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The Teachers' Monthly.

Vol. II.

MAY, 1896.

No. 5.

COURSE OF STUDY IN BIBLE HISTORY.

We would draw the attention of our Sabbath School teachers to the new course in history contained in the Syllabus of Higher Religious Instruction for 1896. The history of the church in Scotland gives way to a four years' study of Bible history under the guidance of Dr. Blaikie. The text-book is unique in its plan and comprehensive in its scope. We cannot give a better idea of its contents than by quoting from the author's preface.

"The purpose of this work is to enable students of the Bible to grasp the whole course of history which it contains, both in its outline and in its details, and to indicate and apply the great lessons which the history is designed to convey. For this end—

1. It follows the stream of the Bible narrative, arranging and classifying the leading facts, so as to aid the eye and the memory in grasping the whole.

2. It keeps in view, throughout, the great spiritual purpose of Revelation, and shows its gradual development.

3. For illustrating the narrative, it takes advantage of the mass of Biblical illustration of which recent years have been so prolific, in researches, monuments, travels, and expeditions in Bible lands.

4. It notices briefly the chief countries, towns, and other scenes of Bible history as they occur; bringing before the reader the facts that contribute most to the full understanding of what is said of them in the Bible.

5. It glances at the parallel history and progress of the leading nations of the world—showing what was going on elsewhere while the history of the Bible was being enacted.

6. It traces the progress of religious knowledge, and of the revelation by which it was made known, and the state of social and spiritual life at different periods, partly in other nations, but especially among the Israelites.

7. It fills up the interval between the Old Testament and the New, so as to throw light on the great changes that had occurred between the time of Malachi and the appearance of our Lord.

It is generally acknowledged that in these days of diligent learning and competitive examinations, Bible knowledge is not so much attended to as it ought to be. The present work is intended to aid in remedying that defect. In an elementary book on the subject, entitled "Outline of Bible History and Geography," the bare facts will be found in a convenient and compendious form; in this treatise the facts form the groundwork, but it has been attempted to bring flesh and skin over them, and turn the whole into a continuous and lively narrative.

We hope that many of our Bible Classes and Young Peoples' Societies will be attracted by this course. Medals, prizes and diplomas are granted, without restriction as to age, to all who come up to the required standard in the grade to which they severally belong. By a special arrangement the text-book is offered at the very low price of eighty-one cents, less than two-thirds of the ordinary retail price. The following is the course as laid down in the Syllabus for copies of which and all information regarding the examinations write to **Rev. W. Farquharson, Claude, Ont.**, Vice-Convenor for Higher Religious Instruction.

DEPARTMENT III.—HISTORICAL.

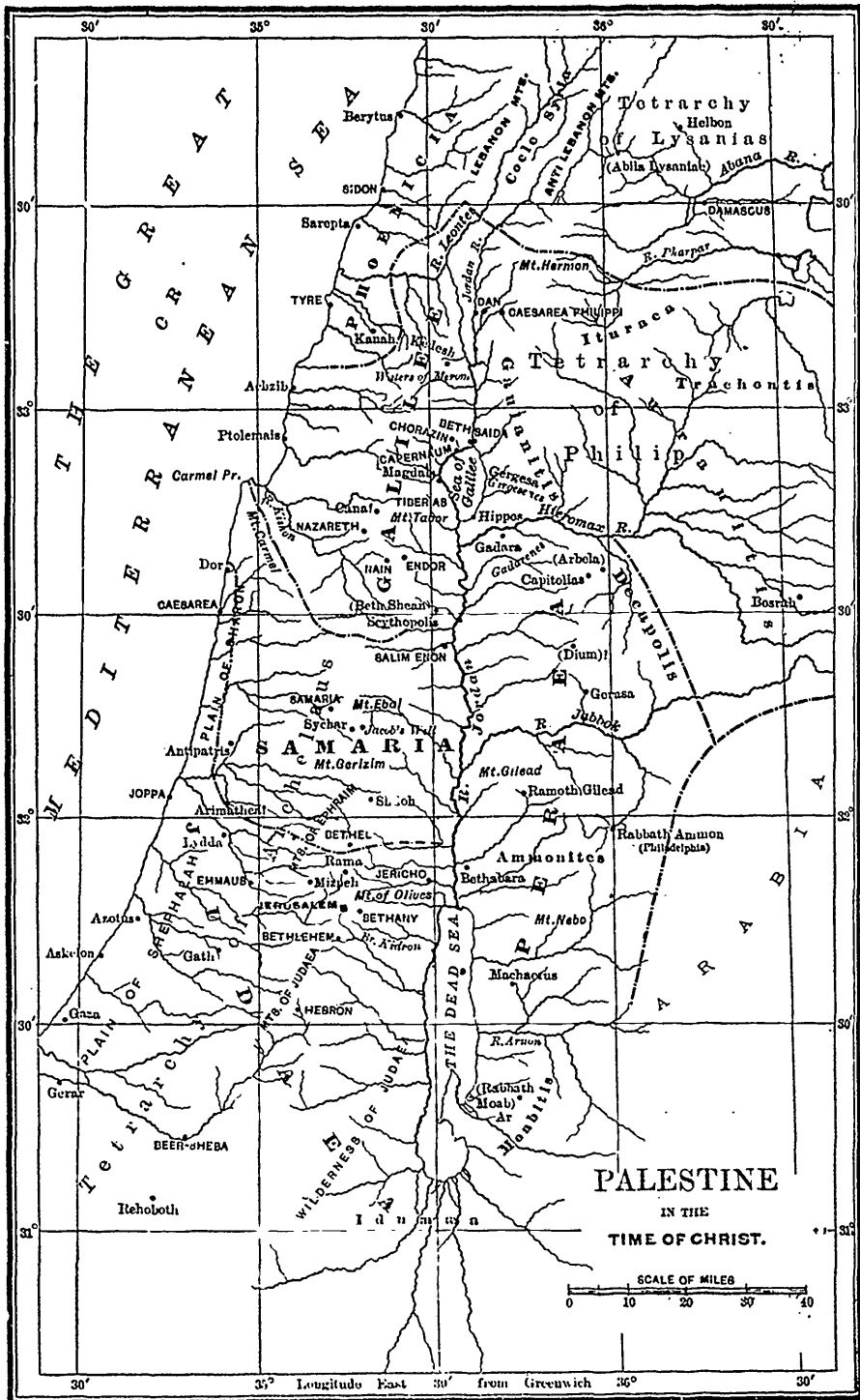
All Grades.—Bible History from the Creation to the Death of Moses. Text-book "A Manual of Bible History," by Rev. William G. Blaikie, D. D., LL. D. Pages 1-163. By special arrangement with the publishers, the text-book can be obtained for *eighty-one cents* if ordered through the convenor, or vice-convenor, or if the money is remitted direct to the publishers—The Copp, Clark Co., Ltd., Toronto.

