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No. 1

A New Year and a New Beginning

A MESSAGE FROM THE CONVENER

Old work done better, new work undertaken, and done well. A lift up—and a step forward.

A TEACHER TRAINING CLASS in every congregation, in compliance with the General Assembly's request, and in answer to the call from the Schools for "better teaching".

A CRADLE ROLL in every congregation. If one hundred can be enrolled, so much the better, if but one or two, the more easily can it be done.

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A HOME DEPARTMENT in every congregation. "A sure and effective agency for the introduction of Bible reading in the home and the institution of the 'family altar'. A silken cord binding home and School together."

These are of the things that can be done, and therefore ought to be done, the doing of which will add to the gladness of the New Year.

Surprised

Sir Andrew Fraser, so widely known through his connection with the Laymen's Missionary Movement, told, in a recent address, of an occasion during his administration as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, when he was presenting honors bestowed by the king on certain natives of India who had distinguished themselves by their services in a dangerous crisis in that country. At a great "durbār", or official reception, each of these was called forward, not knowing what honor

he was to receive, most of them, however, showing, by their manner, that they expected some signal token of the king's favor.

At last, when the name of a brave Brahmin was called, who had risked his life in the royal cause, and had, indeed, narrowly escaped death, so overcome was he with surprise at being selected as worthy of any mark of distinction, that he could hardly stammer out the customary words of respect in addressing the Governor. He had been intent simply on doing his duty in the crisis, the thought of receiving any public recognition had never entered his mind.

Many a Christian worker there is, doing in a lowly sphere, with unswerving fidelity, the daily task laid upon him by the Master, who will be equally surprised when he is singled out, at last, as especially deserving of the praise of his Lord, whose eye no humblest act of loving service escapes.

Our Dwelling Place

By Rev. George A. Little, B.A.

Our real home is not the house in which we live or the town in which we reside. Men may live on the same street and yet be dwelling in different worlds. The musician lives in a world of sound. The mathematician dwells in a world of numbers. The historian lives in the past. The poet lives in imagination Elaine, in Tennyson's Idyll, lived in her chamber high up a tower to the east, but her real life was in the hidden meanings which she guessed in the devices upon Lancelot's shield. "So she lived in fantasy."

The Christian lives in a spiritual world. Christ is the Dwelling Place of his soul. "Abide in Me", said Christ. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in

Me." And Christian experience proves the reality of this home of the soul. Paul lived in Tarsus and Antioch, in Jerusalem and Rome, but his real life was hid with Christ in God. "For me to live is Christ", he said. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And where Paul dwelt we may dwell. Our political citizenship is in Canada; our spiritual citizenship is in heaven.

"I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him."

The most unhappy people are the homeless. Hood described the loneliness of the outcast in his pathetic line, "Home she had none". Recently I met a man and his wife who unexpectedly inherited a sum of money. They sold their house and furniture and started to travel. But they were not satisfied. Hotels, sleeping and dining cars could not provide the comforts of a home. In like manner are we unhappy when our faith is unsettled. How comfortless is the atheist who has no belief in the existence of the living God. How cheerless is the agnostic who has no belief in the goodness of our Father in heaven. But the soul with a firm faith in God knows the comforts of a home.

"The man who once has found abode
Within the secret place of God,
Shall with Almighty God abide,
And in His shadow safely hide.

"Because thy trust is God alone,
Thy dwelling-place the Highest One,
No evil shall upon thee come,
Nor plague approach thy guarded home."
Kenora, Ont.

The Unveiling of Christ

By Rev. J. A. McKeen, B.A.

The late Dr. De Forest, the well known missionary to Japan, says that he observed, in Japan, a friendship for Christ outside of Christian circles. He tells of a public school in which there were no professing Christians among the teachers. The walls of the school hall were adorned with paintings of men of history, among them a life size copy of Hof-

mann's, Christ in Gethsemane. This painting was hung with ceremony. The children assembled. A hymn composed by one of the teachers was sung. The covering veil was drawn aside. The school banner was lowered, and all bowed reverently before the picture.

The children of our schools live in a Christian land, yet there are many of them to whom Christ has not yet been unveiled. They have been learning of Christ. They have been taught by the testimony of scripture. They have had ideals set before them by the life and doctrine of their instructors, and the impression made is deeper because, like Timothy, they respect and love those from whom they have learned these things. They also continue in them. They keep up their habits of reading the Bible, of observing set times for prayer, of remembrance of the Sabbath day, of attendance upon services in the house of God, and in all things are loyal to their early training.

Our children have in their religious faith a rich inheritance, but it may not be altogether a conscious possession. Their Saviour is near, but He is not quite real to them nor personal, till the day comes that Christ is unveiled before them and they know that it is Jesus.

A very simple thing may make real to a well instructed child the living, loving Saviour. I saw two young girls, holding the same book in their hands, sit down quietly weeping after the singing of a hymn, and I afterwards discovered that they had then got their first real vision of Christ.

I remember a thoughtful lad who wished to see Jesus. A wise word spoken to him by a friend was the means of taking away the veil and he got a sight of his Saviour that filled his soul with a great and abiding peace.

A young child in passing through an art gallery was shown a painting of Christ, and being asked who it was, she replied, "Suffer little children to come unto Me." She saw in the picture the Person with whom she associated the words of her text. So children recognize and take as their own the Saviour with whose life and words they are familiar, when some act, it may be as simple as the touch of a kindly hand, is as the opening of a door, through which they come into Christ's presence.

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This unveiling of Christ may come early, or it may be delayed ; but it is to the expectant that it comes, and expectancy is preceded by instruction.

Orono, Ont.

✻

" In Every Part "

Fill Thou my life, O Lord my God,
In every part with praise,
That my whole being may proclaim
Thy being and Thy ways.

Not for the lips of praise alone,
Nor e'en the praising heart,
I ask, but for a life made up
Of praise in every part.

Praise in the common words I speak,
Life's common looks and tones ;
In intercourse at hearth and board
With my beloved ones.

Not in the temple crowd alone,
Where holy voices chime,
But in the silent paths of earth,
The quiet rooms of time.

So shall no part of day or night
From sacredness be free,
But all my life in every step
Be fellowship with Thee.

—Horatius Bonar

✻

Leading the Children to Christ

By Rev. James Murray, B.D.

We all hold, in theory at least, that children of eight, ten or twelve years may come to Christ and be truly saved, and that the supreme duty of parents, preachers and teachers to the children under their care is to lead them to the Saviour.

The anxious question of many is, How can I lead the child to Christ ? As an encouragement in our efforts, let us understand and remember two things : First, that the child knows, thinks and feels far more on matters of religion than we are apt to give him credit for ; and secondly, that the Spirit of God is at our side, infinitely more anxious for the success of our efforts than we can be.

The paths along which children come to Christ are many, and what proves helpful in

one case may fail in the next. With a deep sense of the importance of the matter, I humbly venture to indicate the lines along which, with some degree of success, I have tried to lead the children consciously to the Saviour. In dealing with children, it is important that we avoid saying too much, and at the same time say all that ought to be said.

First. Christ Himself must be the supreme object upon whom the thought of the child is fixed : (a) Who He is—the Man Christ Jesus ; yes, but far more. To inspire reverence as well as love, Jesus must be to the child the God Man. (b) The purpose of His coming to seek and to save. At this point the opportunity opens up to impress upon the child his need of Christ because of sin.

Second. What the child must do to be saved. Christ in dealing with Nicodemus, and Paul in dealing with the jailer, laid down one condition of salvation, namely,—Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ ; and it is wise and safe for us, in dealing with the children, to adhere to the lines they followed. But what does it mean to believe on Jesus ? I like to use the word "trust" instead of "believe". In 2 Tim. 1 : 12 the apostle throws a flood of light upon this vital matter. He says, "I know whom I have believed (Margin, "trusted"), and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." The Greek text is more helpful still,—"I am persuaded that He is able to keep my deposit." And so to believe on Jesus is to trust Jesus. To trust Jesus is to commit something to Him, or to make a deposit with Him ; and that deposit is ourselves and our eternal interests.

Third. Having as briefly as possible made clear the conditions of salvation, I urge upon the child immediate decision, that now and here he give himself to Christ ; and prayerfully and patiently press the matter to an issue, that in his heart he may, with all sincerity, say ; "Lord Jesus, I do now give myself to Thee to save and keep me." Now, with reverence, let me say, do not be afraid of making the mistake of going too far at this point. The Spirit of God is with us, and far more concerned in the issue than we are, and He will surely guard against a fatal error.

Fourth. Having tenderly led the child to take this step, I would go further and have the child confess the Saviour publicly, especially by uniting with the church and sitting at the table of the Lord. To stop short of this is to imperil what has been done. Surely the Master, whose table it is, wants to see all the family, the little ones as well as the big ones, enjoy the feast of His love.

In conclusion, let me say, that in all this our own hearts must be right, and we must have a deep sense of the vital and eternal interests at stake. We must be tactful and kind, and whenever possible act with the consent and sympathetic co-operation of the parents.

When we have thus in the right spirit sought to lead the child to Christ, the Holy Spirit will not fail to do His part.

Toronto

D.

The Sunday School's One Textbook

The Sunday School has great educational value, but even that has its specific line. That will come in fullness and richness only as we hold the School itself, in all its changing forms of method in class and class-work, in rules and regulations, to its one great, glorious purpose of serving as a church School—a church School to study the Bible as its one textbook,

with Bible purpose and spirit. Whatever there be of departure from this, will work toward weakness, inefficiency and failure for this School, and remove it from its place of power and usefulness in the educational system.

The old story of the shoemaker and his "last" is in point here, homely, but timely and instructive. He who makes shoes had better "stick to his last", else there will be no shoes. We can teach religious principles, but not religion, for religion is of one's own self and of the heart in its outgo toward God in worship and service. There can be no teaching religious principles except in the study and teaching of the Word of God. For this reason there is no room in the curriculum of the Sunday School for other than Bible studies, however worthy and important the other subjects be in themselves.

This statement is justified by every experiment that has been made, and only recites what has already taken place wherever the experiment has been made. Turning from the main course, you lose the main things, and the loss is greater and more far-reaching in its effects and influence than we are accustomed to think.—Dr. J. M. Frost in, *The School of the Church*

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL COUNCIL

Under this title will appear, month by month, brief articles by leading Sunday School experts in the United States and Canada. The aim is to focus light from many minds on the problems of the School and its work. The two here given are by the International Teacher Training Superintendent, and a leading Primary Worker.

The Teacher-Training Class for Men

By Rev. Franklin McElfresh, D.D.

While the call for service sounds sharp and clear, we must insist also upon the preparation for service.

Long and careful training is demanded by educational institutions and for responsible positions in business. Men know this, and respect the call for trained workmen fitted for special lines of service in the church.

Training classes for young men who will devote several hours a week to fitting themselves for teaching boys, can be organized in many towns and cities. The teaching of Adult Classes of men is now a challenge to the

strongest manhood in the church. The man who meets a club of men in free discussion of the great themes of religion ought to know his business.

The development of the Organized Class has been too rapid for any training of its teachers and leaders; but in all the larger classes young men should be selected and asked to prepare themselves thoroughly for to-morrow. They should study the Bible, practical phases of psychology, and methods of teaching, and be ready to go forth with confidence and joy to win men and build men in Christian character. Training is simply the effort to find the method by which the noble men of the church

ches may use their strength for the highest efficiency in the kingdom.

Do They Love?

By Mrs. Antoinette Abernethy Lamoreaux

We are emphasizing the intellectual requirements of Sunday School work very strongly at the present time. We insist upon graded lessons and broad instruction for the pupil. We urge training in psychology, and pedagogy, and method for the teacher. Is there not danger of our forgetting that a very ancient thing still remains as the core of religious education—namely, love, not knowledge?

The supreme question concerning the pupil is not, "Does he know about God, the Bible, the church and Christian service?" but "Does he love them?" The supreme question concerning a teacher is not, "Does he hold a Teacher Training Diploma?" but, "Can he teach so as to lead the pupil to love the things of God?"

Of course, one cannot love without knowing, but it is all too possible to know without loving—and we become what we love, not what we know. The law of life is eternal and unchanging, "What I love I will seek and seek till I secure." Love is life's reaching hand, its insistent, unwavering, impossible-to-be-turned-aside hand, and that which it fastens upon, it builds into boy and girl, into man and woman. Every life that is splendid is splendid not because it knew right things, but because it loved them. Every life that is wrecked, is wrecked because it loved the wrong. Persistently ask, "What do they love, these pupils of mine?" Knowledge of God plus love for Him, attention to the Lesson plus love for it, regular attendance plus love of coming, acts of service plus love for the doing—these are the teacher's goal.

The Teacher's Tools

By Professor Amos R. Wells

I. BETWEEN SUNDAYS

It may almost be said that the teacher who teaches only on Sunday does not teach at all. The Sunday-school themes are too great, the Bible facts are too many, the life issues are too vast, for half an hour a week.

But how can teachers teach between Sundays? Mainly through influencing their pupils to study during the week, and guiding this study. It is not what you yourself think or say that is of most value to your scholars, but what you can get them to think and say—their own original study, thought and expression.

Therefore part of your preparation for every Lesson should be a plan for inducing pupils to prepare it. This is the first tool for teaching and the most important. It is also the hardest tool to get. It is far easier to study yourself than to get others to study, especially careless, restless, often over-schooled children.

But how are we to get this tool, this plan for getting our scholars to study? First, it must be a plan suited to the pupils and not to you; therefore, it must be very simple.

Ask the pupils to accomplish tasks like these: "Learn from the Bible Dictionary all you can about Mount Carmel;" "Read the whole chapter;" "Make a list of the fine points in Elijah's character shown by this event;" "Write a letter describing this event as if you were a boy looking on."

Second. Your between-Sundays' plan must be not only simple but comprehensive. It must not confine itself to some minor point, however interesting; but, though you may make something of that, you must be sure to set your pupils some task that will cause them to go over the entire Lesson.

Third. Do not assign many points for home work. One point, if it is comprehensive, may be enough; many items of work would discourage them. If other good ideas occur to you, consider whether they may not be brought out quite as well in the class or in later Lessons, or perhaps in some later year.

Fourth. Make your assignments of home work very definite. To say, "Get a general idea of Jerusalem" will only confuse your pupils. Say, "Make an outline map of Jerusalem; learn the names of the valleys, hills, gates, pools, and location of the temple and the castle of Antonia."

Questions are not usually a good form in which to make assignments of home work. Questions are best in the class to test the results of study; but to get that study the best

way is to prescribe something the pupils can do or write.

Help your pupils in their home work. Do not merely give a vague, general invitation to come to you for assistance, but go to them. Call now and then at their homes to "see how they are getting on with it". You will thus have a fine opportunity of showing pupils how to work and study.

Auburndale, Mass.

The Thing that Matters

Dr. David Smith of Londonderry College, Ireland, is described by the British Weekly as "one of the most exact and finished scholars of our time". Professor Smith recently delivered an address on The Aims of Sabbath School Teachers, in which he told his audience, "that, as the day teacher has an aim, so has the Sunday School teacher. The day school teacher has to fill the minds of his pupils with facts. But for the Sunday School teacher that is not enough. These things are only preliminary. The aim of the Sunday School teacher is nothing else than to bring those little lives into living contact with the living Saviour. All preliminaries are good and helpful if they lead on to that, but only so. It is hardly worth while to study the Bible, if it is a mere study of Oriental history. New maps, new models, new methods—these are well and worthy, and deserve to be pursued. But the law of conversion is not the law of war. In war we need the latest invention and machinery, but in the kingdom of God it is not the machinery that tells—it is the man. "What", said Dr. Smith, "is the great thing that matters in Sunday School work? It is the teacher, not what the teacher knows, nor even what he says, but what he is. That is what tells. The teachers in the Sunday School are to be a point of contact between God and the souls of the children."

The Tenfold Standard of Excellence

By Rev. A. Macgillivray

V. AN ORGANIZED BIBLE CLASS

Not simply a Bible Class that almost every School may be assumed to have, but a Class "organized" to the end that through

such organization every member of the Class will be in a position to receive and impart the greatest measure of good.

The advantages of organization are so obvious, that the wonder is that we have been so slow in beginning it, and that up to the present there are only 241 Organized Classes out of 3,402 Schools reported at last Assembly. "There remaineth yet much land to be possessed."

Among the advantages of organization may be mentioned the division of work. The Class becomes transformed into a Class enterprise in which members mutually share. It ceases to be the enterprise and the responsibility of the teacher alone. Permanency is assured in the organized Class. Too often the existence of a Class is dependent upon the teacher, and the loss of the teacher may mean the breaking up of the Class. The Organized Class, in the event of a teacher leaving, looks out for a new teacher, and, pending the appointment of one, the president and his officers keep it going. Organization ensures increasing strength. Members are also workers, and a very outstanding feature of their work is going out and "compelling" others to come in.

Organization further stands for service—a more adequate and thorough service, when the work that each member can best do is assigned to the member.

A standard of organization calls for the following officers: Teacher, President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Three Committees are counted essential to effective work—Membership, Social, and Devotional and Missionary.

It goes without saying, that the Class is connected with the School, is an integral part of the School, vitally interested in all the School interests, sharing in its enterprises, participating in its devotional exercises, acting the part of "big brother" and "big sister", as the case may be, to the little boys and girls, and magnifying to them the first importance of Sabbath School work, attendance at the Sabbath School session, and loyal, enthusiastic participation in all its work.

