

nations doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship; lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable and grave, all these to paint and to describe.

And as one means to the evolution of the poem, his

"Care was fixed and zealously intent To fill his odoriferous lamp with deeds of light And hope that reaps not shame."

Puritan he was. Yet there was nothing sour or fanatical in his Puritanism. He loved music, he loved art, he loved science, he loved the drama. And in these years he wrote "Comus," which, amid its festal splendor and rural sweetness, is the loveliest poem ever written in praise of chastity; and "Lycidas," in which we first see that terrible two-handed engine at the door, and hear the first mutters of that storm which was to sweep so much away.

In 1638 Milton started on his travels. His travels were not filled with inanities and debaucheries, as were those of too many. In Paris he was introduced to the great Hugo Grotius; in Florence, to the "Starry Galileo;" in Naples, to the Marquis Manso, who had been the friend and patron of Tasso; at Rome his bold faithfulness brought him into peril. He had intended to proceed to Greece and Sicily, but the sad news of civil discord in England called him home. In those stern days men could not shilly-shally down the stream of popular compromise. They were forced to take a side, and Milton took his side against that which he regarded a feeble tyranny and ruthless priestcraft. "When God," he says, "commands to take the trumpet and blow a dolorous and jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say or what he shall conceal. I considered it dishonorable to be enjoying myself in foreign lands while my countrymen were striking a blow for freedom." You may disapprove—you may honorably disapprove of the part he took. Remember only that on both sides in that great civil war in England were noble, righteous, and holy men; and that we, sitting in our arm-chairs, are hardly adequate to judge of the mighty issues of national life and death which were at stake in that tremendous conflict. Thus, then, ended the youth—the happy pure and noble youth—of Milton.

"YOU BROUGHT ME."

BY A SABBATH-SCHOOL TEACHER.

Before me lie two letters and a photograph.

The latter is the "counterfeit presentment" of as happy and light-hearted a boy as ever blessed the world with his presence. It seems impossible that four years have passed into history since the sun caught that impression and kept it for me to linger over and wonder why God took him so early. In the study of the Sabbath-school lesson my eye would wander over the various "helps" in search of something to bring the central truth home to Herbert's mind and heart, and he was of such a responsive nature that he seemed to grasp an idea before it was fully brought out. He never tired of telling of the heroes he had met in books and at school, and his longings to emulate them. What a sad day that was to the class when the dread verdict, "scarlet fever," placed a great gulf between us. And sadder still were we all when we learned that death had again chosen a shining mark, and that Herbert had gone to sit at the feet of the Great Teacher.

The first and neatly-written letter reads: "I believe you led my boy to Christ. I have just read a little poem about a lad named 'Jim' looking through the gate of heaven for his mother whom he had left behind. You have no idea how it has comforted me, coming the same day as your letter. But I think my dear boy will be looking for you, too."

Since the foregoing was written and received changes have occurred and I find myself in charge of another class of boys. I do not recall these memories because they have been forgotten these four years, for such has not been the case. They have served to mould a character praised beyond its deserts and to soften a temper not yet thoroughly controlled. They are brought out to-night because of the presence of the second letter, written in a cramped, boyish

hand, blurred and in a soiled envelope. Left by the postman this afternoon, it comes like a benediction after a day of physical and mental toil. The members of the family at home when it arrives wonder who could have written it. But I take it with me into a place apart—into an "upper room." I know it is from Charlie. He told me last Sabbath that he is going to try to be a Christian, and I have an idea that he has written something to me about it. Maybe it is something demanding an immediate answer—a cry for help.

Charlie was, at first, the most unpromising boy in the class. In fact, giving it up altogether was at one time thought of because he was a disturbing factor. But having served at one time on a committee for the supply of teachers, and knowing the fewness of the laborers, I had borne with him—not at all meekly—hoping for a change. I had written him a letter several weeks before about making the class of better reputation than it had previously enjoyed, and the result was apparent in a better behaviour on his part. And now Charlie had written to me.

"Dear teacher," the letter runs, "I have thought the matter over as you said last Sunday I should. I read the verses you marked, too. But I don't think I will wait three months, as you say, though: I want to join the church next communion. You say I have an influence over the boys in the class, and ought to try to get them to come, too. I don't know about it but I will see what I can do. I can't draw like you. You, I guess, will have to get them as you brought me."

