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November, 1899

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# The Teachers Monthly

Vol. V.

NOVEMBER, 1899

No. 11

See page 323 for special notice as to Bible and Book of Praise.

Subscribers will remember that no supplies of any sort are sent *beyond the period subscribed for*. We trust that all will renew in good time. There will then be no disappointing break in the receiving of the Lesson Helps and Papers.

Some schools send us *Standing Orders*, the supplies going on from year to year until order is countermanded. We shall be glad to arrange with any school desirous of following this method. Schools now having standing orders would do well to notify us well in advance of changes in the numbers of the various publications required.

At its recent meeting the General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee most heartily commended our Lesson Helps and Illustrated Paper to the Schools throughout the Church. The Committee also evidenced a deep interest in the proposal to issue a Programme of Scripture Passages for memorizing. They felt that this would carry out the desire of the General Assembly that more attention should be given to the committing of Scripture to memory.

## The Time Extended

The prize stories for THE CHILDREN'S RECORD were to be in the hands of the editor by November 10th. *The time is now extended to November 22nd.*

The offer, which we repeat from THE TEACHERS MONTHLY for October, is as follows:

Cash prizes of FIVE DOLLARS, THREE DOLLARS, and TWO DOLLARS, respectively, are offered for the First, Second, and Third best stories for THE KING'S OWN, (continuing the

*Children's Record*). The stories must be suitable for boys and girls of from eight or nine to fifteen years of age, and must be such as will tend to uplift the children, to make their childhood and youth holier and therefore happier.

The stories must not contain more than one thousand words, must be signed by a pseudonym or motto—the author's real name to be enclosed in a separate envelope—and must be in the hands of the Editor of THE TEACHERS MONTHLY, Confederation Life Building, Toronto, *not later than 22nd November*. The Editor will be at liberty to publish any story sent in. The awards will be published in THE TEACHERS MONTHLY for January, 1900, and the prizes paid immediately thereafter.

## A Word With Our Friends

Our friends will see from the notices in this issue of THE TEACHERS MONTHLY that we are using all diligence to provide fully for the various requirements of our Sabbath Schools. The Committee of Publication has been greatly cheered by the hearty, nay enthusiastic, support received from all sides. Its plans for the future are large and far-reaching. They involve no small addition to the Committee's labors and responsibilities. In view of this fact the Committee looks confidently to the ministers and Sabbath School superintendents and teachers, and indeed to all our people for continued sympathy.

It is at this time of year that we specially prize the crystallizing of general good will into practical form. The great majority of the schools give their orders for the new year almost at once. Let those orders be for *our own Publications*. The General Assembly of our Church has set its hand to this work

because of the conviction that our children should be fed from our own table, and every additional order for the Publications ensures that this will be better done. Larger circulation makes possible increased excellence.

The new venture of illustrated weekly papers—which is one involving large expense—can be made an instant success by the hearty co-operation of all who have to do with our Sabbath Schools.

It is a somewhat startling fact that the Sabbath School papers now provided for our children are nearly all foreign. We have no quarrel with our near neighbors or with any other foreign country. Nor can we find fault that they exalt their own flag and glorify their own national heroes. It suits them. But it does not suit us. Even when there is nothing directly anti-British—and unfortunately things anti-British do now and then creep in—the tone and atmosphere of a foreign paper must necessarily be more or less alien to our life. It is important that in making our children good Christians we also make them good Presbyterians and good Canadians. Our new papers will antagonize nothing except what is wrong. The atmosphere of sweet charity is the only wholesome atmosphere, whether for grown people or children. But we shall seek to catch the note which thrills through our whole national and church life. This beautiful land which God has given us is our own land, to have and to hold for all time, and, by the grace of God, to be held and kept for Him.

#### For 1900

**THE TEACHERS MONTHLY**—Will be enlarged to forty pages (beginning December, 1899), one fourth more pages than at present, with more room for the lessons and several new features; no increase in price.

**THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY and HOME STUDY LEAFLET** So arranged as to provide considerable additional matter for each lesson. **THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY** has found wide favor with the Home Department. It will be still further adapted to the use of that new and interesting department of Bible study.

**THE PRIMARY QUARTERLY and PRIMARY LEAFLET**—To have new and specially engraved pictures illustrating the lessons. The increase in the circulation of **THE PRIMARY QUARTERLY** has been phenomenal. It is a great mother's help with the very little ones.

**JEWELS**—A new illustrated paper for the Little Ones; to be published every week, with original stories by some of our most charming writers for children, and bright and pretty pictures.

**THE KING'S OWN**—continuing the *Children's Record*, which is to be transferred to this office at the New Year, and will be published weekly instead of monthly as now. *It will be freely illustrated.* **THE KING'S OWN** is for the older boys and girls and the home, and will seek to speak out the King's message clear and true. It will have a word to say on various points, country, home, work and play, our Church and its enterprises in many lands, the Divine Lord and Master, and the privilege of serving Him.

**LESSON SCHEME**—Being slips with schedule of Lesson passages, Golden Texts, Topics for proof, Catechism, etc.

**PASSAGES FOR MEMORIZING**—Consisting of select and complete passages of Scripture, along the line of the Lessons for the year. The General Assembly of last June urged that more attention should be given to the memorizing of Scripture. Such a series of connected and complete passages will be preferred by many to the fragmentary "memory verses" commonly followed.

For samples of any of our publications as above, or further information concerning them, address Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

The nineteenth century has been the century of American progress; the twentieth century will be the century of Canadian progress. And we'll do better than our neighbors did, for we'll take Christ and His Gospel with us to the ends of our wide land.

## How to Reach the Child Mind

By Mrs. Mattie Rose Crawford.

A lady once said to me, "I am anxious to take the Infant Class in our Sunday School. Everyone is anxious that I should take it. Can you give me some general points on teaching?"

I replied, "Jot down the following. Read and re-read them, and in preparing your lesson keep the principles before you. 1. The child's powers find freest play in the world of nature. Living things attract him most. 2. The child develops through his own activities. Let him see, hear, handle. 3. The child has a life of his own. It is not on the same plane as the parent life. We must, therefore, proceed with the child from the known to the unknown. 4. Live with the children. Become as a child. Get the child's point of view in every lesson."

"Yes," she said, looking somewhat mystified; "but I don't see yet exactly how I can apply truths through these points."

"Just in this way," I replied:—

"Your field for nature teaching is very broad. 'The Lord is my shepherd'; 'Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves'; 'Behold a sower went forth to sow'; 'As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him and there was no strange God with him.' No book is more filled with nature teaching than the Bible. Our Saviour is the only perfect model for nature teaching. Ever do we find Him leading His disciples out into nature's world."

"But as to just how I should prepare my lesson?" my friend said breaking in upon my thoughts.

"As to just how?" Well, suppose, for example, you had such a lesson as Job 40: 6-14, "Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind and said, Gird up thy loins now like a man," etc.; also Job 42: 10, to the end, "And the Lord turned again the captivity of Job." From these passages you wish to impress upon the child the truth that God afflicts or disciplines those He loves

in order that they may become better and stronger. To speak about this point at first to the child would be to force him out of his own plane of life into yours. To tell the story of Job's life at once would be to work upon the child's feelings and gain little.

Find a nature text, such a one as this, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest." Study the habits of the eagle and its ways with its young, also the habits of birds in general in teaching their young to fly. Repeat the nature text, making it all very vivid. Then, when the child sees it with his own eyes, and is full of the spirit of it, tell the story of Job's life in a childlike way. Read the lesson, in part, at least. Be careful to point out clearly the analogy in the case of the eagle. The eagle forces her young out of the nest in order that they may learn to fly. The eagle is ever ready to catch them if they are likely to fall. When tired, the eaglets are taken back to the nest. God forced Job from his home, depriving him of friends and family and possessions, in order that he might gain strength and learn more of God's protecting care. Job faltered under his troubles. God did not let him fall. He brought him back to his home and made him happy again.

The family may be regarded a part of the nature world. Stories of family life are always understood by an appeal to the child. Indeed, his tendency is to arrange everything in nature into the family life. "The father and mother and baby cherry," I heard a child say the other day, size being her basis for classification.

Take such a lesson as that of John 14: 1-15: "Let not your heart be troubled," etc.; point to be impressed—We have access to the Father through the Son. Take this story:—

"A poor orphan boy had been tossed about here and there, no one caring whether he lived or died.

"He heard of the Queen's love for little children and great kindness to them. He determined to walk to her palace, which he learned was many long miles away. So he set out on his journey.

"On reaching the gate he found it guarded by soldiers, who drove him back when he attempted to go in.

"He sat down some distance from the gate, very miserable; near enough, indeed, to death's door, so weary and faint was he. A carriage drove by. It stopped. A young man stepped out. He saw the child and had pity on him.

"'Come with me,' he said when he had learned the child's story. The child obeyed. When they reached the gate this time, the soldiers saluted the young man and allowed him to pass.

"He led the child into the palace, saying, 'The Queen is my mother'; I shall go on and speak to her first. Then she will be sure to call you to her side, and you may speak to her.'"

The application to the lesson in hand is very easily made.

The Manse,

Niagara Falls, Ont.

### The Prize Stories for JEWELS

In response to offer in August TEACHERS MONTHLY of prizes for original stories for JEWELS, our new illustrated paper for the very little ones, a considerable number of manuscripts were sent in. Most of them are of high merit, and those to whom they were submitted found it no easy task to make selection of the three best. The conditions were as follows:

1. The story must not exceed 325 words.
2. It must be original, the writer's own.
3. It must be a story such as a child of from three years of age to seven will relish.
4. It must serve to deepen the child's love of nature, God, home, country.
5. It must be signed by a brief motto, the writer's name to be enclosed in a separate sealed envelope with the motto written on the outside.

The judges, after reading all the stories very carefully, recommended as follows:

FOR THE FIRST PRIZE—Three dollars—the story bearing the motto, "The Almighty Dollar."

FOR THE SECOND PRIZE—Two dollars—the story bearing the motto, "This Canada of Ours."

FOR THE THIRD PRIZE—One dollar—the story bearing the motto, "Ebenezer."

When the sealed envelopes containing the

mottos were opened it was found that those entitled to the prizes were:

FIRST PRIZE—Miss Violet Robinson, Toronto.

SECOND PRIZE—Miss Mary Sutherland, New Carlisle, New Brunswick.

THIRD PRIZE—Miss Margaret Amos, Aurora, Ont.

Much to the regret of the judges the number of prizes was limited to three, as there were several other stories well worthy of recognition, and of which we hope to give the readers of JEWELS the benefit by-and-by. They also regretted having had to exclude from the competition some stories of exceptional merit, which exceeded the prescribed limit as to the number of words, and were therefore not eligible under the conditions named.

We feel sure that the little readers of JEWELS will be delighted with the stories, and we thank all those who have been so kind as to enter into the competition.

We would draw attention to the offer in another column of prizes for stories suitable to THE KING'S OWN (continuing *The Children's Record*), the new paper for bigger scholars. The limit is 1,000 words and the time is extended to November 22nd.

### An Excellent Idea

A flourishing congregation in Western Ontario orders a large quantity of HOME STUDY QUARTERLIES for distribution amongst the families of the congregation by the missionary collectors in their rounds. They are encouraged to use the Daily Readings for the Lessons at family worship, and having the QUARTERLIES in their hands, parents are enabled to instruct their children more conveniently in the Sabbath School lessons. Those members of the family who cannot well attend the Sabbath School are thus enabled to follow the Lessons at home. This is a very practical method of carrying on the Home Department with almost no machinery.

We have to go to press so early, in order to reach the distant schools in our wide constituency, that we have not yet learned the result of the Children's Day Collections. No doubt it will be of the most gratifying character, as the interest, both in the Service prepared for the day, and in the Century Fund, whose claims were presented to the scholars, was very great. Now is the time to arrange plans for even a better Children's Day and better collections next year.

## Our Publications

### Lesson Helps

**THE TEACHERS MONTHLY**—50c. a year; 5 or more to one address, 40c. each.  
To be enlarged by one-fourth from December onward, no increase in price.

**THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY**—20c. a year; 5 or more to one address, 10c. each.

Largely used also in the Home Department.

**THE PRIMARY QUARTERLY**—With a picture for each lesson; 20c. yearly; 5 or more to one address, 10c. each.

**THE HOME STUDY LEAFLET**—5c. a year; sent only in fives or multiples of five.

**THE PRIMARY LEAFLET**—5c. a year; sent only in fives or multiples of five.

Samples of above free on application.

### Illustrated Papers

**JEWELS**—For the Little Ones; every week, handsomely illustrated; single copies, 30c. a year; 5 or more to one address, 20c. each.

**THE KING'S OWN**, continuing *The Children's Record*—Every week, instead of monthly as now, and handsomely illustrated; single copies, 40c. a year; 5 or more to one address, 25c. each.

