

OUTWARD BOUND.

SIT and watch the ships go out
Across the widening sea;
How one by one, in shimmering sun,
They sail away from me.
I know not to what land they sail,
Nor what the freight they bear;
I only know they outward go,
While all the winds are fair.

Beyond the low horizon line
Where my short sight must fail,
Some other eyes a watch will keep,
Where'er the ships may sail;
By night, by day, or near, or far,
O'er narrow seas or wide,
These follow still, at love's sweet will,
Whatever may betide.

So round the world the ships will sail,
To dreary lands or fair;
So with them go, for weal or woe,
Some dear ones everywhere.
How will there speed each lagging keel,
When homeward it is laid;
Or watch will keep, o'er surges deep,
If there a grave be made!

O human love, so tried, so true,
That knoweth nor mete nor bound,
But follows with unwearyed watch
Our daily changing round!
O Love divine, O Love supreme,
What matter where I sail,
So I but know, where'er I go,
Thy watch will never fail!

—Anson J. F. Randolph.

NELLIE'S CHICKENS.

NELLIE has fed her little chickens so often that they know her very well. Even the old mother, though she made a great fuss at first when she came near, has learned that she does not want to hurt them, and seems glad to see her come.

I wonder if Nellie ever thinks about that One who wants little children to run to him, just as these little chickens will run to her, or rather, just as they run to their mother. He came to the people in Jerusalem, and wanted to save them. He said, "How often would I have gathered you under my wings, as a hen gathereth her chickens." He meant that he wanted to save them from the great destroyer, Satan; to save them from the wrath due for their sins; to keep them from all evil, and to give them great good. But they hated him; they would not come to him that they might have life; they even put him to death on the cross.

Do you feel sorry when you see a little chicken or a little lamb suffering? Don't you want to help it right away?

Jesus is sorry to see us living in sin, and he wants to save us from it. Will you not come to him every day, that he may do this for you?—Selected.

THE DUSTY ROOM.

A YOUNG girl was sweeping a room one day when she went to the window-blind, and drew it down.

"It makes the room so dusty," she said, "to have the sunshine always coming in."

The atoms of dust which shone golden in the sunbeams were unseen in the dimmer light. The untaught girl imagined it was the sunlight which made the dust.

Now many persons imagine themselves very good people. One poor old man, who lived all his life without a thought of love to God, said he was willing to die. He didn't owe any man a shilling.

If the Spirit of God should shine brightly into such a heart how would it look? It would show him sins enough to crush him. This light of

the Spirit is like the sunshine in the dusty room. It reveals what was before hidden. When we begin to feel unhappy about our sins, let us never try to put away the feeling. Don't let us put down the curtain, and fancy there is no dust. It is the Holy Spirit's voice in our hearts. He is showing us ourselves, and better still, He will show us the true way to happiness.

THE ONLY CURE.

"If you were seriously burned, and many remedies were brought to you, only one of which could certainly cure you, while the others might do you some good, which remedy would you prefer?"

"The one that would certainly cure me."

"Would you not try the others?"

"No, sir; try the one that cures certain."

"There is but one cure for sin. In 1 John 1. 7 it is written, 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' That only can cure the wounds sin has made."

A little girl giving her experience for membership, said, "I was converted the day the bee stung my mother." When asked what she meant by that, she replied, "When the bee stung my mother I cried and ran away, afraid he would sting me. She called me back, and said, 'Don't be afraid; he can't sting you now. He has left his sting in my hand.' Then she told me that sin could not sting me either if I believed in Jesus; for sin had left its sting in Jesus. I believed it, and ever since then I have felt I had a new heart."—Kind Words.

NEATNESS IN GIRLS.

