

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the "Little Pilgrim Question Book," by Mrs. W. Barrows, Congregational Publishing Society, Boston.)

LESSON XI.—SEPT. 15.

IMPORTUNITY IN PRAYER.—Luke xi. 5-13.

5. And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves? ... 13. If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint."—Luke xviii. 1.

1. What did the disciples ask the Saviour to do for them? Ans. To teach them to pray. 2. What form of prayer did he give them? Ans. That which we call the Lord's Prayer, and which every Sunday-school child ought to know by heart.

3. What did he then go on to show them? Ans. That, if they wished to be blessed, they must pray with importunity. 4. What is importunity? Ans. A continuous asking, that will not be denied. 5. What illustration did he give them? Vers. 5-8.

6. What is an illustration? Ans. That we must not be discouraged if we do not have an immediate answer to prayer, but keep on asking. 7. How many commands and how many promises do you find in ver. 9? Ans. Do these promises mean that we shall have every thing we ask for? Ans. If we ask for things which it is best for us to have, and ask in the right way, we shall have them.

8. How many commands and how many promises do you find in ver. 9? Ans. Do these promises mean that we shall have every thing we ask for? Ans. If we ask for things which it is best for us to have, and ask in the right way, we shall have them. 11. Who knows what is best for us? 12. What are some things which we are sure it is right to ask for? Ans. To be made more holy and more useful.

13. Why may God sometimes delay answering even such a prayer? Ans. To see if we are really in earnest, and will ask again and again. 14. What further illustration did the Saviour use? Vers. 11, 12. 15. Explain the meaning of these verses. Ans. If children make proper and reasonable requests of an earthly father, such requests would be granted.

16. What does he then say of our heavenly Father? Vers. 13. 17. Why is God more willing to bless us than earthly parents to bless their children? Ans. Because he loves his children more tenderly than any earthly parent can love a child, and he knows just what we need. 18. May we bring the little things of our every-day life to God in prayer? 19. May we ask him for health, and happiness and riches, and all such things? Ans. We may; but, as we are not sure that these things would be best for us, we must always add, "Thy will be done."

LESSON XII.—SEPT. 22.

WARNING AGAINST COVETOUSNESS.—Luke xii. 13-23.

13. And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. 14. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? ... 23. And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

15. And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. 16. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17. And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18. And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 20. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21. So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. 22. And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. 23. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Take heed, and beware of covetousness."—Ver. 15.

1. Repeat the Tenth Commandment. Exod. xx. 18. 2. Whose commandment is this? 3. What led the Saviour to talk of this sin? Vers. 13, 14. 4. How did he warn his disciples? Ver. 15. 5. What is covetousness? Ans. A strong desire for something which belongs to another. 6. Has this word any other meaning? Ans. Yes; it also means an undue love of money, and a desire to get it and hoard it.

7. What parable did Jesus relate to his disciples? Vers. 16-19. 8. What is a parable? Ans. A short story, to explain some truth. 9. Was the rich man to be blamed for having good crops and a plentiful harvest? Ans. He was rather to be praised for thrift and industry. 10. What was his great mistake? Ans. In laying it up for himself, instead of sharing it with the poor and needy. 11. What is the duty of those who have plenty of this world's goods? Ans. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

12. Mention another great mistake of this rich man. Ans. His plans were all for this world, and he made no preparation for another. 13. What did God say to him? Ver. 20. 14. Why is it hard for a rich man to be a good man? 15. Who is like this foolish rich man? Ver. 21. 16. What is it to be "rich toward God"? Ans. To give God our best love, and have him for our friend and portion forever. 17. What charge did Jesus next give his disciples? Vers. 22, 23. 18. Does this mean that they are really to take no care of these things? Ans. It means that they are not to take too much care and be over-anxious about them.