Samples of above free on application.

### Catechisms, etc.

**SHORTER CATECHISM**, per doz., 20c., 100, \$1.25.

**SHORTER CATECHISM**, with proofs, per doz., 35c.; 100, \$1.75.

**LESSON SCHEME**—Schedule of Lessons for the year, with Topics for Proof, Catechism, etc.; per 100, 50c.

**PASSAGES FOR MEMORIZING**—List of choice connected and complete Scripture passages on neat little four-page card; per 100, 50c.

### Other S. S. Supplies

**CARSON'S PRIMARY CATECHISM**, per doz., 45c.; per 100, \$3.00. **COLORÉD LESSON PICTURE ROLLS**, 75c. per quarter, \$2.50 for year. **COLORÉD LESSON PICTURE CARDS**, 2½c. per quarter, 10c. for year. Sent only in lots of 5, 10, 15, etc.; no fives broken. **S. S. CLASS REGISTER**, 5c. each. **S. S. SUPERINTENDENT'S RECORD**, 10c. each.

**S. S. SECRETARY'S RECORD**, 25c. and 30c. each. **BIBLE AND PRESBYTERIAN BOOK OF PRAISE**, Oxford Press, 40c. each. **PRESBYTERIAN BOOK OF PRAISE**, S. S. Edition, \$8.00 per hundred; and ANY OTHER S. S. Supplies that may be required.

### Special

**TWO GEMS**—BIBLE and PRESBYTERIAN BOOK OF PRAISE, complete in one volume; from the famous Oxford press, a perfectly new issue, now for the first time on the market; India paper. The handiest possible pocket edition, and bound in morocco limp so as to last a lifetime. Size only 4¼ in. x 2¼ in.; weighs about 5 ounces; a beautiful type. Sent postpaid, \$1.50.

**MY COUNSELLOR**—A sweet companion for the Quiet Hour; from the Oxford press, India paper, pages in red and black, with readings for every morning and evening in the year entirely in the language of Scripture. An exquisite book. Sent postpaid on receipt of 75c.

**NOTE.**—1. It is our rule to discontinue all supplies at termination of period for which ordered, except in the case of Standing Orders. Schools are urgently requested to bear this in mind and renew in good time.

2. Orders for less than a year at proportionate rates.

3. Payment should accompany orders in every case.

### ADDRESS

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## ORDER OF SERVICE: Fourth Quarter

### Opening

I. SILENCE.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.

SCHOOL. For His mercy endureth forever.

SUPT. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

SCHOOL. Whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.

III. SINGING.

IV. PRAYER; closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert.

V. READING OF LESSON, in concert or in alternate verses.

VI. SINGING.

### The Lesson

I. STUDY IN CLASSES.

II. SINGING.

III. REVIEW FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK; which may include Recitation in concert of Catechism, Lesson Title, Golden Text, and Heads of Lesson Plan.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS; SECRETARY'S AND LIBRARIAN'S DISTRIBUTIONS.

### Closing

I. SINGING.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES.

SUPT. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

SCHOOL. And forget not all His benefits.

SUPT. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction.

SCHOOL. Who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

SUPT. As the heaven is high above the earth.

SCHOOL. So great is His mercy toward them that fear Him.

SUPT. Glory ye in His holy name.

SCHOOL. Let the hearts of them rejoice that seek the Lord.

III. CLOSING HYMN OR DOXOLOGY.

IV. BENEDICTION OR CLOSING PRAYER.



**Bible Dictionary for Fourth Quarter, 1899**

**A'-dar.** The twelfth month in the later Jewish calendar.

**A'-gag-ite.** A term of-reproach used to designate Haman. Its origin is not known.

**Ahas-u-e'-rus.** Opinion divided between Cambyses, successor to Cyrus, and Xerxes (485-465), the King of Persia during the period of Esther.

**Ah-a'-va.** A tributary of the Euphrates on which Ezra encamped when setting out for Jerusalem.

**Am-mon-ites.** Inhabitants of the district east of the Jordan between Arnon on the south and Jabbok on the north; the perpetual enemies of Israel.

**Ash'-dod-ites.** Inhabitants of Ashdod, one of the seven great Philistine strongholds. After the restoration enemies of the Jews.

**Ar-a'-bians.** The wandering inhabitants of the great desert peninsula of Arabia.

**Chis-leu.** The ninth Hebrew month.

**Da'-vid.** Son of Jesse, and, after Saul, called to be king of Israel.

**El-i'-jah.** The greatest of the early prophets, called out of Gilead to stem the rising tide of heathenism in Israel.

**Esth'-er.** See Mordecai.

**Ez'-ra.** A priest and scribe who led a colony of exiles from Babylon to Jerusalem, instituted many reforms. He did much to collect and arrange the sacred writings.

**Gen'-tiles.** Nations outside of Judah, strangers to the true religion.

**Hach-a-li'-ah.** The father of Nehemiah.

**Ha-man.** Son of Hammedatha; was chief minister of Ahasuerus. Enemy of the Jews, but defeated at court by the Jewish queen Esther, and hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai.

**Ha-na'-ni.** A brother or near kinsman of Nehemiah, who brought him tidings to Susa of the distressed condition of the Jews in Palestine. Later made a governor of Jerusalem.

**Hash-a-bi'-ah.** With Sherebiah, one of the twelve priests set apart by Ezra to carry and care for the holy vessels brought back from the captivity.

**Ho'-reb.** The mountain in the Sinaitic peninsula of which Sinai was a chief summit.

**Is'-ra-el.** Name given to Jacob because he prevailed in prayer; later given to his descendants, the whole nation, and later still to the kingdom of the Ten Tribes.

**Ja'-cob.** Son of Isaac and father of twelve sons, who became the heads of the twelve tribes. (See Israel.)

**Je-ru'-sa-lem.** The Holy City, capital of all Israel, and after the separation, of the kingdom of Judah.

**Jesh'-u-a** and his twelve companions. Levites who assisted Ezra in expounding the

law to the assembled people.

**Jews.** The descendants of the Israelites. (See Israel.)

**Ju'-dah.** The fourth son of Jacob, whose name was given to one of the tribes. After the division of the kingdom the name was applied to the southern division, which included the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, with a portion of Simeon and Dan; Jerusalem was its capital.

**Le'-vites.** Descendants of Levi, the third son of Jacob and Leah; set apart for the services of the sanctuary. They assisted the priests and conducted the service of praise.

**Mat-tith-i'-ah,** and twelve others, who stood to the right and left of Ezra as he read the law to the people.

**Mi'-dian.** The Midianites who inhabited northern Arabia.

**Mor'-de-cai.** A Benjaminite who incurred the displeasure of Haman at the Persian court. Through Queen Esther, who was his own niece, and whom he had brought up, he overthrew Haman's plot against the Jews, and secured the punishment of Haman. He became the prime minister to the Persian king.

**Mo'-ses.** Born an Israelite, and saved as a babe from the wrath of Pharaoh in Egypt. Taken to the Court and taught in all the learning of the Egyptians. Chose rather to be a Hebrew; and in time led Israel out of Egypt and through the desert. Died on Mount Nebo.

**Ne-he-mi'-ah.** The Governor of Judah under Artaxerxes at the time of the Restoration. A man of great wealth, and a strong, honest ruler; prompt in resolution, masterful in execution.

**Ni'-san.** The first month of the Jewish year.

**Per'-sia.** The great eastern kingdom conquered by Cyrus and governed by Xerxes, which overran all western Asia and long held sway over Palestine.

**San-bal'-lat.** Satrap of the king of Persia in Israel after the Restoration; the great opponent to the rebuilding of the Temple and city.

**Shu'-shan.** One of the three capitals of Persia and winter residence of its kings.

**Tri-aha'-tha.** The Persian title for a local or provincial governor.

**To-bi'-ah.** An Ammonite who united with Sanballat to oppose the Jews in the restoration of the city and Temple.

**Tyre.** A chief city of the Phoenicians on the Mediterranean, celebrated for its traffic, and very rich.

**Vash'-ti.** The first queen of Ahasuerus, divorced for disobedience.

**Zi'-on.** The mountain captured by David. Later the name was applied to the city of Jerusalem and to the dwelling place of Jehovah therein.

# International Bible Lessons

## Studies in the Old Testament

### LESSON CALENDAR: FOURTH QUARTER.

1. October 1.....Joy in God's House. Psalm 122.
2. October 8.....Haman's Plot against the Jews. Esther 3: 1-11.
3. October 15.....Esther Pleading for Her People. Esther 8: 3-8 and 15-17.
4. October 22.....Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem. Ezra 8: 21-32.
5. October 29.....Psalms of Deliverance. Psalms 85 and 126.
6. November 5.....Nehemiah's Prayer. Nehemiah 1: 1-11.
7. November 12.....Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah 4: 7-18.
8. November 19.....Public Reading of the Scriptures. Nehemiah 8: 1-12.
9. November 26.....Woes of Intemperance. Proverbs 23: 29-25.
10. December 3.....Keeping the Sabbath. Nehemiah 13: 15-22.
11. December 10.....Lessons in Giving. Malachi 1: 6-11; 3: 8-12.
12. December 17.....Fruits of Right and Wrong Doing. Malachi 3: 13-4: 6.
13. December 24.....Christ's Coming Foretold. Isaiah 9: 2-7.
14. December 31.....Review.

### LESSON VI.

### NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER

November 5, 1899

Nehemiah 1: 1-11. Commit to memory vs. 8-10. Read chap. 2

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month <sup>2</sup>Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace,

2 That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men <sup>3</sup>of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

4 And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

5 And said, I beseech thee, O Lord <sup>6</sup>God of heaven, the great and terrible God that keepeth covenant and mercy <sup>7</sup>for them that love him and <sup>8</sup>observe his commandments:

6 Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest <sup>7</sup>hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee <sup>8</sup>now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, <sup>9</sup>and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have

**Revised Version**—Now: <sup>3</sup>Chisleu; <sup>4</sup>Out of; <sup>6</sup>The God; <sup>7</sup>With; <sup>8</sup>Keep; <sup>9</sup>Hearken unto; <sup>10</sup>At this time; <sup>11</sup>While I; <sup>12</sup>Yea, I and; <sup>13</sup>Thy servant; <sup>14</sup>Peoples; <sup>15</sup>Remember; <sup>16</sup>Cause my name to dwell there; <sup>17</sup>Now I was cupbearer to the king.

#### GOLDEN TEXT

"Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day." Neh. 1: 11.

#### DAILY READINGS

- M.—Neh. 1. Nehemiah's prayer.  
T.—Neh. 2: 1-11. The request granted.  
W.—Neh. 2: 12-20. A good resolve.  
Th.—Lev. 26: 40-46. Confession and forgiveness.  
F.—Deut. 32: 1-10. Precious promises.  
S.—1 Kings 8: 46-53. Solomon's prayer.  
S.—Psalm 80. Turn us, O Lord!

#### TIME

Late in 445 or early in 444 B.C., the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes (ch. 1: 1), thirteen years after Ezra first went to Jerusalem.

#### PLACE

Shushan (Susa), the winter capital of the Persian empire.

#### CATECHISM

Q. 78. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbour's good name.

#### CONNECTING LINKS

Having studied two of the hymns of the returned exiles, we now turn to an incident in the life of Nehemiah, who was a Jewish official at the court of the Persian king.

sinned against thee: <sup>10</sup>both I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

8 Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye <sup>11</sup>transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the <sup>12</sup>nations:

9 But if ye <sup>13</sup>turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; <sup>14</sup>though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to <sup>15</sup>set my name there.

10 Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.

11 O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. <sup>16</sup>For I was the king's cupbearer.

#### LESSON PLAN

I. A Courtier, 1, 11 (last clause). In the king's palace, and the king's cupbearer.

II. A Patriot, 2, 3.

Eager for news of his countrymen, and grieved because of their sad estate.

III. A Man of Prayer, 4-11.

Taking the case of his people to his God and theirs.

#### LESSON HYMNS.

Book of Praise—159, 42 (Ps.), 171, 96, 160

*m. Lead.*

Nehemiah heard that affairs were not progressing favorably with his brethren who had returned to the Holy City. He was filled with anxiety and grief, and laid the whole matter before God, with humble confession of sin beseeching the divine favor. This lesson is a study of his prayer.

## EXPOSITION

## I. A Courtier, 1, 11 (last clause).

V. 1. *In the month Chisleu*; the latter part of November and the first part of December. The twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, about 445 B.C. For *Nehemiah* and *Shushan* see Bible Dictionary for Quarter.

