

For Map, see end of cover

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Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Rev. R. Douglas Fraser,
Editor & Business Manager
Confederation Life Building, Toronto

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The Teachers Monthly

Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, M.A., Editor
Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D., Associate Editor

Vol. XII.

January, 1906

No. 1

Special attention is drawn to the Question on Missions as it appears in the TEACHERS MONTHLY, and the QUARTERLIES and LEAFLETS. A new feature is the paragraph of additional facts and figures on the Question, which will now be found as part of the Lesson material each week in the TEACHERS MONTHLY. This year the fields selected are:—For the first Quarter, Home Missions in the Maritime Provinces, Ontario and Quebec; second Quarter, French Evangelization; third Quarter, Trinidad and Demerara; fourth Quarter, Formosa. The Missionary Question with its answer, each Sabbath, is the General Assembly's method of seeking to teach every Sabbath School scholar throughout the church what we are doing and what we ought to do in helping to spread abroad the good news of Christ's salvation; to develop, in short, the active aid of the scholar's Christian life.

Prisoners of Hope

By Rev. D. R. Drummond, B.D.

The New Year is a great hope begetter. In His patience and love and willingness to use us, God allows us to greet its opening day. How truly descriptive and encouraging Zechariah's word—"prisoners of hope!"

We are prisoners. On the right hand and left, behind and before, we are hedged about, turned back, kept within limits. There is no material thing that we can compel, save as we obey its law. The whole world of nature is saying, "Thus far, and no farther."

Our bodies, despite their wonderful self-adjusting powers, hold us fast. Our grasp always falls short of our reach, our accomplishment of our plan, our real of our ideal.

If we could only do all that we have the desire to do! In the realm of thought we are thrilled by the great things wrought in literature, art, education, government and commerce. Men do not any longer recognize the word "cannot." Yet a lisping child or thoughtless man can ask questions which all the wisdom of all the ages cannot answer. We are still in the prison house.

And though a man have the strength of a Samson or the wisdom of a Solomon, he may be weak and unwise as any child, in temptation. What multitudes who say, "We are so little that we ought to be, and so much that we ought not to be. There is a law in our members bringing us into subjection. Prisoners of evil habit, taste or tendency!"

But we are prisoners of hope. First, men of iron will and long patience, willing to pay the price, compel nature on every hand to their will. Lightning is harnessed; seas are made international highways; winds are hitched; disease is outwitted; the whole world becomes every man's neighbor. New inventions will doubtless come to meet man's every will. He is not God's child, to be forever in any prison house. In the realm of thought, it is open to debate if there is now unanswered a single question whose answer would help in daily living. Perhaps life would not be worth living or heaven worth the having, but for their new uplifting thoughts, their widening, entrancing visions; their cheering outlook and growing insight. In love, God has made us prisoners, but with hope the undimmed light of our prison cell. And though we see in ourselves and others much to regret, though reforms come slowly, yet to all who wait upon God victory

A Christian's Duty to the State

is sure. Evil habits are overcome; character grows. The public mind, too, is learning to value the life that is life. A higher use of money and power and other possessions is manifest. We are prisoners of hope.

If we add, and keep in the forefront, the thought of what God is and promises, we may face the New Year and work, with ourselves and others, young and old, assured that He "that spared not His own Son," will with him freely give us all needed help. "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

St. Paul's Church, Hamilton

A Christian's Duty to the State

By Rev. W. D. Armstrong, D.D.

Moderator of the General Assembly

We are so apt to think that the state exists for material ends—for tariffs, the production of wealth or the protection of rights, that we forget the great moral end which gives it dignity and worth.

The perfect form of society, which is the ideal towards which the state is working, can be reached only when Christian men take an earnest and honest interest in politics.

The Christian Church must make men good citizens of the state here, as well as prepare them for the heaven of the future.

The Christian citizen is to "obey the powers that be," but he is to do more than that. He is to do his best to see that the powers that be are making for righteousness. He may obey unjust laws, but he should also seek their removal. Is there unrighteousness in the land? He surely is not to remain acquiescent or indifferent. It is for him to do his utmost towards righting every wrong.

No man who has the Spirit of Christ in him can be morally indifferent to anything that touches the welfare of humanity. No man can truly pray "Thy kingdom come," and not be active, as he may find or make opportunity, in all lines of influence and efforts that tend to bring in that kingdom. No man with enlightened Christian consciousness can look on with indifference and see corruption eating out the heart of the national life, or fail in desire to see his country pervad-

ed by that righteousness which exalteth a nation.

Further, the Christian man will not refuse offices of public trust when desired to undertake them by his fellow citizens, unless other responsibilities forbid him. He may shrink from the discomfort of political associations, but does not the law of self-denial come in here? Public life should be viewed from the ethical standpoint. The standpoint of the true statesman is always ethical. He looks for the moral meaning and moral outcome of every measure. Our present Governor-General shows this mark of true statesmanship. Read his addresses.

How different things would be, if our public men kept the moral bearings of questions they discuss before their eyes. If political contests were carried on under the great principle, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," what a change would come over our elections! If the command, "Thou shalt not steal," were hung upon the walls of public offices, or rather were engraved on the consciences of men in public trust, how it would modify commercial and political life.

One could illustrate this subject by many particulars, but my point is sufficiently clear—the moral outcome of any political policy or of any commercial enterprise should be kept clearly in the forefront; and further, Christian men should accept responsibilities and bring influence to bear to secure, as far as possible this end.

We should do our best, not only to secure a God-fearing people, but also a God-knowing government.

Ottawa

The Still Waters

By Rev. W. McC. Thomson, M.A.

Centuries are crossed at a bound when we are passing through troubled waters. Barriers of race and creed are in a moment hurried away, whether a David fleeing for his life, palace gone, kingdom gone, friends gone, the work of a life time in ruins, or whether it be the modern strife between capital and labor, between greedy corporations and Christian public sentiment guarding "the

Rest-Day," it matters not. The story is just the same, worry, anxious care, overwork! What depths of human experience they stir up in these modern days! No heart, no home is exempt, nor does age guarantee any immunity from the troubled waters. Here rich and poor, masses and classes, meet together.

"Water! water!" so ran the cry from company to company of the two millions of footsore, travel-stained pilgrims from Egypt. What enthusiasm and expectation as they hurried along! But in a moment it was exchanged for another cry, like the strange fickleness of our Lord's Passion week. "What shall we drink, for the waters are bitter?" Every one has not a Moses with his branch to sweeten the waters of Marah. So many times the very wine of life becomes vinegar while we stand beside the *bitter waters*. Beside the troubled waters latent powers are often discovered and developed. The eldest son takes the father's place; the eldest daughter becomes the angel of the home; the junior partner the directing mind of the corporation, revealing administrative ability unsuspected. But when the waters are bitter, vision fails, spirits wither, hearts faint, lips cry out, "O God, let this cup pass!" It is hard to believe that they contain a spiritual tonic, and the world's literature contains many angry letters written by souls when first they have tasted the bitter waters. Even those who have manufactured their own drugs, cry out, "All these things are against me." It takes time to convince us that everything in the universe comes to perfection by drill and marching, that out of the world's pain comes the world blessing, and that the agony of the Garden made possible the glory of Olivet.

The *still waters* are always near. Beside the still waters standing, we may hear a voice full of comfort and refreshment. Amid the roar of the city's traffic we can often hear faintly the chimes of a great cathedral. Pushing our way along, we find the great stone steps, pass through the iron gates and behind the oaken doors. In a moment the noise is shut out. There is a great calm deepened by soft musical notes of a well-known hymn floating down from the organ

loft. Tears take the place of sighs, and unspoken prayer ascends. You forget that the waters were ever troubled or bitter, and gratefully whisper, "Lord, it is good to be here." That stillness of spirit becomes to you a pool in which you can see the blue sky and the banks of the stream and your own face, in relation to all about you and above you. You discover the better life within, and feel the powers of One who makes the rough places smooth, and the crooked places straight, and the bitter waters sweet. A voice whispers in the midst of the moments so troubled and bitter, "Come ye apart, and rest awhile beside the still waters."

"We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from Thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow."

New Glasgow, N.S.

Traveling

By Rev. Professor Robert Magill, Ph.D.

In the ordinary work of life men must travel more or less. We travel in infancy, in youth, and in manhood. We "come" into, life and we "go" out of life. It is little wonder then that the deep student goes one step further, and regards life itself as travel. This is the idea of the 16th Psalm, and the author throws light upon life as traveling.

The Traveler's Creed

The traveler meets with a great variety in matters religious—variety of organization, creed and worship. And he finds both pleasure and profit in endeavoring to widen his perspective, to grasp the universal as distinguished from the local, and thus arrive at the basal principles of all religious life. In this way he reaches the traveler's creed, the simplest, most intelligible, and most universal of all creeds—"In Thee do I put my trust."

The Traveler's Society

The selection of friends is an important matter for the traveler. Nothing could be more fatal to him than a bad selection, and on the other hand nothing could help him more than meeting and becoming friendly with one or more congenial spirits. And of his seeking the true, the beautiful and the

good, there is one test he always employs, and that is character. And thus he comes to the traveler's society—"The saints . . . in whom is . . . my delight."

The Traveler's Wealth

Few things impress the traveler so much as the abundant wealth of the world; and, as he reflects upon it, the contrast between the wealth of the race and that of the individual strikes him. How little of it all do I possess! How small is my share of this world's goods! But, reflecting further, he finds that his share is larger than he had imagined. That lovely landscape—is it not his, in so far as it fills his soul with a calm that gold could not buy? That glorious picture—is it not his, in so far as it gives him a new vision of some spiritual reality? That majestic cathedral—is it not his, in so far as it lifts his soul up in tireless aspiration after the infinite? The things of sea and land, the products of human skill, the creations of human genius—in all of these the wise traveler finds his own large share; for behind them all, he learns to see the spiritual, the eternal, the divine. And so he gains the traveler's wealth—"The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup."

The Traveler's Guide

In a strange land or city the traveler may waste time and energy and money, and may suffer many inconveniences and miss much for lack of a good guide. And in making his way through life, in the questions of belief and duty, in the forming of opinions on those matters that cannot be dismissed and yet cannot be demonstrated, in these strange regions through which mortals must travel, or in which no mortal man can act as guide, in all these the wise traveler looks inward for light—"I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel."

The Traveler's Home

As one steps from off a big ocean liner, one hears all around him the words, "There's no place like home." Man travels far and sees many beautiful things and places. He brings back with him a greater estimate of men and things, a truer perspective, a deeper insight, a wider sympathy, and a simpler and therefore profounder faith. All this he brings to

his home, and in it he expects henceforth to live a richer and fuller life. Such is the traveler's home—"life," "joy," and if he has traveled with his eyes open and his heart unbiased, he returns seeking this fuller life and joy, but knowing that it is only "in the presence of God" that it can be had "for evermore."

Presbyterian College, Halifax, N.S.

The Teacher and the Poets

IN TWELVE ARTICLES

By Rev. F. H. McIntosh, M.A.

I. POETRY VERSUS PROSE

What is poetry? How differs it from the world of prose in which we may be better traveled?

The questions bring us to that enchanted ground where clever and dogmatic definitions are out of place. There is a vague and mystic something about the world of poetry which the coarse thumb and finger of our logic can never measure. We can but indicate very broadly, and let this elusive something shade away into the prose and mystery it lies between.

Poetry, then, shades away into common prose. There is a twilight land between, to which each lays claim. When Ruskin said, "If your life were but a fever fit—the madness of a night, whose follies were all to be forgotten in the dawn,—it might matter little how you fretted away the sickly hours," he was poetical, but did not write poetry. The statement lacks poetic form. And when Wordsworth wrote,

"One morning (raw it was and wet,
A foggy day in winter time),

A woman on the road I met,

Not old, tho' something past her prime,"
he versified, but imparts no thrill. No words could be more matter-of-fact.

"Poetry is poetry," as someone puts it, "because it differs from prose." It differs in *stuff* and *form*. Our thought and emotion are the warp and woof of each, just as the same sun and soil enter into the cabbage and the rose. But in poetry this ordinary thought and emotion are charged with a current of imagination; or, to change our

figure, this ordinary thought and emotion are caught up into a third heaven of activity and fused into a beauty which it is not lawful for prose to utter.

In the realm of form the difference is also one of degree. In either prose or poetry we look for strength and clearness and all the other graces of living literature. But poetry takes this common property and transfigures it. Poetry is the expression of the heart and mind carried up into very incondescence. It is not merely a matter of rhyme or accent, or alliteration. Poetry is expression trembling with a great melody. There

also is a melody in prose, just as there is a melody in the speaking voice; but then, we do not really talk of music until we hear the voice of song and the chime of poetic numbers.

So then, poetry is not a forced or artificial product—the out-pouring of a people sidetracked in the race of being by a frenzy. Too many regard the poetries as so many sad lispings fools, left aside by the great, outgoing, human tide. True poetry is the whitened crests of all the waves that ride to meet the sea. Prose is an expression of our life; but poetry is the expression of it more abundantly.

Soul-Winning in the Sabbath School

What the Teacher Should Be and Do

By Rev. George C. Pidgeon, D.D.

The first essential in one who would influence the young Christward, is a consistent Christian life. The Sabbath School teacher must be, not only above reproach, but above suspicion. The grandest thoughts in the mouth of an unworthy teacher will only provoke the scholars' contempt, whilst genuine virtue gives weight to a commonplace lesson.

But more than a sound moral character is necessary for soul-winning, although it is the foundation. There must also be a superstructure of spiritual earnestness:—a *passion for Christ*, and a *passion for souls*.

There should be such love for Christ in the teacher's heart as will make him long to see young characters molded according to Christ's image (Gal. 4 : 19). An old writer distinguished between two of Alexander's servants by saying that one was a lover of the king, the other a lover of Alexander. Too many believers attach all their devotion to the office of Christ and have no intense personal love for Him. Some one said, "I have but one passion, and that is Christ." That should be the main element in every teacher's life. His fervent desire will then be to see Christ's nature formed in every member of his class, and to this he will bend all his energies.

Then, corresponding to this passion for Christ, there should be a love for souls. This phrase may be objected to, because Chris-

tianity means salvation for the whole man, body and mind, as well as spirit, yet it expresses the truth as no other does. Men are saved, in the Scriptural sense, when their spiritual nature is quickened and they are brought into personal relations with God. Without this new life they are not saved, no matter how much they may be improved in mind and morals by the teachings of Christianity. Thus, to lead men Christward, the heart must be touched, and no one can do this who does not burn with love to the soul he aims to influence. Spurgeon once preached a sermon, showing that only when the churches agonized for the salvation of men, were souls led to God in large numbers. The sermon was distributed through all the Non-conformist churches of England, and resulted in a great quickening of their work and multiplication of results. We must follow the same rule, if we would reach the same end. The teacher should seek for souls as for hid treasure. The scholars will know before any one else whether the teacher is intensely anxious for their salvation or not, and if they recognize that feeling behind all that the teacher says, it will have great effect upon them. They value genuineness above all else and deep feeling makes an indelible impression upon them.

The teacher should also prepare specially for each class hour. This does not mean to work himself up into a fever, but calmly to

Decision for Christ

lay each case, with the anxiety it gives him and the difficulties it brings him, before God, and plead for God's blessing upon the scholars and upon his work. This will result in two blessings, (1) The Spirit of God will give him the special message that his class requires: will suggest the thoughts that will exactly fit into the scholars' spiritual state, and meet his peculiar need. (2) The Spirit will also co-operate with him. He will prepare the pupil's heart for the message He intends to send, so that when the seed falls the soil will be ready. Without this previous preparation in response to prayer, no teaching can produce spiritual results. Then, while the lesson is being taught, that same blessed Spirit will act on the hearts of those who hear, communicating the gift of life. This consciousness of God's active co-operation gives great weight to the teacher's words.

Yet while the teacher is thus thinking about heavenly things, he must not be lost in these deeper thoughts and emotions. He must be alert, watchful, ready to take advantage of every turn, and so lead his scholars Godward.

Toronto Junction, Ont.

Decision for Christ

By Rev. D. McTavish, D.Sc.

When the agent of a business firm deals with customers, he does not talk on mere trade generalities: he places his goods before the prospective buyer, points out their excellent qualities, and urges immediate purchase. Teachers talk of their spiritual goods very fully and faithfully, but there they seem to think their duty ends; they too seldom press for immediate decision.

There must be some explanation for this very manifest defect, as no earnest teacher, however reticent, would wilfully shirk this supremely important duty. One fears the main reason is, that many do not understand child life and child experience. A good many people think a child can be amiable and well-disposed, but cannot in the true sense become a Christian, because of immaturity. Members of churches that lay much stress upon a fully stated creed, are apt to think

that a very extensive knowledge of doctrine is essential to salvation. But a little careful study of the Gospels and the Acts should forever dispel that illusion. The penitent thief knew very little, but he knew enough to go to paradise with Christ that day.

Then, many do not understand child nature. Children are very mercurial, passing from one state of feeling to the opposite, and then back again, with remarkable celerity. Now, a superficial teacher would set this down to insincerity, whereas nothing could be further from the truth. At a certain age, too, there arises in children a disposition to suppress religious emotions and to appear indifferent when they are at heart deeply serious. The possibility and importance of child conversion and child discipleship are, however, taking a firmer hold of the majority of Sabbath School workers. It has been shown by statistics that of every thousand persons brought to Christ 70% come before they are twenty years of age, and only 9% after fifty years.

Decision Day, when wisely conducted, may be very helpful. It awakens very definite prayer beforehand, and gives special opportunity of speaking directly to the scholars upon the subject. A clear forceful gospel address may be given to the whole school, or each teacher may explain "the way" very simply. It has been found helpful to have a card ready to give to each scholar having upon it some such statement as this—"I will accept Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, and will seek by His help to live a Christian life." Ask the scholars to think and pray over this during the week and to bring back the card on the following Sabbath, signed or unsigned. If a card is not signed, it may open the way for further conversation, so that the difficulties may be removed. We should always be careful to respect the feelings and convictions of the child. Never make light of them and do not nag at him until he is forced into a false position.

