

WHICH WAS THE FOOL?

PRIZE SKETCH.

"Dolly, I think that husband of yours is a fool."

"I've heard you say something of this kind before, brother; but out with it, what is the nature of his latest offence?"

"I suppose it's none of my business if he wants to go to the poor-house and drag his family along with him; it's a free country, and a man can do what he will with his own."

"You are very mysterious. I hope Sam has not suddenly taken to drinking, nor anything of that nature?"

"Sam is a good fellow, in some respects a capital fellow; but no man in business can afford to give away all his money. Five dollars here, ten dollars there, and a hundred dollars to-morrow. I tell you what it is, Dolly, Sam has only what he has saved by hard work, and now he's giving it all away. In a few years he will not have a cent to his name, then he will come to those who have saved their money to borrow a loaf of bread for his family."

"Are you not a little mistaken, John? I know Sam is quite liberal, but I never supposed he wasted his money."

"Waste! I'd like to know what waste means? He gave that Jim Summers who broke his leg five dollars, and no one else gave over one. He would have been thought just as much of if he had given what others did, and saved four dollars by the operation. He subscribed for our church this year—I know, I saw the paper—\$100! That is double as much as any one else gave. So it goes; when he hasn't a dollar left he will have only himself to thank."

"Did you know, John, that Jim Summers's wife has a young babe, and that only last week Jim paid the last dollar he had on the debt he owed for the house that was burned down?"

"Well, what if Jim is an honest, needy fellow, Sam don't have to support him, does he? And then, what right has Sam to give \$100 to the church when he has a family to support?"

"Our duty, John, should be done, regardless of what the world may say. Sam does not give a second thought to what any one says, so long as his own conscience approves. And I most sincerely wish that every man was as thoughtful concerning his family as Sam is."

"Oh, well, as I said, it's none of my business, but I tell you plainly it will be useless for you to come begging around me, I shall never have any more than enough for myself," and with this parting shot John took himself off.

Samuel Grand had established himself in business in a small Western town. He married Dolly Whiting, a sweet girl of strong common sense, who had unbending faith in her husband, and when he told her his plans and gave his reasons for what he did, she, believing him right, like a sensible woman gave him her earnest support. Nor could the lugubrious prophecies of her only brother shake her confidence in the least. At the same time she stored all these sayings in her heart, and watched and waited.

Ten years flew swiftly by. The Western town had grown to be a city and Samuel Grand was a wealthy man. His was the most extensive business in the place. He owned corner-lots and was interested in every enterprise calculated to be of use to his neighbors, and though he lived plainly his home was a delightful spot to which he joyfully turned after the toils of the day were ended. Here, too, the needy were always sure of sympathy and assistance, and it was the wonder of many how one family could do so much for others without becoming impoverished thereby.

John Whiting, on the other hand, was little if any better off than when, ten years before, he complained to his sister that Sam was on the road to the poor-house. In fact, John's rapidly increasing family taxed his resources to the utmost, and one day he was forced to call on Sam for a small loan, though it cost him an effort to do so.

"Oh, certainly," said Sam, "I have a little fund which I keep for just such purposes. Here is the money, and when you are in need call again."

John was considerably overcome, but finally he said: "Sam, I don't know what to make of you."

"Why so, John?"

"Well, when you were first married you and I were worth just about the same. You were always spending your money freely—even worse, I thought, giving it away—while I saved every dollar, and yet you have plenty and to spare, and I am not as well off as I was then. I cannot account for it, for we both had an equal start, and you have worked no harder than I have."

"John, let me give you a little bit of history. You remember when I commenced business here I bought wheat and stored it to ship in the spring. It so happened I had about all of a certain kind of wheat the farmers at that time used for seed. When they had done their spring sowing a long rain came on and the seed rotted in the ground. Now, I reasoned, I can get double price for every bushel of wheat I have. The Sabbath day came, and while sitting at home I could not refrain from congratulating myself on my good luck to Dolly. I noticed she did not say much, and presently she took up the Bible; as she frequently did, and read aloud the eleventh chapter of Proverbs, closed the book, and said never a word. I could not tell, nor do I know to this day if she intended to read me a lesson, but I took up my hat and went out for a walk. I thought of the thousand bushels of grain, really worth about one dollar, which I could sell for two if I should demand that price, and then, ringing in my ears, were the words Dolly had just read—

"He that withholdeth corn the people shall curse him."

