

from the great rock which formed such an unsightly spot in the tiny orchard, and a wild grape vine, trained across its rugged front, covered it with grace and beauty. The trees had been carefully trimmed and pruned and the most desolate and disreputable looking spot in the village borders had become so delightfully pleasant and picturesque, that we drove out of our way often to show strangers the charming sight. A real "nest" it was, embowered in trees and greenery and full of the music of sweet chirping voices.

One morning we were all electrified by the tidings that Jay was going away to school. A wealthy uncle had volunteered to pay her expenses and the family had accepted the offer.

She ran over to see me that afternoon, her little brown face aglow with excitement and her black eyes dancing as she told her story.

"I mean to study hard," she said at last. "The children will miss me, but I can help them so much more when I have an education."

Always "the children!" there was never any thought of her patient, self-sacrificing little self.

Jay was gone four years, the brief vacations at home making pleasant interludes in her life. She came back to us a noble, beautiful woman; her natural refinement increased and strengthened by the rigid intellectual discipline to which she had subjected herself. She had won her old uncle's heart in those years of companionship; had brightened and enlivened the stately mansion where he had lived alone with his crusty old housekeeper; and his tardy sense of justice developing at last, when he died, a few months later, it was found that, after deducting liberal bequests to his sister and her other children, the bulk of his great fortune went to Jay, "who," he said, "will, I am confident, make a better use of it than I have done."

People said, "what a fine thing for Jay! Now she can go into society: now the Robins will hold up their heads in the world: their days of hardship are over."

Sure enough. As soon as the spring opened the builders were at work on a new house upon the Robin lot. The family moved into a vacant cottage near by, and we waited to see the old house torn down and moved away. But, to our surprise, we found the carpenters at work raising the upper story, putting on a new roof and dormer windows, a large sunny bay window on the east side, a tasteful porch to the west; partitions were taken down; the tiny rooms made into comfortable apartments, and with it all the cottage bid fair to rival its handsome neighbor which was going up so rapidly.

"What is it, Jay?" I asked at last, when my curiosity could no longer be restrained. She laughed out in her pretty, merry way, and clapped her hands softly together.

"Oh, it's lovely to have money," she said, "but how can people waste it, when there is so much real happiness to be bought with it. I will tell you what I am going to do. Your Jessie has christened the old home 'The Robins' Nest,' and a 'nest' it is going to remain, into which I shall gather all the poor, maimed, helpless little children that I can care for. I wasn't made for a society woman: I shall never be anything but a pitiful mother-bird, ready to care for and protect the nestlings. Don't you see? That is why God has given me this fortune. It is not mine; it is only lent to be used for his needy, and I mean to be worthy of his trust." And so she has proved. When we pass "The Robins' Nest" in these later days we see an army of little children peeping from the windows, swinging under the great oaks, playing on the lawn or ensconced in a cosy corner with a book. They are God's helpless little ones, gathered from the slums and alleys; weak, dirty, ragged, sickly and forlorn, as she finds them, but growing up under her fostering care into noble manhood and womanhood. It is not one of the world's great charities, yet its influence reaches into the lanes and by-ways, and the world thrills to the quiet, unconscious inspiration of a noble life.—*N. Y. Observer.*

THE WONDERFUL LAMP.

A little ragged errand boy was busy one day in the city of London with a piece of chalk in his hand, trying to write on a wooden gate this verse from the Bible: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet." He was so busy with his work that he did not notice

a kind-looking old gentleman, who, after walking slowly past him twice, returned, and stood behind watching him.

"M.y," said the little fellow, repeating the letters aloud, as he wrote them with the chalk; "f. double e-t, feet."

"Well done, my little man, well done," said the old gentleman. "Where did you learn that?"

"At the ragged school, sir," said the boy, who was half frightened, thinking perhaps the old gentleman would hand him over to the police for writing on the gate.

"Don't be afraid, my boy. I'm not going to hurt you. So you learned that text in the ragged school? Do you know what it means?"

"No, sir," said the boy.

"What is a lamp?"

"A lamp? Why, a lamp! It's a thing that gives light."

"And what is the word here spoken of?"

"It's the Bible, sir."