I have heard Sabbath-school teachers insist that their work, especially with boys, was all a failure; I have heard them declare they would "have to give up that class," or "change the membership of this one," and so I have recalled the memory of one boy in heaven and recounted my experience with another just about to enter the King's church militant. As I have said, the case of the latter was very unpromising. But one letter, humanly speaking, was what "brought him" to a sense of his misbehavior in the sight of man, and the Holy Spirit awakened him to a sense of his condition in God's sight. He will need great care and nurture in the Church; as Satan will be only too ready to sift him. But life is before him. He is a living trophy of which any teacher may be rightly proud.

Many teachers the world over can recall similar experiences. Somebody brought Dwight L. Moody to Christ. I have often wondered if the human instrument of that work is living and what he or she thinks of the result. Think of Andrew's feeling on the day when Peter preached with such marvellous power, as he remembered that he had brought his impetuous brother to the Lamb of God! And who but the Father himself can recall the work of the pastoral office in the world's broad field of Christian work!

Then, teachers of the Sabbath-school, let us be true to our vows, our opportunities, our influence. I have given the account of two real boys and I know that you might likewise write could you know even as ye are known. "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."—Presbyterian Observer.

"A POOR, USELESS OLD WOMAN LIKE ME!"

A lady worker at a Widows' Class said to one seventy-two years of age:—

"Well, Mrs. C——, have you been getting a bit out of the good old Book to-day? What have you been reading?"

"Wait a bit, my memory is bad, but I'll tell you directly."

After thinking a minute, she said—"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want"; that's where it says, 'my cup runneth over.'"

"Does your cup run over?" I asked.

"Oh, yes! though I often don't know where my next meal is to come from, my Father sends it when I want it. When I think of him, I wonder he should care for a poor, useless old woman like me."

At another time she said—"I have been reading about how the Lord was crucified and rose again for me. It seems almost too good to be true. For me, so unworthy. I think so much about it, how the Creator and Preserver of us all should have been

crucified; but he rose again, that is the beauty of it. They could not keep him in the grave, and they cannot touch him again."

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

FOURTH QUARTER.

LESSON I.—OCTOBER 7.

THE COMMISSION OF JOSHUA.—Josh. 1:1-9. COMMIT VERSES 8, 9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth; and having on the breast-plate of righteousness.—Eph. 6:15.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Trust in God, courage, and obedience, according to his Word, are the conditions of a truly successful life.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Josh. 1:1-18. T. Deut. 28:1-20. W. Deut. 28:45-48, 53-57. Th. Deut. 29:1-29. F. Deut. 30:1-20. Sa. Ps. 24:1-10. Su. Prov. 3:1-18.

THE LIFE OF JOSHUA.—1. His name. Originally Oshoa, or Hoshea (help). Moses changed it to Jehoshua (the help or salvation of Jehovah). In Greek the name became Jesus. 2. His ancestry. He was of the tribe of Ephraim, the eighteenth generation. His father's name was Nun, and his grandfather was Elishama, the head of the tribe. 3. His birth. He was born in Goshen in Egypt, about B.C. 1531, so that he was about 83 or 84 years old at this time. 4. His history. He was probably born a slave to Pharaoh. He was about 43 years old at the time of the Exodus. Moses made him a general of the army, and his prime minister or chief aid. He died after the conquest at the age of 110. 5. His character. He was distinguished (1) for courage; (2) for his generalship—keen observation and quick movements; (3) for his faith in God; (4) for his humility.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—Moses had brought the children of Israel to the borders of the Promised Land. There he died on Mount Pisgah, that rose behind the encampment, about the last of February, 1451 B.C., aged 120. For thirty days the people mourned him. Then God called Joshua to go forward and possess the Promised Land.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

2. Go over this Jordan: which lay before them. Its name means descender, from its rapid current. Usually it was about 80 to 150 feet wide, and 3 to 10 deep. Now it was swollen by the spring rains, and was 1,200 feet wide and quite deep. 4. The wilderness: the desert of Arabia Petraea on the south; Lebanon, the high mountains, on the north, 10,000 feet high. The Euphrates: 1,700 miles long, on the east. The land of the Hittites: descendants of Heth, the second son of Canaan. At one time they were a great nation, extending over this region. The great sea: the Mediterranean, their western border. This region was about 140 miles from north to south, and 400 from east to west. Only in the time of David and Solomon did they possess it all. But they might have held it all the time. The Promised Land is a type of heaven, and of a holy, happy, restful life here. 7. All the law: contained in the five books of Moses. 8. This book: he was (1) to teach it; (2) to study it; (3) to obey it; (4) the result would be prosperity.