"You see what it says, the people shall curse him. I interpreted this to mean, it was not only their right but their religious duty to do so, because of the iniquity of the action. Was I then committing a crime? The next day I commenced selling my wheat at a dollar a bushel, which gave me a fair margin of profit. Men called me a fool. Dolly and my own conscience told me I had done right. About that time, you may remember, came up for discussion the question how much ought we to give to objects of charity and for the public good generally. I had long talks with Dolly about it, and she advised that we lay aside one-tenth of each year's income, to be devoted to such purposes as the occasion might warrant. The plan was adopted, and we have never missed the amounts thus expended. In fact, it has seemed like good seed sown on good ground, or like bread cast upon the waters. Leaving out of the question our duty to God, which should be the ruling principle of our lives, there is a sound wisdom from a business standpoint in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses of that same chapter, which, you will remember, say:

"There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

"The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

"Such is the history of my success, for in the eyes of men I have been successful. I have merely followed my guide—the blessed word—and my good wife has helped me to do so. I have been blessed beyond my most sanguine expectations, and I have realized that it is surely more blessed to give than to receive."

"Sam, ten years ago, I told Dolly you were a fool, and on the way to the poor-house. I have had my eyes opened, and I am now convinced that yours is the right path, even though my predictions had been verified. My children shall be taught to give as they have opportunity, and to remember that we are only stewards of God's bounty."—Oscar Bliss, in *New York Observer*.

YIELD YOURSELF.

Consecrate yourself to God for service. Years ago a young man who had never spoken in public, and who had never led a meeting, was sitting in a prayer-meeting room some minutes before the opening of the service. One of the officials of the church came to him and said, "We want you to lead the meeting to-night." The young man was astonished and demurred, and after some talk the official left with the words: "If you are ever to begin to work for the Lord, there will be no better

time than now. I shall be back in five minutes for your answer." During the five minutes the young man prayed and thought. He reasoned thus: "If the Lord wants me to do this work, he can give me power to do it. I will give myself into his hands, and let him lead the meeting." So, without any preparation except that which came from above, he led the meeting; and from that time on he has been ready for any service that the Lord has put in his way, because he then learned that the Lord would not ask him to do anything for which he would not give him the necessary qualifications. Does your school want you for superintendent? Consecrate yourself to the Lord for service, and he will give you power for work. Are you superintendent, and do you feel that you are not doing your work properly? May it not be because you are trying to do your work without divine help? Yield to the Lord, and let him work through you. Remember how Moses was used when he yielded himself to the Lord.—*Sunday School Times*.

A MYSTERIOUS GIVER OF £60,000.

A year before the death of the late good Earl of Shaftesbury a large sum of money was placed at his disposal for the purpose of being distributed as he thought best, and almost the last act of his noble life was the supervision of the distribution of the money. Now it appears that since Lord Shaftesbury died one of the leading secretaries of a charitable society received an anonymous communication requesting him to be in Chapel Court at midnight on a date named. After taking further advice the gentleman decided at all hazards to keep the rendezvous. He had not been many minutes on the spot, which at that hour, we need scarcely say, was quite deserted but for the tramp of a policeman or the hurried walk of some belated passer-by, when a mysteriously-shrouded figure hurriedly approached him and asked him whether he was Mr.—. He replied that that was his name; and to cut a long story short, what he was told was much as follows: "I have more money than I know what to do with. Your name is familiar to me as one of those who are most active in the benevolent world, and I am anxious to give you a sum of money that you may distribute it as Lord Shaftesbury distributed the sum placed in his hands a few years ago. I do not wish to fetter your control as to the disposition of it, but here is a list of charities which I should like to have some portion of it. I have no wish that my name should appear, and you must not make any effort to find out who I am." He then placed in the hands of the astonished gentleman an envelope containing bank notes to the amount of £60,000. This money is at the time of writing still being distributed among the best known and most deserving charities in the metropolis. This man followed our Lord's precept, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." (Matthew vi. 3.)—*English Paper*.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

LESSON VIII.—NOVEMBER 22, 1891.

CHRIST BETRAYED.—John 18:1-13.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 4-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."—Mark 14:41.

HOME READINGS.

M. Matt. 26:36-46.—Christ in Gethsemane.
T. Heb. 5:1-14.—Christ Heard in that he Feared.
W. John 18:1-13.—Christ Betrayed.
Th. Psalm 40:1-17.—"Lo, I Come."
F. Psalm 41:1-13.—"Mine own Familiar Friend."
S. Psalm 55:1-16.—"Mine Acquaintance."
S. Acts 1:15-26.—The Betrayer's Fate.

LESSON PLAN.

I. Betrayed by Judas. vs. 1-5.
II. Defended by Peter. vs. 6-11.
III. Led Away by the Band. vs. 12, 13.

TIME.—A. D. 30, from midnight till three o'clock Friday morning, April 7; Tiberius Caesar emperor of Rome; Pontius Pilate governor of Judaea; Herod Antipas governor of Galilee and Perea.

PLACE.—Gethsemane, an enclosed garden or orchard at the foot of the Mount of Olives.

HELP IN STUDYING THE LESSON.