The best method, however, is to take your scholars individually, and speak to them earnestly and lovingly on this matter. Each communion season, as it comes round, is a fresh and telling opportunity. Some-

times one may select a definite passage like Rev. 3 : 20, "Behold I stand at the door and knock," etc. Then press the question, "Are you willing to have Christ enter and cleanse and control your heart?"

These are mere suggestions. If the heart of the teacher is set upon it, he will find the way that best suits himself and the scholars he desires to reach.

Toronto

To Wear Out Bibles

By Rev. F. W. Murray

The writer has always found a Home Department necessary. There are young mothers, aged persons, invalids and others who are unable to attend Sabbath School. And there are many schools that do not meet in the winter time.

In these and many other instances the Home Department is needed. There is literature enough of a kind, crowding into our homes on Sunday. If the Bible is to have the effect it should have upon our lives, some method must be used to increase the emphasis upon it.

The man without a library need be no longer cast down. His QUARTERLY will give him the results of hard and prolonged labor, at a price that is only made possible through highly perfected organization. Many a parent would like to take his proper place at the head of his home. The Home Study Helps afford him one of the best possible aids one could have. If any congregation wishes to tighten its grip upon its people, no better means could be afforded. The Home Department can reach all absentees. Many, who feel themselves neglected and forgotten, are revived in their kindly feeling toward the Church—an important matter in itself.

A Home Department can be conducted in any congregation, if any *one* person makes up his mind that it *shall* be done. No matter what the difficulties are, they can be overcome.

No hints that might be given, as to starting a department, will fit all conditions. Sometimes a department will be a high success where the pastor, whatever the reason, takes no part. Sometimes the whole thing depends

on the pastor. He may have to do the superintending himself. But, generally, it will be better for him to appoint some person whom he can fully depend upon, to superintend. It often affords a fine opportunity to give some young worker a start off in Christian activity.

One thing is absolutely necessary, viz.:—watch the class. This may be done in a variety of ways that will readily occur—a frequent word from the pulpit is a great help, a word from the superintendent to the visitor, a word from the visitor to parents or scholars; but in some way or in many ways, let the classes know they are being watched for good. If it is thus clearly understood that the Home Department is depended upon to attend to its business, and that a good deal is expected of it, its success will be as great as that of any other department. And it will help a congregation to wear out its Bibles.

Upper Musquodoboit, N.S.

Organized S.S. Work in Quebec

By Seth P. Leet, Esq.

Treasurer, Provincial S.S. Association

[The fourth of a series of articles on the most marked or promising feature of the Provincial S.S. Organization. P. E. Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick constituted the three previous articles.—EDITORS.]

Sunday School work in the Province of Quebec has to contend with exceptional conditions. Out of a population of about 1,700,000, there are but 210,000 Protestants. In some counties there are practically no Protestants at all, and there are very few counties, or even townships, in which there is not a considerable number of Roman Catholics.

Organization, therefore, is difficult: indeed impossible in the same fashion as in provinces where the population is more homogeneous. There are about twenty counties organized. But this by no means tells the whole tale. There are numerous township or district conventions. The holding of these has been greatly promoted, as indeed every part of the work, by the labors of Rev. Edgar T. Capel, a Church of England clergyman, the Secretary of the Provincial Association for the past five years. Mr. Capel is indefatigable in his

Our Publications

efforts, and his skill in the presentation of the best methods of teaching, and his faculty of getting the best workers into harness, have been a tower of strength. There are many active workers in various parts of the Province.

There is a Provincial Department of Normal Work, Home Department, and White Ribbon Department, which are being developed with fair success; and, altogether, the condition of things has never been so good as at present.

These three hopeful features may be specified:

1. The thorough-going system of raising

funds for the Provincial work. The plan seeks to enlist individuals as well as county and district organizations.

2. The multiplying of district conventions by reducing the area. Five schools is the Secretary's ideal for a practical convention.

3. The theological colleges are giving attention to the training of their students in Sunday School principles and methods. This is true of the Presbyterian, Anglican, Methodist, and Congregational colleges of Montreal.

Montreal

Lesson Calendar: First Quarter

WORDS AND WORKS OF JESUS (MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE).

1. January 7.....The Shepherds Find Jesus. Luke 2 : 1-20.
2. January 14.....The Wise Men Find Jesus. Matt. 2 : 1-12.
3. January 21.....The Boy Jesus. Luke 2 : 40-52.
4. January 28.....The Baptism of Jesus. Mark 1 : 1-11.
5. February 4.....The Temptation of Jesus. Matt. 4 : 1-11.
6. February 11.....Jesus Calling Fishermen. Luke 5 : 1-11.
7. February 18.....A Day of Miracles in Capernaum. Mark 1 : 21-34.
8. February 25.....Jesus' Power to Forgive. Mark 2 : 1-12.
9. March 4.....Jesus Tells Who Are Blessed. Matt. 5 : 1-16.
10. March 11.....Jesus and The Temper. Matt. 5 : 33-48.
11. March 18.....REVIEW.
12. March 25.....Temperance Lesson. Prov. 23 : 29-35.

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R. DOUGLAS FRASER

CONFEDERATION LIFE BUILDING, MONTREAL

Lesson I.

THE SHEPHERDS FIND JESUS

January 7, 1906

Luke 2 : 1-20. Commit to memory vs. 13, 14.* Read Matthew 1 : 1-25; Luke 1 : 1-80. GOLDEN TEXT—For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.— Luke 2 : 11.

1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehém; (because he was of the house and lineage of David.)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

Revised Version— Now; ² Omit that; ³ enrolled; ⁴ enrol themselves; ⁵ to; ⁶ family; ⁷ enrol himself; ⁸ who is filled; ¹⁰ an angel of the Lord stood by them; ¹¹ Be not afraid; ¹⁴ the; ¹⁵ is the sign; ¹⁶ a; ¹⁷ among men in whom he is well pleased; ¹⁸ when the angels went away; ¹⁹ both; ²⁰ to them about this child; ²² Omit they; ²³ the; ²⁴ spoken unto them; ²⁵ sayings, pondering them; ²⁶ even as.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Babe, 1-7.
- II. The Angels, 8-14.
- III. The Shepherds, 15-20.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—Counsel for New Year, Prov. 3 : 13-26. T.—The shepherds find Jesus, Luke 2 : 1-20. W.—Isaiah's prophecy, Isa. 9 : 1-7. Th.—Christ is Lord, Phil. 2 : 1-11. F.—Worship by angels, Heb. 1 : 1-8. S.—Made flesh, John 1 : 1-14. S_c—Sent to save, 1 John 4 : 4-14.

EXPOSITION

By Rev. Principal R. A. Falconer, LL.D., Litt.D., Halifax, N.S.

Time and Place—Perhaps late in the year 5 B.C., or even earlier. It is impossible to say definitely in what year Jesus was born. Bethlehem, a small village about six miles south of Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—Luke, the writer of the Third Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles, was a physician, and a close friend of the apostle Paul, Col. 4 : 14. For the facts about His life Luke had very accurate information (Luke 1 : 3), perhaps having heard the story of the Saviour's birth and early life from Mary, His mother. In the Lesson chapter are shown the political, social and religious

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehém, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found both Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was so told unto them.

⁴ This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius; was betrothed to him; ¹⁰ it came to pass, while; ¹¹ fulfilled; ¹⁴ the; ¹⁵ is the sign; ¹⁶ a; ¹⁷ among men in whom ²⁰ saw it; ²¹ concerning the saying which was spoken unto them; ²² sayings, pondering them; ²⁶ even as.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 1. What is the chief end of man? A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

The Question on Missions (First Quarter, HOME MISSIONS AND ARGUMENTATION IN THE MARITIME PROVINCES—5 Questions; AND IN QUEBEC AND ONTARIO —6 Questions). 1. Where were the first Home Mission fields of our church? In the Province of Nova Scotia; where, from the year 1764 onward, ministers from Scotland and the United States labored among the early settlers.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 114 (Supplemental Lesson); 26; 30; 88 (Ps. Sel.); 520 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 457.

conditions in the midst of which Jesus was born and spent His boyhood and youth.

I. The Babe, 1-7.

Vs. 1-3. *Decree*; an imperial edict from Cæsar Augustus, the first and greatest of the emperors of Rome. In a remote corner of the universal Roman empire, at its prime, was born in a manger the King whose empire is eternal. *All the world*; for practically all the then known world was either directly or indirectly under Roman sway. *Enrolled* (Rev. Ver.); have their names placed upon the public register, probably for the purposes of taxation. *First enrolment* (Rev. Ver.). For

*The Scripture Memory Passages of the Supplemental Lessons are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. They will be found in the Supplemental Lesson Leaflet.

The Shepherds Find Jesus

the second see Acts 5 : 37. *Cyrenius* (Quirinius) was (Roman) governor of Syria; the Roman province to which Palestine belonged. It seems to have been a fixed policy to take a periodical census of the empire, probably about every fourteen years, and this enrolment was one. *Every one to his own city* (Rev. Ver.); following the Jewish custom of making the registration at the old family home.

Vs. 4-7. *Joseph*; the husband of Mary (Matt. 1 : 24), and during the lifetime of Jesus regarded as His father, Matt. 13 : 55; Luke 4 : 22; John 1 : 45; 6 : 42. *From Galilee*; the most northerly of the three provinces of Palestine. *Out of Nazareth*; a town resting in a basin of hills. From the summit of these the eye could look out on the road from Jerusalem with its annual throng of pilgrims, the road from Egypt with its merchants going up and down, and the road from Damascus with its richly laden caravans. At Nazareth the birth of Jesus had been announced, ch. 1 : 26. *City of David*. See 1 Sam. 17 : 12, 58. From the character of David are derived the chief features in the description of the Messiah, the long-expected King of God's people. (See Matt. 1 : 1, 20; 9 : 27; 15 : 22; 21 : 9; John 7 : 42; Rom. 1 : 3; 2 Tim. 2 : 8; Rev. 5 : 5; 22 : 16.) *With Mary*; although in the Roman census women were not obliged to come to be enrolled in person. *Days . . . fulfilled* (Rev. Ver.) It is impossible to say how long they were in Bethlehem before the birth of Jesus. *First-born son*. The words would lead us to suppose that Mary afterwards had other children, sons and daughters (see Mark 3 : 31-35). *Swaddling clothes*; strips of cloth three or four inches wide and several feet long, wound around the child. *No room . . . in the inn*. Besides the ordinary business travel, the inn would be filled up with strangers, who, like Joseph and Mary, had come to be enrolled and had arrived before them.

II. The Angels, 8-14.

Vs. 8, 9. *Shepherds . . . in the field*. Luke's Gospel always brings out the Saviour's sympathy for the poor: the announcement of the birth is made to humble country folk. *Keeping watch*, etc.; against thieves and wild beasts. In the valleys the winter nights may

not have been too cold for the flocks, so it is not impossible that Jesus was born about our Christmas time, but that is all that can be said. *An angel* (Rev. Ver.) of the Lord. Angels are the messengers of God, Ps. 104 : 4. *Glory of the Lord*; the heavenly brightness which is a sign of the presence of God or of heavenly beings, 2 Cor. 3 : 18. (Compare Luke 9 : 31, 32, and also Ex. 16 : 10; 24 : 16, 17; 40 : 34; Lev. 9 : 6, 23.

Vs. 10-12. *Fear not*. No one could see God and live (Ex. 33 : 20); and any divine manifestation would naturally produce awe. *Good tidings* (words of the same meaning as "gospel") of great joy. Joy is one of the surest fruits of a preached gospel. The gospel, or glad tidings, is the birth of Jesus. *City of David*; and so to fulfil all that David had hoped for, and that God had promised His people in Him. *A Saviour*. The promise of deliverance from sin and oppression rang through Israel's history (see ch. 1 : 66-75, 77-79), like a church bell breaking on the ear of a lost traveler in a thick wood. *Christ*; the Messiah, the anointed King of the true Israel. *The Lord*; and therefore full of power to make this salvation complete. *Sign . . . a babe* (Rev. Ver.); not a glorious earthly monarch, but a weak child. Only the arm of the Lord Himself could bring strength out of such weakness.

Vs. 13, 14. *Suddenly*; to confirm this most unlikely message. *Heavenly host*; inhabitants of heaven, whose song shows that the salvation of men is the theme of the "choir invisible." *Praising God*. All salvation leads men to give glory to the Father for His marvelous lovingkindness. *Glory to God*, etc. In the Revised Version there are only two causes: (a) Glory in heaven ("the highest"); (b) Peace upon earth; but this peace is only among men who have found favor in God's light. Thus reconciliation through God's mercy is the theme of the gospel, resounding with glad song in heaven and awakening joy in earth.

III. The Shepherds, 15-20.

Vs. 15, 16. *It came to pass*, etc. As long as the divine melody of peace lasted, they listened. Then they proceeded to verify it, leaving their flocks and going across the

country to Bethlehem. These shepherds are the best type of simple faith. They prove the worth of the heavenly vision by action. *Haste*; so intense was the impression produced upon them. *Found*; just a babe in a manger, but simple-hearted shepherds could have a heavenly vision of angels adoring God for the birth of Jesus, whereas the wise and the prudent among the Jews would have been blind to it all.

Vs. 17-19. *Made known abroad*. Such news was too good to keep. *All . . . wondered*. Such a Saviour was entirely unlike what they had been taught to expect. How much more would they have marveled had they known, as we do, that the very Son of God had come to earth. *Mary kept . . . pondered*. She had had visits from an angel (ch. 1 : 26-38), and the tale of the shepherds confirmed her own experience. It had a meaning for her that it could not possibly have for any one else, but it is not likely she divulged the secret till after His resurrection showed her who He was.

V. 20. A beautiful return of the shepherds to their work in simple joyous hope, heart and mouth filled with praise. "Feeding sheep could never again be commonplace toil to them."

APPLICATION

By Rev. J. W. Macmillan, B.A., Winnipeg

Joseph also went up, v. 4. Life is full of surprises. Things do not happen at the time nor in the way we had expected. Prediction is always a miracle, and always astonishing. Who could have

Life's
Surprises

guessed that the census regulations of the Roman empire should be the means of fulfilling the prophecy that Jesus should be born in Bethlehem? And just as little can you tell what temptation or triumph, sorrow or enchantment, humiliation or promotion may be just breaking upon your life. Any morning you may go out to meet the greatest opportunity or the deadliest peril of your life. Nothing will calm the mind or steady the purpose like the habit of dependence upon God and obedience to His will. Then, come what may, it will find us ready.

No room . . . in the inn, v. 7. Plenty of places are like that, filled up beforehand, so that there is no space left for the Saviour.

Light from the East

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London, Ont.

CYRENIUS—Was Governor of Syria from A.D. 6 to about A.D. 11, and in that capacity took over Judæa on the deposition of Archelaus, and made a census of it, which roused a good deal of opposition, Acts 5 : 37. But it seems from an old Italian inscription that he was Governor of, or at least held a prominent position in, Syria at an earlier date; and although it was probably after the date of Herod the Great, yet a census begun by his predecessor and completed by him might be called the first, to distinguish it from the second, to which Luke afterwards refers in the Acts. In Egypt, from the time of its regulation by Augustus, a census by families was taken every fourteen years; and this custom was probably extended, in some cases at least, to Syria. The circumstances were such as to make it fitting that Mary should accompany Joseph. All women over twelve years of age were subject to a head tax, and all men over fourteen and up to sixty-five. The Roman custom in such an enrolment was that every man reported at his place of residence, but the Jewish plan was to enumerate them by the clan or family.

Somehow, when His meek knock is heard, it seems easy to discover that every place is taken. One wonders if the landlord would have sent a Roman centurion, or one of Herod's courtiers, to the stable. Business gets filled up with money-making, the home with ordinary domestic duties, the school with studies, the playground with sports, so that religion is refused admission. When wealth and rank and cleverness and laughter apply, they are treated more considerately. Some people seem to think that a Sunday rain is wetter than any other!

Shepherds . . . keeping watch, v. 8. Visions may come to people in sleep, but never to sleepy people. These shepherds were watching their flocks, not dozing around their camp fires. Esau lost his birthright because he was too dull to appreciate it. The man with

Every Place
Full

Visions for the
Wideawake

The Shepherds Find Jesus

the muckrake sees not the crown above his head. Religion deserves intelligent and wide-awake attention. The Bible requires study, as well as arithmetic. The careless traveler may get some touch of the atmosphere of a strange country, but if one would really know lands and people, one must keep eyes open and mind alert. The way of the righteous is the way of truth, and, as an old proverb says, "Truth lies at the bottom of a well."

**Be not afraid* (Rev. Ver.), v. 10. Fear is a foolish thing, because it is so disastrous. A coward is easily chased, and a discouraged person soon grows weary. When

Foolish Fear Joshua was detailed to conquer Canaan, he was bidden to "be strong and of a good courage." There is nothing like a stout heart for fighting, and life is all a battle, anyhow. Pluck often wins a game of baseball or lacrosse, when nothing else will. And in the keener and deadlier contests to which sin challenges us, there is need to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."

Good tidings, v. 10. The gospel is not good advice, but good news. Good advice is for those who can apply it. It is of no use to

Good News those who are so weak or so shackled that they are powerless. What use to tell a prisoner in a stone cell that if he had a sledge hammer and a dynamite cartridge he might escape? For he neither has, nor can get, these things. Rather, unlock the door of his cell and hand him a royal pardon. Jesus came, not to help those who can help themselves, but to help those who cannot help themselves.

