

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds : but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 Another parable spake he unto them ; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

#### THE LESSON PLAN

- I. The Tares, 24-30.
- II. The Mustard Seed, 31, 32.
- III. The Leaven, 33.

#### HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

M.—Sowing and reaping, Gal. 6 : 6-10. T.—The growth of the Church, Acts 11 : 21-30. W.—The seed and the soil, Matt. 13 : 1-17. T.—The result of sowing, Matt. 13 : 18-23. F.—The final harvest, Matt. 13 : 24-43. S.—The judgment, Rev. 20 : 11-15. S.—Glory of the Church, Isa. 60 : 1-3, 10-14.

**Primary Catechism**—Ques. 127. *What will become of the good at the Judgment Day?* A. Jesus will take the good to be with Himself forever. Ques. 128. *What will become of the wicked at the Judgment Day?* A. The wicked will then be driven away forever from

the presence of God.

**Shorter Catechism**—Review Questions 1-39.

**Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise : 213 (463), 252 (551), 488 (141), 233 (661), 529 (771), 454 (588). (The numbers of the Praise Selections in brackets are those of the new Book of Praise.)

**Special Scripture Reading**—Isa. 60 : 1-3, 10-14, 19-22. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.) It is expected that each scholar will have his or her Bible, and so be prepared to take part in this reading which may form part of the opening exercises of the School.

**Lantern Slide**—For Lesson, B. 1187, The Mustard Seed. (Slides are obtained from PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS, Church and Gerrard Sts., Toronto. Schools desiring slides made may procure them on short notice by sending negatives, prints or photographs. Slides are colored to order.)

### THE LESSON EXPLAINED

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, D.D.

**Time and Place**—A.D. 27 ; beside the Lake of Galilee, probably near Capernaum.

**Lesson Setting**—The thirteenth chapter of Matthew groups together specimens of our Lord's teaching by parables. A parable is a scene or short story taken from nature or common life which presents in a picturesque and vivid way some thought or principle which may be applied to the higher spiritual life of man. In the parable a picture is presented to the mind and the hearer is stimulated to search for a hidden meaning or application beneath the picture. Through this responsive effort on the part of the hearer, the truth becomes more deeply rooted in his mind and heart. The parables of the lesson chapter deal with the nature and growth of the kingdom of God, which means God's "reign" or "rule,"—"the world of invisible laws by which God is ruling and blessing his creatures" (Hort).

#### I. The Tares, 24-30.

V. 24. *Another parable* ; picturing the future state of things in the kingdom, as the parable of the Sower had described experiences already met. *Put he forth*. The Greek word is commonly used of placing food on a table, but here refers to spiritual provision. *Is likened unto a man*. The comparison is not with the man, but with the whole picture described in the parable. *Good seed* ; genuine wheat, with no mixture of other seeds. *In*

*his field* ; in which the soil is all good, not partly good and partly bad as in the parable of The Sower. The crop would be all good but for the malice of the enemy.

V. 25. *While men slept* ; in the night, when men and their work are undefended, the enemy's opportunity. *Enemy* ; some one with a grudge against the farmer. *Sowed tares* ; the bearded darnel of Eng'land, and like the chess or cheat of this continent. The darnel, until the ear is formed, can hardly be distinguished from wheat, so close is the resemblance ; but it is poisonous. *Went his way* ; leaving his evil purpose to fulfil itself, while he remained hidden.

Vs. 26, 27. *The blade* ; of wheat. *Sprung up . . . brought forth fruit* ; at the time of ripening. Now the tares could easily be known by the branching twigs with prickles in each, while the wheat ear is a single perpendicular spike. *Appeared the tares* ; not distinguishable from the wheat in the "blade" stage. *Sir, didst not thou sow good seed?* A question of surprise and impatience. *Whence . . . tares?* There might be some darnel seed in the ground, but how there should be so large a crop is a mystery to the servants.

Vs. 28, 29. *An enemy*. The farmer knew that he had sown good seed. Only the trick of an enemy could explain the large crop of darnel. *Gather them up*. The first impulse