

THE NEW YEAR

IN THE
Sabbath School.

On the 1st of January, 1894, we began the study of a course of lessons covering a period of six years, and consequently ending with the last day of this nineteenth century. This course will cover the whole of the Bible, and while it is to a certain extent tentative, will follow most probably the plan mapped out below, —

- 1894—First half: Old Testament to Exod. 14.
1894—Second half: Chronological study of the life of Christ.
1895—First half: Chronological study of the life of Christ, completed.
1895—Second half: Old Testament to 1 Samuel.
1896—First half: The Gospel of Luke.
1896—Second half: 1 Samuel to the Division of the Kingdom.
1897—First half: The Book of Acts.
1897—Second half: Epistles.
1898—First half: Division to Captivity.
1898—Second half: The Gospel of Matthew.
1899—First half: Captivity to conclusion of the Old Testament.
1899—Second half: The Gospel of John, and Revelation.

It will be seen that in the first half of the present year, we continue our study of the Master's life, which during the last six months has been fraught with so much blessing and helpfulness to many of us; while in the second half we catch up the thread of our Old Testament study, dropped last June, and continue it to the end of Samuel. It is well at the beginning of a new period of labor to glance over the work to be done, to overhaul our equipment for doing it, and seek new strength, new wisdom, fuller consecration with which to make the best use of the opportunities it will bring.

To be a successful teacher to-day one must be up to date. Every year makes the rising generation a more difficult problem to deal with, and understand; but while with the advance of time, and the increasing precocity of the children, the position of the Sabbath school teacher becomes, more and more, one demanding much careful attention and preparation, there is an element that remains, and ever will remain, unchanged; and that is the need of the child heart and the power of the love of Christ, nay, of Christ Himself to supply it. It is a deplorable fact, that many teachers in their eagerness to make their class the best behaved and most attentive, and their lesson the most entertaining and attractive, lose sight of this most important element of all in connection with their work. There is, and we make this statement out of a considerable experience, a spirit more or less Unitarian in its character unwittingly present in the methods of many of our best teachers, using the word in the sense of ability to instruct. The fact that the children before them possess immortal souls needing for their salvation the application of Christ's blood as much as does the vilest sinner, seems not to have been realized by them; and Sabbath after Sabbath they draw from the prescribed passages, beautiful lessons concerning the history of the times, the manners and customs of the people, the conduct of the characters concerned, and wonder why their teaching while attentively heard has so little influence on the lives of their scholars. Under such teachers, the boys and girls will be well versed in Biblical history and geography; they will know the period to which each individual belongs and the influence he exerted upon it; they will be able to locate important places accurately, and group about them the great events and circumstances of history; but of the deep spiritual meaning of all these things they will know little, and none need be surprised if as they grow older they drift away from the Church, and become avowed sceptics or at best higher critics. It is not our contention that such instruction as has been outlined above should be neglected;

but that it should all be made subservient to the imparting of spiritual truth. We believe that the first concern of a Sabbath school teacher should be the salvation of each individual member of his or her class, and that until such a condition is brought about, no Sabbath should pass, no opportunity be let slip, without bringing before the scholars Christ and Him crucified as their only hope of salvation. When this becomes more generally the objective point of our Sabbath school work we will hear less concerning the difficulty in keeping the young people within the Church. We have personally a class of six boys, rapidly developing into young manhood, none of whom, thank God, show any disposition to desert their class or church, and we attribute it to the fact that they are bound to them by the constraining love of a personal Saviour, whom we strive so make the central object of every lesson. This also we never lose sight of in the Sabbath School department of the Review, which it has been our endeavor to make thoroughly helpful, and in fact a necessity to every up-to-date Presbyterian teacher, and student of the International lessons. To this end we have at present in contemplation certain improvements which we think will be appreciated by our readers. Among these is included the occasional illustration of the lesson by map or picture, the earnest of which we give you this week in the accompanying outline of Palestine.

Now then for 1895, with earnest consecration let us rally in united effort to the cry of "The Children for Christ, and Christ for the Children!"

Prayer should be the key of the day, and the lock of the night.

Let your prayers be as frequent as your wants, and your thanksgivings as your blessings.

Prayer is the telegraph wire between earth and heaven, and faith the electric current, without which the wires are useless.

Prayer is the door to heaven's treasure house, and faith the key which will unlock it.—Pryer.

Prayer is the ladder between earth and heaven.—Partridge.