## II. A Patriot, 2, 3.

V. 11. See below.

V. 2. *Hanani, one of my brethren*. The words might mean merely that Hanani was of Jewish nationality. But according to Neh. 7 : 2 he was Nehemiah's own brother. *Came*, from Jerusalem. Josephus says that Nehemiah, while walking outside the city of Susa, overheard some strangers who were approaching talking in the Hebrew tongue. He soon found out that they were from Jerusalem, and that one of them was his own brother. From them he obtained the information about Jerusalem that caused him so much anxiety. *Concerning the Jews that had escaped*; had escaped from exile and had gone up to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and Ezra. *And concerning Jerusalem*. He is anxious as to the condition of the city as well as of the people therein.

V. 3. *The remnant that are left of the captivity*; the exiles who had returned, as distinguished from those who still remained in other countries. *In the province*; called the province of Judah, Ezra 5 : 8; the district of which Jerusalem was the centre, and of which Zerubbabel was governor. *In great affliction and reproach*. The "affliction" denotes the evil plight of the exiles within the walls (Neh. 5 : 3-5), the "reproach," the scornful attitude of their enemies without. (Compare Ps. 79 : 4-9; 89 : 38-46.) *The wall of Jerusalem*. The city had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar 140 years before, and the walls broken down to render it defenceless (2 Kings 25 : 10). But the walls had been at least partially rebuilt (Ezra 4 : 12). The Jews may therefore be telling

Nehemiah of recent outrages on the part of hostile neighbors. (See for condition of the walls Neh. 2 : 11-15.)

## III. A Man of Prayer, 4-11.

V. 4. *I sat down and wept*. The pitiable condition of his brethren at Jerusalem affected him greatly. It stirred the depths of his patriotic and religious feelings, and lay heavily upon his heart. *And fasted*; expressive of the deep grief and humiliation which he experienced upon hearing the sad news. Fasting was a frequent practice among the Jews during the captivity. (See Dan. 9 : 3; Ezra 10 : 6; Esther 4 : 3.) *And prayed*. He laid the whole matter before God, confessing his own and his people's sins, and praying for the divine blessing. *The God of heaven*. This title occurs frequently in Persian inscriptions. It is used of Jehovah, the true God, in Darius' letter, Ezra 6 : 9, 10, and in Artaxerxes' letter, 7 : 12, 21, 23. In Nehemiah it occurs in 1 : 4, 5; 2 : 4, 20. (Compare Ps. 136 : 26; Dan. 2 : 18, 19, 44.)

V. 5. O LORD. The word LORD written in capitals always means Jehovah, in the Old Testament. It is His especial name as the covenant keeping God of the Jews. *The great and terrible God*. Great in the performance of mighty deeds, and terrible in His judgments upon wrong-doers. *That keepeth covenant and mercy*; never violating His promises, but richly blessing those who love and obey Him (Ps. 103 : 17, 18).

V. 6. *Thine ears . . . thine eyes*. To comprehend God at all we are under necessity of thinking of Him in terms of our poor humanity, ears, eyes, tongue, arms, hands, etc. And He condescends so to speak to us of Himself. *Confess the sins of the children of Israel*. Sin was the cause of all their troubles, and true repentance implied not only sorrow for sin, but the forsaking of sin through confession (Hos. 14 : 1, 2), and amendment of life. *Both I and my father's*

house have sinned; that is, the people were individually and collectively responsible for the nation's guilt.

V. 7. *We have dealt very corruptly*; showing his consciousness of the greatness of his own and of the people's sin. *Have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments*; the law of God from various points of view, as "commandments" from His mouth, "statutes" in His book, "judgments" or decisions from His judgment throne.

V. 8. *The word that thou commandest*. This is not an exact quotation of Scripture, but the general sense of several passages, such as Lev. 26:33; Deut. 28:64, is given. And God had made this awful threat good, to the infinite sorrow and loss of the people.

V. 9. *But if ye turn unto me*. Here again we have not the precise words, but the general sense of such passages as Lev. 26:40-42, and Deut. 30:1-5. The fact that God had been faithful in His threatenings was to the mind of Nehemiah a guarantee that He would also fulfil His gracious promises. *The uttermost part of the heaven*; the furthest horizon or sky-line—a strong expression for distance. *The place that I have chosen to set my name there*. The place He had appointed for His worship, the Temple at Jerusalem (1 Kings 8:29).

V. 10. *Now these are thy servants*. God had chosen them, and had given them His promises. They were His "peculiar people" even though they had sinned and were punished. *Whom thou hast redeemed*. Their whole history had been marked by God's special deliverances. But "the redemption"

here spoken of looks back beyond the recent restoration from Babylon to the original deliverance from Egypt, which sealed forever the relation between Jehovah and His people (Ex. 20:2). (*Cam. Bible.*) *Thy strong hand*. See note, v. 6.

V. 11. *Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day*. He resolved to ask the king to allow him to go up to Jerusalem to help his brethren (2:5.) It was a bold decision; for he was a favorite whom the king was loth to spare (2:6); and he prays for the blessing of God upon it. *Mercy in the sight of this man*; favor in the sight of the Persian king. *For I was the king's cupbearer*. The cupbearer's special duty was to serve wine at the royal table; and he frequently had to taste it himself to ensure the king against poison. It would be hard for the king to permit leave of absence to such an official. Some curious information is forthcoming from the monuments and elsewhere as to the servants and officers of the Persian court. These included, amongst others, the parasol-bearer, the bearer of the fan or fly-flapper, who stood behind the throne and fought off the gnats, flies and mosquitoes, the steward of the household, the groom or master of the horse, the chief eunuch or keeper of the women, scribes or secretaries, messengers, ushers, tasters, who tried the various dishes lest they should be poisoned, cupbearers, who handed him his wine and tasted it, chamberlains, who assisted him to bed, musicians, and a horde of inferior officers. "The Persian king," says Rawlinson, "fed within the precincts of his palace as many as fifteen thousand persons."

#### ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

*McIntosh Allardale*  
The words of Nehemiah, the son of Hacaliah, v. 1. Nehemiah tells in an artless way what he did for God's cause, and the narrative has been an inspiration and guide ever since to those engaged in like service. It is not necessarily egotism, when one gives his own experience in the Lord's work; and it may be of great help to others. One reason, doubtless, why so large a part of the Bible is biography is because of the strong moulding influence of one life upon other lives. We can

give no better education to our children than to make the great men of the Scriptures real to them. Nor should teachers fail to make free use of their own larger experience of life in endeavoring to lead the scholars to holier and higher things. It is a false delicacy, by no means scriptural, which hides its light under a bushel.

*As I was in Shushan the palace*. Standing in the presence of the King of Persia, for he was "the king's cupbearer," v. 11. Nehemiah

forgot not to make his appeal first to the King of heaven, the King of kings. He was not of those who are shamed out of their religious convictions by high place or great company, but like Daniel at the court of Babylon, kept "his windows open toward Jerusalem." Our loyalty to God should be so strong and so real that everywhere, in palace or cottage, in public and in the house, we shall alike acknowledge His name. "Let your light so shine before men;" and before all sorts of men, in all sorts of places.

*Concerning the Jews . . . concerning Jerusalem*, v. 2. The burden of prayer is intercession, and intercession only goes as far as love gives it wings. Our souls are lifted in prayer to God as our hearts go out in sympathy towards men. The affliction and reproach of the Jewish remnant and of Jerusalem drove Nehemiah to prayer. The fields white unto the harvest moved our Saviour to appeal to "the Lord of the harvest." And only as our eyes catch sight of the great, dark mountain of human misery and behold the grievous wolves that desolate the flock of God "purchased with His own blood," shall we wrestle in prayer for our brother men.

*In great affliction and reproach*, v. 3. And wherefore? Verily, not because God had forsaken them, but because they had been unfaithful to God. Had they been but faithful in the first instance, they would have never been dragged away into captivity. Their land would have remained their own. And when, through God's tender mercy, they were brought back to the land they had forfeited through disobedience, the fear of God would have opened the door to happy and prosperous days. God is always more than willing to bless, "waiting to be gracious," indeed. When individuals or Sabbath Schools or churches do not prosper, it is well worth their while to inquire whether some want of faithfulness to God does not lie at the root of the calamity.

*Wept and mourned . . . and fasted and prayed*, v. 4. Personal preparation both physical and spiritual must precede prevailing prayer. The faith that will take no denial, that is capable of removing mountains and casting

out any kind of devil, comes not except by prayer and fasting (Matt. 17: 21). So conquered our blessed Lord, and so have overcome His saints of every age, as, for instance, those pious souls whose work was followed by the Reformation and of whom a poet says:

"They in the stillness did prepare  
Horses and men and weapons of war."

*O Lord God of heaven*, v. 5. The strength of prayer lies in our confidence in God. That confidence, in the case of Nehemiah, is seen to rest, so to speak, on four pillars: (a) God's ability, *The great and terrible God*; (b) God's character, *That keepeth covenant and mercy*; (c) God's word, *The word that thou commandest* (v. 8); (d) God's dealings with His people, *Whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power* (v. 10). And the least in the kingdom of heaven now ought have greater confidence than had Nehemiah. Science has, every century since, added to the world's sense of the might of God, revealing more and more the limitless sweep and sphere of His dominion, whilst history has evermore been confirming our belief in the benevolence of His purposes and the absolute holiness of His nature. We have, in addition, the new covenant and the cross of Christ, which set forth a redemption greater than that contemplated by Nehemiah, as the heavens are higher than the earth.

*Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day*, v. 11. We would expect this prayer of Nehemiah's to be answered, for it contains all the elements of true and acceptable prayer; viz.: (1) "An offering up of our desires unto God" v. 6; (2) "For things agreeable to His will," v. 6; (3) "In the name of Christ," v. 10 (He rests his hope for present grace on the redemption that God has wrought for His people); (4) "With confession of our sins," v. 6; (5) "And thankful acknowledgment of His mercies," v. 10. (*S. Catechism, Ques. 98.*) But in view of the obstacles in the way—the Persian king, the perilous journey, the spiritless Jewish remnant and the organized heathen opposition (see chap. 2), probably Nehemiah himself did not look for such a speedy and literal answer.

## TEACHING HINTS

Ezra and Nehemiah were originally one book, and Nehemiah begins where Ezra leaves off, describing his own mission to his distressed and disheartened brethren in Jerusalem, the re-building and dedication of the wall, the renewing of the covenant, and various further steps toward the re-establishment of God's kingdom and worship. The lesson of the day describes

## NEHEMIAH'S FIRST STEPS IN HIS GREAT ENTERPRISE:

1. He appears on the scene as a trusted courtier and officer in the Persian court. ("I was the king's cupbearer," v. 11).

The scholars will be interested in the curious details given above as to the elaborate and extravagant organization of the king's court. Show how only one of native force of character could come to the front in such a crowd; and also that only a man of integrity could retain such an office as Nehemiah's. A fine opportunity it is of emphasizing the value of character and the possibility of holiness of heart and life even in Sodom-like places; for the vice of eastern palaces

kept pace with their luxury.

2. Courtier as he is, Nehemiah cannot be happy while his people are in distress. Draw out from the class the incident of the meeting with Hanani (v. 1). Have them describe the condition of the Jews in Jerusalem and the reason thereof (v. 2); as also Nehemiah's state of mind (v. 4). There are two evident truths to be pressed (a) That suffering and sorrow dog the heels of disobedience; and (b) That the true lover of his brethren shares all their sorrows.

3. The heart of the lesson is reached in what follows. Nehemiah in his distress and perplexity BETAKES HIMSELF TO God in prayer. These points are to be specially noted and their practical bearings urged home: (a) The proper attitude of one who seeks God (v. 4); (b) The true source of help (v. 4); (c) The attributes of God on which faith lays hold (v. 5); (d) The pleas that prevail—"thy servant," confession of sin (vs. 6, 7), God's threats and promises (v. 8, 9); His love for His own people (v. 10); (e) The directness of the prayer (v. 11).

## TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. The King's cupbearer.
2. A courtier in tears and the reason for it
3. The pleas that prevail with God.

## BLACKBOARD REVIEW

# A Prayer that Prevailed

By a True Servant of God

From a Deep Sense of Need

With Humble Confession of Sin

In Reliance on God's Faithfulness

For the Present Need

## LESSON VII. REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM November 12, 1899

Nehemiah 4 : 7-18. Commit to memory vs. 15-18. Read chap. 4

7 But it came to pass, *that* when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth.

8 And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.

9 Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10 And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you.

13 Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and

their bows.

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

16 And it came to pass, from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.

17 They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

18 For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.

**Revised Version**—1 The repairing of the walls went forward; 2 To cause confusion therein; 3 But; 4 Into the midst of; 5 Ten times from all places, ye must return unto us; 6 Lowest part of the space behind; 7 In the open places; 8 Coats of mail; 9 Laded themselves, every one.

## GOLDEN TEXT

"Watch and pray." Matt. 26 : 41.

## DAILY READINGS

M.—Neh. 4 7-18. Rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.