NEATNESS is a good thing for a girl, and if she does not learn it when she is young, she never will. It takes a great deal more neatness to make a girl look well than it does to make a boy look passable. Not because a boy, to start with, is better looking than a girl, but his clothes are of a different sort, not so many colours in them; and people don't expect a boy to look so pretty as a girl. A girl that is not neatly dressed is called a sloven, and no one likes to look at her. Her face may be pretty, and her eyes bright, but if there is a spot of dirt on her cheek, and her fingers' ends are black with ink, and her shoes are not laced or buttoned up, and her apron is dirty, and her collar is not buttoned, and her skirt is torn, she cannot be liked. I went into a little girl's room once, and all her clothes were on the floor, and her playthings, too. Learn to be neat, and when you have learned it, it will almost take care of itself.

THE current "catch" is to ask your friend if Christmas and New Year's come in the same year. Not a few people will promptly answer, "No, of course they don't," and a half minute later they feel sick over their mental weakness.

"SAM, you are not honest. Why did you put all the good peaches on top of the measure, and the little ones below?" "Same reason, sah, dat makes de front of your house marble and the back gate chiefly slop bar', sah."

LESSON NOTES.

B.C. 445.] LESSON IX. [Feb 28.

NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER.

Neh. 1. 1-11. Commit to mem. vs. 8, 9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. Psa. 108. 12.

OUTLINE.

1. A People's Need, v. 1-3.
2. A Patriot's Prayer, v. 4-11.

TIME.—445 B.C. Almost a century since the lesson. 83rd Olympiad. Year of Rome, 308.

PLACE.—Shushan or Susa.
EXPLANATIONS.—The twentieth year—That is, of the reign of king Artaxerxes. The remnant that are left—Only a comparatively small part of the children of the captivity returned to Canaan. Sat down and wept . . . certain days—Not one continuous act of weeping, but a weeping and fasting extending through several days at times when he was alone and free from official duty. The king's cup-bearer—The cup-bearer, or butler, to the king was an officer of high rank under every oriental monarch.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

- Where, in this lesson, are we taught—
1. Sympathy with God's people in trouble?
 2. Sorrow for sin?
 3. Confidence in God's promises?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Who was Nehemiah? A nobleman at the court of Persia.
2. When did he live? After the return of the Jews from captivity.
3. In what condition was Jerusalem at that time? It was without gates or walls.
4. What did Nehemiah undertake to do? To rebuild the wall.
5. How did he begin? By seeking God's help.
6. How is his prayer expressed in the GOLDEN TEXT? Give us, etc.
7. How did he succeed in building the wall? By leading the people in the work.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The nature of prayer.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

11. What is his warning to them? That his word shall condemn them at the last day. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day.—John xii. 48.

B.C. 444.] LESSON X. [March. 7.

READING THE LAW.

Neh. 8. 1-12. Commit to mem. vs. 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. Neh. 8. 8.

OUTLINE.

1. A Great Congregation, v. 1.
2. A Bible Reading, v. 2-8.
3. A Day of Gladness, v. 9-12.

TIME.—444 B.C. Fifty-two days after the arrival at Jerusalem the wall was done. This service followed 83rd Olympiad. Year of Rome, 309.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.
EXPLANATIONS.—Street . . . before the water gate—In the south-eastern part of the city, south of the temple. Pulpit of wood—A tower of wood in margin. A raised platform built in this street where the speaker could stand and be plainly seen. Lifting up their hands—With their hands raised toward heaven, palms upward and faces upward. Gave the sense.—They explained and expounded the law as it was read so that all could understand.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

- Where, in this lesson, are we taught—
1. Reverence for the word of God?
 2. Carefulness in the reading of the word?
 3. To rejoice in the understanding of God's law?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. For what purpose did Nehemiah gather the people in Jerusalem? To hear the law of God.
2. Who read the law? Ezra the priest and scribe.
3. Who listened to the reading? All who were old enough to understand.
4. What is said of the reading in the GOLDEN TEXT? So they, etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The authority of the word.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

12. What blessing does he pronounce on believers? To Peter he gave it thus: [Read Matthew xvi. 17.] And to Thomas he gave it thus: [Read John xx. 29.]

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