The Class may be helped by the adoption of a name that suggests its spirit and aim. The international emblem of the Adult Bible

Class, or an emblem chosen by the Class means distinction. The Charter-Certificate, with the names of the charter members thereon, will be an interesting adornment on the wall of the room where the Class meets, if fortunate enough to have a separate room, although a room is not essential to organization and effective work.

The following standard of work has been approved as one towards which every Organized Class should strive :

1. An annual increase in membership, either within the Class or by organizing a new class.
2. Bibles used in the Class.
3. A definite contribution to Missions.
4. Personal evangelism.
5. Other definite Christian work.
6. Representation in Teacher Training, Study Class, or Reading Class with a view to larger service.

There are not a few Classes in remote mission fields that maintain religious services when the missionary is withdrawn. The Class becomes the nucleus around which the community gathers, and in this way worship is maintained.

There is a great opportunity for a forward movement through the Organized Class in nine-tenths of our Schools. Shall the members of our Sabbath Schools press in at this open door ?

Toronto

How We Manage the Home Department

By Rev. Thomas Wilson

Knox Church congregation, Walkerton, includes about eighty families in the country. For many years, during the summer, in order to reach the country children, a special session of the Sabbath School was held in the morning, before the church service. This was found to be so unsatisfactory that it was dropped.

Then we decided to change the hour of meeting of the Sabbath School from three in the afternoon to ten o'clock in the morning, so that the country children might meet with the town children in the regular School. This was also a failure.

Some four years ago "literature" came to

me from our Presbyterian Publications house; Toronto, drawing attention to the Home Department. After a very careful study of the information sent, I saw that it was the solution of the problem of reaching the families in the country ; and one Sabbath morning made the whole matter a subject of discourse, referring to the difficulty above stated, and the need of reaching the country children.

My plan was to have each elder become the superintendent of his district, and to go to each family in his district at the end of each quarter, taking with him the supplies, such as the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY, and the Home Department Envelope, in which would be entered each Sabbath the number who studied the Lesson in that home, the offering taken, and the number in the home who were at church service. He would also collect the report for the past quarter.

At the close of the service the session met to consider the plan. With one voice the session said, "This is just what we want, and we will do our part." At that meeting I arranged that each elder should take me with him over his district and the matter would be fully explained in each family and some member of the family appointed secretary, to fill in the report for each Sabbath during the quarter. To the credit of my session, let it be said that during these years not one has failed in his duty.

On our Home Department Roll we have 180 members.

The advantages of having this work done by the session are :

First. It gives each elder a definite work to do in his district, and the elders have an excellent opportunity of speaking of spiritual things.

Second. It gives permanency to the work. In some congregations the work is done by the minister or some good women. But the minister moves away or the women have other church work that interferes with this, whereas the session is as permanent as the congregation.

Third. It gives regularity to the work. As a rule, country Sabbath Schools are held only part of the year. Bad roads and stormy weather often close the School. But the Home Department can laugh at the fiercest

storm that blows outside and the worst condition of the roads.

Fourth. It gives unity. Those who in the Home Department spend at least one half hour each week in studying the Lesson for that week, are looked upon and enrolled as members of the Sabbath School and their presence at the social gatherings of the School emphasizes this fact.

The weekly offering in the Home Department, not only pays for all the supplies needed

but each year a large balance is left which is contributed towards missions.

Our wish is that in every congregation, where there are families not within reach of the Sabbath School, and "shut-ins", the Home Department may be given an honest trial; and our prayer is, that it may give as much joy to every minister and session, as it has given to the minister and session of Knox Church, Walkerton.

Walkerton, Ont.

HOW THE WORK GOES ON

A correspondent sends us the following remarkable record of Sunday School attendance. A little girl commenced to attend a city School in 1892, when she first went to the day school, and has attended Sunday School ever since. After perfect attendance for fifteen years she received a gold locket, but only last year was she persuaded to take a class, as she wished to complete twenty years as a scholar. She shortened a visit to England by three weeks in order to be present at the School, when it re-opened on the first Sunday in September, after being closed for July and August, and arrived at the School only half an hour late, coming straight from the steamer.

Recognizing the need for trained Secretaries, Field Workers, Department Superintendents, etc., to meet this constantly increasing demand for men and women to fill such positions, an International Sunday School Association Training School for Secretaries and Field Workers, has been arranged for. The sessions of the School will extend over a period of ten days during August, 1912, exact dates to be announced later. This will be followed by a correspondence course to cover the entire year. The School is to be held at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, about eighty miles from Chicago, and considered one of the most beautiful lakes in North America. W. C. Pearce, 805 Hartford Building, Chicago, is Dean of the Training School.

Almost every Sabbath School in the large district included in the Presbyteries of North

Bay, Algoma and Temiskaming was visited during last summer by Mr. J. M. Mutch, B.A., the Field Worker of the General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee. Six or seven meetings were held each week. Addresses were given on Sunday School work, and usually some practical method was introduced. At the week meetings conferences were held in which such topics as the Cradle Roll, the General Assembly's Memory Passages, the Home Department, Teacher Training, the Organized Bible Class were brought before the people, the meeting being afterwards thrown open for discussion. By this method the advantages of a District Conference, which can otherwise be enjoyed only by a representative or two from each Sunday School, were brought to all the people in each place. Besides, the Field Worker, by such personal visitation secured a better idea of each School's condition and needs than can be obtained from reports.

Looking forward to the union of the Committees and the unifying of the work of the Sabbath Schools and Young People, representatives of both Committees have carried on in the Toronto Presbytery a number of Institutes. Successful afternoon and evening meetings for the consideration of various phases of the work were held recently in Aurora, Georgetown, Stouffville, Scarborough, and Port Credit. The attendance was good and the interest gratifying. Among those taking part were Rev. Mr. Andrews and Rev. Mr. Christy, Conveners of Sunday School and Young People's work, respectively.

The I. B. R. A. (International Bible Reading Association) is an admirable aid to Bible study in the Sunday School and in the home. Its headquarters are in London, England; it has had a great history, with a present membership of close upon a million. The begin-

ning of the year is a good time to form a branch. Full information in regard to the Association and its work may be obtained from Dr. D. F. Price, 351 Sherbourne St., Toronto.

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL PERIODICALS

TEACHERS MONTHLY

Single copies, per year, each	\$0.60
Two or more copies to one address, per year, each	0.50

BIBLE CLASS MAGAZINE (Monthly)

Single copies, per year, each	0.40
Five or more copies to one address, per year, each	0.25

HOME STUDY QUARTERLY

Single copies, per year, each	0.20
Five or more copies to one address, per year, each	0.12

INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY

Single copies, per year, each	0.20
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PRIMARY QUARTERLY

Single copies, per year, each	0.20
Five or more copies to one address, per year, each	0.12

HOME STUDY LEAFLET

(For each week, mailed monthly)	
Five or more copies to one address, per year, each	0.06

INTERMEDIATE LEAFLET

(For each week, mailed monthly)	
Five or more copies to one address, per year, each	0.06

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COLORED LESSON PICTURE ROLL

(Providence Roll)	
Per year, each	3.25
Per quarter, each	0.82
(Includes American postage)	

COLORED LESSON PICTURE CARDS

(Corresponding to Roll)	
Per year, each	0.12
Per quarter, each	0.03
(Includes American postage)	

Lesson Calendar : First Quarter

1. January 7... The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold. Luke 1 : 5-23.
2. January 14... The Birth of John the Baptist. Luke 1 : 57-75.
3. January 21... The Birth of Jesus. Luke 2 : 8-20.
4. January 28... The Presentation in the Temple. Luke 2 : 25-38.
5. February 4... The Wise Men Led by the Star. Matthew 2 : 1-12.
6. February 11... The Boy Jesus in the Temple. Luke 2 : 40-52.
7. February 18... The Ministry of John the Baptist. Luke 3 : 1-17.
8. February 25... The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus. Mark 1 : 9-11 ; Matthew 4 : 1-11.
9. March 3... The Call of the First Disciples. Mark 1 : 14-28.
10. March 10... Jesus the Healer. Mark 1 : 29-45.
11. March 17... The Paralytic Forgiven and Healed. Mark 2 : 1-12.
12. March 24... Feasting and Fasting. Mark 2 : 13-22.
13. March 31... REVIEW.

* AN ORDER OF SERVICE : First Quarter

Opening Exercises

I. SILENCE.

II. PRAYER. Closing with the Lord's Prayer repeated in concert.

III. DOXOLOGY (Hymn 615, Book of Praise).

Praise God from whom all blessings flow :
Praise Him, all creatures here below ;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host ;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

IV. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Psalm 100.
Superintendent. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

School. Serve the Lord with gladness : come before His presence with singing.

Superintendent. Know ye that the Lord He is God : it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves ;

School. We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

Superintendent. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise :

School. Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.

All. For the Lord is good ; His mercy is everlasting ; and His truth endureth to all generations.

V. SINGING.

Lord, this day thy children meet
In Thy courts with willing feet :
Unto Thee this day they raise
Grateful hearts in hymns of praise.

—Hymn 574, Book of Praise

VI. BIBLE WORK. From the Supplemental Lessons.

VII. SINGING. Hymn 29, Book of Praise. (It is expected that this hymn from the Supplemental Lessons will be memorized during the Quarter.)

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie ;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by :
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light ;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night.

VIII. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.

IX. READ RESPONSIVELY. See SPECIAL SCRIPTURE READING in THE TEACHERS MONTHLY, in connection with each Lesson.

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 or Class Secretary.

II. OFFERING ; which may be taken in a class envelope, or class and report envelope. The Class Treasurer may collect and count the money.

III. RECITATION. 1. Scripture Memory Passages from the Supplemental Lessons, or Memory Verses in Lesson Helps. 2. Catechism.

IV. LESSON STUDY.

Closing Exercises

I. SINGING.

I love to hear the story
Which angels' voices tell,
How once the King of Glory
Came down on earth to dwell.
I am both weak and sinful ;
But this I surely know,
The Lord came down to save me
Because He loved me so.

—Hymn 556, Book of Praise

II. 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.)

III. RECITATION. In unison, all standing, Matt. 7 : 12,—“All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”

IV. BENEDICTION.

V. SILENT PRAYER. All seated.

* Copies of the above ORDER OF SERVICE on separate sheet may be had at 50c. a hundred

Lesson I

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST
FORETOLD

January 7, 1912

Luke 1 : 5-23. Read Luke 1 : 1-4. *Commit to memory vs. 15, 16.

GOLDEN TEXT—Without faith it is impossible to please him.—Hebrews 11 : 6.

5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zachari'as, of the course of Abi'as : and his wife was of the daughters of Aa'ron, and her name was Elis'abeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, because that Elis'abeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 And when Zachari'as saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zachari'as : for thy prayer is heard ; and thy wife Elis'abeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness ; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink ;

Revised Version—Omit the ; 2 Abijah ; 2 he had a wife of ; 4 Now ; 5 Omit that ; 6 enter into the temple of the Lord and burn incense ; 7 hour ; 8 Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and ; 9 because thy supplication is heard ; 10 he ; 11 no ; 12 unto ; 13 his face in ; 14 Elijah ; 15 walk in the ; 16 for the Lord a people prepared for him ; 17 I was sent ; 18 bring thee these good tidings ; 19 sent ; 20 come to pass ; 21 believedst ; 22 were waiting for ; 23 they marvelled while he tarried in the temple ; 24 and he continued making signs unto ; 25 dumb ; 26 when the days ; 27 fulfilled ; 28 unto his house.

LESSON PLAN

- I. A Childless Home, 5-7.
- II. A Father's Prayer, 8-13a.
- III. A Divine Promise, 13b-23.

DAILY READINGS

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

M.—The birth of John the Baptist foretold, Luke 1 : 5-23. T.—The incense altar, Ex. 30 : 1-10. W.—An earlier prophecy, Mal. 3 : 1-6. Th.—A vision of the forerunner, Isa. 40 : 3-10. F.—"Praise ye the Lord", Ps. 113. S.—Christ's testimony to John, Luke 7 : 24-28. S.—Without faith, Heb. 11 : 1-6.

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, VILLAGE WORK IN INDIA.)—1. Why is village work so important a part of mission work in India? Because the masses of the people, about nine-tenths of the whole population, live in the villages. In our mission field in Central India we have 17,000 villages.

EXPOSITION

By Rev. Professor Daniel J. Fraser, D.D., LL.D., Montreal

Time and Place—About B.C. 7 ; the temple at Jerusalem.

A Foreword—The subject of study this year is, "The Life of Christ in the Synoptic Gospels". The Synoptic Gospels are those of Matthew, Mark and Luke, and they are

and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Is'rael shall he turn to the Lord their God.

17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Eli'as, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just ; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

18 And Zachari'as said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Ga'bra'iel, that stand in the presence of God ; and I am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zachari'as, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them ; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple ; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministrations were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 29 (Supplemental Lesson); 449 ; 457 ; 16 (Ps. Sel.); 116 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 452.

Special Scripture Reading—Ps. 84. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.) It is expected that each scholar will have his or her Bible, and so be prepared to take part in this reading, which may form part of the opening exercises of the School.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 415. The Birth of John the Baptist Announced. For Question on Missions, I. 182, Map of Canadian Presbyterian Mission with Stations Marked ; I. 181, Map of Canadian Presbyterian Mission Showing 17,000 Villages.

Ste.ograph—For Lesson, Jerusalem Beautiful for Situation, From the Southeast, Showing the Temple Site (Underwood & Underwood, 62 Adelaide St. East, Toronto), set of 13 stereographs for Quarter's Lessons, \$2.17 (Owners of 1911 material need only 9 new stereographs for this Quarter ; owners of both 1910 and 1911 material need only 7 new stereographs) ; four for January, 67c. ; less than four in one order, 20c. each ; stereoscopes, 85c. (postage paid in all cases). In ordering please mention THE TEACHERS MONTHLY.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 415. The Birth of John the Baptist Announced. For Question on Missions, I. 182, Map of Canadian Presbyterian Mission with Stations Marked ; I. 181, Map of Canadian Presbyterian Mission Showing 17,000 Villages.

Ste.ograph—For Lesson, Jerusalem Beautiful for Situation, From the Southeast, Showing the Temple Site (Underwood & Underwood, 62 Adelaide St. East, Toronto), set of 13 stereographs for Quarter's Lessons, \$2.17 (Owners of 1911 material need only 9 new stereographs for this Quarter ; owners of both 1910 and 1911 material need only 7 new stereographs) ; four for January, 67c. ; less than four in one order, 20c. each ; stereoscopes, 85c. (postage paid in all cases). In ordering please mention THE TEACHERS MONTHLY.

so called, because they agree in giving a "synopsis" or general view of the same series of events. The Fourth Gospel follows a different outline of the life of Christ. Every teacher, as well as every Bible Class student, should, if possible, use a "Harmony of the

*The Scripture Memory Passages of the Supplemental Leaflets are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. Their recitation leads to the obtaining of a beautiful Certificate or Diploma.

Gospels", in which the Synoptics are printed in parallel columns. The Harmony of Stevens and Burton (\$1.00) is recommended, and to teachers who read the Greek, The Synopsis of A. Huck (\$1.25).

I. A Childless Home, 5-7.

V. 5. *Herod*; "Herod the Great",—an Idumæan, that is, a native of Edom, the country south of the Dead Sea, who ruled over Judæa by Roman appointment from about B.C. 40 to B.C. 4. His dominions included also Samaria, Galilee and Perea east of the Jordan. *Priest. Zacharias*. The name means "Remembered by Jehovah". *Of the course*; or, "daily ministry". The priests were divided into twenty-four courses or classes, which each performed in turn daily service for a week in the temple (see 1 Chron. ch. 24). *Abia*; or Abijah, the eighth course, 1 Chron. 24 : 10. *Wife. Aaron*. John, therefore, was descended from priestly parents on both sides. *Elisabeth*; meaning literally, "My God is my Oath".

Vs. 6, 7. *Righteous*; persons of piety and goodness. *Commandments*; the moral law. *Ordinances*; the ceremonial law. *Blameless*; holy and consistent in their lives. *No child*; a heavy misfortune in the Jewish view, since the Jews are proverbially fond of their children and every Jewish mother hopes to be the mother of the Messiah. The childlessness of Zacharias and Elizabeth was also a fact hard to reconcile with Jehovah's promise to grant prosperity to the righteous (see Ps. 128).

II. A Father's Prayer, 8-13a.

Vs. 8, 9. *Executed the priest's office*; served his week in due course. *His lot was*. The priests on duty cast lots among themselves both morning and evening to determine which one of them should offer the incense. *Burn incense* (see Ex. 30 : 34-38); on the golden altar which stood before the veil (see Ex. 30 : 1-7) which separated the Holy Place of the temple from the Holy of Holies or innermost shrine. Incense was a symbol of prayer, offered twice a day, before the morning, and after the evening, sacrifice of a lamb. There were about twenty thousand priests in our Lord's time; therefore this highest and most coveted priestly function might never fall twice to the lot of the same priest. It

was "the most memorable day in the life of Zacharias". (Farrar.)

