

STREET SCENES IN CHINA.

From a letter written by Miss Barnett, of Tain-foo, we extract one or two vivid street photographs. The first illustrates the weakness of what is best in Chinese religion—the inability of the higher teaching of the sacred books to impress the popular mind.—"In an open space directly in front of one of the large temples stands a sage, dressed in long robes, reading aloud at the dictation of his voice. You hear the word, 'Reverence your parents,' 'Respect your elders,' 'Do not grumble,' &c., and you are reminded that this is the fifteenth of the Chinese month, the day on which they hold most of their heathen festivals. He is not, as is their wont on that day, to read the 'Sacred Edict' in front of the temple. It has little effect on the community at large. You see the bystanders pointing the finger of ridicule at him, and hear them say, 'What is the use of his coming out to exhort other people? He is the biggest gambler we know. He eats opium-herb; and, in fact, he can do everything that is bad.'"

Another of Miss Barnett's sketches shows a dark side of Chinese life:—"A little farther on is a young man laid out in the path of life. He is well dressed, and looks respectable enough. By his side is a basin of cold water. You ask him all kinds of questions, but he is too far gone to raise his eyes, or take any notice; dying, and dying alone. A little girl comes along, and from her you learn that he is a stranger to the city, and had been staying in one of the inns close by. But when they saw that he was dying, they cast him out lest the evil spirits which are supposed to come at death might invade the place ever after."

Still another picture, with both light and shade in it:—"A little farther on you pass another sad sight. A poor, degraded, forlorn-looking wretch is lying by the roadside groaning. He can neither lift hand nor foot. An old woman is sitting by his side, nearly blind and almost devoid of clothing. She has taken off all the rags she could to cover the miserable creature on the ground, whom she calls her son. She tells a sad tale about him. He had been stealing, and was caught in the act. In such a case the people whose goods the thief is trying to steal inflict what punishment they please. They bound this man with strong thongs to a tree, and left him there for a considerable time. As she told me this she lifted up the ragged garment to let me see the result. I started back shuddering. His face was a mere skeleton; blood was oozing through his teeth; his body was fearfully distorted and swollen. I suggested his being taken to our hospital. One of the bystanders said, "No medicine would relieve him just now." He was a fearful opium-smoker, and the craving for opium was giving him far more pain than his bruise and wounds. I don't think he would be better until he got the opium. Opium is a terrible curse, ruining thousands both body and soul. They tell me ancestral worship is the greatest hinderance to the Gospel in China. I think opium is a much more formidable obstacle to our work."—Presbyterian.

THE STORY OF A HYMN.

At one of the most successful series of meetings held at Galashiels, Scotland, recently, Mr. Sankey sang with much effect the hymn, "Eternity," which is in his collection. The music of this hymn, which has a very interesting history, was composed by Mr. P. P. Bliss, whose name will always be remembered in connection with the well-known "Hold the Fort." Along with Major Whittle, who has of recent years been a most devoted worker among young men in this country, Mr. Bliss carried on most successful evangelistic meetings in America for a number of years. When Mr. Sankey was in Scotland in 1874 he heard a story at Dundee that intruded itself upon his mind, and for several years he could not get rid of the one word "Eternity." The story was to the effect that Robert Annan, of Dundee, was leaving his cottage one morning to go down to the mill, but, pausing at the threshold, he took a piece of chalk from his pocket and wrote on the pavement the word "eternity." He passed down the street, but half-way down he stopped again and wrote the same word. When he arrived by the ship he saw a little child fall into the

