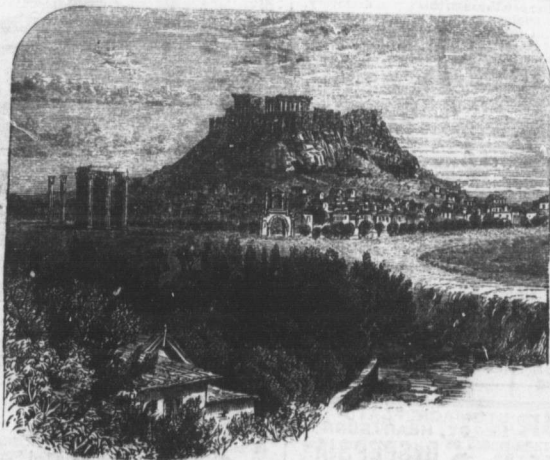


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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol 37

JANUARY, 1903

No. 1

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This Year.

BY HELEN F. BOYDEN.

What will it bring,
The year just dawning to our view?
Will roses strew our path, or rue?
And will the days be false or true?

What will it bring?
The days stretch far away; we mean
To crowd so much—so much—between,
Living in hope the time unseen.

What will it bring?
Only neglect, and then regret,
Hearts full of pain, and eyelids wet,
Or happy days, and happier yet?

What shall we give?
Hands are outstretched on every side,
And many are the wants, and wide;
What can we throw into the tide?

What shall we give?
Such little things fill up our thought,
And awkwardly our hands have wrought
What seems thereafter to be naught.

What shall we give?
No costly gift or fragrant spice;
Some humble token must suffice—
A thing of love, and not of price.

What shall we give?
A breath to fame, a smile to art?
Better! a consecrated heart,
From earth and all its toils apart.

What shall we give
Fit for eternity and time?
A life where heart and soul make rhyme,
A character for God sublime.

A Prayer for the New Year.

Thy will to do, thy work to make
More forceful on this fallen earth,
Thy love in some lone heart to leave,
Thy word to give where spirits grieve,
To teach a downcast soul its worth;
Into some fettered life to take
Thy freeing power; for some one's sake
To give of self as thou didst give.—
For such a mission let me live

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Sunday School Banner

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1903.

On the Threshold.

AS we stand on the threshold of the New Year, before we lift the latch and enter in, it is wise to pause and think and pray for guidance and protection. What its issues shall be of joy or sorrow, of weal or woe, no wisest mind can forecast. Let us, therefore, put our hands trustfully in that of our blessed Saviour and Lord, and follow him whithersoever he leadeth, knowing that he will guide the trusting soul into all truth, into full salvation, into everlasting blessedness.

For six months the attention of the Sunday School world, embracing over twenty million teachers and students of the Word of God, will be focused upon the life and labors of St. Paul. St. Paul and Moses, whose characters we have been studying, stand out prominently, as we think, the greatest teachers of the age, and men who more than any others have

moulded the thought and mind of Christendom. We shall in our various periodicals devote special attention to St. Paul, the noblest figure of the Christian centuries. In our connexional monthly two finely illustrated articles, one on "Rome Revisited," the other on "The Footprints of St. Paul," will be of great interest to all Bible students.

For the second six months we shall resume the study of those grand heroes of God, the judges and early kings of Israel. In following their footsteps we shall learn many lessons from that olden life of three thousand years ago that will help the guidance of our lives to-day. It is a liberal education of no ordinary character to follow faithfully these Bible studies, for the teachers as well as the taught will derive untold benefit therefrom.

Arrows from the New Year Bow.

IT is the season for aim-taking, for laying plans, for making resolutions.

At this and that mark people let fly their arrows. The air just now is as full of good purposes as a storm-atmosphere of snowflakes. Diogenes from his tub may look out and laugh at all this, but a good resolution, an arrow sent from the New Year bow at a worthy mark, has its value in spite of the sneer of Diogenes. All action dates back at a purpose. It will make a vast difference in our life and the lives of others because we took up the New Year bow and sent an arrow toward a good mark. Let us aim thoughtfully, in submission of our will to Christ's in a childlike trust. There may be a serious fault when people make their resolutions. There may be the expression of a hasty impulse. The arrow is shot carelessly. Sight your arrow carefully, and taking all strength from Jesus, send it out. We must not despise the hour when we sit down and, in the shadow of the cross, say, "I will."

What are some of the arrows we may well send out, some of the resolutions we may satisfactorily make?

Arrow one.—The Sunday School shall receive our special attention this year. No matter what we did in 1902, we will do more in 1903. No matter what we did not do; mistakes behind us shall not become Alps ahead of us. Let the past go. We will do more this year than ever before. Pull hard, send an arrow at that mark.

Arrow two—As teachers in the Sunday school, we will be there each Sunday. If sick, absence then is unavoidable. We will notify the superintendent as seasonably as possible. If well, rain shall not dissolve our interest in attendance, nor cold freeze it, nor heat melt it. We will be there! there! there! Plant an arrow in that mark; for the "there Sundays" make a class; for the "not there Sundays" ruin it.

Arrow three.—We will go before our classes prepared to teach them. We will not put on an interest in the lesson about the time we put on hat and gloves. We will begin as early in the week as possible to pack the Sunday School bundle. When what an hour of interest there will be when the package is opened in the class, before shining eyes and attentive ears! Out with your bow and send an arrow at that mark.

Arrow four.—We will be much in prayer for our classes. It will make a good atmosphere out of which to send our words to souls. Those words, too, will find a good atmosphere when they get to souls.

Arrow five.—We will make the conversion of our scholars not only a special thing, but the thing supreme. We will begin at once.

Sending these arrows from the New Year bow will make an immeasurable difference in the everlasting history of the souls for whom you care.—S. S. Jour.

Sunday School New Year's Calls.

In fashionable life, calls are sometimes in vogue, and sometimes not. But there is a kind of New Year's calling that it would be well to have always in fashion. A Sunday School worker explains how he spent the first day of the present year; and a suggestion of this kind may help many a teacher who finds it difficult to get time to visit all the scholars of a large class.

"On New Year's Day of this year, the question came to me whether I had not better sacrifice the pleasure of calling on my friends, and take that time and call on my scholars—my class being of bright girls, but still children of such classes as usually attend large mission-schools, averaging in age from 14 to 16 years. Having church as well as occasional social engagements, and also spending an evening or two each week in the preparation of the lesson, I found that I gave

my class very little attention excepting at school, thereby neglecting a very important portion of the work.

"To make these calls on the scholars of my class during the week was next to impossible, as they lived in another portion of the city; and if I would call, it would be but on one member of the class, as the calls, in order to be effective, should not be too brief. As before mentioned, my work being with a mission-school, the greater number of the scholars were compelled to find employment of some kind, and, as a natural consequence, they would be more or less tired, and sometimes very sleepy, which made it quite difficult to entertain them. I made six calls that afternoon, found all my scholars at home and quite pleased that I gave them a call that day, and, I believe, still more pleased at receiving my card. Meeting the parents, as well as the older members of the family who thought they had grown too old to go to Sunday School, it is easy to see what an opportune time it was to sow some seed to the honor and glory of God."

Methodist Magazine and Review For December.

The December number of this Magazine completes its twenty-eighth year and fifty-sixth volume. Among the illustrated articles are: "Dr. Johnson once More," by "Pastor Felix," "Village Life in France," "In Dalecarlia," "Methodism Farthest North," "Pathfinders of Empire," "The Elevator Did It, Evolution of the Sky-Scraper," and "Tennyson the Nature Poet." Other articles are "Earthquakes and Their Causes," "The American Trek to the North-West," and Chancellor Day's tremendous indictment of the liquor traffic. Christmas stories, poems, and pictures give a holiday flavor to this number. The announcement for 1903 is particularly strong in illustrated articles on Canada, its lumber camps, fur trade, fisheries, artists, men of mark, Sydney, Gaspé, Montreal mansions, etc. Serial and short stories, popular science, character studies, Wesley Bicentenary papers, Memories of Mexico, Footprints of St. Paul, Byways of Venice, British House of Commons, and Current Topics and Events.

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A New Leaf.

He came to my desk with a quivering lip—

The lesson was done.

"Dear teacher, I want a new leaf," he said;

"I have spoiled this one."

In place of the leaf so stained and blotted, I gave him a new one, all unspotted—

And into his sad eyes smiled—

"Do better now, my child."

I went to the Throne with a quivering soul—

The old year was done—

"Dear Father, hast Thou a new leaf for me?

I have spoiled this one."

He took the old leaf, stained and blotted, And gave me a new one, all unspotted,

And into my sad heart smiled—

"Do better now, my child."

—C. S. P.

Bible Geography.

BY GEO. MAY POWELL.

BIBLE geography is far more a key to the Bible than is popularly supposed. Most Bible students have an idea they are sufficiently well informed on this subject, when in fact they are not. This can easily be demonstrated in less than five minutes in almost any Sunday School. The pastor, superintendent, and teachers, as well as the scholars, may be included in the experiment. Distance and direction are, of course, the two essential points in geography of the earth surface, therefore the following line of questions substantially covers the subject.

Ask, if you please, the distance and direction from any Sunday School, of, say, a half-score of such points as Boston, New Orleans, San Francisco, London, etc. The answers will probably be fairly prompt and accurate. Follow this by asking the distance and direction, from that school, of Jerusalem, the centre of sacred cartography. In ninety-nine cases in a hundred there will now be a painful pause, followed by some wild and inaccurate guessing. Then, taking Jerusalem as the centre, ask the direction and distance from it to Hebron, the first capital of David; of Samaria, the capital

of the disaffected tribes after their secession from the rule of Solomon's son. The darkness will now be visible in respect to these most important localities; still worse if other important cities, towns, mountains, and streams are called up, likewise the location of the tribal divisions, and later of Roman provinces, of Bible lands.

In the first line of questions, relative to secular geography, it will be seen that those questioned have enough information under that head to read the daily newspaper tolerably intelligently; also, perhaps, in some cases, to study with profit modern, mediæval and ancient history. Such a knowledge of secular geography is considered absolutely essential to profitable study of current events. Without it, in these days, a young man or woman seeking a situation as teacher in a common school would fail to get a certificate making employment in that profession possible. In any case, where one was under an honestly conducted civil-service examination, anything like the ignorance of secular geography that was found as above in sacred geography would subject the applicant to disappointment in securing the desired salaried position, even though it be a humble one.

Geography systematizes and helps to fix in the mind the salient features of these correlated branches of even a common education. The geology, botany, climatology, and other natural sciences relating to different parts of our earth, find in geography an almost absolutely necessary adjunct. Can all this be true of the secular element of our subject, and not be equally true of its sacred element? In either of these secular or sacred fields history and geography are like the two wings of a bird,—cripple either wing, the other is in a measure crippled.

The main point is to make Bible study the means of reaching souls with truth vitally important to them. To illustrate: The writer once had an interesting Bible-class in a large Sunday School. One day a wild storm drove a bevy of street arabs in there for shelter. They were of the kind noted for their skill in making trouble for good citizens and the police, by stealing, breaking windows, etc. What to do with them was a question with both the pastor, who was present, and the superintendent. If they were driven away, they would therefore be extra troublesome outsiders in future. Ragged, wet, filthy, and saucy, they were not attractive subjects to a teacher. I was asked to leave the regular class in hand,

and see what could be done to entertain and benefit these uninvited and uninviting visitors.

I began by asking them the distance and direction from us of a city a few hours away by rail. Some of them had been there, and were proud to be able to answer some questions about that city. This was the entering wedge to some questions and statements on Bible Lands still farther away. The railway, steamship, and donkey rides necessary to go there, and go around when there; to talk about the boys, and the dogs and cats, the birds and the flowers, of that country where Christmas first came. By that time two of these boys were cuddled as close as they could get to each side of their teacher, and three were kneeling in front of him. All those seven faces were earnestly looking into his, and the class was as receptive and as orderly a one as there was in that school. They were then ready for nearly a half-hour of teaching on the spiritual sides of the regular lessons of that day. Some of them became regular scholars in that school.

This is only a type of numerous other actual cases the writer has had in dealing with the "restless class" (that is in almost every school), as he has visited schools in over a score of the United States,—sometimes when the class numbered twenty or thirty small boys.

Any one who has never done so, and who will take the trouble, in even a few minutes of Bible reading, to really understand any geography there may be in the portion read, will be surprised to see how much interest and understanding is thereby added, and how it helps to fix the main facts and ideas of that reading in the mind. Furthermore, with a class, for example, studying the story of Joseph seeking his brethren, try going by map light with the boy from the vale of Hebron, where Jacob lived, to Bethlehem, where his mother was buried,—on past Mt. Moriah and Bethel, with memory of their stories of the sacrifice of Isaac, and his father's vision, which he had, doubtless, heard at home so often. Thence, after his cruel sale at Dothan, go with him in his captiveway along the Mediterranean shore to Egypt. Marching for days in sight of mountains near where his father was waiting for him, and from which swift rescue would come if those at home only knew his situation,—and see if the boys and the girls in that class do not get interested in the lesson through its geography, especially if you have a thoroughly indexed map to aid in instantly finding the places mentioned,

and if, furthermore, it is a relief map, where the hills and the valleys are shown as if looking down on them from a balloon.

Large portions of the International Lessons for 1902 and 1903 relate to the travels of Paul, the "petit Apostle,"—physically smaller than Napoleon, who in turn took comfort in saying he himself was "larger than Alexander the Great." Follow him cartographically over his field as above suggested, and in that vast mission work there will be abundant and vivid verification of the ground we take. With advanced classes it may be well, in a few cases, to further elaborate by weaving in an occasional thread of still more ancient geography and its related history, as well as that more modern than the days of Paul,—the Greek conquests of Alexander, modern Christian missions, and even recent Armenian troubles. In Asia Minor especially these subjects are intimately interwoven, as also the present German battle for railway control of travel and traffic to India and China,—a battle having much to do with religious and reform missions among hundreds of millions of people. Ararat, the monarch mountain of Bible lands, also in this field, would be a fine subject for essays to be read at Bible-study conventions,—only one, in fact, of many subjects good as well for literary and social gatherings of a Sunday School. Thus the importance of the general subject of Bible study will be magnified, not minimized. It will help to remove the "far country" flavor of the Book, and make it more plain that the great love-letter sent down to us from the stars is for each one of us, here and now.

No competent councillor will thoroughly examine this subject without finding that "there is very much land to be possessed" in the realms of Bible geography.

N.B.—Preserve for future reference the excellent map which accompanies this number.

Words for the New Year.

"From glory unto glory!" Be this our joyous song,
As on the King's own highway we bravely march along!
"From glory unto glory!" O word of stirring cheer,
As dawns the solemn brightness of another glad New Year. —Havergal.

A Unique Sunday School.

BY REV. A. C. CREWS.

Probably the most unique Sunday School in Canada is that of the All Peoples' Mission, Winnipeg, which I had the privilege of visiting a few weeks ago. This school consists entirely of foreigners, the majority of whom are unable to speak or read English. It was organized some twelve years ago, in connection with McDougall church, almost entirely through the efforts of a devoted young lady, Miss Dollie McGuire. It soon grew to such proportions that larger and separate quarters had to be secured, and a room was rented on Main Street. Devoted workers have carried on the work of the mission, often amid much discouragement, but with a considerable degree of success.

During the past year or two the mission has been in charge of Rev. Dr. Morrison, who seems to be peculiarly adapted for this work. He not only preaches to the people on Sunday, but visits among them, and conducts a free medical dispensary. The doctor thinks that one of the most serious problems for the North-West to solve is what to do with the foreigners who are pouring into the country in such numbers. He stated that he had never met a train at the C. P. R. depot without seeing some who were coming to this new land to make their home. There are twenty-four different languages spoken in the city of Winnipeg.

Throughout Manitoba and the Territories there are 100,000 Germans, 30,000 French, 30,000 Scandinavians, 30,000 Galicians, 10,000 Doukhobors, beside many others from various countries. Twenty-four thousand foreigners came into the country last year, and this year they have been coming at the rate of 3,000 a month. These people bring not only their own language and customs, but some peculiar ideas about individual liberty, which are not at all in accordance with our idea of good citizenship. When a prohibition contest is on the whiskey sellers manage to secure most of these foreign votes. It is said that seventy-five per cent. of them voted against prohibition. It is felt by the Christians of Manitoba that if something is not done to Christianize these people, they will, before long, become a serious menace to the country.

Dr. Morrison does not believe that very much can be done with the old people, but that there is a hopeful field for missionary work among the children, and is therefore giving special attention to them. Within a radius of half a mile of All Peoples' Mission there are 500 children of foreign families, and 300 of these are enrolled as scholars under the doctor's guidance. Their Sunday School is like no other, and therefore original methods have to be used. In one corner of the building is a class of Russian children, in another a class of Galicians, and in various parts of the room are found classes of Scandinavians, Doukhobors, Syrians, etc. As far as possible each class is being taught in the language of the scholars. Of course it is no easy task to secure qualified teachers for such a school.

To meet this difficulty Dr. Morrison is anxious to obtain testaments, tracts, and books printed in the various languages represented, so that these people may come in contact with the truth through the printed page. He thinks that many of our Epworth Leagues would esteem it a privilege to help in such an enterprise as this. I am sure they would be moved to do something if they could hear his earnest appeal. We cannot do too much for foreign missions, but we certainly ought not to neglect the stranger at our own doors.—Epworth Era.

How Can the Officers Help the Teachers in Class Work?*

G. W. GROTE.

1. By preventing, and refraining from, interruption, so that the time-table may be strictly adhered to; at all events, so as to secure to the teachers the full time set down for teaching. (a) This implies prompt commencement or the elimination of some part of the exercises preceding the teaching. (b) Also placing on the bulletin board each session the exact time for the orchestra to com-

* At a meeting in the interest of the Sunday School, held in the Metropolitan Church, Mr. Grote read this paper with verbal comments and elucidations.—Ed.

mence "tuning up." This announcement would vary according to the time the teaching actually begins. The orchestra might come in and make ready, all that might be necessary prior to "tuning" and the first bell, having given the five minutes' warning, the teachers would be able to "sum up" and close the lesson to best advantage. (c) The extra "summing up" by the superintendent, though important as a part of the day's work, ought not to encroach upon the teaching time. (d) The day's report having been prepared promptly by each teacher, the proper officer should come round promptly for same, and at same time deliver library books, etc.

2. By the adoption of a general plan of co-operation with the teachers for securing order. (a) This implies not merely a quick eye and a sharp ear on the part of both officers and teachers, but the exercise of spiritual demeanor, tact, and quiet firmness of manner on the part of the superintendent or other chief officer, and especially tact, e.g., the refraining from any show of temper or impatience, such as the announcement that "There's some one talking!" or "That whispering has got to stop!" or "Now, I want you all to look this way, please!" (b) In order to avoid all such unseemly announcements, the superintendent should take all proper occasion, or, if need be, make occasion, by calling the school together, say, quarterly, for a social evening in the church parlors—for becoming personally acquainted with the scholars. It would then rest with the superintendent to bring to bear such personality and experience as he may possess, and especially that mild firmness which always wins the heart. That having been accomplished, the superintendent should, so far as possible, avoid drawing the attention of the school to any particular class concerning misconduct. The co-operation of the teachers is indispensable.

3. By proper attention to the classification and arrangement of the scholars from time to time. (a) This implies personal inspection of the classes by the superintendent, assisted by the assistant superintendent. (b) This inspection could be made partly by a mere glance at the class or perhaps a five minute, or three-minute call by the superintendent, but so as not to interrupt the teaching, and partly by the consideration of any suggestion made by any teacher. (c) By this means scholars would be trans-

ferred and promoted somewhat after the plan required in day schools, with this important exception, however, namely, that the "promotion," or transfer, should always have due regard for securing each scholar to his or her class so long as the teacher of that class desires and can show the desirability of such course.

4. By the offering of prizes for competition at examinations, semi-annually, such examinations to be partly oral and partly in writing, and to cover the then last preceding half-year's work.

5. By supplying teachers with cards calling for information as to absentees—so that teachers may be induced to give more prompt attention to the question of regular attendance of scholars.

Good Things For the New Year.

The following list of "Good things to do in 1903" is condensed from suggestions by members of the British Christian Endeavor Council. It is worth reading and worth attempting:

Lift the level of the Sunday School.
Take a real part in the prayer-meeting.
Exhibit the true Christian spirit.
Work for the slaying of the war spirit.
Get a better view of the mountain peaks of scripture.
Foster a strong Christian conscience against social evils and the worldly trend of life.

Get one recruit each for the society and the church.

Study the history of the church in the past, and help to make the history of the church in the future.

Fill the empty seats of the church.
Strengthen temperance sentiment and the civic spirit.

Seek to discover those who ought to be missionaries, and open the way for them to go.

Seek to know, to grow, to glow, and to go.

Make the home brighter.

Go after the young people in the church who have been holding aloof from your work.

Yield so completely to Christ that you will come to be the disciple he would have you be.

Live more in the reverent fear of God, and put away the delights that are costly.

Capture the young men of the cities for Christ and the church.

Book Notices.

"The Drillmaster of Methodism." Principles and Methods for the Class Leader and Pastor. By Chas. L. Goodell, pastor of Hanson Place M. E. Church, Brooklyn, N.Y. New York: Eaton & Mains. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 248. Price, \$1.25.

We are glad to note the revived interest in the class meeting in Methodism, both in the old world and the new. Evidences of this are the class leaders' conventions, the class leaders' column in the church papers, and such a volume as the one under review. The book gives wise counsels concerning the best methods of organizing, recruiting, teaching, training and leading a class. Every class leader will find greatly helpful hints and suggestions in this book. An interesting note describes the visit of Queen Victoria to a class meeting. A Methodist servant at Buckingham Palace received such hostile treatment on account of her attendance at class that the Queen said, "I will go to the meeting myself, and see if it is a fit place for a servant to attend," and to the persecuted Methodist maid Her Majesty said, "Never forget your class meeting; I only wish that other servants would go also."

"Light for Daily Living." By John Maclean, Ph.D. Author of "The Indians of Canada," "Canadian Savage Folk," etc. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, 50 cents net; postpaid, 55 cents.

This is another of Dr. Maclean's "Better Life Series." To those who have been reading his books on the building of character nothing more need be said. This one, like its predecessors, is full of force, vigor, and inspiration—a bit of the marrow of Christian thought in the richest of literary setting. There are sentences that are like flashes of lightning; there are placid descriptions; there are bright nature touches. And everywhere the writer gives evidence that his spirit has been fed with "the finest of the wheat," and satisfied "with the honey out of the rock." Its fifteen chapters are on such topics as, The Other Side of the Stone, The Grace of Forgetfulness, Christ is All, Loving the Unlovely, The Poems of God, The Transformed Talent, etc. One cannot overestimate the value of such books to the young of our church.