T.—Neh. 6 : 1-9. Tempters unheeded.

W.—Neh. 6 10-16. The wall finished.

Th.—Neh. 12 : 27-30 and 43-47. Dedication and rejoicing.

F.—Psalm 64. Evil designs frustrated.

S.—Eph. 6 10-18. Able to stand.

S.—Mark 13 28-37. Watching and prayer.

## TIME

Summer of B.C. 444, some months after the date of last lesson.

## PLACE

Jerusalem.

## CATECHISM

Q 79. Which is the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment is, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's.

## CONNECTING LINKS

The Persian king allowed Nehemiah to go up to Jerusalem to repair the walls of the city. Upon the third night of his arrival he made a secret inspection of the ruins (2 : 12, 13). Then, summoning the leaders of the people, he for the first time stated his intentions and the scope of his commission from the king (2 : 17, 18). The people responded heartily (v. 18). They were not allowed, however, to rebuild in peace (vs. 19, 20; 4 : 1-3). This lesson shows how Nehemiah met the attacks of the enemies.

## EXPOSITION

## I. In Peril from Evil, 7, 8.

V. 7. *Sanballat and Tobiah.* For these and the remaining proper names see the Bible Dictionary for the Quarter. *Heard that the walls . . . were made up.* It would appear from the preceding verse that the wall had been rebuilt to one half its height. The people had been quite enthusiastic. *The breaches began to be stopped; the great spaces broken out of the walls to render them useless. They were very wroth.* San-

ballat and the others had from the very first disliked the appointment of Nehemiah as Governor of Judea (2 : 10). Sanballat particularly regarded him as a rival and evidently thought that Nehemiah's influence at Jerusalem would weaken his own at Samaria. At first he and his associates were content to use the weapon of scorn (2 : 19), and to speak of the Jews as beneath contempt (4 : 2, 3). But, as the walls began to rise above the ruins, and the gaps began to be filled up,

## LESSON PLAN

## I. In Peril from Evils, 7, 8.

Who through envy and hatred conspired against them.

## II. Praying and Watching, 9-14.

At the command and after the example of Nehemiah, their leader.

## III. Watching and Working, 15-18.

Girded for battle, but busy on the walls.

## LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—6, 35 (Ps.) 250, 252, 254.

they became greatly alarmed, and mild contempt gave way to violent anger.

V. 8. *And conspired all of them together . . . to fight against Jerusalem.* It was a secret plot—for such is implied by the word “conspired”—to disperse the workers and destroy the walls. It might have succeeded if Nehemiah had not heard of it and taken measures to meet it.

## II. Praying and Watching, 9-14.

V. 9. *Nevertheless*; undismayed because trustful. *We made our prayer unto our God*; knowing that the source of all power was in Him whose will they were carrying out in rebuilding the city walls. *And set a watch against them day and night.* Trust in God did not make them less careful as to measures for defence; and so sentinels were posted day and night to prevent and repel possible attacks.

Vs. 10, 11. *And Judah said.* The Jewish community said through their representatives. *The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed.* The carriers were beginning to feel the effects of over work. From early morning until prevented by darkness (4 : 21) they were engaged in clearing the foundation, removing the rubbish to a distance, and carrying the best of the materials from the ruins to the masons; and physical endurance had almost reached its limit. *And our adversaries said.* To the weakness within the walls was added the constant menace of the enemy from without, who felt confident of the success of their secret plans. (See v. 8.)

V. 12. *The Jews which dwell by them*; the Jews living in the country, near Sanballat and his party, who would be acquainted with the evil designs of the enemy. *They said unto us ten times from all places, ye must return unto us.* (Rev. Ver.). “Ten times,” repeatedly, again and again. “From all places,” from different localities in the country. A constant pressure from all sides was brought to bear on the people in Jerusalem. “Return unto us,” either for the purpose of protecting the villages and towns in the country where they themselves lived, or to save their own lives from the threatened overthrow of Jerusalem.

V. 13. *Therefore, set I in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in the open places.* (Rev. Ver.). “The original in this passage is very obscure. The true meaning seems to be given in the Rev. Ver. Nehemiah stationed armed detachments, under the cover of the wall, in the open spaces, where houses and buildings would not interfere with their movements.” (*Camb. Bible.*)

*After their families.* This arrangement “guaranteed the discipline and organization and energy resulting from the strong clan feeling of the Semitic races. Many would thus be required to defend their own homes.” (*The same.*)

V. 14. *And I looked.* The enemy was hovering near and Nehemiah now sees them advancing as if to attack. *Rose up*; to give his commands and to encourage the soldiers to act on the defensive. *Be ye not afraid of them*; because God, who is great in defence of His own but terrible against His enemies, to be counted on in the battle. *Fight for your brethren*, etc. It was an appeal to the strongest instincts of the human heart, love of God, of home and of country, which would inspire them, as nothing else could, with enthusiasm and courage.

## III. Watching and Working, 15-18.

V. 15. *When our enemies heard.* Finding that their plans had been discovered and that Nehemiah was ready to receive them, Sanballat and his party withdrew. But Nehemiah, prudent leader as he was, did not in any measure relax his efforts of defence.

V. 16. *The half of my servants.* Dean Stanley thinks that these were a large body of slaves which he had brought with him from Persia. Others think that he refers to the guard that accompanied him on the journey (4 : 23). Relying upon their fidelity and courage, he set half of them to work, and the other half, fully armed, he placed upon the defensive. *The habergeon.* An old English word for a coat of mail. Literally a defense for head and shoulders, from “hals” the neck and “bergan” to protect. (Compare the French “haubergeon,” neck covering). Coats of mail were common in the East at an early date. *And their*



rulers; the loyal nobles. *Were behind all the house of Judah.* They were stationed near to encourage the workmen, and to take the command of the forces in case of attack.

V. 17. *They which builded.* The workmen were all armed, and all except the builders carried their weapon in one hand whilst they worked with the other.

V. 18. *The builders*; as distinguished from the carriers and "those that laded." They needed the use of both hands in laying the

stones of the wall, and hence they carried their swords at their sides. *And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.* The walls of the city were, perhaps, four or five miles long. The workmen would be scattered, thus increasing the danger from attack. But Nehemiah went everywhere, attended by his trumpeter, who was to sound an alarm when the enemy should appear. After more than seven weeks of this terrible strain the walls were at last finished (6 : 15).

#### ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

*The walls of Jerusalem were made up,* v. 7. The leader in this work of rebuilding possessed gifts and qualities of heart and mind that eminently fitted him for so great an undertaking. *Not content to accept hearsay reports* he made a personal examination of the ruins. By means of an earnest and patriotic appeal he enlisted the sympathy and co-operation of the nobles and rulers. Nehemiah is a fine example of Christian patriotism and wise leadership.

*Conspired all of them together,* v. 8. A common enmity is a strong bond. Herod and Pilate were made friends by their common hatred of the Man of Nazareth. (Luke 23 : 12.)

The refusal of Nehemiah to have anything to do with the surrounding mixed races made them bitter foes, who, to the utmost of their power, hindered the work of rebuilding the walls by sneers, slanders, conspiracies and treachery. Christian workers in all ages have had to encounter like opposition. It is only necessary to stand out boldly and firmly—to be "not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12 : 2)—to find the men of the world arrayed against one.

*We made our prayer unto our God,* v. 9. The methods of defence employed display a high order of generalship and true faith in God's will. Prayer was given the first place as the best and most essential weapon of defence. Nehemiah himself was a man of prayer. (Ch. 1.) He had proved its efficiency by experience, and now resorts to it once more in his time of need. There is more than a hint here for Sabbath School teachers, and indeed for all Christian workers. Prayerless teachers are powerless

teachers. Education and culture, energy and diligence go far; but a personal and abiding walk with Christ in the School of Prayer is the surest guarantee of success. Leadership in Christian service, indeed Christian service of any sort, is impossible apart from the frequenting of the throne of grace.

*Set a watch,* v. 9. Prayer does not pretend to dispense with the use of means. It is not a substitute for work, but rather an inspiration to it. Nehemiah made careful preparations for any emergency that might arise, and thereby showed that his prayer had been in earnest. He showed, too, thereby, the prudence of the wise general. If we are to come off victorious in our conflict with the hosts of Satan, wiliest of all leaders, we can never afford to be off our guard. "Vigilant" (1 Pet. 5 : 8) must be our watchword.

*And Judah said,* v. 10. The insolence and opposition of enemies may be hard enough to bear. But it is infinitely more disheartening when those whose sympathy and support we might reasonably expect, begin to weaken and to throw a chilling influence upon the work. (Compare Ps. 55 : 12, 13.) It is not, alas, an unusual thing for Christian workers to meet with a spirit of lukewarmness and apathy in quarters where they might properly look for sympathy and encouragement. This spirit of indifference has always to be reckoned on; for even amongst the Lord's people there are always found some weak-kneed brethren.

*Our adversaries said,* v. 11. Zealous workers may always count on adversaries. "Woe unto you," the Lord said, "when all men

shall speak well of you." (Luke 6 : 26.) And then adversaries, like those of Nehemiah, are much given to planning and scheming how the workers may be discredited and the work hindered.

*The people after their families*, v. 13. Division of labor is an excellent thing. An eminent evangelist once said he would rather get ten men to work than that he should do the work of ten men. In Nehemiah's plan of operations we find what might be called a perfect model. Every family was enlisted and each had assigned to it the work on the wall opposite their own dwelling-places. No family would want to see a poor part of the wall opposite their own house. Besides, in simple self-defence they would build the part nearest themselves the more earnestly. There is no better way, indeed no other way, of building up a firm fabric of civic righteousness. Each household must see to it that its home-life is pure and Christ-like. A state that is walled about by God-honoring homes is secure against all the world.

*Be ye not afraid*, v. 14. What an inspiration an enthusiastic, courageous leader is in battle! A kindly word of good cheer from a master to a servant has in many an instance proved a benediction. Some time ago, in a large hardware house in New York, a little shop-boy was sent to the top shelf for an odd size in nails. He was newly hired and very nervous. In his eagerness to obey promptly, the package fell down and its contents were scattered. Poor little man! It was bad enough without the clerks' unkind, "Now you will have the job of picking them up." And a job he found it. But to make his mortification complete one of the members of the firm came upon him as he was thus employed. The tall figure paused for an instant beside the little stooping one. He did not fail to see the flushed face and quivering lips, nor how often the tiny wire nails eluded the trembling fingers. With a cheery "Take a magnet, Tommy; it will pick them all up in a minute," and a kind pat on the little head the busy merchant passed on. Parents will do well to have a kindly word for their children and teachers for their

scholars and all of us the one for the other.

*Remember the Lord*. The secret of Nehemiah's great and noble life was the consciousness of God's presence with him. There is nothing that proves such a source of strength, helpfulness and encouragement to Christian workers as to remember that the work they are engaged in is the Lord's, and that He who gave the commission gave also the assurance, "Lo, I am with you alway" (Matt. 28 : 20). *Fight for your brethren*. What a grand incentive to work and to fight is the defence and well-being of those dearest to us! Country, home, loved ones; there is no one with a spark of true manhood who will not fight to the death rather than that these should be dishonored. When to these incentives the honor of the heavenly Lord and Master is added, heroism reaches its highest ranges. There are no more noble men than the men who have fought and died that the kingdom of God might be free.

*God had brought their counsel to nought*, v. 15. It is rank heresy, which all history disproves, that "God is on the side of the heaviest battalions." God is on the side of those who are on *His* side. Gideon's three hundred triumphing over the hosts of the Midianites is an example of what has often happened. Perilous indeed is the case of any nation which relies on its armies and its fleets and forgets God or fights for that which God condemns. The Spanish Armada is the answer to all such presumption. *Everyone unto his work*. There were no dawdlers nor idlers. Each one did his own work and did it with a will. There was diversity of work, but unity of spirit. They labored unitedly. They also labored in the work perseveringly. There were no days off duty, and the hours were long; they "labored in the work . . . from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared" (v. 21). They worked successfully. In the incredibly short period of fifty-two days the work of rebuilding the wall was completed. Each Christian has his working day, at the end of which, if he wearies not, but toils on perseveringly, he shall find his labors crowned with success. (1 Cor. 15 : 58.)

## TEACHING HINTS

The appeal of the lesson is to the heroic. It tells how a crisis was met and affords both example and stimulus to all to whom the service of Christ brings scorn and opposition, who have to fight while they build.

Begin with Nehemiah yonder at Shushan, entreating his God that he may find favor with the king and so be permitted to go to the help of his distressed countrymen at Jerusalem (ch. 1).

Follow this with the scene in the palace described in chapter 2:1-8. Nehemiah gains his point, and is provided with a safe conduct and with an order for the timber for the gates and wall.

Trace his journey under protection of the King's cavalry (v. 9).