Vs. 10-13a. *People. without*; in the court which surrounded the temple; only priests might enter the house itself. *Were praying*; the spiritual reality accompanying the symbol. *Hour of incense* (Rev. Ver.); whether morning or evening, is not told. *An angel*; a heavenly visitant. Luke dwells much on the ministry of angels (see chs. 1 : 26 ; 2 : 9, 13, 21 ; 12 : 8 ; 15 : 10 ; 16 : 22 ; 22 : 43 ; 24 : 4, 23). *The right side*; that is, the place of honor. *Troubled. fear*; the natural effect of being suddenly faced with the supernatural. *Fear not*. The opening message of the gospel is one of cheer and heartening. *Thy prayer is heard*. The Greek word for "prayer" implies a special supplication, that is, for a son.

III. A Divine Promise, 13b-23.

Vs. 13b-15. *John*; meaning "God is Gracious". The name was given to inspire faith in the reality of the promise. *Great in the sight of the Lord*; literally, "a great man before the Lord", that is, really great in the region of morals and religion. *Neither wine nor strong drink*. Abstinence was a mark of consecration and separation. John was to be a Nazirite like Samson (Judg. 13 : 5), Samuel (1 Sam. 1 : 11), and the Rechabites, Jer. 35 : 6. *Filled with the Holy Ghost*; the exaltation of spiritual fervor as contrasted with the excitement of intoxicants. (Compare Eph. 5 : 18.)

Vs. 16-18. *Shall he turn*. His mission shall be the repentance and conversion of Israel. *Before him*; Rev. Ver., "before his face", that is, God's face or presence. There is no mention yet of the Messiah. *Spirit and power of Elijah* (Rev. Ver.); such reforming energy as Elijah showed at Carmel, 1 Kgs. 18 : 17-40. (Compare Mal. 3 : 1 ; 4 : 5.) *Turn. hearts. fathers. children*; restore happy family life. (Compare Mal. 4 : 6.) *The disobedient*; the Jews who had transgressed God's laws. *To the wisdom of the just*; the wisdom which showed itself in a life of righteousness. *Whereby*. Zacharias asks for a sign.

Vs. 19-23. *Gabriel*; "Man of God". (See Dan. 8 : 16.) The other angel named in scripture is Michael ("Who Is Like God ?"),

Dan. 10 : 21 ; Jude 9. In later Judaism names were frequently given to angels. *Dumb* ; Rev. Ver., "silent". The sign unbelievably asked for in v. 18 comes in the form of a punishment. *The people waited . . . and marvelled*. The priests usually hastened from the Holy Place, lest the near approach to the divine Presence should bring them harm (see Lev. 16 : 13). *Be konpd. remained speechless*. He could only make signs, and could not pronounce the blessing for which they were probably waiting. *Seen a vision*. This was inferred from his dazed look. *Days of his ministration* ; the week of his priestly course. *His own house* ; in the hill country (v. 39) south of Jerusalem.

Light from the East

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

Lot—The Jewish priests, in our Lord's day, were divided into twenty-four divisions, and each division was on duty twice during the year. Every morning and evening it was decided by lot which should burn incense. As they numbered about twenty thousand,

the opportunity would not likely come to a priest more than once in a lifetime, and to many of them it never came. The priest who drew the white pebble out of the urn, chose two others to help him, but when they had done their part they retired, leaving him alone in the Holy Place. It must have been a solemn moment in his life.

NEITHER WINE—The religious devotee in Israel was the Nazirite, a zealot for the national religion, whose vows were sometimes taken for a limited period and sometimes for the whole life. Wine and every other product of the vine were forbidden, as a sign of complete separation from the nature worship around them, and a protest against luxury and sensuality by a return to the simple nomadic life. The Nazirite was not to approach dead bodies, even of those dearest to him, for he must always be ready for the service of God. As the hair was believed to be the symbol of vitality, it was left uncut to indicate the devotion of the entire manhood to God, and it formed a significant outward sign of the consecrated man.

APPLICATION

By Rev. P. M. MacDonald, M.A., Toronto

They were both righteous before God, v. 6. A good New Year resolve for all young people in Christian homes might be this : "I will remember the Fifth Commandment and pray for strength to keep it." Dr. John G. Paton, the missionary hero to the New Hebrides, often acknowledged, with a full heart, the kindness of God shown to him in the character of his parents, and he tells us that, again and again, in his lonely and laborious life among the South Sea Islanders, he was upheld by the memory of his mother's prayers and his father's counsels, and the noble example of both. "The inheritance of a good name", he used to say, "is one of the greatest blessings life can bring to us.

The people were praying, v. 10. Tyndall, the eminent scientist, noticed, one day, that the air above a red hot poker is absolutely free of dust, and he recorded the fact. Years afterwards, Sir Oliver Lodge verified the experiment with an electrified poker, and

discovered that the dust was dispelled more quickly. He has now utilized his discovery by charging a wire with electricity on foggy days, and, by means of it, clearing the fog from the air surrounding it for nearly two hundred feet. The ocean ports that suffer from fog are installing charged wires, thus saving much property and many lives. If we charge our lives with the heavenly electricity of prayer, we shall escape the misery of earth and sin-born clouds.

There appeared unto him an angel, v. 11. Around us day and night the angels sing and serve, though we hear them not nor see them.

Silent Singing and Serving Their help is none the less real because we are not sensibly aware of their presence. In the

home where there are young children, the mother does many things for their comfort while they are fast asleep. One mother I knew went the rounds of the rooms where her dear ones slept, and saw to their safety before she went to rest. One she tucked in, another she raised upon his pillow, a third she made

cooler by taking away a heavy covering from his bed. When she joined her husband again, she said, "Dear unconscious ones, they never knew I was near them." So it is that God's angels gird and guard us when we know it not.

He shall drink neither wine nor strong drink, v. 15. At a dinner party where wine was being served, one of the guests turned his glass upside down to show **The Glass Turned Down** that he would not drink. This act of his was a surprise to some, for he had been known as a moderate drinker. He did not notice that two others abstained like himself. Later in the evening another guest came to him and said, "May I thank you for your refusal to take wine at dinner? My son, who sat opposite to you, leaves me to-morrow to win his way in the world. He has been a pledged abstainer for some time now, but had intended this evening to do as the others did. Your refusal led him to keep his pledge, and I hope that he will remember your example." That night

the man knelt and thanked God that he had helped the young man, and he resolved always to abstain for the sake of others from wine and strong drink.

Whereby shall I know this? v. 18. What an unfortunate habit we have of doubting God's promises! We pray, and are surprised when the answer comes. **The Unanswered Knock** We ask, and then demand added proof that He means to give. A man of means and with a kind heart heard one day of an aged woman in great poverty, who had earnestly prayed for relief. At once he went to her home and knocked at the door. Getting no response, he went round the house, trying every door and calling out the woman's name; but there was no sign of her presence. Next day he met her as she was coming out of the door, and told her of his call. "Oh, it was you that knocked was it? I thought you were the officer coming to take my furniture, so I bolted the door and hid myself."

THE LESSON GRADED

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

For Teachers of Bible Classes

By Rev. W. H. Smith, Ph.D., Fredericton, N.B.

Take a little time to discuss the coming year's work. Make clear the meaning of the term, "Synoptic Gospels", and point out the difference between these and John's Gospel (see A Foreword, Exposition). Elicit the fact that Lessons I. and II. concerning John the Baptist are a prelude to those that narrate the coming of Christ. Let the class discussion gather about three points:

1. *The parents of John*, vs. 5-7. Bring out: (a) The official position and duties of Zacharias, also his descent, and that of Elizabeth. (b) Their moral and spiritual character. (c) Their childlessness. Refer to Ps. 128, and dwell on the fact that the godly must sometimes bear sore disappointments. Discuss the question whether material or family prosperity are always sure to come to the godly. Compare the teaching of Jesus in Mark 10: 28-31.

2. *Zacharias' vision*, vs. 8-17. Question about: (a) the special service of offering

incense,—the place, the method by which this service was allotted to each priest in turn, why it was so rare a privilege, its meaning as a symbol of prayer. (b) The appearance of the angel. Refer to Luke's frequent mention of angels. (c) Zacharias' fear. Bring out the reason for this dread. (d) The message of the angel. Dwell on John's birth as an answer to prayer, the announcement of his name, his character, and his work as preparatory to the coming of God's kingdom among men.

Get the class to discuss the greatness of John. The standard was spiritual, such as God approves. Contrast other standards,—commercial, educational, political, social. Emphasize the place total abstinence had in his life. Bring out the duty and privilege of abstaining for self and others. Next, turn to the place the Holy Spirit must have in abiding greatness. For illustrations take the spiritual heroes of the world. Bring out the distinctive work of John, as leading to repentance and conversion. Have the class compare him with Elijah in spirit, power and functions. Emphasize the prominent feature of his work in building happy homes.

3. *Zacharias' doubt*, vs. 18-23. Bring out the fact that, though he believed in answers to prayer in general, he cherished a lurking doubt whether God would answer his special supplication. Question, is this a common experience? Is there any good reason to doubt God's power in our own salvation or in that of others? Discuss the penalty of Zacharias' unbelief: (a) His inability to pronounce the usual priestly blessing on the people in God's name (see Num. 6 : 22-26); (b) his temporary loss of joy in God's promise.

Emphasize the two main lessons: First, spiritual preparation is a necessary condition of receiving God's best gifts. Second, faith is necessary to please God. Press these home upon the class.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

By Rev. A. Wylie Mahon, B.D., St. Andrews, N.E.

In beginning the study of the Life of Christ, it will be well to draw the attention of the class to the four inspired books which have come down to us, which deal with this subject. For some interesting information about the four Gospels see A Foreword in the Exposition of this Lesson. Draw special attention to Luke's beautiful preface, vs. 1-4. Some people never read the preface of a book. When a writer knows, as well as Luke knew, how to write a preface, a great deal is lost by skipping it.

1. *An Interesting Old Couple*, vs. 5-7. Picture this beautiful home in the hill-country of Judea,—Zacharias and Elizabeth, bound up in the bundle of life with each other, and bound up in the bundle of life with God,—growing old together beautifully,—loving and serving God, and loved and revered by all who knew them,—wearing the white flower of a blameless life. Some of the scholars will be led to think of a country home—a country manse, perhaps—like this, just a grand old man and his dear old wife, beloved by everybody. What was lacking in the home life of this beautiful country home? Zacharias and Elizabeth no doubt fathered and mothered other people's children, but they had none of their own to love.

2. *An Angel's Visit*, vs. 8-17. What was Zacharias doing when Gabriel appeared? There are always angels in the path of duty.

We are told that angels' visits are few and far between. Is this in harmony with the teaching of the Bible, that angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister (Heb. 1 : 14)? Speak of God's *visible* angels of the present day,—the friends and counselors and helpers whom He sends to us. These are not less divine than those who appeared long ago, though they are more human. May not God's *invisible* angels have more to do with our life than we think? Dwell upon the message which the angel brought that day to Zacharias. What kind of a child, what kind of a man, was this John to be? Could he have been the man he was, if he had not been the child he was? Impress upon the scholars that a good boyhood or girlhood goes to the making of a helpful and beautiful manhood or womanhood.

3. *A Good Man Struck Dumb*, vs. 18-23.

This may seem to the scholars a severe punishment for such an offence, but we need to remember that we cannot doubt what God has to say to us without sinning and suffering. It was worse in Zacharias than it would have been in one less highly privileged.

Emphasize, in closing, the joy and strength of a simple faith that always takes God at His word.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

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

Begin with a little talk about the persons named in v. 5. There is Herod the Great, the Edomite usurper, holding his throne by grace of the Romans. Have his dominions pointed out on the map. There is Zacharias the priest. Question about the meaning of his name, and make clear the meaning of "the course". And there was Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias, the meaning of whose name the scholars will be able to tell. Bring out what is said about the character of this good old couple (v. 6), and the great sorrow of their hearts and home because they had no child, v. 7. Dwell on the fondness of Jewish parents for their children, and the hope of every Jewish mother that she may become the mother of the Messiah.

Turn now to the picture (vs. 8-10) of Zacharias offering incense in the temple. The

points to bring out by questioning are: the manner in which it was determined which priest should perform this office; the reality—prayer—of which the smoking incense was a symbol; the praying multitude in the temple court; and the time—morning and evening—when the incense was offered.

Next (vs. 11-17) we have the appearance of the angel, with his promise. Question about the place where he took his stand and the significance of this, the effect of his appearance upon Zacharias and the reason, the promise of a son, what his name was to be, the description given of his character, what is meant by "the spirit and power of Elijah" (v. 17, Rev. Ver.), and what he should do for family life amongst the Jews.

The wonder of the people at the long delay of Zacharias and the reason for this wonder,

their recognition of the fact that he had seen a vision, the completion of Zacharias' ministrations in the temple and his departure for his own home, suggest material for further questioning and discussion, vs. 21, 22.

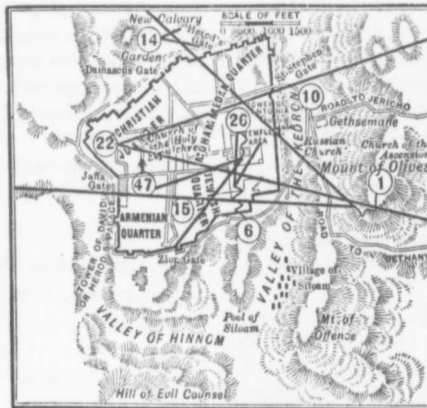
Now ask for the Golden Text. Bring out the manner in which Zacharias had showed lack of faith in God. Emphasize the teaching, that true faith just takes God at His word, and leads us to act in the confidence that He will do just what He says.

Zacharias received the promise of the angel with doubt, v. 18. Discuss his demand for some sign from the angel in support of the truth of his promise. The sign came, but it came in the form of punishment, v. 20. Have the scholars tell what this punishment was, and how Zacharias had brought it upon himself by his unbelief.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Find, on the map of modern Jerusalem, the number 1 on a hill outside the city at the east. Two heavy lines start from near 1 and reach off across the city. You find at your feet part of the stony ground of Mount Olivet. The opposite bank of the Kidron Valley at its foot rises still more steeply, with a heavy wall of stone masonry all along its crest, a

wall 30 to 40 feet high. Nearly opposite where you stand, that wall turns a square corner and extends directly away from you. Over the top of the wall you can see a large, nearly level, oblong space, partly paved, partly grassy, with just a few trees. Near the middle of that open space, on a terrace a



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PAT. U. IN GREAT BRITAIN.

little higher than the surrounding level, is a curious eight-sided building, the Dome of the Rock. Beyond that domed building and the level terraces you see the gray and white-washed stone houses of Jerusalem, crowded so closely together that there seem to be no traces of its crooked streets. A few modern churches and convents stand out conspicuously because

they are so much larger.

You can see the place for yourself, just as if you were standing on Olivet, by using, in the stereoscope, a stereograph entitled, *Jerusalem Beautiful for Situation, From the Southeast, Showing the Temple Site.*

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Something to Look Up

[From the INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY AND LEAFLET]

1. In the Old Testament there is a story

of a man whose birth was foretold by an angel, and who was never to touch strong drink. Who was he? Where is the story found?

2. "With God all things are possible."

Who spoke these words? Find the chapter and verse.

ANSWERS, LESSON XIII., Fourth Quarter, 1911—(1) 2 Cor. 9 : 7. (2) Prov. 11 : 24.

For Discussion

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY AND LEAFLET]

1. Is prayer always answered?
2. How may we be filled with the Holy Spirit?

Prove from Scripture

That we should trust God.

The Catechism

Ques. 1. *Man's chief end.* Man's "chief end" means what chiefly he was made for. All that God has made is intended to express and reveal the perfections of His character (see Rom. 1 : 20). We are doing what we were made for when we willingly give ourselves to the furthering of this divine revelation. 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 Miss Jessie Weir, Mhow, Central India

Ques. 1. Village work is of the greatest importance, in mission work in India, because it is in the villages that the great masses of the people are found. Over ninety per cent. of the population live in villages. This may be accounted for by the fact that India is not a manufacturing country. Industries are not developed to any great extent, and hence there is little tendency to congregate in large centres. It is in the villages that one sees conservative India, and they are in a sense so isolated that the most exciting changes in the country may leave them unaffected. In our Central India mission field we have 17,000 villages, and for the evangelization of these the Canadian Presbyterian Church is responsible. Each of the mission stations already opened is surrounded by a district dotted with villages. For instance, there are about two thousand villages in each of the Dhar and Mhow fields. Since, therefore, the bulk of the people live in the villages, the importance of village mission work cannot be overestimated.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston

Subject for the Quarter—Jesus the Mighty Worker.

Golden Text for the Quarter—The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.—Matthew 4 : 16.



Introduction—In our Lessons this Quarter we shall learn about the coming of two great ones. Like two lights they came into the world, one a lesser light to show the coming of the Great Worker,—the Light which should lighten the world with the shining of His life of purity and goodness, and show the way of salvation for all nations.

Lesson Subject—The Mighty Worker's forerunner promised.

Introduction—Do you remember a Lesson about a promise that God made that He would send Some One into the world? What was the promise? (Recall Lesson XIII., December 24.) To-day we are going to hear about another promise that God made, that He would send some one to prepare the people to receive this promised Saviour, this Mighty Worker, Jesus Christ.

Lesson—We'll draw a picture of a cradle, because God promised that this one who was to go before and get the people ready for Jesus would be born into the world a little baby boy, and be nursed and trained and taught like other babies are.

Zacharias and Elizabeth—There lived in Jerusalem a good old priest named Zacharias, and his wife Elizabeth, who was also old. They were both good people, loving and serving God, v. 6. One thing made them sad—no little baby had ever come to them, although they had often prayed to God that He would send them one.