"Talks on Favorite Texts and Other Addresses to Children." By Various Writers. Edited by the Rev. Harry Smith, M.A., Editor of "Morning Rays." Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 160. Price, 35 cents.

There is no more important, and few more difficult, tasks than that of preaching to children so as to hold their interest and impress the truth upon their hearts and minds. On account of this very difficulty this duty is often neglected, yet none will better repay the effort. The church of the future is in the schools of to-day. To mould the young thought, and heart, and life by the teachings of the Word of God is a privilege an archangel might covet. In this little book are collected examples of talks to children by masters of the art. They are chiefly Scottish ministers. One of the sweetest of them all is an interpretation of the legend of King Arthur's good sword Excalibur, a symbol of the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. We strongly commend this book.

"Ephraim Swansea." By the Rev. J. W. Keyworth. Author of "Mother Freeman," "The Churchwarden's Daughter," "Shad and Shady," etc. London: Charles H. Kelly. Toronto: William Briggs.

This is a pleasing story of life in the household of a dealer in second-hand books in old London. The story throughout is one of a struggle with scepticism and doubts. The hero, Ephraim Swansea, is a typical representative of his class, the thread-bare, spectacled, old book-lover, living his life among his shelves. In his early days he had been a lay-preacher of Methodism, but had drifted into free thinking, influenced by the reading of atheistical books. He had trained his eldest son up in his own ideas. But his Christian wife had left her faith as a heritage to the younger children. The story of how father and son were led back to the cross is beautifully unfolded.

"The Practice of Immortality." By the Rev. Washington Gladden. Boston: The Pilgrim Press. Toronto: William Briggs.

This little book will be a light and inspiration to any who may have to wrestle

with doubts concerning immortality; it brings also the touch of the Comforter to those whose friends have passed "within the gates." Says the writer, in speaking of the immortality of the soul, "The way to be sure of it is to assume it as one of the fundamental facts, and build your life upon it." The arguments are clear, forceful, and logical. The writer shows how an argument that would convince the senses merely is after all insufficient. And he goes on to show that immortality is the only foundation that makes life rational. The work is such as we might expect from the pen of such a writer.

"The Victory of Mary Christopher." By Harvey Reeves Calkins, B.D., minister of the Grand Road Methodist Episcopal Church, Bombay. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. Toronto: William Briggs.

This is one of a series of "Little Books on Practice," by various Christian writers. It takes up the subject of tithing from every point of view. The book tells the story of Mary Christopher's struggle to yield her tithe, of her victory and her final reward. It will be a help to those seeking light on the tithe question. The book throughout has the splendid missionary ring of a writer who has lived in the heart of missionary enterprise and known its needs.

"The Gentle Art of Making Happy." By Geo. H. Morrison, M.A. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 61. Price, 35 cents.

Mr. Morrison is an accomplished essayist and preacher. He is the master of a fascinating style, vivacious, but not frivolous, sane and sage without being dull.

"Bible Characters." Our Lord's Characters. By Alexander Whyte, D.D. Author of "Bunyan Characters," etc., etc. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 311. Price, 3s. 6d.

Dr. Whyte has won wide reputation by his admirable lectures on Pilgrim's Progress and six volumes of Bible Characters. The same spiritual insight is shown in the studies of the parables of our Lord and the Angels of the Seven Churches. No better evidence can be given of the

perennial interest felt in the world's greatest book than the demand for successive volumes by a "master of assemblies" on these great themes.

"Ways That Win in Church Finance." By Rev. Albert Sydney Gregg. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. New York: Eaton & Mains. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 131. Price, 25 cents. Postpaid, 30 cents.

Out of a large experience the author of this book sets forth some improved methods for conducting this important department of church work. He shows that the pastor is not a pauper, urges self-help in debt-paying, enlisting the multitude, the benefits of beneficence, gives wise hints concerning church entertainments, shows what women can do. Preachers and church officials should read this book.

"John Ruskin." The Voice of the New Age. By J. S. Montgomery. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. New York: Eaton & Mains. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 53. Price, 35 cents net.

The true purpose of John Ruskin's message to his age is more and more being recognized. The author of this dainty booklet has made a study of the great teacher, and interprets the moral significance of his religious and economic doctrines.

Teacher-Training.

BY JAMES EDMUNDS.

The need with which I am especially concerned at this time is that for trained teachers. Strange, indeed, it is that in an age when men demand trained lawyers, trained doctors, trained public school teachers, trained nurses, trained preachers, missionaries, cooks, tailors, laundrymen, barbers, and bootblacks, it should be necessary to argue for trained teachers in our Bible schools; but it is true as strange. The father who will not allow an untrained smith to shoe his horse will readily agree that any one knows enough to teach his child in the Bible school, and the church that insists upon the most thorough training of the missionary who is to labor with the cannibal, and for the clergyman who is to

minister to intelligent and discerning men and women, is quite ready to consign its youth for the development of their highest powers to any person, no matter how untrained and incapable.

Mark you well! Our Bible school teachers are doing more to shape the theological thought and the religious life of the church of to-morrow than all the preachers and theologians taken together! No observing and thoughtful man can doubt this for a moment. And yet we find a host of people more pious than prudent who declare that any one who has a love for the children and is filled with the Spirit is quite sufficiently equipped for this work, reasoning with the same logical nonsense which some of our fathers used to refute the necessity for a trained ministry.

The truth is there is no reason against, there is every reason for, giving our teachers the most thorough training possible. There are difficulties in the way, as always when anything worth while is undertaken; but they are not insuperable. We cannot offer salaries to our teachers, thus encouraging them to the expenditure of much time and money in the securing of a proper training; and when trained, there is but one brief hour in the week in which they can exercise their attainments; but there are other motives than those mercenary to which appeal may be made in the case of the Christian teacher; and the time, short as it is, affords an opportunity not to be despised; its very brevity, moreover, emphasizing the necessity for training that it may be most fully utilized.

LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS—FIRST QUARTER.

Studies in the Book of the Acts.

- Lesson 1.** Jan. 4.—PAUL AND SILAS AT PHILIPPI. Acts 16: 22-34. Study Acts 16: 16-34. *Commit vs.* 29-32. (Read Acts 15: 36—16: 40.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 16: 31. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.
- 2.** Jan. 11.—CHRISTIAN LIVING. Phil. 4: 1-13. *Commit vs.* 6-8. (Read the whole epistle.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Phil. 4: 4. Rejoice in the Lord always.
- 3.** Jan. 18.—PAUL AT THESALONICA AND BERRA. Acts 17: 1-12. Study Acts 17: 1-15. *Commit vs.* 2-4. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Ps. 119: 105. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet.
- 4.** Jan. 25.—PAUL'S COUNSEL TO THE THESALONICAISE. 1 Thess. 5: 14-23. Study vs. 1-23. *Commit vs.* 16-18. (Read the epistle.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Thess. 5: 21. Hold fast that which is good.
- 5.** Feb. 1.—PAUL AT ATHENS. Acts 17: 22-34. Study vs. 13-34. *Commit vs.* 28, 29. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 17: 18. He preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.
- 6.** Feb. 8.—THE CHURCH AT CORINTH FOUNDED. Acts 18: 1-11. Study vs. 1-17. *Commit vs.* 9-11. **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Cor. 3: 11. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- 7.** Feb. 15.—CHRISTIAN SELF-CONTROL. (A Temperance Lesson.) 1 Cor. 8: 4-13. Study the whole chapter. *Commit vs.* 8, 9. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Rom. 14: 19. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace.

- Lesson 8.** Feb. 22.—CHRISTIAN LOVE. 1 Cor. 13. *Commit vs.* 1-3. (Read 1 John 4: 7-21.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Cor. 13: 13. Now abideth faith, hope, charity, but the greatest of these is charity.
- 9.** March 1.—PAUL AND APOLLON. Acts 18: 24—19: 6. Study Acts 18: 18—19: 7. *Commit vs.* 4-6. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Luke 11: 13. If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?
- 10.** March 8.—PAUL AT EPHESUS. Acts 19: 13-20. Study vs. 8-20. *Commit vs.* 18-20. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Acts 19: 17. The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.
- 11.** March 15.—THE RIOT AT EPHESUS. Acts 19: 29-40. Study vs. 21-41. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Ps. 31: 23. The Lord preserveth the faithful.
- 12.** March 22.—PAUL'S MESSAGE TO THE EPHESIANS. Eph. 2: 1-10. Study the whole chapter. *Commit vs.* 4-7. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Eph. 2: 8. By grace are ye saved through faith.
- 13.** March 29.—REVIEW. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Matt. 28: 20. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

ORDER OF SERVICES—FIRST QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psa. 67.)
- SUPR. God be merciful unto us, and bless us;
- SCHOOL. And cause his face to shine upon us.
- SUPR. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.
- SCHOOL. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.
- SUPR. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy;
- SCHOOL. For thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth.
- SUPR. Let the people praise thee, O God;
- SCHOOL. Let all the people praise thee.
- SUPR. Then shall the earth yield her increase;

SCHOOL. And God, even our own God, shall bless us. ALL. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

- III. SINGING.
- IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.
- V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.
- VI. SINGING.

CLOSING SERVICE.

- I. SINGING.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psa. 72: 18, 19.)
- SUPR. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel,
- SCHOOL. Who only doeth wondrous things.
- SUPR. And blessed be his glorious name for ever;
- SCHOOL. And let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.

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International Bible Lessons.

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF ACTS.

LESSON I. Paul and Silas at Philippi.

[Jan. 4.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Acts 16. 31.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 16-21. Read Acts 15. 36 to 16. 40.]

Acts 16. 22-34. [Commit to memory verses 29-32.]

22 And the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely:

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bands were loosed.

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Time.—A. D. 52. **Place.**—The court of justice and the "prison house" of Philippi.

Home Readings.

- M. Paul and Silas at Philippi. Acts 16. 16-24.
 Tu. Paul and Silas at Philippi. Acts 16. 25-40.
 W. The prison opened. Acts 5. 17-32.

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

22 And the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely: 24 who, having received such a charge, cast them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks. 25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them; 26 and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison-house were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened; and everyone's bands were loosed. 27 And the jailer, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors opened, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 and brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. 32 And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his immediately. 34 And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.

Th. Peter delivered. Acts 12. 1-12.

F. The persecution remembered. 1 Thess. 2. 1-12.

S. Life by faith. John 3. 9-17.

S. Way of salvation. 1 Pet. 1. 1-11.

* The American Revision, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 136.

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea-billows roll.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 112.

Jesus, my Lord, to thee I cry,
Unless thou help me I must die.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 128.

Saved to the uttermost: I am the Lord's;
Jesus, my Saviour, salvation affords.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

What motives led the magistrates to their course in this case?

Describe scourging.

Describe the oriental prison.

What was the bearing of the jailer at first toward Paul?

What led him to meditate suicide?

What caused him to change his bearing toward the apostles?

What brought conviction to him?

How did he show the genuineness of his conversion?

What effect did his conversion have upon his household?

What must we do to be saved?

What is saving faith?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Cruelty and Injustice from Men* (verses 22-24).

What was the cause of the arrest of Paul and Silas?

What was the charge made against them?

Did they have a real trial?

What suffering was inflicted upon them?

Where were they placed for the night?

What was done to increase their sufferings?

Who had charge of them?

2. *Help from God* (verses 25, 26).

How did the apostles spend their time in prison?

What gave them comfort in their sufferings?

How were they set free?

3. *A Great Question Answered* (verses 27-34).

Why did the jailer try to kill himself?

Who kept him from it?

How did he come to the apostles?

What question did he ask?

What answer was given?

Would they give the same answer to everyone?

What was done when the jailer believed?

Who besides the jailer joined the church that night?

What shows that there was a real change in the jailer.

Questions for Younger Scholars.

What came upon Paul and Silas?

Why did the masters of the fortune teller hate them?

How were they treated in prison?

Were Paul and Silas troubled?

What did they do at midnight?

Who heard them?

How could they be happy. *They trusted in God.*

What happened then?

Why was the jailer so terrified?

Why did he try to kill himself? *He knew that he would be killed for letting his prisoners go.*

Who called to him?

What question did the jailer ask of Paul and Silas?

What did they tell him to do?

How did he show that he truly believed?

What good came from putting the apostles in jail? *A whole family was converted.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. What did the magistrates do to Paul? *Beat them and cast them into prison.*

2. What happened while Paul and Silas were singing in the prison? *There came a great earthquake.*

3. What was the effect? *All the doors were opened.*

4. What did the keeper of the prison ask Paul? *"What must I do to be saved?"*

5. What did Paul reply? GOLDEN TEXT: *"Believe," etc.*

The Church Catechism.

7. What is God? God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being and attributes.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Light Out of Darkness.

I. AFFLICTION.

1. *Laid many stripes upon them.* v. 23.
Had trial of mockings and scourgings; destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. Heb. 11. 36-38. Were shamefully entreated, as ye know. 1 Thess. 2. 2.

2. *Thrust them into the inner prison.* v. 24.
Others had trial of bonds and imprisonment. Heb. 11. 36.
I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Matt. 25. 43.

3. *Made their feet fast in the stocks.* v. 24.
He putteth my feet in the stocks. Job 33. 11.
Being bound in affliction and iron. Psa. 107. 10.

II. ENDURANCE.

1. *Prayed.* v. 25.
Out of the depths have I cried unto thee. Psa. 130. 1.

Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. James 5. 13.

2. *Sang praises.* v. 25.
Singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Col. 3. 16.

O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness! Psa. 107. 15.

3. *We are all here.* v. 28.

Having done all, to stand. Stand therefore. Eph. 6. 13.

Endured, as seeing Him who is invisible. Heb. 11. 27.

III. JOY.

1. *Foundations shaken; doors opened; bands loosed.* v. 26.

He hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron asunder. Psa. 107. 16.

The opening of the prison to them that are bound. Isa. 61. 1.

2. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* v. 31.

That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3. 16.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Isa. 55. 6.

3. *He rejoiced, believing in God.* v. 34.

Believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

All those that put their trust in thee rejoice. Psa. 5. 11.

He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Psa. 107. 9.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

With the beginning of the new year we resume our studies in the Acts of the Apostles. Last June the arrival of Paul and Silas in Philippi and the conversion of Lydia were brought to our notice. How long Paul remained as Lydia's guest we do not know. Each morning he seems to have gone to the place of prayer by the riverside; he proclaimed the Gospel at every opportunity, and so taught and organized his followers that after his departure the work of spreading the Gospel might be continued with success. In Acts 16. 16-21 (suggested for study as an introduction to this lesson) our attention is called to "a damsel possessed with a spirit of divination," or, in the words of the Revision, "a maid having a spirit, a Python." In this girl there seemed to reside a spirit similar to that which controlled the prophetic priestess at the Delphic cave—who, seated upon a tripod, held her nostrils over a crevice in the rock from which gases ascended, and her prophetic words, spoken under the influence of this vapor, were believed to be inspired by Apollo. Nothing could exceed the general reverence for this oracle at Delphos. This "damsel" in Philippi seems to have been a sort of strolling Delphos, who brought to people's doors at cheap rates the oracular guidance which otherwise they would have had to travel far to receive. She must have been a conspicuous sojourner in the little Roman town. But she was a slave, and the "gain" (profit) of her "soothsaying" (an old English word for wisdom, and especially for supernatural wisdom) went to her "masters." She, doubtless surrounded by admirers, hung on the skirts of Paul's audiences, and the two companies, thus strangely brought into contact, interfered with each other, and doubtless agitated greatly the thoroughfares of Philippi. "THESE MEN ARE THE BONDSERVANTS OF THE MOST HIGH GOD, WHO PROCLAIM UNTO YOU THE WAY OF SALVATION!"—thus the girl "cried out" for many days. The use of the phrase "salvation" in those days, and especially by pagans, presents a problem of deep interest. The phrase was vague, but the terror that gave birth to it was definite; and the pagan world, shrinking from its future, was ready to listen to almost any teacher concerning "the way of salvation." Paul became "sore troubled" by this

screaming Pythoness, and, turning, said to the spirit, "I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." Immediately the spirit left. Such an act in public could not but thrill the city to its heart. The owners of the girl, indignant that "the hope of their gains was gone," dragged Paul and Silas to the "market place," or court, or forum. The accusation against them (verses 20 and 21) was curiously framed. They had drawn out of the slave the source of her master's revenue; but there was no law prohibiting exorcism. If Paul had stolen the slave's cheap jewelry he might have been prosecuted for it, but he had only taken away her demon; so nothing could be done. The complainants, however, formulated a charge that would hold—that Paul and Silas "set forth customs" (that is, religious customs) that are unlawful. And the arrow of this charge was winged by racial prejudice, for they began with the statement that the apostles are "Jews" (who were odious to the Romans), and "do exceedingly trouble our city." This brings us to our lesson proper.

Verses 22, 23. *The multitude rose up together against them.* A few days before this the apostles were in unanimous favor, now they are unanimously attacked. The cause of the change was the suddenly formed conviction that they were proclaiming novel religious opinions and rites. The Roman government had decided to abide by hereditary worship of every sort, and to enforce this policy throughout the empire. Religious novelties were prohibited as tending to insubordination and confusion. "It was this worldly policy rather than definite bigoted hostility," says *Dr. Alexander*, "with which Christianity at first had to struggle in the Roman empire." The usual title of the *magistrates* was "dumviri," but they are here called "prætors," a title they took pride in as being more honorable. *Rent off their clothes* ["rent their garments off them"]. Tore down the apostles' clothing as far as their waists, so that their backs might be naked for the scourging. They *commanded to beat them*. "To beat them with rods." *Laid many stripes upon them.* Three times Paul suffered "stripes above measure" (or moderation), as he tells us in 2 Cor. 11. 23; this is the only recorded instance of the three. The Jewish punishment of whipping was humanely limited to thirty-nine stripes; the Romans had no limit, and the "lictors" were by training rough and brutal. The magistrates ordered imprisonment as a further punishment, possibly with the intention of liberating the apostles in the morning, but meanwhile they charged the jailer to keep them safely, and, as we shall see, he was as brutal as his superiors. All this harshness was contrary to the Roman law, which declared that "The case unheard, none can be condemned."

24. The inner prison. The darkest dungeon, possibly underground. *The stocks.* Two great timbers, with semicircular holes at each edge, and so fixed together as to permit a man's legs to be inserted between them, with no possibility of release except by unscrewing the timbers. The torture of the constrained position caused by the stocks was very great.

25. At ["about"] midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang ["were praying and singing"] praises ["hymns"]. Physical discomfort kept them awake; spiritual comfort made their wakefulness joyful. "The abundant consolations of God," says *Dr. Clarke*, "render any circumstances not only tolerable, but delightful." *The prisoners heard them* ["were listening to them"]. So loud and heartily did they sing. "No higher attainment can humanity gain than the power to suffer for righteousness."

26. *Suddenly there was a great earthquake.* Frequency of earthquakes rather adds to than diminishes their terribleness. *The foundations of the prison* ["prison-house"] *were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed.* Time would be worse than wasted in discussing whether or not this earthquake and its effects were miraculous. They were PROVIDENTIAL, and that means much more. The most ordinary circumstances of our lives are providential (though constantly we forget this); and "the trembling foundations and the loosed manacles were God's symbolical fashion of showing the nature and the effect of the religion these apostles preached."

27. *The keeper of the prison* ["the jailer"] *awaking out of his sleep* ["being roused out of sleep"] *and seeing the prison doors open,* supposed that of course the prisoners had escaped; in which case the penalty to which the prisoners had been exposed would be visited on his head. It is natural to suppose that some of Paul's fellow-prisoners were already, or were soon to be, condemned to death. *He drew out his sword, and would have killed himself* ["was about to kill himself"]. "He chose rather to die by his own hand than by that of others." Suicide was approved of by many of the most thoughtful men of pagan antiquity. The religion of Christ is opposed to suicide and says: "Do thyself no harm."

28. "Paul, by some means, natural or supernatural, knew that the keeper, who was in another part of the prison, was preparing to kill himself, and therefore called out *with a loud*

voice to there, danger

29. search was I Silas, a must I death, combine told by ants of of salva hind it even ou the cry come,"

31. "Christ" and thy religion and imp expelling delivered cea for Christ.

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oice to desist, because all of the prisoners were there, none had fled, and therefore there was no danger incurred by the keeper."—Curry.

29, 30. *He called for a light ["lights"].* To search in every direction for the prisoners, as it was his duty to do. *Came trembling.* "Trembling for fear." *Fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* The terror of immanent death, of official disgrace, and of conscience, combined with a tardy recognition of the truth told by the slave girl—"These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim the way of salvation"—led him to ask this question. Behind it was no such theological information as even our primary scholars possess; but it was the cry of a soul fleeing from "the wrath to come," and ready to accept the truth.

31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ [omit "Christ"], and thou shalt be saved, ["thou"] and thy house.* This must mean, Receive the religion of the Lord Jesus, with all it includes and implies. For proclaiming this religion and expelling a demon he knew these men had been delivered into his custody. They had one panacea for all the ills of the world—acceptance of Christ.

32. *They spake unto him the word of the*

Lord. Expounded the simple doctrines of Christianity. Unintelligent belief is not the way to saving faith. *All that were in his house.* This phrase in verses 31, 32, and 34 demands careful consideration. Taken together, the verses show that the conditions on which the household could be saved were precisely those given to the jailer himself—personal acceptance and personal instruction.

33. *He took them.* Literally, "He took them along with him." *Washed their stripes.* "Washed them from their stripes;" bathed them, and tenderly cared for the flesh wounds which had been made by the scourging. *Was baptized.* And so formally inducted into the Christian Church. From the phrases *all his* and *straightway* we learn that at least one Christian household was promptly begun in Philippi.

34. *When he had brought them ["up"] into his house.* His rooms were probably in the upper part of the building. *Set meat ["food"] before them.* Literally, "set a table before them." (See Psa. 23.) *Rejoiced, believing in God with all his house* ["rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God"]. Assigning as the reason for their joy that they had believed God (see Revised Margin). Genuine belief in God always brings joy.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verses 16-21. Three or four points in these introductory verses should claim our attention:

1. The spirit (of divination) in the maid recognized the genuineness of the spiritual work going on. When Jesus entered upon his mission in the world the demons in men recognized his true character and the beneficence of his labors. Spiritual truth is spiritually discerned, and, however worldly-wise one may be, unless he is spiritually awake he cannot understand God and spiritual life.