sea, and as there was a great current at that point the child was being carried away, when Robert Annan sprang into the water and swam out to the little chap. He had previously saved some eight or nine people, but this proved to be the last rescue which he effected. He got near the child and endeavored to swim back against the current. With his fast-failing strength he just managed to give the child a push, which sent it on shore, where it was caught hold of by a man with a boat-hook. The current, however, sucked Robert Annan back, and swept him into the sea. His body was afterwards recovered, and was carried back to his home, on the threshold of which he had that morning written the word "eternity." Mr. Sankey was so impressed by this story that he tried to get several of his friends in America to write a hymn on this subject. None of the hymns he received, however, were suitable, but at last a lady in the State of New Jersey sent to him unsolicited the one which was subsequently published. Mr. Sankey carried the hymn about with him for about three months, when one day in Chicago he handed it to his friend, Mr. Bliss, and asked him if he could set it to music. Mr. Bliss went away, and came back with the music to which it is now sung. After singing it himself a few times in Chicago, Mr. Bliss left to spend the Christmas season with his mother at Pennsylvania. Coming back, one of the great bridges on the route was blown down by a terrific storm of wind, hail, rain, and snow, and the train was wrecked. Mr. Bliss and his wife were sent into eternity, but left behind was this beautiful hymn, the first verse of which is—

O, the clanging bells of Time!
Night and day they never cease
We are wearied with their chime,
For they do not bring us peace;
And we hush our breath to hear,
And we strain our eyes to see,
If thy shores are drawing near—
Eternity! Eternity!

—Word and Work.

ORDER IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

One of the first elements of a good superintendent is his power to maintain order. Order can be defined as the condition of a watch or clock where one wheel moves on another rightly; the superintendent is the regulator—the main-spring.

In a small manufacturing town in New Jersey, the Sabbath-school was in a state of great disorder. The clergyman was in despair. He finally found a young man—a teacher who took hold and in a few months it was a garden of peace. How did he do it? Not by blows or threats, but by solely operating on those minds, simply by the methods that human beings require. It is remarked that children love order, respecting those who maintain it. So that if we wish the co-work and good-will of the scholars this is necessary. Perhaps some are in doubt as to the means of eradicating this unnecessary confusion. The first point is punctuality of the scholars, saving the constant interruptions. Promptness of the superintendent. Washington said, "Punctuality is an angel virtue." This virtue should be possessed by the superintendent to the highest degree. Let us look at the school where this is not the case. School opens at 9.30. At that time the scholars are sent, the bell ceases, but no one is there to take the charge. A few moments afterwards, he rushes breathlessly in, hastens up the aisle, not in a spiritual condition for his work. He loses his self-control. Everything goes wrong. He realizes that the confusion is an outgrowth of his own tardiness.

The same disorder is experienced in a class whose teacher is absent or late. How do the pupils usually employ their time? Think for a moment. Looking idly around at the other classes, is it not? Discussing the fun of the past week or planning something new for the next; commenting on Clara's new dress or Mary's new bonnet.

They have done their part—prepared their lesson and are in their places at the proper time. Have they not a right to expect that the one who has pledged her best efforts, will be there to instruct them further in the great truths of the lesson? Is not that teacher responsible for the opportunity to mis-improve the time, which should have been free from worldly thoughts and have been to all a feast of good things?

What teacher has not been tried by the

inattention of her pupils watching the entrance of two or more persons, talking loud enough to cause in itself no little disturbance. Banish the cause. Let those late comers remember that the school is still in session. That in those last few moments the teacher is using her utmost powers to press the sacred truths home to each heart—those, which, carried away, will enrich and enoble their after life. Stop and think what loss may be felt by these interruptions caused by thoughtlessness, and we know that the next time you will be more considerate and more quiet and thereby letting your actions in the house of God impress upon the scholar's mind, the idea of reverence in divine presence and respect for his sanctuary, that the church is the dwelling-place of our mighty Maker; and that within its walls should rest upon us a spirit of holiness and solemnity. For such respect in his house, God will be pleased.

If you wish your school to advance spiritually—work thus according to God's rules and "heaven's first law—order."—Iowa S. S. Teacher.

THE VALUE OF THE LIBRARY.

