

## BEARS.

Our illustration is taken from a painting by the distinguished German artist Ludwig Beckmann, who was born in Hanover in 1822. He was brought up to the trade of a waggon-maker, in which craft he acquired great reputation. After he became a painter he was often invited to join the hunting parties of the noblemen, and in watching the habits of the bears in the woods while engaged in hunting the idea of sketching their family life came to him, and this celebrated painting was the result. The group that sat for their portraits he found in the Zoological Gardens of Cologne. A mere glance at the picture shows how accurately the artist has reproduced the attitudes, expression, and general demeanor of the family. One can almost hear the maternal reprimand that Madame Bruin is administering to her pugnacious cubs.

The study of natural history is more attended to in Europe than in this country, and the extensive and excellent zoological gardens in many of the capitals encourage the study. In the zoological gardens of London, for instance, there are gathered many varieties of the bear family, from those of the woods of the tropics to the natives of the regions of the frozen north, and each is made to feel at home in his new surroundings. So in Antwerp, Berlin, Paris, and other cities of the Continent the attractive collections of wild animals not only minister to the entertainment, but to the profitable instruction of the spectators.

But it is in Berne, the capital of Switzerland, that the bear holds the highest rank. He has given his name to the city: he appears on its armorial bearing; he surmounts the fountains in the public squares; he strikes the hour on its famous clock, and in procession pays a marching salute to a crowned and sceptred comrade; his effigy, in innumerable forms, is in all the shop windows; and he is an endless centre of entertainment at the Barengraben, or bear's ditch, where he and his companions are maintained at the public expense. Berne without its bears would not only be a misnomer, but would be shorn of its distinctive attraction.

Our own country is the home of many varieties of the family, and there are few persons who have not had the opportunity of looking upon specimens of the black, brown, cinnamon, and grizzly bears in their menagerie cages; while there are not a few who in their vacation rambles in the mountains have heard thrilling tales of their visits to the farmhouses or the sheepfolds, and have perhaps experienced a shiver of dread when making their way through the woods for fear of encountering their unwelcome presence. Even in the Catskills, bears are still plenty, and famous bear-hunters are living there who have gained name and fame for their daring exploits. In frequent visits to the Catskills have we seen the trophies of these brave hunters, and we shall not soon forget the share we had in helping to tote down the mountain two growling, glossy cubs of five or six months that had been trapped by a veteran hunter.

But advancing civilization has driven these natives of the forest primeval to the far West. A recent correspondent of the *Philadelphia Record* from Montana says that 912 bears were killed there last year, costing the Territory \$7,266 in bounties of \$8 each. He says: "The eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains—that is, the foothill reaching down into Montana and near the Yellowstone National Park—is the natural home of the American bear. Here are to be found nearly every species of the animal on the North American Continent save the polar or white bear. The fierce grizzly, which makes his home near the perpetual snow-line; the dangerous silver-tip, which would eat a man as quick as wink; the ugly-natured black, the ravenous brown bear, and the huge cinnamon bear that inhabits the plains and coulees of the cattle ranges, feasting upon cows, calves, and fat steers—all these are to be found in almost unlimited numbers, winter and summer alike, in the localities I have mentioned."—*Illustrated Christian Weekly*.

FIFTY YEARS AGO it was a capital offence for a Chinese to be a Christian; now you can preach the gospel there with more liberty than in any place in Europe.

## A LITTLE TALK ABOUT THE LIBRARY.

Yes, of course, the last time your library was put in order, you had the best committee your Sabbath school could find. They spent several months consulting with other library committees, procuring catalogues of other schools, reading, and selecting new books, looking over the old ones, and rejecting those considered undesirable, until finally everybody pronounced the library perfect.

Perhaps it is, but it is very easy for books that ought not to be there to get into a library. Books are selected, carefully examined and read by two or more persons. Their decision is discussed and voted upon by the entire committee before the books are accepted. Their work is really done conscientiously. Yet something more is necessary to insure complete safety in books.

How many teachers in our Sabbath schools know what their scholars are reading? How many know, even, what books are in the library! How many know and remember that in some families there is no reading matter except that taken from the Sabbath school? How many know the effects of this reading on their scholars?

The same book is not alike suitable to every boy and girl in your class. Like one typographical error in a printed article, which changes its entire meaning, so one book, though in itself of a high order, may, through the connection in which it is read, have a pernicious influence upon the reader.