2. Her testimony was rejected—on the principle that there can be no fellowship between Christ and the powers of darkness. Jesus forbade the demons to speak his praises. What the maid said was true. These men were "servants of the Most High God," and they were then engaged in showing the people "the way of salvation." But Paul and Silas could not permit her to proclaim this truth. They were planting the kingdom of Christ, and they could not afford to receive aid from the kingdom of Satan. Some in these days have departed very far from the standard set by

Jesus and the apostles. Some not only receive aid from the emissaries of Satan, but seek it. Some people care little or nothing as to how money is obtained, and are concerned only that it get into "the Lord's treasury." Men are taken into the church, or into intimate relations with the flock, for their influence or their money, or some other temporal advantage expected to be reaped from the association, while we utterly disregard their spiritual state and its deleterious effect on others.

3. When her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone they were furious. When you touch a man's purse you touch a tender spot. Preachers are permitted to denounce sin in general without being subject to criticism, especially if they draw their illustrations from occurrences distant in time or place. But when they attack concrete sins of the people who are listening to them they are "out of the job re." To urge the people to abstain from sinfulness is entirely within the limits of the preacher's prerogative, but to denounce particular forms of worldliness prevalent in the community in which he is preaching, or in which members of

his own congregation indulge, subjects him to severe criticism.

4. See how false was the pretext of their attack upon the missionaries. "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city." O yes, "we are the guardians of the peace of our city! We come to warn you against these seditious invaders!" There is not a word about the real cause of their attack, namely, the cutting off of their gains. This, too, is the way of the world, and it has crept into the Church. We live too much by pretense. We wish to do an evil thing and we search heaven and earth for an excuse or reason, other than the real one. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is true, and it demands of all who come under its sway that they be true and put away all dissembling.

22-24. *The abuse of the prisoners.* 1. How easily the rabble is stirred up! In a time of great political excitement some one boldly takes a stand against the popular view; often he is set upon and roughly treated because of his opinion. A crime has been committed; the criminal is in the hands of the officers of the law or securely locked within prison walls, awaiting trial and punishment; but how often under such circumstances has he been the victim of lynch law, and how often have the innocent thus been foully murdered! Let every Sunday school scholar and every student of God's word be superior to this rising up with the multitude.

2. Consider the sufferings of St. Paul. Dean Farrar says: "Such horrors occurred eight times at least in the story of one whose frame was more frail with years of suffering than that of our English missionaries, and in whose life these pangs were but such a drop in the ocean of his endurance that, if the eight occasions on which he underwent these horrible scourgings, this alone has been deemed worthy of even passing commemoration." (See 2 Cor. 11. 23-28.)

3. The severity of this particular penalty. Their garments were rent off of them; many stripes were laid on them with rods in the hands of the brutal Roman lictors; they were cast into the "inner prison" (probably an underground cell located for greater security), and their feet made fast in the stocks. We must think of these men with lacerated and bleeding backs, lying upon the cold, damp ground, stretched in a frame that almost tears their limbs from their bodies, and thus left for the night. And yet they counted it a high honor thus to be permitted to suffer for the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Heroism for the

Gospel's sake has not yet died out in the world. Missionaries and native Christians in the recent "Boxer" troubles in China suffered as heroically as any servant of Christ that ever lived.

25-28. *The midnight song.* 1. Rejoicing in tribulation. The prisoners were physically so uncomfortable that they could not sleep. How could they better employ the midnight hour than in "praying and singing hymns"? Most people complain bitterly if called on to endure trial. One is overtaken by a circumstance which brings with it unusual hardship. Instead of converting his place or surroundings into a house of worship he makes it a place of moaning and complaint. The servants of God should rejoice in tribulation. Madame Guyon, in prison in the Castle of Vincennes, sang the praises of God, and even composed hymns of praise, and those rough old granite walls became to her as walls of polished jasper studded with the most precious gems.

2. "And the prisoners were listening to them." Paul and Silas were probably unaware of the presence of these listeners; they were not singing for the ears of others, they were but giving voice to the praise that was in their hearts and could not be held back. And what a concert was that to those prisoners who had been accustomed to hear only curses and coarse and brutal jests! It was a new revelation to them, and the prisoners who could thus sing must belong to a new order of beings. Are we aware that others are listening to us, whether we sing praises or mutter complaints? In the home, on the street, in the market place, about our work or business or recreation, our words are taken up by eager ears, and the hearers are influenced for good or evil according as we praise God for his goodness or complain of his providence when it causes us inconvenience.

3. The earthquake was the answer to the prayer inherent in this song of praise. They were not asking for an earthquake to break off their chains; indeed, they were not asking for anything. Their bodies were racked with pain, but their hearts were overflowing with joy in God. It was the spirit of prayer in them that was answered, and what was best for them then was given. Whether this earthquake was general in that region and affected a large section we need not stop to inquire. In any event, the circumstances and the effects stamp it as miraculous and the answer to their prayer of faith. The faithful Christian who bears his trials patiently and always keeps his heart open toward heaven and spiritual impressions

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will find his burdens falling off and his bands loosening and himself ready to step forth into that liberty for which he has longed but has not dared to ask.

4. The jailer assured. Suicide was supposed to be the "proper" thing for a Roman officer under such circumstances. Paul sees by the frantic manner of the jailer that he is on the point of performing the fatal deed. He calls out, "Do thyself no harm," in such tones of assurance as to arrest his attention and save him from the rash act. Here again is something new—these prisoners, scourged and tortured, turning to save the life of their persecutor and refusing deliverance when it is already within their grasp! Surely he has not met the like before. "Do thyself no harm," is the voice of Christianity to every son and daughter of Adam. It demands such care of all our powers, whether of body, mind, or spirit, as will avoid everything that would harm them. Christianity condemns suicide along with every other form of murder. When a poor distressed and careworn soul has become weary of the burdens of life, and contemplates suicide as the measure of relief, well is it for him if he can hear the voice of God in the words of his servant Paul in that far-off ancient prison cell, "Do thyself no harm!"

29-34. The conversion of the jailer. 1. "What must I do to be saved?" Doubtless the jailer was inquiring about salvation from sin. There was no longer any reason to fear for the safety of his prisoners or as to his official relation. The prisoners were safe, and he would not be disturbed. He had probably become familiar with the word "salvation" by hearing the oft-repeated cries of the damsel in the streets, "These men . . . proclaim unto you the way of salvation." A crisis had come in his life. A few moments since he had stood face to face with death—death in disgrace. He is saved from it by the assuring word of the very man whom he had persecuted and shamefully mistreated. This man has something which he needs, not only at such a time, but always. And this brings him to the great question. Often and often have men been prompted to seek Christ by crises in their lives, and many have dated their conversion from the day that a calamity fell suddenly upon them or that they were confronted by some unexpected danger. It is well for them if they only seek Christ when such a crisis comes.

2. "Believe on the Lord Jesus." How important was this answer, and how much was involved in it! Here was a poor heathen, prob-

ably a veteran Roman soldier, accustomed to the brutal and brutalizing warfare of that period, who had known nothing of Jesus hitherto. Salvation is to come to him and to his house by believing on the Lord Jesus. The very terms of this offer make it plain that all who will comply with them may obtain salvation. But in connection with this exercise of faith a few points: (a) He must have knowledge of the way. "How can they believe on him whom they have not heard?" But he is not permitted to go without instruction. "They spake the word of the Lord unto him." How many souls perish for the lack of this knowledge! How important it is when a sinner is under conviction that he be instructed by some godly person who knows the Scriptures! (b) No devout seeker after truth can fail in the end to believe on Jesus. As surely as he is actuated by a high and holy purpose, and learns the way of salvation as it is in Jesus, will he be assured of its truth. (c) All who believe on him are transformed into new creatures.

3. "All that were in his house." This expression and its equivalents, thrice repeated in this connection, make a strong argument for family religion. That "he and all his" should be baptized and enter the kingdom of Christ on earth is a fact worth vastly more for its bearing on the importance of religion in the family than for any support it may give to the doctrine of infant baptism. Let all the members of the family be enrolled as members of the church.

4. "Was baptized." However important, or otherwise, we may consider the *mode* of baptism, the fact that this man yielded obedience in accepting the Christian ordinance is of much greater value as a lesson to every convert.

5. "Washed their stripes . . . set meat before them." Here is proof of the genuineness of his conversion. The prisoners had been cruelly beaten, without trial and to satisfy a howling mob. They are thrust into prison to bleed and suffer. But now the jailer has come to himself. His whole nature is transformed. For harshness and cruelty comes kindness and helpful ministrations; for cold indifference, Christian hospitality. Unless the new convert begins to live a better life than has characterized him hitherto we may look upon his profession with suspicion; there is something wrong with his "conversion." Our Lord's rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them," is infallible. Sinners are known by their sins; Christians by their Christliness.

Thoughts for Young People.

THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD.

1. *A Contrast in Conversion.* How infinitely various are God's ways in the work of the conversion of souls and the bringing of sinners to himself! One is never more struck with this than in comparing the two records of conversion which this chapter contains and which befell in the same city—the conversion of Lydia and the conversion of the Philippian jailer. The first, what a quiet work!—the evening dews do not light more gently, more imperceptibly, on the earth than did the doctrine of the Lord light and d'still upon her heart. He that hath the key of David with a touch of the key caused the chambers of her heart to fly open, so that she attended unto the things spoken of by Paul, and almost without an effort, for so it would appear, was born into the kingdom of God. Contrast this with the mighty though brief birth-pang with which the jailer was born into the same kingdom, the earthquake of fear which shook his soul, the agony of terror out of which he cried, "What must I do to be saved?"

2. *The Philosophy of This Contrast.* What is the lesson which we may draw from this comparison and contrast? It is this: Let none of us make rules for conversion, either in our own case or in that of others—how it should come about, and what exactly are the successive stages of the process through which one who is brought to God must pass, so that if any has not passed exactly through these we will not believe that the work has been wrought in him at all. No man is in this matter in all things a pattern to others. God is greater than our rules; he refuses to be shut in by their littleness. There is a boundless, inexhaustible originality in his methods of dealing with souls.

3. *The Practical Teaching of This Contrast.* All which concerns thee—and this does concern thee more than everything besides—is this, namely, that the thing itself shall have been done, and that thou shalt have indeed asked the great question, "What shall I do to be saved?" and that thou shalt have received into thine heart of hearts the all-including answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," and shalt have so received it that out of this there shall be now unfolding itself in thee a life of conformity to the will of God, thou walking in all those good works which he had prepared for thee to walk in (R. C. Trench).

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

PRELIMINARY NOTES.

For six months we are to study the Acts of the Apostles and some of the related epistles. The title of the book should give us the key words for study and teaching. In it we have to do with actions and with men. Hence, our work with the young people should not be difficult, because they love to hear about both of these. Let us study them to get our pupils interested in MEN IN ACTION as they pass before us in our lesson texts.

That we may crystallize our study so that it may be available in the class, and that we may know just about *what* we are to teach and *how* we are to teach it, we shall follow during this quarter a plan the memory word of which will be "Silas," the name of that "faithful brother" who was associated with Paul in several of his missionary tours. Our outline will be

SURROUNDINGS.
INTRODUCTION.
LESSON TEXT.
APPLICATION.
STUDY IN ADVANCE.

See note at the beginning of HINTS for Lesson IV.

SURROUNDINGS.

Time. 52 A. D.

Place. Philippi, a city "which had long been famous by reason of the neighboring gold mines." Explain the meaning of the name.

Persons. Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy are the missionaries referred to in Acts 16. 10.

INTRODUCTION.

Recall to the pupils the fact that on June 15, 1902, we studied about Paul's call to Macedonia. Connect this lesson with the one for that date, and tell the class that we are for some months to study about the result of Paul's obeying that call.

Ask: How many of you ever visited a prison? Why did you go there? When the pupils are interested in prisons and prisoners ask: Did you ever know of a person being put into prison for doing good? Did any of the prisoners whom you visited praise God while they were in prison? Would you not like to study about men who were put into prison for doing good and who praised God there? Then open your Bible to the

LESSON TEXT,

and we will look at some pictures painted therein:

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A Demon-possessed Girl (verses 16-18). Briefly but vividly picture her bringing in gains to her masters because of her supposed power to foretell events. Then ask: How did she get this power? Whom did she follow? What did she cry out? How long did she continue this? How did Paul feel? What did he do? What did he say? What resulted?

Selfish Masters (verses 19-24). Picture their rage and the reason therefor, then ask: What did these men do to Paul and Silas? What did they say about the missionaries? Who assisted these men? What did the magistrate have done? What charge was given to the jailer? What did the latter do with the prisoners?

Singing Prisoners (verses 25, 26). If possible, become familiar with a Roman prison in the olden time and picture Paul and Silas confined in the dark, foul, and loathsome inner prison. Then ask: What did the prisoners do? Why? Who were listening? What took place?

A Frightened Jailer (verses 27-32). What was the jailer doing while his prisoners were singing? What did he see when he awoke? What did he suppose had taken place? What did he attempt to do? Who prevented this? How? When the jailer realized that his prisoners were safe what did he do? What did he ask? What did the missionaries answer?

A Rejoicing Jailer (verses 33, 34). What made the jailer rejoice? How did he show that he really believed?

APPLICATION.

Ask: What is it to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? By much prayer and careful thought the teacher should be prepared to explain in simple language what it is to believe in Christ. Encourage the pupils to ask questions, and when this important truth is understood ask those who really believe to print:

I AM SAVED BECAUSE
I BELIEVE
IN JESUS CHRIST.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Urge everyone in the class to read the entire Epistle to the Philippians at least once during the week.

Review words, "Philippi" and "Jailer."

FOR HINTS ON REVIEW see note at the beginning of Lesson III.

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

Verses 22-24. And this was the place to which they had been called by a vision! Dr. George Matheson, in commenting on the words, "Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship," says: "Jesus constrained them to go! One would think that if ever there was the certain promise of success in a mission it was here. He sent them out on a voyage, and they met such a storm as they had never yet experienced. This has been the way with me. I have sometimes felt myself compelled to act by an influence which seemed above me—constrained to put to sea. The belief that I was constrained gave me confidence, and I was sure of a calm voyage. But the result was outward failure. The calm became a storm, the sea raged, the winds roared, the ships tossed in the midst of the waves, and my enterprise was wrecked. Was, then, my divine command a delusion? Nay; nor yet was my mission a failure. He did send me on that voyage, but he did not send me for *my* purpose. He had one end and I had another. My plan was for calm; his plan was that I should meet the storm. My plan was to gain the harbor of a material rest; his was to teach me that he could overrule the storm and work his purpose through the storm."

"And when they had laid many stripes upon them." In Old Nuremberg is a famous collection of instruments of torture used during the Inquisition. In looking at them one is amazed at the awful revelation of malignity and cruelty which made men so ingenious in inventing racks and wheels and iron devices. And now it is known that most of these produced such a numbing effect that they deflected the very purpose for which they were made, and the Roman scourging such as Paul endured produced the greatest physical suffering.

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God." An old Puritan said: "God's people are like birds; they sing best in cages, they sing best when in the deepest trouble. The deeper the flood was, the higher the ark went up to heaven." So it is with the child of God: the deeper his troubles the nearer to heaven he goes. Troubles are called weights and a weight generally clogs and keeps down to the earth; but there are ways, by the use of the law of mechanics, by which you can make a weight lift you; and so it is possible to make your troubles lift you nearer heaven, instead of making them sink you.—*Spurgeon.*

A Loud Amen. The earthquake was God's answer to prayer, his "Amen" to their faith. Let us accept it as natural or supernatural, or, if we please, as both; for indeed there is little or no difference, except in the regularity and frequency of the one and the infrequency of the other. God is as much present in the law that brings about the daily natural events as he is in the law that brings about the occasional supernatural events. In this earthquake and its results we have a prophecy of what God's answer will be to all the devices of men and devils arrayed against his Son. He will open prison doors, free captives, and send his Gospel forth with increased power from the very place where men sought to imprison and bury it.—*G. F. Pentecost.*

"*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*" Not in Christianity, but on Christ. Mark that word "on." It is not enough to believe in Jesus Christ. Millions of unconverted people believe in Jesus, just as they believe in Wellington as a great soldier. But they do not rest on him for salvation. They do not build their hopes of heaven on him. When a miner looks at the rope that is to lower him into the deep mine he may say, "I have faith in that rope as well made and strong." But when he lays hold of it, and swings down by it into the tremendous chasm, then he is believing on the rope. Then he is trusting himself to the rope. It is not a mere opinion—it is an act. And when a human soul lets go every other reliance and hangs entirely upon the atoning Jesus, that soul believes on Christ.—*T. L. Cuyler.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

Last June, you remember, we went with Paul to Macedonia after his vision of the man praying him to come over there and help them. We were with him in the riverside prayer meeting where Lydia's heart opened to the Lord. We are again with him under very different circumstances, but with the same devoted purpose to bring men and women to Jesus. To one fully possessed with this desire passing events make little difference. The prayer meeting and the prison equally were Paul's opportunity. God's love in the heart toward others is like the sun drawing the grass and flowers out of the ground into life and bloom. It cannot help it; it is its nature.

In the faithful doing of his work Paul had occasion to interfere with the unlawful business of certain men, and consequently they perse-

cuted him. The love of money is the root of evil because it is essentially selfish; it is now, as ever, the greatest hindrance to the Gospel in the world and in individual hearts. The liquor business, gambling, and other dreadful traffics would soon be given up if there were no money in them. Men and women who do what they can to banish these evils must not expect to rest on flowery beds of ease, for the same opinion is held of them as of Paul and Silas—"they exceedingly trouble the city"—and there are plenty who would be glad to shut them up with feet and tongues held fast.

But what a delight it is to go with these men into that inner prison! Stop a moment and see this wonderful thing. Two men, unjustly imprisoned, in pain and bleeding from cruel beating, held fast in stocks that hurt the feet and prevent any motion that might ease their suffering, enduring all this because of their faithful service for the Lord they loved and who had promised to be with them all the days. Yet, not a thought of murmuring or questioning of God's way; not even suffering in silence, but so full of praises that all the prisoners heard their songs of victory. Others have braved danger and borne suffering with a courage we admire, but I never heard of their breaking out in singing for very joy unless they had within themselves the same fountain of everlasting life that these men had.

The victory of faith is greater than the victory of courage or of moral heroism. We are "more than conquerors" through Christ. A few weeks ago from a lonely place in Africa a missionary passed out from earth. Young, full of love for her work, smitten with the fever, she said, "I want to live and labor here a little longer, but if my work is done I shall be with Jesus;" and the next day, it is said, she passed away, "triumphant." Men and women die painlessly and peacefully; but only the victors through Jesus die triumphantly, as only they live through all sorts of tribulation more than conquerors. "The joy of the Lord is your strength;" so strong, it broke the prison bolts for all the prisoners, not alone for Paul and Silas.

How shall we get this joy? A simple sentence covers all. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Believe; not weep, nor pray, nor do something. Begin by believing; true repentance comes after believing; believe now, without waiting for anything you may think necessary. Believe and thou shalt be saved—saved from sin, saved not from tribulation, but in the midst of it, gloriously, trium-

phantly saved according to the measure in which you believe, not in yourself or your works, but in the Almighty Saviour. This is the one gateway to that path which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Study Paul's career in Philippi with relation to its historic connections—the events that hinge upon his faithfulness there.... Study Paul's career geographically, its relations to the rest of Europe, for which it became the starting-point of evangelistic activity.... The variations of the American Revision in the text of our lesson and the connected passages.... Study such phrases as: "a spirit of diviniton" ["Python"]; "soothsaying;" "Most High God;" "way of salvation;" "masters;" "market place;" "rulers" and "magistrates;" "customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans;" "inner prison;" "stocks;" "praises unto God.".... How God helps his people in trial; how God's people act in trouble; how a sinner may be saved.... The spirit of the world contrasted with the spirit of Christianity.... The conversion of Lydia contrasted with the conversion of the jailer. (See THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.)

Library References.

BY REV. S. G. AYRES.

LIVES OF PAUL.—The literature on the life of Paul is very large. It is second only in volume to the lives of our Lord among all biblical biographies. The best are: Farrar, *Life of St. Paul*. (Popular.) Lewin, *Life of St. Paul*. (Archaeological.) Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveler*. (Archaeological.) Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*. (Exegetical and introduction.) Stalker, *Life of St. Paul*. (Best condensed life.) The latest Lives are by Gilbert, Cone, and Foward.

SILAS.—Taylor, *Paul the Missionary*, page 204. Howson, *Paul and His Companions*.

Iverach, *St. Paul*, chaps. vi, ix. Other Lives of Paul.

PHILIPPI AND THE PHILIPPIANS.—Lightfoot, *Philippians*, page 47. Smith, *Dictionary of Classical Geography*. The Bible dictionaries and Lives of St. Paul.

SAINTS IN PRISON.—Bunyan: *Life by J. Brown*. Read also the account of Christian in Doubling Castle in his *Pilgrim's Progress*. Huss: *Gillette's Life of John Huss*. Fox's *Book of Martyrs* contains many accounts of this kind.

Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.



There was in the question of the Philippian jailer a confession of utter need and an appeal for help. He knew himself to be the helpless prisoner of sin, and unable by any human means to escape its power, its presence, and its penalty. Divine intervention had been displayed in the liberation of his recent prisoners, and nothing less could avail to save himself, bound in manacles stronger than those of iron. The crisis hour of his life drew from him a great question, and for it there was a great and all-sufficient answer—"Believe, be saved."

Coloring.—Upper and lower lines, white and blue; P and "sin," yellow filled in purple; other words, yellow.

LESSON II. Christian Living.

[Jan. 11.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Rejoice in the Lord alway. Phil. 4. 4.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read the whole epistle.]

Phil. 4. 1-13.

[Commit to memory verses 6-8.]

1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, now stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

1 Wherefore, my brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, now stand fast in the Lord, my beloved.

* The American Revision, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

2 I beseech Eu-o'di-as, and beseech Syn'tyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clem'ent also, and with other my fellow-laborers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Je'sus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Time and Place.—The Epistle to the Philippians was written by Paul while imprisoned at Rome, between the beginning of A. D. 61 and the close of A. D. 63, ten or eleven years after the founding of the church at Philippi.

Home Readings.

M. Christian Living. Phil. 4. 1-13.

Tu. Without care. Luke 12. 22-31.

W. A shining life. Phil. 2. 12-18.

Th. True walking. Phil. 3. 13-21.

F. Rules for life. Titus 2. 1-15.

S. The upright life. Psa. 37. 27-40.

S. Be ye holy! 1 Pet. 1. 13-25.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 131.

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.

2 I exhort Euodia, and I exhort Syntyche, to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 Yea, I beseech thee also, true yokefellow, help these women, for they labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. 9 The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

10 But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at length ye have revived your thought for me; wherein ye did indeed take thought, but ye lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. 12 I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound: in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. 13 I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 13.

I will sing of my Redeemer,
And his wondrous love to me:
On the cruel cross he suffered,
From the curse to set me free.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 148.

My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in his hands!
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full,—he has riches untold.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

Where was Paul when writing this letter?
To whom was the letter addressed?
For what purpose?
What is meant by "standing fast in the Lord"?

