

A QUEER BOY.

He doesn't like study. "It weakens his eyes."

But the "right sort" of book will insure a surprise;

Let it be about Indians, pirates, or bears,
And he's lost for the day to all mundane affairs;

By sunlight or gaslight his vision is clear;
Now, isn't that queer?

At thought of an errand, he's "tired as a hound,"

Very weary of life, and of "tramping around";

But if there's a band or a circus in sight,
He will follow it gladly from morning till night.

The showman will capture him some day,
I fear,

For he is so queer.

If there's work in the garden his head
"aches to split,"

And his back is so lame that he "can't dig a bit";

But mention football, and he's cured very soon.

And he'll dig for a woodchuck the whole afternoon!

Do you think he plays possum? He seems quite sincere;

But— isn't it queer?

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM
ISAIAH TO MALACHI.

LESSON XI.—December 10.

READING AND OBEYING THE LAW.

Neh. 8. 8-18. Memorize verses 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.—Luke 11. 28.

THE LESSON STORY.

Fifty-two days the Jews worked on the walls of Jerusalem, and when all was finished Nehemiah called a great meeting of all the people to hear the word of the Lord read and explained so that they would understand and keep it. He knew that breaking the Lord's law had caused all the trouble of his people. A great company met on the street, near the water gate, and Ezra, the priest, stood on a high pulpit of wood and read the law to them from a parchment scroll on which it was written. Many of the people had never heard the law read, for in those days there were no Bibles, and the parchment scrolls were very costly. When Ezra and the Levites read and explained the law many of the people wept with sorrow and shame as they thought how they had broken the

law of God. But Nehemiah and Ezra spoke words of comfort to them. They said this was a day of thanksgiving, and they should not only be glad themselves, but help to make others glad.

So the people went away comforted and kept a thanksgiving day, and on the next day the principal men of the tribes and the priests and Levites came to Ezra to learn more about the law. Then they found that Moses had commanded the children of Israel to keep a great feast, which was called the Feast of Tabernacles. They had not done this, but now they wanted to do it; so they sent word to all the cities and told the people what to do. They gathered branches of trees and built little booths upon the roofs of their houses and in the streets, and there they kept the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. Who helped the Jews build the walls? Nehemiah.
2. How long did it take? Fifty-two days.
3. What did they then hold? A great meeting.
4. What was it for? To learn the law of God.
5. Where was it held? Out of doors.
6. Who read God's law to them? Ezra and the Levites.
7. Who was Ezra? A scribe and a priest.
8. What was the Bible like then? A scroll.
9. How did the people listen? With great reverence.
10. What did Nehemiah and Ezra tell them? To be thankful and glad.
11. What did they hold after this? The Feast of Tabernacles.
12. What was this like? Our Thanksgiving Day.

LESSON XII.—December 17.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE MESSIAH.

Mal. 3. 1-12. Memorize verses 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me.—Mal. 3. 1.

THE LESSON STORY.

Malachi was a prophet who lived in Old Testament times. If you will look in your Bible you will see that his prophecy is the last book of the Old Testament. Although he lived four hundred years before Christ came, he knew about his coming, for God gave him the power to look into the future.

In this lesson he talks about Messiah's kingdom. You know "Messiah" is one of the names of Jesus. Malachi calls him the "Messenger of the Covenant." A great while before this God had promised his people that he would send a Saviour, and Malachi now reminds them of this promise. He says that when the Messiah

comes he will visit his temple to make it clean and pure. He did not mean the temple in Jerusalem only, but also the temple of every heart that will open to his coming. No heart can make a right offering to the Lord unless it is clean and good, because the holy Lord hates sin, and he can always see if it is in the heart. God says that people who pretend to worship him when their hearts are not right, even though they bring offerings to him, are really robbing him. The Jews robbed him in tithes and offerings. The tithes means the tenth of all we have, and God says that belongs to him, and by offerings he means the freewill offerings which the love in our hearts leads us to give to him. God tells the Jews, through Malachi, to bring all their tithes to him in the right spirit, and then he says he will open the windows of heaven and pour out a great blessing upon them. He will do this for us too if we will give to him the love of our hearts and the offerings he asks of us.

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

1. Who was Malachi? A good prophet.
2. Who spoke through him? The Lord.
3. When did he live? Four hundred years before Jesus came.
4. What did he tell the people God had promised? A Saviour.
5. What did he want them to do? Get ready for his coming.
6. What had the Jews been doing? Forgetting God.
7. What had they brought him? Poor offerings.
8. What does God ask us to give him? The best.
9. What is meant by the tithe? The tenth of all we have.
10. To whom does the tithe belong? To God.
11. What do we do when we keep God's part? We rob him.
12. What does he want us to give him most of all? Our hearts.

THE SQUIRREL'S ARITHMETIC.

High on the branch of a walnut tree
A bright-eyed squirrel sat;
What was he thinking so earnestly?
And what was he looking at?

He was doing a problem o'er and o'er;
Busily thinking was he
How many nuts for his winter's store
Could he hide in the hollow tree?

He sat so still in the swaying bough
You might have thought him asleep;
Oh, no; he was trying to reckon now
The nuts the babies could eat.

Then suddenly he frisked about,
And down the tree he ran;
"The best way to do, without a doubt,
Is to gather all I can."