A Son Promised—One day while Zacharias was attending to his work in the temple (see Exposition), there appeared to him a messenger from God, vs. 11, 12. Tell the message of the angel. vs. 13-17.

A Sign from God—Tell of the surprise of Zacharias. Can it be possible that the prayer for a child would yet be answered? How shall he know that it is a true message from God? (Tell vs. 18-23.)

Promises about John—The angel said he should be called John. V. 15 tells us the beautiful promises God made about this child.

Golden Text—Print and repeat Golden Text,—WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE HIM. Repeat also, "There hath not failed one word of all His good promise."

The Mountain of Faith—Let us call this mountain (Outline) FAITH, and this valley away down here we'll call DOUBT. When we believe that some good thing is going to come to us, our spirits go up, and we feel as if we were on a mountain top, seeing the bright sunshine, breathing the pure air, and full of joy. But when we doubt that good is coming, our spirits go down, and we feel as if we were in a dark valley where no sunshine is and no joy is found. Let us all stay on the mountain of faith, believing God's promises and being full of joy.

Something to Think About—I should believe God.

FROM THE PLATFORM

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

HE. ZA. EL. GA. JO.

Ask for the name of the first person mentioned in the Lesson. Having received the answer, Herod, print HE. on the blackboard. Question about this king, bringing out his origin, how he came to be placed on the throne of Judah, his character, etc. In the same way get the name of the second person mentioned, Zacharias, and print ZA. Ask about his occupation and the purpose for which he had come into the temple. Next, having got the name of the third Lesson person and printed EL., have the scholars tell you who she was, and question about the great lack in the home of Zacharias and Elizabeth. The fourth name to be dealt with in a similar fashion is Gabriel (Print GA.). A question or two will suffice about the fifth name, John (Print Jo.). The point to emphasize is that of the Golden Text, the duty and blessedness of unquestioning faith in God.

Lesson II.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST January 14, 1912

Luke 1 : 57-75. Study Luke 1 : 57-80. Read Luke 1 : 24-56. Commit to memory vs. 67-69 or 76, 77.

GOLDEN TEXT—Blessed be the Lord God of Israel ; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.—Luke 1 : 68.

57 Now Elisabeth's ¹ full time came that she should be delivered ; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her ² cousins heard ³ how the Lord had ⁴ shewed great mercy upon her ; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, ⁵ that on the eighth day ⁶ they came to circumcise the child ; and they ⁷ called him Zachari'as, after the name of his father

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so ; but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, ⁸ how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing ⁹ table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, ¹⁰ and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them : and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judæa.

Revised Version—¹ time was fulfilled that ; ² kinsfolk ; ³ that the ; ⁴ magnified his mercy towards her ; ⁵ Omit that ; ⁶ that ; ⁷ would have called ; ⁸ what he ; ⁹ tablet ; ¹⁰ blessing God ; ¹¹ Omit they ; ² heart ; ¹² then shall this child be ? For the hand ; ¹⁴ the ; ¹⁵ wrought redemption for his people ; ¹⁶ Salvation from ; ¹⁷ shew mercy towards our ; ¹⁸ To grant ; ¹⁹ should serve ; ²⁰ our days.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Birth, 57, 58.
- II. The Naming, 59-66.
- III. The Song, 67-75.

DAILY READINGS

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

M.—The birth of John the Baptist, Luke 1 : 57-66.
T.—The birth of John the Baptist, Luke 1 : 67-80.
W.—A joyful thanksgiving, Isa. 12. Th.—God remembereth, Ps. 105 : 1-12. F.—John's testimony, John 3 : 26-36. S.—A glad promise, Zeph. 3 : 14-20. S.—Girded with gladness, Ps. 30.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 2. *What rule hath God 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

66 And all ¹¹ they that heard *them* laid *them* up in their ¹² hearts, saying, What ¹³ manner of child shall this be ! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zachari'as was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 Blessed be the Lord ¹⁴ God of Is'rael ; for he hath visited and ¹⁵ redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant Da'vid ;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began :

71 ¹⁶ That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ;

72 To ¹⁷ perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant ;

73 The oath which he sware to our father A'braham,

74 ¹⁸ That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies ¹⁹ might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all ²⁰ the days of our life.

the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.

The Question on Missions—2. How large are these villages ? They vary in size from a few huts to a thousand or more huts. In the average village there are about three hundred people.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 29 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 80 ; 85 ; 84 (Ps. Sel.) ; 52 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 84.

Special Scripture Reading—Isa. 9 : 2-7. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 416, Birth of John the Baptist. For Question on Missions, I. 74, A Village in India.

Stereograph—For Lesson, Hebron, the Home of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, From the East (Underwood & Underwood, see page 13).

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—About B.C. 6 ; an unknown city in the southern hill country of Judea.

Connecting Links—Between this Lesson and the preceding one Luke records the announcement to Mary of the coming birth of her Child, the visit of Mary to Elizabeth, and Mary's song, the "Magnificat". (See vs. 24-56.)

I. The Birth, 57, 58.

Vs. 57, 58. *Elizabeth. brought forth a son ;* and so the angel's promise in v. 13 was fulfilled. *Neighbours ;* named first as living nearest. *Cousins ;* Rev. Ver., "kinsfolk". Some of these doubtless lived some distance away. *Magnified his mercy* (Rev. Ver.) ; made His kindness conspicuous. *Rejoiced with her ;* entered with full sympathy into her gladness (see ch. 15 : 6, 9 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 26).

We have here a beautiful picture of Israelitish home life.

II. The Naming, 59-66.

Vs. 59-61. *The eighth day ;* the legal day of circumcision (compare Gen. 17 : 12 ; Phil. 3 : 5). *They came ;* the relatives and friends of the family. *To circumcise the child ;* a very solemn ceremony. At this time the child's name was given. *They called him ;* literally, "were calling him",—either they were taking it for granted that he would be called Zacharias, or they wished to give him this name. *Name of his father.* Josephus says that this was a common Jewish custom. *He shall be called John ;* as the angel had bidden, v. 13. Elizabeth's husband had likely written down the name for her.

Vs. 62, 63. *Made signs.* Was Zacharias deaf as well as dumb ? Some think so. But

perhaps the relatives wished to spare the feelings of Elizabeth when they appealed from her decision, or a sign was all that was needed if the father had heard the conversation. *Asked for*; also, of course, by means of signs. *A writing table*; a wooden tablet covered with wax. It was used like a slate. *Wrote, saying*; said by writing. The writing implement would be a stylus, a pointed pencil of metal, bone or ivory. *His name is John*; not "shall be", but "is": the matter had already been settled by the angel's command (see v. 13). *They marvelled*; that the parents should give him a strange name, feeling that there must be some hidden reasons behind this action.

Vs. 64-66. *Mouth was opened*. He recovered speech after his dumbness of nearly a year's duration. The prophecy having been fulfilled, the punishment of refusing to believe it was removed as promised, v. 20. *Spake*; "began to speak". *Praised God*; for answering his prayer in spite of his unbelief (see v. 18). *Fear came on all*; not terror, but religious awe in presence of the supernatural. *Noised abroad*; made widely known. *Laid them up in their hearts*; pondering and, doubtless, often speaking about them. *What manner of child*; Rev. Ver., "What then shall this child be?" These three marvels,—his birth of aged parents, his strange name, and the recovery of his father's speech,—were omens of a wonderful future for the child. *And the hand, etc.*; Rev. Ver., "For the hand, etc.", a Hebrew expression for God's guidance and upholding. (See Ps. 37 : 24 and 80 : 17.)

III. The Song, 67-75.

Vs. 67-69. *Filled with the Holy Ghost*; who stirred his heart and mind with an overpowering spiritual excitement. *Prophesied*. The prophet spoke for God to the people of his own time. *Blessed*. This word is translated "Benedictus" in the Latin Bible; hence Zacharias' song is known as "The Benedictus." *Visited*; that is, graciously. *Redeemed*; literally, "made a ransom for", not, as the Jews fondly hoped, from the yoke of foreign foes, but from the worse bondage of sin. *His people*; that is, Israel. *Horn of salvation*; a Jewish symbol, meaning either "a kingdom", because kings were anointed with a horn of oil, or "victorious power", because in their horns all horned animals have

their power. (See 1 Sam. 2 : 10; 2 Sam. 22 : 3; Ps. 75 : 4, 5, 10.) *House* (family) of David; pointing to Jesus' descent from David.

Vs. 70-72. *As he spake by his prophets*; who had foretold the Saviour's coming. *Since the world began*; from the earliest times. *Salvation from our enemies* (Rev. Ver.); from the tyranny of sin more dreadful than that of alien conquerors. *Mercy towards our fathers* (Rev. Ver.); ancestors to whom the promises, now soon to be fulfilled, were made. *Covenant*; an arrangement wherein God promises certain things provided that men accept and carry out certain conditions.

Vs. 73-75. *The oath. Abraham*. See Gen. 12 : 3; 17 : 4; 22 : 16-18. *Serve him*. God's purpose in redeeming and delivering His people was, that they should serve Him in their lives as Zacharias and the other priests served Him in the temple. *Holiness*; purity of heart and life, the Godward, religious aspect of conduct. *Righteousness*; just and faithful dealing, the manward, ethical aspect.

The remaining portion of Zacharias' song describes the work of John as the forerunner of the Messiah, and v. 80 tells of John's growth to manhood.

Light from the East

WRITING TABLE—The ancients wrote ordinarily on tablets of fir wood, citron wood, or ivory. These were covered with soft wax, and were written on with an iron stylus, one end of which tapered to a rounded point, while the other end was flattened like a blunt chisel to smooth down the wax and erase the writing. When the written matter was to be preserved or sent away, two tablets were fastened together by wire hinges and the waxed sides turned together. To prevent the surfaces rubbing, there was a raised margin round them. When Henry M. Stanley visited Uganda, the portions of the New Testament translated or paraphrased by him were written by the natives on thin boards of white wood.

HORN—Was the symbol of power in the ancient poetry of Israel. The wild bull, the unicorn of the Bible, was one of the strongest and fiercest animals known to the Hebrews. It was hunted by kings in the wilds of Assyria

and in the forests of Germany, but it has been extinct for centuries. Its immense horns, which it could use with such deadly effect when brought to bay, impressed men so much

that they were used as the symbols of strength and power in all early literature, and emperors on their monuments boasted of killing it.

APPLICATION

They came to circumcise the child, v. 59.
So, in baptism, our Christian parents gave us to God and His service, and to the age-long conflict with His and our enemies. When Hannibal, afterwards the famous Carthaginian general, was nine years of age, his father, Hamilcar, proposed to take him on one of his military expeditions. This offer the young Hannibal eagerly accepted. His father then bade him to devote himself once for all to the service of his country—Carthage—and, with his hand upon the altar, to swear eternal enmity to Rome. The resolve thus made in his boyhood, determined the whole course of Hannibal's life. To the end of his days he had but one love, the love of his native land, and but one foe, the rival power of Rome. So love to God and hatred of evil should rule the hearts and conduct of those who, by gift of believing fathers and mothers, belong to the kingdom of heaven.

The hand of the Lord was with him, v. 66.
One captain says it was the good ship that made his voyage so successful, and another says it was the way he worked his ship. One farmer regards the quality of the soil of his farm as the explanation of his large crop. Another says his good harvest was due to the climate; and yet another is sure that his own hard work has brought him his full barns. How insufficient are these explanations to one who knows that

“Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,
And back of the flour the mill;
And back of the mill is the wheat, and the shower,
And the sun, and the Father's will.”

He hath visited and redeemed his people, v. 68.
When Portugal was coveted by Napoleon in 1807, the king of Portugal hurriedly departed for Brazil. His arrival was hailed with joy, and resulted in the greatest prosperity to the colony. The ports soon became filled with

shipping. A printing press was introduced, and a royal gazette was published. Academies of medicine and schools of art were established. The royal library, composed of sixty thousand volumes, was opened to the people. New streets were added, new buildings erected, and new towns came into existence; and over all Brazil went a better and happier spirit. The coming of the king did this. The coming of Christ has transformed the whole world. Peace and happiness, joy and gladness, attend and follow His presence. The world of humanity is on its way to God ever since His Son came and broke the chains of sin that held men captive.

Saved from our enemies, v. 71. A friend of Martin Luther once sent him the picture of a dangerous man who had formed a plot to kill the great Reformer, and earnestly advised Luther to be on the watch for his safety whenever he saw the man near him. The picture and the caution secured Luther's safety. We all have enemies. Powerful spiritual foes constantly assail us. The Bible pictures them in their true character. It unmasks the great enemy, and our own evil thoughts, desires and tempers are portrayed in it. But the Bible also tells us how to escape all these foes, and if we take its advice we shall overcome. It shows to us our all-sufficient Saviour, to whom we may look in every need, and never look in vain.

Might serve him without fear, v. 74. The fear that consists in dread or doubt of God's goodness and love, is never reasonable. When we have once heard God say to us, “Fear thou not; for I am with thee”, we should give no place to a fear that is caused by forgetting Him, or thinking He is far away when we most need Him. When David Livingstone was in the heart of Africa, he was surrounded by perils that kept him on his guard constantly, but he did not give in to crippling and cowardly fear. He said: “I am God's ser-

One Love
—One Foe

The Secret of
Success

Our Way of
Escape

Two Kinds
of Fear

The Coming
of the King

vant, and with such a Master shall I fear? He is my Refuge and my Strength and my Support." Thus it was that Livingstone was calm in the face of all dangers.

In holiness and righteousness, v. 75. Contentment does not spring from what we have, it is the result of our character, our conduct, our relation to God. The Duchess of Argyle once wrote to several European Monarchs and asked them who it was they specially envied. Most of the replies she received were in harmony with that of Francis Joseph, Em-

peror of Austria, who said, "I envy the fate of the man who is not an Emperor." Not long ago one of the richest men in the world declared that he envied the man who had no wealth to care for. No blessedness but that of a good character is ever independent of circumstances, no joy except that which is parallel with the abiding and eternal joy of God can supply our want. When the aim of our life is holiness and righteousness in the sight of God, we need envy no one; we are satisfied in Him and may continue so to be all the days of our life.

THE LESSON GRADED

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

For Teachers of Bible Classes

As the course of studies for the year is intended to be an outline life of Christ, keep the connection between the Lessons well before the class. The Lesson naturally follows the last, as a fulfilment of the promise given to Zacharias by the angel. The main teaching centres in three facts:

1. *The Birth of John.* Bring out:

(a) The holy joy the father, mother, relatives and friends manifested at John's birth.

(b) The circumcision and naming of the child, the legal exactness and the parents' determination to give the name mentioned by the angel. Discuss the principles underlying the ceremony, which meant the claiming of the child for God and the church. Refer to the corresponding sacrament of baptism in the New Testament. Take some time to urge the obligations resting upon those who, as children, have been dedicated to God by their parents. Further, get the class to consider the obligation of the church to care for the children.

(c) The return of the speech of Zacharias, and the consequent wonder of the onlookers. Emphasize the full reasons for this, the unusual birth, unusual name and unusual speech. They saw God in it all and high expectations were aroused. Turn attention to the greater wonder when spiritual power appears in saving men. Refer to some of the great revivals in history, or to any revival of which the class

may have knowledge. Harold Begbie's "Twice Born Men" has many notable instances.

2. *The song of Zacharias.* The song falls into two main divisions:

(a) Vs. 67-75, General thanksgiving for divine mercies. This division contains three main thoughts. Have the class bring out the central thought in each: the ascription of praise to God (vs. 67, 68); the recognition of the fulfilment of the prophetic message (vs. 70-72); and of the realization of the oath to Abraham, vs. 73-75. Take time to emphasize these great ideas.

(b) Vs. 76-79, Special thanksgiving for the birth of John. Dwell on vs. 76, 77 as a prophetic forecast of John's ministry. Call attention to vs. 78, 79 as a glowing prediction of the new life coming. Bring out the force of the contrast between "light and darkness".

3. *The early life of John.* Emphasize particularly his strength of spirit, love of solitude and years of preparation. Each of these helped to make him the man he was in after years.

In closing, bring the last Lesson and today's together, one as promise and preparation, the other as realization. Bring out how God fulfils His plan when His people cooperate. Urge each member of the class to prepare for the fulfilment of God's purpose through him or her. The realization of the purpose necessarily follows obedience.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

In introducing the Lesson, draw the attention of the class to the modern spirit mani-

festated by Luke, in telling us so much about the childhood of John and of Jesus. Few biographers in those days attached much value to childhood. With most of these the interest in life began with the manhood period. We have come to look upon life as Luke did: we have come to think of the child as father of the man, that childhood shows the man as morning light the day.

1. *The First New Testament Baby*, vs. 57-66. Help the scholars to picture the scene in that beautiful hill-country home, when a baby came to make the home life complete,—the excitement and joy of all the friends and relatives, the circumcision, the difficulty about a name, the way the matter was settled, the tongue of the dumb father loosed,—how all the countryside talked about what had happened, and wondered at it, and felt in their hearts that this baby was no ordinary child. Draw the attention of the class to the simplicity and lifelikeness of this whole scene. Luke must have heard this story from some one very familiar with all the incidents, perhaps from Elizabeth's cousin Mary. Elizabeth, who was very old when her child was born, was probably not alive when Luke wrote.

