

ONLY THE CHILDREN.

BENEATH an ancient wide-spread tree,
Which cast a pleasant shade,
Five children full of mirth and glee,
One sunny morning played.
Loud were the sounds of merriment
Which o'er that daisied field they sent;
For there were hearts untouched by care,
And eyes that seldom owned a tear.
"What are those sounds?" one asked, "I hear,
Only the children playing there."

Only the children? Years have flown
Since that bright summer day,
And these have men and women grown
Who then were at their play;
The eldest of that little band,
Who then the ball with skilful hand,
And tolled the hoop by far the best,
Has country now attempts to guide,
And fashions laws which, when applied,
Shall aid and succour the distressed.

The next—a gay and laughing girl,
With blue and sparkling eye,
Whose hair was always out of curl,
Whose frock was oft awry,
Is now a lady full of grace,
In whom your eye can scarcely trace
The want of care that marked her youth;
And to whose gifted pen we owe
Some sweet and simple tales which show
How lovely is the way of truth!

The youngest, gentle as a dove,
As sweet as she was fair;
Who gave her doll such words of love,
And nursed it with such care—
Far from the scenes of early life,
Is now a Missionary's wife,
And oft her weary husband cheers:
Together patiently they toil,
And hope to reap on Indian soil
The seed which they have sown in tears.

Only the children? Yes, they seem
But yonder unto some,
Put I who oft in sad and dream
Of things that are to come,
In children full of healthful glee,
Our future generations see.
Mighty for good—or else for ill!
God bless and guide them, so that they
May scatter blessings o'er life's way,
And all His wise behest fulfil.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.

THE following story of a reckless young man, suggests a possible comfort in the cases of other erring loved ones:

A lady in Baltimore had a wayward son whose reckless conduct cost her many tears. There were many things in her life to make her happy, but her anxiety for her headstrong son saddened all her enjoyment and disturbed her peace.

He grew more indifferent to her love, and finally left his home for a life of adventure in the West. But happiness did not come to him in his wild career, nor riches from his eager search in the mines. For a time the new freedom gratified him; but his restless spirit could not be contented even with that.

By some means his mother kept track of his wanderings, and was able to send him messages of love, but they brought few or no replies. At one of Mr. Moody's meetings in Baltimore she heard Mr. Robert Lowry's touching poem and tune that has been so often sung, and the words exactly uttered her own feelings:

"Where is my wandering boy to-night?
The boy of my tenderest care,
The boy that was once my joy and light,
The child of my love and prayer!

* * * * *

"Bring me my wandering boy to-night,
Go search for him where you will.
But bring him to me with all his blight,
And tell him I love him still.

"Oh, where is my boy to-night?
My heart o'erflows, for I love him he knows:
Oh, where is my boy to-night?"

The weeping woman copied the verses and sent them to her son in a letter. No word from him ever reached her in return. At last she lost all trace of him, not even knowing that he had received her message. Then, after weary waiting, tidings came, bitter tidings, strangely mingled with consolation.

"Her wandering boy" had fallen a victim to his restless passion. In some daring expedition on one of the Rocky Mountain trails he had become separated from his party, and was lost. His body was found in a cave, where he had died of hunger and exhaustion. By his side was an unfinished letter to his mother. In it he craved for forgiveness, as he had already asked the forgiveness of Heaven. He had received the poem she sent him, he said, and it had melted his heart, and had led him to repentance.—*Youth's Companion*.

CURIOUS WATCHES.

In the South Kensington Museum, at London, is a small watch, about a hundred years old, representing an apple, the golden case ornamented with grains of pearl. Another old Nuremberg watch has the form of an acorn, and is provided with a dainty pistol which, perhaps, served as an alarm. In London is an eagle-shaped watch which, when the body of the bird is opened, a richly enamelled face is seen. They are sometimes found in the form of ducks and skulls. The Bishop of Ely had a watch in the head of his cane, and a Prince of Saxony had one in his riding saddles. A watch made for Catharine I., of Russia, is a repeater and a musical watch. Within is the Holy Sepulchre and the Roman guard. By touching a spring the stones move away from the door, the guard kneel down, angels appear, and the holy women step into the tomb and sing the Easter song that is heard in the Russian churches. King George the III., of England, had a watch not larger than a five-cent piece, which had 120 different parts, the whole not weighing quite as much as a ten-cent piece.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

A. D. 28.] LESSON II [April 9.

DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Mark 6. 14-29. Commit to memory v. 14-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The wicked plot against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. Psa. 37. 12.