SUBJECT: SUCCESS IN LIFE, AND THE WAY TO ATTAIN IT.

I. THE GREAT OBJECT TO BE OBTAINED (vs. 1-4).—How is this Promised Land a type of heaven to us? (Heb. 4:9; 11:13-16.) How is it a type also of heavenly blessings and experiences on earth? (John 1:12; 3:16; 6:40; Deut. 28:2-6.) What in your opinion makes a truly successful life?

II. THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE WAY (v. 3).—What condition was attached to the promise? Is this true of the blessings God promises? Why? What were some of the difficulties and dangers in the way of taking possession of the land? (Num. 13:25-33.) What are some of the difficulties in the way of our obtaining holiness and heaven? (Eph. 6:12, 16; Jas. 1:2, 14, 15; Gal. 5:17-21.) What keeps people from being successful in life?

III. THE CONDITIONS OF TRUE SUCCESS (vs. 5-9).—1. God's presence with us (vs. 5, 9). What promise did God make Joshua? What would be the effect of God's presence? How may we have his presence? Why are those who have God with them able to overcome all enemies? 2. Courage (vs. 6, 9). What two things did God command Joshua to do? How many times is the command repeated in this lesson? Why would he need courage? What would give him courage? (v. 6.) What need have we of courage? How may we obtain it?

3. Obedience to God (vs. 7, 8). What was the next condition of success? How many times is this repeated? What would be the result? Why does true success depend on obedience to God? Are not some wicked men successful? Do they ever have the highest success? What promises did God make to obedience? (Deut. 28:1-14.) What threats against disobedience? (Deut. 28:15-19, 45-48.) Give illustrations of the truth of these from the history of the Israelites. 4. Study of God's Word (v. 8). How much of our Bible did Joshua have? What three things was he required to do with it? Give some reasons why we should study God's Word? What is the difference between reading it and studying it? How does the study of the Bible bring prosperity and success?

IV. NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—How do we know it is right to apply these Old Testament histories to our circumstances? (1 Cor. 10:11; Heb. 11:13-16.) What kept many in those ancient days from entering their Promised Land? (Heb. 3:10, 11.) What warning is given to us? (Heb. 4:1.) What is said about obedience? (1 John 5:2-4.) What about the study of God's Word? (John 17:17; Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 3:12; 2 Pet. 1:18, 19.)

LESSON II.—OCTOBER 14. CROSSING THE JORDAN.—Josh. 3:5-17. COMMIT VERSES 5, 6. GOLDEN TEXT.

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.—Isa. 43:2.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

We should take the decisive step into the promised land of the Christian life.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Josh. 2:1-21. T. Josh. 3:1-17. W. Isa. 43:1-26. Th. Ps. 114:1-31. F. Ex. 14:1-8. Sa. Ex. 15:1-19. Su. Ps. 107:1-21.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—The time had come for the Israelites to take possession of the land promised to them. Two tribes and a half had chosen their portions in the rich lands east of the Jordan, but their soldiers were to help the others conquer Canaan. The people in Canaan must have felt safe with the impassable Jordan for a defence. Joshua now called the people to take decisive action, and enter their long-expected home.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

