

beside them. In too many homes gentleness is not manifested while the circle is unbroken; and the hearts ache for the privilege of showing kindness, perhaps for the opportunity of unsaying words and undoing acts which caused pain. We would better learn the lesson of gentleness in time, and then fill our home with love while we may. It will not be very long until our chance for showing love shall have been used up. As George Klingbe says:—

They are such dear, familiar feet that go  
Along the path with ours—foot fast or slow;  
And trying to keep pace. If they mistake,  
And tread upon some flower we would take  
Upon our breast, or bruise some reed,  
Or crush poor hope until it bleed,  
We may be mute,  
Not turning quickly to impute  
Crave fault; for they and we  
Have such a little way to go—can be  
Together such a little while along the way,  
We will be patient while we may.

#### THE COST OF A DINNER.

Recently a gentleman who is fond of arithmetic made up his mind that he would find out how much a dinner really cost. This gentleman asked how much a simple dinner that he was eating cost, and he was told seventy five cents. He contradicted this and then made out the following statement about the cost of that dinner: The pepper, he said, came from ten thousand miles away. It grew on a little bush about eight feet high, which must have had a growth of at least five years. The pepper was picked green; it had to be dried in the sun, and this meant employing women. It took one ship and a thousand miles of railroad to bring the pepper to the United States. The tea on the table came from China, and the coffee from South America. The codfish had to be brought from Maine. Men had to be employed to catch the fish; other men and women were employed in drying, packing and boxing it, and it, too, had to make a long railroad journey. The flour of which the bread was made was grown in Dakota; some one owned the land, and that meant the investing of capital; and then he had also to pay wages to workmen. The flour had to be ground, and the building of the mill and the plant, or machinery, meant more money invested. The millers had to be paid; coopers had to be paid for making the barrels; and, of course, the wood of which the barrels were made had to be cut and sawed and shaped, and this meant the employment of more men. Then the flour had to be shipped over the railroad and handled again by cartmen before it came into the house. The salt came from the Indian Reservation in the north western part of New York State. The canned peaches came from California, and they too represented the employment of capital and labor. The spices in the cake came from the Spice Islands in the Indian Archipelago. After the gentleman had pointed out what the dinner really cost, he asked what on the table could be raised within the limits of the county where they were living. The answer was: only the corn bread, the butter, and buttermilk, and it was decided that the family could not live on those alone. The gentleman estimated that that little dinner represented, directly or indirectly, the employment of five hundred millions of dollars of capital and of five millions of men. It would be quite a lesson in geography for each of the little folks to try to discover where their dinners came from.

#### FOLK-MELODIES.

Almost every occurrence in the lives of primitive peoples has called into being its own peculiar music, either bright and joyous or dark and lugubrious, as the case might be, but all reflecting the national character with more or less sincerity. Thus funeral and marriage music, music to accompany various incantations, melodies supposed to possess medicinal qualities, prayer melodies, love melodies, and melodies to which the historical records of the people were chanted, so that by remembering the melody one could call to mind the words. This method was also used to assist in remembering the laws. An interesting modern example of the tendency of the people to melodize is to be seen in the street cries of our large cities.

The fountain-head of nationality in music is to be found in the folk-melodies. They are very near to the people; they spring from the heart of the nation; and thus contain the musical essence of nationality. Many musical composers have appreciated this fact, and in their endeavors to give national flavor and meaning to their music have searched out and studied the national musical spirit, as evidence in their nation's folk-melodies, and have taken this beautiful wild flower to their hearts, and loved it, developed it, and wrought over it until a noble symphony was produced, which is as much a national product as the folk-melody, although it required the thought, energy, and technique, so to speak, of the cultivated musician, to give it form and being.

## THE BIBLE CLASS.

### THE TRAINING OF SAUL.

(For April 4th.)

BY REV. PHILIP A. NORDELL, D. D.

A period of about ten years elapsed between Saul's conversion and the beginning of his life-work among the Gentiles. His direct preparation for this work covered this interval, and was of a two-fold nature—external and internal. A knowledge of the former is to be gathered from the scattered material contained in the Acts and in the Epistles; a knowledge of the latter must be deduced from the character of his ministry as a whole and from the form assumed by his teachings.

#### SAUL'S EXTERNAL PREPARATION FOR HIS WORK.

Saul's early preaching in Damascus seems to have been divided into two parts separated by an interval of nearly three years. The first occurred immediately after his conversion and lasted only a short time. It was sufficiently long, however, to prove his energy in proclaiming Christ, as his previous career had proved the energy of his antagonism. The second, which may have lasted a little longer, was suddenly terminated by a plot of the Jews against his life. Between these lies the long seclusion in Arabia of which no record remains beyond a passing allusion in the Epistle to the Galatians. The fact that this sojourn belongs to the history of the Apostle's inner life, rather than to the outward history of the church, accounts for the absence of reference to it in the Acts.

Escaping from Damascus, Saul fled to Jerusalem, where for two weeks he became the guest of Peter. Though the Acts speak of his intercourse with the rest of the church and of his disputations with the Hellenists, Paul himself implies that his main purpose in Jerusalem was to see Peter. But why? Certainly not to be instructed in the Gospel, for he repeatedly denies having received his Gospel through human intervention. He had already derived its essential features directly from Christ, and therefore he places his independent dignity and authority as an Apostle on a perfect equality with that of the other twelve. The conference with Peter may have touched the relation of the Gospel to the law, and to the extension of the church, and thus may have helped to prepare Peter himself for the part he was to act a little later in opening the door to the Gentiles, through the conversion of Cornelius.

Driven from Jerusalem, he returned to his native Tarsus, where among his immediate relations he engaged in that most difficult and apparently least profitable part of his ministry. The next six years were spent in establishing churches in Syria and Cilicia. From Tarsus he was brought to Antioch by Barnabas; here another year was spent in successful labor as a "prophet and teacher." This was followed by a second visit to Jerusalem for the purpose of carrying aims to the Judean churches. His return to Antioch closed his period of preparation.

#### SAUL'S INTERNAL PREPARATION FOR HIS WORK.

Saul's conversion was due to a personal revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Before the divine glory of that presence his prejudices, hatred, and pride melted away in an instant. Then and there he gave himself absolutely to the service of this new Master. The spiritual convulsion through which he passed necessitated a reorganization of his religious conceptions. As Christ crucified was now the centre of his new life, so henceforth He became the organic centre of his thinking. All this required time. Here is found the explanation of the long retirement into the solitudes of Arabia, where with prayer and special divine guidance he thought himself clear concerning the person and work of Christ, and the great doctrines of salvation through faith in Him.

The fact that Saul was independent of the other Apostles in authority and doctrine does not require us to suppose that he was independent of the common traditions concerning the life and teachings of the historical Christ. With the main outward facts of the Saviour's life he was doubtless acquainted before his conversion. That he availed himself of every means of enlarging his knowledge cannot be doubted. From detailed oral accounts of what Jesus did and said, which must have been current among the disciples at Damascus as well as from written reports the Apostle would acquire an accurate knowledge of the life of Christ, and especially of the scenes of the passion which formed the central theme of his preaching. So vividly did he picture this that he could address his Galatian converts as those "before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been openly set forth crucified." And yet his Epistles at first sight contain so few references to the events of Christ's ministry that some have concluded that he was not

\*An Exposition of Lesson 14 in *The Bible Study Union B School Lessons* on "The Three Great Apostles."