What are Paul's personal references to himself?

In what words does he hold up the Lord's example for imitation?

Whom does he seek to reconcile?

What general exhortation does he give?

What gave Paul power to endure?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Fellowship in Service* (v. 1-3).
What does Paul call his friends at Philippi?
What disagreement did he try to settle?
Whom did he ask to help in the matter?
What does he say of those who had worked with him in the Gospel?

2. *Rejoicing, Praying, Thinking* (v. 4-9).
What duty is mentioned twice in verse 4?
What are proper objects of prayer?
What effect will true prayer have upon the mind?

- What is the peace of God?
What important matter is mentioned in verse 8?

- How may thinking be controlled?
What example was to be followed?
What is duty besides right thinking and feeling?

3. *A Hard Lesson Well Learned* (v. 10-13).
What caused Paul to rejoice? (v. 10.)
Why was he glad to receive the gifts from the Philippians?
What lesson had he learned?
How had he learned it?
What was his confidence in Christ?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

Where was Paul when he wrote to the Philippians? *At Rome.*

Why? *He was a prisoner.*

What did he do? *He preached to all who came to him.*

What else did he do? *He wrote letters to the churches.*

What does he call the church of the Philippians?

What does he bid them do? *"Stand fast in the Lord."*

What good advice does he give them? *He tells them to "rejoice in the Lord alway."*

What does he tell them to think about? (Verse 8.)

What had Paul learned?

What did he say he could do?

Through whom? _____

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. In whom should we rejoice? *"In the Lord alway."*
2. Where is the Lord? *"The Lord is at hand."*
3. How should we make our requests known unto God? *"By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving."*
4. When should we be content? *At all times.*
5. How did the apostle say he could do all things? *"Through Christ which strengtheneth me."*
6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"Rejoice,"* etc.

The Church Catechism.

8. Name the attributes of God. The attributes of God are omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence; wisdom, goodness, freedom; truth, holiness, love.

Psalm 145. 9. The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Christian Graces.

I. CHRISTIAN JOY.

Rejoice in the Lord alway. v. 4.

I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Hab. 3. 18.

Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy.

Luke 6. 23.

II. CHRISTIAN PEACE.

Be careful for nothing; the peace of God shall keep your hearts. v. 6, 7.

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. 1 Pet. 5. 7.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. John 14. 27.

III. CHRISTIAN THOUGHTFULNESS.

Whatever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, think on these. v. 8.

Let the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight. Psal. 19. 14.

As he thinketh in his heart, so is he. Prov. 23. 7.

IV. CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY.

Those things which ye have learned, received, heard, and seen in me, do. v. 9.

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. John 15. 14.

Walk in wisdom toward them that are without. Col. 4. 5.

V. CHRISTIAN CONTENTMENT.

I have learned in whatsoever state, therewith to be content. v. 11.

Godliness with contentment is great gain.

1 Tim. 6. 6.

A good man shall be satisfied from himself. Prov. 14. 14.

VI. CHRISTIAN POWER.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. v. 13.

To them that have no might he increaseth strength. Isa. 40. 29.

And he said, My grace is sufficient for thee. 2 Cor. 12. 9.

Wait on the Lord: and he shall strengthen thine heart. Psa. 27. 14.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Lesson II falls into its place because of geographical rather than of chronological relationship. Its words were written about ten years later than the date of the events described in Lesson I, while Lesson III follows the history of Lesson I closely. Lesson II is taken from one of Paul's most characteristic letters, written during his imprisonment in Rome, whither Epaphroditus had come bearing a generous gift from the Philippians. On his return to Philippi, Epaphroditus took with him this epistle. All along Paul's relations with the Philippians had been unusually warm and tender; during the ten years' interval mentioned above he had twice visited their city; they had contributed to his financial needs on every opportunity; and his epistle to them is "one of the most ardent letters of love ever written." A most careful reading of it from beginning to end is earnestly urged.

Verse 1. *Therefore* refers to the hope described in the closing sentence of the third chapter. *Dearly*, which occurs twice in this verse, is omitted from the Revised Version because there is no equivalent for it in the Greek. The phrase *beloved* is characteristic of Paul. We have elsewhere called attention to Dr. Whedon's computation that it is used twenty-seven times by him of converts and friends. The receipt of the gift from Philippi had very naturally made Paul's heart yearn for closer association with them; they, far more than their gifts, are *longed for*. The phrase *my joy and crown* Paul had already used in addressing the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 2. 19, 20). The Philippians are exhorted to *stand fast in the Lord*, that is, to gain a holy foothold in the struggle of life, to be firmly planted in divine truth. This figure is a favorite one with Paul. To the Corinthians he wrote: "Stand fast in the faith;" to the Galatians: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free;" and to the Thessalonians, as here: "Stand fast in the Lord."

2, 3. The Revision gives "exhort" instead of *beseech*. *Euodias* (which should be "Euodia") and *Syntyeche* are the names of women, Christian leaders; they are exhorted to *be of the same mind*, that is, to harmonize, in the Lord, that is, for the Lord's sake and with the Lord's temper. The implication is that they are at present out of harmony with each other. Nothing about them is known beyond what is hinted in these two verses, but our second glimpse of them raises them in our estimation. Paul says, *They labored with me in the Gospel*, or, as we might

render it, "strove along with me in the good tidings." Troublesome to the church as they were just now, they had done good work, and doubtless had good hearts. From all this we should learn how easy it is for Christian people to stultify their Christianity by temporary lack of grace and even by lack of tact. For *entreat* the Revision gives "beseech," which does not greatly alter the meaning. Another person is now introduced and directly addressed—Paul's *true yokefellow*. Who this was we do not know. Epaphroditus has been suggested, but this does not seem probable. A legend identifies the yokefellow with Paul's wife; but there is absolutely nothing to support that view. An ingenious explanation is that the word "yokefellow," in Greek, *Syzygus*, is a proper name. "I beseech thee, also, Syzygus, for you are truly so called." But the safest assumption is that the letter was addressed to the Church *through the pastor*, who is here personally exhorted to *help those women* to come again into harmony. Who the pastor was at this time we cannot certainly say. Another problem is the identity of *Clement*. There was a Clement who later presided over the church in Rome, but whether or not this was he we cannot know. *With other* should be "the rest of." *The Book of Life* is God's record of the citizens of the heavenly kingdom—those who have been "born from above." It is not necessary to believe that such a book is a physical fact in the heavenly world. The records of citizenship scrupulously kept by both Romans and Jews had familiarized the ancient mind with the idea of enrollment; and these *fellow-laborers* knew for themselves that they were enrolled.

with Paul, and with those to whom Paul wrote, among the Immortals. Let each of us ask himself and his God, "Is my name written there?"

4. The exhortations of our lesson are miscellaneous in character. But the transition here from peace-making to a rejoicing spirit is unusually abrupt, especially when taken in connection with the injunction of verse 5. The Greek word translated *Rejoice* may with equal correctness be translated, "Farewell;" and the abruptness we have spoken of has led some scholars to prefer this reading: "Farewell in the Lord always; again I say, Farewell;" justifying their preference by Paul's evident effort to round up the epistle toward its close. But "Farewell" appears to be even more abrupt than "Rejoice," and "Farewell always" would be a strange exhortation. So that it seems wise to stand by the usual translation. "It is unquestionably the high duty of the Christian to rejoice in the Lord Jesus."

5. Our *moderation* ("forbearance;" "gentleness;" consideration; a disposition to live for others) is to be made evident *unto all men*. "Let your light shine." *The Lord is at hand*. This statement, like "Thou, God, seeest me," becomes a terror or a comfort according to the condition of the soul that hears it. It is often used as a prophecy of the second advent; but it is much more than this. It teaches the constant nearness of the Divine Being—as we might say of a human friend in an adjoining room, "He is not here, but is just at hand." So with the Lord, who, as we are reminded in the next verse, is ready to hear our words, and respond to our requests.

6. *Be careful for nothing*. "In nothing be anxious." Why? Because, as we have just seen, the Lord is at hand. This is the negative expression of what the rest of the verse gives the positive. The word *everything* is impressive. There is not an item in all the experience of a soul that should be unnoticed in communion with God. *Prayer* includes all kinds of worship; *supplication* specifies direct requests; *thanksgiving* should be the constant temper of the Christian. Why we should make *known* our requests *unto God* when God knows all about us is a problem that we need not attempt to solve. He needs no information from us, but we need to give it to him.

7. *The peace of God*. "A sweet tranquility which comes with the knowledge that God is our present, sympathetic, helpful friend." Which *passeth all understanding*. Surpasses all our powers of thought. Keep. "Guard." *Minds*. "Thoughts." *Through* ["in"] *Christ Jesus*.

The Spirit of the Lord is the element in which the Christian lives, and prayer is his "native air" and "vital breath." As by the physical atmosphere our vital organs are kept in health and comfort, so do we *live in Christ*, and this blessed spiritual atmosphere keeps our hearts and minds in health, in the peace of God.

8. *Finally*. As Koheleth, or the preacher, at the end of Ecclesiastes, had said, centuries earlier, "Hear the conclusion of the whole matter." Koheleth's conclusion was that the whole duty of man was to fear God and keep his commandments, in view of the omniscience of the Divine Judge. Paul's conclusion harmonizes with this but is full of a *NEW GOODNESS* (a *Gospel*) which Koheleth did not know. Not fear, but love, is Paul's *motor*. And not *doing* (keeping commandments) first of all, but *being* (*think on these things*) is his code of morals. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Paul is sure our acts will be right, and God's commandments obeyed, if our "hearts and minds" are right. Eight subjects of meditation and bases of activity are enumerated: 1. *True* [genuine]; 2. *honest* ["honorable"; grave; worthy of reverence; full of dignity and majesty]; 3. *just* [upright]; 4. *pure* [as clean in heart as ceremonial purification made a heathen pure in body]; 5. *lovely* [lovable; amiable; endearing; adapted to excite love]; 6. *good report* [literally, sounding well, that is, fair speaking; winsome; gracious]; 7. *virtue* [courage]; 8. *praise* [praiseworthiness. Lightfoot, quoted by M. R. Vincent, gives this turn to the last two clauses: "Whatever value may reside in your old heathen conception of virtue, whatever consideration is due to the praise of men"]. This gives it additional force.

9. This verse which at first glance sounds egotistical makes quite another impression upon us when we take into account Paul's position before the Philippians. He stood for a new spiritual creed and a new code of morals. Nowadays most men agree in the general in their moral and religious standards. If, therefore, a modern religious teacher used such language as this he would be drawing an offensive comparison or contrast between his life and the lives of others who cherished similar ideals. But the contrast implied in this verse is between the new ideals of which Paul was the authoritative exponent and the lower ideals which prevailed among the Philippians' neighbors and in the empire at large.

10-13. *Rejoiced*. "Rejoice." Paul's rejoicings, like all the activities and emotions of his life, are in the Lord. At the last ["at

length"]. After long delays. *Your care of me hath flourished again* ["ye have revived your thought for me"]. This is Paul's formal acknowledgment of the Philippians' liberality. They had helped him whenever they could. Suppose some of the Philippians had said: "But we can't always rejoice, can't always forbear, must be anxious and troubled sometimes," what had Paul to answer? That he had traveled, and was traveling by the same road. *I have learned*, he says, *in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know also how to abound; in everything and in all things have I learned the secret both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want. I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me* (American Revised Version). "We have gone through a good deal of Paul's life. We have seen him in

suffering and in danger, and yet rejoicing in the Lord—as in the dungeon of that very city to whose people he wrote these words (Acts 16, 25). They knew this. And they knew also how he had used forbearance, when shamefully treated at Philippi, though he might have stood on his rights as a Roman citizen. They knew also that he often lacked the comfort and even the necessities of life, for therefore they sent the succor of which he speaks. From his own personal experience he could recommend the road of rejoicing, forbearance, freedom from anxiety, and peace.

"But we must not forget that he spoke as the Lord's messenger. It was not a mere recommendation that he gave, but a command from the Lord. And the Lord Jesus has passed every step of that road which he commands his people to take."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verses 1-3. Perfect unity in the Lord.

1. Note the terms of affection used in the first verse—"beloved," "longed for," "joy," "crown." This is the most affectionate of all the epistles of the great apostle to the Gentiles. Meyer says, "No other is so completely a letter of the heart." The tender regard which the spiritual teacher has for those under his care is human love of the highest and purest type. How precious is such love, without taint of earthly alloy! There is a beautiful and striking figure in his calling them "my crown;" that is, a victor's wreath woven, not of laurel branches, but of redeemed souls brought to Christ by his labors. Many who labor for Christ will have such crowns in the great day of victory. Will you?

2. The two women whose names are here recorded are exhorted to "be of the same mind," and this was the best advice that could be given. In no other way could they do Christian work successfully, and in no other way can Christians succeed now. Bickerings, contentions, and all sorts of disagreements among Christians mar the work and keep back the victory for which we all are striving. Note, too, that their unity was to be "in the Lord," as its sphere. Perhaps if they were not of one mind, one or the other or both were not in the Lord. Let divisions and contentions among Christians be examined with reference to this inquiry, "Are we in the Lord?"

3. It is noteworthy that women (see verse 3) were the first to receive the Gospel in Europe (as Lydia at Philippi) and to aid in its promulgation there. How much of the work of the Church is done in these days by the women. In many communities were it not for their labors

the Church would languish and die. Are their services to the kingdom of Christ on earth fully appreciated?

4. All that we know about certain workers mentioned here is that their "names are in the book of life," and this is about all that is known of many earnest souls who walk beside us and work for God. But what a record it is! It is enough.

4-7. *Perfect peace in the Lord.* 1. "Rejoice . . . Rejoice." His readers must have remembered his scourging and imprisonment in their own city at the time of the conversion of the jailer, and that while he writes he is a prisoner under the sleepless gaze of a Roman sentinel, or, perhaps, his wrist chained to the wrist of a Roman soldier. And yet he says, "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice." And the sphere of this rejoicing is "in the Lord." If they are not thus anchored they are not able to rejoice at all in the true sense of the apostle's exhortation.

2. "Let your forbearance be known unto all men," not in any boastful manner, for this would be utterly foreign to the spirit of such "forbearance." This can be done only by patience under trial, fairness in all our relations to our fellows, and that reasonable and fair consideration of the rights of others which is so rare among men in the struggles and competitions of business.

3. "The Lord is at hand." Whatever may be the meaning attached to this sentence by expositors, some important lessons may be drawn from it: (a) He is "at hand" in the sense that very soon he will come to every individual Chris-

tian to take him home. (b) He is near to help in time of need. (c) That we are in his presence is a motive for forbearance and standing fast in him. (d) So long as we are actuated by the foregoing motives we need have but little interest in the exact time of the second advent.

4. Here is the panacea for all worrying: "In nothing be anxious." It is the "be not anxious" so oft repeated in the Sermon on the Mount (see Matt. 6, 25-34). "In everything." Note here that there is nothing that we cannot take to God in prayer. He is infinitely more patient and considerate of us than we are of one another. Our desires, our plans, our weaknesses, our foibles, our disappointments, whatever comes into our life, we should take to him as freely as we discuss our plans with each other. We make our requests known, not to inform God of our needs, but in compliance with a law of his kingdom expressed by our Saviour: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

5. When we thus fully and frankly bring all our requests and commit all our ways unto him there comes "the peace of God," that is, such peace as he enjoys himself and imparts to his children. And it "passeth all understanding." The unconverted cannot understand the peace of the Christian. John Wesley, crossing the Atlantic with the Moravians before his conversion, could not understand the calm demeanor of those poor German peasants when a storm was tossing the ship wildly and the sea was threatening to engulf all on board. Even the Christian who has enjoyed it long cannot understand it fully. By this peace the "hearts" and "thoughts" of the Christian are converted into a stronghold and guarded just as the walls and other defenses of a fortress guard all that is within.

8, 9. *Right thinking and holy living.* 1. The exhortation to give our thoughts to noble themes is worthy of all attention. It is the remedy for unworthy and ignoble thoughts. Many complain that they cannot prevent the coming of evil thoughts. Perhaps not, but when they come you need not entertain them. It is, however, the vacancy of the mind that opens it to such thoughts. Plow a field in summer and leave it without cultivation. Soon you will have a luxuriant crop of weeds. Here is a fountain that is supplied with water from a muddy stream. But cut off this stream and turn on the waters of a clear, sparkling brook, and your fountain is soon cleansed and is sending out only clear, pure water. The Christian should cut off all the streams of impurity that flow into his

mind, and think on, take account of, the things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. What a transformation would there be in society if the exhortation in this eighth verse were universally followed!

2. Right thinking leads to holy living. No one can think right for any considerable time without doing right; and as certainly as we cherish evil thoughts will they ripen into evil practices. But we have here a concrete illustration as to how to live. Paul was to the Philippians an example in conduct. Elsewhere (1 Cor. 11. 1) he said, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." While our Lord was the only perfect model for our imitation, he has accommodated conditions to our frail nature and given us imperfect models in men whom we know. Indeed, we prefer these because they are nearer to us, seem more real, and are more easily followed. Among those who have served as examples to the flock none have stood higher than this apostle. Let us not forget that the religious teacher influences more by example than by precept.

10-13. *Christian contentment.* 1. The great lesson taught in these verses is contentment with our lot. It would seem that Paul had had about as many hardships as anyone could well have had, and yet he was content. When his wants were abundantly supplied he was not elated; when pressed by hunger and thirst and exposed to all sorts of privations he did not complain. Whether fortune smiled or frowned he stood unmoved. He had learned a "secret" which every Christian must learn in order to be happy in this life, namely, "both to be filled and to be hungry, both to abound and to be in want." And this must apply to every kind of want known to our earthly life, physical, mental, or social.

2. The man of God has great power. In Christ he has added strength. What tremendous power for good is there in one who is anchored in Christ and content with any lot that may come in the providence of God!

Thoughts for Young People.

1. A Christian may enjoy happiness at all times, even when in the midst of trouble. v. 4.
2. A Christian may enjoy a freedom from anxious care, since he can bring all his cares and needs to the Lord. v. 6.
3. A Christian may enjoy peace, deeper than thought can fathom, for he is a child of God, and reconciled with his Father. v. 7.
4. A Christian may enjoy a sense of God's presence with him in all his life. v. 9.

5. A Christian may enjoy the consciousness of God's care, giving him contentment in his condition. v. 11.

6. A Christian may enjoy a consciousness of power, able to endure and to do all in the strength of Christ. v. 13.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

SURROUNDINGS.

Ask: How many read the whole of the Epistle to the Philippians during the past week? How many can turn to it in the Bible? (Have all do so.) Who wrote this epistle? When? Where? Why? (See NOTES.) What other epistles did Paul write? A few minutes may be spent very profitably in familiarizing the pupils with the name of the Pauline letters and their positions in the Bible with reference to one another, so that the pupils can turn to them readily.

INTRODUCTION.

Our lesson text is a most excellent one for developed Christians, and one that contains truths much needed by boys and girls, but one that cannot easily be taught to young people unless the teacher knows just what he intends to teach. A careful study of the text with the requirements of the pupils in mind will yield rich teaching material. All that can be done in these hints is to give some general suggestions, which must be modified according to the needs of the members of the class. Ask: What constitutes a person? Receive all answers given, good and bad, and by patient questioning draw out the truth that we are threefold in our makeup, namely,

BODY.

MIND.

SPIRIT.

Have the pupils write these three words on their pads. Now ask: How does your body become strong and remain so? All kinds of answers will be given. Accept them all and separate the wheat from the chaff. Then have all print:

| | | |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| THE BODY | } | FOOD. |
| IS | | DRINK. |
| MADE STRONG | | EXERCISE. |
| BY | | BATHING. |

Take the mind and treat it in a similar way. When a reasonable number of questions have been asked and answered the results may be summed up somewhat as follows:

| | | |
|--------------|---|-------------|
| THE MIND | } | READING. |
| IS | | STUDYING. |
| STRENGTHENED | | THINKING. |
| BY | | CONVERSING. |
| | | TRAVELING. |

Ask: What would you think of young persons who are very careful to strengthen their physical nature and their mental nature but who neglect their spiritual nature? Use the answers to this question as starting points for showing how important is the spiritual.

Then ask: How many would like to be strong in spirit? Open your Bibles to the

LESSON TEXT.

which tells us several ways of strengthening our spiritual nature:

1. *Rejoice.* What does it mean to rejoice? In whom should we rejoice? When?

2. *Pray.* Question the pupils to ascertain whether they understand what it is to pray. Be ready to show what real prayer is, then ask: For what are we to pray? With what? What will be the result of such prayer? (verse 7.)

3. *Think.* Say to the class: Now take your Bibles and your pads and write a list of what we are to think about. The list will be as follows:

THINGS

TRUE.
HONEST.
JUST.
PURE.
LOVELY.
OF GOOD REPORT.

When this list is completed explain the meaning of the words and the ideas for which they stand and show what thinking on them means.

4. *Do.* What things is the Christian to do? (verse 12.) Have the pupils name some of the things which Paul did and which he told others to do. Ask: What will be the result of this doing?

APPLICATION.

Have the Golden Text repeated by each member of the class. Show how much better it is for one to rejoice than to complain. Picture an old person who is noted as a fault-finder. Impress on the pupils that that one formed the habit of fault-finding when young, and urge them to form the habit of rejoicing now and it will be easy for them to do so when they are old. Have all print:

I WILL ALWAYS
REJOICE
IN THE LORD.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to learn all they can about the synagogues, which were so numerous in Christ's time. See Hurlbut's *Revised Normal Lessons*, Lesson XX.

Review words "Philippi" and "Rejoice."

By Way of Illustration.

Verse 1. What a lover Paul was! And what a love-letter this book of Philippians is! Notice the affection poured out in these lines. That word for "crown" is the word used for the garland which was given to the successful athlete. He says that his brethren are just such a joy and glory to him as is the crown to the athlete who with impressive ceremony is crowned. The true minister of Christ counts as his greatest glory, his garland of reward, the men and women who have been saved from sin to Christ.

Verses 2, 3. "I learned how to reprove wisely from studying Paul's letters," said a successful pastor. "Notice how he mingles praise with reproof. For example, in that fourth chapter of Philippians, he reproves those two women, Euodias and Syntyche, who had openly quarreled, and he says that they labored (and the word means to strive with all one's strength) with him in the Gospel and their names are in the book of life. And so I follow his example and do not forget to speak of the good work done by those who need the word of reproof."

Verse 4. "It is not possible to rejoice always," I hear you say. "Consider the many times when one's heart is breaking." Yes, but it is possible to rejoice in the Lord always. When trials are heaviest and sorrows are multiplied we can rejoice that we have him—we can rejoice that the Christian walks in the light of a sun that never sets.