Prayer is the leech of the soul, that sucks out the venom and swells thereof.—Martin Luther.

Prayer is dust and ashes pleading with infinitomajesty and mercy. How great the disparity!

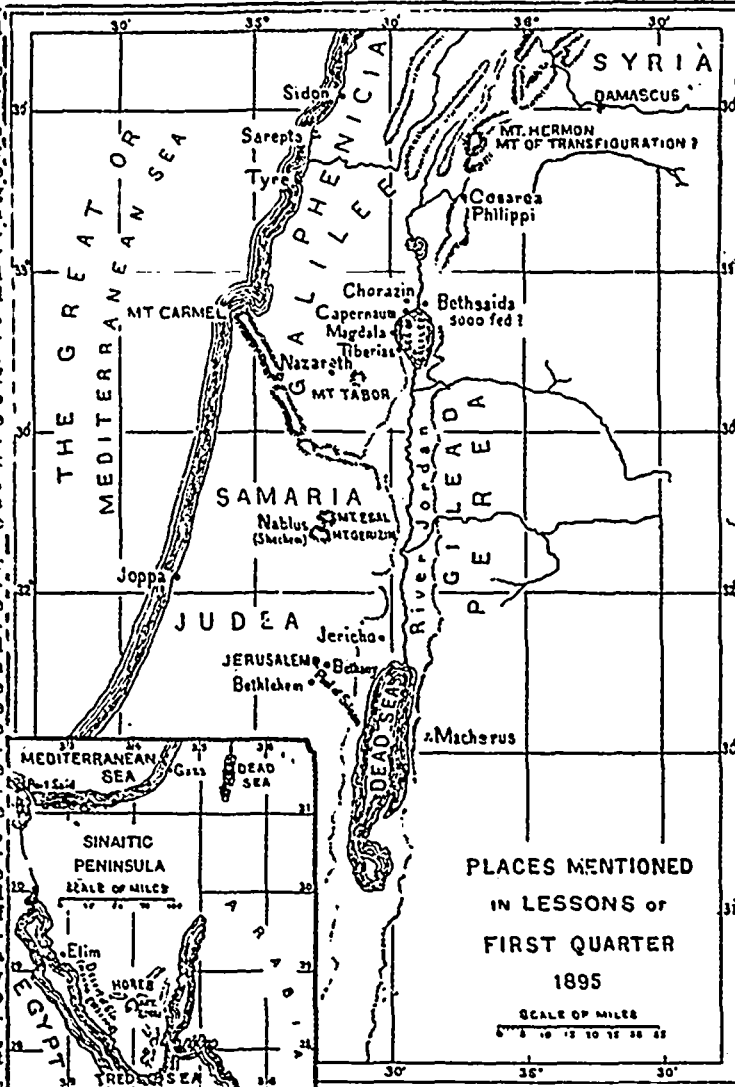
Prayer is the wall of faith, our armour and weapons.—Tertullian.

Prayer is the rope up in the belfry; we pull it and it rings the bell up in heaven.—Evans.

Prayer is a weapon for the feeble, weakest souls can wield it best.

Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance, it is laying hold of His highest willingness.

When prayer leads the van, in due time deliverance brings up the rear.—Watson.



PLACES MENTIONED
IN LESSONS OF
FIRST QUARTER
1895

WE ARE INDEBTED TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES, PHILADELPHIA, FOR THE ABOVE CUT.

Whate'er the bosom's joy or grief.

Our matters, great or small,
Are but an errand to God's throne;
Thero go and tell Him all.

Whate'er the care that breaks thy rest,
Whate'er the wish that swells thy breast;
Spread before God that wish, that care,
And change anxiety for prayer.

We feeble mortal men have the privilege of speaking to our Maker. We utter words here, or pour out our desires in the closet; or when walking in the street, or engaged in our daily employment, we breathe an ejaculation. The word may be scarcely louder than a whisper, it may be inaudible to our neighbor, and yet it cannot die away into silence, nor can it be lost through blending with other sounds; nothing can drown it, nor prevent its reaching its destination. It passes beyond sun and stars, it enters the presence-chamber of the Almighty. Amid the ceaseless strains of praise, that whisper reaches the Divine ear, touches the Infinite heart, moves the Omnipotent arm. It brings forth troops of angels on ministries of mercies. It sets in motion long trains of events, and brings down showers of blessing on those who uttered it.—W. Landels.