We do not sufficiently appreciate the influence of a well chosen Sabbath-school library. It is an educator for good at the most mouldable period in life. The power of good books is incalculable. In many cases they are the turning-points in life. They lead to the Saviour and into the Church, and sometimes into the gospel ministry. They pass from house to house, and are read by young and old. They make abiding impressions, "give true ideals of life," move the feelings, form the judgments, arouse noble ambitions, and stir and quicken the best that is in the nature. They work silently, though radically and permanently. We cannot have too many of the right kind of books, nor have them read too often.—Presbyterian Observer.

SCHOLAR'S NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book).

LESSON VI.—NOVEMBER 6, 1892.

PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.

Acts 12:1-17.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 5-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Psalm 34:7.

HOME READINGS.

M. Acts 12:1-17.—Peter Delivered from Prison.
T. Mark 10:32-45.—The Baptism of James.
W. Gen. 19:12-26.—Lot and the Angels.
Th. 2 Kings 6:8-17.—Elisha and the Angel Guard.
F. Acts 12:18-25.—Herod and the Angel.
S. Luke 11:1-13.—Prayer Enjoyed.
S. James 5:13-20.—Effectual, fervent Prayer.

LESSON PLAN.

I. Imprisoned by Herod, vs. 1-5.
II. Delivered by an Angel, vs. 6-11.
III. Received by Friends, vs. 12-17.
TIME.—A. D. 44, spring; Claudius Caesar emperor of Rome; Herod Agrippa I, king of all Palestine.
PLACE.—Jerusalem.

OPENING WORDS.

The disciples were driven from Jerusalem after the death of Stephen, but in more quiet days doubtless many returned to the city. The city was still the abode of the apostles. Herod Agrippa, now king of all Palestine, was ready to win Jewish favor by persecuting the hated Christians. Thus new troubles arose to try the faith of the disciples.

HELPS IN STUDYING.

1. About that time—that Saul and Barnabas were sent from Antioch. 2. James—the son of Zebedee. 3. Days of unleavened bread—the seven days of the Passover festival, during which only unleavened bread was eaten. Dent. 16:1-4. 4. Quaternions—four squads of four soldiers each, sixteen in all. One company guarded him three hours, and was then relieved by another. After Easter—Revised Version, "after the Passover." Bring him forth—put him to death. 6. Between two soldiers—each wrist chained to the wrist of a soldier. 7. The angel—this must have occurred between three and six o'clock in the morning (see v. 18), the hours of changing the guard. 10. First and second ward—that is the guards who were sleeping with him and the outer guards. 12. John whose surname was Mark—the author of the second gospel and the near relative of Barnabas. 15. Mad—out of her senses. His angel—the Jews believed that every one had an angel appointed to guard him. 17. Unto James—probably James the Less.

QUESTIONS.

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

I. IMPRISONED BY HEROD, vs. 1-5.—Who now persecuted the church? Whom did he kill? What did he do with Peter? When did he intend to execute him? How was he guarded meanwhile? What did the church do for him? What is prayer?

II. DELIVERED BY AN ANGEL, vs. 6-11.—By whom was Peter delivered? What did the angel say to him? What became of his chains? What further command did the angel give him? How was the iron gate opened? Where did the angel

leave Peter? What did Peter say when he came to himself?

III. RECEIVED BY FRIENDS, vs. 12-17.—Where did Peter go? Who were gathered there? What were they doing? Who came to the door? What did the disciples do? Why were they astonished? What did Peter then declare to them? What directions did he give them? Who was this James? What did Peter then do?

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED.

Bad men care more to please men than to please God.

The Lord sends his angels to deliver and care for his people.

3. Earnest prayer has real power with God.

4. God sometimes exceeds our faith in his answers to our prayers.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. What new trouble now came upon the church? Ans. Herod killed James the brother of John, and put Peter in prison.
2. What did Herod intend to do with Peter? Ans. To put him to death after the Passover.
3. What was done to prevent his escape? Ans. He was locked in prison, bound in chains, and guarded by soldiers.
4. What did the church do? Ans. They prayed without ceasing for him.
5. How were their prayers answered? Ans. God sent his angel, who led him out of the prison.