The book of Philippians has been called "The epistle of Christian joy," and it was written by a man in prison.—*Dr. J. B. Young.*

Verse 7. Paul says, "And the peace of God shall garrison your hearts and minds." He was in the charge of a soldier of the pretorial guard, and naturally fell into a military way of speaking. He thought of the emperor of Rome surrounded by his splendid guard, every man of whom was a trusted and valiant soldier whose life would have paid the penalty for the least lapse of duty, and Paul says that God's peace is such a guard. Neither sneaking worry, nor strong anxiety, nor threatening care can break through such a guard as is God's peace.

Verse 8. What a stately sixfold repetition this is! Guard your thought life. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." The heart is the fountain above which the life cannot rise. "What has helped you most in your Christian life?" was asked at a conference of college men, to which several answered, "The reading of Christian biography." Such reading kindles an admiration and stimulates a desire for the best things of life. When you are reading about good

men and women you are following Paul's injunction here given.

Verse 13. There are two ways of helping one who is weak; one is to divide his burden and carry half, which is what a strong man may do, and the other is what the physician does who by wise medical treatment puts new strength into the man so that he easily and at all times carries his own loads. As the strong man cannot always be by the side of the weaker one, it is far better that the man should have his weakness changed to strength. This last is what Christ does for us. His answer to Paul's prayer that the thorn might be removed was, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

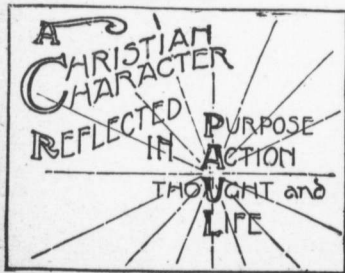
Heart Talks on the Lesson.

This beautiful letter to the Philippians, especially this closing chapter, should be hid in our hearts with the Shepherd Psalm, the Beatitudes, the fourteenth of St. John, and the thirteenth of First Corinthians. If we can live out in daily experience these teachings we have found the elixir of life, the true philosopher's stone. It is the ideal of Christian living, but it is also practical and possible. St. Paul wrote by inspiration, but he also wrote from experience. Experience means "to try out," and he had tried out all that he exhorted others to do. It is the man who sang praises in prison who speaks of the peace of God that passeth understanding, and says, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." It is all so rich I want to talk over every verse with you. Read those dear, familiar words, "Be careful for nothing." May we really be relieved of care? May the wrinkles be smoothed out so that those who look in our faces will feel rested? Yes; the word is for practical people who live in a world where they must eat and drink and be clothed and bear burdens and suffer many sorrows. So it cannot mean that we are to ignore these things, nor that prudent forethought to provide for ourselves or those dependent upon us is unnecessary. But it does mean that because, as Jesus says, our heavenly Father knows we have need of these things we may talk with him about them and get from him wisdom, guidance, comfort, so that the horrid thing we call "worry" may never possess us. "Everything" includes everything; so there is nothing great or small to be left out of our requests. Bring all to God, with thanks, and the promised peace never fails. It promises much. The heart may be at peace because we know God loves and cares for us, but the poor mind at the mercy of sensitive nerves is tossed like a little lake by the wind.

When we tell every thought to God the mind, with the heart, sinks into quietness. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." Like hooting creatures of the night, evil thoughts depart, and things true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtue and praise, fill the mind like morning song birds.

Was it because this man had everything to make him happy and comfortable that he said he wanted nothing, and was content anywhere? No indeed; his calm assurance was quite independent of circumstances. He was persecuted, beaten, naked, hungry, imprisoned, worked for his living, and had no certain dwelling place, yet he was not only not complaining, but triumphantly cheerful and satisfied. Certainly he was different from most people. Why? Because he had learned a heavenly secret. Learned it, mind you. So you and I need not be discouraged if we do not yet know it perfectly, if only we are learning. St. Paul began to learn it that day when with all his heart he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He went on learning in trial, in affliction, in work, in prayer, learning day by day until he could say, "I can, for I know how: I know how to be abased, and how to abound; to be hungry, and to have what I need. I know how to live because I have learned that I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." So we may say, too, "I can. I can be patient; I can be trustful. I can be forgiving; I can be unselfish; I can be helpful; I can be a strong, victorious Christian for His glory who strengtheneth me." And because we have learned just as he learned we can say, confidently as St. Paul said, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Blackboard.



The exhortations and commands of the lesson show reflectively the character of Paul.

The desire he expresses toward his disciples shows what he really was himself—a Christian who adorned the doctrine and exemplified the life of Jesus. From the cheerless cell of a Roman prison, and a chained hand, came this glowing message of consolation and counsel and encouragement to holy and joyous living. Are our lives such that we could say with Paul, "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do?"

Coloring.—"Paul," red and cream; words, cream; rays, yellow; phrase, light blue.

The Teachers' Meeting.

The lesson may be presented under two subjects, both interweaving through all the verses.

1. What the Christian may enjoy. (See THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.) II. What the Christian should be. 1. Forbearing, v. 5; 2. Trustful, v. 6; 3. Prayerful, v. 6; 4. Noble in character, v. 8; 5. Generous, v. 10. . . . Especially note that Paul was himself an example of all that he here urges upon others.

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LESSON III. Paul at Thessaionica and Berea.

[Jan. 18.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet. Psa. 119. 105.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 13, 14.]

Acts 17. 1-12. [Commit to memory verses 2-4.]

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessa-lon-i'ca, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures,

3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again for the dead; and that this Je'sus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Si'las; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Ja'son, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Ja'son and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 Whom Ja'son hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæ'sar, saying that there is another king, one Je'sus.

8 And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Ja'son, and of the other, they let them go.

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Si'las by night unto Be-re'a: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more noble than those in Thessa-lon-i'ca, in that they received the word with

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessa-lonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the scriptures, 3 opening and alleging that it behooved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ. 4 And some of them were persuaded and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. 5 But the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the city on an uproar; and assaulting the house of Jason, they sought to bring them forth to the people. 6 And when they found them not, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7 whom Jason hath received: and these all act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. 8 And they troubled the multitude and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. 9 And when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who when they were come thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, ex-

* The American Revision, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.

Time.—The close of A. D. 52. **Places.**—Thessalonica and Berea.

Home Readings.

M. Paul at Thessalonica and Berea. Acts 17. 1-12.

Tu. Power of the Gospel. 1 Thess. 1.

W. Good tidings. 1 Thess. 3.

Th. Early knowledge of Scripture. 2 Tim. 3. 10-17.

F. Constant study. Deut. 6. 1-9.

S. Searching the Scriptures. John 5. 31-39.

S. God's word studied. Psa. 119. 97-112.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 295.

Father of mercies, in thy word
What endless glory shines!

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 447.

Throw out the Life-Line across the dark
wave,

There is a brother whom someone should
save.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 403.

Master, the tempest is raging!
The billows are tossing high!

Questions for Senior Scholars.

- Give some account of Thessalonica.
Describe its geographical location.
What was the origin of the name?
Locate Berea geographically.
What were the circumstances under which Paul left Philippi?
What was the distance traveled?
Who were his companions?
What were the methods of Paul's missionary ministry?
To whom did he first appeal?
Upon what did he base his argument?
As a rule, what class of cities did Paul prefer to evangelize?
Why did he select such cities?
What effect did Paul's ministry have upon the Jews?
What was the immediate result?
What is the point of contrast between the Bereans and Thessalonians?

aming the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. 12 Many of them therefore believed; also of the Greek women of honorable estate, and of men not a few.

What other examples of faithful Bible study in the New Testament?

What class of women believed?

How far was Berea from Thessalonica?

Are these cities in Europe or Asia?

What part of our Bible was then written?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

- 1. Finding Christ in the Old Testament** (v. 1-4).
To what people in Thessalonica did Paul preach?
In what book did the Jews believe?
What did Paul prove to them?
Were any converted?
From what three classes did the converts come?
- 2. Envious Opposition** (v. 5-9).
How did some Jews feel against Paul?
What did they do?
Who were arrested?
Was anyone punished?
- 3. Noble Use of God's Word** (v. 10-12).
How did Paul and Silas leave Thessalonica?
Where did they go?
What is said of the Berean Jews?
What was the result of Paul's preaching there?
What put a stop to his work there?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

- Where did Paul and Silas go from Philippi?
Where did they first go?
What did Paul do?
What chapter tells of the death of Christ?
The fifty-third of Isaiah.
Did many believe Paul's words?
Who were they?
What did the unbelieving Jews do?
Who were they like? *The priests and Pharisees who persecuted Jews.*
Whose house did they attack?
Whom did they arrest?
What did they think that Jason's friends had done?
Who were troubled?
What did they finally do?
Where were Paul and Silas sent?
What kind of Jews did they find at Berea?
What did they do daily?
Who were the believers? *Jews, Greeks, and honorable women.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. What did Paul declare to the Thessalonians? *That Jesus was the Christ.*
2. How many of the Greeks believed? *A great multitude.*
3. How did the unbelieving Jews receive his preaching? *"They set the city in an uproar."*
4. How did those at Berea receive the word?

"They received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily."

5. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"Thy word,"* etc.

The Church Catechism.

9. Are there more gods than one? There is but one only, the living and true God.

Isaiah 45. 22. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.**The Right Use of the Bible.****I. SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.***Paul reasoned with them out of the scriptures. v. 2.*

Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read. Isa. 34. 16.

Search the scriptures; in them ye have eternal life. John 5. 39.

II. SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY.*Searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. v. 11.*

Give us day by day our daily bread. Luke 11. 3.

Thy testimonies are my meditation. Psa. 119. 99.

III. SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES SINCERELY.*They received the word with all readiness of mind. v. 11.*

They believed the scripture, and the word. John 2. 22.

Moses and the prophets; hear them. Luke 16. 29.

IV. SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES SUCCESSFULLY.*Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered. v. 3.*

Showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ. Acts 18. 28.

They are they which testify of me. John 5. 39.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Our lesson connects directly with Lesson I, Lesson II having been introduced parenthetically. In Philippi the prætors, probably alarmed by the earthquake, "attempted to retain the appearance of authority while they evaded the consequence of an illegal act." But Paul with dignity showed how they had involved themselves in a complicated violation of the laws of Rome. His word was taken at once. If it had been found false he would have been punishable with death. As Dr. Cook suggests, "To quit the city clandestinely according to the suggestion of the prætors would have had a bad effect on the minds of the converts, and so Paul insisted on a public vindication of his character, which was made by the authorities escorting him." All this must have greatly raised the new faith of Christianity in the public estimation. The record of these facts connects Lesson I immediately with this.

Verse 1. Going westward from Philippi they passed through *Amphipolis*, thirty-three miles away, and *Apollonia* about thirty miles farther; thirty-seven miles farther yet was *Thessalonica*. This city still flourishes, and now, as in antiquity, is a great resort of the *Jews*. Here was a *synagogue*, a public meeting place, where Paul would be sure to meet large numbers of hearers of the sort he most desired.

2, 3. Of Paul's preaching we are first told that *his manner was* to go unto the Jews and reason with them. Everywhere the first offer

of the Gospel was made to them. *Three Sabbath days* of course include the week days between them. Paul *reasoned with them out of the Scriptures*. His effort was first to *prove* that according to the Scriptures there should be a Messiah who should suffer, die, and rise again from the dead, and, secondly, that Jesus is this Messiah. The tense implies that the argument was resumed in one session after another. We know from many testimonies that discussions were allowed in the synagogue. Gospel instances of it are Matt. 12. 10; Luke 4. 21-24;

John 6. 59. During the time, long or short, that Paul labored in Thessalonica he received supplies from Philippi, about a hundred miles away. See Phil. 4. 16. How long the time was we do not know.

4. *Some of them believed* ["were persuaded"]. "Some" Jews, but a *great multitude*, as presently we shall see, of Gentiles. When, a few months later, Paul wrote to the Christians of Thessalonica he thought of them collectively as Gentiles. "Ye turned from idols," he says, "to serve the living God;" and his two epistles to them are exceptionally free from scriptural quotations. *Consorted* (closely associated themselves) *with Paul and Silas*. And thus a Church was formed. *Devout Greeks*, "Worshipping" Greeks; Gentiles who regularly worshiped with the Jews. (See note above.) *Chief women*. Women of high social rank. "The position of women in Macedonia seems to have been exceptional," and contrasted sharply with that of the women of Athens and Corinth. Their prominence in Christian work in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, is especially noted in the Acts.

5. *Which believed not*. These words, while accurately descriptive, are in few of the early manuscripts, and consequently are omitted from the Revision. *Moved with envy* ["jealousy"]. They were maddened by the encouragement given to the Christians by persons of rank, and feared that their own position was about to be undermined. *Certain lewd fellows of the baser sort* ["certain vile fellows of the rabble"]. Literally, "loafers around the market." The phrase may refer to the employment of contemptible pettifoggers to present the case before the city rulers, or, more probably, to the street ruffians they took with them as a threat. *Gathered a company*. "Gathering a crowd." *Set all the city on an uproar*. Made a disturbance, and then charged it against the apostles of peace. *Assaulted the house of Jason*. Where Paul and Silas lodged. If this is the brother referred to in Rom. 16. 21, he was a kinsman of Paul. *The people*. The public assembly.

6. *Found them not*. Probably they had been warned of the mob's approach. *Dreic*. "Dragged." *The rulers of the city*. "Politarchs." Luke always uses the accurate title for public officials. Asiarchs, chiliarchs, prætors, proconsuls, politarchs, each come into history in their proper places. This is very notable, for such titles varied greatly throughout the Roman world. The title politarchs is not mentioned in classical literature nor elsewhere in the Scrip-

ture; but it has been traced in an ancient inscription on the Egnatian Way, where it enters Thessalonica, and the entablature containing the names of the politarchs is now in the British Museum. *These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also*. Among many suggestions that spring from this remarkable sentence is the astonishing wide reach of the influence already exerted by Paul and his associates in an age when there were no newspapers and when travel was difficult.

7. *Whom Jason hath received*. And therefore is responsible for their misdeeds. *The deceives of Caesar*. The imperial laws. *Another king, one Jesus*. This accusation could hardly have been sincerely formulated. It took in one half of Paul's teaching concerning Jesus; but omitted the important fact that "His kingdom is not of this world." It was an accusation very liable to have serious results for the accused, for "The law of treason had been gradually concentrated upon the emperor alone, as the impersonation of the sovereign people, and the definition of the crime was loose and elastic."—*Merivale*.

8. *Both the people* ["multitude"] and the rulers were *troubled* by this turn of affairs. If treason really had sprung up in Thessalonica it would be bad for all of them.

9. *Taken security*. Not what we now call "bail," to assure the presence of the accused for trial; but "a pledge of money to be forfeited if any disturbance occurred." *The other*. "The rest."

10. *Immediately sent away*. Paul intended to return when the excitement was over; but his enemies made this impossible. 1 Thess. 2. 18; 3. 2. *By night*. For safety's sake. *Berea* was a small town, about fifty miles or so away. Paul finds here *Jesus* and a *synagogue*, and immediately begins to unfold the Gospel.

11. *More noble*. They were without that vicious "contempt by anticipation" which always "precludes investigation." *Searched*. "Examining," with open minds, the prophecies to which Paul constantly appealed. *Daily*. Constantly. The profitable way to study the Bible. 12. *Therefore*. Because of their candid examination of the Scriptures. *Honorable women which were Greeks*. "Greek women of honorable estate." (See note on verse 4.)

But the bitter-spirited Jews of Thessalonica followed Paul to Berea, and again he was forced to retreat. But with Paul every retreat was a forward movement.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verses 1-4. Preaching at Thessalonica and the result. 1. A synagogue in a city was a signal for Paul to stop and proclaim the Gospel message. "As his custom was," he attended the synagogue service. It had become a habit with him, and when the hour of service drew nigh he found himself almost irresistibly drawn in that direction. He was not an occasional attendant, but was regularly there. Every lover of Christ should form the habit of always attending the church service unless providentially hindered. Attendance at the preaching service is more important than being present at the Sunday school.

2. Paul "reasoned with them from the Scriptures." He did not bring before them his own philosophy or speculations about life and the future. He proclaimed the truth spoken by the Lord, which was given him to publish. There is great power in the truth thus presented. In his reasoning he "opened" the Scriptures and set before ("alleged") them the fundamental truths of the Gospel. He preached Jesus and his resurrection as having been taught by the Old Testament Scriptures, and ended by declaring "that this Jesus, whom," said he, "I proclaim unto you, is the Christ." Note with reference to Paul's teaching here: (a) It was scriptural; (b) It was explanatory and argumentative; (c) At the last it was positive and emphatic—"This is the Christ."

3. The result of his labors—"some were persuaded." We may gather two or three lessons from the facts of this revival: (a) Such preaching as Paul did at Thessalonica always results in the conversion of some of the hearers. Why do we not have more of it? (b) The genuineness of the conversions is attested by the fact that they "consorted with Paul and Silas," that is, cast in their lot with them, boldly adopting the Christian life and manner with all its privations, and even dangers, at that time. (c) Again, as in the last two lessons, we find women prominent among the converts. In all the Christian ages women have constituted a very important element in the Church.

5-9. The uproar made by the opposition. 1. The foundation of the uproar was "jealousy." The new doctrine of Paul and Silas ran counter to many of the teachings of the Jews. They saw the "devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few," accepting the Christian faith. This aroused their jealousy and they resolved to be avenged. How much of the mischief perpetrated in society, in business, in the church, originates in jealousy!

When tempted to oppose another in any way, or even to offer a word of criticism, it is well to stop and ask ourselves whether our course is not prompted by jealousy.

2. They made use of "the rabble," with whom they would have disdained to be associated under other circumstances. These "vile fellows of the rabble" were loafers about the market place who had no occupation and were ready for any adventure that might be presented under circumstances sufficiently exciting. These Jews would have nothing to do with them except when they had some "dirty work" to be done. On questions of importance in the social, business, or ecclesiastical world they would not consult them for a moment. Even Herod and Pilate could be made friends when Jesus was before them for trial.

3. The unreasonableness of the rabble. These evidences are worthy of consideration. (a) They attack the house of Jason, who probably entertained them, and in whose house the converts may have had a meeting place. But they stop not here. Not finding the strangers, they "drag" Jason and "certain brethren" (doubtless some of those converted during the revival) "before the rulers of the city." Outbreaks against Christianity in heathen countries have not usually ended with mobbing the missionaries. Many times native Christians have suffered even more than the foreigners themselves. This was the case during the "Boxer" troubles in China. (b) They declare that Paul and Silas "have turned the world upside down." While attempting in this to charge them with sedition, they unconsciously pay a high tribute to their labors. Whedon says, "The world is wrong side up, and needs to be turned *upside down* to be brought right side up." We have in these words of the crowd an indication of the widespread influence which the preaching of the Gospel had exerted. (c) They falsely accuse them of treason against Rome, of "saying that there is another king, one Jesus." How easy it is to quote one's very words and at the same time make him say what he has not said! Yes, Jesus is King, but in no such sense as this seditious crowd would have the ruler believe. The kingship of Jesus will not interfere with the reign of Cæsar, for his "kingdom is not of this world." The howling mob is trying to impress the rulers that it comes in the interests of public peace. Every one of them is a patriot! If the Jews who instigated the uproar had told the truth, if they had simply said that they had come to take vengeance on these men because they had set up a

rival religion in their city, they would not have been heard at all. But with this stupendous lie on their lips "they troubled the multitude and the rulers of the city."

10-12. Among the Bereans. 1. The departure of Paul and Silas "by night" need not be regarded as evidence of cowardice or failure or anything akin to either. We must keep in mind that the magistrates "had taken security of Jason and the rest," and the presence of these men in the city was liable to start another uproar and bring the little band of believers into trouble.

2. The Bereans have become world-famous because they were noble-minded. This trait consisted in (a) their willingness to consider calmly what was told them, and (b) their thorough investigation of the truths presented.

3. The Bereans are a type of what all devout persons ought to be. (a) They gave interested and close attention to the truth as it was presented, and thus helped the preacher in presenting it. A "good listener" greatly improves the preaching. There is inspiration in the expectant attention of the congregation, and if a man ever can preach it is under such conditions. (b) They studied the truths they had heard from the Scriptures, to see "whether these things are so." While they were ready recipients of the truth, they did not blindly and superstitiously accept what they heard without investigation. They exercised the right of private judgment, "examining the Scriptures daily." There has been a great revival in Bible study in recent years, and enthusiasm has been awakened in a marked degree. Bible schools have been established; Bible classes have been formed in connection with every kind of benevolent or religious enterprise; many schools have taken up Bible study; and the Sunday school numbers its Bible students by the millions. But still there is great need of more and more thorough Bible study. Only yesterday, in conversation with an intelligent business man who tried to tell me about a very striking revival sermon he had heard, I found him unable to quote a very familiar text from the Sermon on the Mount. This ignorance of the word is widespread, even among Christians and Sunday school scholars. Let every Christian become a Berean. (c) The inevitable result of such hearing and investigation always will be just what it was there, "many of them believed." The most common and most fruitful cause of infidelity is the fact that men will not investigate. Study of the truth after this manner guards against blind superstition on the one hand and infidelity on

the other. These Bereans did not believe superstitiously. They gave reverent and thoughtful attention to the message proclaimed, and then compared it carefully with the teachings of the Scriptures. Finding complete agreement between the two, they were convinced and forced to believe. So will be every sincere soul that follows their example in hearing and investigating.

13-15. Paul's departure to Athens. 1. If the servants of God were as zealous in their labors in behalf of his kingdom as the emissaries of Satan are in trying to tear it down, much more would be accomplished in the right direction. The Thessalonian Jews could not permit such a work as was going on at Berea to remain unmolested, so "they came thither, stirring up and troubling the multitude."

2. But the zeal of his opponents caused them to overreach themselves. Paul was driven out of the quiet and more obscure Berea to more populous centers. The Gospel message found new hearers, and the seed was sown in broader fields.

Thoughts for Young People.

CHRISTIANITY ESSENTIALLY THE SAME THROUGH THE CENTURIES.

1. *The means used to produce faith (or persuasion) are now almost the same as those employed at first—at least in Thessalonica and many other places.* To preach Christ is to reason out of the Scripture, to lay out the matter as it seems to ourselves, to press it home upon all whom it concerns; to remonstrate, expostulate, entreat, and then to leave the issue with God. The passage shows us along what line the reasoning usually went. It went toward proving out of the Scriptures that Jesus is Christ. We do not now need to pursue formally the same line of argument, unless as against Jews, who hold to their own Scriptures and reject our Christian conclusion. Substantially, however, our course is the same; our reasonings, our openings of Scripture, our allegations all tend Christward.

2. *The faith itself is the same as at the beginning.* Faith in Christ—in Christ the sufferer, the death-destroyer, the life-giver, the Redeemer of all trusting men.