19. What is covetousness called by the apostle Paul? Ans. Idolatry (Col. iii. 5). 20. How is a covetous person an idolater? Ans. He loves riches more than anything else. 21. To what other sins will covetousness be likely to lead us? Ans. To dishonesty and wrong-doing. 22. From what will every covetous man be shut out? Ans. "From the kingdom of Christ and of God." (Eph. vi. 5) 23. When you find yourselves thinking too much of money, what will you remember? Golden Text. 24. If you had plenty of money, what would you do with it?

Command of Christ for this week. "LAY UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN HEAVEN."

THE WORLD MOVES.

The following is from an article on "Japan and its Hopes," in the New York Independent, by the Rev. J. L. Atkinson. "The multiplication of schools is a clear indication of a noble purpose to enlighten the masses. The common school system (as is well known) is modelled on our American plan. Boys and girls (Americans who know little of Asiatic customs can hardly appreciate the need of the word girls being written in Italics; but those who do know of them will appreciate the emphasis) study together. They study the same books and have the same teachers. In the common schools the girl is as highly favored as the boy. Further, that these common schools may have capable teachers, normal schools are being created in every governorate in the empire. A large building for this purpose is now almost completed, in this city of Kobe. Over 200 students are expected from the very first. Every city, town, and little village is ambitious to be known as one in which there is a good school or schools. The revolution of thought that comes to the peasantry and others through the instruction that their children receive in the common schools is astounding to them. Speaking to a group of farmers one day about the existence, etc. of God, I happened to speak of the revolution of the earth around the sun. One said: "Is that really so?" I replied: "Don't your children go to school?"

"They do," the man said, "and they have told me what you have said just now; but I didn't believe them. I thought they were telling lies or saying it just for the sake of talk." The old Buddhist ideas of creation and providential care are handled with unconscious severity and telling effect by the little folk who are still in their primers. The education of the children is no longer in the hands of priests. It is entrusted to the most capable and wide-awake young men of the empire. And these men have no sympathy with Buddhism, Shintoism, or any otherism. "Enlightenment" is their watchword and the motive and aim of all their endeavors. Besides the common schools, there are for the young men schools of almost every description. The latest in Kobe is a business college for young merchants. Here all the branches that are taught in a business college in America are taught, both theoretically and by mimic transactions. Higher schools for the girls are still lacking; but as the common schools begin to graduate students it is highly probable that higher schools for the girls will be created. Woman has, however, so long been the servant or plaything of the man that it will take time for the Japanese to apprehend woman's true place in the social economy. The apprehension is being hastened. The residence of young men abroad in Christian and enlightened family circles; the works of travel, telling of the manners and customs of enlightened nations; the living among them of intelligent Christian families, missionary and otherwise, are working a revolution on this subject. Educated young men, who have been abroad, return, and find few if any young women who are capable of being the wives the want. Some of these men now yearn for a home, with all its social companionships and sweet ministries of love and intellectual helpfulness. A young man of rank wrote to me last year asking if in our girls' seminary here we had not a young lady who would make him a good wife? He spoke of his rank, his income, his education in America, and then said that he wanted a wife who could take some true interest in the things which interest him so much. "He felt that he could not marry unless he found one who could be a companion to him and who could make him a home. I knew of one who would be what he seemed to want. When the matter was referred to the lady, it was discovered that education, Christian truth and sentiment, and some mingling with Christian people had so changed the ordinary Japanese maiden's views on the subject of marriage that she said, without any hesitation, that, although she appreciated the young man's rank, wealth, education, and the honor he offered her, yet, as she did not love him, she could not become his wife!" Here, certainly, was some indication of "enlightenment," "liberty," "reformation," "progress!" It is sincerely to be hoped that this will continue, until every maiden in all the land may come to have the same sentiment and be enabled to act in the same womanly way. This one young man's position is the position of hundreds in the empire to-day. This state of things being so consciously unsatisfactory, there can be but little doubt that higher schools for girls will gradually be created, and intelligence be the portion of both sexes."

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