speak," he may say, "the wisdom of God, and not in words which man's wisdom teacheth." Now, of course, it is quite true that the highest knowledge and the cleverest teaching are in themselves utterly powerless to change the heart. Better a thousand times than an ignorant believer should find employment in the Sunday-school, than the brilliant sceptic. But I have assumed that in any case the teacher is himself taught of God. But because this is essential, it does not follow that it is sufficient. "God is not dependent on your learning," said an unlearned man to a student. "True my friend; neither is he dependent on your ignorance." He is not dependent on us in any way; but Scripture, reason, and experience alike show that it is part of his plan to use instruments. The conspicuous figure of the Old Testament was Moses, a man skilled in all the learning of the most learned country of the age. Paul, the most highly cultured of the apostles, takes the largest share in carrying out his Master's commission: "Go and teach." The whole course of God's dealings with man shows that he will never work miracles to encourage our sloth, negligence, or indifference. "Till I come," said Paul to young Timothy, "give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching." And again, "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of

truth." And our Saviour likens the scribe—that is, the educated man—who is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, to the householder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old—new truths or new aspects and developments of old truths, while even the old truths which seem to have been thoroughly explored are cast into new moulds, and have new illustrations and fresh applications.

The ideal teacher—I have not seen him yet!—explains the meaning of the passage and its connection with the other parts of Scripture. He has made himself acquainted with the times, the manners and customs, modes of thought, government, and civilization of the people of the time of the writer. He explains the influence of climate and surroundings on the people. He describes the dress, habitations, implements and mode of warfare. He presents vivid pictures of the story to the class, so that the persons become real, and are loved or hated, scorned or admired. He explains difficult passages, showing that the difficulty in some cases is only on the surface, arising out of the continual change that is going on in a living language. In other cases he may indicate where the solution may be found, and may take the opportunity of showing the necessary limits of our understanding by calling attention to the mysteries of life. His knowledge of the Scriptures enables him to quote parallel passages, and to show a truth now in the germ, and now more fully developed. His knowledge of nature and science gives him a wealth of illustration—the metamorphoses of insects, the mysterious instinct of animals, the wonders of the microscope on the one hand and the telescope on the other. These are but a few of the treasures at his command.

But in addition to teaching there is the benefit of intercourse with an educated person—true, indefinable culture, the un-pretentious but effectual teaching of intercourse. A child grows up respecting his teacher, and therefore respecting what the teacher respects. The teacher is adorning, and not casting a slur on his faith.—*Presbyterian (London)*.

BITS OF ADVICE TO GIRLS.

WHAT TO AVOID.

A loud, weak, affected, whining, harsh, or shrill tone of voice.

Extravagances in conversation—such phrases as "awfully this," "bestly that," "loads of time," "don't you know," "hate" for "dislike," etc.

Such exclamations of annoyance, surprise, and joy, such as "bother!" "gracious!" "how jolly!" Yawning when listening to any one.

Talking on family matters, even to bosom friends.

Attempting any vocal or instrumental piece of music you cannot execute with ease.

Crossing your letters. Making a short, sharp nod with the head, intended to do duty as a bow.

WHAT TO CULTIVATE.

An unaffected, low, distinct, silver-toned voice.

The art of pleasing those around you, and seeming pleased with them and all they may do for you.

The charm of making little sacrifices quite naturally, as if of no account to yourself.

The habit of making allowances for the opinions, feelings, or prejudices of others. An erect carriage, a sound body.

A good memory for faces, and facts connected with them, thus avoiding giving offence through not recognizing nor bowing to people, not saying to them what had best be left unsaid.

The art of listening without impatience to prosy talkers, and smiling at the twice-told tale or joke.—*Harner's Young People*.

POISONED PAPER.