3. *The outward result of this faith or persuasion is, to some extent, the same as at first, and ought to be much more so than it is.* They consorted with Paul and Silas. It must always be good to consort with good men. It must always be good to be associated as closely as possible with a good cause. It must be good

to escape from an equivocal position. It must be good to remove farther from danger. It must be good to obey divine commandment. (*Raleigh.*)

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

Note: At the very beginning of the quarter the teacher should begin to prepare for Review Sunday. Tell the pupils that our review will be focused around the five places brought to our attention in this quarter's lessons, namely, Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus. Have them write in their notebooks below the application of each lesson the name of the place prominent in connection with that lesson, and one word that will recall a central figure of truth of that lesson. For example, to-day's review words will be "Thessalonica" and "Bible." For the review words of the other lessons see the end of STUDY IN ADVANCE for each lesson.

SURROUNDINGS.

Time. A. D. 52, during Paul's second missionary journey.

Places. Take the map and point out Amphipolis and Apollonia, through which the missionaries passed on their way to Thessalonica, where the preaching of Paul produced such a tumult that he and Silas were sent by night to Berea. Point out also both of these places.

INTRODUCTION.

This lesson is easily connected with the one for January 4. Briefly review the four pictures of that lesson, then have the pupils open their Bibles and follow the text while one of them reads aloud Acts 16, 35-40.

Now ask: Did you ever know of persons who were released from prison and then did things similar to those for which they had been sent to jail? This will bring out the fact that criminals frequently go from jail to engage at once in those practices which had caused their arrest. We are now going to talk about two men who were not afraid to do the very things which had led to their being beaten and imprisoned. Let us look at four buildings brought to our attention in our

LESSON TEXT.

1. *A Synagogue.* Ask: Who knows what a synagogue is? (Question on the pupils' home study.) Where was this one? What stranger went into this synagogue? How often? What did he do? What three things did he affirm concerning Jesus? What was the result?

2. *A House.* Who lived in this house? Who

were entertained here? Who assaulted the house? Why? What did the mob do to the missionaries? Why?

3. *A Judgment Hall.* Who sat in judgment here? Who was brought to these rulers? What charge was made against Jason? What did the mob cry out that the missionaries had done? What did the rulers do with Jason?

4. *Another Synagogue.* Where was this synagogue? What visitors came into this synagogue? How had they gotten here? In what respect were the Jews of Berea more noble than those of Thessalonica? What was the result of their searching the Scriptures?

Note: Instead of asking the questions first, the teacher may have the pupils draw on their pads, one at a time, outlines of the four buildings, and may then vividly picture the scenes enacted therein (as suggested in the HINTS for January 4), and often add questions concerning the pictures.

APPLICATION.

Bring to the class a small lantern. Ask: For what are lanterns used? Among the answers some will suggest that they are used by persons in the country to see the way on dark nights. Talk about this for some time. Then ask: What lantern is there that every one needs? When some one has answered, "The Bible," have each member of the class repeat in turn the Golden Text. Then show the pupils how the Bible furnishes light for our guidance over all the dark paths and dangerous places of our journey to heaven.

Ask all who will to print and to keep this resolution:

DAILY I WILL READ

THE BIBLE

FOR LIGHT AND GUIDANCE.

The teacher should be prepared to tell the class how to read the Bible, and should write out a list of texts suited to the needs of the individual pupil, which he or she may mark in his or her Bible.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to read the whole of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians during the week, and to be able on next Sunday to turn to it in their Bibles and to tell what epistle precedes it and what one follows it. Also ask them to learn the answers to the following questions:

Who wrote the epistle?

Where? When? Why?

Review words, "Thessalonica" and "Bible."

By Way of Illustration.

The itinerant missionaries. Can we conceive what their procedure was like in the towns they visited? As we picture them entering any place we naturally think of them as the most important personages in it; to us their entry is as august as if they had been carried on a chair of victory. Very different, however, was the reality. They entered a town as quietly and unnoticed as any two strangers who may walk into one of our towns any morning. Their first care was to get a lodging; and then they had to seek for employment, for they worked at their trade wherever they went. Nothing could be more commonplace. Who could dream that this travel-stained man, going from one tent-maker's door to another, seeking for work, was carrying the future of the world beneath his robe. When the Sabbath came they would cease from toil and go to the synagogue. They joined in the psalms and prayers and listened to the Scriptures. After this the elder might ask if anyone present had any words to speak. This was Paul's opportunity. He would arise and begin to speak. At once the audience recognized the accents of the cultivated rabbi. Taking up the passages which had been read, he would show that the Messiah had come—that he had been crucified and had risen from the dead. We can easily imagine the sensation produced by such a sermon. During the week it would become the talk of the town, and the next Sabbath the synagogue would be crowded with Jews and Gentiles. Paul would declare that salvation was as free to Gentiles as to Jews, and this was the signal for the Jews to contradict and blaspheme. The Jews would stir up a mob and in a storm of tumult the messengers would be swept out of the town. This happened in Antioch in Pisidia, and was repeated at Thessalonica and at many other places.—*Dr. James Stalker.*

Verses 5-9. "Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block." There are two ways of treating a seed. The botanist splits it up and discourses on its curious characteristics and destroys it; the simple husbandman eats and sows, sows and eats. There are two ways of treating the Gospel. A critic dissects it and discusses it; he neither lives on it himself nor spreads it for the good of his neighbors; he neither eats nor sows. The disciple of Jesus, hungering for righteousness, takes the seed; it is bread for to-day's hunger, and seed for to-morrow's supply.

Verses 4, 12. "Chief women," "honorable women." A prominent feature of the work in Macedonia was the part taken in it by women. Amid

the general decay of religions throughout the world at this period many women sought satisfaction for their religious instincts in the synagogue; and they pressed into the Christian Church. This was a prophecy of the happy change in the lot of woman which Christianity was to produce. A man owes much to Christ, but a woman owes still more. He has delivered her from being man's slave and plaything and raised her to be his friend and equal. The first convert in Europe was a woman—Lydia. The change in her and the change in that poor slave girl of Philippi whom Paul restored to sanity prefigured what woman was to become under the influence of Christianity.

Verse 11. "Searched the Scriptures daily." You cannot read the Bible as you do other books. I visited Mr. Prang's chromo establishment in Boston and saw the process of printing a picture of some public man. The first stone made hardly an impression on the paper. The second stone showed no sign of change. The third showed no sign. The fifth and sixth showed only outlines of a man's head. On the tenth the man's face, chin, and forehead appeared. The fifteenth and twentieth looked like a dim picture. The twenty-eighth impression stood forth as natural as life. It looked as though it would speak to you. So carefully and prayerfully read the word of God—read the same chapter again and again—and the twenty-eighth time Christ Jesus will shine forth.—*Moody.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

In the agitations of religious thought at present we see the same difference as that between the Thessalonians and Bereans. Thessalonians were sure the new teaching would turn the world upside down, and were determined to drive it out and banish the teachers. The Bereans searched the Scriptures for themselves and made up their own minds as to the soundness of the doctrine. Therefore—put great emphasis on the word "therefore"—they came to a settled faith not built upon St. Paul or any other man, nor disturbed by questions or contentions; a faith that rested upon the word of God interpreted to them by the Holy Spirit. There are some now who fear the foundations are giving way because research and learning are throwing new light upon the dear old book. And some are indeed letting go of their precious heart faith because, they say, men differ in Bible interpretation so that one does not know what to believe. The remedy for all this is the Berean method, to "Search the Scriptures daily

whether these things are so." Do not take your teaching through human channels. Find for yourself what God says and let the Holy Spirit be your teacher.

If you doubt whether this book is truly God's word search it and see. No argument is so convincing as the word itself. It is impossible to read it prayerfully, with sincere desire to know the truth, and not see that it is a book unlike all others. Is it not reasonable to believe that the God who made us and sent us into the world would in some certain way make known to us his will? The soul's questions, Who is God? Who am I? Whence came I? Whither am I going? are answered only in this book.

"The wise men are ashamed, they are discouraged and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?" I am sometimes asked, "How shall I read my Bible to get real help from it?" Really, I do not know how to answer except to say, "Read it." For spiritual food and enlightenment, which is its chief purpose and value, no "system" devised by another has ever been of service to me. My experience is, "Thy words were found and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." How did I find them? By reading chapter after chapter with the references from Genesis to Revelation, and "learning them by heart"—which is a better way to express it than to say "committing to memory." How did I "eat" them? By prayer that the Holy Spirit would reveal their meaning in my inmost soul. Many times, alone, I have bowed my head over my Bible with grateful tears for the rich revelations of love and grace. Not interested in it? Would you say you were not interested in a lantern if you walked a narrow path beside a precipice on a dark night? The Bible is a lamp to guide you through the uncertain ways of this life to the safety and glory of the life everlasting. You cannot find your way without it. I have somewhere read these suggestions for getting practical help from it at special times; I give them to you, but I hope you will search it daily to learn what courage and peace it will give you at all times and in all places:

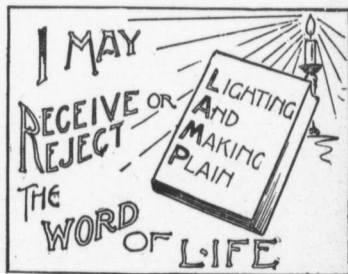
"If you are downhearted read Psa. 27. If you feel lonesome or unprotected read Psa. 91. If you are out of sorts, read Heb. 12. If people pelt you with hard words read John 15. If you are losing faith in men read 1 Cor. 13. If you don't know where to look for the month's rent read Psa. 37. If the stovepipe has fallen down, and the cook goes off in a pet, put the stovepipe up, wash your hands, and read the third chap-

ter of James." When the shadow falls across your door as the messenger comes to take the dearest of all from your home read John 14 and Rev. 22. 1-7, and the shadows will melt away in the light of heaven.

The Teachers' Meeting.

As we have remarked elsewhere, this story in all its parts is so interrelated, both in its incidents and in its teachings, that the class which "does not get through with it" might almost as well not have begun. So the time for class study should be carefully divided, and the division scrupulously followed.... Consider the three classes which met Paul in Thessalonica and Berea, Opponents, Believers, and Inquirers, and study their modern representatives. (There is room here for personal application.).... Study the adaptability of Paul—"All things to all men." Study his holy antagonism to vice and prejudice, his tender nurture of inexperienced Christianity, his respectful and patient waiting for the results of others' honest inquiry.... What this lesson teaches concerning the advantages of Church membership. What it teaches about the duty of Bible study; and about the proper way to study the Bible. What it teaches about those who hate the Gospel; and about the sure providential direction of those whose lives are devoted to Christian enterprise.

Blackboard.



Man's similitude to the invisible God argues his free will—the power to do or not to do which rests with the human will. The exercise of this transcendent power is exemplified continually in our own lives in outcome of good or evil. Here again the scene is before us, where the message of God is faithfully presented, some receiving and some rejecting the life it offered. Our responsibility is confirmed,

and we are left without excuse, by the fact that God's word makes our duty unmistakably plain. Let those who seek after God search his own word with sincere prayer, and conviction is certain to follow.

Coloring.—Book, cream; words, red and white; other wording, yellow and dark blue.

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THESSALONICA.—Iverach, *St. Paul*, chap. viii. Taylor, *Paul the Missionary* (Index). Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveler*, pages 226-235. Finlay, *Byzantine and Greek Empires*, vol. i, page 315; vol. ii, pages 182, 204, 607. *Bibliotheca Sacra*,

vol. xi, page 830; vol. xviii, page 845. The Bible dictionaries.

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BIBLE STUDY.—Clifford, Moule, and others, *Hints on Bible Study*. Adeney, *How to Read the Bible*. Sell, *Bible Study by Books*.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 6.—Spurgeon, C. H., *Sermons*, vol. v, page 402.

Verse 7.—*The Pulpit*, London, vol. xv, page 40.

Verse 11.—Burton, *Christian Life and Truth*, page 196. *The Princeton Pulpit*, page 293. *The Homiletic Monthly*, vol. viii, page 309.

LESSON IV. Paul's Counsel to the Thessalonians.

[Jan. 25.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Hold fast that which is good. 1 Thess. 5. 21.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 1-13. Read the epistle.]

1 Thess. 5. 14-28. [Commit to memory verses 16-18.]

14 Now we exhort you brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

16 Rejoice evermore.

17 Pray without ceasing.

18 In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19 Quench not the Spirit.

20 Despise not prophesyings.

21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

14 And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all. 15 See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all. 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you-ward. 19 Quench not the Spirit; 20 despise not prophesyings; 21 prove all things; hold fast that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil.

23 And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it.

25 Brethren, pray for us.

26 Salute all the brethren with a holy kiss. 27 I adjure you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the brethren.

28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

W. Good for evil. Rom. 12. 9-21.

Th. Well doing. Gal. 6. 1-10.

F. Giving thanks. Col. 3. 12-17.

S. Prayer for sanctification. John 17. 5-17.

S. Kept by God. Jude 17-25.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 132.

All praise to our redeeming Lord
Who joins us by his grace.

*The American Revision, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

Time and Place.—The First Epistle to the Thessalonians was written by Paul in the winter of A. D. 52, from Corinth. It is probably the first book in order of time in the New Testament, and the first of Paul's inspired contributions to the Scriptures.

Home Readings.

M. Paul's Counsel to the Thessalonians. 1 Thess. 5. 14-28.

Tu. The unruly. 2 Thess. 3. 6-18.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 439.

Take time to be holy,
Speak oft with thy Lord;
Abide in him always,
And feed on his word.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 161.

When Jesus comes to reward his servants,
Whether it be noon or night,
Faithful to him will he find us watching,
With our lamps all trimmed and bright?

Questions for Senior Scholars.

Give some account of the church at Thessalonica.

What need was there of this epistle?
Among the Pauline epistles where in point
of order of writing does this one stand?

Where was it written?

When?

What are the traits of the Christian put
negatively? put positively?

For what kind of sanctification does the apostle pray?

Upon what ground is the realization of the ideal of Christian character affirmed to be possible?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *The Duty of Christians among Themselves* (v. 14, 15).

To whom are these words addressed?

What three classes of persons in the church are mentioned?

What treatment was each to receive?

What spirit was to be shown to everyone?

How is bad treatment from others to be met?

2. *Some Short but Very Precious Advices* (v. 16-22).

When should Christians rejoice?

What is the time to pray?

What things should cause thanksgiving?

What is God's will for his people?

How should the Holy Spirit be received?

What regard should be given to Christian teaching?

What should be tested?

For what purpose?

3. *The Complete Christian* (v. 22-24).

What should be done in regard to the various forms of evil?

Whose prayer is given?

For whom was it offered?

To whom is it addressed?

For what does it ask?

What kind of life is asked for?

For how long?

Who will answer this prayer?

4. *Closing Words* (v. 25-28).

What request does Paul make for himself?

What courtesy was to be remembered?

For whom was this epistle intended?

What benediction closes?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

What did Paul form at Thessalonica? *A Christian church.*

Of what three classes of people?

Had they a New Testament? *No.*

Why? *It was not yet written.*

What did Paul do? *He wrote them two letters.*

What are they called?

Where was he when he wrote them? *In Corinth.*

What was Paul to these Christians? *Their spiritual father.*

Why did he love them? *He had the love of Christ.*

What does he tell the strong? *To be good to the weak.*

What to the impatient? *To be "patient toward all men."*

What to all? *To rejoice, pray, and give thanks.*

How does he tell them to choose the right? *"Prove all things."*

What is the GOLDEN TEXT?

What is his prayer? *That they may be kept pure until Christ comes.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"Hold fast,"* etc.

2. How are we to hold fast the good in our church? *By holy living, good advice, sympathy, and patience.*

3. How are we to hold fast that which is good in our own hearts? *By doing good, and constantly rejoicing, praying, and giving thanks.*

4. How are we to hold fast that which is good in society? *By abstaining from every form of evil.*

5. What is the meaning of holding fast that which is good? *Entire sanctification.*

The Church Catechism.

10. How many persons are there in the Godhead? In the Godhead there are three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Matthew 28. 19.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Christian Rules for Christian Conduct.

I. EDIFY THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD.

Warn unruly, comfort feeble-minded, support weak, be patient. v. 14.

Edify one another, even as also ye do.

1 Thess. 5. 11.

Esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. 1 Thess. 5. 13.

II. THE GOLDEN RULE.

Ever follow that which is good. v. 15.

Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. Matt. 7. 12.

See that none render evil for evil unto any man. 1 Thess. 5. 15.

III. CONSTANCY IN RELIGION.

Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks. v. 16-18.

Having done all, stand. Eph. 6. 13.

Be sober, be vigilant. 1 Pet. 5. 8.

Give earnest heed to the things which we have heard. Heb. 2. 1.

IV. DEPEND ON THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Quench not; despise not. v. 19, 20.

Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Acts 2. 17.

Tarry until ye be endued with power from on high. Luke 24. 49.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

Like Lesson II, Lesson IV is introduced parenthetically, and its relation to the lessons preceding and following is due to the law of association rather than to chronology. If the chronological order were followed this lesson would come immediately after Lesson VI. The epistle from which it is taken was written by Paul to the church which he founded at Thessalonica, according to our lesson of last Sunday. It was written in Corinth, not many months after Paul had parted from his Thessalonian converts. The first thirteen verses of 1 Thess. 5 should be studied carefully in connection with this lesson. They follow a prophetic description of the second coming of our Lord, which the apostle compares, in its unexpectedness, to the stealthy approach of a burglar at night. Those whose bad hearts cause them to dread the Lord will be comforting themselves because of his absence up to the very moment of his coming, and will be saying, "Peace and safety" when sudden destruction shall come to them. But Christians have no fear; they rejoice in their Saviour's nearness, however manifested, for they are the children of light and of the day. It is in darkness that burglars are feared, but we are not of the night nor of darkness. As children of moral and spiritual light we must not spend our hours in sleep, ignoring moral and religious duties, but, like soldiers, shielded by faith and love and helmeted with the hope of salvation, we are to make determined stand against all evil, for we have been "appointed to salvation," a salvation secured by the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do."

Verses 14, 15. Here are simple rules for the Christian's conduct toward his fellow-men, whether church members or those outside the Church. The *unruly* ["disorderly"] members he is to *warn* ["admonish"]. Paul had been absent from the Thessalonians only a few months. Hearing that disorder had arisen in the church he naturally turns first (verse 12) to the official members to reestablish discipline; then (verse 14), addressing all the *brethren*, he "exhorts" them to sustain the authorities of the church and to see that order is properly enforced. Paul's conception of disorder would include both erratic creed and forbidden behavior. To proclaim beliefs that are antagonistic to the established teachings of the church of which one is a member is not only an ecclesiastical misdemeanor, it is a sin. And it is often overlooked by public opinion where inconsistent behavior is reproved. The Christian is to *comfort the feeble-minded*, that is, to "encourage the faint-hearted." Our English word "encourage" means

to "enhearten;" "to put heart into;" and the Greek word for "feeble-minded" means "little soul" or "little heart." After bringing back into the ranks those out of line, we are to show the rank and file that they are capable of stronger, holier work than they ever dreamed of. This is true of most church members. It was with profound knowledge of human nature that our Lord told the story of the burial of the talent, charging that crime rather to the one-talented man than to the many talented. In financial liberality, perhaps, as a rule the one-talented people do as well and sometimes better than those blessed with wealth, but in almost every other sphere of Christian activity, those who are not brilliantly endowed are tempted to faint-heartedness, to persuade themselves that they need not attempt Christian work because they cannot do it as well as some rare sanctified genius. *Support the weak.* "Carry" them. But the average Christian needs not so much to be carried, as to be encouraged. *Be patient toward*

all men. "Be long-suffering toward all." "Whether they try you by their presumption or by their timidity, by rude aggressiveness or by simple incapacity." See that none render evil for evil unto any man. This was written to a group of Christians who had been gathered from the midst of a heathen population, and lived among those who persecuted them for righteousness' sake. Ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men ["one toward another, and toward all"]. Goodness here is not only beneficence, but includes what is absolutely morally good (Rom. 2. 10; 7. 18; Heb. 13. 21; 1 Pet. 3. 11).

This completes five rules for the maintenance of Christian brotherhood.

16. Here we turn to six rules for the personal conduct of the Christian. *Rejoice evermore* ["always"]. See Matt. 5. 10-12; Rom. 5. 3-5; 2 Cor. 12. 10; 1 Pet. 4. 12-14.

17. *Pray without ceasing.* Prayer in the apostle's view is a state, quite as much as an act. Paul does not say, "Offer petitions without ceasing," for from the structure of man's mind that would be impossible. But "continue in the spirit of prayer." Our hearts are like cups which, properly placed, are in constant receipt of the blessings which our beneficent God constantly outpours; on the contrary, it is within our power perversely to turn them (as was the quaint fashion one hundred years ago with teacups), so that whatever is poured over them will flow outside.

18. *In everything give thanks.* Knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God." This is the will of God, not thanksgiving only, but constancy, constant rejoicing, ceaseless prayer, and unvarying thanks. *Concerning you.* "To youward."

19, 20. *Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings.* On the one hand Paul directs us to admonish the disorderly; but, on the other, to be careful, when novel experiences come, that in our efforts to be orderly and well disciplined we do not suppress the utterances of the mind of God. In Paul's day, as in ours, there were

fanatics in the church, and there was danger lest their vagaries should be taken too seriously; but there was quite as much danger that the actual utterances of the mind of God might be ignored. We should not suppress the Divine Spirit in ourselves or in others.

21. *Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.* Test all things; discriminate wisely in the fear of God. One of the utterances of Jesus which, though not preserved in the Gospels, come down to us by venerable tradition and have every appearance of being genuine, is, "Show yourselves approved money-changers, rejecting some things but holding fast the good."

22. *Abstain from all appearance of evil.* "Every form of evil." Never do evil that good may come. Never indulge in the doubtful; never in that which is not certainly right.

23. *The very God of peace* ["the God of peace himself"] *sanctify you wholly.* That is, "separate you from things profane, and consecrate you to God." The whole church should be sanctified. For *I pray God* the Revision substitutes the simple word "may." *Spirit and soul and body.* The whole nature. Each member of the church should be sanctified throughout every part of his nature. *Be preserved blameless.* "Entire, without blame."

24. *Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.* True to his own nature, righteous character and requirements. Not to be faithful would be to deny himself.

25. *Brethren, pray for us.* Some ancient authorities add, "as we pray for you, so do you pray for us." Paul's heart yearns for Christian sympathy.

26. *Greet.* "Salute." A kiss was a common sign of affection in meeting and in parting. It was given on the cheek and not on the lips.