Describe the appearance on the scene of Sanballat and Tobiah, veritable thorns in the flesh to Nehemiah (v. 10).

Work out Nehemiah's plans, his three days' pondering over the situation (v. 11); his night survey (vs. 12-16); his appeal to the rulers and their response (vs. 17, 18); and the first encounter with Sanballat and his crew (vs. 19, 20).

Note the plans for and the progress of the building, the enemy the meanwhile scoffing and threatening (chs. 3; 4:1-6).

IN THE LESSON PASSAGE ITSELF MARK

1. *The crisis of peril.* Sanballat and the

rest conspiring, vs. 7, 8; the people discouraged by reason of exhausting labors, v. 10; the friendly Jews outside the city, fearing that if the building of the walls be persisted in, all will be lost, and so again and again urging that it should cease, v. 12. These three classes of hinderers may stand for (a) The avowed enemies of the Gospel. (b) Those who are wearied in, and therefore well nigh wearied of, the work. (c) The faint hearted.

2. *How the crisis was met.* First of all, by unflinching faith and courage—"Nevertheless," v. 9; then by prayer and vigilance, v. 9; this followed up by a careful disposal of the forces, v. 13, and an appeal to the highest motives, v. 14. So the first flash of danger is passed.

Now for the actual building of the wall, v. 15—on guard and ready for the conflict, but busy with their hands upon the work, vs. 16-18. By long hours, v. 21, and sleepless vigilance, v. 23, the work is completed.

These SIX REQUISITES OF SUCCESS in the building of character under the stress of temptation or in the doing of any work for God in the face of opposition, are clearly brought out: Prayer, Vigilance, Prudence in planning, The free play of the highest motives (v. 14), Sturdiness, and Diligence.

## TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. Nehemiah's generalship in the rebuilding of the wall.
2. Hinderers.
3. For God, home, country.

## BLACKBOARD REVIEW

PRAY

WATCH

FIGHT

WORK

## LESSON VIII. PUBLIC READING OF THE SCRIPTURES November 19, 1899

Nehemiah 8 : 1-12. Commit to memory vs. 1-3. Read Nehemiah 8 and Luke 4 : 16-22

1 And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the <sup>1</sup> street that was before the water gate ; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.

2 And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both <sup>2</sup> of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.

3 And he read therein before the <sup>1</sup> street that was before the water gate from <sup>2</sup> the morning until mid-day, <sup>4</sup> before the men and the women, and <sup>5</sup> those that could understand ; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

4 And Ezra the scribe stood upon a <sup>6</sup> pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattith'ah, and She'ma, and Anai'ah, and Uri'jah, and Hilkiah, and Masei'ah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedai'ah, and Mish'rael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbada'na, Zechariah, and Meshul'lam.

5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all people ; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up:

6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with <sup>7</sup> lifting up their hands: And they bowed their heads, and

worshipped the LORD with *their faces* to the ground.

7 Also Jesh'us, and Ba'ni, and Sherebi'ah, Ja'min, Ak'kub, Shabbethai, Hodij'ah, Masei'ah, Kell'ta, Azari'ah, Joz'abad, Ha'nan, Pelai'ah, and the Le'vites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place.

8 <sup>8</sup> So they read in the book in the law of God <sup>9</sup> distinctly, and gave the sense <sup>10</sup> and caused them to understand the reading.

9 And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Le'vites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto <sup>11</sup> them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye <sup>12</sup> sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your <sup>13</sup> strength.

11 So the Le'vites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved.

12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

**Revised Version.**—1 Broad place; <sup>2</sup> Omit of; <sup>3</sup> From early morning; <sup>4</sup> In the presence of; <sup>5</sup> And of those; <sup>6</sup> Margin, tower; <sup>7</sup> The lifting up of; <sup>8</sup> And; <sup>9</sup> Margin, or with an interpretation; <sup>10</sup> So that they understood; <sup>11</sup> Him; <sup>12</sup> Grieved; <sup>13</sup> Margin, or stronghold.

## GOLDEN TEXT

"The ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law." Neh. 8 : 3.

## DAILY READINGS.

M.—Neh. 8 : 1-12. Public reading of the Scriptures.  
T.—Neh. 8 : 13 to 9 : 3. Obeying the law.  
W.—Deut. 11 : 13-21. God's Word to be studied.  
Th.—Psalm 119 : 1-16. Delight in the Word.  
F.—2 Kings 22 : 3-13. The Scriptures believed.  
S.—Jer. 36 : 9-24. The Word rejected.  
S.—Psalm 19 : 7-14. Reward in keeping.

## TIME AND PLACE

Jerusalem; middle or last of September, B.C. 444, a week after the completion of the wall.

## CATECHISM

Q. 80. What is required in the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbour, and all that is his.

## LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—357, 10, vs. 5-9 (Ps.), 119, 118, 117.

## LESSON PLAN

- I. The Law Sought, 1.  
The people eager to hear.
- II. The Law Read, 2-6.  
By Ezra, after worship.
- III. The Law Explained, 7, 8.  
By Ezra and his helpers.
- IV. The Law Applied, 9-12.  
Makes the hearers glad.

## CONNECTING LINKS

In the face of great opposition from Sanballat and his friends the wall of Jerusalem was completed, and the gates set in their places by the 25th Elul (Sept.), B.C. 444, the work having occupied only fifty-two days (6 : 15). The wall finished, Nehemiah gave the charge of the city to his "brother Hanani and Hananiah, the ruler of the palace," organized a guard for defence and arranged for a register of genealogies (7 : 1-5). The time was now ripe for the public instruction of the people in the law of Moses and the renewal of the covenant with Jehovah.

## EXPOSITION

## I. The Law Sought, 1.

V. 1. All the people gathered from the cities where they lived (ch. 7 : 73; Ezra 3 : 1). They went up to Jerusalem to the feast of the New Moon, which was held on the first day of each month (Num. 28 : 11). The New Moon of the seventh month (8 : 2) be-

gan the civil year. It was the New Year's day of the nation, and therefore a fitting day to introduce the law. (For the time, compare 7 : 73 with 8 : 2.) As one man; showing the unity of feeling which had now taken possession of them. The pulses of national life were again beginning to beat. The street;

McNair.

Rev. Ver. "broad place," a broad square within and in front of the water gate, south-east of the Temple. *The water gate*; so-called because the water was carried through it into the city from Gihon (Enrogel), a great fountain in the western slope of the Kedron, the one spring of Jerusalem.

*Ezra, the scribe, or writer.* Ezra was no mere copyist, but an earnest student, who "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra 7: 10). His name occurs here for the first time in the Book of Nehemiah. He may have returned to Babylon after the reforms mentioned in Ezra 9: 10, twelve years before; or, if remaining in Jerusalem, may not, as a student or teacher, have been reckoned on for such practical work as wall-building; hence no mention of his name in connection therewith. It is not to be forgotten that the story is not a complete one, but only of certain incidents. *The book of the law*; probably the first five books of the Old Testament. The word for "law" is the word used for the written law. *Which the Lord had commanded*; from Mount Sinai, and by other communications to Moses, His servant.

## II. The Law Read, 2-8.

V. 2. *Ezra the priest.* Ezra was both priest and scribe (Ezra 7: 1-5, 11). *Both men and women*; the whole adult population. All that could hear with understanding; all who were old enough to understand. (Compare 10: 28.) Children, as well as the older people, came. The Jew, even in his most degenerate days, has never forgotten the command of Deut. 6: 6, 7. *The first day of the seventh month.* See above on v. 1.

V. 3. *Before the street that was before the water gate.* "In each case the preposition seems to mean on the west side; i.e., in front of looking eastward." (*Cumb. Bible.*) *From the morning (the light) until mid-day*; about six or seven hours. As explained further on, Ezra had others standing by to relieve him, and there was exposition also. *Attentive.* God's Spirit was stirring in their hearts.

V. 4. *A pulpit of wood.* Rev. Ver. margin, "tower of wood." This is the first mention

of a pulpit or reading desk. It had been erected in the street specially for the occasion. The rostrum, built of stone and used by speakers, was a familiar feature of the Forum at Rome. *Beside him stood Mattithiah, etc.* Thirteen names are mentioned; six on the right and seven on the left. They were probably not priests but laymen and Levites. (*Cumb. Bible.*) The name of the high priest is not given. Ezra was now, for the first time, publishing to the people laws which had been kept in the priests' hands.

V. 5. *Ezra opened the book*; i.e., unrolled the roll. (Compare Luke 4: 17.) The Hebrew book of that time was a parchment roll. *All the people stood up*; showing their reverence for God and His law and their eagerness to hear. The people still stand in the Jewish synagogue during the reading of "the Law."

V. 6. *Ezra blessed the Lord*; leading the people in an opening prayer of adoration and praise. *The great God*; in contrast with false gods, gods merely in name, but with no power.

*All the people answered.* The people responded to the words of Ezra with loud Amens, lifting up their hands to God and falling prostrate on the ground in obeisance; an excellent preparation for the hearing of God's Word. (For the use of the Amen see Deut. 27: 15; 1 Chr. 16: 36; Ps. 41: 13; 106: 48; 1 Cor. 14: 28; Rev. 5: 14; 19: 4.)

## III. The Law Explained, 7-8.

V. 7. *Also Jeshua, etc.*; thirteen Levites, possibly representatives of leading families, and trained by Ezra in the law. Four of them are mentioned in ch. 9: 5 and seven in ch. 10: 9-14. They were stationed at different places among the people.

V. 8. *So they read.* Ezra read portion by portion, and the Levites repeated it to the people, explaining and expounding. *Distinctly*; with clearness and precision, so that all might hear. *And gave the sense*; explained the meaning.

## IV. The Law Applied, 9-12.

V. 9. *The Tirshatha*: the Persian title for a provincial Governor. (Neh. 7: 85.)

*This day is holy unto the Lord*: "Both as a

New Moon day and as the day on which the law was read." (*H. E. Ryle*). *Mourn not nor weep*: Like King Josiah (1 Kings 22:11) the people, when they heard the law, were overpowered with fear and shame because they had violated it in so many ways. Mourning and weeping ought now to give place to repentance and fresh consecration to God, which would make them glad.

V. 10. *Then he said*; perhaps Nehemiah, as governor, but more probably Ezra, as the leader of the present great religious movement. *Eat the fat and drink the sweet*; a proverbial expression for taking things joyously. *Send portions*. It was a custom to interchange "portions" on festal occasions to mark good fellowship. Nor were the poor forgotten. (*Esth. 9:19, 22.*) For

*whom nothing is prepared*; the needy and the stranger.

*The joy of the Lord is your strength*, Rev. Ver. margin "stronghold." Joy in God is like a fortress. It is a safe refuge from the attacks of foes, and it breeds the confidence which makes strong to go out against enemies.

V. 12. *All the people went their way*; from hearing the law to holding feast and fellowship, glad that once more they knew Jehovah's will and willing to obey it. *To make great mirth*. The feasts of Israel were times of great social enjoyment as well as worship. They embodied the idea that religion should be glad, not sad, and that all who love God should love their brethren also. (*1 John 4:21.*)

#### ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

*All the people gathered themselves together*, v. 1. It was a great gathering on a great occasion. Seldom, if ever, in the history of any nation has there been witnessed a more imposing scene. The wall of Jerusalem had been rebuilt. The people felt a sense of freedom from the toil and anxiety which had constantly attended the undertaking. They now assembled for the express purpose of considering the way back to God and to His worship and rule, as these had been known amongst their fathers, but which the captivity had broken up. It is a pathetic sight to behold a nation seeking after God. It is a hopeful sign too, for they that seek shall find. *The broad place that was before the water gate* (Rev. Ver.); a capital meeting place for a great crowd. There was plenty of room and it was near the Temple. The pulpit was extemporized for the occasion. We are to reverence the house of God, but no house or place is essential to worship or religious instruction. No particular place, not even the holy Temple which Christ called "My Father's house" has intrinsic virtue. That same Christ prayed and taught on mountain tops and spoke parables from a fishing boat.

*The congregation*, v. 2. It was an ideal congregation in several respects. (1) In respect of its composition; men, women and

children. Too many men just now have easy consciences in regard to church going, and the children are often sadly absent. These are weak points to which the Church, the home and the Sabbath School should give earnest heed. (2) In the spirit which pervaded it. All were expectant, "attentive unto the book of the law" (v. 3). They wished to be instructed, not simply to be entertained or amused. In such a spirit the worshipper is sure to get what he seeks. Such worshippers are neither frivolous nor over critical. (3) It was a model congregation, further, inasmuch as all listened reverently and patiently. The reading and exposition went on for six or seven hours and there was no diminution of interest. There was the same profound desire for the truth of God that kept our fathers quiet and eager under the two or three hour sermons of their day.

