

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

THE FACTS OF THE QUARTER.

(By Professor Matthew B. Riddle, D.D., L.L.D.)

The lessons for this year are from the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, which are called synoptic Gospels, their authors being properly termed the synoptists. These terms are used because these Gospels proceed on a common outline, or synopsis. Hence the facts of this quarter to not include any matter peculiar to the Fourth Gospel, covering almost an entire year. As frequently stated, it is here accepted that our Lord's public ministry included four Passovers, only the last one being mentioned by the synoptists.

Lesson 1.—The Shepherds Find Jesus: At and near Bethlehem, a small place about five miles southwest of Jerusalem. The year was quite probably year of Rome 749,—that is, B. C. 5, but the time of year is altogether uncertain. For convenience the traditional day, December 25, may be accepted. Dionysius Exiguus placed the birth of Jesus on December 25, 754, that is, five years later than the probable date. But he reckoned A. D. 1 from March 25, 754. For a full consideration of the question "Why Was A. D. 1 Called B. C. 5?" see *The Sunday School Times of February 27, 1904.*

Lesson 2.—The Wise Men Find Jesus: These Magi—according to tradition, three kings, named Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar—probably came from Persia, led by a star. They were Gentiles, but sought a "born King of the Jews." Inquiring at Jerusalem, they were sent to Bethlehem, and again guided by the star. In the house where they found the young Child and his mother, they presented their offerings. The traditional date of the Epiphany, or manifestation of Christ to Gentiles, is January 6; but this is too early. A more probable date is early in February, year of Rome 749,—that is, B. C. 4.

Lesson 3.—The Boy Jesus: After the flight into Egypt Joseph went to Nazareth in Galilee. In his thirteenth year Jesus went to the Passover at Jerusalem; being now a "son of the law." He tarried behind in the Holy City, where Joseph and Mary found him in the temple, a ready pupil among the "doctors." The date is April, year of Rome 762,—that is, A. D. 9.

Lesson 4.—The Baptism of Jesus: After eighteen years of quiet subjection in Nazareth, Jesus, now "about thirty years of age," came to the Jordan where John the Baptist was preaching and baptizing. He, too, was baptized, though John demurred. Visible and audible signs were given to attest his person and mission. The place may have been near Jericho, according to tradition, or farther north, nearer to Galilee, beyond the Jordan. The probable date is January, year of Rome 780,—that is, A. D. 27.

Lesson 5.—The Temptation of Jesus: The forty days' fast immediately followed the baptism, and at its close the three temptations occurred. The order of Matthew is to be preferred. The traditional and probable scene of the fasting and of the first and third temptations is a mountain near Jericho, called Quarantania. The period covers February and the early part of March, year of Rome 780,—that is, A. D. 27.

Lesson 6.—Jesus Calling Fishermen: In the year that intervened after the temptation, our Lord spent from April to December in Judaea. His public ministry in Galilee began shortly afterwards. The event immediately preceding the call of the four fishermen was the rejection

at Nazareth. The pair of brothers had known Jesus previously, but were now called to follow him continuously. The place is on the lake near Capernaum, and the date probably in the latter part of February, year of Rome 781,—that is, A. D. 28.

Lesson 7.—A Day of Miracles in Capernaum: Probably on the Sabbath day following the call of the fishermen. The incidents narrated are: the healing of a demoniac and the amazement of the people; the healing of Peter's wife's mother; many cures in the evening. Capernaum was in Gennesaret, on the northwest shore of the lake, not far from the mouth of the upper Jordan. Time: February, year of Rome 781,—that is, A. D. 28.

Lesson 8.—Jesus' Power to Forgive: After an interval, probably of some weeks, spent partly in retirement and partly in a preaching tour, Jesus returned home to Capernaum. A paralytic is let down through the roof on account of the crowd. Jesus heals him, making this the proof of his authority to forgive. The date is March, year of Rome 781,—that is, A. D. 28.

Lesson 9.—Jesus Tells Who are Blessed: Matthew was called just after the healing of the paralytic. The second Passover (John 5) followed. The controversy about the Sabbath, beginning at Jerusalem, was continued in Galilee (see Lesson 2, Second Quarter). Withdrawing first to the lake and then to a mountain in Galilee, probably the Horns of Hattin, Jesus chose the Twelve, and then "on a level place" (Luke) spoke the Sermon on the Mount. The date is in the spring, probably May, year of Rome 780,—that is, A. D. 28. The lesson describes the ideal citizens of "the kingdom of heaven."