There has seldom occurred a more striking proof of the poisonous qualities of the innocent looking roll of paper called a cigarette than was shown last week in Ohio. A promising young lawyer from Washington, detained for a time in the town of Peebles, near Cincinnati, while away the time by smoking twelve boxes of cigarettes. The powerful poison took prompt effect, and the next morning

brilliant young man was found dead. If every boy or man who smoked these dangerous rolls were to use a dozen packages at once, there would be no need of preaching against cigarettes. Men would rise in prompt horror against the tobacco-dealers. But what they seem unable to understand is that the poison does its deadly work when taken in small quantities as when taken in large amounts, only more slowly. Just as truly as the drunkard, the smoker puts an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains, and, finally, his life. For though smokers may die from a thousand diverse diseases, and even in old age, in every case they die before their time. The old proverb has it that procrastination is the thief of time, but, on many accounts, procrastination must share the fame with tobacco.—*Golden Rule*.

AN INNER MEANING.

There has come to my mind a legend, a thing I had half forgot, And whether I read it or dreamt it, ah, well it matters not. It is said that in heaven, at twilight, a great bell softly swings, And man may listen and hearken to the wondrous music that rings. If he puts from his heart's inner chamber all the passion, pain and strife, Heartache and weary longing that throb in the pulses of life— If thrust from his soul all hatred, all thoughts of wicked things, He can hear in the holy twilight how the bell of the angels rings. And I think there lies in this legend, if we open our eyes to see, Somewhat of an inner meaning, my friend, to you and me. Let us look in our hearts and question, can pure hearts enter in To a soul if it be already the dwelling of thoughts of sin. So then, let us ponder a little—let us look in our hearts and see If the twilight bell of the angels could ring for us—you and me.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

LESSON V.—JANUARY 29, 1893.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD.—Zech. 4:1-10.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 5-7.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—Zech. 4:6.

HOME READINGS.

M. Zech. 4:1-14.—The Spirit of the Lord. T. Zech. 6:1-15.—Christ's Temple and Kingdom Foreshown.

W. Zech. 8:1-23.—The Restoration of Jerusalem. Th. Ezekiel 36:21-38.—I Will Put My Spirit Within You.

F. Luke 11:1-13.—The Holy Spirit to Them that Ask. S. John 16:1-15.—The Work of the Spirit. S. Gal. 5:19-26.—The Fruit of the Spirit.

LESSON PLAN.

I. The Golden Candlestick, vs. 1-3. II. The Power that Works, vs. 4-7. III. The Promise of Completion, vs. 8-10.

TIME.—B.C. 519, January or February; Darius Hystaspes king of Medo-Persia; Zerubbabel governor of Judah.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

OPENING WORDS.

Our lesson passage to-day contains a vision seen by the prophet and its interpretation by the angel. It was intended to encourage Zerubbabel in the work of rebuilding the temple, by impressing upon him the truth that it should be accomplished not by human might or power, but by the Spirit of God.

HELPS IN STUDYING.

1. The angel—the same as in the last lesson. Waked me—roused me. 2. A candlestick—the Church, the appointed light-bearer in a dark world. Bowl—a cup or basin containing oil. Lamps—God's people, lights in the world. Seven pipes—to convey oil to the lamps, indicating the number and variety of the channels by which God's grace is communicated. 3. Two olive trees—the source of the oil by which the lamps are supplied. 4. Unto Zerubbabel—for his special encouragement. Not by might—not by thy own strength. Nor by power—nor by authority from others. But by my Spirit—the Holy Spirit, the author of moral energy in men. 5. O great mountain—obstacles that seem to block up the way. A plain—all shall be removed. 6. Who hath despised the day of small things?—Who that hopes to accomplish anything great despises the day of humble beginnings? The time passing while the temple was restored was a day of small things. With those seven—Revised Version, "Even those seven." The eyes of the Lord—the all-seeing providence of God, which watches the progress of the kingdom.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—What was the subject of the last lesson? What practical lessons did you learn from it? Title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK, vs. 1-3.—Who came to the prophet? What did the angel ask? Describe what he saw? Explain what was seen in the vision. Candlestick, the bowl, the seven pipes, the oil, the olive trees, the mountain, the plain, the eyes of the Lord. II.—What did the angel say? How did the temple come to be built? What is the promise of completion in verse 7? How is it fore-

told of Zerubbabel? What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption? How is the word made effectual to salvation? How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

III. THE PROMISE OF COMPLETION, vs. 8-10.—What further revelation was given to the prophet? Who had laid the foundation of the temple? Whose hands should finish it? What made the success of the work certain?

