

BLESSED IS THE DAY.

BY KATHARINE DOORIS SHARP.

O blessed is the day when Christ was born!

Dreary was the darkness, mankind forlorn;
But grandly in the East his star arose,
Still its waxing splendour forever glows.

The shepherds on the hillside heard the song:

"Glory in the highest!" it pealed along.
Angel hosts, enraptured, welcomed the morn,
So blessed was the day when Christ was born!

Hail him, little children! He bids you come—

He, of life the centre, of joy the sum.
Raise your shout symphonic, your anthems gay,
Christ, a babe in Bethlehem, was born to-day!

In his arms of mercy, tender and mild,
Blessing them, loving them, he takes each child.

Sing it, little children, this holy morn,
"O blessed is the day when Christ was born!"

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL BY JOHN.

LESSON III. [Jan. 15.]

CHRIST'S FIRST MIRACLE.

John 2. 1-11. Memory verse, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And his disciples believed on him.—
John 2. 11.

A LESSON TALK.

A wedding feast in the land where Jesus lived lasted a whole week. Jesus and his disciples were invited to such a feast in Cana of Galilee, a little city among the hills. It was only three days after the first disciples were called. Can you tell how many there were? It was thought to be a disgrace if the wine or food gave out during the feast days, and so you will see how troubled the household was when the servants came to say that the wine was all gone! Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there, and she told him about it. Perhaps she thought he could help in some way, for she knew he had wonderful power. You will see in the fifth verse that she had faith in her son. Do you think it strange that Jesus could turn the water into wine? Perhaps some one wonders why he did it. A reason is given in last verse of the lesson. But you must not think because Jesus made new, pure wine for the feast that he wants us to use any kind of drink that has alcohol in it! He never meant that we should let the demon of alcohol come through the door of decay into the pure juice of the grape!

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

To what feast was Jesus invited? To a wedding feast.

Who went with him? His new disciples.

Where was this feast? In Cana of Galilee.

What gave out one day? The wine for the feast.

Who told Jesus about it? His mother, Mary.

What should we do when in trouble? Tell Jesus.

What did Jesus tell the servants to do? Fill the waterpots with water.

What did he do to the water? He changed it into wine.

Why could he do this? Because he was God.

What do we call such a wonderful work? A miracle.

What did this miracle show? The power of Jesus.

Why should we not drink wine? Because it causes so much sin and sorrow.

LESSON IV. [Jan. 22.]

CHRIST AND NICODEMUS.

John 3. 1-16. Memory verses, 14-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3. 16.

A LESSON TALK.

Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and a teacher of the law among the Jews. He thought himself a very good man, and other people thought he was good too. But when he went to Jesus to learn the way to heaven Jesus told him he must be "born again." He meant by this that the heart he had was not right, and that it must be made new and clean. It shows that the heart of Nicodemus was not right, that he was afraid, or ashamed to go openly to Jesus, but went in the night. Do you wonder that Nicodemus did not know what Jesus meant? The selfish heart finds it hard to think that anything can be wrong with it. But notice how kindly Jesus taught this man who thought himself good and great, that the sinful and selfish heart can only be made clean and good by the power of a new life coming into it from above. Jesus told him of the serpent lifted up in the wilderness. Do you know the story? Then think how Jesus was lifted up for our salvation, and how he tells us to "look and live." Have you looked at the "lifted-up" Saviour?

QUESTIONS FOR THE YOUNGEST.

Who came to Jesus by night? Nicodemus.

Who was Nicodemus? A ruler of the Jews.

What did he want to ask Jesus? How to find the way to heaven.

What did Jesus tell him? "Ye must be born again."

What did he mean? That Nicodemus must have a new heart.

What can never enter heaven? Sin.

Who only can take it away? God.

How can we get the new heart? By asking God for it.

How were the Israelites once cured of sin? By looking at a brazen serpent.

Did the serpent cure them? No; God cured them.

Who was sent to cure us of sin? Jesus.

How may we be cured? By looking to Jesus.

DO AS YOU' ARE BID.

"Do as you are bid." Do you remember mother or nurse saying this to you when you were quite a little child, and you perhaps feeling that you did not want to do the thing? Why should you—why, why?

A little child cannot always understand the "why" of obedience, and, indeed, it is best that it should learn to do as it is bid, without asking "why," since it is a plain duty that children should do as they are told. When they grow older they will see the answer to that "why," and realize that it is all for their good that they should do exactly what their parents or their nurse tell them. A little boy I will tell you of would have lost his life if he had not learned to be obedient to his father's first word.

His name was Tommy, and one winter's day his father, Mr. Fraser Tytler, took him and his brother Sandy to skate on the lake in Regent's Park. The ice broke and Tommy and his father fell through into deep water. As he sank into the cold water little Tommy caught hold of his father, who told him not to cry or to struggle.

His father wrote in a letter soon after: "Certainly nothing could be better than Tommy's behaviour. . . . The little man implicitly obeyed me, not shedding a tear or uttering a sound, which the people who saw his diminutive size seemed much astonished at, one gentleman calling him 'a little hero.'"

If Tommy had not learned to be obedient on dry land, he never would have been able to keep quiet in cold water, as his father bade him, and if he had screamed or struggled, he would probably have been drowned.

HE NEEDS YOUR HELP.

"Mamma," said Alfred, "I prayed three prayers, and the Lord has answered two of them. Do you think he'll answer the other?"

"I think he will, my dear. What were the prayers?"

"One was that he would make you well, and not let you be sick any more. another was to make papa more kind."

"Yes dear. Now what was the third?"

"I prayed that God would keep us children from quarrelling, but he hasn't answered that yet, for Daisy and I quarrelled dreadfully to-day."

"Ah, my son, you will have to help the Lord to answer that."