Parallel accounts, Matt. 26:30-56; Mark 14:26-52; Luke 22:39-53. V. 1. He went forth—from the upper room. Cedron—or Kedron, a torrent bed on the east of Jerusalem, between the city and the Mount of Olives. Garden—Gethsemane. Matt. 26:36-46. V. 3. Band—Roman soldiers,

From the chief priests and Pharisees—the Sanhedrin. Some of the chief priests were there. Luke 22:52. V. 4. Went forth—while his hour had not yet come he withdrew from danger; now he goes forth to meet it, knowing that the end would be death. V. 8. Let these go—he seeks the safety of his disciples. V. 9. Lost none—see ch. 17:12. V. 10. The high priest's servant—Luke records the healing of his ear. Luke 22:50, 51. V. 11. The cup—compare Matt. 26:39. V. 13. To Annas first—Annas had been high priest eleven years, and had secured the high priesthood in turn for five of his sons, as well as for Caiaphas, his son-in-law, after he had been deposed himself.

QUESTIONS.

Introductory.—What is the title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. BETRAYED BY JUDAS. vs. 1-5.—Whom did Judas give to Gethsemane? How did he know the place? What did Jesus do? What did he say to the officers and soldiers? What did they answer? What was his reply? Who stood with them?

II. DEFENDED BY PETER. vs. 6-11.—What effect had the answer of Jesus? What did Jesus again ask them? What was their reply? What did Jesus request for his disciples? Who of the disciples resisted the arrest? What did Jesus say to Peter?

III. LED AWAY BY THE BAND. vs. 12, 13.—What was then done to Jesus? What do you know about Annas? Who was Caiaphas? v. 13. What prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled? Isa. 53:7.

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?

1. That it is base beyond expression to use the token of love to do the work of hate.
2. That Jesus in his own peril had a tender regard for the safety of his friends.
3. That his enemies had no power over him except as he freely gave himself to them.
4. That we should submissively drink the cup that our Heavenly Father gives us.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. What did Jesus do after his prayer for his disciples? Ans. He went with them to the garden of Gethsemane.
2. Whom did Judas lead to Gethsemane to take Jesus? Ans. A band of soldiers and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees.
3. How did Peter resist the arrest? Ans. He drew a sword, and smote the high priest's servant.
4. What did Jesus say to Peter? Ans. Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?
5. What did the officers and soldiers then do? Ans. They took Jesus and led him away to Annas.

LESSON IX.—NOVEMBER 29, 1891.

CHRIST BEFORE PILATE.—John 19:1-16.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 5-7.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."—Rom 4:25.

HOME READINGS.

M. Mark 14:53-65.—Christ before the Council.
T. Mark 14:68-72.—Christ Denied by Peter.
W. John 18:28-40.—Christ Rejected by the Jews.
Th. Matt. 27:11-31.—The People Persuaded.
F. Luke 23:1-32.—Christ Mocked by Herod.
S. John 19:1-16.—Christ Before Pilate.
S. Acts 4:13-35.—Both Herod and Pontius Pilate.

LESSON PLAN.

I. Scourged and Mocked. v. 1-5.
II. Examined by Pilate. vs. 6-11.
III. Delivered to be Crucified. vs. 12-16.

TIME.—A. D. 30, Friday morning, April 7; Tiberius Caesar emperor of Rome; Pontius Pilate governor of Judaea; Herod Antipas governor of Galilee and Perea.

PLACE.—Pilate's palace in Jerusalem.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—By whom was Jesus tried? What sentence was pronounced upon him? Why was he taken before Pilate? What did Pilate find on examination? What did he propose? How was this proposal received? Title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. SCOURGED AND MOCKED. vs. 1-5.—What did Pilate then do with Jesus? What did the soldiers do? How did they further mock and torture him? What did Pilate then do? In what manner did Jesus come forth to them? What did Pilate then say?

II. EXAMINED BY PILATE. vs. 6-11.—What did the priests do? What was Pilate's answer? What did the priests reply? What did Pilate then do? What was Jesus' reply? What did Pilate then say to him? What did Jesus answer?

III. DELIVERED TO BE CRUCIFIED. vs. 12-16.—What did Pilate then seek to do? What was the cry of the Jews? What did they mean by this? What did Pilate then do? What day and hour was this? What did Pilate say to the Jews? What did they cry out? How did Pilate answer them? What was their reply? What did Pilate then do?

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?

1. That Jesus was scourged that with his stripes we might be healed.
2. That he was condemned that we might be justified.
3. That he was mocked of men that we might be honored of God.
4. That he was crowned with thorns that we might receive a crown of glory.
5. That he was delivered to death that we might be received to eternal life.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. What did Pilate do? Ans. He took Jesus and scourged him.
2. How did the soldiers mock Jesus? Ans. They crowned him with thorns, and put a purple robe upon him, and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.
3. What did Pilate again say to the Jews? Ans. I find no fault in him.
4. What did the Jews cry out? Ans. Away with him, crucify him.
5. What did Pilate finally do? Ans. He delivered Jesus to be crucified.