*Ezra opened the book*, v. 5. The text-book was the book of the Law. This was really a Bible reading. Ezra, the leading speaker, was a great man, a Jewish scribe of the tribe of Levi, and a descendant of Aaron. According to Jewish tradition Ezra was the originator of the synagogue worship, and the collector of the books of the Old Testament, which he edited and revised. He was famed for his knowledge in the Law, and his great zeal for its observance. And on this historic

occasion he was ably supported. Men of influence, both Levites and others, stood by him and aided in the details of teaching. Even Ezra, great as he was, must have his helpers. The wise minister gives much attention to gathering about him elders, managers, teachers, missionary workers, young people, and training them for and by actual service. It is good strategy for leaders thus to multiply themselves, for the strongest commander counts only as a unit, not as a host, when he has no army.

*And all the people answered, Amen, Amen,* v. 6; a regular custom, as the passages given under v. 5 in the Exposition show. It is a custom that recognizes the place of the people. Worship is not an act in which priest or minister is to engage, the people being ignored. Every child of God has equal access to the throne of the heavenly grace, and each is bound under God's law, to join with his brethren in worship. To join audibly in song, and in prayer, so far, at least, as to give the responsive "Amen," is quite according to Scripture, if it be thought well for edification.

*So they read in the book,* v. 8. It was a model Bible Reading.

(1) The reading was distinct. Every minister of the Gospel should give a great deal of attention to the reading of the Scriptures in the pulpit. Every word should be pronounced in such a manner as to be heard clearly and distinctly by the congregation. Slovenliness here is inexcusable. Not to read well is to fall short in a great opportunity. (2) The sense was clearly brought out, unfamiliar words and truths were explained. (3) They "caused the people to understand the reading." No mere philosophical or rhetorical discourse this, but a sincere effort to give the people the truth in the setting in which God has revealed it. This is the sort of preaching that enriches the preacher and makes intelligent and strong hearers; and what is true of the minister and his congregation is true of the

teacher and his class. Any other kind of teaching of the Scriptures than that which seeks to let God speak through them is an impertinence.

*"The people wept,"* v. 9. It is a sign of good preaching or teaching when it brings conviction home to the hearts of the hearers and leads them to see their own unworthiness in the light of eternal truth. "In the new light of the higher truth we suddenly discover that the robe of righteousness in which we have been parading is but filthy rags."

*Go your way,* v. 10. Two directions were given to the conscience-smitten people: Be glad; and be helpful; and herein is a large part of religion. Be so true to the pure and holy God that conscience will have nothing of which to accuse, and seek out of your abundance to enrich the lives of your fellows.

*The joy of the Lord is your strength.* "Holy mourning prepares the way for spiritual mirth." "The joy of the Lord" is not a worldly joy, but the joy that arises from a deep sense of reconciliation, acceptance, adoption, and a saving personal union with Christ. It is a joy that makes strong for service. "I never knew," says Mr. Moody, "a case where God used a discouraged man or woman to accomplish any great thing for Him. Let a minister go into the pulpit in a discouraged state of mind and it becomes contagious. It will soon reach the pews, and the whole church will be discouraged. So with a Sabbath School teacher. I never knew a worker of any kind who was full of discouragement and who met with great success in the Lord's work. It seems as if God cannot make large use of such men. It is well known that soldiers march best to music, and sailors work most happily when singing a cheery song. Joyous Christians are certain to set sinners' mouths watering for the dainties of religion. If Christians were happier and more cheerful, sinners would be far more ready to believe."

#### TEACHING HINTS

Peloubet's treatment is capital. We follow the main headings of it, with some modifications.

The lesson describes

A GREAT MEETING FOR BIBLE STUDY.

I. *The occasion of the meeting.* The wall

was finished and various other preparatory matters arranged. (See above, CONNECTING LINKS.) The time has come to deal with the people concerning the things of God. The long captivity and the unrest induced by the opposition of their foes since the return had thrown religious teaching into the background. It is now to be revived.

II. *The assemblage.* Be minute as to time (New Year's Day), place, who were present, the spirit that pervaded them ("as one man"), the express purpose for which they had gathered.

III. *The Text Book.* The Law of Moses, God's own revelation as to their personal relation and duty to Him and as to their national life. Give a rapid analysis of what the books of Moses contain.

IV. *The teaching force.* Ezra, the most distinguished scribe that Israel ever had, filled with zeal for God's law; the thirteen mentioned in v. 4, whose part in the work of the day is not very plain (perhaps they were merely men of influence on the platform with Ezra to give the weight of their presence to the occasion); the thirteen of v. 7, who were the active teachers, under Ezra as chief.

V. *The method of study.* The study was

preceded by worship, in which all audibly joined. It is quite possible that in our eagerness to give as much place as possible to Bible study in the Sabbath School we scrimp the devotional part. The matter is worth looking into and mending, should the need appear. The study consisted (1) Of reading and that distinctly. Good reading is often the best commentary. (2) Giving the sense by exposition and reiteration. That is the best teaching that leaves the Word imbedded in the minds and hearts of the scholars.

VI. *The results.* These may be classified as (1) Penitence and repentance. (Don't fail to explain the distinction. (2) Joy in the Lord, because they had come to know His will and had turned their hearts to obey it, and because they felt the nearness of His presence; (3) Brotherliness, shown in the sending of "portions" to one another; (4) Benevolence, in their remembrance of those in need; (5) A new consecration of themselves to God. (The formal making of the covenant is mentioned in chs. 9:38; 10:1-39); (6) Better living, as manifested in the keeping of the holy feasts, the sustaining of the Temple services, the better observance of the Sabbath, and a purer social life. (See remaining portion of the book of Nehemiah.)

#### TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. A description in your own language of the events of the day.
2. "The joy of the Lord is your strength."
3. The effect of God's Word on national life.

#### BLACKBOARD REVIEW

## GOD'S WORD

Heard with Lowly Heart  
Willing Ear Leads to Joyous Lips  
Open Hand



## LESSON IX.

## WOES OF INTEMPERANCE

November 26, 1899

Proverbs 23: 29-35. Commit to memory vs. 29-32

29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth

like an adder.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35 They have stricken me, shall thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

Revised Version.—1 Complaining; 2 Seek out, 3 Its; 4 Goeth down smoothly; 5 Strange things, 6 Forward; 7 Hurt.

## GOLDEN TEXT

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Prov. 30: 1.

## DAILY READINGS

M.—Prov. 23: 29-35. Woes of Intemperance.

T.—Isa. 5: 8-16. God's judgment.

W.—Isa. 5: 18-25. Anger of the Lord.

Th.—Prov. 20: 1-11. The mocker.

F.—Nahum 1: 1-10. Sudden destruction.

S.—Isa. 24: 1-12. Desolation.

S.—Matt. 24: 42-51. His portion.

## TIME AND PLACE

The lesson is from the Proverbs of King Solomon and is vivid with the increasing luxury of the Jerusalem of his day.

## CATECHISM

Q. 81. What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment forbiddeth all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbour, and all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his.

## INTRODUCTION

The Book of Proverbs sets forth the excellency of wisdom, and of a good and pious life, and, by way of contrast, the folly and sinfulness of the opposite. One of the follies exposed in the book is that of drunkenness, which is treated of in the present lesson.

## EXPOSITION

## I. Wine's Woes, 29, 30.

V. 29. *Who hath woe?* (Hebrew) "Oh!" an interjection; the cry which comes from the drunkard and his home. The root of the word "woe" in Hebrew means to howl as a dog in the night. *Who hath sorrow?* Hebrew, "to whom is Alas!" again an interjection; this time denoting want and despair.

*Who hath contentions?* Quarrelling and strife, such as is common amongst those given to drink. *Who hath babbling?* The foolish talk to which tongues loosened by drink are addicted. Rev. Ver., "complaining," the querulous disposition. *Who hath wounds without cause?* Wounds received by accident while intoxicated, or such as are received in brawls, which generally take place without cause or upon slight provocation. *Who hath redness of eyes?* Referring to the bloodshot appearance of the eyes usual to those who are heavy drinkers. The literal translation is: "Whose is the darkling of the eyes?" In Gen. 49: 12, the only other place where the word is used, the redness is regarded favor-

ably, "His eyes shall be red with wine and his teeth white with milk." The word may carry both the good and the bad meaning. "In the first moment of excitement the pupil of the drinker's eye dilates and flashes with a darkling fire; but it is not long before the eye becomes heavy, dim, maudlin." (R. F. Horton.) The drunkard carries his certificate in his face.

V. 30. *They that tarry long at (or over) the wine;* who drink often and till late at night (Is. 5: 11). *They go to seek;* literally, "digging," exploring or searching keenly for, so deep is their desire for it. *Mixed wine;* i.e., spiced wine; much stronger and more intoxicating than ordinary wine. "Mixed wine undoubtedly here signifies spiced, drugged, medicated wine, the intoxicating power of which is increased by the infusion of drugs and spices." (Meunischer in Peloubet's Notes.) Those who begin with *yayin*, the "wine" soon begin to seek and long for *meah*, the "mixed wine" (Prov. 9: 2, 5; Is. 5: 22).

## LESSON PLAN

## I. Wine's Woes, 29, 30.

On those who put themselves in its power.

## II. Wine's Warning, 31, 32.

Its very relish giving notice of danger.

## III. Wine's Ways, 33-35.

Plunging into sin and folly and creating a thirst for more.

## LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—19, 92 (Ps.). 241, 587, 255.

## II. Wine's Warning, 31, 32,

V. 31. *Look not thou*; with a look of delight and growing desire. The sight of wine starts in the drunkard a longing for it. "If it is really pleasant to us we can never tell when the pleasantness melts into a dangerous fascination, when the color and the agreeable tingle which make it pass so easily down the throat have become the lure and the spell of a poisonous reptile." (R. F. Horton.) Safety lies in turning away from it altogether. *When it is red*; literally, when it reddens itself. This reflexive meaning of the verb may suggest the growing influence which wine as it is poured out has on the drunkard who views it. Red wines were very much esteemed in the East. The wine of Lebanon is said to have been of a rich golden color. *When it giveth its color*; literally, when it giveth in the cup its eye. As the flashing eye reveals the spirit within, so a chalice of sparkling wine reveals the spirit of wine. To see it so sparkle is to the wine-bitten to desire it. The "bead" is regarded as an indication of the strength and quality of the liquor. *When it moveth itself aright*; Rev. Ver., "When it goeth down smoothly." This may refer to its smooth flow as it is poured out, or to its pleasant taste in the swallowing. "It describes," says Plumptre, "the pellucid stream flowing pleasantly from the wine-skin or jug into the goblet or throat."

V. 32. *At the last it biteth*. Though it may go down smoothly, it has, after being swallowed, a sharp and biting effect. This biting is felt, not merely in the body, but in the business, the home, the soul. *Like a serpent*. "Like a serpent, it will be brilliant of color and glide with easy motion; and, like a serpent, it will bite." (Peloubet.) Pleasant to look upon as it is, wine leaves its poisonous wounds in the physical and moral life of all who come under its influence. *And stingeth*; pierceth and woundeth deeply. *Like an adder*; one of the most dreaded of desert vipers, whose bite was poisonous and fatal. The "adder" is said to be the *Cerastes* or horned snake, which is exceedingly venomous. It lurks in the sand, coiled up, perhaps,

in a camel's footprint, ready to dart at any passing animal. (Peloubet's Notes.) How singularly similar are the ways and effect of wine and serpents!

## III. Wine's Ways, 33-35.

V. 33. *Thine eyes shall behold strange women*. The Rev. Ver. reads "strange things," giving "strange women" in the margin. It is notorious that strong drink arouses the baser passions. An intoxicated man, too, sees strange sights. Everything is confused before his unsteady vision.

"The rising moon began to glow'r,  
The distant Cumnock hills out-oure.  
To count her horns, wi' a' my power  
I set mysel';  
But whether she had three or four,  
I cou'dna tell."

*Thine heart shall utter*. The heart was regarded by the Hebrews as the seat of thought and imagination. (Compare Matt. 15: 19). *Perverse things*; foolishness, things turned about; also what is contrary to the opinions of others. The drunkard delights in contradiction and controversy, and becomes silly and obstinate in his ways.

V. 34. *Lieth down in the midst of the sea*. Senseless with drink, he will lie down in the sea, mistaking it for his bed. *Lieth upon the top of a mast*; the very acme of insecurity. None but a demented person or a drunkard (and is not a man deep in drink in reality demented?) would choose such a place for sleeping.

V. 35. *They have stricken me*; the language of the intoxicated man who boasts that he was smitten by his fellows but did not feel it. *I was not sick* (Rev. Ver. was not hurt); pained or injured consciously. *They have beaten me*; more severe than the former, the punishment being with fists or a club. *I felt it not*. Liquor has a numbing effect upon the body, so that a man may be badly bruised and not know it.