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED.

- 1. It is not by human might or power, but by God's Spirit, that God's work is accomplished. 2. We should not be discouraged by difficulties nor alarmed by opposition. 3. Faith will remove mountains and make them a plain. 4. The day of small things oftentimes leads to the day of great things.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

- 1. What did the prophet see? Ans. A golden candlestick silently supplied with oil from two olive trees. 2. For what purpose was the vision given? Ans. To encourage the Jews in the work of building the temple. 3. How did the angel interpret it? Ans. As the lamps were supplied with oil in a secret, invisible manner, so difficulties would be removed and the temple finished, not by human force and power, but by the secret operation of God's Spirit upon the hearts of men. 4. What did the angel say of Zerubbabel? Ans. He shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. 5. What further assurance was given? Ans. The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it.

LESSON VI.—FEBRUARY 5, 1893.

DEDICATING THE TEMPLE.—Ezra 6:14-22.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 21, 22.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—Psalm 122:1.

HOME READINGS.

M. 2 Chron. 6:1-23.—The First Temple Dedicated. T. 2 Chron. 6:21-42.—The Prayer of Dedication Continued.

W. 2 Chron. 7:1-22.—The Dedication Accepted. Th. Ezra 6:14-22.—The Second Temple Dedicated. F. Psalm 122:1-9.—Love for the House of the Lord.

S. Psalm 81:1-12.—Longing for the Courts of the Lord. S. 1 Cor. 3:1-23.—"Ye are the Temple of God."

LESSON PLAN.

I. The Temple Finished, vs. 14, 15. II. The Temple Dedicated, vs. 16-18. III. The Passover Kept, vs. 19-22.

TIME.—B.C. 515, March, April; Darius Hystaspes king of Medo-Persia; Zerubbabel governor of Judah; Tattenai Persian governor of Syria and Palestine.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, the city only partially rebuilt.

OPENING WORDS.

The Jews, encouraged and incited by the words of Haggai and Zechariah, set themselves heartily to the work of rebuilding the temple, and in four years' time, in the sixth year of Darius, it was completed, twenty years after it was begun.

HELPS IN STUDYING.

14. Built—built the temple. Artaxerxes—not the king mentioned in chapter 4:7, but Artaxerxes Longimanus, who appears in Ezra 7:7. 15. The month Adar—which began with the new moon of March. Sixth year—B.C. 515, twenty years after the foundations were laid. 17. Twelve he goats—one for each tribe; a proof that the returned "children of the captivity" regarded themselves as the representatives of all Israel. 19. Kept the passover—at the appointed time. 20. Were purified—by the ceremonial purifications required by the law. 21. Such as had separated themselves—these were descendants of the Jews who had remained in the land when the rest of the nation had been carried away captives. 22. The king of Assyria—Darius, the king of Persia, which included Assyria.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—When were the foundations of the temple laid? How was the work hindered? When was it resumed? Title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. THE TEMPLE FINISHED, vs. 14, 15.—What did the Jews do? Who encouraged them? Under whose command did they not? When was the temple finished? How long after the foundation was laid?

II. THE TEMPLE DEDICATED, vs. 16-18.—Who kept the dedication? How did they keep it? Why did they rejoice? What offerings were made? What provision was made for the temple service?

III. THE PASSOVER KEPT, vs. 19-22.—What feast did the people observe? What is said of the priests and the Levites? Who besides the returned exiles kept the passover? What gave the people so much joy in its observance? Of what was the passover a memorial?

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED.

- 1. We should separate ourselves from the pollution of the world. 2. We should purify our hearts from wickedness. 3. We should consecrate ourselves as temples for the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. 4. We should serve the Lord with gladness.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. When was the building of the temple finished? Ans. In the sixth year of the reign of Darius, twenty years after its foundations were laid. 2. How was it dedicated? Ans. The children of the captivity kept the dedication with joy, with sacrifice and songs of praise. 3. What feast was observed? Ans. They kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. 4. Who united in keeping the feast? Ans. Those who came out of captivity and those who had separated themselves from the defilement of the heathen. 5. With what spirit did they observe the passover? Ans. They kept the feast with joy, for the Lord had made them joyful.