27. *Charge.* "Adjure." Omit "holy." "This strong appeal may perhaps be explained by a suspicion on Paul's part that a wrong use might be made of his name and authority so that it was important that his view should be made to all."—M. R. Vincent.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

1-11. *The second coming of Christ.* 1. The time is not known, and speculation concerning it is idle. Our Lord himself, in his humiliation, said (Mark 13. 32) that "of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father;" and again, after his resurrection, he declared (Acts 1. 7), "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own

authority." If Jesus and his apostles, and even the angels, were not permitted to know the exact time of the coming of "the day of the Lord," why should we trouble ourselves about it?

2. Paul's readers had been sufficiently informed on the subject before, namely, "that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night;" and as this was all that could be known about it further instruction was unnecessary.

There are, everywhere in the New Testament writings, apparent two elements in the expected coming of our Lord: (a) its uncertainty, and (b) its suddenness.

3. The careless and unbelieving will keep on saying "Peace and safety" when "sudden destruction" is coming upon them. What was true of the Thessalonians of that day is true of men and women of all nations to-day. While the event here referred to is not the death of the individual, practically it is such for everyone who dies before our Lord's coming. It is then that his probation ends, the books are closed, to be opened again at the judgment. But death is liable to come at any moment, and, in fact, does come to thousands "as a thief in the night," at the very moment "when they are saying, Peace and safety," but destruction comes instead. *Are you ready?*

4. Paul's readers had been thoroughly instructed, hence they should act wisely. They were "sons of light" and should not give themselves up to nightly revelings, drunkenness, and debauchery. There is danger now, just as there was then, that a multitude who are well informed in reference to religious duty will neglect to put in practice what they know. Notwithstanding the immanence of death they plunge into sin and excesses of every kind, just as if they expected to live forever.

5. But watchfulness is not enough to enable us to ward off the dangers here. For our armor of defense we are to put on the three Christian graces, "faith," "love," and "the hope of salvation." And this "hope of salvation" is here selected to point an exhortation to faithfulness, since the design of the Father is to *save* the faithful at the coming of his Son, and not to inflict "wrath."

12-15. Proper attitude toward all in the Church. 1. Those in authority. Our duty toward them is twofold: (a) We are to know them, that is, to recognize them in this relation, rightly to estimate and appreciate them. (b) We are to "esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake." Civil magistrates have power to compel obedience to their mandates by physical force and punishments. Church officers can command respect only through the love of those in the Church, and this it is the duty of every Christian to bestow upon them.

2. One another. The proper relation here is "peace," which can be general in the Church only when there is a general and harmonious recognition and loving esteem of all in authority.

3. Certain classes call for special treatment. It seems best to regard these exhortations as

addressed to all believers rather than to the rulers in the Church. We see here no recognition of a hierarchy, or any exclusively authoritative official body to perform these duties.

(a) "Admonish the disorderly," those who do not keep their places in the ranks. This is the first duty to such when disorder is manifest. Then, if it is persisted in, more stringent measures are to be adopted. But let such admonitions always be in love. (b) "Encourage the faint-hearted." There are a great many narrow-souled, feeble, faltering Christians who need the help and encouragement of the strong and brave to enable them to endure the strain of trial. It is our duty to render them all the assistance possible, and to bear with them patiently because of their weakness. (c) "Support the weak." Just as we would minister to the physical needs of the sick or helpless, so ought we to support those who are weak in faith and in the other Christian graces. (d) "Be long-suffering toward all." The very fact that we have faults by reason of which others must exercise patience should prompt us to be patient with the faults of all others. Herein lies the superiority of Christianity over "science" (so-called). "Natural selection" destroys the weak and helpless, and the "fittest" only are permitted to survive. Christianity cares for and nourishes the weak and helpless and ready to perish, and thus shows its origin to have been in heaven.

4. Follow after that which is good, not especially what is morally good, but rather what is beautiful, what is good for him who receives it. We must put ourselves in his place and consider what would be good for us under like conditions. After we have reached a conclusion a most difficult duty often is to do what we recognize to be "good toward all." But at this point we must not fail. An old writer has said, "To requite good with evil is devilish; to requite evil with evil is heathenish; to requite good with good is commendable; to requite evil with good is Christian."

16-18. Christian joy. Herein is the remedy for all pessimism. 1. "Rejoice always." This is not only a Christian privilege, something to make one happy or pleased with his situation, it is a Christian duty, something to make him useful. And why should not the Christian rejoice? God and Christ and the Holy Spirit and heaven are his, together with as much of earthly good as is wholesome for his immortal soul. Barrow, in his sermon on this text, says, "If we scan all the doctrines, all the institutions, all the precepts, all the promises of Christianity, will not each appear pregnant with matter of

joy, will not each yield great reason and strong obligation to this duty, of rejoicing evermore?"

2. And this rejoicing is to be accomplished by unceasing prayer. It is the soul's aspiration after God, and consists, not in attitudes of body or forms of words (however much these may contribute at times to the spirit of prayer), but rather in the yearnings of the soul Godward and heavenward. And this is the very life of the Christian, so that as well may the pulse cease to beat and the body still live as the Christian cease to pray and his soul life continue.

3. Thanksgiving is the other element in the Christian joy here outlined. To the man whose life is hid with Christ in God there can arise no circumstance for which he may not be thankful, for "all things work together for good" to him. His losses, his crosses, and his failures, as well as his victories and successes, are occasions for thanksgiving. But he is not in the proper spiritual state to do this until sin and infirmity are put behind him; then, however, he can live a life of unceasing joy, gratitude, and devotion.

19-22. The proper attitude toward spiritual gifts. 1. "Quench not the Spirit." The Holy Spirit is the abiding guest of every faithful believer, and is the inspirer of the gifts here mentioned. He is represented as a *fire* which may be quenched by repression, neglect, disobedience, or sin. We may quench the Spirit in others as well as in ourselves. It is better to tolerate slight breaches of propriety, or of what a fastidious world would call strict order, than to put out the fire which comes from Heaven to fill the soul.

2. "Despise not prophesyings." Although we often hear good people speak very carelessly of their thoughts and utterances as inspired by the Holy Spirit, and are sometimes tempted to regard *all* such statements as unworthy of notice, we should be careful not to "despise" that which is really good.

3. "Prove all" these professed supernatural gifts, or in the words of another apostle, "Prove the spirits whether they are of God" (1 John 4. 1). We should test them by the Scriptures, the common opinion of the holy men of earth, our own sense of propriety, and any other light which circumstances may throw upon them.

4. Having tested them, each in turn, we are to hold fast the good; and this is the very purpose of our testing—that we may find out which is good, and then hold it fast.

5. And, on the other hand, after the test has been made, "abstain from every form of evil." We choose the good and reject the evil. The injunction based on the common rendering of

this text may be wise counsel, namely, "Abstain from every appearance of evil;" but it is not the exhortation here.

23, 24. Entire sanctification. 1. It is a state of "peace." The counsels of the apostle from the twelfth verse on have looked toward "peace;" and now "the God of peace himself" is to accomplish this work of sanctification in them.

2. It is a state of separateness from sin. The very word "sanctify" means to set apart, to separate from common to holy uses. Hence the Christian who is sanctified is separated from sin and dedicated unto holiness; and this is true in a measure of every Christian.

3. It involves the entire being. The apostle prays God to sanctify them "wholly." The whole church is to be sanctified. Then the apostle takes up the several parts of our nature, the "spirit," the "soul," and the "body," which are to "be preserved entire;" and this means a very high state of Christian grace. Every part of the individual is to be sanctified.

4. It is attainable in this life, and ought to be attained by every Christian; for (a) God who is "faithful" "calleth" to it. (b) He "will also do it." (c) The sanctified believer is to "be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." But how could he be so "preserved" who had not already attained? This attainment is altogether too rare in the Church to-day.

25-28. Closing admonitions. 1. The apostle's request suggests the importance of prayer for spiritual leaders and teachers. The request is not a mere form with Paul, but suggests a real need.

2. The "kiss" was a common form of salutation in the East, and among Christians was to be converted into a "holy" greeting. So are we taught to carry our religion into the commonest relations in life, even to the handshake.

3. The solemn adjuration "that this epistle be read unto all the brethren" assures us that the Scriptures are not for any class in the church or ministry, but are *for all the people*.

Thoughts for Young People.

A CHRISTIAN'S ENVIRONMENT.

1. *The coming of the day of the Lord.* Whenever we are, and however surrounded, the day of the Lord is sure to come. It does not bring sudden destruction to us if we have been reconciled to him; but it increases responsibilities and opportunities. We are not to terrify each other about it, but are to comfort ourselves together

and build one another up because of the coming of that day of the Lord. We are not to dogmatize, for we have the apostle's word that it shall come unexpectedly; but we are to feel that intertwined with all our environments are the forces of heaven, and we are to endure as seeing Him who is invisible.

2. *The evil world.* The injunction, "See that none render evil for evil to any," implies evil surroundings. The attitude of the world toward Christianity is not the same now as when Paul wrote, but even yet the faithful Christian suffers because of his faithfulness. We are, however, to follow that which is good to all men.

3. *Church membership.* We are enrolled in the church for several reasons, one of the most prominent being that we may become improved in moral character. But we have not been in it long before we find that some of the members are exceedingly weak; and, as children have to be carried when a family is on a long journey, so these people have to be toyed with and cared for and carried perpetually. What are we to do with such people? They try one's patience. Then there are the assertive people, "unruly" our Authorized Version calls them; troublesome folk, who want to "run things." We feel sometimes that "we cannot live with them or without them." How are we to treat them? Then there is the most numerous class of all—the people who might amount to much if they only tried, but who are ciphers in the church work. What are we to do with them? We should be careful not to fall into any one of these three classes ourselves, and we should be careful to be patient toward all, giving each what he needs—admonition and discipline to the disorderly, encouragement to the cowardly, and support to the weak.

4. *Our own hearts.* We are to secure their control by consecrating them entirely to the Lord Jesus.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

Note: In order that the pupils may preserve for future reference the APPLICATION of each lesson, provide each one with a small notebook. Have two pages reserved for each lesson. On one page ask the pupils to write the title and the Golden Text of the lesson and such facts as they may wish to preserve as the result of home study. On the other page have printed the APPLICATION and the review words for each lesson, with such facts or truths brought out in the lesson study as should be preserved.

SURROUNDINGS.

See questions below.

INTRODUCTION.

Bring to the class a bundle of old letters. Ask: What are these? Where did I get them? By whom were they sent? Why? The pupils will take a very lively interest in this method of questioning, and if the teacher is ready with his questions and wise enough to make use of the answers there will be no inattention in the class.

Now ask: Did you ever receive any letters? From whom? Why were they written to you?

After speaking a short time on the answers to these questions ask: Are there any letters in the Bible? Who wrote them? To whom? Why? What one are we going to study about to-day? Did you read it during the week? Who wrote it? When? Where? To whom? Why? Now we will turn to our

LESSON TEXT.

Let us look at this part of the letter which we have assigned to us for to-day's study. Let us read it over in silence, and after we have done so I am going to ask each one of you to tell me which verse you like best.

As the pupils give their verses ask questions like these: What does that verse mean? What would be the result of living every day according to its teachings? Are you willing to sincerely ask God to help you to live it? As these questions are asked the teacher should give such explanations as may be suggested by the answers given.

After the various verses chosen have been disposed of let the teacher take up those which have not been selected by the pupils, and dwell upon them as long as may seem necessary for the peculiar needs of the individual members of the class.

The teacher's knowledge of the pupils will help in determining the verse to which the most attention should be paid. For example, verse 22 is one that most young people need to have impressed upon them. We frequently hear such exclamations as these from Christian people: "I have a right to do this;" "It is none of his business if I choose to do this;" "I am the keeper of my conscience." The young Christian should be taught that for the sake of others, for Christ's sake, many things must be given up.

APPLICATION.

The teacher may bring to the class a number of envelopes on each of which is written:

THE APOSTLE PAUL'S LETTER

to

John Johnson,

the third line being different on each envelope, so that there will be one addressed to each member of the class. For each envelope should be a blank sheet of paper, on which the pupil should print the verse of to-day's lesson which he is going to make his own especially. For example, one will print:

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

Another,

QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT.

Of course, there is no objection to a pupil printing as many verses as he chooses. These letters are to be taken home and looked at from time to time as reminders of what the owners thereof are to do.

Ask each pupil to print in his notebook the verse he has selected, and also the Golden Text turned into a prayer, as follows:

LORD, HELP ME TO
HOLD FAST
 THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the members of the class to learn during the week the answers to the following:

1. Who were the Athenians mentioned in Acts 17. 2?

2. What gods did they worship?

Review words, "Thessalonica" and "Hold fast."

By Way of Illustration.

Verses 14. The Jews would not willingly tread upon the smallest piece of paper in their way, but took it up; for possibly, said they, the name of God may be on it. Though there was a superstition in that, yet it has its lesson. Trample not on any; there may be some work of grace there thou knowest not of. The name of God may be written upon that soul thou treadest on. Despise not the weak ones for whom Christ died.—*Leighton.*

Verses 15. Morning by morning God's great mercy of sunrise steals upon a dark world in still, slow self-impartment; and the light which has a force that has carried it across gulfs of space that the imagination staggers in trying to conceive, yet falls so gently that it does not move the petals of a sleeping flower, nor hurt the lids of an infant's eyes, nor displace a grain of dust. So should we live and work, clothing all our power in tenderness, destroying nothing but the darkness, and with silent increase of beneficent power filling and flooding the dark earth with beneficent beams.—*Maclaren.*

Verses 16, 18. Let not thy praises be transient—a fit of music and then the instrument hung by the wall till another rejoicing day of some remarkable providence makes thee take it down. God comes not guest-wise to his saints' house, but to dwell with them. David took this up for a lifework: "As long as I live will I praise thee." "His praise shall continually be in my mouth."

Verses 17, 19-21. The natives of India had this saying about Sir Henry Lawrence: "When Sir Henry looked up twice to heaven and once down to earth, and then stroked his beard, he knew what to do." If we may utilize the saying, it seems to express the attitude of mind with which all life's work and study should be done. The reverence which looks up, and the observation which looks around, combined with the judgment that can reflect, become safeguards against the falsehoods of extremes. There is an observation which is keen enough, but which, never looking upward, has no reverence; there is a pious reverence which, in its rapt and heavenward gaze, forgets to look earthward, and so loses touch with humanity. Follow Sir Henry's example.—*Bishop of Ripon.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The charm and value of the Gospel spoken by Jesus or by his apostles is that it is practical. It is meant to be lived out every day, and can be so lived out in spirit and in conduct as to make the world better and happier. This can be, however, only on one condition: we must receive it as St. Paul says those people to whom he wrote received it, "not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost." Let us so receive it, and let us see how beautiful it may make our daily life even this very week. "Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all." What a blessing we shall be in the home, in the place where we work, in school, everywhere we go, if we do this! Somebody has lost heart; has not courage to decide what to do; lacks strength of mind to take hold of things. Can you speak an encouraging word, or open some way for them? One is fainting with a heavy burden; or is in danger of falling under temptation; put your sympathy and your moral support around that weak soul. Some one is very trying in temper, or inefficient in work, "dreadfully stupid," you think, and wanting in qualities you admire. Be patient with that one. Answer irritating words with gentle speech, and repeat the same things over and over again if necessary, without scolding them for their stupidity. Do some kindness or say

some kind thing for those who have done or said just the opposite for you. When we get thus far in sweet and gracious living it will be easy to "rejoice evermore." The song birds will be making music in our hearts; we will see so much to admire and love in others that we shall be glad we live in a world of so much goodness.

Will it be possible in everything to give thanks? Yes, that is the only way to keep hopeful and cheerful; not to give thanks for everything, because there are some things in the world that are not pleasing to God. But in the darkest experience we may give thanks that it is no worse, and thanks indeed that God reigns and that he will sometime overcome evil with good. The blessed spirit, given to all who ask, makes these things possible for us. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit by inattention to his voice. Do not grieve him by willful sin. Ask him to fill your heart with himself, and yield yourself fully to his control. Do not put these things away up in cloud-land beyond your reach, an ideal to be admired but never attained. It is the sweet, possible, practical way to get the hardness and unloveliness out of our hearts and make us fit to live with people here on earth, and by and by to live with the pure spirits in heaven.

Another saint who lived after St. Paul says: "Do not lose your inward peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset. Commend all to God, then lie still and be at rest in his bosom. Whatever happens, abide steadfastly in a determination to cling simply to God, trusting to his eternal love for you; and if you find that you have wandered forth from this shelter recall your heart simply and quietly. Do not smother yourself with a host of cares, wishes, or longings under any pretext." Is such a calm, strong life possible for everyday people who are not saints? Yes; for faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Our part is simply to give ourselves so fully to him that he can fulfill in us the good pleasure of his will.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Notice Thessalonica on the map; Paul's visit and preaching; the founding of the church; a review of the last lesson; where the apostle was when writing this epistle; its subject; its purpose. . . . Coming now to the lesson, notice the leading thought of the study verses—Christ's coming, and the comfort and hope of his people. How Christians should regard the coming of the Lord. . . . Notice the leading thought of our lesson. It is well phrased in the Golden Text: "Hold fast that which is good."

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Blackboard.



Our lesson presents an array of duties positive and negative; there are virtues to follow and evil practices to forsake. The Christians are exhorted to warn, comfort, and support others and to preserve peace; and in their own lives to rejoice, pray, and give thanks. On the other hand, they are warned not to quench the Spirit or despise prophesying; and to avoid even the appearance of evil. With the word of wisdom there is the word of warning; for the good and evil must in some manner be dealt with by all men. If we would choose aright we must first with heavenly wisdom and a renewed mind "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." The sequel will be a sanctified life, preserved blameless by the grace of the Lord Jesus.

Coloring.—Scroll, light brown, cream outline; pen, yellow; top and bottom lines, white filled in purple; others, red.

Primary Teachers' Department.

Trust the Children.

Trust the children. Never doubt them,
Build a wall of love about them ;
After sowing seeds of duty,
Trust them for the flowers of beauty.
Trust the children just as He did
Who for "such" once sweetly pleaded,
Trust and guide, but never doubt them,
Build a wall of love about them.

Primary [Notes.

A Happy New Year !

"Ye have not passed this way heretofore."

A new way, a new opportunity, and therefore a new and added responsibility. How may it be met ?

This is the day of special training for special work. Who more than the primary teacher needs the most painstaking preparation for the delicate and difficult, yet most delightful of all work, dealing with the sensitive soul of a little child !

A primary teacher's notebook may become an invaluable help. If you have not yet found this out begin at once to put down in some convenient form such everyday hints and helps as may be of use in preparing the next Sunday's lesson. Keep eyes and ears open as you walk and talk. Note the familiar things, and lay them under tribute to light up your lesson way. Soon the class will catch the inspiration of your alertness. They will say, "Teacher was thinking about us when she went to walk. Guess she cares whether we know our lesson."

A Danger Point.

The Epworth Herald has called attention in a recent editorial to a danger we do well to recognize and guard against. It is the danger of thinking of and preaching to children as if they did not need the converting grace of God, as if they could glide into the Christian life without

any spiritual change. As The Herald says, speaking of such teachers, "They may not intend to do so, but they really make the impression that, so far as children are concerned, regeneration is an unnecessary experience. They teach spiritual evolution. Their ideal children are never consciously adopted into the family of God. They just grow into goodness."

Now, we believe that the church is just waking up to the fact that her great and most hopeful field of usefulness is in connection with the young. We are glad, and more than glad, that during the last decade that so much attention has been given to them and to their religious life and its culture. We are glad, too, that the great psychological facts in connection with the period of youth and adolescence are being generally studied, and are being made to add emphasis to the argument for devoting special effort to saving our young people."

The younger that children can be brought to God the better. The sooner they are led to understand their duty and privilege of forgiveness and regeneration and to lay hold of Jesus as Saviour and Guide the better. Before the conscience grows callous, before habit with evil trend grows into evil character, while the heart can be readily touched and the evil readily turned to good, that surely is of all times the convenient time for salvation. The river that grows wide and torrent-like and hard to cross in adult life may be crossed at a step in childhood. Conversion is easy, simple, natural, swift. The agony of mature souls under conviction of sin is not felt, the sense of relief when the burden of sin is removed is of course less. But if conversion is there, these things, really and substantially, though, of course in less degree, will be there too. If conversion is real, forgiveness and regeneration will be there, recognized and exemplified in consciousness and character. But let us not make the terrible mistake of teaching our children that anything short of or other than conversion—the sin forgiven, the heart made new—can fit them for the service of God here or the presence of God hereafter.—Wesleyan.

The Primary Teacher's New Year Budget.

BY A PRACTICAL PRIMARY TEACHER.

A BUDGET is literally a bag. The useful bag holds a variety of things. "Budget" is, ultimately, a comprehensive word for statement, or statements, usually in reference to finances. But there is a realm where thought and opportunity and high resolve form the current coin. Into this kingdom of time comes the new ruler. He comes to his coronation when he comes to his kingdom, not when he leaves it, and so we hail The Year, and crown him. Now let us see what is the budget of the new administration. What has it for the primary teacher in her world? In this time of beautiful beginnings we must cast about to see "the things before," since "the past is God's country and we cannot go back there!" We must press forward now.

If we open the New Year's budget we shall find it filled with admonitions, suggestions, incentives, which we must put to the exchangers and turn into resolutions, and then into deeds. The work is important, the need pressing; the opportunity priceless, the plea urgent. Come, it is for each of us. What shall we do, and how? Let us look and see.

Here is a hint that comes to hand, and we may as well take it out first:

Give attendance to reading. Paul said this to Timothy, but we may use it as practically, and in the most extended sense. Are we really making use of this means of grace as we should? Think of the books written especially "for our learning" in these days. Are we using them? Just let me whisper it low, and you need not "tell it in Gath:" There are teachers, in surprising numbers, as discovered in various conventions—not in your county, of course—who have yet before them the great pleasure and profit of reading such books in the Primary Training Course, as *Point of Contact*, by Du Bois, and *Study of Child Nature*, by Elizabeth Harrison, and the rest. These are to be congratulated on the pleasure in store, but what of the loss of time up to the present?

If you happen to know any such teachers, talk over with them the great advantage of studying, or at least reading, the books recommended by the International Association and Primary Union as helps in training teachers. Instead of taking the long path of individual experience through many failures, use the short way, offered by these books which make available the study, research, and experience of others.

Lacking the advantage of study in a Primary or Teachers' Union, or personal ownership of the books of the course, there should be, if possible, a circulating library containing the four special ones (any county primary superintendent can give particulars) in the school, the town, or the district. A plan found feasible is to appoint a librarian to receive contributions from a quarter up, for purchase of books, send for and circulate them, allowing two weeks for reading of each, and signifying to whom to pass it on.

But what else is in the budget?

Exchange Experiences. Reading is not enough. Talking helps. Let us discuss our work with fellow-workers, attend Primary Unions, Institutes, and Conventions, or, failing these opportunities, visit other classes.

Isolation is narrowing; observation, broadening. Let us give and gain by interchange.