*When shall I awake?* Impatient of his drowsiness, he calls for more drink, even when but half awake. *I will seek it yet again*. Every little village has its "early birds" (and the towns and cities as well) who cannot even begin the day without going for their drink. The appetite created for

drink is so strong that all the physical and moral evils resulting from its constant use will not prevent the drunkard from continu-

ing in his foolish, sinful course. It is an infatuation that can be overcome with certainty only by the grace of God.

*reason, upper extremities*  
ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

*Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow?* v. 29. Here we are called to look at some of the evil effects of intemperance. It is well that the young should know what these are, that they may be on their guard against the deceptions of the wine cup. Let all plainly see the distress, poverty, misery, calamity, deep sorrow, that are here held up. *Who have to suffer these things? They that tarry long at the wine.* Yes, and their poor wives, and children, and friends, too. "Drinking," says R. F. Horton, in the Expositor's Bible, "is the natural opposite of hard and honest work. When the love of it takes possession of a man he is sure to become a useless and unproductive member of society. A drunken people are in the end an incapable people; their wealth declines, their industries pass over to soberer rivals, their qualities of brain and muscle gradually disappear." *Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling?* How soon people under the influence of strong drink begin to dispute, to quarrel. And what nonsense we hear many a time from drunken people, senseless "babbling," of which, when they are sober, they are ashamed. *Who hath wounds without cause?* A drunken man quarrels and fights for no cause; and, in his fighting, he gets hurt, wounded, when, apart from the drink that is in him, there is no cause for his sufferings. A senseless proceeding, surely, but common as the day. *Who hath redness of eyes?* One of the effects of alcohol on the system is to force the blood to the surface, and cause an overflow to the small surface veins, so that they become congested. Those of the eye are very tender and sensitive, and show the effects sooner than other parts. It is this action of alcohol that produces the glow that seems so pleasant to the drinker, and gives rise to the mistaken idea that strong drink is good to make one warm. This is one of its deceptions; for it forces the blood to the surface, where it comes into contact with the cold air, and becomes chilled, and the body loses thus a

measure of its power of resisting the cold.

*They that go to seek mixed wine,* v. 30; i.e., "spiced wine, that has a stronger taste, and is more intoxicating. At first one is satisfied with mild liquors—wine, beer, cider—containing but little alcohol. After a while the diseased appetite demands something stronger, "mixed" wine in those old days, but to-day whiskey, brandy, and such like fiery fluids. The appetite gets so strong that men will "go to seek" the strongest drinks, and will sacrifice anything to secure them, and gratify their awful cravings. One of our missionaries in Honan tells of a poor Chinaman, a victim of the opium habit, tearing the tiles off the roof of his house to sell for more opium. That is like many a poor drunkard in our fair land, who will sell anything and everything in his home for drink. Oh! what a terrible thing to be a drunkard! What a very sad thing to be a drunkard's wife or children! Do not our hearts ache for them?

*Look not thou upon the wine,* v. 31. Perhaps some are inclined to think, "It is a terrible thing to be a drunkard. Intemperance is a great sin. But to take a little in moderation will never hurt one." But the advice here goes to the root of the matter. It says, "No, you should not take any at all. You should not even look upon it. You must keep as far away from temptation as possible." If one never takes any at all, it is very clear that he will never take too much. If one never drinks any intoxicating liquors, one will never become a drunkard; and that is the only sure way of escape. Those who tamper with it may escape. Only those who let it alone entirely are perfectly safe.

*When it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright* (Rev. Ver., "When it goeth down smoothly") v. 31. These things picture the wine cup in its most attractive form, surrounded with delights. It is gratifying to the taste, it sparkles, it allures the appetite, it looks charming, looks so well

that it seems to say, "Come and drink me." It sparkles with promise of good, something to make one happy. Beware! that is the time of danger, when no danger seems near; and that is the time when most people are tempted to begin drinking. Then, "Look not thou upon the wine." From heredity and other reasons, for some even to "look" is a sore temptation. A young lady, whose father was a drinker, but who herself had never tasted wine, once told the writer that she dare not stay in a room where wine was on the table. Its sparkle set her blood tingling; and she felt a strange power drawing her to it. She did not dare to even "look upon the wine." She knew her danger, that to taste it might be her ruin; and so by being wary escaped.

Bishop Potter says, "Verses 30, 31, indicate four dangerous passes; who does not enter the first will not be waylaid in the fourth, (1) Keeping bad company. (2) Sipping the wine. (3) Drinking to excess. (4) Drunken carousals. Do men rush deliberately with full purpose of heart into such an abyss? I tell you nay. Every human being recoils with involuntary horror and disgust from the contemplation of such a fate." But men are terribly deceived. At first the wine cup, with its pleasant surroundings, is attractive, alluring, enticing, terribly so to some. It is full of promise of good cheer, of gratification, of pleasure; but that is all a delusion.

*At the last it biteth like a serpent, etc., v. 32.* Oh! how fatal! full of all deadly poison. We need to be wise and look to the end. Keep the end in view, and the deceptive allurements of the wine cup will lose their power to deceive us. Surely there are good reasons for the precept here given, to be total abstainers. The serpent cannot bite us. Then, having the desire to save our loved

ones from being bitten and bringing sorrow to themselves and us, we will think it wise to kill the serpent. Is that not reasonable? For as long as this serpent lives, many will be fatally stung. Will we let him live? Shall we not rather destroy him? Shall we not crush his head? The weapon that will deal the fatal blow, if the people will put enough force into the use of it, is prohibition.

*Thine eyes shall behold strange women, v. 33.* Drunkenness does not go alone. It leads to other vices, especially to licentiousness. How those two sins are wedded together in all our cities, and many other places, sapping the moral and physical life of multitudes. The Rev. Ver. reads, "Shall see strange things." In this sense it is true, too, as in delirium tremens, or even in the silly delusions of the ordinary state of drunkenness.

*I will seek it yet again, v. 35.* Oh! the awful thirst, the terrible craving that fairly burns up the poor drunkard, when he begins to get sober. The serpent's bite and the adder's sting are full of woe. And yet, so overpowered is he by his diseased appetite that he will "seek it yet again," to quench that awful thirst, only to have it return with greater force after a little. The writer lately visited a strong man who was just "sobering up." His nerves were all quivering, and his complaint was, "Oh! this awful thirst! this awful thirst!"

Let the Golden Text, which so aptly sums up the teaching of this lesson, be indelibly impressed on all hearts, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." And recognizing that drinking is after all just self-indulgence writ large, let us give good heed to Paul's injunction, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. 5: 18.) True exhilaration is through the Spirit of God.

#### TEACHING HINTS

"I have been to the Louvre again and again," writes a lady spending a season in study in Paris, "and I begin to despair of seeing the wonders that it contains; for I can never get beyond one room, the room that holds the masterpieces. It lays its

spell upon me when I enter it, and I get no further."

This picture of drink and the drunkard is a veritable masterpiece. The conception and the execution, what the writer saw and how he depicts it, are alike strong. It is an

awful delineation of what, alas! is all too familiar.

This very familiarity of the scholars with the evils of drunkenness, as they are to be seen all about, makes it the more necessary to have the method of teaching this lesson well matured.

It is all about WINE, and perhaps it may not be amiss to lead the scholars in a conversation about wine, how it is produced, in what countries it is the common drink, etc.

Then bring them face to face somewhat suddenly with

1. *Wine's Woes*, as described in vs. 29, 30. What an arraignment of the smooth-flowing and enticing beverage! Woe! Sorrow! Contentions! Babbling! Wounds without cause! Redness of eyes! There is scope here for much and profitable conversation on the avalanche of evils which drink bring down on those who indulge in it. Verse 30 goes straight to the point. Over-indulgence in even the milder intoxicants, "tarrying long at the wine," and the feverish thirst after the stronger liquors, "seeking after mixed

wine," are shown to be the culprits that work so much mischief.

2. *Wine's Warnings* come next in order, vs. 31, 32. Do not allow the class to get entangled in the differences between the ordinary version and the Revision in v. 31. The main thought—which each version brings out in its own way—is the allurements of wine, and the injunction is plain and pertinent, "Look not" upon it. To tamper with drink is to trifle with danger. Verse 32, as with a lightning flash, reveals the awful pit, filled with hissing, venomous serpents, to which wine hurries the unwary.

3. *Wine's Ways* are ways that will surely disgust those who fall into them, eyes perverted, heart bewildered (v. 33); danger courted (v. 34); senses benumbed (v. 35). But no! (and the skilful teacher will make much of the sudden turn here), disgusting as its effects are, "I WILL SEEK IT YET AGAIN."

A good foundation has now been laid for the Golden Text, which should be pressed home. They are fools indeed who are deceived by drink.

#### TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class.)

1. The drink evil, its extent in our own land.
2. Why should I be a total abstainer?
3. How best as a nation to cope with the drink traffic.

#### BLACKBOARD REVIEW

THE  
WINE  
CUP

It Saddens  
It Degrades  
It Befools  
It Enslaves  
It Destroys

LOOK  
NOT  
UPON IT

# Primary Department

HELPS FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES, BY MISS JESSIE A. MUNRO, TORONTO

## FOURTH QUARTER

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

LESSON V.—October 29, 1899

PSALMS OF DELIVERANCE, PSALMS 85 and 126

PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: **God daily loadeth us with benefits**

**Golden Text**—They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Ps. 126 : 5.

**To-day's Lesson Thought**—I should be glad in the Lord.

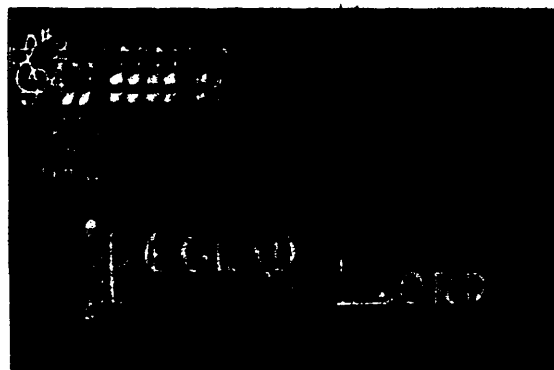
**Connection**—What a lot of happy little faces I see! When you feel very happy what do you do? Sing, or whistle, or shout, or laugh, or clap your hands and dance about? Yes, when we are very happy we show it in some way. The little birds sing in the trees all day long. They are so happy and free. Have you been in the woods sometimes and listened to all the buzzing of the little bees and insects and the chirpings of the birds? How happy everything is! That is the way God wants everything and everybody to be. He gives us so much to make us happy. (So many *benefits*.) Recall the story of all the help he had given to the children of Israel. He

these beautiful songs. (Do you remember the shepherd boy who wrote such beautiful Psalms?) Read the parts of the lesson that are easy to be understood by the children. Let them repeat the words after you. Dwell especially on the words, "The Lord hath done great things for them; the Lord hath done great things for us." This is a song we all should sing.

Did you ever see a farmer sowing the seed? Explain all the time and labor required. But after all the trouble comes the harvest, the time of reaping. How the farmer rejoices now! Then we have Thanksgiving Day for the plentiful harvest and for all God's goodness to us. The children of Israel had their time of trouble and of weeping. God says after all our troubles joy will come. Repeat Golden Text.

**Practical Thoughts**—God is always keeping us from harm. Make use of any special deliverance from danger that may be within the experience of the children.

The thought of bondage to sin and God's power to deliver us—His promise to make us free, if we trust in Jesus Christ—may be brought out. We are free. We have no cruel ruler over us; but a kind, good Queen. We should be glad in the Lord. God wants us



had set them free (delivered them) and let them go to their own dear home. Do you remember the man who went to teach them God's laws? Recall story.

**The Lesson**—The children of Israel felt so glad and thankful that God had delivered them from bondage (Explain)—kept them safe from all enemies, that they sang songs of praise to Him. We are going to read one of

to be glad and joyful and thankful. He has given us so many good things. He sends us so much brightness into our lives. He wants us to enjoy all the good things he sends us. "Let us gather up the sunbeams;" and let us make sunshine around us by our happy smiling faces and our kind, bright words and actions to everybody. The "Benefit" block is "Freedom."

## LESSON VI.—November 5, 1899

## NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER, Neh. 1: 1-11

PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: **God daily loadeth us with benefits**

**Golden Text**—Prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day.—Neh. 1: 11.

**To-day's Lesson Thought**—God always hears prayer.

**Connection**—Teach verses 1 and 4. Hymn 568, Book of Praise. Did you ever try to catch a sunbeam? Once I saw a little kitty playing with the sunbeams. The wind moved the branches and leaves on a tree near the window and that caused the sunbeams to dart about on the floor, just as you have often seen them doing. Kitty ran about trying to catch them. Our blackboard last Sunday said: "Let us gather up the sunbeams." God wants us to be happy and

king (Outline of palace. See **TEACHERS MONTHLY** for October, p. 335.) When we get into the palace we will go into the beautiful room where the king is seated on his throne (Describe). A number of men are about him dressed in gorgeous dresses of silk and velvet trimmed with gold and silver. One of them—a fine looking young man—is handing the king a gold cup of something to drink. The young man's name is Nehemiah. He is "the king's cupbearer." (Explain that the cupbearer was one of the king's most trusted friends. He tasted everything the king was to drink, for fear some wicked person might give the king something that would hurt him.)