2. *The Second New Testament Hymn*, vs. 67-79. What was the first New Testament hymn? (Vs. 46-55.) This song of Zacharias' was not a man-made hymn. The author was filled with the Holy Spirit. Have a talk with the class about how the great hymns of the church all come from souls filled with the Holy Spirit. Dr George Matheson, the blind minister of St. Giles, Edinburgh, who wrote, "O Love, That Will not Let Me Go" (Hymn 185, Book of Praise), in a few minutes, always said that he had very little to do with it except to put down the words which were put in his heart. The same thing was true of Dr. Ray Palmer's, "My Faith Looks up to Thee" (Hymn 207, Book of Praise). It was the product of an inspired moment. When the Spirit of God gets possession of us, we always have a song of praise in the heart, whether we can give musical expression to it or not. What are the great thoughts contained in this song of Zacharias? (See Exposition.) It comes in the end to be a missionary hymn.

3. *God's Good Boy*, v. 80. Bring home to the class that we have here a description of the way God expects all His boys—all boys are God's boys—to grow. It is a splendid thing to grow strong physically, but along with this growth God expects us to grow strong spiritually, to be growing up into the life of the Spirit, into sweet fellowship with Himself and with every thing that is true and beautiful and good.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Go over, with the scholars, Luke's account, in vs. 24-56, of the angel's annunciation to Mary of the coming birth of Jesus, of Mary's song, the "Magnificat", and of Mary's visit to Elizabeth. Then use the Lesson Plan as a guide for the questioning and discussion:

I. THE BIRTH, vs. 57, 58. To whom was a son born? What promise was thus fulfilled? What two classes of persons heard of this event? Explain "showed great mercy". With what feelings was the news of the birth received? By whom had this joy been foretold?

II. THE NAMING, vs. 59-66. On what day after his birth was a Jewish child circumcised? Who came to the circumcision of Elizabeth's son? What was given to the child on the day of his circumcision? What was it proposed that this boy should be called? Why? Who opposed this? What did they say the name should be? From whom had she learned this?

Who was then asked about the child's name? How was the inquiry made? In what way did he give his answer? What was the "writing tablet"? With what did Zacharias write upon it? What did he write? How had the question been settled? What effect had Zacharias' answer on the company? What wonderful thing now happened to Zacharias? What did he at once begin to do? What effect had this on all who heard of it? How widely was it made known? What was asked concerning John? Who was his Guide and Upholder?

III. THE SONG, vs. 67-75. With whom was Zacharias filled? What is meant by this? Explain "prophesied". What was the first word of Zacharias' song? What is it

therefore called? What was meant by God's visiting His people? Explain "redeemed". From what would God's people be set free? Explain "horn of salvation". To whom is the Saviour's descent traced back?

Who had foretold the coming of the Saviour? From what bondage would He deliver His people? How would this be "mercy towards our fathers"? Explain "covenant". What "oath" is referred to? For what purpose would God deliver His people? In what spirit were they to serve Him? What were

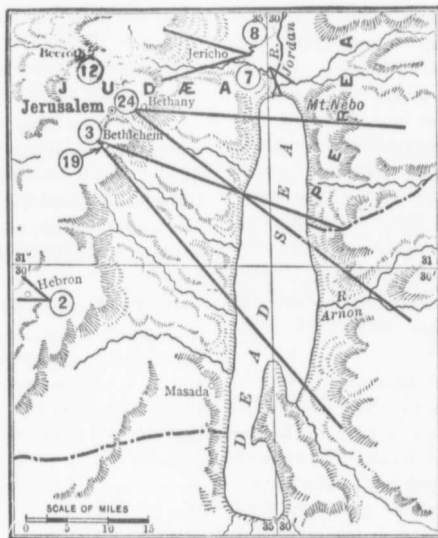
they to be in character and life?

Give an account of the contents of vs. 76-79 and of v. 80.

Dwell, in closing, on the word "redeemed", in v. 68. Bring out, that Jesus, by His life and death, brought us back from bondage to sin, so that we might be free from its guilt and power. This He did, that we, out of love and gratitude, might serve Him with all our hearts and in every part of our lives. Press the claims of Jesus upon the whole-hearted devotion of all who call themselves by His name.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Find the number 2 on the map. If you stand at that point and look west over the space included between those spreading lines, you see a place which may have actually been John's boyhood home,—Hebron, about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. You find yourself standing on a hillside whose lower slope is covered by an olive orchard. You look off over the feathery, pale green treetops and see, beyond a little space of open ground, the houses of a town, packed quite closely together in a valley between low hills. The buildings are of gray stone, some of them whitewashed. The only conspicuous ones are two tall towers in the distance towards the right; those be-



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PAT'D IN GREAT BRITAIN.

long to a modern mosque. The boys who lived here in John's time used to see these same hills covered with olive groves and vineyards. Their homes were small, rather bare stone houses, a good deal like these which you find here now. These two mosque towers were not built until long after John's time, but even in his day every boy in Hebron knew a certain place of ground between the towers of the mosque, for it is where the bones

of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob still lie buried.

To see for yourself the homes of the old town, with the pleasant hills around it, use a stereograph entitled, Hebron, the Home of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, from the East.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Lesson Points

No promise of God ever failed of full performance. v. 57.

Praise is the natural fruit of faith. v. 64.

It is when the heart is filled with God's Spirit that the lips are fitted to speak God's truth. v. 67.

Lives redeemed by free grace should be spent in loving service. v. 68.

All that the Saviour's love would do for men, His power can do. v. 69.

God saves us from our worst foes, the sins that would destroy our souls. v. 71.

The mercy of God links the earliest with the latest generations. v. 72.

If we would enjoy the promises of the divine covenant, we must fulfil its conditions. v. 73.

We are saved that we may serve. v. 74.

Only those are the true children of God who reflect His character. v. 75.

Something to Look Up

1. The apostle Paul, in writing to the Christians at Corinth, said, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift." Give the chapter and the verse.

2. Where does Paul speak of Jesus as a Descendant of David?

ANSWERS, Lesson I.—(1) Samson; Judg. 13 : 2-7. (2) Jesus; Mark 10 : 27.

For Discussion

1. Of what use is baptism?
2. Sin the worst.

Prove from Scripture

That God requires us to be holy.

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. 1 : 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 Tim. 3 : 16. Thus they are our sure guide in all the duties of life.

The Question on Missions

Ques. 2. The villages of India vary very much in size. Some contain only a few huts, while others might be called towns. The average village will have about sixty or seventy houses, with a population of about three hundred people. The village is marked on the landscape by a cluster of trees,—mango, tamarind, neem or some other kind. The houses, for the most part, are built of mud, with tiled or thatched roofs. The village always has a temple, usually a number of wells, and perhaps a large tank or pond. About five hundred acres go to make up the average "village". The villages are usually a mile or so apart, although one often finds a group of three or four within that distance, and then a longer distance without any.

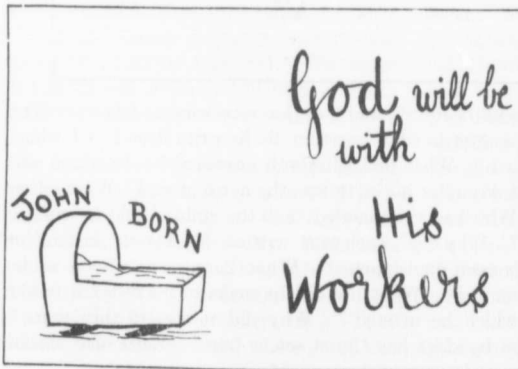
FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—The Mighty Worker's forerunner born.

Introduction—To-day we are to think again about that

cradle (Outline) in the home of Zacharias and Elizabeth; but we do not see it empty now, for God has kept His word and the promised son has come. Their prayer has at last been answered, and the father and mother and friends are rejoicing.

Lesson—What is the name of your baby brother? Why was he called that name? Now the time has come for naming this baby boy. He is eight days old. Those who were naming him called him by his father's name. (What was that?) But his mother said, "Not



so ; but he shall be called John." But they said to her, "None of your people are named John. Why should you choose that name ? Why not do as we always do, and call him by his father's name ?" Then they made signs to his father (Why did they do this ?) what he would have him called.

His Name is John—He asked for a writing-table (see Exposition), and on it he wrote, "His name is John." (Do you remember that the angel Gabriel had told Zacharias that the boy's name should be John ?) Just at that time Zacharias, who had been dumb so long, found himself once more able to speak, and he praised and thanked God for sending this son to them. Everybody who heard about this baby believed there was something wonderful about him. He had been born in the home of aged parents ; he had been given a strange name ; his father had got suddenly back his power to speak.

The Hand of the Lord With John—Truly John was to be a great man, and the secret of his greatness was that God's hand was guiding him, pointing out what he should do.

Golden Text—Repeat these words of Zacharias.

John's Work in the World—God told Zacharias what John's work was to be, and Zacharias told the people, vs. 67-79. God was

going to make John the forerunner of Jesus (see Exposition). He was to tell the people to repent of their sins and receive forgiveness, and of the Great Worker who was coming soon to give peace and salvation to those who were in the darkness of sin.

The Boyhood of John—All we are told about John as he was growing up is, that the child grew and became strong and that, as he grew older, he lived much by himself in quiet country places. All the while God was getting him ready, training him for the work he had to do.

Work for Us—We may be sure God has work for each one of you to do in the world, perhaps great work for some of you. Repeat :

"That is how God works His wonders,
Without trumpets or display,
And we know not what is rocking
In the cradles of to-day."

If God's hand is guiding, and you are following, you are always in the right way.

Our Prayer—All repeat,

"Early let us seek Thy favor,
Early let us do Thy will ;
Blessed Lord and only Saviour,
With Thyself our bosoms fill."

—Hymn 585, Book of Praise

Something to Think About—I should ask God to be with me.

FROM THE PLATFORM

"His name is John"

Write on the blackboard, "HIS NAME IS JOHN", and question somewhat as follows : Who in the Lesson wrote these words ? In answer to what question did he write them ? Of whom had this question previously been asked ? What had Elizabeth answered ? To whom was the name John to be given ? On what day after his birth was the name given ? What other name had been proposed ? Why ? Who had commanded that the child should be named John ? What does the name mean ? Why had Zacharias written his answer instead of speaking it ? For what was his dumbness a punishment ? What happened as soon as he had written what his child was to be named ? What use did he make of his restored power of speech ? What is the song called which he uttered ? Why did it receive this name ? What is the Golden Text ? From what bondage has Christ set us free ? What use should we make of our freedom ?

Lesson III.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

January 21, 1912

Luke 2 : 8-20. Study Luke 2 : 1-20. Read Matthew 1 : 18-25. Commit to memory vs. 10, 11.

GOLDEN TEXT—For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.—
Luke 2 : 11.

8 And there were ¹ in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, ² keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And ³ lo, the angel of the Lord ⁴ 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, ⁵ Fear not : for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all ⁶ people.

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

12 And this ⁷ shall be a sign unto you ; Ye shall find ⁸ the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, ² 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

Revised Version—¹shepherds in the same country abiding ; ²and ; ³an angel ; ⁴stood by them ; ⁵Be not afraid ; for, behold ; ⁶the people : for there is born to you this day ; ⁷is the sign ; ⁸a ; ⁹among men in whom he is well pleased ; ¹⁰when the angels went away ; ¹¹that is ; ¹²both ; ¹³the ; ¹⁴saw it ; ¹⁵concerning the ; ¹⁶spoken to them about this ; ¹⁷Omit they ; ¹⁸spoken unto them ; ¹⁹sayings, pondering them ; ²⁰even as it was spoken unto.

LESSON PLAN

I. The Saviour Announced, 8-14.

II. The Saviour Found, 15, 16.

III. The Saviour Proclaimed, 17-20.

DAILY READINGS

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

M.—The birth of Jesus, Luke 2, 1-7. T.—The birth of Jesus, Luke 2 : 8-20. W.—The mighty God, Isa. 9 : 1-7. Th.—The Light of the world, John 1 : 1-14. F.—God made manifest, 1 John, 4 : 9-16. S.—God's gift, John 3 : 16-21. S.—"Thou art my Son", Ps. 2. **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.

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—About B.C. 6 ; Bethlehem.

Connecting Links—The Lesson immediately follows the last, in Luke's narrative. John the Baptist was born six months before Jesus (see ch. 1 : 36). The events of the Lesson occurred while Herod the Great was king of Judea and Cæsar Augustus was Roman emperor (B.C. 30 to A.D. 14). The exact date was the year of the enrolment or numbering ordered by Augustus for the whole Roman empire.

The Jewish method of enrolment was for each family to report at its ancestral city. Therefore Joseph, being of the family of David, went to David's city, Bethlehem (1 Sam. 16 : 1), to be enrolled. He was accompanied by Mary. The inn where they had expected to lodge was too crowded. They therefore went to the stable, where Jesus was born. Being a poor woman, Mary had to

peace, ⁹ good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, ¹⁰ as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Beth'lehem, and see this thing ¹¹ which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found ¹² Mar'y, and Jo'seph, and the babe lying in ¹³ a manger.

17 And when they ¹⁴ had seen it, they made known ¹⁵ abroad the saying which was ¹⁶ told them concerning this child.

18 And all ¹⁷ they that heard it wondered at ¹⁸ those things which were ¹⁹ told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mar'y kept all these ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ as it was told unto them.

The Question on Missions—3. Who make up a village ? Most of the people are farmers, but, besides, in every village there is a barber, a shopkeeper, a blacksmith, a carpenter, a weaver, a shoemaker, a potter, and the coolie, of the lowest caste, but one of the most useful men in the village.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 29 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 25 ; 29 ; 2 (Ps. Sel.) ; 34 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 30.

Special Scripture Reading—Ps. 72. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 90, The Birth of Christ. For Question on Missions, I. 151. Village Potter at Work ; I. 175, Natives Weaving—Family Workshop.

Stereograph—For Lesson, Southeast Over Bethlehem Past the Church of the Nativity (Underwood & Underwood, see page 13).

attend to the Child herself, as soon as He was born. Vs. 1-7.

I. The Saviour Announced, 8-14.

Vs. 8, 9. *In the same country* ; the fields around Bethlehem, in which David had cared for his father's flocks, 1 Sam. 16 : 11. *Shepherds* ; a class regarded with contempt amongst the Jews of the time. *Abiding in the field* ; literally, "making the field their house", that is, passing their time in the open air. (See Light from the East.) *Keeping watch* ; watching by turns, the Greek means, under the silent stars. Fires were kept burning to scare away wild beasts. *And, lo* ; introducing something wonderful. *An angel* (Rev. Ver.). No name is given, but he may well have been Gabriel again, who brought the message of mercy to Zacharias (see ch. 1 : 19). *Came upon them* ; Rev. Ver., "stood by them". *The glory of the Lord* ; the Shechinah, the brightness which the Jews associated with the

divine Presence, Ex. 24 : 16 ; 1 Kgs. 8 : 10 ; Isa. 6 : 1-3. *Sore afraid* ; at the supernatural appearance.

Vs. 10-12. *Fear not* ; a word of cheer, as in ch. 1 : 13. *I bring you good tidings* ; a single word in Greek, from which comes our "evangelize", to preach the gospel. *Of great joy* ; the form which the good tidings takes. *To all the people* (Rev. Ver.) ; that is, the people of Israel. *Unto you* ; even to such despised people as the shepherds. *A Saviour* ; a word often used by Luke and Paul, but rare in the rest of the New Testament. *Christ the Lord*. "Christ" is the Greek, and "Anointed" the Latin equivalent of the Hebrew "Messiah". The angel announced the birth of the looked-for Messiah. "The Lord" was the favorite name for the risen Christ in apostolic times. *Sign* ; by which the newborn Saviour might be identified. *Find a babe* (Rev. Ver.). How, but for the words of the angel, would the shepherds have recognized the helpless Infant of a lowly mother as the Lord of Glory. *Wrapped in swaddling clothes*. See *Light from the East*. *In a manger* ; a strange bed, in truth, for such a King to lie in.

Vs. 13, 14. *Suddenly* ; with lightning swiftness. *Host* ; army. A "multitude" from this army appeared. (Compare Dan. 7 : 10 ; Rev. 5 : 11, 12.) *Praising God*. This refers to the "host", not merely to the "multitude". The whole army of heavenly beings was praising God ; the shepherds heard only a portion of them. The *Gloria in Excelsis* ("Glory in the Highest"), as the angelic chorus is called, was sung by a celestial choir as a refrain to the song of the angel to the shepherds. In the Authorized Version it has three lines :

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace,
Good will (of God) toward men."

In the Revised Version, there are two lines :

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men in whom
He is well pleased."

Glory to God. To Him belongs all praise for having sent this wonderful Saviour. *In the highest* ; the highest heaven, where God dwells. The Jews believed in seven heavens. *On earth peace* ; of man with God and of man with man, which springs up wherever Jesus is

known. Only those can have peace *in whom He (God) is well pleased* (Rev. Ver.).

II. The Saviour Found, 15, 16.

Vs. 15, 16. *The shepherds said* ; a prompt and wise resolve. *Let us now go*. "Come, let us go", the Greek means, indicating great emotion. *Came with haste* ; movement answering to mood. *Found* ; literally, "discovered after search". The "inn" was probably an enclosed courtyard open to the sky, surrounded by the usual sleeping places, namely, recesses with paved floors raised a little above the ground. The stable in which Jesus was born also opened off the courtyard.

