

# The Teachers Monthly

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Vol. XII.

January, 1906

No. I

Special attention is drawn to the Question on Missions as it appears in the TEACHERS MONTHLY, and the QUARTERLIES and LEAFLETS. A new feature is the paragraph of additional facts and figures on the Question, which will now be found as part of the Lesson material each week in the TEACHERS MONTHLY. This year the fields selected are:—For the first Quarter, Home Missions in the Maritime Provinces, Ontario and Quebec; second Quarter, French Evangelization; third Quarter, Trinidad and Demerara; fourth Quarter, Formosa. The Missionary Question with its answer, each Sabbath, is the General Assembly's method of seeking to teach every Sabbath School scholar throughout the church what we are doing and what we ought to do in helping to spread abroad the good news of Christ's salvation; to develop, in short, the active side of the scholar's Christian life.

## Prisoners of Hope

By Rev. D. R. Drummond, B.D.

The New Year is a great hope begetter. In His patience and love and willingness to use us, God allows us to greet its opening day. How truly descriptive and encouraging Zechariah's word—"prisoners of hope!"

We are prisoners. On the right hand and left, behind and before, we are hedged about, turned back, kept within limits. There is no material thing that we can compel, save as we obey its law. The whole world of nature is saying, "Thus far, and no farther."

Our bodies, despite their wonderful self-adjusting powers, hold us fast. Our grasp always falls short of our reach, our accomplishment of our plan, our real of our ideal.

If we could only do all that we have the desire to do! In the realm of thought we are thrilled by the great things wrought in literature, art, education, government and commerce. Men do not any longer recognize the word "cannot." Yet a lisping child or thoughtless man can ask questions which all the wisdom of all the ages cannot answer. We are still in the prison house.

And though a man have the strength of a Samson or the wisdom of a Solomon, he may be weak and unwise as any child, in temptation. What multitudes who say, "We are so little that we ought to be, and so much that we ought not to be. There is a law in our members bringing us into subjection. Prisoners of evil habit, taste or tendency!"

But we are prisoners of hope. First, men of iron will and long patience, willing to pay the price, compel nature on every hand to their will. Lightning is harnessed; seas are made international highways; winds are hitched; disease is outwitted; the whole world becomes every man's neighbor. New inventions will doubtless come to meet man's every will. He is not God's child, to be forever in any prison house. In the realm of thought, it is open to debate if there is now unanswered a single question whose answer would help in daily living. Perhaps life would not be worth living or heaven worth the having, but for their new uplifting thoughts, their widening, entrancing visions; their cheering outlook and growing insight. In love, God has made us prisoners, but with hope the undimmed light of our prison cell. And though we see in ourselves and others much to regret, though reforms come slowly, yet to all who wait upon God victory