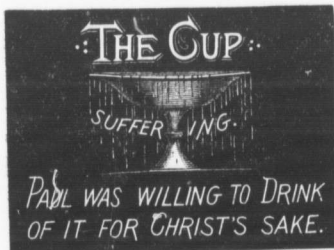


above the shield "Faith," the helmet "Salvation," and the sword "Word of God." Teach that the Christian soldier must wear this armor all the time if he would be safe. Give simple illustrations, showing how a child may use the armor, and how safe he is when clad in it. Tell that the home, the school, the playground, are the child-soldier's battle-fields, and that he is safe as long as he trusts Jesus.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



ANALYSIS. In reviewing the lesson bring out the following points: 1. Paul arrives at Cesarea. 2. He there has made known to him a plain and full prediction of future suffering. 3. The great importance of his friends to persuade him from going to Jerusalem. 4. The holy bravery and lofty Christian faith with which Paul persists in his resolution. He is ready to drink the cup of suffering for the sake of Christ. There is no wavering, no shadow of turning.

APPLICATION. What am I doing for the Master?

PAUL I AM
READY
TO WORK,
TO PREACH,
TO TEACH,
TO SUFFER,
TO DIE,
FOR CHRIST?

LESSONS FOR FEBRUARY, 1885.

- FEB. 1. Paul at Jerusalem. Acts 21. 15-26.
FEB. 8. Paul Assailed. Acts 21. 27-40.
FEB. 15. Paul's Defense. Acts 22. 1-21.
FEB. 22. Paul before the Council. Acts 23. 1-11.

Methodism in the Lessons of the First Quarter.

BY D. A. WHEDON, D.D.

OUR study for the new year opens with the history of St. Paul in the Acts, where we left it six months ago. He is on the homeward course in his third missionary journey. In Lesson I we find the distinct mention of a Christian assembly on "the first day of the week," with preaching and the Lord's Supper or a love-feast, or perhaps both. St. Paul's direction in 1 Cor. 16. 2, was of a still earlier date. The first day came very early to be known as "the Lord's day," and to be recognized

as the Christian Sabbath. Methodists agree with the great body of Christians in this recognition, holding that by apostolic usage and authority it took the place of the Jewish Sabbath, in commemoration of our Lord's resurrection. They regard this day as sacred, and set apart for sacred purposes, and one of the General Rules forbids "the profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein or by buying or selling."

Methodism has always been noted for direct and persistent speech on the fundamentals in religion. First of all, as does Lesson II, it insists on "repentance," which has regard to God as an offended sovereign, and involves a hearty and complete renunciation of every sinful practice. Second, it directs the penitent to "faith," which has regard to the atoning Redeemer and involves a trust in the merit of his sacrifice as the only ground of pardon. Thus, repentance is not faith, but a necessary prerequisite to it. Without true penitence there can be no true faith. Moreover, faith, in order to save, must be directed, not toward God as Buddhists know him, or God as Mohammedans and other Unitarians teach him, but God in Christ the Saviour, as the Scriptures reveal him. This is at the foundation of Christian life.

All Methodists hold that originally bishop and presbyter were synonymous. In Lesson III the "overseers"—superintendents, or "bishops," as in the Revised Version—are the "elders" or presbyters whom St. Paul called together. Superior to them were the apostles alone, and the apostles had no successors. At a later day, not by divine appointment, but providentially and in the exercise of the best judgment of those concerned, it was deemed best to make a president of the body of presbyters, and to him the title of "bishop" came to be specially given. Methodist Episcopalians are content with their episcopacy as, (1) Accordant with providential necessity and wise expediency; (2) Not contrary to the Scriptures, and in harmony with the early Church; and (3) Justified by its fruit in the experience of a hundred years.

The Revised Version sustains the reading, "Church of God," in Lesson III. The best supported by ancient authority, it is probably correct. The passage is a most weighty proof-text of the evangelical doctrine of the Godhead of Christ, as it teaches that he by the shedding of whose blood we are redeemed is truly God, as our Article II affirms. The expression that God purchased the Church with his own blood is a very strong one, but it brings out, not only the preciousness of the Church, the price of which was so great, but the fact which gave their value to the sufferings of our Lord upon the cross, namely, he was God as well as man. "One Christ," says Article II, "very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men."

In Lesson V appears the distinction between the essential and the non-essential, which all Methodism