"That's right. Now how can the Bible be a lamp and give light?"

"I dun'no," said the boy, "cept you set it on fire."

"There is a better way than that, my lad. Suppose you were going down some lonely lane on a dark night, with an unlighted lamp in your hand, and a box of matches in your pocket, what would you do?"

"Why, light the lamp, sir," said the boy, surprised that anyone should ask such a simple question.

"What would you light it for?"

"To show me the road, sir."

"Very well. Now suppose you were walking behind me one day, and saw me drop a shilling, what would you do?"

"Pick it up and give it to you, sir."

"But wouldn't you want to keep it yourself?"

"I should want to; but I wouldn't do it."

"Why not?"

"Because that would be stealing, and the Bible says we mustn't steal. And is the Bible called a lamp because it shows us the right way to walk in?" asked the boy.

"That's just it, my lad. And now do you think it worth while to take this good old lamp, and let it light you right through life?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why?"

"Because if I'm honest I shan't stand no chance of going to prison."

"And what else?"

The boy thought a moment, and then said: "If I mind the Bible I shall go to heaven when I die."

"Yes, that's the best reason for using this lamp. It will show you the right way to heaven. Good-bye, my lad. Here's a shilling for you. Mind you use this lamp."

"Sir," said the little fellow, clasping the shilling, and taking off his ragged cap, "I'll mind."—*Rich. Newton, D.D.*

HIS LOVE TO ME.

To an invalid friend, who was a trembling, doubting believer, a clergyman once said: "When I leave you I shall go to my own residence, if the Lord will; and when there the first thing that I expect to do is to call for a baby that is in the house. I expect to place her on my knee, and look down into her sweet eyes, and listen to her charming prattle; and, tired as I am, her presence will rest me, for I love that child with unutterable tenderness."

"But the fact is she does not love me; or, to say the most for her, she loves me very little. If my heart was breaking under the burden of a crushing sorrow, it would not disturb her sleep. If my body was racked with excruciating pain, it would not interrupt her play with her toys. If I were dead, she would be amused with watching my pale face and closed eyes. If my friends came to remove my corpse to the place of burial, she would probably clap her hands in glee, and in two or three days totally forget her papa. Besides this, she has never brought me in a penny, but has been a constant expense on my hands ever since she was born. But, although I am not rich in the world's possessions, there is not money enough in this world to buy my baby. How is it? Does she love me, or do I love her? Do I withhold my love until I know she loves me? Am I waiting for her to do something worthy of my love before extending it to her?"

"Oh, I see it," said the sick man, while the tears ran down his cheeks, "I see it clearly; it is not my love to God, but God's

love to me I ought to be thinking about; and I do love Him now as I never loved Him before."

From that time his peace was like a river.—*Light and Shadow.*

MANY YEARS AGO, while residing in Eastern New York, a young man living in our family experienced religion and united with the Baptist church. I observed soon after that he did not remain to the communion service. I enquired of him, when no other one was present, the reason. He hesitated, and the tears began to fall. I tenderly and confidently insisted that he would tell me his trouble, when, to my astonishment, he said the taste and smell of the wine produced craving for something stronger, which he could not resist, and he dare not trust himself. This was in the days before people knew that by canning they could preserve the "fruit of the vine" in its natural state; but now we can drink of "that cup" in remembrance of our Lord and Saviour, as He has commanded us, without hazarding our Christian character.—*Standard.*

WHEN THE WISE MEN found the babe Jesus in the manger at Bethlehem, they worshipped him with offerings of "gold and frankincense and myrrh." There must be more gold brought to the feet of our Lord, before his blessed gospel can reach the uncounted multitudes of pagan lands. He calls for the gold of his church to be used for his glory. His disciples will yet count it the best investment, to give their largest sums for missionary work and church extension. Arhington of Leeds, England, reasoned thus, when he built a steel steamer for that Central African lake; and other men, rich and poor, are learning the lesson that will work wonders in the world when the whole church has learned it. Let us pray that the converts in all lands, at home and abroad, may learn at the start to give liberally for the extension of Christ's kingdom. The Karens of Burma seem to have learned this important lesson, and so have the converts of the South Seas. A Hindoo loves money almost as well as any American or Englishman; still, even he is getting on. Our India churches gave nobly last year for Christian work.—*Morning Star.*

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON I.—OCTOBER 2.