Nehemiah belonged to the children of Israel. Sometime before this many of his people had gone back to Jerusalem to build up the city and the Temple (Explain). They had had many enemies and much trouble. One day, as Nehemiah was attending to his duties, he saw some men coming to the palace. They were all dusty and tired from a long journey. He heard them talking about Jerusalem. He spoke to them and found that one of them was his own brother,

thankful and gather up all the brightness and happiness about us and make sunshine and happiness for others. We are to be *sunbeam-gatherers* and *sunshine-makers*. Recall the happiness of the children of Israel and some of the verses of the Psalms of Deliverance ("The Lord hath done great things for them").

**The Lesson**—Do you remember the name of the beautiful queen and of the city where she lived? We are going away over here to Persia again and into the beautiful city of Susban (A square) and into the palace of the

Hanani, whom he had not seen for a long time. Nehemiah asked how the rest of the people were getting along in Jerusalem. Tell the reply (v. 3) and what Nehemiah did (v. 4). The first thing he did was to pray to God. Tell his prayer in simple words. Teach Golden Text. (Explain).

**Practical Thoughts**—God always hears prayer. "Ask and ye shall receive." Tell a story of some answered prayer.

The "Benefit" block is "The Privilege of Prayer."

## LESSON VII.—November 12, 1899

## REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM, Neh. 4 : 7-18

PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER : **God daily loadeth us with benefits**

**Golden Text**—Watch and pray.—Matt. 26 : 41.

**To-day's Lesson Thought**—We should watch and pray.

**Connection**—Talk about prayer. Why do we bow our heads and close our eyes? It is just "talking to God." He hears our *thoughts*, even if we do not speak aloud. We can "lift up our hearts" to Him and He will hear. What was the name of the man who prayed for the children of Israel? Let them tell you about the trouble and about his prayer we heard last Sunday.

**The Lesson**—We are going to hear how God answered Nehemiah's prayer.

Nehemiah felt very sad because of what the men had told him about Jerusalem's walls being broken down and the trouble of the people. The king noticed his pale, sad face and asked him what was the matter. Nehemiah told him, and said he wanted to go to Jerusalem and help them to rebuild the walls. The king said he might go (God put it into the king's heart to do so), and gave him letters to the great men (governors) around about Jerusalem, telling them they must do all they can to help Nehemiah. He went to Jerusalem and told the children of Israel all his plans and cheered their hearts, and they promised to help him to rebuild the walls. (God was answering his prayer now.) We must work as well as pray.

Describe the carrying on of the work—some carrying stones for the building of the walls, some putting the stones in place (Building blocks may be used to illustrate, or

a bit of wall drawn on the board). All were *working* and *watching* and *praying*. Each one helping in his own way.

Tell the lesson story. They prayed to God and set a watch, and God helped them. Teach Golden Text.



**Practical Thoughts**—We all have enemies who will do us harm if they can, who will break down the wall of good character and good resolutions. Satan is always ready to send his messengers (sins) to creep through the walls of our hearts and settle themselves inside if possible. Name some of these enemies who are always waiting to get into our hearts unless we are fighting and watching to keep them out and praying to God to help us. Here is one ugly fellow marching up. He says, "Never mind what mother says; go and play with those bad boys." His name is *Disobedience*. Watch and pray and fight to keep him out of your heart. (Other sins may be illustrated in a similar manner.)

"Benefit" block—"Protection from enemies."



## LESSON VIII.—Nov. 19, 1899

## PUBLIC READING OF THE SCRIPTURES, Neh. 8: 1-12.

PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: **God daily loadeth us with benefits**

**Golden Text**—The ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the Law.—Neh. 8: 3.

**To-day's Lesson Thought**—We should be doers of God's Word.

**Connection**—Speak of some building going on in your neighbourhood. What had the children of Israel been building? Recall last lesson. What enemies should we try to keep out of our hearts?

**The Lesson**—After the walls were built and the enemies shut out Nehemiah wanted to teach the people inside the walls how to be good men and women and boys and girls. Talk about our churches and Bible schools (Sunday Schools), where we meet to hear God's Word read and explained.

Shew a parchment roll (made of brown paper). Shew your own Bible. Talk about the different names by which God's Word is called. Do the children remember Ezra the scribe, who wrote books? He was busy writing, while the people were building the walls, on a parchment roll of sheepskin the law given to Moses by God. There were few books; few people could read. The people knew that Ezra had been busy writing and were anxious to hear what he had written. Describe the scene as given in the lesson. A high pulpit was built and Ezra stood up in it to read the parchment. All the men and women and little children gathered in this great Bible class to hear the Scriptures read and explained. Teach Golden Text. Shew a commandment roll. Repeat Commandments. These were some of the words in the parchment book. Tell the rest of the lesson story.

**Practical Thoughts**—Impress the thought in verse 10, "Send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared." Name some of the good things we may give or send to others. Teach a missionary lesson. We should be doers of God's Word. We cannot be truly happy unless we have God's Word in our hearts. (David said "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart.") If we have God's

Word in our hearts it will shew itself in our lives. We will do the things God wants us to do and people will know that we are little Christians, and we may lead others to Jesus. We should listen gladly and with reverence to God's Word wherever spoken or read.

Our good Queen Victoria was asked why our country is such a grand and good country to live in and had so many great men and women. She held up a copy of this book—God's word—saying, "Because we have this book we are great." Tell of some of the wrongs and cruelties in countries where they do not know our God and have not His Word preached to them.

"Benefit" block—"God's Holy Word."

## LESSON IX.—November 26, 1899

WOES OF INTEMPERANCE, PROV. 23 : 29-35

PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: **God daily loadeth us with benefits**

**Golden Text**—Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.—Prov. 20 : 1.

**To-day's Lesson Thought**—We should never taste strong drink.

**Connection** — Shew your Bible. Recall some of the names by which it is known. What kind of books were used in Bible times. Recall last lesson.

**The Lesson.**—Do you remember the name of the king who wrote the beautiful songs? He had a little boy named Solomon. He was a good boy—obedient, kind, thoughtful. After a while he became king in place of his father David, who had died. The first thing he did was to pray to God to make him a wise,

good king. God answered his prayer and made him the wisest man that ever lived. People came from all over the world to get his advice and help when they were in trouble.

King Solomon must have loved little children and wished them to grow up wise and good men and women (Prov. 20 : 11). He wrote a whole book full of rules for them to follow if they wished to please God. This book is called "The Book of Proverbs." (Write the name of the book and shew the part of the Bible where it is found). Solomon shows us some bright pictures and many very sad ones. (Picture one of the beautiful Proverbs.) "The good woman," Prov. 31 : 10-31. See PRIMARY QUARTERLY.)

Our lesson to-day is one of the very sad pictures. Tell the story of the artist who painted the picture of a beautiful boy with blue eyes and golden curls. Years after that he painted the face of a miserable looking man whom he saw staggering down the street. (Describe him, vs. 29, 33-35.) It was the

blue-eyed boy—now this wretched man because of strong drink. If he had been a cold water boy the artist would never have had this dreadful picture to paint.

Repeat verse 31. Teach Golden Text. ~

Talk about danger signals. These verses are God's danger signals—warnings against strong drink. A stair may be drawn—each step. The little boy stands on the top step safe, if he does not taste strong drink; but bad companions is one step down. Tasting is another; and so on till this wretched man stands at the foot of the stair. (Nothing but God's grace in his heart can save him now. All his youth and manhood wasted, his own life and others' lives spoiled.)

**Practical Thoughts** — I should never taste strong drink.

Choose good companions—

"Somebody asked me to take a drink, What did I tell him, what do you think?  
I told him NO.

"If sinners entice thee, consent thou not," My Bible says, and so on the spot  
I told him NO."

"Benefit" block—"Warnings against sin."

## THE BOOK PAGE

Books for review to be sent to the Editor, TEACHERS MONTHLY, Room 87, Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

The price of PIONEER LIFE IN ZORRA, by Rev. W. A. MacKay, D.D. (William Briggs, Toronto) is \$1.50, not \$1.75, as mentioned through inadvertence in the October TEACHERS MONTHLY. We understand that the book is selling rapidly.

BIBLE CHARACTERS, Ahithophel to Nehemiah, by Rev. Alexander Whyte, D.D., 241 pages, cloth, gilt top, \$1.25. Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto.

No living preacher has sounded the depths of the human heart as has the minister of Free St. George's, Edinburgh. "He knew what was in man"—John testifies of the Divine Teacher of Nazareth, and because He knew, his arrows went straight to the mark and sank deep. Dr. Whyte's chief characteristic is his marvellous insight into human nature, and especially those hidden chambers where a man communes alone with himself—and with the devil or God. When one adds to this a wide sweep of the fields of literature, a vivid imagination, and a command of strong speech, there is a rare combination. Dr. Whyte's "Bible Characters" are real men and women.

"I am not going to whitewash and rehabilitate Ahithophel. I am neither to extenuate nor am I to denounce Ahithophel. I shall put myself back into Ahithophel's place and I shall speak of Ahithophel as I see and feel Ahithophel to have been. I shall do my best to put myself first into Ahithophel's place, and then into David's place, and then I shall tell you exactly and honestly what I see and feel, first as to Ahithophel and then as to David." The twenty-two Bible characters in this volume include such as Mephibosheth, Elijah, Job, Jonah, Isaiah, Belshazzar, Esther. It is indeed a series of mountain-top studies.

OUR LIVING GENERALS. Twelve Biographical Sketches of Distinguished Soldiers. By Arthur Temple (with twelve full page halftone portraits), 198 pages, gilt top, \$1.25. Andrew Melrose, London. (From Copp, Clark Co., Toronto.)

"If a limber's slipped a trace,

'Ook on Bobs;

If a marker's lost 'is place,

Dress by Bobs.

For 'e's eyes all up 'is coat,

An' a bugle in 'is throat,

An' you will not play the goat

'Under Bobs."

So "Tommy Atkins" thinks and speaks of Lord Roberts, "the most popular soldier

in the British army, a little wiry Irishman, as brave as a lion, a born leader of men, and, at the same time, as kind and considerate towards those who serve under him as Irish gentlemen generally are." The sketches of Lord Roberts, Lord Wolseley, the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Donald Martin Stewart, Lord Kitchener, and the rest, are done in a brisk and lively fashion. There is nothing tedious. The pace all through is the "Quick March," and it will make our boys prouder Britons to look into the faces of these "soldiers of the Queen," and to read of their exploits. Perhaps they will take fire, too, from Lord Wolseley's wit and wisdom, when he says:—"Every young soldier who wants to get on should try hard to be killed whenever there is an opportunity."

KIT KENNEDY, COUNTRY BOY, by S. R. Crockett, 384 pages. Paper, 75c., cloth, \$1.25. William Briggs, Toronto. Kit was from Galloway, fresh in Edinburgh, a raw student. He is rushing up the common stairway to his humble lodgings—it is his very first day. A pretty girl, whose home was on one of the landings, steps aside to let him pass. "Now the Galloway code of manners demands a salutation from wayfarer to wayfarer as each crosses each in the tranquil travel of life. So Kit smiled broadly upon the pretty girl. 'It's a fine day!' he said, 'but I wadna wunner gin it cam' on a wee saft!' A faint smile flickered on the girl's face. She finished buttoning her glove with as much care as if that were her only object in life. She did not reply, and as soon as Kit had passed she began to descend. 'That's curious,' said Kit to himself; 'she never answered me!' He thought the matter over in his mind. It troubled him not a little. 'Maybe the puir lassie's deaf!' he concluded within himself."

This is in Crockett's characteristic style. Kit is the brilliant, eager country boy, fighting his way to high honors in school and University, his heaviest weight an inheritance of weakness and wilfulness, and of shame, too, from a brilliant but scapegrace father, who deserted his young wife before Kit was born. "The Taking of the Buik," is one of the strongest bits in a strong book, the old Covenanting Elder "keeping warship," with the sheriff's officer in the house. The "Orra Man," too, Kit's wayward father, who re-appears as a tramp and manages in devious ways and in stolen hours to coach the unsuspecting boy in his classics for a bursary, is well drawn. But Mary Bisset, the pretty Edinburgh infant-school mistress, who, from love of Kit and from inborn righteousness, fights him into a solid manhood, is the most charming of all. The book will be read right through.

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*The Christian Advocate*, Nashville, Tenn., says:

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