A Saviour, v. 11. There is no joy for a

sufferer like the joy of relief. The invalid's dearest hopes are set on a cure. He may find

The Joy of Salvation some pleasure in the visits of friends, and in the books and fruit and flowers they bring

him. But the man he supremely wants to see is the doctor who can make him well. And similarly, this lost world needs, above all things, a Saviour. Its learning, its arts, its civilization may do their utmost; they yet leave it vexed and defiled with sin. There is no other joy possible to it so rapturous as salvation.

Let us . . . go, v. 15. When we hear of any great sight, our first impulse is to go and see it. When the military procession files along

Going to See Jesus the streets, when the fire bells clamor, when a famous man visits our town, wherever there

is a marvel or a tumult, both old and young want to start at once for the scene of interest. Let us go then and see this Child of whom the angels have been singing! We shall find Him where He is worshipped, and we shall find Him, as He taught, wherever there is any one of His human brethren in need.

The shepherds returned, v. 20. This is a parable for life. We need the heavenly vision to hearten and inspire. But our days

The Value of Visions are not all to be spent in the enjoyment of visions. To prove their value we must go

down into the dusty streets of life's common way and take up the daily drudgery with the greater cheerfulness and diligence. If we linger in selfish rapture, we shall lose the very Presence that gives us joy. But let us walk in the lowly path of obedience, and It will be ever at our side.

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars

By Rev. John H. MacVicar, B.A., Fergus, Ont.

We talk about the love of the cross. Do we talk enough about the love of the cradle? Christ gave Himself not only to the Crucifixion, but to the weakness of infancy.

1. *The Placing of the Cradle*, vs. 1-7. What had the Roman state to do with it? vs. 1-3.

What had Joseph's lineage to do with it? v. 4. What had the crowded condition of the town to do with it? v. 7.

Make it clear that Christ's entrance into the circle of our humanity was (a) lowly, (b) providentially ordered, and (c) voluntary. He was the only human being who ever came into our world of his own choice. Had men no sin from which to be redeemed, there is no evidence that He would have come (see 1 Cor. 15: 3). We cannot enter into the

mystery of the Incarnation more deeply than to exalt the redeeming love it exhibits.

2. *The Revelation of the Cradle*, vs. 8-14. At what place was Joseph's name enrolled? v. 4. Notice how it is twice called the "city of David", vs. 4, 11. Recall David shepherding his sheep in that region, 1 Sam, 17 : 15. Recall the encouragements given to look for David's greater Son, Ps. 132 : 11; Isa. 55 : 3; Jer. 23 : 5; Ezek. 37 : 24.

It is a big leap across the centuries to these shepherds on the lonely hillside. Yet they have been made ready for what they are to see and hear. The angel of the Lord (v. 9) who came upon them caused awe ("fear"), but not surprise. We do not know the shepherds' names. We only guess they may have belonged to the royal line of David. We may safely judge their character to have been devout and expectant. They would scarcely otherwise have seen angels whilst about their ordinary calling.

The herald angel's announcement (vs. 10, etc.) shows the cradle to be : (a) A revelation of joy, v. 10. A Christless world always was, and always will be, a sad world—one groping in the dark. (b) A revelation of deliverance, v. 11. Discuss Christ's Saviourhood, and its personal bearings on the members of your class. (c) A revelation of sovereignty, v. 11. Too often the people see the Saviour, without seeing the Lord. Christ has an inherent right to rule over all our thoughts, feelings, words, ideals and acts. Christ has come to rule, no less than to save. The praise of the heavenly host has never died away in its confirmation of the twofold significance of the cradle : (a) God's glory, and (b) Man's well-being, v. 14.

3. *The Adoration at the Cradle*, vs. 15-20. How deeply the shepherds must have thought in the ensuing darkness and silence! They acted, as well as thought. Persuade your class to act. These shepherds could not go too quickly (v. 16) to that wondrous cradle. Nor can we. They noised it abroad, v. 20. Others shared their wonder, v. 18. Mary pondered it, v. 19. Later when she stood by the cross (John 19 : 26) she understood it better. Later still, after His resurrection (Acts 1 : 14), she understood it best.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, M.A.

The year's Lessons are to be on the Words and Works of Jesus, as recounted in the first three Gospels; and so the first Lesson takes us to the beginning. The passage is filled with movement : event follows event in quick succession, all interesting, some marvellous.

THE JOURNEY—The travelers : Who ? Of the royal line; but humble people. Of what trade was Joseph ? Where did He live ? Why was the journey made ? Explain the taxing, and why Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem, instead of being enrolled at home. What wonderful promise had been made about Bethlehem seven hundred years before ? (Micah 5 : 2.) What great ruler now helped to fulfil it ? (See vs. 1, 3, of the Lesson.) How unerringly God makes everything work together to carry out His purposes !

THE BABE—The crowded caravanserai, the stable (perhaps a cave in the hillside), the manger filled with hay, and the sweet Babe nestling on its mother's bosom—take the scholars over the familiar ground; and the quaint swaddling clothes, that make the babe look like a mummy, save for the uncovered face and head. Recall a verse from last Sabbath's Lesson about this "Son," Isa. 9 : 6. Did any one know this was true ? Some humble men were to be told :—

THE SHEPHERDS—Verse 8, with verse 9, makes a weird and startling picture. Work out the details—the hillside, the blackness of night, the sleeping flocks, the wakeful shepherds, reverent men, surely, but little thinking of how close heaven was at hand.

THE ANGEL—The darkness is scattered by the swiftly approaching messenger ("angel" means messenger) of the Lord, and the dazzling glory enveloping all. Why "sore afraid" ? Let the class answer. *What was the message ?* First, a very tender word, "Fear not" (compare Rev. 1 : 17) : how gentle the Almighty God and His messengers are ! Then, a marvellous announcement : v. 10 seems to peal like a joyous bell, and v. 11 gives the reason. Four questions here at least,—Why is Bethlehem called "the city of David" ? Why is Jesus called "Saviour" ?

The Shepherds Find Jesus

Why "Christ"? Why "the Lord"? "Unto you is born?" Quote Isa. 9 : 6 again.

THE CHOIR—"A multitude": how many? Only some of an infinitely great number after all. How many in heaven? Rev. 5 : 11. Question on the far-ringing chorus, v. 14.

WHAT THE SHEPHERDS DID—V. 15 is a long verse; but it did not take the shepherds long to make up their minds. God had spoken; what could they do but "go" and "see"? Wise men, they. Wise, we also, always to go

whither God directs: and to go, as the shepherds did, "with haste," v. 16.

WHAT THE SHEPHERDS FOUND—Just as God's messenger had described. Things are always as God says they are.

WHAT THE SHEPHERDS DID—Told what God had told them (v. 17); and praised God for the good news. The people wondered (v. 18); and the mother silently thought and hoped and longed (v. 19): what might not this Babe become!

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Lesson Points

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

God uses the world's sovereigns to prepare the way for the world's Saviour. v. 1.

The centuries of human history are linked by the chain of the divine purpose. v. 4.

He who stooped to the lowliest cradle now wears the loftiest crown. v. 7.

It is the vigilant who behold visions. v. 8. Messengers from heaven can always find their way to the humble heart. v. 9.

There is no terror, but rather infinite tenderness, in God's voice to those who trust Him. v. 10.

We cannot know Jesus as Saviour unless we acknowledge Him as King. v. 11.

That which brings the greatest glory to God will also bring the highest good to man. vs. 13, 14.

The surest way to learn the meaning of God's word is to obey it. v. 15.

Behold the paradox of gospel gladness—the more we impart of it to others, the more we possess for our own enjoyment. vs. 17, 18, 20.

From the Library

Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

—Wordsworth.

Regarding the exact spot where Jesus was born we have a tradition mentioned by Justin martyr, which was adopted by Origen, to the effect that Jesus was born in a cave near the

village of Bethlehem. If Jesus was born in a cave, it was at least one which had been used as a stable, as the word *manger* indicates.—Gilbert's, Student's Life of Jesus.

The unfathomable depths of the divine counsels were moved; the fountains of the great deep were broken up; the healing of the nations was issuing forth; but nothing was seen on the surface of human society but this slight rippling of the water.—Isaac Williams.

The writer has frequently spent the night in a large stable, at one end of which there was a fireplace, separated by a low railing, within which there was space for several persons to lie down; the natural warmth from a number of cattle made the place quite comfortable in cold weather, and the only inconvenience experienced was the occasional disturbance of slumber by the touch of the cold nose of a too friendly ox.—Professor Albert L. Long.

Prove from Scripture

That Jesus brings joy.

Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—How many gospels are there? Give the names of the writers. How did Luke likely learn about the words and works of Jesus?

1-3 What ruler is named here? What did he order? For what purpose?

4-7 Where did Joseph and Mary live? Whither did they go to be enrolled? Was Jesus born in a house? Where was He born? How was this?

8-14 Who were told about the birth of Jesus? Where? By whom? Repeat the song of the angels.

15-20 How did the shepherds find Jesus? Whom did they tell about Him? What effect had their tidings?

Seniors and the Home Department—Mention some prophecies fulfilled in the coming of the Saviour. Give some account of Luke.

1-3 Where does Luke refer to another enrolment? (Acts 5:37, Rev. Ver.) What is Christ's teaching about paying taxes? (Matt. 22:21.) Paul's? (Rom. 13:6, 7.)

4-7 How does Paul describe the humility of Christ's earthly appearance? (Phil. 2:6-8.)

8-20 How are we saved? (Rom. 10:9.) What is the test of real faith? (Acts 16:15.) Our duty in regard to making the gospel known? (Isa. 6:8.)

The Catechism

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

Ques. 1. *Man's chief end.* Man's "chief end" means, what chiefly he was made for. The Scriptures teach that God's purpose in all He has made is to reveal the glory of His own character (see Rev. 4:11). We are doing what we were made for when we willingly give ourselves to the furthering of this divine purpose. The word "chief" is used because there are more ends than one which men may rightly seek, such as making money,

increasing knowledge, and the like. But above all these, we ought to set the duty of glorifying God; and no duty is done aright in which God is not glorified. Men choose the ends they think will make them happy. The Question assures us that in seeking God's glory we shall find the highest happiness.

The Question on Missions

By Rev. J. S. Sutherland, B.A., Halifax, N.S.

Ques. 1. The beginnings of our church must be sought among the early settlements of Scotch and Irish immigrants. The first distinctively Presbyterian congregation was organized at Londonderry, Nova Scotia, in 1761. Its first minister was Rev. James Lyon, who came from New Jersey in 1764. He preached at a number of places near what is now the town of Truro. Other ministers, chiefly from Scotland, came a few years later. Rev. James McGregor arrived in 1786, and settled in Pictou County. From this as a centre he made many missionary tours, preaching, dispensing the sacraments, and organizing the scattered settlers into congregations.

Dr. Thomas McCulloch, afterwards Principal of Dalhousie College, Halifax, became minister at Pictou in 1804. Besides his other labors, he founded the Pictou Academy, in which many students for the ministry were trained.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, North Bay, Ont.

Introduction—Our stories for the whole year are to be about JESUS (1) Coming to earth, (2) Working among men, (3) Returning to the Father.

A Message—If you get a message that grandmother or some one else whom you dearly love is coming to see you, but you are not told exactly when, you will be looking eagerly and watching to see who comes in the gateway, watching for letters that may tell when the loved one will be here. The children of Israel had received a message long before, telling them of a wonderful Friend—a Saviour—who would come to live amongst them (read Isa. 9:6). From that time they are always look-



The Shepherds Find Jesus

ing for that One—the Messiah. They expect He will come as a great, grand King (Micah 5 : 2), and will put away all other kings and rulers, and take charge of everything Himself. (Will they know Him when He comes? We shall see.)

Lesson Subject—Jesus announced by the angels.

Shepherds Honored—Picture by means of sand on tray, or blackboard, or slate, or scribbling book, that beautiful scene on the hillside near Bethlehem. It is night. The white sheep lie among the grass, close to their own shepherds. (Teachers will easily make objects to represent the scene.) The shepherds are resting, but ever watchful. Suddenly a great light bursts from the sky, making brightness all around, something like a brilliant lightning flash, perhaps. The shepherds are filled with fear, and jump up trembling, looking around in wonder. Listen! A soft voice says, "Fear not," etc., v. 10 (repeat).

Golden Text—Repeat v. 11.

Shepherds Find Jesus—They must leavethir flocks to go and seek Him! Where shall they find Him? In some beautiful palace surely! This wonderful King would come to no other

home! Listen again to the sweet voiced angel! v. 12 (repeat).

A Choir from Heaven—Then bursts forth such a chorus of sweet voices, singing, "Glory to God in the highest," etc., v. 14. The whole sky is filled with beautiful angel faces beaming with joy. The shepherds are spell-bound. They cannot move. They can only gaze and listen—and the song grows fainter and more faint, and dies away. The shepherds turn one to the other: "Let us now go . . . and see," etc., v. 15.

A Humble Birthplace. The heavenly Babe, the promised King, is found with Mary and Joseph, whom God had made to be His mother and father, to take care of Him just as other babies are cared for. (Why are they here?)

A Humble King—Sing, "Who is He in yonder stall?" etc., Hymn 538, Book of Praise. (This is the Supplemental Hymn for the Quarter.)

Telling the Good News—The shepherds went out to tell everybody they met, and returned to their work praising and thanking God.

Something to Draw at Home—Draw a crook. Print, THE SHEPHERDS FOUND JESUS.

Something to Remember—I may find Jesus.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

THE SAVIOUR PROMISED
PRAISED
PROCLAIMED

The Lesson is about the birth of THE SAVIOUR. (Print). Let the scholars be asked for announcements of His coming. Such passages as Isa. 9 : 6, 7, and the angel's words to Mary about the birth of the Babe will be fresh in mind. So then the Saviour was PROMISED (Print). Next, ask for the three titles given to Jesus by the angel who appeared to the shepherds (see v. 12). Bring out the meaning of each title (see Exposition, and HOME STUDY QUARTERLY or LEAFLET). Not only was the Saviour promised, but He was also PRAISED (Print). Then question about the visit of the shepherds, and what they saw. Ask, too, about what they did to spread the good news. By them the Saviour was PROCLAIMED (Print). Close by asking about the ways in which the Saviour is proclaimed nowadays, and press home the duty of helping to make Him known. Emphasize the gladness that comes from taking part in this work.

Lesson II.

THE WISE MEN FIND JESUS

January 14, 1906

Matthew 2 : 1-12. Commit to memory v. 11. Read Luke 2 : 21-38.

GOLDEN TEXT—My son, give me thine heart.—Proverbs 23 : 26.

1 Now when Je'sus was born in Beth'lehem of Jude'a in the days of Her'od the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jeru'salem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews ? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

3 When Her'od the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jeru'salem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In Beth'lehem of Jude'a : for thus it is written by the prophet,

6 And thou Beth'lehem, in the land of Ju'da, art not the least among the princes of Ju'da : for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Is'rael.

7 Then Her'od, when he had privily called the

Revised Version—¹saw; ²And when; ³heard it; ⁴gathering together; ⁵inquired; ⁶the; ⁷land of Judah; ⁸in no wise least; ⁹which shall be shepherd of; ¹⁰privily called the wise men, and learned of them carefully; ¹¹out carefully concerning the young child; ¹²Omit again; ¹³also may come and worship him; ¹⁴And they, having heard the king, went th. way; ¹⁵they came into the house and saw; ¹⁶opening their treasures; ¹⁷offered.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Seekers, 1, 2.
- II. The Directions, 3-8.
- III. The Discovery, 9-12.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—The Wise Men find Jesus, Matt. 2 : 1-12.
T.—The prophecy, Micah 5 : 1-4. W.—Scripture testimony, John 7 : 32-44. Th.—"Thy light is come," Isa. 60 : 1-6. F.—Gifts and worship, Psalm 72 : 1-15. S.—Simeon's blessing, Luke 2 : 25-35. Sa.—Anna's thanksgiving, Luke 2 : 36-39.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 2. What rule hath God

wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Beth'lehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Her'od, they departed into their own country another way.

given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him ? A. The word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

The Question on Missions—2. What has been the result of the labors of these early missionaries ? The labors of these early missionaries, together with those of the faithful men who followed them, have made the Eastern Section of our church strong enough to support all its own work, besides contributing towards home missions in the Northwest.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 114 (Supplemental Lesson) : 31 ; 34 ; 5 (Ps. Sel.) : 31 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 560.

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—Probably early in B.C. 4; Bethlehem.

Connecting Links—In fulfilment of the law of Moses Jesus had been circumcised (Luke 2 : 21) and presented in the temple (Luke 2 : 28-38), where He was received by the aged Simeon, who, under the influence of the divine Spirit, welcomed the Babe as the long hoped for Saviour of Israel. At the same time the prophetess Anna broke forth into thanksgiving for the new redemption. Matthew, writing for the Jews, as Mark for the Romans and Luke for the Greeks, shows in his Gospel that Jesus is the true Messiah. He therefore traces the descent of Jesus to King David (ch. 1 : 1-17), and now narrates this story in order to show how the representatives of heathen nations come to pay homage to the new born king.

I. The Seekers, 1, 2.

V. 1. Jesus was born. See Lesson I. Bethlehem of Judæa. There was another Bethlehem in Galilee. Matthew says nothing

about Nazareth having been the home of Joseph and Mary. Herod the king. Herod I., called "the Great," (B.C. 40-B.C. 4) a foreign usurper from Idumæa, a country south of Judæa, who got the Romans to appoint him king of Judæa. A man of wonderful power, who murdered any rival, however closely related to him. He enlarged the kingdom, but introduced many heathen practices, and was hated by the Jews on this account, and because of his great cruelty. Matthew apparently wishes to contrast the birth of the true King of Israel with the power of the false king who has usurped the Jewish throne. Wise men; literally, "Magi," men of great influence belonging to the priestly class, who practised astrology. Later tradition, working on Isa. 60 : 3, supposed them to be three kings. From the east; perhaps from Babylon, some say Arabia or Persia. In these Eastern regions learning had been earnestly cultivated from a very early period. To Jerusalem; for this was the Jewish capital,

where the new king would be supposed to be born.