III. The Saviour Proclaimed, 17-20.

Vs. 17-20. *Made known abroad* ; to Mary and Joseph and the people of Bethlehem. The shepherds were thus the first Christian preachers. *All wondered* ; as well they might, for they were witnesses to the greatest event which had ever happened in the world's history up to that time. *Mary pondered* ; holding well in her mind the things which had happened to herself and to the shepherds, and putting them together to see what they all meant. She would recall, too, again and again the promise of the angel (ch. 1 : 35) and the Old Testament prophecies to which it pointed. The Greek suggests that the wonder of the many was a passing emotion, while the brooding of Mary was an abiding habit. We know little of Mary, but she was evidently of a meditative disposition. It is likely that Luke obtained his information about the birth of Jesus from Mary.

Light from the East

KEEPING WATCH—The sheep were sent away from the villages early in March and brought home in November ; and if this had occurred, then the sheep would have been farther from the town and would have been in their folds and not in the open field. The fact that they were being watched is an argument for the winter season and not against it. Bright days occur in December and January, and during these the sheep are taken to pastures near by to feed on the grass produced by the late fall rain. Being away from the walled folds, they have to be closely watched against wild beasts and thieves.

SWADDLING CLOTHES—Mean the long bandages which are still in use in the East to wrap the body of the infant to support its soft structure, to strengthen the back and limbs, and to make the child easier to carry. The practice was continued in all civilized countries until recently. In the East the term is

now often applied to the square piece of cloth which forms the child's only clothes. The bandaged infant is laid diagonally across it, one corner is folded over the feet, the opposite under the head, the other two round the body, and the whole held in place by a bright colored scarf tied round it in two places.

APPLICATION

Fear not, v. 10. As Charles Kingsley's wife lay dying, she said to him, "Do you think it cowardly of me because I tremble on the brink of the dark river? Do you think it cowardly because I shrink from the parting with you and the children, and the love that made life so full and blessed for so many years? Do you think me a coward because I fear to go alone into the unknown world?" "No", he replied; "but remember, my dear, it is not darkness you are going to, for God is Light. It is not lonely, for Christ is with you. It is not an unknown land, for Christ is there, and where He is we have no need to fear. His power, His presence will take your fear away. Listen now to Him as He says, 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God.'"

To all people, v. 10. "If I had the choice," said Mr. Moody, "of preaching like Gabriel to all the world, swaying men at my will, or of taking them one by one and leading them to Christ, how gladly would I choose the latter." The work of making the Saviour known to all the world was begun by a disciple who found his brother and brought him to Jesus. One at a time is the only way to reach all.

Lying in a manger, v. 12. Once a poor outcast tramp, who had been driven from place to place, awoke, on a Christmas morning, in a stable, where he had been sleeping all night amongst the cattle. He heard the ringing of the bells, and recalled the story of the birth of Jesus. The thought came to him that he was not the first one who had lain in a manger. He resolved that he would go for help to that Mighty One who had been cradled in the Bethlehem manger. Perhaps, he went on thinking, Jesus lay in the manger, so those

might go to Him for help who are too low down to go to any one else. Then the outcast prayed to the Saviour, and was lifted by His strong hand up from vice and degradation, to a clean and worthy life. He was saved by the might of the manger, and that might can save any one.

On earth peace, v. 14. In his poem, "Disarmament", Whittier has enshrined a story that is told in the far East. A gentle and loving man who was known as "the son of peace" was going on his merciful errands, when a monster "huge and fierce of look" met him and "cried with awful voice": "O son of peace, thy fate is sealed at last, and love shall yield to hate." The unarmed man looked at the monster, and without any sign of alarm, said, "Poor fiend, even thee I love." At this the fierce and great foe shrank to handbreadth size and took the form of a dove. Then the dove sang:

"Hate hath no harm for love,
And peace unweaponed
Conquers every wrong."

Peace on earth depends on the extent of the sway of love as Christ has brought it and taught it.

Let us now go . . . and see, v. 15. There is a legend current in Russia, as Tolstoi tells, of two pious men who started to see Jesus when He was here among men. One of these, Yesei, had been a kind friend to the poor, and on the outskirts of the village he was overtaken by a child who begged him to return and help a poor woman. He did return and got food and drink and fuel for the needy one. He bought back her cow and paid the debt on her farm, and made her secure against want. Then, with all his money spent, he started to overtake his fellow pilgrim. But others cried

Do You Think
Me a Coward?

The Fiend
and the Dove

One by One

By the Might
of the Manger

The Delayed
Christ-Seeker

for assistance, so he stayed at home and toiled among the poor. At any hour of the night or day he was ready to aid the sufferer. The other man stayed for no one. He reached Jerusalem the very day Jesus was crucified, but could not get near the cross because of the crowds. That night he had a vision of Yesei standing close to Christ and wearing a halo of glory round his head, and a voice said to him, "Christ rewards with His own presence those who in faithfulness and love do merciful works to the wretched of the earth."

They made known abroad the saying, v. 17. Good news ought to be told to those who need to hear it. In ancient days (see 2 Kgs., ch. 7) a city was besieged by a great "Tell It Out" army. The siege was prolonged and famine began to kill the people. At the city gate were four sick men who had long been waiting for admission. Now that famine had begun its work, they resolved to go to the attacking army for shelter and sustenance. When they went, they found only empty tents. Some alarm had produced a panic, and the siege was at an end. All the food and treasure of the army were in the camp. The sick men satisfied their hung-

er and began to carry off the treasure, when they remembered the suffering ones in the city and said: "We do not well; this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace." So they hurried to the famished ones with the good news that abundance of food was at hand.

Pondered them in her heart, v. 19. A true mother does more for the good of her boys than they ever imagine. While she works for their comfort, she plans and hopes and prays about their future. She ponders lovingly over what they may be and may do as good men in this sorrowful and sinning world. John Geddie's mother planned wonderful things for her son after she had heard of the need of the heathen nations. She set him apart for definite missionary work far from the peaceful Christian community in which he was born. Her unselfish desire that her son might grow up to help some benighted people was a beautiful hidden service that proved to be a blessing to very many. The boys will do well to remember their mothers' high hopes concerning them, and be ambitious not to disappoint them.

THE LESSON GRADED

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

For Teachers of Bible Classes

The materials for questioning and discussion fall into four divisions:

1. *The visit to Bethlehem, vs. 1-5.* Bring out all possible information about the census which accounted for Joseph and Mary being in Bethlehem. Refer to 1 Sam. 16:1 for David's connection with the place, and to Micah 5:2 for the prophetic statement concerning the coming of the Messiah. Dwell on ways in which human plans contribute to the realization of God's purpose.

2. *The birth of Jesus, vs. 6, 7.* Impress three facts: (a) The naturalness of Jesus' birth. He came into the world like any other child. Draw the lesson of His real oneness with us. (b) No special exaltation of Mary is found here or elsewhere in scripture. There is no warrant for offering worship to her, as is the practice of Roman Catholics. (c) The

poverty of Jesus' parents. Bring out the bearing of this fact upon the experience of many who must always be poor, emphasizing its comfort and inspiration.

3. *The shepherds and the angels, vs. 8-14.* Question about the angel who first appeared to the shepherds. The points to bring out are: his supernatural testimony to the Saviour's birth, the meaning of the unusual brightness that surrounded him, his announcement and the sign which he gave. Dwell particularly upon the heart of the message, the good news of a Saviour. Refer to the various titles in v. 11, bringing out the force of each. Take up the angels' song. Discuss the two arrangements as given in the Authorized Version and Revised Version. Ask how the coming of Jesus glorified God in the highest. Bring out the limiting clause in the Rev. Ver. ("among men in whom he is well pleased"), which indicates that peace can only come among men when they are well pleasing to God.

4. *The visit of the shepherds to Bethlehem*, vs. 15-20. Bring out the deep emotion in the speech and conduct of the shepherds (see Exposition). Have the class follow out the story which goes on to narrate : (a) The visit of the shepherds to Joseph and Mary, vs. 15, 16. (b) The proclamation by the shepherds of the angel's message. Emphasize the obligation resting on hearers of the gospel to make it known to others. (c) The profound impression upon the people, v. 18. (d) The attitude of Mary, v. 19. (e) The great joy of the shepherds who fully accepted the message of grace.

Press home the question : What does the birth of Jesus mean to each one in the class ? Has each one accepted Jesus as his Saviour, and is he seeking to tell others of Him ?

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Our Lesson to-day takes us to the little town of Bethlehem, which is one of the dearest spots on earth to us. Question the class about this place where Ruth gleaned after the reapers, where David learned to sing his sweetest songs, which had now become the birthplace of great David's greater Son. It will add greatly to the interest to tell about the Bethlehem of to-day. (See Geography Lesson.)

1. *The Birth of Jesus*, vs. 1-7. The scholars will be able to tell how Bethlehem came to be the birthplace of Jesus. Was there any other reason ? God, for His own good pleasure, had chosen, from all eternity, to glorify Bethlehem in this way, as Micah tells (Mic. 5 : 2). Make it clear that God had something to do with this matter as well as Caesar. Was the lowly cattle-shed where Mary laid her baby in a manger for His bed also in God's plans ? How does Luke explain it ? It seems as if it were all due to the crowd at the inn, but when we look behind the crowd, we see God. Why was it necessary for Jesus to come into this world of ours in this lowly way ? That He might share life with the humblest, and touch the poorest life with heavenly hopes, and reveal His kinship with all mankind.

2. *The Shepherds and the Angels*, vs. 8-12. Get the class to picture the scene on the grassy slopes where the shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks by night, lying on the hillside, looking up as the silent stars went

by, listening to the secret questionings of their own hearts. They got a fright, v. 9. Why were they frightened ? What makes people afraid of ghosts, or of anything that seems to be supernatural ? Is it sin that makes people afraid of angels ? What message did the angels bring ? (Vs. 10-12.) This is the gospel for all ages. How it fills our hearts with great joy ! Dwell upon the song which the angels sang, vs. 13, 14. These words make melody in our hearts to-day. May they grow in sweetness as the years go by !

3. *The Shepherds and the Christ*, vs. 15-20. Dwell upon the beautiful spirit which these shepherds manifested. They were in a receptive mood. The glorious revelation made by the angels was not too much for them. We are not left in doubt as to the impression which that visit made upon the shepherds, v. 20. What impression does it make upon us ?

It will be a great loss to us,—make this the closing point of application—if our visit to Bethlehem to-day does not touch our hearts with a new sense of reverence and love, and—the greatest of all losses, if we do not see in the Babe of Bethlehem our Saviour and Lord.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Get the scholars to tell the story in vs. 1-7, the unprinted portion of the Lesson, of how it came to pass that Mary and Joseph went from their home in Nazareth to Bethlehem. Then let the questioning and discussion gather about some outstanding phrases which present a series of vivid and striking pictures :

1. "*Shepherds. keeping watch*", v. 8. Ask about the place, bringing out its association with David (1 Sam. 16 : 11), the estimate of shepherds by the Jews of the time ; the time,—at night, under the silent stars ; the season, winter (Explain that sheep in Palestine were kept out of doors even at this time of year).

2. "*The angel of the Lord*", v. 9. Was this Gabriel again ? (See ch. 1 : 19.) What was "the glory of the Lord" ? (See Ex. 24 : 16 ; 1 Kgs. 8 : 11 ; Isa. 6 : 1-3.) Why were the shepherds "sore afraid" ?

3. "*Fear not. I bring you good tidings*", v. 10. Talk about the good cheer which the gospel always brings, and explain the word "evangelize" (see Exposition). Question about the "great joy" which results from

hearing the "good tidings", and bring out the meaning of "all the people" (Rev. Ver.).

4. "*A Saviour. Christ the Lord*", v. 11. Here are three titles of the world's Redeemer. Discuss the meaning of each, and bring out the significance of Jesus' birth "in the city of David" (see Exposition).

5. "*Sign unto you*", v. 12. And what a sign! How, but for the angel's words would the shepherds have recognized the King of Glory in the Babe lying in the manger cradle?

6. "*A multitude. praising God*", vs. 13, 14. Make the wonderful scene real to the scholars, and bring out the meaning of the angel's song in its different parts.

7. "*Let us now go even unto Bethlehem*", v. 15. As the angel host disappears, the shepherds start across the fields to the town. Bring out their fervent desire to know and the eager energy and haste of their movements.

8. "*The babe. in a manger*", v. 16. The point to make here is that the angel's word (v. 12) was precisely fulfilled.

9. "*Make known abroad*", v. 17. And thus the shepherds became the first Christian preachers. How many there have been since, and how many more are needed!

10. "*All. wondered*", v. 18. And with what good reason! Try to make every scholar feel the marvel of the gospel story.

11. "*Mary kept. pondered*", v. 19. How like a mother! Every mother thinks loving thoughts of what her son or daughter is to be and do. Are we what our mothers dreamed we would be?

12. "*Shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God*", v. 20. Yes, and we must go about our every day tasks, but all the while there should be a song of praise and thanksgiving to God rising in our hearts.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON II.]

Bethlehem is one of the best known towns in the Holy Land. The spot marked 3 on the map indicates where we are to stand. It is on a high tower belonging to a Christian school. We are to look off southeastward over the space included between those spreading lines. From the high tower, you look down on the flat roofs of some of the Bethlehem homes and into a narrow street which curves around between them. For about a quarter of a mile ahead such houses stand close together; at the left the ground slopes rather steeply downward and the slope is divided by stone fences into several small yards or gardens. Beyond the farthest of those stone fences you see an irregular mass of buildings belonging to the

Church of the Nativity ("Birth"), with a high tower just beyond that. And from our high standpoint you look away off even beyond the town itself to where rolling hills stand, one behind another, as far as the eye can reach. The highest of those southern hills, 6 or 8 miles away, is singularly conspicuous, by reason of its abruptly flattened summit. That is the Frank Mountain. At the time of Jesus' birth there was a fortress up on that commanding height, garrisoned by soldiers of Herod the Great. Nazareth is about 80 miles away at your left (northwards).

To see Bethlehem as it exists to-day, use a stereograph entitled, Southeast Over Bethlehem Past the Church of the Nativity.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Lesson Points

Into the lowliest lives may come the most glorious visions. v. 8.

The nearer we come to God, the more clearly we realize our own unworthiness. v. 9.

Human fears vanish like clouds before the sunshine of the divine favor. v. 10.

We cannot have Jesus as Saviour unless we accept Him as King. v. 11.

In Jesus we behold the perfect union of God with man. v. 12.

Sweeter even than the angels' song is that of a forgiven human soul. v. 13.

It is through the preaching of the gospel that world-wide peace is to be established. v. 14.

Others can tell us about Jesus; each of us must go to Him for himself. v. 15.

Only when the gospel is shared is it really possessed. v. 17.

No day can be commonplace that is spent in fellowship with God. v. 20.

Something to Look Up

1. Isaiah says that the feet of those who bring good tidings, that publish peace and salvation, are beautiful upon the mountains. Where is the saying found?

2. By what prophet is Jesus called the "Prince of Peace"? Find the chapter and verse.

ANSWERS, Lesson II.—(1) 2 Cor. 9 : 15. (2) Rom. 1 : 3.

For Discussion

1. Do angels help us now?
2. Are we bound to tell others of Jesus?

Prove from Scripture

That we should help to spread the gospel.

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 duty. 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 Law-giver. 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 great bulk of the people of India are farmers, but they do not live on their farms as in our country. For mutual protection and other reasons they have congregated in villages. The village community, except for a few articles of commerce, is self-contained and self-dependent, and therefore, although the great majority of villagers are farmers, other callings are also represented. There is the barber, whose duties have somewhat of a religious significance; the potter, who makes the earthen water vessels so much used; the shopkeeper, who handles the few imported articles; the blacksmith; the carpenter; the shoemaker; and the coolie, menial or sweeper, the lowest in rank but one of the most useful members of the village community. As a rule, these different members of village society do not seek a wider sphere than that offered in their own immediate neighborhood. They are satisfied to supply the needs of their own village, like their fathers before them.

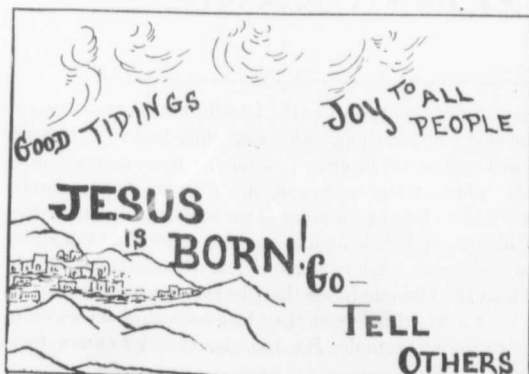
FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—The Mighty Worker a little Babe, found by the shepherds.

Introduction—You little people all love to "tell things". If I should say, "Who will go

and tell our superintendent a message from me?" every hand would go up. You are all eager to tell news. "Oh, let me be the first to tell father when he comes home." "Let me be the first to tell our teacher that we have a new baby brother." To-day we are going to hear some great good news, we are going to hear about those who were first to tell the news, and then we are going to see that it is news we may all tell to everybody.

The Birth of Jesus—The Christmas story is still in the



minds of the children. Teachers will think of many ways of recalling the story.

Review—Tell me the name of the baby boy we heard about last Sunday. Print, JOHN. Why did God send him into the world? We'll draw a hand pointing to another name,—JESUS.