LESSON VII.—NOVEMBER 13, 1892.

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

Acts 13:1-13.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 2-4.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations."—Luke 24:47.

HOME READINGS.

M. Acts 13:1-13.—The First Christian Missionaries.
T. Matt. 10:1-22.—The Apostles Commissioned.
W. Luke 10:1-27.—The Seventy Sent Forth.
Th. Isaiah 42:1.—The Light of the Gentiles.
F. Isaiah 60:1.—The Conversion of the Gentiles.
S. Isaiah 61:1-11.—Known Among the Gentiles.
S. Psalm 72:1-20.—"Unto the Ends of the Earth."

LESSON PLAN.

I. Set Apart by the Spirit, vs. 1-3.
II. Sent Forth by the Spirit, vs. 4-8.
III. Filled With the Spirit, vs. 9-12.

TIME.—Between A. D. 45-48; Claudius Caesar emperor of Rome; Cumanus governor of Judea.

PLACES.—Antioch, the capital of Syria, three hundred miles north of Jerusalem; the island of Cyprus.

HELPS IN STUDYING.

1. Prophets—those especially inspired by the Holy Ghost. Teachers—pastors, doing the regular work of training and instructing the converts. Cyrene—on the northern coast of Africa, west of Egypt. Which had been brought up with—Revised Version, "foster brother." Herod the tetrarch—Herod Antipas, who beheaded John the Baptist. 2. As they ministered—in public worship, probably in reference to further missionary work. The Holy Ghost said—perhaps by one of the prophets. 3. Laid their hands on them—as a sign of their consecration to this special work. 4. Salucia—the seaport of Antioch, near the mouth of the Orontes. Cyprus—an island of the Mediterranean. 5. Salamis—a seaport on the eastern extremity of the island. John—John Mark, a near relation of Barnabas (Col. 4:10), and the author of the second gospel. 6. Paphos—a city on the western end of the island, the residence of the Roman proconsul. Sorcerer—magician. 7. Deputy—Roman governor, proconsul. 8. Who is also called Paul—Saul was his Jewish and Paul his Roman name. 11. Mistaken darkness—first partial, then perfect blindness.

QUESTIONS.

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

I. SET APART BY THE SPIRIT, vs. 1-3.—Who were in the church at Antioch? What were they doing? What did the Holy Ghost say to the church? What was the work to which Barnabas and Saul were called? How were they set apart for this work?

II. SENT FORTH BY THE SPIRIT, vs. 4-8.—By whom were they sent forth? Where did they go? What did they do at Salamis? Who was their attendant? Where did they go from Salamis? Whom did they find there? With whom was the sorcerer? What did the deputy do? Why did the sorcerer oppose them?

III. FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT, vs. 9-12.—By what name is Saul henceforth known? How did Paul address the sorcerer? Under whose influence did he thus address him? What sentence did he pronounce upon him? How was this sentence executed? How did this affect the deputy? What is faith in Jesus Christ?

PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED.

1. God has laid upon us the work of sending the gospel to the heathen.
2. Men of the choicest gifts and graces should be chosen for this work.
3. We should give it our sympathy, our prayers and our money.
4. Mission-work may meet with opposition, but the gospel will finally triumph over all.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. What did the Holy Ghost command the prophets and teachers at Antioch to do? Ans. Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

2. Where did Barnabas and Saul go? Ans. They went to Salucia, and sailed thence to Cyprus.

3. Who sent for them at Paphos? Ans. The deputy of the country, who desired to hear the word of God.

4. Who opposed them? Ans. Elymas the sorcerer, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

5. How was the sorcerer punished? Ans. He was first rebuked by Paul, and then struck with blindness.

6. What was the effect? Ans. The deputy, when he saw what was done, believed.