V. 2. *King of the Jews*. The expectation that a great King would arise among the Jews was widespread over the world. They had doubtless learned of Him and the blessing to accrue to the Gentiles also through Him, from the writings of the Jews who for several centuries had been scattered throughout the East. *His star*. The appearance of constellations or brilliant stars was in antiquity generally thought to betoken the birth of great men (see Num. 24 : 17). It seems that a star of especial brilliancy appeared in the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn about B.C. 6 or 7. *To worship*. It does not mean that they were going to pay Him divine honors, but the homage due to a divinely appointed King. They were the first Gentiles to recognize the kingship of Christ.

II. The Directions, 3-8.

Vs. 3, 4. *Herod . . . troubled*; because he was afraid lest the throne should be taken from him. *All Jerusalem*. The visit and purpose of the Magi would be widely reported through the city. Knowing the cruelty of Herod, the people would fear the result of a struggle between the usurper and the coming King. They may have feared, also, that the new King would bring them into conflict with the terrible power of Rome, and further that He would interfere with the sinful pleasures and wicked schemes for gain so common amongst them. *Chief priests* (who had charge of the temple services) and *scribes* (teachers of the Old Testament): Herod consulted the religious authorities, who might be supposed to know the expectations of the Jews better than himself, who was a foreigner from Idumæa. The chief priests, who were Sadducees, a Jewish religious sect, had very little interest in the Messianic hopes of the people, and usually sided with those in power; but the scribes would be well versed in these matters.

Vs. 5, 6. *Thus it is written*. Matthew is very fond of showing that the life of Jesus the Messiah was a fulfilment of prophecy. *Bethlehem of Judæa*. Scripture proof that Messiah's birthplace was Bethlehem is taken from Micah 5 : 2. *Shepherd of my people Israel*

(Rev. Ver.); in contrast to thieves and robbers who plundered the sheep (see Micah 5 : 4, and compare 2 Sam. 5 : 2; 7 : 8; Jer. 23 : 2). All the evil associations connected with kingship are stripped off by the use of the word "shepherd."

Vs. 7, 8. *Privily*; secretly, so that no one might interfere with his evil designs (see v. 16). *Enquired . . . diligently*; "learned of them exactly." *What time*, etc.; so that he might know how old the child probably was. *Sent them to Bethlehem*. The wise men seem not to have met the priests and scribes by themselves. Herod kept everything in his own hands. *Go and search diligently*. A very sly schemer was Herod, and a hypocrite withal. Other agents might have alarmed the town, and he could not have got the information he wished. *Bring me word . . . worship him*. Herod covered up his real motive of murderous hate with a pretended motive of great piety. It was like the kiss of Judas, Luke 23 : 47, 48.

III. The Discovery, 9-12.

Vs. 9, 10. *They . . . heard the king*; and may have had a suspicion of his unholy purpose, but said nothing (see v. 12). Shrewd men of the world, familiar with courts, they could read character well. *Lo, the star*. Having got information in Jerusalem, the star confirmed their knowledge, appearing brightly before them till they came to Bethlehem. *Saw . . . rejoiced*; because it was a sign to them from heaven that their mission was to be successful. How beautiful a contrast is the devout simplicity of these wise men, to the selfish devices of Herod!

Vs. 11, 12. *Into the house*. By this time Joseph and Mary very probably had a temporary home of their own in Bethlehem. *The young child with Mary*; a humble woman of the laboring class with nothing royal about her, and yet they had faith to believe that this Babe was to be the long looked for King. *Fell down . . . worshipped*; gave Him royal homage. *Opened their treasures*; for they were men of great wealth, and were able to give very different expression to their worship than that of the poor shepherds. *Offered* (Rev. Ver.); a reverent act. *Oriental*s never approached a king without presents.

Gold . . . frankincense (a fragrant resin from the bark of an Indian tree) . . . myrrh (an aromatic gum used in perfumes). These were the gifts commonly offered. Matthew perhaps saw in this visit a fulfilment of the prophecies of Ps. 72 : 10; Isa. 60 : 3, 10, 12. *Warned . . . in a dream*; which would give force to any of their former suspicions, and thus these good men were in no way involved even unwittingly in the murderous plans of Herod.

Light from the East

BETHLEHEM—The "house of bread," about six miles south of Jerusalem, is now a town of 8,000 people, in the most fertile district of Judæa. The Church of the Nativity is the oldest church in the world still in use, the principal part of it being built in A.D. 330. In the crypt or basement, under the choir,

is the Chapel of the Nativity, which contains an arched recess, said to represent the grotto of the manger. Fifteen lamps constantly burn around it and a silver star on the rock floor has the inscription around it in Latin : "Here of the Virgin Mary Jesus Christ was born." It is a solemn sight to see a long line of Russian pilgrims come forward, one by one, in silence, and stretching themselves flat on the ground under the circle of lamps, kiss the star which marks the place of the Lord's birth. It is the best authenticated of all the sacred spots in the Holy Land. Quite early in the second century it was a resort of Christian pilgrims. Besides the Greek Church and Roman Catholic institutions of Bethlehem, there is a school for girls of the British mission, and one under the Jerusalem Union of Berlin.

APPLICATION

Jesus was born, v. 1. How simple the announcement and yet how richly freighted with blessing. No need now for men to bear their burden of pain and sorrow
Ring It Out! alone : for One has come to stand at their side with the sympathy of an Elder Brother. No need for the tempted to go down into the dark and woeful depths of sin : for the strong Son of God is ready to give them the victory. No need to go out into the darkness when death comes : for He who came from heaven and returned thither has left a path of light for all His followers. Let the good news ring through the heart and ring out until all the world shall hear it !

Wise men . . . came (Rev. Ver.), v. 1. No doubt their neighbors thought that they had forgotten their wisdom when they set out to follow a star to find a baby.
Ridicule Proves Nothing So all Europe laughed at Columbus when he talked of discovering a new world. And the people laughed at George Stephenson's locomotive, the Rocket. And anyone who dares to do better or wiser than his companions will be laughed at. But ridicule never proved any thing, nor accomplished anything. "Be sure you are right, and then go ahead !"

To worship him, v. 2. Religion and wisdom are the best of friends. The gospel is

indeed for the foolish, but in order to make them wise. Lord Bacon writes, "It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion." Mr. Gladstone said that, of all the hundreds of statesmen with whom he had been associated during half a century of public life, less than half a dozen were not professed Christians.

Troubled, v. 3. A suicide, who took his life lately in one of the Western States, left a note confessing that thirty years ago he had killed a woman. During all those years he had never ceased to suffer, and nearly every night he saw her in his dreams at his bedside. His remorse frightened him, until he slew himself. There is nothing which leaves us so open to alarm as guilt. Even a baby can frighten King Herod, because of his wickedness. When sin comes in at the door, peace flies out at the window.

In Bethlehem, v. 5. The proper use of the Bible is to reveal God. They knew the words of their Bibles, those priests and scribes, but they did not know God. They had the form of godliness but denied the power thereof. So Jesus, thirty years later, complained of these same people, "Ye search the Scriptures, be-

**The Wisest
Wisdom**

**A Peace
Destroyer**

**Useless
Learning**

The Wise Men Find Jesus

cause ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of Me; and ye will not come to Me that ye may have life." It is little use to learn verses and read the original languages, and know all that criticism teaches, if we do not find Him of whom all these pages speak. The great end of Bible study is the finding of the Christ.

Governor . . . shepherd (Rev. Ver.), v. 6. Authority ought to mean service. A governor should be a shepherd. And the shepherd, as Ezekiel says, ought to

What Promotion Means feed the sheep, and not make the sheep feed him. The captain exists for his soldiers, the doctor for his patients, the minister for his congregation, the king for his subjects. No person has the right to think that any promotion is for his own gratification. To be monitor in school, to captain an athletic team, to hold an office in any society, means to help and serve. Even Jesus came not to be ministered unto but to minister.

I also may . . . worship him (Rev. Ver.), v. 8. Because a lie is clever, it is none the less detestable. Herod thought he had succeeded in deceiving these strangers,

Tell the Truth! and no doubt chuckled at the success of his knavery. No amount of decoration can make a round-about road as short as a direct route. You may paint wood to look like bread, but

you cannot therefore eat it. You may rouge the cheeks of a corpse, but you do not start the blood flowing. And no skill or aptness can make an untruth anything but base and cowardly and wicked.

Gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, v. 11. These were the costly gifts of rich men. A rich man is as welcome to worship God and accept His mercy as a poor man.

Rich Men's Worship

Abraham was a prince and a millionaire. Joseph of Arimathea was well-to-do. In fact the Bible cares so little who was rich and who poor that we are scarcely ever informed. God is so rich, that the difference in human possessions must seem trifling to Him. He asks no man, How much money have you? But He asks, Where did you get your money? and, What are you going to do with your money?

Warned of God . . . they departed, v. 12. Children amuse themselves with building castles of cards, which tumble to the floor at a touch. So wicked men care-

Castles of Cards

fully construct their plans, priding themselves upon their skill and counting confidently upon success; but the Almighty puts forth His hand, and lo, all their cunning devices lie about them in ruin. There is nothing but disaster and defeat for those who contend against God. The victory and the triumph are always in the long run on His side.

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars

Do not strain your eyes to see merely the star. It matters little whether it was a conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter, or a comet, or a supernatural Shechinah. That we should see Christ in His saving, kingly power is far more important than to solve the astronomical problems of the story. Gather the lessons, then, round four propositions.

1. Interest in Christ is sometimes aroused in remote ways, v. 2. Say here what little you think you know about the star; but do not use up too much time. Say more about the men who saw the star. How many were there? Some say twelve, some three. What

were they? Men of the learned class ("wise," v. 1). What names does tradition give them? Melchior, Caspar, Balthasar. Where are they supposed to have come from? "The east," v. 1. Arabia, Persia, Egypt, India, have been conjectured.

The interest of the Magi began at a point as remote as the stars. Astrology promises little from a Christian standpoint; yet in the end it led to Christ. So with modern athleticism. I know swift runners who became deeply concerned in the Christian race (Heb. 12 : 1), and strong wrestlers who vie with Jacob in a serious contest, Eph. 6 : 12. Pugilism seems most remote of all from Christianity, yet it may illustrate how the body has to be bruised black and blue, to keep it under and leave the soul free for

Christian duty, 1 Cor. 9 : 27. Better a remote interest, than none at all.

2. Those who are really interested in Christ are not easily discouraged in their efforts to find Him, vs. 2-6. These Wise Men feared not the hardships of Oriental travel. On reaching Palestine they found universal ignorance and indifference. In the border towns they asked their question, "Where is He?" v. 2. They were surprised that no one knew; surprised, but not disheartened. They felt sure people would be better posted when they reached the capital. Disappointment awaited them there. Still they sought. They "troubled" both king and people, v. 3. They set priests and scribes searching the scriptures, v. 4. They persisted until they located the birthplace at Bethlehem, vs. 5, 6. They kept on till they actually found the Christ, v. 11. If any of your scholars happen to ask yourself where He may be found, will you be ready to answer?

3. A person may point out the way to Christ without going that way himself, vs. 7, 8. Call for a description of Herod's course. Show the cunning in the concealment of his real purpose. He professes an interest in the star (v. 7) and in the King, v. 8. He sends others to Christ, whilst himself resisting and opposing His right and claim to rule, and plotting His murder, v. 16.

4. Persevering effort to reach Christ is sure to be rewarded, vs. 9-12. Trace the progress of the star, v. 9. It was neither a fixed star, nor planet, nor meteor. It moved, but not in an erratic course. After all, we need a supernatural light to find Christ, Acts 9 : 3. When it bursts upon us, we have gladness : the gladness (1) of finding we have taken the right way (v. 10); (2) of finding the way really open to worship and serve Christ (v. 11); (3) of finding a way indicated to defeat the plottings of wicked hearts, v. 12.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The richness of romance is all about this Lesson—the mysterious East, the still more mysterious star, the far travellers, the blood-thirsty king, the persistent search, the finding of the Child, the gifts, and the outwitting of the would-be murderer.

Perhaps the best treatment of the Lesson is

to let the scholars weave the story, thread by thread, with just enough of question and of explanation and application to make it all live before their eyes.

Or some such points as those mentioned above may be brought out, as follows :—

The Searchers. Whence came they; and who were they? From the "Eastern regions" (for that is what the word for East here used means): Persia, India, some far away land, or lands. Heaven was intent on the scene in the manger at Bethlehem, as our last Lesson told; the furthest regions of the earth were intent also, as this Lesson shows. "Wise Men" (Magi is the Latin word), men of rank, wealth, learning; none are so lofty that they should not rejoice to bow before this blessed Son of God.

The Star. "His star," they call it, v. 2. The study of the stars (astrology) was in high favor then. Men believed that they could learn the will of the Deity from the movements and conjunctions of the stars. There was a remarkable conjunction of Jupiter, Mars and Saturn about that time. Was it this? More likely a light which God Himself placed in the sky specially to guide these men.

The Quest. Vs. 1 and 2 describe it. Fancy sets these three "kings" on camels, with lordly trappings. We know only that they made the far journey looking for the "King of the Jews." How had they heard of Him? There were Jews scattered everywhere; these were expecting Him, for did not their prophecies foretell His coming, Isa. 9 : 6; 11 : 10?

Herod—who pretends to help, but in reality is on a bloody trail. Question as to who Herod was, and of what sort; as to why v. 3 should have been so. He knew about the promised Messiah (Christ). Every Jew did also, and so much the greater sin and shame for him and them not to have welcomed Him, when He came. Where was He to be born? Only six miles away (at Bethlehem, vs. 4-6) was the startling answer. Study Herod's hypocrisy, vs. 7, 8. Compare with v. 16.

The Child. The class will be eager to follow through vs. 9 and 10 to v. 11. It is the climax of the story. Note, it is not a stable now, but a "home" (For the naming and the

consecration of the Babe, see Luke 2 : 21-38). The gifts—as to a king—follow (some other beautiful examples of giving, Luke 21 : 2-4; Acts 2 : 44, 45; 4 : 32-37; 2 Cor. 8 : 1-4;

9 : 13; Phil. 4 : 18; compare Hymn 535, Book of Praise). How Herod was outwitted and the Holy Child preserved (v. 12), closes the Lesson.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Lesson Points

True learning is the handmaid of religion.

v. 1.

The soul that would see visions must keep its windows open heavenward. v. 2.

"Conscience does make cowards of us all."

v. 3.

Whether the birth of Jesus brings joy or judgment, depends on men's character. v. 4.

The paths of prophecy all converge on Christ as the centre. vs. 5, 6.

To the Searcher of hearts the deepest secrets of men are an open page. v. 7.

We cannot mask sin from our Maker. v. 8.

When God starts us on a search, look for success in it. v. 9.

Joy is the certain goal of the godly. v. 10.

The gift most pleasing to God is a gift that all can bring—a loving, grateful heart. v. 11.

Human plots can never defeat a divine plan. v. 12.

From the Library

Virgil owns (Fourth Eclogue) that a child from heaven was looked for, who should restore the golden age, and take away sin.—Jacobus.

These Jerusalemites—townspeople as they called themselves—were so polished, so witty, so pleasant. And how much there was to be seen and heard in those luxuriously furnished houses, and at those sumptuous entertainments! In the women's apartments friends from the country would see every novelty in dress, adornment, and jewelry, and would have the benefit of examining themselves in looking glasses. And then the lady visitors might get anything in Jerusalem from a false tooth to an Arabian veil, a Persian shawl or an Indian dress!—Edersheim.

Three acts are here—falling down, worshipping and offering: the first, the worship of the body; the second, of the soul; the third, of our goods. With these three, our bodies, our souls, our goods, we are to wor-

ship Him. Without them all, worship is but a lame and maimed sacrifice, neither fit for wise men to give nor Christ to receive.—Dr. Mark Frank.

Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion,
Odors of Edom and offerings divine?
Gems of the mountains, and pearls of the ocean,
Myrrh from the forest, and gold from the mines?

Vainly we offer ample ovation,

Vainly with gifts would His favor secure:
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.
—Heber.

In this story we have types of four classes of men, which exist still; namely, (1) those who earnestly seek the truth; (2) those who rest in the letter of the truth; (3) those who are fearfully alarmed at the truth; and (4) those who are affectionate guardians of the truth. The Magi represent the first, the scribes and Pharisees the second, Herod the third, and Joseph and Mary the fourth.—Abbott.

Prove from Scripture

That we should give for Christ's cause.

Lesson Questions

[From the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—At what age was Jesus presented in the temple? What law commanded this?

1, 2 Who was king in Jerusalem when Jesus was born? Who came to Jerusalem? Whence did they come? For whom were they seeking? What had started them on their search?

3-8 Why was Herod troubled at hearing about a "king of the Jews"? Whom did he call together? What question did he ask? The answer? What did Herod ask the Wise Men to do? His purpose?

9, 10 What went before the Wise Men? Where did it stop? How did they feel?

11, 12 What did the Wise Men do when they had found Jesus? What presents did they give?

Seniors and the Home Department—Upon what event in the life of Jesus did the visit of the Magi follow? For whom specially was Matthew's gospel written? Luke's?

1, 2 Tell of Herod's origin and describe his character. Who were the Magi? Tell of other Gentiles who came later to Jesus. (Mark 7 : 25, 26; Luke 7 : 2, 3; John 12 : 20, 21.)

3-8 Explain why Herod was troubled. What did the people of Jerusalem fear? How was it known where Christ should be born? What other Herod was troubled when he heard of Jesus? (Luke 9 : 7.)