Lesson 10.—The Tongue and the Temper: The lesson is from the Sermon on the Mount, part of an exposition of the true requirements of the law, which Jesus came to "fulfil," that is to set forth more fully. The place and time are the same as those of Lesson 9.

MORNING HYMN.

By Rev. Joseph Hamilton.

Eternal Father! Throned in heaven high,
Yet to thy feeble children always nigh;
We rise to bless thee for the morning light,
And all thy tender care throughout the night.

Strong Son of God! Who ere creation's
morn,

Before the angels or the worlds were born,
To die for sinners was ordained, O may
Thy precious blood wash all our sins away.
Spirit divine! Thou fruit of life and fire,
With heavenly zeal our hearts and lives

inspire;
Guide, guard, control; allay our needless
fears,

Revive our hope, and wipe away our tears.
Thrice holy Trinity! Thou Three in One,
Whose love eternal, like the circling sun;
Sweeps round our sinful world; for this
we pray,

That all the world may see a heavenly day.

ONE CONVERT A YEAR.

A "call to the converted" was issued by the Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip, the other day, which contained one suggestive statement which should stir us up to activity. If there were but one Christian in the world in this year of grace 1905, and if this year he or she were to win one friend only to Christ, and if, during 1906, each were to win one convert, and so on, each new and old convert winning one person to the gospel each year, every man, woman, and child in the world would be Christianized by the year 1936. That's all; but isn't it enough to set everyone to work?

LET YOUR MODERATION BE KNOWN.

Moderation is "sweet reasonableness" and something more, even "considerateness." This most excellent gift should be earnestly coveted by all who desire to do the work of Christ in the spirit of Christ. So far as "forbearance" expresses its meaning, it is a virtue which needs to be developed to intensity in those whose temperament impels them to assert their principles to the extremest limit, to contend to the uttermost for everything that is "in the bond," and to speak slightly of those who are said to be content with half measures because they prefer to work for a good which is right rather than to strain after a good which is higher, but more remote—not beyond the grasp of their desire, though to their thinking beyond their reach. "The forbearing man," says Aristotle, "is he who does not insist on his rights to the damage of others." Moderation prompts to the tempering of strict justice by considerations which may lead to what we suggestively call equitable concessions. From Christian service the spirit of vainglory and of partisanship will be exercised when "intense moderation" is our animating motive. With Clement "this gentleness and equability, this 'sweet reasonableness' was a passion." It will always commend Christianity to them that are without. Clement asks: "Who did not admire your sober and forbearing piety in Christ?" Wesley's desire should be ours: "I want an even strong desire, I want a calmly fervent zeal." Moderates who are not intense need to be reminded that "considerateness" is an active grace and prompts to energetic conduct. If extremists who lack moderation are in danger of becoming faddists, moderates who lack intensity are in danger of becoming eiphers. Nor can those who are content to be non-combatants complain that they do not count. The principle underlying "moderation" is the repression of self-assertion; and this is no mere passive virtue. "Even Christ pleased not himself," and Christ-like deeds are the outward and visible sign that the inward life is dominated by that "intense moderation" which puts effectual restraint on the clamorous demands of self.—J. G. Tasker.

ARE YOU BECOMING BETTER?

Is life decreasing or increasing? It is growing richer or poorer. The ordinary cheap philosophies assume that life is like a fire which speedily reaches the fullness of its heat, and then fades till it goes out. The high philosophy which gets its light from God, must move from richness into richness always. All we believe is but the promise of the perfect faith. All we do is great with its anticipation of the complete obedience. All we are but gives us suggestions of the richness which our being will attain. Those moments make our real, effective enthusiastic life. They create the fulfilment of their own hopes and dreams. O, cherish them! O, believe that no man lives at his best to whom life is not becoming better and better, always aware of greater and greater forces, capable of diviner and diviner deeds and joys!—Phillips Brooks.

The French Protestant Mission in Basutoland, South Africa, have 30,000 Christians connected with their churches, and the cost of sustaining their work among the 300,000 pagans remaining, for the past year was \$25,000. This went wholly for the support of the stations and the white missionaries, for the native Christians gave \$20,000 for schools and for evangelization in more than 200 out-stations.