

The Sunday School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON LI.

Dec. 21, 1876. THE LAST WORDS.

Rev. xxii. 10-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."—Rev. xxii. 21.

HOME STUDY.

- M. Ps. xvi. 1-11. Fulness of joy. T. Ps. xlviii. 1-24. God in His palace. W. John xvii. 1-25. Christ's intercessory prayer. Th. 1 Tim. iv. 1-22. The crown of righteousness. F. Tit. ii. 1-13. The blessed hope. S. Jude i. 25. Behold, the Lord cometh. Sab. Rev. xxii. 6-21. The last words.

HELPS TO STUDY.

This is the last lesson of the year, before the final review; it is the last lesson in the Bible; and to some it will be the last lesson in this life.

Its teachings may be arranged as follows: (1) The Last Classification, (2) The Last Condition, (3) The Last Invitation, (4) The Last Caution, (5) The Last Benediction.

I. THE LAST CLASSIFICATION.—Vers. 10-13. John was commanded to "seal up" some of the things revealed to him, "and write them not" (chap. x. 4), but as to those things which he had been permitted to write, the order is: Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. The time for the beginning of the fulfilment of the prophecies was at hand although they should not be fully accomplished until the end of the world.

In so far as the contents of this book relate to the individual, the decisive crisis to which they point may always be said to be "at hand," for death is never very far away from any of us.

Throughout the Bible, the offer of salvation, the invitation to repentance, the opportunity for amendment, the possibility of attaining eternal happiness, are presented to the sinner, as in Isaiah lv. 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." This and the numerous gracious offers of a similar character are to be accepted in this life—

"As long as life its term extends, Hope's best dominion never ends; For while the lamp holds on to burn, The greatest sinner may return."

But when death comes—and it may come at any moment—the character, and therefore the eternal destiny, of the individual is unalterably fixed; and the fiat is,

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is just, let him be just still. Those who have rejected the Saviour will be found to be in their character either "filthy" or "unjust," or both.

The man who indulges in sensual gratification cannot find salvation in the honesty of his dealings; the dishonest trader cannot rest his safety and happiness on the purity of his personal habits; and should the unbeliever deny both of these charges, he must, at least, acknowledge his injustice in withholding from God the worship and service due to Him.

Believers have their character so changed, by the Holy Spirit, from what it originally was, that its tendencies are to make them—"righteous"—honest in their dealings with God and man, and—"holy"—pure in their personal conduct. These characteristics, on both sides, are fully developed, let him be holy still. In this final and permanent classification there are only two kinds of people; and the criterion is neither wealth, nor rank, nor power, nor position and rendered permanent by death.

The foregoing considerations explain how it is that although believers are "justified by faith," still, when Christ comes to judgment, He will give every man according as his work shall be.

II. THE LAST CONDITION.—Vers. 13-15. As there are but two characters so there shall be but two conditions—the condition of those who enter in, through the gates, into the city, and that of those who are without.

Our natural character, however amiable it may be, will keep us out. Only they that do His commandments enter; and none are able to do so but those who are justified by faith in Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Many may flatter themselves that the epithets in ver. 15 do not apply to them, until they come to the last clause; but who can examine himself in the light of the description, who-so-ever loveth and maketh a lie, without self-condemnation?

III. THE LAST INVITATION.—Vers. 16-17. When Christ was visibly present on earth he said "Come"—Matt. xi. 28. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" and now the Spirit and the bride say, Come. The Holy Spirit, by means of the Word, and the "bride," that is the Church, by the voice of her ministers, say "Come;" and the command is given to all who, themselves, have complied with this Gospel invitation to echo it, so that others may hear. No one is excluded. Let him that is athirst come: This, in its restricted sense applies to those who have been brought to know their

sinsful and miserable condition by nature and are seeking salvation; but it would not be unscriptural to extend it to all who thirst for happiness and are perhaps seeking it where it cannot be found—Isaiah lv. 1: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, . . . . . wherefore do ye spend . . . . . your labour for that which satisfieth not?"

Who-so-ever will, let him take of the water of life freely. Richard Baxter said that he was better pleased with the word "who-so-ever" in this passage than he would be if the invitation were addressed to him by name, because the word "who-so-ever" certainly included himself, whereas if the verse read "let Richard Baxter take," etc., it might not mean him, but some other person of the same name.

IV. THE LAST CAUTION.—Vers. 18-20. How necessary it is that all who have occasion to expound Scripture to others should do so with careful study, and with much prayer, lest they come under the condemnation contained in this passage. The "National S. S. Teacher" says, "It forbids careless constructions and fanciful interpretations as well as interpolations and elisions. It is man's business, not to speculate about the truth, but to find it; not to twist it into what he would like to have it, but honestly to accept it as it is."

V. THE LAST BENEDICTION.—Ver. 21. John, in addressing this book to the seven churches of Asia, and through them, to the whole Church of Christ in all ages, says (chap. l. 4) "Grace be unto you, and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come," and now in closing the book, he invokes the same blessing, the favour of the Saviour, for he does not know of a better or higher blessing that can be enjoyed on earth than that which he prays for in the words, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure for Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who desire it, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. W. SHERAR, 149 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.