THE CENTURION'S FAITH.—Matt. 8:5-13.

COMMIT VERSES 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.—Matt. 8:10.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

True faith is humble, unselfish, confident, reasonable and successful.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Matt. 8: 1-13.
- T. Luke 7: 1-10.
- W. James 5: 10-20.
- Th. John 4: 46-54.
- F. Heb. 3: 7-19.
- Sa. Luke 13: 18-30.
- Su. Matt. 24: 42-51.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—When Jesus had finished his sermon he came down from the Mount; and, followed by the multitudes, he went toward Capernaum, seven miles distant.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

5. CENTURION.—the captain of a hundred men in the Roman army. This man was a pious Gentile, who had built a synagogue at Capernaum, the remains of which still exist. 6. SAYING—by a delegation of elders (Luke 7:3). 7. PALSIED—paralysis; not ordinary paralysis, but a painful kind like lockjaw or rheumatic fever. 8. THE CENTURION SAID—by another delegation of friends, who met Jesus near the house (Luke 7:6). I AM NOT WORTHY—(1) he was conscious of his sinfulness in the presence of a holy man of God. (2) He knew that Jesus considered it a demerit to enter a Gentile's house. 9. I (also) AM A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY—of the Roman Government, and therefore had received authority to command those under him. So, he argued, Jesus had received authority from God, and could make nature and disease go at his command. 11. FROM THE EAST AND WEST—distant Gentile nations. SHALL SIT DOWN WITH ABRAHAM, etc.—recline at the feast with them. The blessings of heaven are represented as a feast. 12. OUTER DARKNESS—feasts were often held in the evening, and it was dark and cold outside. WEeping—in sorrow. GNASHING OF TEETH—in rage. But it was only their own misconduct which shut any of them out of the feast.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—On what occasion were our last (regular lessons spoken)? How soon after that sermon did the event of to-day's lesson take place? In what town? In what other Gospel is this lesson recorded?

SUBJECT: THE CENTURION'S FAITH. 1. THE CENTURION'S NEED (vs. 5, 6).—What is a centurion? What can you tell about this one? (Luke 7:4, 5). Was he a truly religious man? What trouble had come upon him? What does his deep interest in a servant show as to his character? What is the palsy? What are some

of our great needs for ourselves? For our friends?

11. HE APPLIES TO JESUS FOR AID (vs. 6, 7).—What did the centurion do in his trouble? Did he go himself, or send friends? (Luke 7:3). Why did he apply in this way? How did the centurion know that Jesus could help him? (Matt. 4:23, 24). Was this a good ground of faith?

To whom should we apply for help? How do we know that Jesus can help us?

111. THE CENTURION'S FAITH (vs. 8-10).—How do you know that his faith was unselfish? (v. 8; Luke 7:5). How does he show that it was humble? Why did he consider himself unworthy? How did he show that his faith was strong? What is the argument in v. 9? Why did Jesus marvel? What is faith?

IV. THE REWARDS OF HIS FAITH (vs. 10-13).—Was the centurion successful? What shows that the cure must have been a miracle? What did Jesus say in reference to the centurion in v. 10? Does this show that he had saving faith? Who are meant by the "many from the east and west"? What is meant by "sitting down with Abraham"? In what respects is the Gospel like a feast? Why were the children of the kingdom shut out? (Heb. 3:15). What lessons do you learn about faith from this incident?

LESSON II.—OCTOBER 9.

THE TEMPEST STILLED.—Matt. 8:18-27.

COMMIT VERSES 24-27.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith!—Matt. 8:26.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Trust in God the way of peace.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Matt. 8: 14-27.
- T. Mark 4: 30-41.
- W. Luke 8: 18-26.
- Th. Luke 9: 49-52.
- F. Ps. 46: 1-11.
- Sa. Isa. 43: 1-17.
- Su. Ps. 107: 1-31.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25; 9:57-62.