9-12 How were the Wise Men guided to where Jesus was? Describe their gifts. What is the best gift we can offer? (Rom. 12 : 1.)

The Catechism

Ques. 2. *The rule of life.* Note first the title here given to the Scriptures. They are called the "Word of God." This teaches us that God has spoken to men. The writers of the Bible books were commissioned to speak in His name and by His authority, Matt. 28 : 19, 20; 2 Pet. 2 : 21. Further they were qualified for their work by the gift of the Holy Spirit, John 14 : 26; 15 : 26, 27. The Holy Ghost helped the sacred writers in two ways. First, He revealed to them truth which they would not otherwise have known.

Secondly, He inspired them, that is, so guided them by His divine wisdom that they wrote the very truth which God intended. All parts of the Scriptures are inspired, 2 Pet. 3 : 21; Heb. 3 : 7, thus they are our sure guide in all the duties of life.

The Question on Missions

Ques. 2. The work of the early home missionaries demanded much faith, patience and self-denial. Outward circumstances were unfavorable. In many places the forest came down to the water's edge. Often the only roads were paths blazed through the woods. The people were very poor, many were indifferent, even profligate. The missionaries had much to discourage them and received little material reward. As a result of the work done by these pioneer missionaries, and by those who followed them, there are to-day in the Eastern Section of our church 196 pastoral charges, 26,000 families, and 43,000 communicants. We have a well-equipped Theological Hall with 31 students. Besides carrying on its own congregational and home mission work, the Maritime Synod supports our foreign missionaries in the New Hebrides, Trinidad, Demerara, and Korea, and aids in French Evangelization and in home missions in the Northwest. The givings for all purposes last year were \$446,661.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—Jesus—Worshipped by the Wise Men.

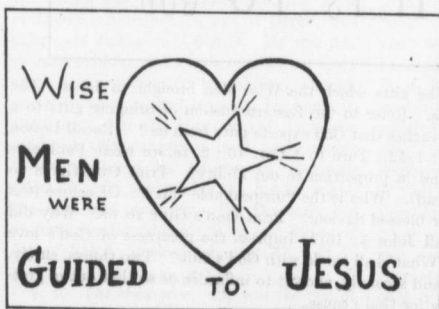
Introduction—Have you ever looked up into the sky on a beautiful clear night and tried to count the stars? Have you ever said,—

"Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky."

(Repeat, pointing upwards.)

Do you know that there is one bright star which we know is directly in the north? If sailors or travelers look for the north star (point), they know which way they should go.

A Guiding Star—We are going to hear about a wonderful guiding star. It appeared



The Wise Men Find Jesus

in the East (point), where lived some of the descendants of Abraham. They knew about the promised King. They were not humble shepherds, but great, rich, wise men, who had read many books. They knew all about the stars too. One night they see a new star. It must be a sign. They look and wonder! Then they remember the promise, Num. 24 : 17. Some of them say, "We will go and find the King." They prepare for the journey on the backs of camels (describe). They carry costly gifts to present to the long looked for King Jesus. They begin their journey. Lo, the star moves! They follow it till they reach Jerusalem. They ask, "Where shall we find Jesus?"

Herod is alarmed lest King Jesus may have come to take the crown and throne away from him and become King in his stead. So he finds out from the chief priests and scribes (explain) that the new King was to be born in Bethlehem and sends the Wise Men thither to find Him. Herod's wicked plan was to kill Jesus (see v. 16). But God defeated this plan (tell v. 12).

Wise Men Find Jesus—Describe the Wise Men kneeling around the helpless Babe, worshipping. They open their treasures and present to Him the most costly gifts they could bring.

Some Gifts—Repeat :

"The wise may bring their learning,
The rich may bring their gold :
The poor may bring their service
And a wealth of love untold."

Golden Text—Print—MY SON GIVE ME THINE

HEART. **BRING GIFTS TO JESUS.**

Our Gifts—What can we bring to Jesus ?

"Hearts that they may love Him,
Daily more and more;
Hands that they may serve Him
Better than before;
Lips that they may praise Him,
Singing all the way;
Feet that on His errands
Run all through the day."

A Wish—

"I wish I were a little star,
I'd shine so bright for Jesus;
E'en the little rays can reach afar,
And lead some one to Jesus."

The Bright and Morning Star—Jesus calls Himself "the bright and morning Star," Rev. 22 : 16.

Something to Draw at Home—Draw a star within a heart. Print, WISE MEN WERE GUIDED TO JESUS.

Something to Remember—I should worship Jesus.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

GOD'S GIFTs TO US
OUR TO GOD

Begin with a little talk about the gifts which the Wise Men brought to Jesus. The scholars will explain what these were. Refer to the Eastern custom of bringing gifts to a king. Now ask what recent Lesson teaches that God expects gifts from us ? (Recall Lesson XII., Fourth Quarter, 1905, Mal. 3 : 1-12.) Turn to 1 Cor. 16 : 2, to see what Paul says about giving (it should be regular and in proportion to our ability). Print OUR GIFTS TO GOD. Now turn to 2 Cor. 9 : 15 (Read). Who is the "unspeakable Gift"? Of course it is Jesus Christ, God's own Son, and our blessed Saviour. Print GOD'S GIFT TO US. Why did God bestow this gift upon us (Recall John 3 : 16)? Impress the greatness of God's love and His eager desire to save us all. What shall we do with God's Gift ? Two things, surely. First, accept it with grateful hearts, and secondly, allow it to influence us so that out of gratitude we shall work and give willingly for God's cause.

Lesson III.

THE BOY JESUS

January 21, 1906

Luke 2 : 40-52. Commit to memory v. 51. Read Matthew 2 : 13-23; Luke 2 : 39.

GOLDEN TEXT—Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.—Luke 2 : 52.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom : and the grace of God was upon him.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

43 And when he had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst

Revised Version—Omit in spirit; And his parents went every year to Jerusalem; Omit to Jerusalem; returned to; amazed; his; he; Omit have;

LESSON PLAN

I. The Boy Jesus, 40.

II. Jesus at the Feast, 41-45.

III. Jesus in the Temple, 46-50.

IV. Jesus and His Parents, 51, 52.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—The Boy Jesus, Luke 2 : 40-52. T.—The Passover Feast, Deut. 16 : 1-8. W.—The wisdom of Jesus, Matt. 13 : 53-58. Th.—A child and the Scriptures, 2 Tim. 3 : 10-17. F.—Seeking for wisdom, Prov. 2 : 1-9. S.—The principal thing, Prov.

Time and Place— March-April, A.D. 7 or 8; Jerusalem, and Nazareth, a village in Galilee.

Connecting Links—After the visit of the Wise Men, Joseph and Mary flee with Jesus from Herod's power into Egypt, Matt. 2 : 13-15. But they remain there only until his death, when under divine guidance they return to Judæa, Matt. 2 : 19-21. Meanwhile the cruel massacre of the children at Bethlehem had taken place under the order of Herod. Archelaus, a son of Herod, was ruler over Judæa until 6 A.D. He was just as unscrupulous as his father, and even more cruel, and a man of far less ability. Joseph seems to have wished to make his home in Bethlehem, but the character of Archelaus rendered this dangerous, and again under divine guidance he returns to Nazareth (Matt. 2 : 22, 23), where the family might live in a safe obscurity. For the early life of Jesus see Edersheim's "Life and Times of Jesus," Vol. I., Book II., chapters IX. and X.

I. The Child Jesus, 40.

V. 40. *The child grew.* He was the Son of

of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed : and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us ? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me ? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business ?

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them : but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

4 : 1-13. S.—Growing in grace, 2 Peter 3 : 11-18. **Shorter Catechism**—*Ques. 3. What do the Scriptures principally teach ?* A. The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

The Question on Missions—3. What amount of home mission work was done last year by the Eastern Section? Over \$32,000 were given for home missions, one half by the mission stations themselves. There were 76 missionaries, who preached in 202 mission stations, and to more than 16,000 people.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 114 (Supplemental Lesson); 521; 389; 57 (Ps. Sel.); 304 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 584.

EXPOSITION

God, conceived by the Holy Spirit (ch. 1 : 35), but Luke shows that He grew in a perfectly natural way. *Waxed (grew) strong*; referring to the knitting of the physical frame. (Rev. Ver. omits "in spirit.") Jesus was a strong, sturdy, active boy, full of life and energy. *Filled with*; "becoming full of," growing in mind as well as in body. In His fifth or sixth year Jesus would begin to attend the school connected with the village synagogue, taught by a scribe, with the Bible as the chief lesson book. At home, too, where His mother's piety would be a gracious influence, He would be carefully instructed in Bible knowledge, Deut. 6 : 6, 7. He heard God's Word read also at the Sabbath services in the synagogue, which He regularly attended, ch. 4 : 6. *Wisdom*. As His mental powers grew, Jesus displayed marvelous insight into the things of God, and also into the minds of men and into human affairs, John 2 : 25. *Grace*; the favor and help of God, which kept Him from evil, and produced in Him every beauty of character. Such winsomeness could come only from God.

II. Jesus at the Feast, 41-45.

Vs. 41, 42. *To Jerusalem*; a distance of seventy or eighty miles from Nazareth. *Every year*. According to Ex. 23 : 14-17; Deut. 16 : 16, every male Israelite was required to attend the three great feasts, Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. Women were not required, but only recommended, to go, and their presence was regarded as a mark of special piety, 1 Sam. 1 : 21, 22; 2 : 19. *The passover*; which commemorated the great national redemption, when Jehovah delivered Israel from Egypt. It was the birthday of the nation (see Ex. 12 : 27). *Twelve years old*; an important year then, as now, in a boy's life, because the period of adolescence is drawing on. At that time the Jewish boy became a "son of the Law," that is, had to begin to obey for himself its statutes and observe its feasts. Now also he began to learn a trade; in the case of Jesus, that of a carpenter, Mark 6 : 3. The education of a boy in Galilee was much freer from pedantry than in the rabbinic schools of Judea and Jerusalem.

Vs. 43-45. *Fulfilled the days*; the seven days of the Passover Feast (Ex. 12 : 15; Lev. 23 : 6, 7; Deut. 16 : 3), or perhaps only the two days of the chief sacrifices, after which many of the pilgrims left Jerusalem. *Tarried*; possibly because for Him the attraction of divine things was so strong, or, as Godet thinks, He found Himself unintentionally separated from his parents, and in his loneliness naturally went to the temple. *Knew not of it*; showing their confidence in Jesus and how little they are accustomed to watch Him. *In the company*; the caravan. The people of a village, or of several neighboring villages traveled together to and from the feasts. At the present day women and children start early, and the men, setting out later, overtake them before nightfall. In this case Mary might think that He was with Joseph, and Joseph that He was with Mary.

III. Jesus in the Temple, 46-50.

Vs. 46, 47. *After three days*; one day going, one returning, and one seeking Him in the city. *In the temple*. There were several synagogues and schools within the temple court, or on "the (temple) terrace, where

members of the Sanhedrin (great Jewish council) gave instruction on the Sabbath and at festivals." (Plummer). *Sitting in the midst of*; not that the rabbis were learning from Him : He was the respectful pupil, Acts 22 : 3. But there was always a great deal of freedom of question and answer between teachers and taught. Jesus, feeling the influence of the place and feast, had probably put such questions that the rabbis were giving close attention to this wonderful Boy. *Amazed* (Rev. Ver.). He was not less remarkable as a Boy than as a Man, Mark 2 : 12. *His understanding*; that is, intelligence, the use of the wisdom with which He was being filled, v. 40. *Answers*; probably from scripture. The scriptures were always His delight (see His very last appearances to His disciples, Luke 24 : 32, 45).

Vs. 48-50. *Astonished* (Rev. Ver.); perhaps at several things—the questions and answers He gave, His apparent forgetfulness of themselves, possibly a degree of self-assertion which they had never seen before. *Sorrowing*; literally, "in anguish," lest some accident had befallen Him. In the complaint there may have been a vein of self-reproach on Mary's part. She and Joseph had appeared to be neglectful. *Wist*; knew. *About my Father's business* (Rev. Ver., in my Father's house"); literally, "in the things of My Father" the first recorded words of Jesus and the proof of a religious character of extraordinary depth. "Father" is really a new name for God, and such a sense of Sonship was quite without example (compare ch. 3 : 22). Note His surprise : they might have expected Him to be in His Father's house, not lost in curiosity on the streets of the city. *Understood not*; already living in another world than His parents. (Compare ch. 8 : 19-21.)

IV. Jesus and His Parents, 51, 52.

Vs. 51, 52. *Nazareth*. In this town, so obscure that it is not even mentioned in the Old Testament, and surrounded, we may be sure, by much evil, the great commercial highways lying so near (see Lesson I.), Jesus lived for thirty years a spotless life. *Was subject*. During the following eighteen years He lived in submission to His parents, plying the carpenter's trade. *Kept all these sayings*.

There were doubtless other sayings of the same kind that set the mother thinking and wondering. V. 52 describes the growth of the perfect Man. In contrast with John the Baptist, He mingled with and charmed His fellows.

Light from the East

DOCTORS—Frequently called scribes, were expounders of the law of Moses and of the traditions of the elders. The boyhood of Jesus fell in the golden age of Jewish theology. Herod the Great had put down all political agitation, and the mental energies of the most thoughtful men were turned to the discussion of religious questions. They were anxious to teach the people the length and breadth of the law, and so a number of teachers sat in a part of the temple enclosure, or on the

terrace outside, during the Passover period, to lecture on various questions and observances, and to answer questions and resolve doubts. Some of the most celebrated Jewish rabbis were then living. Hillel, the greatest exponent of liberal Judaism, may possibly have been present, although he must have been very old. Jonathan Ben Uzziel, the author of a commentary on the Bible; Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night; and Paul's teacher, Gamaliel, may have been among them. The discussions on such an occasion were of an informal nature, and the masters were always ready to notice and draw out bright boys. It was very likely the perception by Jesus of the more spiritual aspects of truth that aroused their astonishment.

APPLICATION

The child . . . waxed strong, v. 40. The best kind of bodily strength is health. The value of sports is not to make us nimble and dexterous for a few years, but to equip us for long years of steady work. Athletic limbs are not

so useful and do not give so much pleasure as a sound constitution. As soon as a boy becomes a man he begins to tire of violent games, but as long as he lives, he needs healthy organs. If you want a good horse, get one that eats well and sleeps well. And if you want a man to do any kind of work, with hand or brain, get one that eats well and sleeps well. The physical is not so important as the mental, or the moral, or the spiritual, but it is the foundation upon which all three stand.

Filled with wisdom, v. 40. "Thinking God's thoughts after Him"—so the famous astronomer, Kepler, described his studies of the stars. It is God who gives their laws to the suns and planets, which are the work of His hands. His will rules in the world of nature. And He has made the world of men, as well. He has laid down laws for human life; and true wisdom lies in finding out what these laws are and obeying them. For the youngest of us knows that we do not get happiness by doing what we like, but by doing what is right. It is when we fit our life into God's

way that we are on the road to true blessedness. To do His will is the secret of joy.

The grace of God, v. 40. Among the trees leveled to the ground in a fierce wind storm in Muskoika was a lofty maple. Its upturned roots measured eighteen or

How the Tree was Nourished twenty feet in diameter; but they had been covered with only a foot or so of soil. Below this they ran literally over the solid granite rock. The tree could get but little of its nourishment from the soil: Most of it came from the atmosphere. And it is so with all that is best and noblest in our natures. The virtues that make character beautiful and strong are fed from above. It is by dwelling in the presence of God that we grow both worthy and winsome.

They went up, v. 42. That is the right practice, parents and children going to religious services together. The difference in age and learning and experience and occupation keeps them apart a great deal of the time,

Parents and Children but there are two places where they should be together: at the family meal, and in the family pew. Let the boys and girls attend church, even though they may not yet understand it all. Indeed, in the Old Testament, provision is made for such cases. The children are to be shown things which will prompt their questions. They will ask about the

A Physical Foundation

Thinking God's Thoughts

How the Tree was Nourished

Parents and Children

The Boy Jesus

pile of stones on the bank of Jordan, "What mean ye by these stones?" (see Josh. 4 : 6, 21) and the parents will tell of the Lord's mercy. Boys and girls are learners, and should go, not so much where they understand, as where they will learn to understand.

In the temple, v. 46. That is a proper place to find a true child of God, in His house. You expect to find a soldier in barracks, a sailor on a ship, a merchant in a store.

Love Draws Their business so orders it. To find them habitually in other places, is to suspect their genuineness. Where the heart is, the feet will go. One can be present in the spirit and absent in the body, only when the body is under compulsion to be absent. Love is magnetism, the attracted body, if free, flies to the magnet. The lover of God's house will be a frequenter of God's house.

Astonished at his understanding, v. 47. A thoughtful boy makes a thoughtful man, and a heedless boy makes a heedless man :

"The boy is father of the man."
The Boy and the Man The lad that astonished the doctors of theology by His questions and answers, in after days similarly astonished the world. The sinless Man never could have been an ill-controlled boy. Better to be pure and true in youth than be

"As one

That all in later, sadder age begins
 To war against ill uses of a life.

But these from all his life arise, and cry,
 'Thou hast made us lords, and canst not
 put us down.' "

My Father's business, v. 49. There is a fine sermon in the common expression, "Mind your own business," if we take "Mind your own Business" it as a kindly advice and not as an angry rebuke. Here are the divisions : (1) Business. Every-

body ought to have a business, something to do. It is a disgrace to loiter and sponge on others. (2) Your own. It ought to suit one's talents. Each of us has his own gift or abilities, so that there is something he can do easily, strongly and well. Find that out. (3) Mind. Forget other things, if you like, but remember your business. Do your work heartily. Give yourself wholly to it. (4) It is all the time your Father's business. Your work is to be consecrated work, and twice as much valued and twice as well done for that reason.