5. Sanctify: i. e., make holy, prepare your hearts, and go through the prescribed ceremonies of purification. 6. Ark of the covenant: an oblong box of shittim (i. e., acacia) wood, covered with gold. It was 4 feet 4 inches long, by 2 feet 7 inches broad and high. Over it was the mercy seat with the cherubim. It was called the ark of the covenant because it contained the tables of stone with the ten commandments on them, which were God's covenant with man. 10. Canaanites: "lowlanders," descendants of Canaan, on the lowlands by the coast and by Jordan. The other tribes were also descendants of Canaan, and were sometimes included under the name Hittites, descendants of Heth, second son of Canaan,—near Hebron. Hivites: near Mount Hermon. Perizzites (rustics): in the south and west of Carmel. Gergashites: a family of Hivites, east of the Sea of Galilee. Amorites: mountaineers on the heights west of the Dead Sea. Jebusites: a mountain tribe holding the site of Jerusalem. 15. Jordan overfloweth his banks: in the harvest, i. e., the barley harvest, the Jordan is full and deep and wide. They crossed at this time because no enemy would await them on the other side, it being impossible for any army to cross. 16. The waters, etc.: the waters were cut off at Adam, near Zaretan, which was probably at Kurud Sartarbeh, 17 miles above Jericho. All below that the river-bud was dry. The priests with the ark stood in the midst of the river, 2,000 cubits, 2/3 of a mile, above, while the people crossed.

SUBJECT: THE NEW START IN LIFE.

QUESTIONS.

I. PREPARATIONS FOR THE NEW START (v. 5).—What was the first act of preparation? (1:10, 11.) What was the second measure? (2:1.) Give an account of the excursion of the spies? How long were they gone? What was the third act of preparation? (3:1.) What was the fourth? (v. 5.) Meaning of sanctify? How were they to sanctify themselves? (Ex. 19:10; Lev. 20:7, 8.) Was this a spiritual preparation? Were any of their ceremonies to be more forms? (Deut. 28:16; Isa. 58:6, 7.)

APPLICATIONS.—Do we need special preparations for any now advance in life, temporal or spiritual? Who has reported to us what is before us in the Christian life? In what ways? Is the way to further good to do the duties and take the steps immediately before us? What is it to sanctify ourselves? What preparation like this must we make? (Ps. 51:10; John 3:3, 5.)

II. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE NEW START (vs. 6-13).—What instructions did Joshua give to the priests? (vs. 6, 8.) What was the ark? Where was it to be carried? How far in advance? (Josh. 3:4.) Why? What are you taught by this symbol of God's presence going in advance? (Isa. 41:10; 43:1, 3.) What message did the Lord give Joshua? How did the crossing of Jordan magnify Joshua? Would this strengthen his position as leader? Would that make the people stronger to conquer? What instructions did Joshua give to the people? What nations were to be driven out of Canaan? How were the Israelites to know that they could do this great work? How would the drying up of Jordan prove it? Give an example of David's experience. (1 Sam. 17:32-37.) For what purpose were twelve men chosen? (4:2, 7.)

APPLICATIONS.—Do we need continual instruction? Should religion be first in our lives? Do God's wonderful works in revivals and conversions magnify his church? Do they give us faith to go forward on his work?

III. THE DECISIVE STEP (vs. 14-17).—What time of the year was it now? (Josh. 4:19.) What was the state of the Jordan at this time? How many people were there to cross? (Num. 26:2, 51.) Why did they cross at such a time? Who entered the Jordan first? What happened as soon as they touched the water? How far up was the water stopped? Where did the ark remain while the people were crossing? (Josh. 4:10.) What was the object of this great miracle? (v. 7; v. 10; chap. 4:21.)

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—What is the most decisive step in our lives? (John 3:3, 5.) What is the Jordan to be crossed? (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Rom 12:1.) Is every conversion as wonderful an act of God as this passage of Jordan? In what respects is death like this Jordan? (2 Cor. 5:1, 8; Phil 1:23; Luke 23:43.)

LESSON CALENDAR.

(Fourth Quarter, 1888.)

- 1. Oct. 7.—The Commission of Joshua.—Josh. 1:1-9.
2. Oct. 14.—Crossing the Jordan.—Josh. 3:5-17.
3. Oct. 21.—The Stones of Memorial.—Josh. 4:10-21.
4. Oct. 28.—The Fall of Jericho.—Josh. 6:1-16.
5. Nov. 4.—Defeat at Ai.—Josh. 7:1-12.
6. Nov. 11.—Caleb's Inheritance.—Josh. 14:5-15.
7. Nov. 18.—Helping One Another.—Josh. 21:45-48 and 22:1-9.
8. Nov. 25.—The Covenant Renewed.—Josh. 24:19-28.
9. Dec. 2.—Israel under Judges.—Judg. 2:11-23.
10. Dec. 9.—Gideon's Army.—Judg. 7:1-8.