OUTLINE.

1. A King's Fear, v. 14-20.
2. A King's Folly, v. 21-25.
3. A King's Crime, v. 26-29.

TIME—A. D. 28, immediately following the events of the last lesson.

PLACE—Castle of Machærus, near the Dead Sea.

PARALLEL PASSAGES—Matt. 14, 1-13; Luke 9, 7-10.

EXPLANATIONS.—*Herod*—The son of the Herod who had caused the murder of the children in Bethlehem. *Heard of him*—Of Jesus and his works. *Risen from the dead*—Herod's conscience made him feel afraid. *For Herodias' sake*—Partly to please her, and partly to protect John from her plots. *Not lawful*—He had persuaded her to leave her husband and live with him. *Fearing John*—Looked up to John with reverence as a

prophet. *Observed him*—Rather "kept him" from his wife's anger. *Daughter of . . . Herodias*—Her name was Salome. *Charger*—A large dish or platter. *For their sakes*—He would not refuse, because they had heard him promise.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

How does this lesson show—

1. That the wicked are troubled by a guilty conscience?
2. That the wicked fear the good?
3. That the wicked hate the good?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Who did king Herod believe Jesus to be? John the Baptist. 2. What had Herod done to John? He had put him in prison. 3. How long did he keep him in prison? About a year. 4. What did he then do? He put him to death. 5. Whose hatred caused Herod to kill John? The hatred of his wife, Herodias.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Human depravity.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

38. When Pharaoh let Israel go out of Egypt, how did they get over the Red Sea? Israel being permitted by Pharaoh to go out of Egypt, and having arrived at the banks of the Red Sea, Moses with his rod divided the waters of the sea asunder, and the people went through upon dry ground.

A. D. 28.] LESSON III. [April 16.
THE FIVE THOUSAND FED.

Mark 6. 30-44. Commit to memory v. 41-44.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. Psa. 132. 15.

OUTLINE.

1. The Pledge, v. 30-32.
2. The People, v. 33, 34.
3. The Provision, v. 35-44.

TIME.—A. D. 28, immediately after the events of the last lesson.

PLACE.—The shore of the Sea of Galilee, near Bethsaida.

PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Matt. 14. 13-21; Luke 9. 10-17; John 6. 1-14.

EXPLANATIONS.—*The Apostles*—See Lesson 1.) *Gathered*—Their ministry at that time lasted only for a month or two. *Desert place*—That is, a place without many inhabitants, but not a barren region. *No leisure*—Both Christ and his apostles needed rest. *By ship*—Probably in small row-boats. *Privately*—Without letting the crowd know. *Outwent them*—Went by land around the sea where they were sailing across it. *Compassion*—Love, pity, and sympathy. *Sheep not having a shepherd*—Ignorant, and without teachers of the truth. *For spent*—At evening. *Desert place*—And therefore leaving no supplies of food for so great a crowd. *Two hundred pennyworth*—The penny or denarius, was worth sixteen cents, hence this sum would be worth thirty dollars. *Loaves*—Thin cakes about the size of soda-biscuit. *By companies*—In orderly groups of fifty and a hundred each. *Blessed*—As an offering of thanks to God. *To his apostles*—Christ blessed the food, and his disciples distributed it to the people. *Twelve baskets*—Small hand-baskets, used in carrying food while travelling.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

How are we here taught—

1. That Christ feels for our needs?
2. That Christ helps our needs of both soul and body?
3. That Christ supplies all our needs abundantly?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Where did Jesus lead his disciples after their return from preaching? To a desert place near Bethsaida. 2. What did the people do? They came to hear Jesus. 3. How did Jesus feel toward them? He was moved with compassion. 4. How did he show his mercy toward the people? By giving them food. 5. How many people did he feed with five loaves and two fishes? Five thousand men.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The compassion of Christ.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

34. What became of the Egyptians that followed them?
The Egyptians following the Israelites who had passed over the Red Sea when Moses with his rod divided the waters, Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the waters returned upon the Egyptians, and they were all drowned.

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