With a little planning and thought a teacher can, during the week, organize his class into a reading circle. It may be very informal, and the meetings need not be burdensome to any one, but through this medium the teacher will be able to direct the intellectual powers of his class. He can make history and biography and travel interesting to them, though at the same time making all these things subservient to the great truths he wishes to teach from God's Word. The life of a great man or noble woman, if read intelligently, may perchance turn the entire course of a child's future life.

A girl of fourteen, who once lived among the hills of Vermont, found somewhere a biography of Mary Lyon. From reading this she was inspired to endure hardships, and through many difficulties made her way to Mt. Holyoke seminary. Do not let your boys and girls select books to read without your guidance. If you do not find there the books needed by your class report this to your committee. They will be rejoiced to receive suggestions springing from real needs.

Next to the teaching of the Scriptures there is no greater work than training the intellects of growing boys and girls to appreciate and love a pure and instructive class of literature.—*Mary Louise Butler, in Westminster Teacher*.

## ONE HOUR.

The great clock in the church steeple struck three; the afternoon sun slowly waned, and the shadows lengthened in the streets. The clock struck four.

It was only an hour. The children playing on the sidewalk did not know that it had gone; but in it a great-hearted man had written down some strong, true words, which will live long in the world, and give courage and help to many struggling souls.

In it a chemist, working with brain and hand over carefully prepared compounds, had discovered one of the secrets of nature—how the atoms of elements group themselves to form a molecule of organic matter.

In it four women sitting with their sewing on yonder porch, had brought out old, forgotten scandals, and set them loose again in the world, like flying scorpions, to poison and to kill.

In that hour a young man in the next house to them had yielded to a temptation which never will lose its grip on him while he lives.

In the same time a woman with a child on her lap tells him a story with a high, pure meaning, which will be a "lamp to his feet" all the days of his life.

Another woman, watching silent and motionless by a sick bed, fills the hour with prayers and high thoughts, that will

serve as food for her soul in the trouble which is coming to her.

How many of us remembered that the hour was passing—a servant, laden with the report which we should give to it—up to God?

What report did it carry of us? What burden are we making ready at this moment for the hour that is passing now?

"Only an hour! Yet the despised slave," says Antigonus, "may be laden with treasure that would ransom a Caesar."—*Youth's Companion*.

## SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON VI.—FEBRUARY 5.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.—MATT. 17: 1-13.

COMMIT VERSES 4, 5.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved son: hear him.—Luke 9: 35.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The glorious nature of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Matt. 17: 1-23.

T. Mark 9: 2-13.

W. Luke 9: 28-36.

Th. 2 Pet. 1: 1-19.

F. Dan. 7: 9-16.

Sa. John 1: 1-14.

Su. Mal. 4: 1-6.

PLACE.—Probably Mount Hermon, near Caesarea Philippi.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Mark 9: 2-13. Luke 9: 28-36.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. *After six days*: Luke says, *about eight days*. He counts the two parts of days at each extreme, and says, *about*, because it was six whole and two parts of days. *Peter, James and John*: the three disciples most advanced in the knowledge of Jesus and his kingdom. *Apart*: from the other disciples. 2. *Transfigured*: changed in appearance, in form. The heavenly glory of his nature, which was still concealed under his earthly appearance, now broke forth. The fashion of his countenance was altered (Luke) by being lighted with radiance both from without and from within. Luke says he went up into the mountain to pray. The transfiguration was God's answer to his prayer. *And his raiment* (plural *his garments*) *white as light*: Mark says, *shining, exceeding white as snow*. 3. *Moses*: the giver of the law, and the founder of the old dispensation which was soon to blossom out into the new. *Elijah*: Greek for *Elijah*, the representative of the prophets and the forerunner of Christ. *Talking with him*: the subject of their conversation is given in Luke 9: 31. It was of the *decease* (exodus, departure, referring to his death and ascension) *which he should accomplish at Jerusalem*. This was the great event of the world's history: this was the real founding of the kingdom of God; this was the culmination of the salvation brought by the Messiah, and foretold by the prophets; this was the great act to which all the sacrifices appointed by Moses looked forward, and which gave them meaning and value. 4. *Then answered Peter*: in a bewildered way (Mark 9: 6). *Three tabernacles*: booths, of the bushes that grew on the mount. It seemed to him that the hour for the long-looked-for reign had come. From the slopes of Hermon he would have had the laws of a new kingdom proclaimed, so that all men might recognize the true Messiah attended by the representatives of the old dispensation. 5. *A bright cloud*: like the shekinah in the wilderness. The brightest cloud veils and shadows the glory of God's nature. *A voice out of the cloud*: their faith was now confirmed by the testimony of God's own voice. 9. *Tell the vision*: the sight, the spectacle, to no man tell. It would not be understood till after his death and resurrection. 10. *Elijah* (Elijah) *must first come*: from Mal. 4: 5, 6. They expected Elijah. But if Elijah was first to come, how could Jesus be the Messiah, when he had not yet come? Or if this appearance was his coming, how could they preach that Jesus was the Messiah and not tell men that they had seen Elijah who had come? Jesus explains that John had come in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1: 17).