Was subject unto them, v. 51. Only those who have learned to obey are fitted to rule. First, they learn to obey others. Thus they

learn to obey themselves, which **Obeys, to Rule** is the same thing as to rule themselves. Not until then are they fit to rule others. The obedience may be hard: it may chafe and fret you, and so, perhaps, be the better discipline. For then you will understand that others may chafe and fret under you, when your turn comes to rule. It will pay you to have learned how it feels, and your leadership will be stronger, because gentler.

Favour with God and man, v. 52. These two things do not disagree, especially in the younger and less militant years. David was such a double favorite. He **A General Favorite** was brave, unselfish, bright, clever, truthful, modest. God doesn't like a prig, or a tattler, or a coward, or a lazybones, or a liar; nor does any one like such boys. A man may sometimes justify his unpopularity by saying that he is persecuted for righteousness' sake, but very seldom is it so with a boy. God and men are in practical agreement regarding the proper character of boys and girls.

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars

Do not be afraid of making it too vivid that Jesus was a real boy. Throw proper force into the Revised rendering "the boy Jesus," v. 43. Instead of seeing legendary miracles blaze about His childhood, picture :—

1. *The Growing Boy*, v. 40. Jesus was not unlike other boys in a love for healthy play, keen thoughts, and simple tasks. His development would be : (a) Physical : He "grew." Christ always honored the body in which He lived, Luke 12 : 23; John 1 : 14; 2 : 21. If Jesus so honored His body, we should honor ours, 1 Cor. 6 : 19, 20. (b) Mental : He "waxed strong in spirit." The

boy mind of Jesus would grow both at home and at school. The Jews had free schools, with the Bible as a text-book. The boy Jesus, like His companions, would sit cross-legged on a cushion, and learn to read and write. Let Christ's example as a school-boy bring brightness into the supposed "drudgery" of modern school life. (c) Moral: He was "filled with wisdom." No small part of wisdom is to make moral distinctions. This wisdom came to Christ, so far as He was human, both at home and in school. At home He was "subject" to Joseph and Mary (v. 51) and at school to His turbaned teacher. All helped to make Him morally wise, Luke 6:40, as in margin; Eph. 6:1. (d) Spiritual: "the grace of God was upon Him." This is the climax of growth, Eph. 4:13.

2. *The Boy Lost*, vs. 41-45. Ply your class hard with questions regarding the nature of the Passover Feast, the stir at it, Jesus' age and its significance (the usual time when a Jewish boy conformed to all the requirements of the Mosaic ritual and became a "son of the Law"), His separation from Joseph and Mary, the discovery that He was missing, the search in the most likely places (v. 44), then the retracing of the journey to Jerusalem. It is easy for a boy to get lost. But whilst the boy Jesus was lost without harm or fault, boys nowadays easily become "lost," to their life-long and eternal injury.

3. *The Boy Recovered*, vs. 46-52. Where was Jesus found? By whom surrounded? What doing? v. 46. His boyish mind had been enlarged by the zest of a novel experience. Deeper thoughts had been started than the ordinary Jewish boy had ever felt.

What were His questions, what His answers? For all we know, they may have centered round the problem of recovering the lost, Matt. 9:13. His Father's business, which He was so eager to be about (v. 49)—was it the recovery of the lost? Luke 19:10. Were Joseph and Mary thinking of one kind of a lost boy (v. 48), whilst Jesus was thinking of another kind of lostness, which they did not understand? v. 50.

Any, however "lost," who are "found" in Christ (Phil. 3:9), have been eternally recovered, Luke 15:24.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Twelve years between this Lesson and that of last Sabbath; and the Babe grown into a Boy. Where did He spend those years? v. 39. A little place, and His home a carpenter's shop and house in one. (The class will find interest in telling of many noted men who have come from very quiet localities and very humble homes.)

What sort of boy had He grown to be? V. 40 answers; encourage the boys to measure themselves by it:—grew strong; grew wise; grew ever more good (show that what God does for us puts on the finishing touch, Rom. 12:2).

Then follows an example of what the Boy was: how He stood the test of His first dip into the big world.

The Exposition explains about the Passover feast, v. 41 (see Ex. 12:13-20; 23:15; Deut. 16:16). Question the scholars on it, and who were required to go. Jesus' parents were pious people: they obeyed God by going "every year."

At twelve, Jesus also goes: that was what the Law (God's law) bade. For Jesus' delight to do God's law, see John 4:34. The caravan—neighbors, friends, strangers,—with all the novelty and excitement of it for a boy, gives a vivid touch of color.

How did Jesus spend the "days" (seven days, Ex. 12:15; Deut. 16:3)? We can readily guess from what follows in the Lesson. For His love for Jerusalem, His nation's capital, the holy city, see Matt. 23:37.

He "tarried behind," v. 43. "Was it through wilfulness? V. 51 (first clause) gives an emphatic, No. "Joseph and His mother knew not of it." He had had the best of all training, the training that makes a boy worthy of being trusted.

Get the scholars to tell the story of vs. 44, 45, 46. Is it a surprise—where they found Him? (See ch. 19:45, 46.) Or with whom they found Him? (The "doctors" were the men who made their life work the study of the Bible; how well He knew His Bible, the story of the Temptation, Matt. 4:1-10, reveals.) Or at what they found Him? (Hearing, and asking questions: seeking to get deeper and deeper into God's Word and

will.) For how deep He got, see Matt. 7 : 29.

We don't wonder, because we know who He was, and what He became; but v. 47. So was His mother also—her words are a mingling of wonder, pride and gentle chiding, v. 48.

"About My Father's business," v. 49 says. In the Revised Version, it is "My Father's house." Either way, it shows where this Boy's heart was. No wonder "they under-

stood not." (See also John 5 : 17, 18, and following verses.)

The most wonderful thing remains, v. 51 (first part). How close it brings the Son of God to us! And what an example for all boys!

The silent, pondering mother, perhaps the class cannot yet understand; but again let them measure themselves with the Boy Jesus, v. 52.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Lesson Points

The grace of God gives the finishing touch to character. v. 40.

The habits of the life reflect the feelings of the heart. v. 41.

By the help of "Start-right" and "Stick-at-it" we are sure to reach the goal. v. 42.

People are trusted because they have been tried and not found lacking. v. 43.

A parent's love reaches far. vs. 44, 45.

The place is not safe for one, where he should not like his father or mother to find him. v. 46.

It is not sufficient that we admire the Saviour's teachings; we must yield ourselves to His authority. v. 47.

A mother's gladness is the crowning sweetness of a son's success. v. 48.

Never are we so near to the King as when we walk in the lowly path of obedience. vs. 49, 51.

By worth alone can we win the friendship of God and of true men. v. 52.

From the Library

This incident . . . is the solitary flower out of the wonderful enclosed garden of the thirty years, plucked precisely where the swollen bud at a distinctive crisis bursts the flower.—Stier.

Take notice here that His doing nothing wonderful was itself a kind of wonder . . . As there was power in His actions, so there is power in His silence, in His inactivity, in His retirement.—Bonaventura.

According to the Jews, twelve was the age at which Moses left the house of Pharaoh's daughter, and Samuel was called, and Solo-

man gave his judgment, and Josiah carried out his reform.—Farrar.

Labor . . . was honorable among the Jews. Even boys who were set apart to the life of scribes learned some trade. "Love work" was the motto of Rabbi Shemaiah, and another teacher said, "Great is work, for it honors its master."—Gilbert's, Student's Life of Jesus.

Noblesse oblige : there is stimulus to noble action supplied by a noble lineage; and Milton is not perhaps overstepping the bounds of legitimate inference when, in *Paradise Regained*, he represents the mind of the youthful Saviour as being stirred to noble ambition by the memories of His ancestors :

"Victorious deeds
Flowed in my heart, heroic acts—one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;
Then to subdue and quell o'er all the earth
Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
Till truth was freed and equity restored.

—Stalker.

Prove from Scripture

That children should obey their parents.

Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—Who warned Joseph to leave Bethlehem? Whither did he take Jesus and Mary? What cruel deed did Herod do? How did Joseph know when to return to his own country? To what place did he go?

40 What is said about the body of the Child Jesus? About His mind? How was He kept from evil?

41-45 To what feast did Jesus go? Where? How old was He? What did He do at the close of the feast? Who sought for Him?

46-50 Where was Jesus found? What

was He doing? What did He call the temple?

51, 52 How did Jesus act towards His parents? In what ways did He grow? To whom was He pleasing?

Seniors and the Home Department—When did Joseph take Jesus and Mary to Egypt? When did they return? What prophecy was thus fulfilled?

40-45 How far from Jerusalem was Nazareth? Name the three great feasts of the Jews. At what age did the Jewish boys begin to attend them? What event did the Passover commemorate? How long did it last?

46-50 By what title does Jesus call God? Where is he called the Son of God? (Ps. 2 : 7; Rom. 1 : 4; Heb. 1 : 5.) What honor should we pay to Jesus? (John 5 : 23.)

51, 52 Which Commandment teaches obedience to parents? Where does Paul teach the same duty? (Eph. 6 : 1.) What is the best kind of knowledge? (2 Tim. 3 : 15.)

The Catechism

Ques. 3. *The contents of Scripture.* The teachings of the Bible are here placed under two headings: (1) Knowledge concerning God. (2) Knowledge concerning our own world. There are many ways in which we may learn about God. The world about us is a wonderful revelation of His wisdom and power. The provision made for the smallest creatures is a proof of the divine

goodness. Conscience, with its approval of right and condemnation of wrong, points to a law we ought to keep, and behind the law to a Lawgiver. But the Bible gives us so much fuller and clearer knowledge of God that it is our principal guide. As to our conduct, too, while we can get much help from our own faculties and the experience of others, the Bible is our only infallible guide.

The Question on Missions

Ques. 3. The amount of home mission work done in the Eastern Section of the church does not vary greatly from year to year. The field is limited in extent, owing to the comparatively small territory included in the Maritime Provinces. From time to time new stations are opened, and almost every year several mission charges become augmented congregations. Last year 76 men were at work, including the Superintendent of Missions for New Brunswick, 21 ordained missionaries, and 54 catechists. There were 202 preaching stations with 3,053 families, and 3,607 communicants, of whom 254 were added during the year. These stations contributed \$15,564 for the payment of their missionaries, and \$1,638 for the Schemes of the Church. Such figures are encouraging. They show that our home mission work is helping those who believe in helping others as well as themselves.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

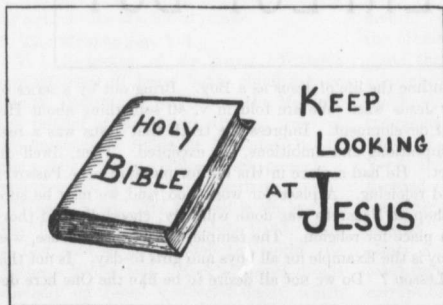
Lesson Subject—Jesus—the Boy in the home.

Introduction—"Harry is a very good boy when he is out in company, but at home he

is very disobedient and cross," said a friend. How sad! Let me see a boy in his home, and I'll tell you what sort of a man he is likely to make.

A Copy—If we want to write well, we try to make our letters like those in our copy-book. If we want to play soldier, we try to copy the soldiers we have seen (illustrate). If you would like to be the **BEST** possible, the only way is to find a perfect boy and copy him.

A Perfect Boy—In our Lesson



to-day we hear about the only perfect Boy, JESUS. Let us see what He was like. We hear very little about the babyhood and boyhood of Jesus. In our Lesson we get the only glimpse we are given of Jesus in His home, vs. 40, 51, 52.

Golden Text—Repeat Golden Text. We see Him, growing, becoming manly and beautiful and strong in His body, His thoughts His words, His actions; true, just, gentle, obedient, kind, faithful, listening to older people, attentive to His teachers, reading good books, studious, filled with wisdom, going to the synagogue every Sabbath Day, going about doing good, happy—God's grace was upon Him; beloved by all who knew Him—"in favor with God and man."

Lesson—Tell the Lesson story, showing the picture, "Christ among the Doctors" (Hofmann.)

Obedience—Jesus was obedient to the mother and father that God gave Him (v. 50), "subject to them." He did as He was told, and did so willingly.

Church Going—A little lad asked his parents to take him to church with them. "Oh, wait till you are older," they said. "Perhaps when I get bigger I may not want to go," was the naive reply. The time to form all good habits is when we are little.

Looking at Jesus—A little one was put to bed one evening without the curtains of her room being drawn. It was one of those nights when clouds come over and veil the sky, and then disappear. Some one went up to see if she was asleep. She said, "The stars all went in just now, and then all came out shining brighter than ever. I think they must have gone to look at Jesus." Let us all look at Jesus often. We have a great many pictures of Jesus. All the New Testament stories are like pictures of Him. So we can imagine just how He looked and acted. How kind and gentle and sympathetic, as He bent over the sick ones! How stern, as He rebuked wrong-doers! How faithful to duty, as He went "about His Father's business"! How pure in His life, as He said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan"! How prayerful, as He kneeled on that Mount of Olives! How trustful, as He said, "Not My will, but Thine, be done." How patient, when ill-treated by His enemies! How brave and manly, as He stood before Pilate! etc., etc. What a beautiful Copy! Sing the beautiful Hymn 524, Book of Praise, "More like Jesus would I be."

Something to Draw at Home—Outline a Bible. Print LOOK AT JESUS.

Something to Remember—I may copy Jesus.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

THE PERFECT BOY

The Lesson sketches in brief outline the life of Jesus as a Boy. Bring out by a series of rapid questions what kind of Boy Jesus was. We are told in v. 40 something about His bodily, mental, moral and spiritual development. Impress the truth that Jesus was a real Boy, with a boy's desires and temptations and ambitions, sin excepted. Then, dwell on what we are told about His conduct. He had a place in His life for pleasure—the Passover Feast was a season of gladness and rejoicing. A place for work, too, and we may be sure that His work in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth was done willingly, cheerfully and thoroughly. And, above all, He had a place for religion. The temple, His Father's house, was like home to Him. This perfect Boy is the Example for all boys and girls to-day. Is not this a winsome picture we have in the Lesson? Do we not all desire to be like the One here described?

Lesson IV.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

January 28, 1906

Mark 1 : 1-11. Commit to memory vs. 10, 11. Read Matthew 3 : 1-17; Luke 3 : 1-22.

GOLDEN TEXT—Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only.—1 Samuel 7 : 3.

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

2 ¹As it is written in ²the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, ³which shall prepare thy way ⁴before thee.3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, ⁵Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.4 John ⁶did baptize in the wilderness, and ⁷preach the baptism of repentance ⁸for the remission of sins.5 And there went out unto him all the ⁹land of Judaea, and ¹⁰they of Jeru'salem, and ¹¹were all baptized of him in the river ¹²of Jor'dan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and

Revised Version—Even as: ²Isaiah the prophet; who baptized; ⁷preached; ⁸unto remission; ⁹country; leathern girdle about; ¹⁴after .ne he that is mightier than I; ⁵I baptized; ¹²the; ¹⁷rent asunder; ¹⁸as; ¹⁹a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art; ²⁰thee.

LESSON PLAN

I. The Messenger, 1-4.

II. The Message, 5-8.

III. The Mightier One, 9-11.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—The baptism of Jesus, Mark 1 : 1-11. T.—John's humility, Matt. 3 : 1-17. W.—John's confession, John 1 : 14-28. Th.—Revealed by the Spirit, John 1 : 29-34. F.—Disciples baptized, Acts 2 : 36-42. S.—Baptized into Christ, Rom.

¹³ with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;7 And preached, saying, There cometh ¹⁴one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.8 ¹⁵I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in ¹⁶Jor'dan.10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens ¹⁷opened, and the Spirit ¹⁸like a dove descending upon him:11 And ¹⁹there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in ²⁰whom I am well pleased!3: ^{whc}; ⁴Omit before thee; ⁵Make ye ready; ⁶came, ¹⁰all thy; ¹¹they were baptized; ¹⁷Omit of; ¹⁸had a ¹⁹rent asunder; ²⁰as; ¹⁹a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art; ²⁰thee.

6 : 1-11. S.—Buried in baptism, Col. 2 : 6-12.

Shorter Catechism—Review Questions 1-3.

The Question on Missions.—4. What are now the chief home mission districts in the East? New Brunswick and Cape Breton, where, during the last few years, many new stations have been opened, and much progress has been made. Rev. James Ross is Home Mission Superintendent for the Presbyteries of St. John and Miramichi, comprising the whole of New Brunswick.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 114 (Supplemental Lesson); 35; 26; 52 (Ps. Sel.); 103 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 105.

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—January A.D. 27; river Jordan.

Connecting Links—John Mark, the writer of the Second Gospel, was the son of one Mary, who lived in Jerusalem. He learned the facts he records from Peter, who seems to have been an intimate friend of his family, Acts 12 : 12. Writing for the Romans (see Connecting Links, Lesson II.), who exalted power, Mark presents Jesus as the strong Son of God (see v. 1) moving through the world for a short time in a life of power.