Lesson—To-day we are going to hear about the coming of the Babe Jesus, the Saviour of the world. We might have imagined that He would come as a royal Babe, born in a palace, robed in costly garments, with nurses and attendants; but that was not God's plan for the Babe Jesus. By being born a poor, humble Babe, He was better able to help all kinds of people when He grew older.

Jesus' Parents—God gave Him parents to take care of Him while He needed their care. They had left their home at Nazareth and gone to Bethlehem to be taxed (see Exposition). There was not room for them in the crowded inn, so they lodged in the stable (Exposition); and here, during a beautiful starry night, the Babe Jesus was born.

The News Told to the Shepherds—By means of crayon and word pictures, make very vivid the scene on the hillsides that night,—the shepherds tending their flocks, the great light appearing in the sky, their fear and wonder,

the voice of the angel telling them the glad news (vs. 10-12), the angel choir and heavenly music, vs. 13, 14.

The Shepherds Find Jesus—Describe the shepherds hurrying into Bethlehem. Picture in simple language the finding of the Babe.

Telling Others—As soon as they found Jesus, they hastened to tell everybody they met. This is what we all should do, tell others of Jesus, and help to send some one else to tell those very far away from us, of Jesus' birth and life and love and death and resurrection to save men.

Golden Text—Print and repeat Golden Text.

My Verse—

Let us tell the lovely story of the Babe of Bethlehem,

How they laid Him in a manger when by night He came to them.

Let us tell how gentle shepherds, watching o'er their flocks at night,

Saw suddenly around them the shining glory bright,

And heard the angel's tidings of the blessed Saviour's birth,

And heard the heavenly chorus, 'Good will and peace on earth'.

Something to Think About—I should tell others of Jesus.

FROM THE PLATFORM

THE MESSAGE MANGER MISSIONARIES

Question first about THE MESSAGE (Print) contained in the Lesson, bringing out the persons to whom the message came,—the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks; the bearer of the message,—the angel of the Lord appearing in glory; what the message itself was; and the song of the angel multitude by which it was accompanied. A second group of questions may gather about THE MANGER (Print), eliciting the story of the shepherds' eager hastening from the fields to the town of Bethlehem and their finding in the manger of an inn stable the Child of whose birth the angel had told them. Ask next about THE MISSIONARIES (Print). A little well directed questioning will lead the scholars to see that the shepherds showed themselves to be missionaries by making known to others what they had learned of the Saviour. Dwell upon the conduct of the shepherds as our example. We, too, should seek to know Jesus as our own Saviour and then tell others of Him.

Lesson IV.

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE January 28, 1912

Luke 2 : 25-38. Study Luke 2 : 22-39. Commit to memory vs. 29, 30.

GOLDEN TEXT—For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people. —Luke 2 : 30, 31.

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then he took him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Revised Version—¹this man; ²righteous and; ³looking for; ⁴Spirit; ⁵had been revealed; ⁶in the; ⁷that they might do concerning him; ⁸he received him into his arms; ⁹Omit Lord; ¹⁰O Lord, according to thy word, in peace; ¹¹peoples; ¹²for revelation to the; ¹³his father and; ¹⁴were marvelling at the things; ¹⁵concerning him; ¹⁶falling; ¹⁷up of; ¹⁸is spoken; ¹⁹and a; ²⁰Omit also; ²¹thoughts out of; ²²Asher; ²³having lived; ²⁴had been a widow even for fourscore; ²⁵worshipping with; ²⁶supplications; ²⁷coming up at that very hour she gave; ²⁸Omit likewise; ²⁹God; ³⁰were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

LESSON PLAN

I. The Babe and Simeon, 25-35.

II. The Babe and Anna, 36-38.

DAILY READINGS

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

M.—The presentation in the temple, Luke 2 : 22-32.

T.—The presentation in the temple, Luke 2 : 33-39.

W.—His name, Jer. 23 : 1-6. Th.—The voice of rejoicing, Ps. 118 : 14-23. F.—A stone of offence, 1 Pet. 2 : 1-8. S.—A light to the Gentiles, Isa. 42 : 1-7.

S.—A song of praise, Ps. 96.

Shorter Catechism—Review Questions 1-3.

The Question on Missions—4. Who are the most

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher: she was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

influential members of the village community? Each village has a head man, a clerk who transacts the village business, a priest who officiates at weddings and other ceremonies, and who is sometimes also the astrologer. Most villages have a schoolmaster also.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 29 (Supplemental Lesson); 105 ; 111 ; 27 (Ps. Sel.); 521 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 107.

Special Scripture Reading—Ps. 45. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 167, The Presentation in the Temple. For Question on Missions, I. 300. Mother Teaching Her Child to Worship a Priest.

Stereograph—For Lesson, Herod's Temple, the Famous Schick Model (Underwood & Underwood, see page 13).

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—B. C. 6 ; Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—When the Child Jesus was eight days old, He was circumcised, according to the requirement of the Jewish law, and received His name.

The purification of a Jewish mother, according to Lev., ch. 12, took place forty days after the birth of her child. In the case of a first-born, there was a special service of dedication. (See Light from the East.) At this service a sacrifice was prescribed as the mother's gift of thanksgiving for her purification,—a lamb and a pigeon or turtledove for those who could afford them, for others two turtledoves or two young pigeons, Lev. 12 : 6-8. Mary brought the poor woman's offering. Vs. 22-24.

I. The Babe and Simeon, 25-35.

V. 25. A man : of whom nothing is elsewhere told us. Simeon ; a very common Jewish name. Just ; upright in his daily life

among men. Devout ; strict in observing all his religious duties. Looking for the consolation of Israel (Rev. Ver.) Compare Isa. 40 : 1. The Jewish rabbis spoke of the Messiah as the "Consoler" or "Comforter". (Compare John 14 : 16.) The Holy Spirit was upon him (Rev. Ver.). Simeon's beautiful character and blameless life were due to the blessed Spirit's power.

Vs. 26-28. Revealed unto him ; from heaven. How, we are not told. By the Holy Spirit (Rev. Ver.) ; who illumined his mind and gave him a vision of the truth about Christ. Seen the Lord's Christ ; the Anointed of God, the Messiah whom God was about to send. His coming would be in Simeon's lifetime. Came by (Rev. Ver., "in") the Spirit ; under the influence of the Holy Spirit ; in an inspired condition. Into the temple ; probably into that part of it known as the Court of the Women. Custom of the

law. See vs. 22-24. *In his arms*; and therefore Simeon was called in the early church, "Theodokos" or "the Receiver of God". *Said.* Simeon's song is called the "Nunc Dimittis", from the Latin for "Now Lettest Thou . . . depart".

Vs. 29-31. *Lord*; literally, "Master". Simeon acknowledges God's absolute right to dispose of him either in retaining or dispensing with his service. *Now*; at last, since I have seen the long-looked-for Messiah. *Lettest thou thy servant depart*; literally, "Thou art releasing Thy slave". The idea is that of a slave being emancipated or released after the day's toil. *In peace.* See Gen. 15:15. Death will be to Simeon as sleep to the laboring man. *Thy word*; the revelation referred to in v. 26. *For mine eyes have seen*; and his hands had handled (see v. 28 and compare 1 John 1:1). *Thy salvation.* The deliverance was assured, now that the Deliverer had come.

Vs. 32-35. *All people*; all races of mankind. *A light to lighten*; to give light to those who are in the darkness of ignorance. Simeon speaks of God's salvation as being for all people, while Zacharias regards it as being limited to Israel (see ch. 1:68-79). *Marvelled*; astonished at Simeon's knowledge of the Child and His destiny. *Blessed them*; gave them the blessing of an old man and an old saint. *The fall and rising again*; Rev. Ver., "falling and rising", a description of opposite effects of Christ's influence on men. Those who reject Him fall; those who believe on Him rise. (Compare 2 Cor. 2:15, 16.) *A sign.* Jesus was to reveal God's will. *Spoken against*; hated and opposed, as Jesus was, for example, by the Pharisees. *Sword . . . thy own soul*; a vivid prophecy of Mary's intense grief at the sufferings that would come upon her Son: she shall be the *Mater Dolorosa*, "Sorrowful Mother". *Thoughts . . . revealed.* One effect of Christ's coming will be the revelation to men of their real character.

II. The Babe and Anna, 36-38.

Vs. 36-38. *Anna*; "Grace", the same name as Hannah, 1 Sam. 1:20. *Prophetess*; one endued with inspiration. *Phanuel*; "the Face of God". *Fourscore and four years*; either now eighty-four years old,

or a widow for eighty-four years (Rev. Ver.). The second view would make her very old. Married, say, at sixteen, seven years a wife, eighty-four years a widow, she would be a hundred and seven years of age. *Departed not*; was present at all the stated hours of prayer, or, as a prophetess, she may have lived within the temple precincts. *Fastings*; perhaps more than the customary fasts on Mondays and Thursdays. *Gave thanks . . . spake of him . . . redemption.* The subject of her praise was Jesus; and its burden, that He was the Saviour.

After this solemn service, the holy family returned to their home at Nazareth. V. 39.

Light from the East

CHRIST—Christ means the Messiah, that is, the Anointed One (the one set apart by anointing with oil), the great Deliverer of Israel predicted by her prophets. Israel, like other nations, set apart her kings and priests by the application of a holy oil. The custom, which goes back to hoary antiquity, was perhaps at first supposed to confer physical invulnerability, as the Arabs of Eastern Africa still believe that anointing with lion's fat inspires a man with boldness and makes the wild beasts flee from him. Later, it was connected with supernatural gifts, and in Israel it came to signify the endowment of the Holy Spirit for the official work to be performed.

CUSTOM—The purification of the mother and the presentation of the first-born, although entirely separate ceremonies, took place at the same time. The holy family would come into the hall of the unclean and stand there until all were sprinkled with the lustral or purifying water and the ashes of the heifer. Then followed the presentation of the Child. In primitive times the first-born was the priest of the family, and although in Israel that function had been transferred to the tribe of Levi, every first-born male had to be redeemed from service in the sanctuary by a payment of a sum equal to three dollars of our money, as an acknowledgment that the rights of Jehovah had not lapsed.

APPLICATION

It was revealed unto him, v. 26. When Morse, the inventor of the telegraph, completed his wonderful work, he sent to a friend this first message: "What hath God wrought!" For this he was reproved. One said to him, "You should have kept the credit of the discovery to yourself. You alone did this marvelous thing." "No", said Morse, "I prayed about this more than I worked. At every turn I was baffled, and had to ask God for guidance and patience. I regarded myself as His servant seeking to help humanity, and He has done by me what has been done." This is true of all the good and great thoughts and deeds of men. God reveals them and performs them through the humble and obedient ones who wait upon Him.

Then took he him up in his arms, v. 28. Others had given to the Infant Messiah very costly gifts, and others again had whisped Him in formal and stately fashion, but Simeon received Jesus with affection and gratitude and reverence. This is what Jesus desires most of all. It is written of Cyrus the Great, that when some long-cherished design of his was granted, out of gratitude he gave to one man a ring, to another a sword; but when he came to his best beloved friend Crysantus, he offered him no material gift, but kissing him, he said, "I am happiest after all in having you as my friend."

Now lettest thou thy servant depart, v. 29. One Sunday night, after studying this story about Simeon, a boy had a dream so vivid and so strange that it made him thoughtful and God-fearing. In the dream the boy saw the doctor of the town coming to him and saying, "Boy, I am old and wearied with work. Whenever you are ready to take my practice, I want to give it up. I am waiting for you." Then the magistrate came and said the same about his office. The aged minister approached and said he was waiting for the boy to succeed him. The worst drunkard of the place and the saloon-keeper next appealed to the boy to be ready to carry on their callings. Then a white-robed angel came and whispered, "There are many waiting for

you. Be careful how you play and study and work, for these will determine your choice of a calling." The boy chose to serve Christ, and that led him to a life of usefulness and honor.

A light to lighten the Gentiles, v. 32. The light of our material world is the mighty sun, and the sun is an unfailling illustration of what Christ means to us in our moral and spiritual life. Science tells us that three kinds of light rays are produced by the sun for the world's benefit. There are *illuminating rays*. These dispel darkness, and make order and industry possible among men. Besides, there are *heat rays* that supply us with needed warmth, and *chemical rays* that promote life in all its forms. Thus the rays of the sun make possible the supply of all our physical needs. And Jesus, as the Sun of the Soul brings provision for all the requirements of our spiritual nature. Let Him illumine our hearts, and we shall not care whether it is dark or bright without, nor whether we are rich or poor in this world's goods. The light of His presence prevents any solitude, and turns every event to good for His followers.

Spake of him to all, v. 38. A Christian woman, while touring India with her husband, lived up to a resolve to speak a good word for Jesus Christ whenever fitting opportunity offered. One day in a temple of Buddha, the guide said, "Christian God no good. He come to earth and men kill Him. He no good. Buddha come and no get killed." He said this in anger, as if inviting an argument. There was nothing more said then, but later in the day she told the guide about the resurrection of Jesus from the grave, about His ascension and His presence in our life. He listened attentively, and said, "I never heard that before; tell me again." When she left that place, the guide said: "I think much about what you tell me. Ask your God to help me." It is a Saviour who has died and who has risen again that people need, and no other worth is so blessed as telling of Him.

The First
Telegram

Receiving
Christ

Whom Shall
We Succeed?

The Sun of
the Soul

The Saviour
People Need

THE LESSON GRADED

This section embraces material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of Bible Classes

Refer to the connecting link in v. 21 as an interesting light upon the care exercised by Joseph and Mary in the fulfilling of the law. Dwell upon the name Jesus ("Saviour") as summing up His mission. The following outline may guide the questioning and discussion ;

1. *The presentation of Jesus, vs. 22-24.* Bring out the two reasons for going to the temple : (a) The presentation of Jesus. Emphasize the duty and privilege of parents' dedicating their children to God, and of children's accepting the responsibility thus laid on them. (b) The mother's offering of her thanksgiving gift. Emphasize the fitness of gratitude in view of God's mercies. Question whether Christian people fittingly acknowledge God's goodness by appropriate gifts.

2. *The prayer and blessing of Simeon, vs. 25-35.* Bring out the description given of him : (a) An obscure man. Compare the shepherds of last Lesson. (b) His moral life. Have three things about him stated (see v. 25). (c) His hope. (d) His receiving of Christ. Turn, next, to the "Nunc Dimittis" (vs. 29-32), and discuss its contents (see Exposition).

Take up the blessing of Simeon. Bring out the prophetic nature of his thought and emphasize the four principles he unfolded : (a) Jesus' coming will mean the rise of many, —all those who become His disciples. (b) It will mean the fall of many,—all those who reject Him. (Compare Capernaum, Matt. 11. 23.) (c) His sufferings will be the occasion of intense grief to Mary. (d) Character will be revealed by the searching of His presence. Each of these points can be fully illustrated from the Gospel records.

3. *The thanksgiving of Anna, vs. 36-38.* Again, as in the case of Simeon, bring out her history, embracing her genealogy, condition and piety, as seen in worship, fasting, constant prayer. Then take up her thanksgiving to God, and her prophecy concerning Jesus and His redemption.

Now set the Lesson in its wider horizon, as a remarkable spiritual testimony concerning the Infant Jesus in the temple. Pure souls felt He was the Saviour. Trace this vision to the Holy Spirit's giving perception of spiritual reality. Why cannot the infidel, agnostic and wilfully wicked man see God ? For illustration, refer to the opposite effects of Jesus' teaching upon the disciples who loved Him, and upon the scribes and Pharisees who hated Him. Press home the necessity of living a pure life and having the heart so filled with the Holy Spirit that Jesus will be a reality in daily life.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

These incidents in the young babyhood of Jesus are full of interest for us. Have the scholars note how great souls were attracted to Him, even as a Babe.

1. *The Presentation in the Temple, vs. 22-24.*

Get some one to describe the presentation. What did it mean to the parents ? What did it mean with reference to the Child ? (See Exposition.) Show how, in baptism, the beautiful thoughts suggested by the presentation are perpetuated, how the parents publicly acknowledge that they and their child belong to God. This will be a good opportunity to impress upon the scholars their duty and privilege to live for Him to whom they were presented, dedicated, in childhood, and to whom they belong.

2. *Simeon and the Babe, vs. 25-35.* This is a strikingly impressive and memorable scene. Let it be made vivid by well directed questioning and discussion. Every scholar who has studied the Lesson thoughtfully will have a picture of Simeon in his mind. As soon as his eyes rested upon the Child Jesus he knew that the earnest longing of his soul had been satisfied. We are sure that Mary had no hesitation in allowing him to take her sweet Child in his arms.

Every scholar should know by heart Simeon's beautiful hymn, his swan-song, called Nunc Dimittis. Why did he not wish to live on in this world into which the Lord's Christ had come ? Put the question to the class. If Christ is in the world, it must be a good world to live in. Still the time comes when

a soul that is ripe for glory longs to be away.

Bring out the missionary spirit of this hymn, the broad vision of Christ's mission, which includes both Gentiles and Jews.

3. *Anna and the Babe*, vs. 36-38. Bring out the facts told about Anna, and point out how early in the life of Jesus women manifested a tender response to the gospel, and an earnest zeal in publishing it! In our own day the women that publish the tidings are a great host. Give the class, or get some active W. H. M. S., or W. F. M. S. worker to give some facts about the work the women of our own church are doing.