SUBJECT: THE GLORY OF CHRIST REVEALED.

QUESTIONS.

I. TO WHOM THE GLORY WAS REVEALED (v. 1). Where did Jesus go from Caesarea Philippi? What mountain was this? Whom did he take with him? Apart from whom? On what other occasion were these three specially chosen? (Mark 5: 37, 38; Matt. 26: 37.) Why did these three have more privileges than the other disciples? (Matt. 13: 12-13.) How can we have the best things in the Gospel? (Matt. 25: 21.)

II. THE VISION OF CHRIST'S GLORY (v. 2).—What took place upon the mountain? Meaning of *transfigured*? Why did Jesus go up into the mountain? (Luke 9: 28.) What was he doing when he was transfigured? Was it an answer to prayer? What was Jesus' appearance when transfigured? (Matt. 17: 2; Luke 9: 29.) What else do we learn about Christ's glory? (Rev. 1: 13-16; Dan. 7: 9.) Did this show the true nature of Jesus? (John 1: 14.) Is he as glorious now? Why do you love to think of Jesus as so glorious and powerful?

III. HEAVENLY VISITANTS CONFIRM THE GLORY (vs. 3, 4).—Who appeared with Jesus? What was there peculiar about the deaths of these two? (Deut. 23: 5, 6; Jude 9; 2 Kings 2: 11.) Did this have anything to do with their appearance here? (1 Cor. 15: 42-50.) What would Moses represent? Whom would Elijah represent? What did they talk together about? (Luke 9: 31.) How did the law point to the crucifixion of Jesus? (Heb. 10: 10-12.) What did the prophets foretell of it? (Isa. 53: 1-9; Dan. 7: 9, 10, 26, 27.) Why was this the topic of their conversation? What proposal did Peter make? What for?

IV. THE TESTIMONY OF GOD TO JESUS (vs. 5-8).—What now enveloped them? Of what was this the symbol? (Exod. 40: 34-35.) What voice came

from God? On what two other occasions were the same words uttered? (Matt. 3: 17; John 12: 28.) How would all this comfort the disciples after what Jesus had told them of his sufferings? How would it strengthen their faith in Jesus in the trials yet to come?

V. EXPLANATIONS (vs. 9-13).—What did the disciples want explained? Who was *Elias*? What did they expect him to do? (Mal. 4: 5, 6.) How did Christ explain this prophecy to them? Show how John the Baptist fulfilled the prophecy. (Luke 1: 17.)

## LESSON VII.—FEBRUARY 12.

JESUS AND THE LITTLE ONES.—MATT. 18: 1-14

COMMIT VERSES 2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 19: 14.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

We should seek, by a childlike spirit, to enter the kingdom of heaven, and to bring all others with us.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Matt. 18: 1-14.

T. Mark 9: 33-50.

W. Luke 9: 46-50.

Th. Mark 10: 13-16.

F. 1 Cor. 13: 1-13.

Sa. John 10: 1-17.

Su. Luke 15: 1-10.