I. The Messenger, 1-4.

V. 1. *Beginning of the gospel.* Without any reference to Jesus' birth, childhood, or human descent, or to Him as the Messiah, the fulfiller of prophecy; with no word of any ministry in Judaea or Jerusalem before His public work in Galilee; Mark presents a vivid portrait of Jesus in full activity at once. *Of Jesus Christ.* He Himself is the gospel. His life is the Word of God, John 1 : 14. *Son of God;* and so able to tell the world His Father's loving will. Mark's Gospel dwells specially on Jesus' wonderful deeds, which show that He is divine.Vs. 2, 3. *Written in Isaiah the prophet* (Rev. Ver.). The first quotation is from Mal. 3 : 1 and the second from Isa. 40 : 3, but Isaiah only is mentioned, because it contains the writer's chief thought, Malachi's words leading up to t. *My messenger;* John (v. 4), who was to open up the way for the coming of Christ. (See Lesson XII., Fourth Quarter, 1905, Mal. 3 : 1-12.) *The voice.* The messenger is merely an instrument, existing solely for the sake of making the message known. *Prepare ye the way, etc.* Before the Messiah comes, the Jewish people must mend their ways. The reference is to the messengers sent on before royal travelers in the East, to have the roads freed from obstructions and even to have new roads made where there were none. *John came* (Rev. Ver.); the appearing of a mighty man. *Who baptized* (Rev. Ver.); whose work consisted primarily in baptizing; hence his title, "the Baptist." *In the wilderness;* "of Judaea" (Matt. 3 : 1), near the Jordan, a wild region overhanging the Dead Sea. John avoided the corrupt society of the day, and called people out to him. His message was new, for the

Pharisees taught the people that they were a holy nation. *Preached* (Rev. Ver.); literally, "heralded," a word used to describe the proclamation of a king. *Baptism* (as a sign) of *repentance*; change of mind, and reformation of life, as well as sorrow for, and confession of sin. John's baptism was a symbol of his message to the people that their sins must be washed away. *Remission of sins*; of which John's baptism was indeed a symbol, but which only the Messiah could bestow. A blessing following on repentance, it means deliverance from sin's punishment and power and defilement, and restoration to God's favor.

II. The Message, 5-8.

Vs. 5, 6. *All the (people of the) land of Judaea*. The whole country was stirred, so that even Herod (son of Herod the Great, Lesson I, and now ruler of Galilee) sent for John, ch. 6 : 17. *Camel's hair*; that is, coarse cloth woven of long camel's hair. *Girdle of a skin*; untanned leather, like the belts worn at the present day by laborers. (Compare the dress of Elijah, 2 Kgs. 1 : 8, and see also Zech. 13 : 4.) *Locusts*; winged insects resembling grasshoppers, used as food only by the poorest. *Wild honey*; either bee honey (made by wild bees in trees or holes in the rocks), or tree honey (liquid exuding from palms and fig trees). John shunned the luxury of his day. He had no time even for innocent pleasure. In this latter particular he differed from Jesus (see Matt. 11 : 1-14).

Vs. 7, 8. *Preached, saying*. The second part of his message points to the King. Repentance without this message of hope would be of little avail. *One mightier*. This will be proved by His baptizing "with the Holy Ghost." *Latchet of . . . shoes* ("shoe-lace," Weymouth). Slaves carried and tied on their masters' sandals. So great was the distance between Jesus and John. *With the Holy Ghost*. The Spirit of God alone could give life, and cleanse from sin. (See Isa. 44 : 3; Ezek. 36 : 25-27; Joel 2 : 28.)

III. The Mightier One, 9-11.

V. 9. *In those days*; about six months after John began to baptize. *Jesus came*; being now about thirty years old (Luke 3 : 23),

the age at which Levites entered on their ministry, Num. 4 : 3. He had heard of John's great movement and wished to have a share in it. *Baptized of John*. See Matt. 3 : 13-15. Jesus has no sins of His own (1 Pet. 2 : 22), but takes on Himself the sins of others, Isa. 53 : 12. *In the Jordan* (Rev. Ver.); either at a ford near Jericho, or at a point nearer the Lake of Galilee (compare John 1 : 28).

Vs. 10, 11. *Straightway*; a favorite word with Mark, denoting rapid movement. *He saw*. The Baptist saw it also, John 1 : 32-34. *Heavens opened*; as though a garment were rent in twain (compare Ezek. 1 : 1; Acts 7 : 56). There had been for generations no direct vision of God, nor voice from Him. Now a perfect revelation is come, John 1 : 5. *Spirit*; the Holy Spirit (see S. Catechism, Ques. 6). For promise see Isa. 11 : 2; 42 : 1. Jesus was praying at the time, Luke 3 : 21. *Like a dove descending*. This symbol indicates (a) the source of Jesus' new power—heaven; (b) its nature—He was all purity and love; (c) the anointing of Jesus by the divine Spirit as Messiah. *A voice from heaven*; as at the Transfiguration (Mark 9 : 7), and before our Lord's trial and crucifixion, John 12 : 28. *My beloved Son*. Compare Ps. 2 : 7, 8. So hereafter Jesus would live in closest fellowship with His Father, and know and do His will in perfect love. *Well pleased*. Compare Isa. 42 : 1. These words and the descent of the Spirit would reveal to Jesus that He was to be the "Servant of the Lord," the special object of His Father's love, serving Him even unto death and so ransoming the many.

Light from the East

CAMEL'S HAIR—In the East, where the material for cloth is comparatively scarce, the hair of the camel is still spun and woven. This material is softer and more pliable than the sackcloth which is woven from goat's hair. There is considerable variety in the natural color, varying from cream to a fairly dark brown, and advantage is taken of this to form a rude pattern in the cloth. The large outer garment of the Bedouin, which covers him by day and night both, is frequently made of this cloth.

HONEY—The Syrian bee is somewhat smaller and lighter in color than ours and is very fierce and easily irritated. Some years ago a few hives of them were introduced into the South of England, but they were so aggressive that they had to be destroyed. They are found in large swarms in the wilderness of Judæa in the crevices of steep rocks and

in hollow trees. Most of the honey sold in Southern Palestine is gathered in the region where John found his supply. Before the discovery of sugar, honey was almost the only sweetener of food, and is still used by the Arabs in cakes and other confections. It is also eaten pure by them in quantities which surprise a Westerner.

APPLICATION

The beginning, v. 1. The Bellows one day gave a long-drawn sigh. "What is the matter, friend Bellows, that you seem so sad?"

Birth before Growth

said the Hearth. "I have toiled to no purpose," answered the Bellows in a dejected tone. "Haven't succeeded in kindling the fire, is it?" asked the Hearth. "That is the cause," replied the Bellows; "after all my blowing there is no flame. In fact the more I blow, the darker it appears." "Perhaps," said the Hearth, "it requires something more than your blowing to quicken it. Let some one kindle a fire, and then your blowing will make it burn brighter." Make a start. You must be born again, before you can grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Of the gospel, v. 1. It is a wonderful story, the story of the wheat. Away out on the Western prairies the seed is cast into the black soil to die. But out of its death, the harvest springs up, first green and then golden. Then the reaping time comes, and the grain is carried across the continent and over the ocean, to feed the hungry multitudes of the old world. There is a spiritual parallel to this thrilling story of nature. God's Son came into the world and, like the seed, He was buried in death. But He rose again, and has become the Bread of life for the world's teeming millions. What joy, to have this living Bread, and to carry it to others!

Make his paths straight, v. 3. In a school for deaf mutes a bright boy was asked, "What is truth?" He answered by drawing a straight line on the blackboard.

The Shortest Route

He was asked again "What is a lie?" and drew a wavering and crooked line. The straight path may be the hard path—it goes right over the hills

and down the gullies—but it is the shortest and surest route to the journey's end—the only path for the man who would do his duty.

In the wilderness, v. 4. The hardest part of a true and brave life is at first. Law comes before grace. John, rough and terribly plain-spoken, comes before the mild and kindly Jesus. It is hard to resist the devil, but easy to watch him fleeing from you. Repentance, contrition, reformation, are the most difficult enterprises one can venture upon. But these accomplished, we reach the green fields and still waters of the divine pasturage, where goodness and mercy follow us continually.

Better, Farther On

Mightier than I, v. 7. He is the hero who can overcome his mood, and do the thing he does not want to do. Suppose that, like

Do, Even If You Die

John, you expect that your work will soon be over and yourself disregarded. Why, if the work is worth doing, have courage to persevere. Suppose that you feel indisposed to effort. Don't wait for the moment of inspiration to come, but set to work doggedly. Duty is its own sanction. John was like a star doomed to extinction, which refused to quiver and wane, but shone with undimmed lustre until the very moment that it was lost in the dawning day.

With water . . . with the Holy Ghost, v. 8. There are miles of difference between "would be good" and "could be good." Some desire

only John's baptism of cleansing, and some seek besides

Jesus' baptism of inspiration and energy. Sometimes one sees this sign, "Rooms to let, with power." That is the place to set up your machinery, which without power to drive it will be useless. "The whole task of conduct is to translate opinion into practice." But, as the oxygen and hy-

drogen need the touch of the electric spark to be combined into water, so it is the power of God's Spirit that can convert our good intentions into holy deeds.

Jesus . . . was baptized, v. 9. No one can afford to be above his work. He that came to save from sin was "numbered with the transgressors." It is only in

Not Above One's Work day dreams, when we forget the toil in the expected reward, that noble living seems all sweetness and light. That man who is decorated with the Humane Society's medal once risked his life to save another's. That great statesman was once a poor student, grinding at his books in a garret. That sweet-souled saint has resisted hundreds of temptations to fretfulness and

complaining, before he attained to victorious contentment.

A dove . . . a voice, vs. 10, 11. The Father shows His approval of His children's obedience: He would be a strange Father if He

did not. Sometimes it is in **The Father's Commendation** the success of their efforts, as when a missionary sees his dusky parishioners coming in penitence to be baptized. And constantly His Spirit witnesses with our spirits that we are children of God. He stood by Paul in the night on that ill-fated ship, which was soon afterwards wrecked on the coast of Malta. He confirms the faith of everyone who does His will. It was His own blessed Son who said, "I know My sheep, and am known of Mine."

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars

Mark plunges at once into the "good news," v. 1. He takes for granted the Incarnation, and says quickly: "Here is a Man. I have good news about Him. He was God, and is God (v. 1, last clause). He has become Man. Why? That is the 'good news.' He has become Man—to be your Saviour." In this all the evangelists agree, Matt. 1: 21; Luke 2: 11; John 1: 29.

1. *The Preparation for a Saviour*, vs. 2-8. Prophecy excited expectation. Turn to the quoted passages, Isa. 40: 3; Mal. 3: 1. What did John's preaching—emphasized by his practice of baptizing—mean? That sin existed, and needed to be put away, v. 4. Moral crookedness must be made straight, v. 4, (last clause). John's words scalded like boiling water. Consciences were hurt, Luke 3: 10. Crowds of sinners flocked to him, v. 5. He did not spare them. He insisted there was nothing for it but that sin must be washed clean away. A Saviour was needed. John, living apart from men, could not be that Saviour, v. 6. A Saviour must live amongst men and touch them closely. John knew he could never approach Jesus in His power to reach sinners (v. 7), still less in the power to put away sin. John's work was on the surface, v. 8 (first clause). Christ's work,

would be within—a hidden, fiery baptism, burning up what was vile and unworthy v. 8 (last clause). So it was John's passion to turn men away from himself to Christ, John 1: 29; 3: 30. Let that be your passion.

2. *The Consecration of a Saviour*, vs. 9-11. John spoke of sin. The people mourned over their sins. Just then a sinless One came to be baptized. Why? Does it clear away any of the mist to think of Christ's consecration in baptism as an act in which He (1) endorsed John's claim that a holy King would look for holy subjects (Matt. 3: 12); (2) dedicated Himself to the work of taking away sin and making His subjects holy (John 1: 29); and (3) exalted Himself through His voluntary humiliation, Heb. 12: 2? This exaltation was demonstrated by three wonders: First, the heavens opened, v. 10. Christ came to open heaven to us. Second, the Spirit descended like a dove, v. 10. His kingdom extends noiselessly from heart to heart and life to life by gentle operations, because "in Him dwelled all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. 2: 9. Third, a voice was heard from heaven, v. 11. To the crowd it seemed inarticulate thunder. To John and Jesus it was vocal with divine approval. Are we not at the heart of the "good news" now? God accepts Jesus as our appointed Saviour. Do we, in turn, accept Him? Did ever Lesson end more patently at the very point where you can urge that question home?

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

"He comes quick at his work," was the significant comment of a keen, shrewd, man of the world, on a sermon which had launched into the midst of his subject in the very first sentence. Mark's Gospel was for the fighting, conquering Romans—the men of action. His first sentence tells the whole tale. A complete lesson might be made of it. Take time to pick out and explain (if need be) its great words—"gospel," "Jesus," "Christ," "Son of God."

Don't forget the emphasis that is on "the beginning of the Gospel." Where did it begin? In God's love (John 3 : 16). With whom did its proclamation begin? With God's prophets, who foretold John's coming to prepare the way of the Lord, vs. 2, 3. (Have the passages from the prophets turned up.)

Who was John? Tell the story (but briefly) of Luke 1, of the sending of John.

What sort of man was he? See v. 6, and compare him with Elijah, 1 Kgs. chs. 17, etc.—a remote, austere man, for a heroic work.

What sort of preparation did John demand? Ask another question—What did he do? Baptized. What did that signify? That

In this section will be found further assistance under various heading.

Lesson Points

The stream of gospel blessings can never run dry because it flows out from God. v. 1.

There is only one Saviour, but we can all be His heralds. v. 2.

Let the human voice take its keynote from Christ, and heaven can furnish no sweeter music. v. 3.

Confession is half way to forgiveness. v. 5.

The simple life is a matter, not of clothes, but of character. v. 6.

It is the saintliest who are most keenly conscious of their sin. v. 7.

We cannot satisfy the soul with the husks of sign and ceremony; it demands the kernel of real fellowship with God. v. 8.

He is the truest sovereign who sympathizes most fully with his subjects. v. 9.

Infinitely tender is the Holy Spirit, but He can be equally terrible. v. 10.

there was defilement to be washed away. What did he preach? "Repentance"—the turning away from sin: for only so could it be blotted out, and they be made ready for the sinless One who was coming.

What more did He say? Vs. 7, 8. What does v. 8 mean? "I call you to the new life, of which the cleansing with water is the sign. The coming One will give you that new life by His life-giving Spirit." A wonderful message.

Have v. 9 read. "Why was Jesus, the sinless One, baptized?" Perhaps there is no better answer than Heb. 2 : 17; and 2 Cor. 3 : 9 give. He who will save, must fully share the lot and take the place of those whom he would save. It is seen again in Gethsemane and on Calvary.

How does the Father above regard it? Another question: What did Jesus see when He had been baptized? "The heavens opened"; for God was looking on with favor; "the Spirit" of purity ("like a dove") and power descending on this self-sacrificing Saviour, and the Father's voice claiming Him as His Son, and proclaiming His pleasure at His great work of saving men, now well begun.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

The Saviour approved of God should be accepted by men. v. 11.

Prove from Scripture

That Jesus is God's Son.

Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—Who wrote the Third Gospel? What was his mother's name? Where was his home? Which apostle told him about the life of Jesus?

1, 2 Which Gospels tell us of Jesus' birth and early life? Of what does Mark at once begin to tell? Who was the messenger sent to prepare for Jesus' coming?

3, 4 Where did John preach? About what? What is it to repent?

5-8 Who went to hear John? How was he dressed? What was his food? Of what One mightier than himself did John speak? With what did John baptize? With what was Jesus to baptize?

9-11 At what age was Jesus baptized?

The Baptism of Jesus

What came down upon Him? Who spoke to Him? What was said?

Seniors and the Home Department—Tell what you can about Mark. (See Connection, and Acts 12 : 12, 25; 13 : 5, 13; 15 : 36-39; Col. 4 : 10; 2 Tim. 4 : 11; 1 Pet. 5 : 13.)

1-4 For whom specially did Mark write his Gospel? What aspect of the Saviour's ministry does it make prominent? Describe John's preaching. What is meant by "remission of sins"? To whom is it offered? (Luke 24 : 47.)

5-8 What classes of people went to hear John? His message to each? How did he show his reverence for the Messiah? What menial duty did Jesus perform for His disciples? And what did He signify by it? (John 13 : 1-17.)

9-11 Why did Jesus seek to be baptized? What do we learn from the form in which the Spirit descended? What is "the fruit of the Spirit"? (Gal. 5 : 22, 23.)

The Catechism

Questions 1-3. How would it do to review the first three Questions under these headings: (1) The Goal; (2) The Guide; (3) The Going. The goal is set before us in Ques. 1. As the racer strains every muscle to reach the end of the course and win the prize, so it should be our chief purpose in life to bring honor to God, and thus be truly happy. Then the

Guide—Ques. 2 tells us that this is just the blessed word of God, the book that has never failed His people in any circumstances of their lives. And lastly, the Going—Ques. 3 mentions two things as included in it—believing and doing. Both of these are important. Right beliefs are the source, and right deeds are the spring that flows from it. Make sure of the goal, find the guide, and go!

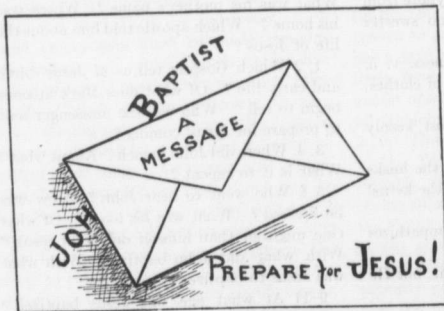
The Question on Missions

Ques. 4. Prince Edward Island is the only Presbytery in the Synod of the Maritime Provinces in which there are no home mission fields. Our home missionaries are found in every other part of the Maritime Provinces, and also in Maine, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador. The chief scene of missionary work at present is the Province of New Brunswick, which contains about one half of all the mission stations in the Synod, and is under the care of Rev. James Ross, the Superintendent of Missions. The island of Cape Breton is another important home mission centre. The development of its mineral wealth, and the establishment of large iron works at Sydney, have led to a considerable influx of population. This has given us an opportunity that has been used to good advantage; and we have now a number of active congregations in districts where formerly our church was comparatively weak.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—Jesus—set apart for His work.

Introduction—Were you ever in the church when the minister was baptizing a little baby?



Did you wonder why he poured the water on its little head and called it by its name? It is not for the purpose of "naming the baby." It is giving the little one into God's especial keeping. The pouring on of the pure water means that the Holy Spirit makes pure the life.