Impress upon the class that no one is too old, or too young, to do something to make Jesus known to others.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The Lesson, including the unprinted portion (vs. 22, 23) may be taught by drawing out from the class the answers in detail to some such series of questions as the following:

1. *What was the "presentation in the temple"?* (Vs. 22-24.) The points to elicit are, that the first-born child amongst the Israelites belonged in a special sense to God, and that, forty days after the birth of a first-born child, the mother must offer in the temple a sacrifice of thanksgiving. (See Exposition.) Now, when Jesus was brought to the temple, a certain man was there, named Simeon. The second question, therefore, is:

2. *What are we told of Simeon's character?*

(V. 25.) Four features are mentioned,—“just”, “devout”, “waiting for the consolation of Israel”, “The Holy Ghost was upon”. The Exposition will furnish materials for the discussion of each of these.

3. *How did Simeon come to be in the temple when Jesus was presented?* (Vs. 26, 27.) Ask about the revelation which Simeon had received,—what it was and from whom it came, and how he was guided to the temple at this time?

4. *How did Simeon receive the infant Jesus?* (Vs. 28-35.) Question about the aged saint's receiving the Babe into his arms, with words of blessing. Then take up point by point the “Nunc Dimittis” with its two parts, the first in which Simeon tells what the Messiah has been to himself, and the second in which he tells what the Messiah will be to the world. Bring out also, the effect of Simeon's words on Mary and Joseph, and his prophecy regarding Mary. (See Exposition for materials.)

5. *Who was Anna?* (Vs. 36, 37.) In answer to well directed questions the scholars will give an account of this aged and saintly woman.

6. *What did Anna do when she saw the Babe Jesus?* (V. 38.) Bring out her thanksgiving and her telling about the Saviour to those who were looking for His coming.

Follow Jesus and His parents to their home in Nazareth (v. 39), and then emphasize the teaching of the Golden Text, that Jesus has provided salvation for all.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

As you look at the Schick Model through the stereoscope, you see it as if you were south of Mount Moriah, looking northward. An upward slope of ground, partly covered by buildings, leads to an oblong space that could be entered by gates through a long wall. That was the Court of the Gentiles, into which any one was at liberty to go. Beyond that open space long, low buildings, connected at their corners, form a hollow square enclosing another open court. Into that inner court only Jews were allowed to go. Inside is another court, surrounded in its turn by a wall of connected buildings. You can see over the tops of the enclosing buildings,

and make out that the enclosed court is itself divided into two parts by a cross wall. The part at the right was called the Court of the Women; Mary went in there, carrying the Child in her arms. The section at the left, beyond the cross wall, was more sacred; only priests and their assistants could go in there. The sanctuary (it looked, you see, a little like a modern church building) stood in that specially sacred Western court, with the altar for burnt offerings in the open air between it and the gate of the Women's Court.

Use the stereograph entitled, Herod's Temple, the Famous Schick Model.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

Something to Look Up

1. John, the beloved disciple, calls Jesus the "true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world". Find the words.

2. Once a prophetess was a judge in Israel, and delivered her people from their enemies. Who was she? Read about her life in the Book of Judges.

ANSWERS, Lesson III.—(1) Isa. 52 : 7.
(2) Isaiah ; Isa. 9 : 6.

For Discussion

1. Is Christ's salvation for the whole world?

2. How can the results of hearing the gospel be, in some cases life, and in others death?

Prove from Scripture

That Jesus is a Saviour for the whole world.

The Catechism

Ques. 1-3 (Review)—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,—to bring honor to God, and thus be truly happy. Ther 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—two things are included in it—believing and doing. Both of these are important. Right beliefs are the source, and right deeds are the stream that flows from it. Make sure of the Goal, find the Guide, and Go !

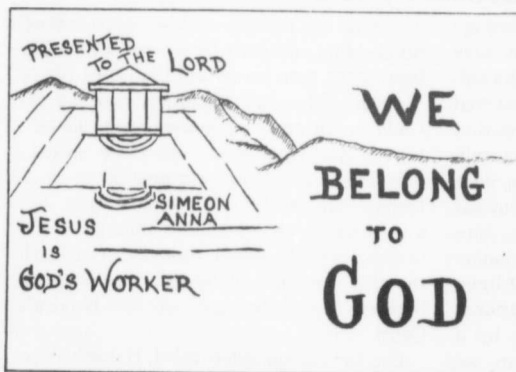
The Question on Missions

Ques. 4. The village in India somewhat resembles a miniature state, and has a system of government of its own. Each village has a head man, who corresponds, perhaps, to the mayor of a city or town, or the reeve of a village, in Western lands. The position is hereditary. The head man may be and often is illiterate, yet the position is one of considerable influence and authority. Next comes the clerk or accountant. He is usually of the highest caste. He is the writer for the village, transacts the village business, looks after the rents, etc. There is always a priest, who has to do with religious ceremonies, officiates at weddings, etc. Sometimes he is also the astrologer, and determines the lucky days for sowing and reaping, going on a journey, etc., and counteracts the influence of an evil omen, as a sneeze, for instance. Most villages of any size have also a schoolmaster to teach the boys. Schools for girls are, as yet, rarely found in the villages.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—The Mighty Worker, a little Babe, presented to the Lord in the temple.

Introduction—Recall what we heard last Sunday about the birth of the Baby Jesus.



To-day we are going to see Him still a Baby, but no longer lying in a manger. He is being carried in His mother's arms to Jerusalem to the temple or church (Sketch), when He is not quite two months old.

The Baby Jesus Presented to the Lord—Do you wonder why Mary and Joseph took the Baby Jesus to church ? It was the law that the first-born boy in every home should belong to the Lord, to spend his life in God's service, and the parents must take him to the temple

and present him to the Lord. They did so, and Mary also gave thanks and praise to God by offering a sacrifice (Explain). Mary offered the usual offering of the poor (see Exposition).

Simeon Worships Jesus—In Jerusalem lived a man named Simeon. He was a good man, who served God, and was looking for the Saviour whom God had promised to send. God had let him know that before he died he should see this Saviour. God now put it into his mind to go to the temple just while the Baby Jesus was there.

Golden Text—When Simeon went in and saw the Babe with His father and mother, Joseph and Mary, he knew at once that He was the promised One; and he took the Babe in his arms and blessed God, and said, "Now I can die peacefully, for—" (Repeat Golden Text). Simeon also called Jesus a Light to lighten all the people of the world and the Glory of the people of Israel. Joseph and Mary were filled with wonder at what Simeon did and said, and Simeon blessed them also, telling them of the great work this little Babe was to do when He grew up, vs. 34, 35.

Anna Worships Jesus—Just then a very, very aged prophetess named Anna came into

the temple, and when she saw the Babe, she too knew that He was Jesus, and she thanked God, and told everybody around that He was the One God had promised to send.

Home to Nazareth—Mary and Joseph and the Baby Jesus went back to Nazareth, where their home was. Joseph was a carpenter there. We can imagine how the Baby grew in size and strength, with a loving pure heart, filled with wisdom and God's spirit upon Him. Day by day He was being trained for His great work.

Belonging to God—When your fathers and mothers have you little ones "baptized", they are giving you to God, to belong to Him. They promise to train you for His service, to teach you His laws. You have, in Jesus, a Copy of a perfect Baby, of a perfect Boy, of a perfect Man. Try to be like Jesus. Sing or repeat,

"Do no sinful action,
Speak no angry word,
Ye belong to Jesus,
Children of the Lord."

—Hymn 529, Book of Praise

Something to Think About—I belong to God.

FROM THE PLATFORM

THE BABE
AND
SIMEON

THE BABE
AND
ANNA

Draw on the blackboard two squares, and print in the one, THE BABE AND SIMEON, in the other, THE BABE AND ANNA. Get the scholars to tell, in answer to questions, who the Babe in the Lesson was, and at what time and for what purpose He was brought to the temple. Then question about Simeon, bringing out his character in relation to men and to God, the influence upon him of the Holy Spirit, his coming into the temple and receiving the Babe into his arms with words of blessing, and his utterance of the "Nunc Dimittis" (Explain, or, better, have the scholars explain, the title of the song). Turn now to Anna, and have the scholars tell all they can about this good aged and saintly soul,—her age, the way in which she spent her time, her coming into the temple at the Presentation of Jesus and her speaking to the assembled people about Him. Dwell on the thought that God's salvation is for all people. Urge every scholar who has not yet done so to accept this salvation for himself or herself, and to do all that is possible to make it known to others.

BIBLE DICTIONARY FOR FIRST
QUARTER, 1912

[For additional information in regard to certain of the places, see Geography Lessons.]

A-bi'-a. Or Abijah (Rev. Ver.), meaning "Jehovah is my Father", the head of the 8th of the 24 courses of priests as arranged by David, 1 Chron. 24 : 3 ; 2 Chron. 8 : 14.

Ab-i-le'-ne. A district on the eastern slope of the Lebanon range.

A'-bra-ham. Meaning "Exalted Father", the first ancestor of the Jewish race.

Al-phæ'-us. 1. The father of James the Less, Mark 15 : 40. 2. The father of Matthew. Some identify these two, thus making James and Matthew brothers.

An'-drew. An apostle, brother of Peter.

An'-na. The same name as Hannah, meaning "Grace",—a prophetess more than a hundred years old who was in the temple when the infant Jesus was presented by His parents.

An'-nas. "Merciful." High priest from A.D. 6 or 7 to A.D. 15, who retained power after he had lost office.

A'-ser. Or Asher (Rev. Ver.). The name of Jacob's eighth son and of the tribe descended from him.

Beth'-le-hem. "House of Bread." The birthplace of Jesus, a small town about six miles south of Jerusalem.

Cai'-a-phas. Son-in-law of Annas and his successor in the high priesthood.

Ca-per'-na-um. A town on the north-western shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Christ. "The Anointed One", a title corresponding to the Hebrew "Messiah". It is our Lord's official title, as Jesus is His personal name.

E-lis'-a-beth. The wife of Zacharias and the mother of John the Baptist.

E-sai'-as. Or Isaiah. The great prophet of Judah in the 8th century B.C.

Ga'-bri-el. "Man of God." The angel who foretold the birth of John the Baptist to Zacharias and of Jesus to Mary.

Her'-od. 1. Herod the Great, the first of the seven Herods mentioned in the New Testament. He was made king of Judea by the Romans in A.D. 37, and reigned till B.C. 4. 2. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, who, after his father's death, ruled over Galilee and Perea, with the title of tetrarch.

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

I-tu-ræ'-a. The region north of Palestine which, along with Trachonitis, formed the dominions of Philip, a son of Herod the Great.

James and John. Two brothers, sons of Zebedee, who were called, at the same time as 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 expresses His special office.

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

Jo'-seph. The husband of Mary the mother of Jesus.

Ju'-da. Or Judah, the territory inhabited by the tribe descended from the fourth son of Jacob.

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

Le'-vi. The original name of the apostle Matthew.

Ly-sa'-ni-as. The ruler of Abilene (which see) at the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry (see Luke 3 : 1).

Mar'-y. The mother of Jesus. She was a resident of Nazareth, where the Saviour's birth was announced to her, Luke 1 : 26.

Naz'-a-reth. A town of Galilee in which Joseph and Mary lived, and the home of Jesus from His childhood until He was about thirty years of age.

Pha-nu'-el. The mother of Anna, Luke 2 : 36.

Phar'-i-sees. A Jewish sect who held strictly not only to the law of Moses, but also to the interpretation of that law given by the scribes or rabbis.

Phil'-ip. A son of Herod the Great and half-brother of Herod Antipas.

Pon'-tius Pi'-late. The Roman governor who, after the death of Archelaus, son and one of the successors of Herod the Great in B.C. 6, had ruled over Judea, with headquarters at Cæsarea.

Sa'-tan. "The adversary", so named because he is hostile to all goodness and the chief opponent of God and man.

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

Sim'-e-on. The "just and devout" man who took the infant Jesus in his arms and blessed Him on the occasion of the presentation in the temple (see Luke 2 : 26-34).

Si'-mon. The chief of the twelve apostles to whom our Lord gave the surname of Peter.

Ti-be'-ri-us Cæ'-sar. The second Roman emperor, who succeeded Augustus in A.D. 14, and reigned till A.D. 37.

Trach-o-ni'-tis. See Ituræa.

Zach-a-ri'-as. A Jewish priest, father of John the Baptist.

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

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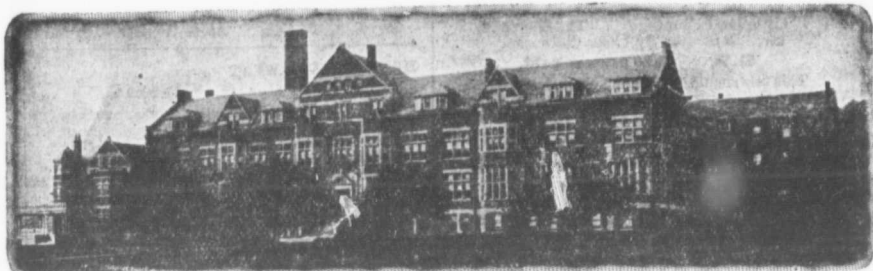
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THE BOOK PAGE

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To those who are following the growth of Modernism in the Church of England, **The Case of Richard Meynell**, by Mrs. Humphrey Ward (The Musson Book Company, Toronto, 630 pages, \$1.25) will be interesting, while the tragedy and beauty of the story and the style will cause many to talk about the book. It is "Robert Elsmere" up to date. Richard Meynell, rector of Upcote, an English mining village, outgrows the creeds of his ordination, vows, and is forced out of

the church. The involved circumstances of his life, and his love for "Robert Elsmere's" daughter Mary, give unusual color and vitality to the persecution to which he is subjected. The same publishers have issued **The Wilderness**, an engrossing tale by Joseph Hooking (350 pages, color illustrations, \$1.25). Robert Dulverton, heir to an estate in Devon, England, and Ralph Endillion, son of a discredited Englishman, meet in Australia. Dulverton is dying as a result of his dissipation. Endillion cares for him to the last. As these two resembled each other, Endillion goes back to England and masquerades as Dulverton. He continues the deception until Miriam Donnithorne, with whom he falls in love, says to him, "You would never deceive me, would you?" Then he confesses his deceit and thinking she despises him he goes out into the wilderness of loneliness. Miriam's love abides, however, and after years of search she finds him in Australia. The ethical teaching of the book is not up to the author's usual high standard.

"One of the most striking signs of the times is the 'new Turkey', the 'new Persia', the 'new India', is the growing desire on the part of Moslem men for the education of their wives and daughters." This is but one of the many tokens of hope for the women of Mohammedan countries as brought out very fully in the papers prepared by missionary women for the General Conference on Missions to Moslems held early this year at Lucknow, the greatest historical capital of the Moslem world in India, and which are now published under the title of **Daylight in the Harem: A New Era for Moslem Women** (Olyphant, Anderson and Ferrier,

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THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES CO., Walnut & 11th Sts., Phila., Pa

Edinburgh, 224 pages, \$1.25). There are eleven chapters in all, each one by a specialist in the work, and Moslem womanhood in all its phases and the work being done for its elevation and regeneration are fully discussed. There is no such difficult mission field as that amongst the Mohammedans, and women's work amongst them has very especial difficulties. The discussion of the subject in this book is therefore of exceptional interest and value. The fifteen full page engravings add greatly to the interest of the work.

The very atmosphere of the rough, titanic mountain West is in Frank L. Packard's, **On the Iron at Big Cloud** (McClelland and Goodchild, Toronto, 343 pages, \$1.25 net), which is made up of fifteen stories of the Transcontinental, and of the stalwarts who run the trains and manage the transportation in its mountain section. Full of tragedy, as a matter of course—for the mountains take terrible toll of their railway men—and of the courage with which well-nigh impossible conditions are met and conquered, the stories have the saving salt of humor, and, best of all, are evidently true to life. Even the West is becoming smoothed, and such story-tellers as Mr. Packard do well to photograph for us the West as it was, and in some of its newest districts only will, for a while, continue to be.

The Innocence of Father Brown (Cassell and Company, Toronto, 335 pages, 8 full page illustrations, \$1.25), by G. K. Chesterton, has all the characteristics of that somewhat whimsical, but altogether keen and delightful essayist and story writer. The innocent—not to say dull and uninteresting-looking—little priest

is a born detective, who rivals—sometimes, indeed, out-rivals—Sherlock Holmes himself as a detective. There are twelve separate stories with a slender thread of connection running through them. Nothing has appeared, this season, more delicious for a long winter evening's reading.

Preparing to Preach, by David R. Breed, Professor of Homiletics in the Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburg, Pa. (George H. Doran Company, New York, U.C. Tract Society, Toronto, 445 pages, \$2.00 net) is a good ten times two dollars' worth to any preacher who has not reached perfection in his art. The most experienced preacher can learn much from it; and to the student or young minister it will be simply invaluable, so sober and searching is it, and so full and specific, entering, as it does, in admirable detail into all that goes into the preparation of the sermon and its delivery. The author writes out of long experience and evidently keen observation. There is little of rhetoric in his style, but a vast amount of painstaking and of shrewd common sense, which are qualities of exceptional value in such a guide book as this.

In the **Reality of the Divine Movement in Israel: A Study of the Logical Sequences of the Divine Consistency**, by Rev. G. Houghton Porter, M.A., S.T.D. (William Briggs, Toronto, 230 pages, \$1.00 net), the critics are criticised. With profound conviction, and not a little argumentative skill, Dr. Porter attacks the modern view of the Old Testament and proves himself a stout defender of the older view.

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