What next?

Make Lesson Study More Definite. We should prepare for review by preview of quarter's lessons. Let us decide upon the line of thought to follow, and maintain continuity of teachings. Truth must be prepared before it can be presented. Fragments taste of the loaf, but Jesus had them gathered in baskets. Let us bring them together, that they may be carried away. This mental discipline is part of teacher-training.

And then?

Secure Home Study by the Class. We should teach the children how to use the cards and quarterlies given. The habit of lesson study should begin in our department. Marking for lessons learned is wise. A card tied with pin-ribbon ready to be hung up at home may bear the words, "I have studied the lesson story and learned the Golden Text of Lessons I, II, III, IV, V," and so on, up to twelve, one number to be crossed out for each lesson, and card signed and returned at end of quarter.

We cannot exhaust the year's budget at once. But let us be on the alert for each new unfolding of duty, privilege, and opportunity. Are we using every offered advantage, and reaching forth for more? At this season of beginnings let us bring our material, methods, and motives afresh to Him whose commission to us is, "Feed my lambs." The nail-scarred hands have set us apart to this dear work. Remember, we are not to amuse but to feed them, and he will fold them. Then, let us lead them to him.

"Since life for us no loftier aim can hold
Than leading little children in the light."

Hymn Studies.

BY MARY A. LATHBURY.

[It is suggested that five minutes be given each Sunday to the simplifying and singing of the verse for the day, reviewing the preceding verse or verses as the weeks go by.]

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more."

More than two hundred years ago there lived in England a good minister named Isaac Watts. He had many thoughts about the Lord and his kingdom on earth, and often they ran through his mind like the music of a great organ. Then he would sit down and pour it out in a hymn of praise. Once when he was thinking how the kingdom of Christ had spread from land to land his heart was filled with faith, and he believed the sacred words that he had often read, that the whole earth should be filled with the glory of the Lord. He looked at the great sun, and knew that every day its light fell all around the rolling world, and he knew that wherever the sun's light fell the light and truth of the Maker of all suns would shine in the hearts of men. He also looked at the ocean with the moon lighting up its waves, and he thought of its shores touching many nations, and, though the name of Jesus had not yet been heard in some of them, by faith he saw them shining under the light of the Gospel.

"From north to south the princes meet,
To pay their homage at his feet;
While western empires own their Lord,
And savage tribes attend his word."

When Isaac Watts wrote these words he was trying to see what God had promised. He saw that for hundreds of years the heads of many nations had called themselves Christians, and many of them did not have the spirit of Christ. The worship of Christ had also begun in the new colonies of North America, and though he could not have believed that so great a nation would cover it within a hundred and fifty years, yet he did see a "western empire where the Lord himself would reign over people of different colors and languages." He saw the savage tribes of Indians from Alaska to Mexico, and from Labrador to Florida, learning the story of the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Looking beyond America, he saw the great Pacific Ocean with its many islands, and though they were the homes of ignorant savages he knew that God had said the isles should wait for his law, and he saw them listening to the word of the Lord brought to them by missionaries.

"To him shall endless prayer be made,
And endless praises crown his head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice."

The author of this beautiful hymn listened with the ears of his spirit, and he heard a great murmur—the prayers of countless people all around the world. He heard it from the people worshipping in the churches, and from the people in their own homes, and from little children at their mothers' knees. He heard the hymns of praise that are sung over all the earth in churches and halls and homes, and under the open sky. All through it he heard the sound of the name that is above every name—the name of Jesus. When the Jews worshiped centuries ago they offered sacrifices of beasts and of incense. When the smoke of the incense rose up through the air they thought it carried their prayers with it to God. So when the sound of prayer and praise rises through the air we believe the worship of our hearts is rising to God. In the morning—and it is always morning somewhere all around the earth—the morning prayers and hymns that are said and sung are rising to God, and every evening it is the same. Though there are so many, he hears the whispered prayer of every child.

"People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on his love with sweetest song,
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on his name."

Did you ever think that when the English and French and Germans and Russians and all the people of strange countries are singing together that it would make a sound that is not pleasant? So it would in this world, but the song of love and praise is a song of the soul, and there is one great spiritual language by which every child of God speaks to him. He does not hear the strange and different languages of the countries of the earth, but he hears the voice of our spirits when we pray or sing to him, whether we be in Europe, or Asia, or Africa, or America. And it is not only the wise and the great and the rich that he hears; he hears the simple and the lowly and the poor. It is not only the men and the women that he loves to listen to; it is the little children. Do you remember how pleased our Lord was when the children in the temple sang "Hosanna, Hosanna to the son of David"? Let some wish to stop them, but he would not let them. So it has always been, and now when all over our land and other lands the children of the Sunday schools sing praises to him he listens and is pleased.

International Bible Lessons.

FIRST QUARTER.

LESSON I. (January 4.)

PAUL AND SILAS AT PHILIPPI. Acts 16.
22-34.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16. 31.

Primary Notes.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.



cause they had seen a witness, and to be a witness is to tell what one has seen. Well, we have messengers and witnesses here, it seems.

Which is better, to do everything one's self, or to let many help? Jesus took this last way. Long ago we studied about his life on earth, and how at last he died and rose again and went back to heaven. Before he went he told his friends and followers that they must be messengers and witnesses for him, carrying his word, and telling what they knew. The book of the Acts of the Apostles (or messengers) is all about the acts, or doings of Jesus's friends, that he left to do his work.

These men went everywhere, as he told them. They were missionaries, another word for messengers. One Sunday we learned how Paul, who was the one Jesus met on the road to Damascus and made him a messenger too, went over to Macedonia to tell of Jesus there. At a prayer meeting by the water side a woman named Lydia was the first one to believe the word of the messengers about Jesus. Paul and Silas, Luke and Timothy were together. To-day we are to hear a wonderful story about Paul and Silas.

Here let teacher explain that such lessons must not be forgotten. As a help to remember, we will have a truth each week to carry home, and we will call it after a little blue flower, a forget-me-not. These lessons are Jesus's forget-me-nots. He wants us to think of him.

Each Sunday let the forget-me-not truths be

written on the board. If class is small give out on first Sunday tiny books made by folding a sheet of paper and tying with pin ribbon. A spray of forget-me-nots on first page would greatly enhance the value. Or, little blank books that can be cheaply bought can be given out. Show that on a certain line and page the lesson truth is to be written each week. At close of quarter these books are to be brought and shown. Encourage scholars to draw or paint the flower on the pages or cut out some flower and paste on each page. Anything to stimulate work at home.

Our memories are so short we must ask Jesus to help us not to forget. Teach this lesson hymn-verse for the quarter, tune Webb.

"Dear Lord, we would remember
Thy word to us to-day;
Upon our hearts forever
O write it down, we pray!
Not one of thy dear children
Hast thou, O Lord, forgot;
In work and play be near us,
May we forget thee not."

Encourage children to sing this verse at home. Ask occasionally if they have done it.

Gather to-day's lesson about the persons. We hear about some

Prisoners. Who were they? Why put in prison? In what city? Which punishment makes one more unhappy, the deserved or undeserved? What did Paul and Silas do that the other prisoners heard? A strange place and time for a praise meeting. But Jesus was with them. That was enough. Teach "Lo I am with you always." So we have

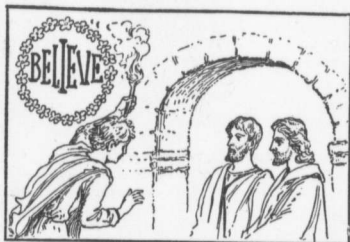
THE APOSTLES IN PRISON RAISING GOD.

The Jailer. Tell how safely he kept the prisoners, how he found the doors open after the earthquake. Give story vividly and dwell upon his

Question, and the *Answer.* He did as he was told, and showed his faith by kindness to Jesus's friends.

Forget-me-not: Believe. What is it to believe? A messenger comes to prison door and says, "You are free." The prisoner believes when he takes the messenger at his word. Paul and Silas saw prison doors open and believed that Jesus meant to save them. The jailer heard about Jesus and trusted him to save him, not from prison but from sin. Do you believe that Jesus means what he says? Do you act as if you really took him at his word?

Thought for Teachers. Do we now believe? Do we trust Jesus to loose our bonds, to make us messengers for him—now and here? Can we teach the children what faith is because we "have heard him ourselves and know"? It is easy for a child to believe, but let us lead the confiding child-heart to know and trust Jesus, not merely to have faith in us.



LESSON II. (January 11.)

CHRISTIAN LIVING. Phil. 4. 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Rejoice in the Lord alway."
Phil. 4. 4.

Primary Notes.



Approach. Make the point of contact a letter. Show children one that has given you pleasure. Why are letters pleasant and welcome? They give us news of friends, show us that we are not forgotten, and bring us lov-

ing words. When we cannot talk together we can write to each other. Paul wrote a letter. In this introductory talk bring in persons, places, and review of last lesson. Produce envelope upon which has been written the address of Paul's letter, found in Phil. 1. 1: "To all the saints in Christ Jesus, bishops, and deacons, in Philippi."

Show that the postmark of this letter is Rome. Draw hasty outline on board to show relative positions of Rome and Philippi. Recur to last lesson to show beginning of work in Philippi; review story of jailer briefly, and tell of the church gathered in that city of Macedonia after Jesus's messengers went there to "help." Paul has not forgotten them, you see. He has written to them and it has made them glad. We must learn to-day about

Paul's Letter. Show this in the Bible to children. Then take sheet from envelope saying that you have copied a few of the many things Paul wrote. First, he thanks God for them whenever he thinks of them. (Do your friends do this for you? Do you make them as glad as that?) Then he says he prays for them. (Do you pray for your friends?) After this he goes on to tell them what Jesus wishes them to do. No wonder this letter made the Philippians glad. We will write on board, after a big letter S why Paul wrote this letter. He did it to

SEND HIS LOVE,
SAY HE PRAYED FOR THEM,
SHOW THEM WHAT TO DO.

The Message for To-day. Paul's letter is for us, too. Jesus had it written down in his book for us. We can't remember all of it, but part of it is the message meant for us now. Here it is (Read from the sheet): "Rejoice in the Lord alway." Here stop to get this Golden Text by heart. Explain what it is to rejoice, in whom, and why we should do it, no matter what comes to us—little people, big people, and all, always.

Go on with Paul's message. He says, "Be careful for nothing." That means, "Don't be troubled." Then, of course, we can be glad. Why? He says "The God of peace shall be with you." Yes, that is written down, and it is true. Why be frightened or sad if God is with us? Then Paul says we as well as the Philippians must think about the things that are true and pure and lovely. You see he shows exactly what to do. We must just be glad, and do right. If we believe that Jesus is with us always, and if we try to please him, thinking and doing what is true, pure, and lovely, of course we will be glad always? What can make us sorry? Sinning makes us sorry. Loving, trusting, and obeying will make us happy.

Do you love to see others glad? Isn't it pleasanter than seeing them cry and fret? Do your friends love to see you happy? Does Jesus love to see you pleased and thankful and bright-faced? Indeed he does. It is one way to please him. It is really one of the commandments. It is he who says, "Rejoice alway."

Tell some little simple story contrasting a happy and an unhappy child.

Forget-me-not: Rejoice. This is the lovely flower we are to take home to-day. Talk a little further about joy and the reasons for it. Bring in the songs of happy birds. Do you

love singing birds? Does Jesus love them? But singing children are better. They know more than birds. Speak of angels' songs. But God hears also the song of tiniest child.

Thought for Teachers. Let us learn that the "joy of the Lord is our strength." Let us give the children living examples. Let us learn, and also teach joy "IN HIM," in spite of sad things, not merely enjoyment of a good time.



LESSON III. (January 18.)

PAUL AT THESSALONICA AND BEREA.

Acts 17. 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet." Psa. 119. 105.

Primary Notes.



Approach. A little talk about light. In an unlighted street, what does a man need to light his feet? A lamp or a lantern. One does not need light for the way behind but before him. He holds the lantern so as to

throw light on the path. Then he follows the light. It would be strange to turn and go the other way in the dark. One must walk in the light of his lamp to go right. But even in the day one needs some way to guide the feet aright. One must know the right path. Knowledge is a sort of light because it shows the way to go. Sometimes we call it wisdom. Did Paul have light for his way? Did he walk in the light? What book and whose word gave him knowledge of what to do and where to go? God's book and word. He loved to tell others about it and get them to take this light for their way, walking always in it.

These lessons are all about this great man

Paul. First we have the prisoner Paul, showing his jailer how to know Jesus, then Paul writing a letter, and to-day we have Paul and the Bible. He was on a missionary journey, going about as Jesus's messenger. Now we are to find out what he did at two different places. First,

Paul at Thessalonica. (See map.) Where do we find him, on what day, and doing what? In the Jews' church, on the Sabbath, talking to them out of the Bible. He wanted them to walk in the light, to know where to go by having knowledge of God's word. A man named Jason took Paul to his house.

How did the people of that city act? Did they try to learn more of God's word? Did they try to walk in the light of God's truth and love? O no. It is a sad story, but they would not have the light; that is, many would not. Many did believe Jesus's word, listening to Paul as he told it, but others were vexed to hear the truth. They did not wish to have the wonderful light. They turned away and went on in the dark, doing wrong and hating Paul because he told them of the true Light. They went to Jason's house and tried to get Paul out, and they made great trouble in the city. At last they let them go, on Jason's promise to keep from making any trouble, and at once Jason and the rest sent Paul and Silas away to another place where they would be safe from these angry Jews.

Paul at Berea. Jesus told his friends that when they were treated unkindly in one place to go to another. Paul and Silas did this. So they came to Berea. Here things were different, and why? The story says that the people were more noble than in the other city, for they read the Bible to find out if what Paul said was true. They found that it was. The Bible was a light to them, and they were ready and glad to walk in the light. Every day they searched, or looked carefully through the Bible. It wasn't enough to do this on the Sabbath. One needs light every day. These noble Bereans were glad to have Paul and Silas with them, as they preached about Jesus and gave them his word.

Forget-me-not: Walk in Light. As the sun gives us light for our feet, that we may not fall, so Jesus's word shows us the way to go to reach him at last—the true and right way. Do as the Bible says and you will walk in light, for David says, "Thy word is a lamp to my feet." (Explain Golden Text and teach it.)

Thought for Teachers. How much actual, personal faith have we in the guidance of our

feet by the word? Let us get this lesson by heart and then seek to instill into young hearts implicit trust and obedience, taking The Word as guide.



LESSON IV. (January 25.)

PAUL'S COUNSEL TO THE THESSALONIANS. 1 Thess. 5. 14-28.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Hold fast that which is good." 1 Thess. 5. 21.

Primary Notes.



Approach. Once upon a time a girl went far away from home to a big college. There were hundreds of other girls there and Mary was a stranger to all. There were many teachers, but it was impossible for each teacher

to know each one of those hundreds of girls. At first Mary did not know whom to ask, which one to go to when she wished to know anything about the lessons or what she should do. Very soon she was told that one of the teachers was to be her adviser. This meant that Miss Gray was to advise Mary, give her advice, that is, tell her what to do, and how to do things, and speak to her about her lessons or the way she behaved. Each teacher was adviser to a number of girls, and these girls could go to her in any trouble, or whenever they wished advice or help. It was a very good arrangement. Now there is another word for adviser, and that is counselor. A counselor gives counsel, and that means the same as advice. We have the word counsel in lesson title. We have Paul giving counsel, or telling the church in Thessalonica what to do. He wrote a letter to them, as he

did to the Philippians, and gave them wise words telling them what to do. You remember how Paul and Silas were driven out of Thessalonica by those angry Jews. But there were many there, not Jews, who believed in Jesus, and were gathered into a church. These were called Gentiles. The church was almost made up of these. All not Jews were Gentiles. Paul wrote two letters to his church in Thessalonica, which was one hundred miles from Philippi. We have part of one of these letters to-day to help us, for we need counsel or advice, too. We need to be told what to do.

The Counsel. Paul says these people must hold fast that which is good. To hold fast is not to let go. A man carrying a box of precious things would not set it down a moment for fear of losing it. He held fast to it till he got it safe home. It was a box of treasure worth much. He would have been poorer if he had lost it.

Another man, going across the seas with a treasure of gold, sewed it into a belt and wore it around his waist. In a storm he was thrown into the water, but he would not drop that belt. He might have floated on a board and been saved, but he held fast to the gold, which was so heavy that he sunk with it. He held fast to something not good at such a time.

Things to Keep. Paul tells of many good things to be kept fast. We will only try to remember three that begin with P.

PATIENCE.
PRAYER.
PRAISE.

(Write on board.)

To be patient is not to complain, not to grumble about what doesn't please us, and to bear



kindly with others' mistakes. Hold fast to this. Don't let go and get vexed. Keep on with prayer, always, and always praise God for what

he gives and does. (Enlarge upon and impress these "good things.")

Forget-me-not Thought: Hold Fast. This is the lesson to take home. It isn't enough to take up any good thing; we must not let go. What a pity to lose any treasure, or to stop after beginning a good work. Hold fast, keep on.

Thought for Teachers. Study the art of illustration from child-life. Come down to level of childish experiences in school, at home, on the playground. What tries patience there? How can children be thankful and prayerful? Let us come close enough to help the little ones to hold fast the good things.

Joy in Service.

IF we want to do something for Christ, God will open up the way for us to do it, and teach us how, and whether it be by word of mouth, or by a line of writing, or by the handed invitation or leaflet, it will be blessed, for he loves a cheerful worker, and will crown his attempt with blessing.

AND so let us give thanks to God. Nature is beautiful, and fellow-men are dear, and duty is close beside us, and he is over us and in us.

Whisper Songs for January.

FIRST LESSON.

Lord, help thy little child to be
In joy or sorrow true to thee,
And then, whatever ills may come,
Thy faithful hand will lead us home.

SECOND LESSON.

Lord, let thy little children know
The joys that from the heavens flow.
To listen ever for the voice
That makes the saddest souls rejoice.

THIRD LESSON.

Dear Saviour, when we hear thy voice
Help us to make thy way our choice,
And then, though lonely it may be,
We shall be led to heav'n and thee.

FOURTH LESSON.

Dear Lord, we are not strong to hold
Great power, or fame, or lands, or gold,
But give us strength, we pray, to take
All good and truth for thy dear sake.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

First Quarter.

DOXOLOGY (*said or sung*). "Praise God," etc.

Teacher. O God, thou art my God,
Class. Early will I seek thee.

T. O thou that hearest prayer,

C. Unto thee shall all flesh come.

T. I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,

C. Whence cometh my help.

CONCERT RECITATION.

(Class seated with bowed heads and closed eyes, recite in concert:)

Dear Lord, we come before thee now;

Our eyes we close, our heads we bow;

Our great and kind and loving Friend,

Unto Thy children's prayer, attend!

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

Together:

Like a shepherd Jesus will guard his children,

In his arms he carries them all the day long;

Praise him! praise him! tell of his excellent
greatness,

Praise him! praise him! ever in joyful song.

SINGING. (A joyful song of praise.)

GIVING SERVICE.

Teacher. Who is the great Giver?

Class. God, our loving Father.

T. What does he love to give to us?

C. All good things.

T. What is the greatest gift of his love?

C. Jesus, our Saviour.

T. What should we learn to do?

C. To freely and gladly give to him.

RECITATION.

Little children, come and bring
Willing gifts to Christ your King:
Many offerings, though but small,
Make a large one from you all.

OFFERINGS received, followed by consecration prayer.

BIRTHDAY SERVICE, with offering.

HYMN STUDY.

MOTION EXERCISE.

Two little hands for loving labor given;
Two little feet to walk the road to heaven;
Two little eyes to read God's holy word;
Two little lips to praise the blessed Lord;
One little soul to serve with all its might;
So should we live, always in Jesus' sight.

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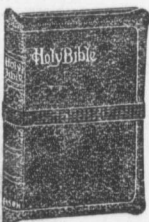
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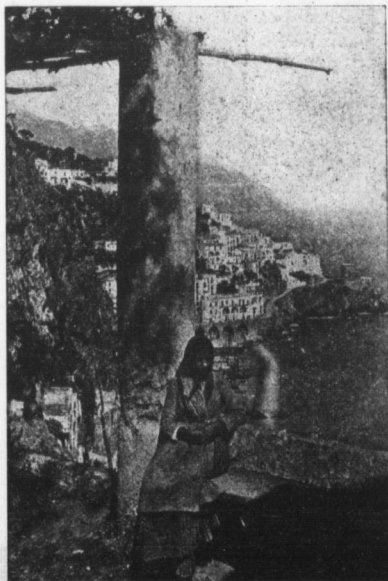
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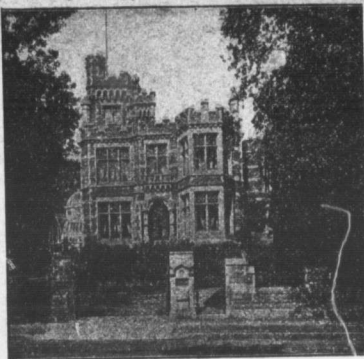


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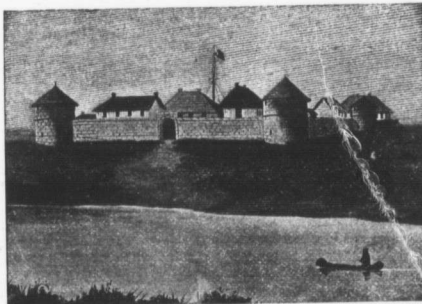
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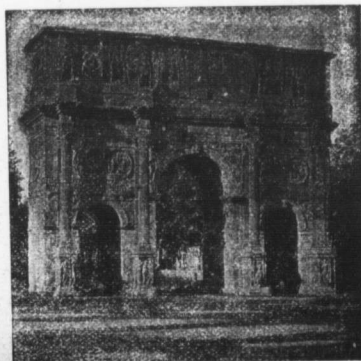
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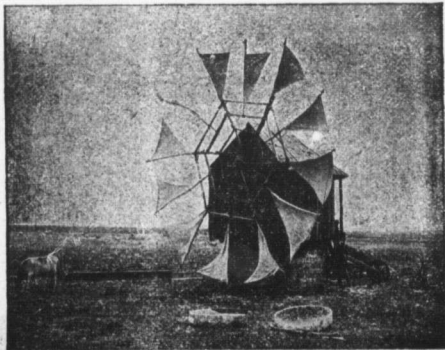
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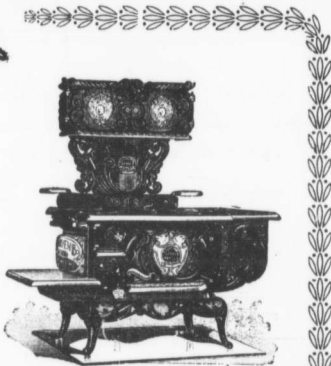
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