John the Baptist—Here is the name of the minister who baptized many people—John the Baptist. Tell in a simple way the facts about the birth of John, Luke, ch. 1. God had promised that a messenger would be

sent to tell the people to get ready for the coming of Christ. John the Baptist is the one God chose (from before his birth) to be this messenger. In our Lesson we see him a grown-up man bringing the message.

The Message—Here is the message. (Unfold a paper and read from it): "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," etc., v. 3. "There cometh One mightier than I after me," etc., v. 7.

Beside the Jordan—Our Lesson last Sunday told us about Jesus beginning His life in the world. To-day we are, to hear about Jesus beginning His work in the world. Describe the scene beside the river Jordan, as the crowds flock to hear the great preacher John, and to be baptized by him. Why do they want to be baptized? John has told them that God will punish them for their sins if they do not "repent" (are not sorry they have sinned against God, and turn away from their sins).

Jesus Baptized—See, here comes a Stranger! He does not look as if He could do anything wrong. See His kind, gentle, pure face! His strong, manly figure! Yes! it is Jesus. He asks John to baptize Him. He has taken the sins of all people upon Himself. He hates sin. He turns from all sin in abhorrence, as He wants us to do. When lo! the clouds are parted. See! a pure white dove floats

gently down and rests upon His head! It is the Holy Spirit sent by God in the form of a dove, that all may see and know the beauty of the work of the Holy Spirit upon us, like a dove in gentleness and purity.

Jesus Set Apart for His Work—A voice from heaven speaks, v. 11 (repeat).

Golden Text—How do we prepare a garden bed? We pull out all the weeds and rake out all the stones and break up all the hard earth. Then the bed is ready for the seeds that will bring forth beautiful blossoms and fruits. Repeat Golden Text—"Prepare your hearts," etc. How? By praying and striving that all sins may be taken out, leaving room only for the Holy Spirit (Name "the fruit of the Spirit," Gal. 5 : 22, 23); and only then will we be ready to serve Jesus well.

"Christ is kind and gentle,
Christ is pure and true,
And His little children
Must be holy too.
Christ is your own Master,
He is good and true,
And His little children
Must be holy too."

Something to Draw at Home—Draw an envelope. Print A MESSAGE—"PREPARE FOR JESUS."

Something to Remember—I should serve Jesus.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

AS THE DOVE
FIRE

Begin by having the school sing v. 2 of Hymn 105, Book of Praise. Ask who it is that is likened in this verse to the gentle DOVE (Print). Then sing v. 3. To what is the Holy Spirit here compared? To the fierce FIRE (Print). Now print AS THE. Is it not strange that the same Person should be compared to these two things so opposite? Now go back to the Lesson. Upon whom did the Spirit descend "as the Dove"? Remind the scholars how gentle Jesus was, for example, in dealing with the palsied man, Mark 2 : 1-12. Here we see the influence of the Spirit upon Him. Now read John 2 : 13-16, the cleansing of the temple. Was the Spirit who came upon Jesus like the Dove now? Or was He like the Fire? Bring out the truth that the Holy Spirit who was in Jesus and wants to be in us was very gentle to the weak and troubled, and determined in His purpose to destroy sin.

BIBLE DICTIONARY FOR FIRST
QUARTER, 1906

An'drew. A fisherman and, with his brother Peter, a native of Bethsaida, John 1 : 44. After the miraculous draught of fishes (Lesson VI.) he, along with Peter, James and John, was called to be a companion of Jesus, and afterwards chosen to be an apostle, Matt. 10 : 2-4.

Beth'-le-hem. The "house of bread," a small village, six miles south of Jerusalem, the birthplace of David and the scene of his earthly life (1 Sam. 16 : 1, 4, 13), hence called the "city of David," Luke 2 : 11. Here Jesus was born.

Ce'-sar Au-gus'-tus. The first emperor of Rome (B.C. 31 to B.C. 14). It was in consequence of a decree of Augustus that Mary, the mother of Jesus, went with Joseph her husband, to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born.

Ca-per'-na-um. A town on the north-western shore of the Lake of Galilee. At an early period in His ministry Jesus made His home here, so that Capernaum came to be called His own city, Matt. 9 : 1. In this city many of our Lord's wonderful miracles were wrought.

Christ. "The Anointed One," the official title of our Lord, corresponding to the Hebrew "Messiah." It is so constantly added to "Jesus," the Saviour's personal designation, that it virtually forms part of His name.

Cy-re'-ni-us. Quirinius (the former was the original Latin name, the latter the modification of it among Greek speaking people), the Roman governor of the Province of Syria at the time of Jesus' birth.

Da'-vid. The second king of Israel, successor to Saul. Bethlehem is called his city in Lesson 1.

Gal'-i-lee. The most northerly of the three provinces west of the Jordan into which Palestine was divided under the rule of the Romans. It was the chief scene of the ministry of Jesus. The lake of the same name is fed by the Jordan, and is called a sea because of its extent. The water is fresh.

Gen-nes'-a-ret. A name in common use for the Lake of Galilee. It was also called the Sea of Tiberias, John 6 : 1.

Her'-od. Called "the Great," the first of the seven Herods mentioned in the New Testament. He was made king of Judaea by the Romans in B.C. 37, and reigned till B.C. 4.

Is'-ra-el. A name given to Jacob and his descendants (see Gen. 32 : 28.)

James and John. Two brothers, sons of Zebedee, who were called, along with Peter and Andrew, to be followers of Jesus, and who also became apostles.

Je-ru'-sa-lem. The sacred city and well-known capital of the Jews.

Je'-sus. The name given to our Lord by direction of the angel to Joseph (Matt. 1 : 21) and to Mary, Luke 1 : 31. It means "Saviour," and expressed His special office.

Jews. Originally those belonging to the tribe or to the kingdom of Judah (2 Kgs. 16 : 6; 25 : 25), then those of the Hebrew race who returned from captivity, and finally all of that race throughout the world.

John. The Baptist, son of Zacharias and Elisabeth, and the immediate forerunner of Jesus.

Jor'-dan. The most important river in Palestine, flowing from the Lebanon Mountains to the Dead Sea. It was in this river that Jesus, at about thirty years of age, was baptized by John.

Jo'-seph. The husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and during the Saviour's lifetime regarded as His father, Matt. 13 : 55.

Ju'-da. Judah, the territory inhabited by the tribe descended from the fourth son of Jacob. It included the greater part of Southern Palestine. Bethlehem, situated within this territory, is spoken of by Micah (ch. 5 : 2) as the birthplace of the coming Messiah.

Ju-dæ'-a. The southernmost province of Palestine under the Roman government, the middle one being Samaria.

Mar'-y. The mother of Jesus. She was a resident of Nazareth, where the Saviour's birth was announced to her, Luke 1 : 26. She is presented in the New Testament as a beautiful example of a devoted and pious Jewish mother.

Naz'-ar-eth. A town of Galilee where Joseph and Mary lived, and the home of Jesus from His childhood until He was about thirty years of age.

Sa'-tan. "The adversary," so called because he is hostile to all goodness and the chief opponent of God and man. He appears in Lesson V. as the tempter of Jesus.

Sav'-iour. A title given to our Lord by the angel who announced His birth to the shepherds, as they watched their flocks near Bethlehem, Luke 2 : 11.

Si'-mon Pe'-ter. Peter is the Greek form of the Aramaic surname Cephas, meaning "a rock," which Christ bestowed on Simon, brother of Andrew, and one of the twelve apostles. He was a native of Bethsaida (John 1 : 44), and afterwards lived with his family at Capernaum, Matt. 8 : 14; Luke 4 : 38.

Syr'-i-a. A Roman province, including the territory west of the Euphrates from the Taurus Mountains to Egypt. This province was erected in B.C. 64 with a governor resident at Antioch.

Zeb'-e-dee. The father of the apostles James and John.

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*AN ORDER OF SERVICE: First Quarter

OPENING EXERCISES

I. SILENCE.

II. OPENING SENTENCE. Psalm 95 : 1-3.
Superintendent. O come, let us sing unto the Lord : let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

III. SINGING. Ps. Sel. 114, Book of Praise. (It is expected that this "Supplemental Hymn" will be memorized during the Quarter.)

IV. PRAYER. Concluding with the Lord's Prayer in concert.

V. SINGING.

Saviour, blessèd Saviour,

Listen whilst we sing,

Hearts and voices raising

Praises to our King;

All we have to offer,

All we hope to be,

Body, soul and spirit,

All we yield to Thee.

—Hymn 210, Book of Praise

VI. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Luke 2 : 11, 14; 1 : 68.

Superintendent. Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,

School. Which is Christ the Lord.

Superintendent. Glory to God in the highest,

School. And on earth peace, good will toward men.

Superintendent. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel;

School. For He hath visited and redeemed His people.

VII. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.

VIII. BIBLE WORK. From the Supplemental Lessons.

IX. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.

X. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected. (This selection may usually be that marked "FROM THE PRIMARY QUARTERLY.")

CLASS WORK

[Let this be entirely undisturbed by Secretary's or Librarian's distribution, or otherwise.]

I. ROLL CALL by teacher.

II. OFFERING, which may be taken in a class envelope, or class and report envelope.

III. RECITATION. 1. Scripture Memory Passages from the Supplemental Lessons, or Memory Verses in Lesson Helps. 2. Catechism. 3. The Question on Missions from the Supplemental Lessons.

IV. LESSON STUDY.

CLOSING EXERCISES

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

II. SINGING. Hymn selected.

III. REVIEW FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK; which, along with the Blackboard Review, may include one or more of the following items : Recitation in concert of Verses Memorized, Catechism, Question on Missions, Lesson Title, Golden Text, and Heads of Lesson Plan. (Do not overload the Review : it should be pointed, brief and bright.)

IV. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Psalm 2 : 7, 8; John 12 : 26.

Superintendent. The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art My Son ;

School. This day have I begotten Thee.

Superintendent. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance.

School. And the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.

Superintendent. If any man serve Me, let him follow Me ;

School. And where I am, there shall also My servant be.

V. SINGING.

Saviour, more than life to me,

I am clinging close to Thee ;

Let Thy precious blood applied

Keep me ever near Thy side.

Every day, every hour,

Let me feel Thy cleansing power :

May Thy tender love to me

Bind me closer, Lord, to Thee.

—Hymn 211, Book of Praise

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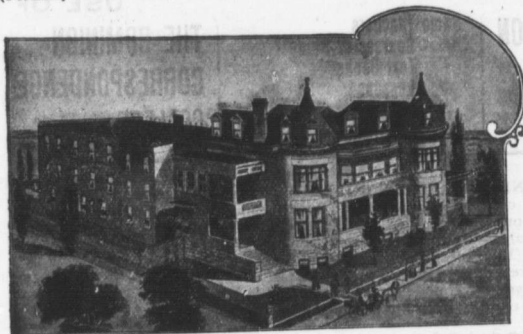
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THE BOOK PAGE

Just as we go to press—the **TEACHERS MONTHLY** is printed very early, to reach distant subscribers—Professor John Edgar McFadyen's **Introduction to the Old Testament** (Hodder & Stoughton, London; U.C. Tract Society, Toronto, 356 pages, \$1.50 net) is at hand. The work "does not pretend to offer anything to specialists. It is written for theological students, ministers, and laymen, who desire to understand the modern attitude to the Old Testament as a whole, but who do not have the time or the inclination to follow the details on which all thorough study of it must ultimately rest." There is no more reverent writer than Professor McFayden, and few more interesting or better informed. The reader will therefore find his treatment of the questions that arise thorough and easy to follow, and whilst, naturally, the critical is in the foreground, the religious value and significance of the several books are distinctly brought out. The writer's conclusions will doubtless not commend themselves universally, but the book is a succinct and valuable statement of the views of modern scholarship on the Old Testament and its interpretation.

The purifying power of love is the theme of Norman Duncan's new book, **The Mother** (Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto and New York, 220 pages, \$1.00 net). It is the love of a mother for her boy—a mother to whom vice has become as natural as the air she breathes. But the lad grows up in that poisoned atmosphere like a flower of spotless white. Given into the care of a curate, he learns the wonder-

ful story of the Cross. At last the mother comes to see the beauty of virtue with her son's eyes, and casts off her vice like a vile and hated garment. Then mother and son together become in their native surroundings an influence to sweeten and cleanse.

Readers of **EAST AND WEST** will recall with pleasure Marjorie L. C. Pickthall's story, **The Sowing of the Harvest**, which ran in **EAST AND WEST** during the first three months of 1904. It has just been published in England in very attractive book form, under the title **Dick's Desertion: A Tale of the Early Settlement of Ontario** (S. W. Partridge & Company, London, 128 pages, seven full-page illustrations, 30c.). There are none too many stories for boys and girls, of Canadian life, by Canadian authors, and illustrated by Canadian artists; and parents and teachers, and others, looking for gift-books, will find in **Dick's Desertion** a vivid picture of life in the back settlements in the early days of Ontario. Miss Pickthall makes us thrill with the fascination of the forest, as she tells how **Dick's** wander-loving heart led him through adventures many and perils many in his months of roving in the wilds with Peter, the Indian, before his love for his sister triumphed. **Mr. C. W. Jefferys'** fine drawings thoroughly interpret the spirit of the story.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Further notice of some of these may be given)

From Morang and Co., Toronto (The Macmillan Co., New York):

Amy in Acadia: A Story for Girls. By Helen Leah Reed. 344 pages. \$1.25.

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- The Universal Elements of the Christian Religion.** By Charles Cuthbert Hall. (Cole Lectures for 1905). 309 pages. \$1.25 net.
- How to Plan a Lesson, And Other Talks to S.S. Teachers.** By M. C. Brown. 93 pages. 50c. net.
- Studies in the Life of the Christian.** By Henry T. Sell, D.D. 169 pages. 50c. net.
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- From **The Forward Mission Study Movement**:
- The Price of Africa.** By S. Earl Taylor. 225 pages; maps and illustrations.
- From **The Upper Canada Tract Society, Toronto (Hodder and Stoughton, London)**:
- A World Without a Child.** By Coulson Kernahan. 91 pages. Paper, 30c. net.
- The Face Beyond the Door.** Same author. 86 pages. 30c. net.
- The Problem of Personality.** By Joseph Newton. 278 pages. \$1.50.
- The Religious Controversies of Scotland.** By Henry F. Henderson. 274 pages. \$1.40. (T. and T. Clark.)
- The Use of the Scriptures in Theology.** By Newton Clark. 170 pages. \$1.00 net. (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.)
- From **William Briggs, Toronto**:
- The Passing of a Race:** And More Tales of Western Life. By D. W. Higgins. 304 pages. \$1.20.
- The Making of a Teacher.** By Martin G. Brumbaugh. 351 pages. \$1.50.
- Duck Lake.** By E. Ryerson Young, Jr. 191 pages. Ill. \$1.00. (Eaton and Mains.)
- Sunday Reading for the Young, 1906.** Freely illustrated. 412 pages. \$1.00. (Wells, Gardner, Darton & Co, London.)
- From **Cliphant, Anderson & Ferrie, Edinburgh**:
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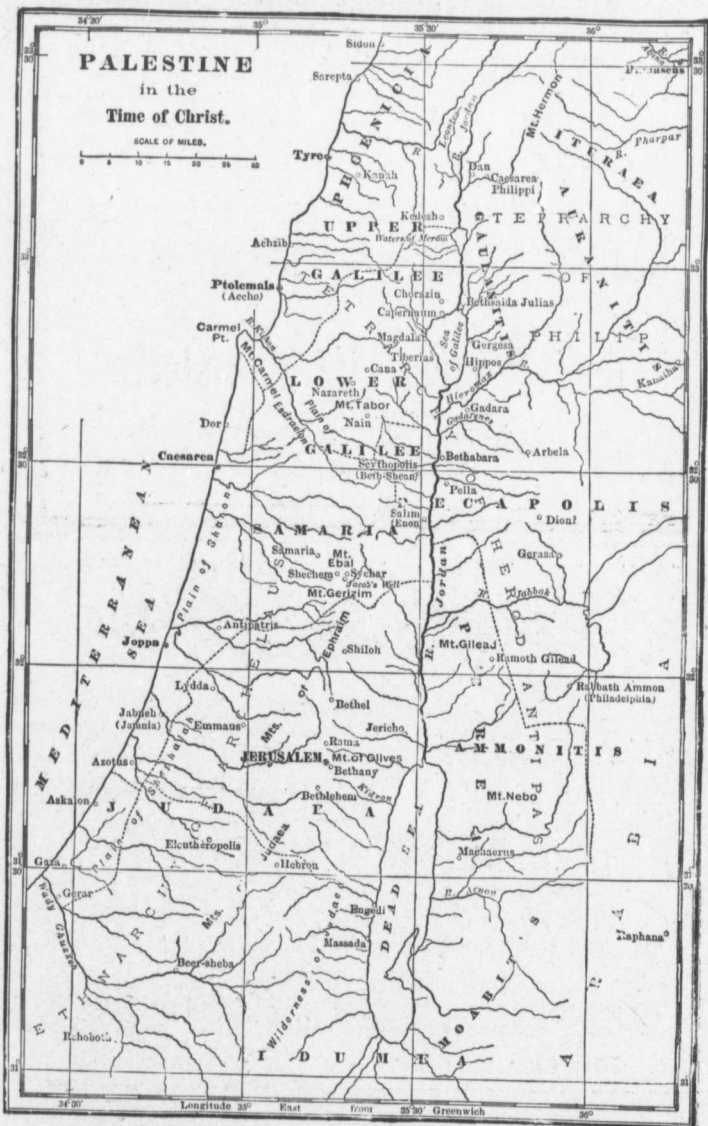
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Further information regarding scholarships, medals, etc., may be obtained from the Calendar, or on application to the Secretary.

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