PLACE.—Capernaum, a town by the Sea of Galilee.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Mark 9: 23-50; Luke 9: 46-50; vs. 11-14 have a parallel in Luke 15: 3-7.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. *At the same time*: that Peter went to the sea, found a piece of money in a fish's mouth and paid the temple tribute (Matt. 17: 24-27). *The disciples came unto Jesus*: in the house (Mark 9: 33). According to Mark, Jesus first asked some of them what they were discussing by the way. They were ashamed, and kept silence. Then some others of the disciples asked the question in Matt. *In the kingdom of heaven*: they expected Jesus soon to set up. 2. *Be converted*: turn from your pride and self-seeking. *Become as little children*: not sinless, but having the characteristics, which belong to childhood—humility, trust, obedience, love, unambitious feelings. 6. *Offend*: cause to stumble, lead into sin. 7. *Woe*: the very depth of depravity is to tempt the young and innocent to sin. 8. *Hand or foot*: representing the things most precious and useful to us. 9. *Hell fire*: the hell or Gehenna of fire. Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, was the place where the refuse of the city and dead bodies were burned. Thus it became a type of the terrible punishment of sin. 10. *Their angels*: their guardian angels (Heb. 1: 14). *Behold the face*: stand nearest the throne, are the chief among the angels.

SUBJECT: ENTERING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

QUESTIONS.

I. THEY ENTER WHO HAVE THE CHILDLIKE SPIRIT (vs. 1-5). What discussion had arisen on the way to Capernaum? (Mark 9: 31.) What could have given rise to such a dispute (Matt. 16: 18, 19; 17: 1; see also 20: 20-24.) What evils grow out of selfish ambition? What question did Jesus ask the disciples? (Mark 9: 33.) What did they ask Jesus? (v. 1.) What was Jesus' answer? (Mark 9: 35; see also Matt. 20: 26, 27.) How did he illustrate his teaching? What is it to become as little children? Why can no others enter the kingdom of heaven? Who is greatest in that kingdom? Why? Explain v. 5.

II. HINDERING OTHERS FROM ENTERING THE KINGDOM (vs. 6, 7).—What question did John ask at this point? (Mark 9: 35-42.) Who are meant by "these little ones"? What is it to offend them? In what ways do men now tempt such to sin? What does Jesus say of this crime? Why is it so deadly?

III. PUTTING AWAY THAT WHICH HINDERS US (vs. 8, 9).—What is meant by the hand and the foot offending us? What by cutting them off? What are some of the things which lead us into sin? What reason is given for cutting them off? What is meant by hell fire? Is it love or cruelty that warns us of our danger?

IV. CHILDREN AND THE KINGDOM (v. 10).—What warning is given in this verse? Who are the little ones? Who are meant by their angels? (Heb. 1: 14.) What by their "beholding the face of my Father"? What does this show of God's care for children? What was Jesus' feeling toward children? (Mark 9: 36; Matt. 19: 13-17.) Should the church take peculiar care of the children? Is it a mark of the true church that it looks out most for the poor, the weak, the unnoticed?

V. WHAT GOD DOES TO BRING MEN INTO THE KINGDOM (vs. 11-14).—Whom did Jesus come to save? In what sense are men lost? By what parable did Jesus illustrate this truth? (See also Luke 15: 3-7.) Read the hymn "The Ninety and Nine." Why was there joy when one was found? What is said of this joy in Luke 15: 7, 10? How does God show his desire that we should all be saved? (v. 14; John, 3: 16.) What should this teach us and lead us to do.

## LESSON CALENDAR.

(First Quarter, 1888.)

- Jan. 1.—Herod and John the Baptist.—Matt. 11: 1-12.
- Jan. 8.—The Multitude Fed.—Matt. 14: 13-21.
- Jan. 15.—Jesus walking on the Sea.—Matt. 14: 22-36.
- Jan. 22.—Jesus and the Afflicted.—Matt. 15: 21-31.
- Jan. 29.—Peter confessing Christ.—Matt. 16: 13-28.
- Feb. 5.—The Transfiguration.—Matt. 17: 1-13.
- Feb. 12.—Jesus and the Little Ones.—Matt. 18: 1-14.
- Feb. 19.—A Lesson on Forgiveness.—Matt. 18: 21-35.
- Feb. 26.—The Rich Young Ruler.—Matt. 19: 16-26.
- March 4.—Christ's Last Journey to Jerusalem.—Matt. 20: 17-29.
- March 11.—Christ entering Jerusalem.—Matt. 21: 1-16.
- March 18.—The Son Rejected.—Matt. 21: 33-46.
- March 25.—Review, Temperance, Gal. 5: 16-26, and Missions.