

of a home. Until the whole was leavened. The language indicates an actual, past accomplishment. (See Ps. 72 : 11 ; Isa. 2 : 2, 4.)

These parables reveal that Jesus was well aware of the fact that great blessings grow from small beginnings. The current idea in Jesus' day was that the Messiah's kingdom would come suddenly amid glory and show, fully grown and equipped for conquest. Instead of that Jesus in these parables teaches that it will be the outcome of an obscure and seemingly insignificant beginning.

## ORIENTALISM

The universal method of building houses in the East is in the form of a hollow square, with an open court or yard in the centre. This yard is therefore entirely shut in by the walls of the house around it. The windows of the house all open into this court, and the most of the work that falls to the housekeeper is done here. The bread is mixed and baked in the oven, out of doors. Here the sour dough, or leaven, kept from the last baking, is put into the meal, and when the whole of it is leavened, the women prepare it for the oven, which is simply a heap of dried clay with a cavity in the centre and a hole in the top to allow the smoke out. A fire is kindled beneath this, and when it is heated enough, the fire is taken out and the dough is put in the cavity to bake.

## LESSON QUESTIONS

26, 27 In how many of the Gospels is this parable of the seed grain found ? What text in Luke's Gospel does it expand ? How does Jesus deal with the kingdom in the parable ? After the seed is sown, what only can the husbandman do ? Can the life of a seed be explained ?

28, 29 Explain, "bringeth forth fruit of herself." How has the earth gained its energies ? How can man hinder the work of nature ? Explain "blade", and "ear", and "full corn."

30-32 To what feature of the kingdom does this parable point ? Is the question in v. 30 an unusual way of beginning a discourse ? How high does the mustard plant grow ? Explain "less than all the seeds." Why did birds alight upon the branches ?

Matt. 13: 33. What feature of the kingdom is brought out by this parable ? What was "leavened ?" What does

it usually represent in the New Testament ? By whom and where, and for what purpose was the leaven hidden ? What was the capacity of a "measure ?" Find in the Psalms and Isaiah a prophecy in line with this parable (Ps. 72 : 11 ; Isa. 2 : 2, 4).

## FOR DISCUSSION

1. God's part and our part in the growth of our bodies—their relations to one another.

2. Great things spring from little things : discuss as bearing upon the formation of habits.

## A LESSON FOR LIFE

In certain districts of Nova Scotia you can find rare and beautiful flowers that are not native to this continent. Botanists have traced the origin of their appearance back to the straw wrappings around articles that came in ships from far across the seas. The seeds of these plants were carried in this secret and unintended way to our shores, and getting into the soil, they have spread through large regions carrying charm and sweetness with them. It is not otherwise that the virtues and beauties of human character have come to be seen in us. The seeds of Jesus' teaching and example have been imported into our hearts. They are not native to our hearts' soil, but through His mercy and grace they grow there.

Prove from Scripture—That angels obey Jesus.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 23. What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer ? A. Christ, as our Redeemer, executeth the offices of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.

The Question on Missions—3. From what kind of homes do the children come ? Most of the homes are quite poor, with only earthen floors and paper windows, and no heating in the winter. There is little furniture, and fewer ornaments. The better homes have brick floors, and are partly heated with open coal fires.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 7 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 122 ; 225 ; 115 (Ps. Sel.) ; 483 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 202.

## FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. What does the parable of the seed growing teach about the kingdom ?

2. What does the parable of the mustard seed teach about beginnings ?

3. What does the meal represent in the parable of the leaven ?

4. Give a Bible promise that all nations shall become Christian.