INTRODUCTION.—We pass over several weeks of the life of Christ, and begin our lesson at the close of one of the busiest days in his recorded life. Jesus wrought miracles, taught great crowds by many parables, encountered opposition from his family and the Pharisees.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

18. WHEN JESUS SAW GREAT MULTITUDES—just at dusk (Mark 4:35). THE OTHER SIDE—of the Sea of Galilee, from Capernaum. They went six or eight miles to the country of the Gadarenes. 19. A CERTAIN SCRIBE—A learned man and leader who had been listening. 20. THE SON OF MAN HATH NOT WHERE TO LAY HIS HEAD—spoken to show him that he would gain no worldly advantage by following Jesus. This showed him the hollow nature of his resolution. 21. SUFFER ME FIRST TO GO AND BURY MY FATHER—who lay dead or was near to death. 22. LET THE DEAD BURY THEIR DEAD—let the spiritually dead, the worldly, bury the naturally dead. Do the highest duties first. 23. A SHIP—a large boat. 24. THERE AROSE A TEMPEST—sudden tempests were very common on the Sea of Galilee. HE WAS ASLEEP—weary with his hard day's labor. JESUS WAS HUMAN. 25. REBUKED THE WINDS—because he was the divine Lord of Nature.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How long after the last lesson were the events of this? Point out the places of this lesson on the map. At what time of the day does our lesson begin? (Mark 4:35). What had Jesus been doing during the day? (See Introduction.)

SUBJECT: SALVATION IN TROUBLE.

I. THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS (vs. 18-22).—Who came to Jesus just as he was leaving the scene of his labors? What did he propose? Was he sincere? What was Jesus' reply? How does this answer apply to us? Can one be a true Christian for the sake of worldly advantages? Who else proposed to follow Jesus? On what condition? What was Jesus' reply to him? Meaning of "let the dead bury their dead"? How does this apply to us?

What was there wrong in this man's proposal? Does religion interfere with our daily duties? Is there any reason to suppose that this man followed Jesus, and the other did not?

11. THE TEMPEST (vs. 23-25).—To what place were the disciples going? (Matt. 8:18, 23). Was the Sea of Galilee peculiarly exposed to storms? What kind of boat were they sailing in? Where was Jesus? What do you learn from his sleeping in such circumstances? What did his disciples do and say? To what storm were we exposed? (Matt. 25:11; Ps. 2:1, 2; 42:3, 7; 107:1-30). Does Jesus ever seem asleep in them? Why did Jesus let his disciples be thus tried? (2 Cor. 4:17, 18; James 1:2, 3, 12; Deut. 8:2.)

111. PEACE, BE STILL (vs. 26, 27).—What did Jesus say of the faith of his disciples? (v. 26; Mark 4:40). What showed they had faith? What that it was small? What miracle did Christ work? What does this show as to his power over nature? How is that a comfort to us? How does Christ still the tempest of sin? (John 8:16). Of trouble? (Matt. 11:28-30). Repeat some other comforting promises!

LESSON CALENDAR.

(Fourth Quarter, 1887.)

- 1. Oct. 2.—The Centurion's Faith. Matt. 8: 5-13.
- 2. Oct. 9.—The Tempest Stilled. Matt. 8: 18-27.
- 3. Oct. 16.—Power to Forgive Sins. Matt. 9: 1-8.
- 4. Oct. 23.—Three Miracles. Matt. 9: 18-31.
- 5. Oct. 30.—The Harvest and the Laborers. Matt. 9: 35-38, and 10: 1-8.
- 6. Nov. 6.—Confessing Christ. Matt. 10: 32-42.
- 7. Nov. 13.—Christ's Witness to John. Matt. 11: 2-15.
- 8. Nov. 20.—Judgment and Mercy. Matt. 11: 20-30.
- 9. Nov. 27.—Jesus and the Sabbath. Matt. 12: 1-14.
- 10. Dec. 4.—Parable of the Sower. Matt. 13: 1-9.
- 11. Dec. 11.—Parable of the Tares. Matt. 13: 24-30.
- 12. Dec. 18.—Other Parables. Matt. 13: 31-35.
- 13. Dec. 25.—Review and Christmas Lesson. (and 44-52.)