THE Supreme Court of Pennsylvania last week refused to permit the city of Erie to run in debt beyond the constitutional limit, laid down a principle which has a wider application than to merely civil affairs: "Corporations, like individuals, must do without conveniences when they have not the money to pay for them."

Official Notices.

MISSIONARY MEETINGS.

WESTERN DISTRICT.

Sarnia, Monday, December 15th; Petrolia, Tuesday, December 16th; Watford, Wednesday, December 17th; Zion, Warwick, Thursday, December 18th; Ebenezer and Forest, Friday, 19th (deputation divide). Deputation: Revs. Wm. Hay, Claris, Colwell, Allworth, Robert Hay. Frome, Tuesday, December 16th; Sheddon, Wednesday, December 17th; Tilbury, Thursday, December 18th. Deputation: Revs. Wallace, Cuthbertson, and Burgess. London to be arranged by the pastor. Embro, Tuesday, December 16th; Stratford, Wednesday, December 17th; Guelph, Thursday, December 18th; Guelph Zion, Friday, December 19th. Deputation: Revs. Salmon, Manchee, Howie, and Hughes. Speedside, Monday, January 19th; Litowel, Tuesday, January 20th; Turnberry, Wednesday, January 21st; Howick 9th, Thursday, January 22nd; Howick 12th, Friday, January 23rd. Deputation: Revs. McGregor, Duff, Gray, and the Guelph pastors. Kelvin, Monday, January 19th; Scotland, Tuesday, January 20th; Burford, Wednesday, January 21st; Brantford, Thursday, January 22nd; Paris, Friday, January 23rd. Deputation: Revs. Allworth, Hay, Barker, Wallace. Hamilton and St. Catharines to be arranged by Secretary.

It is very important that these meetings be faithfully attended to. Let every pastor see that his own meeting is well announced, and his own share of the work faithfully done. And let no honest effort be wanting to secure large contributions promptly paid. W. H. ALLWORTH, Sec. W. D. pro tem.

MEETING OF THE ST. FRANCIS MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION.—The next meeting of the above Association will (D. V.) take place at Granby, P. Q., at four p.m., on Tuesday, 16th December. Exercises—Sermon on Tuesday evening at seven o'clock, by Rev. A. Duff, D.D., alternate Rev. B. W. Day. Wednesday—Essays on subjects previously appointed, by Rev. Messrs. McIntosh, Smith and Black. Simultaneous Plans on Acts ii. 42. Subject, Terms of Church Membership. Plan by the Rev. A. Duff, D.D., on James v. 14, 15. Evening—Public meeting. As it is ten years since a meeting of the above Association was held in Granby, brethren will please favour us with a good attendance.—K. K. BLACK.

Around the Table.

"THERE IS THAT SCATTERETH AND YET INCREASETH."

A riv. from living fountains So secretly may flow, That but a thread of verdure Its desert path may show.

But when that narrow streamlet Hath reached the shining sea, All heaven finds there a mirror, All earth a ministry!

So hearts that come to Jesus A thrill of love must know, Enough to bind the spirit To Him who loves us so;

But O, what deeper glory Lights up our lives so dim, When love can burst all barriers, And widen into Him!

One with our Lord in spirit, Each faithful child hath proved What joy may flood the soul that here Takes in the world He loved!

A BIBLE DEFINITION.

A FRIEND of ours, was one day hearing his little six-year old Alice say her "definitions," asked her the meaning of "earthquake" and "volcano."

"I know, father; God tells us in the Bible what they are."

"Does he? Why, where, Allie?"

"In the 104th Psalm, 32nd verse."

Now turn to that passage and see if this little student of the Bible didn't make a good answer.

RETALIATION.

A LADY once, when she was a little girl, learned a good lesson, which she tells for the benefit of whom it may concern.

One frosty morning I was looking out of the window into my father's farm-yard, where stood many cows, oxen and horses waiting to drink. It was a cold morning. The cattle all stood very still and meek, till one of the cows attempted to turn round. In making the attempt she hit her next neighbour, whereupon the neighbour kicked and hit another. In five minutes the whole herd were kicking each other with fury. My mother laughed and said:

"See what comes of kicking when you are hit. Just so I have seen one cross word set a whole family by the ears some frosty morning." Afterward, if my brothers or myself were a little irritable she would say, "Take care, my children. Remember how the fight in the farm-yard began. Never give back a kick for a hit, and you will save yourselves and others a great deal of trouble."

I AM richer than you if I do not want things which you cannot do without.

HAPPY is he who has learned this one thing—to do the plain duty of the moment quickly and cheerfully, whatever it may be.

If a bee sting you, will you go to the hive and destroy it? Would not a thousand come upon you? If you receive a trifling injury, do not be anxious to avenge it; let it drop. It is wisdom to say little of the injuries you have received.