The course in this subject will extend over four years:

1897—Bible History from the death of Moses to that of Solomon. Text-book, pages 164-266.

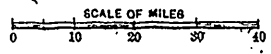
1898—Bible History from the death of Solomon to Malachi. Text-book, pages 267-381.

1899—Bible History from Malachi to the destruction of Jerusalem. Text-book, pages 382-495.



PALESTINE

IN THE
TIME OF CHRIST.



Longitude East from Greenwich

Notes on the Lessons.

LESSON V—May 3rd, 1896.

Faith. LUKE 17: 5-19.

(Commit to memory verses 17-19).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Lord, increase our faith." Luke 17: 5.

PROVE THAT—We should give thanks always. Eph. 5: 20.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 57. *Which is the fourth commandment?* A. The fourth commandment is, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 132, 133, 103, 140.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Faith. Luke 17: 5-19. *Tuesday.* The law of cleansing. Lev. 14: 21-32. *Wednesday.* Naaman cured. 2 Kings 5: 8-14. *Thursday.* Confidence trust. Psalm 27. *Friday.* Faith and sight. John 20: 24-31. *Saturday.* Both able and willing. Mark 1: 35-45. *Sabbath.* Heroes of Faith. Heb. 11: 32-40. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

By Rev. JAB. A. BROWN, B. A., Agincourt, Ont.

INTRODUCTORY. The discourse contained in the first part of chapter 17 (vs. 1-10) was probably delivered directly after the parable in our last lesson. Between verses 10 and 11 we must insert John 11: 1-54. The lepers were healed as Jesus journeyed from Ephraim to Jerusalem, by way of Persea.

LESSON PLAN. I. Faith Working. vs. 5-10. II. Faith Pleading. vs. 11-14. III. Faith saving. vs. 15-19.

I. FAITH WORKING. Christ had just been enjoining on his apostles one of the hardest duties in life, that of unwearingly exercising a forgiving spirit towards such as may be guilty of oft-committed injuries against us. 5. Increase our faith—Conscious of their own inability to obey the duty enjoined, and knowing the source and nature of the all-sufficient remedy the apostles pleaded for an increase of faith. Faith is a personal gift, divinely bestowed (Eph. 2: 8), capable of increase only to the child of prayer. Increase of faith implies an increase of every other grace, and the cultivation of a loving disposition, and a greater readiness to forgive offences. 6. Mustard seed—The smallest of all seeds, not absolutely, but popularly and proverbially so (Matt. 13: 32). Sycamore tree—the black mulberry, quite distinct from the sycomore; "cultivated in Palestine chiefly for its leaves, the favorite food of the silk worm." And it would obey you (R. V.)—The marvellous possibilities to a little real faith, that faith which is the evidence of the new birth, "the victory that overcometh the world" (1 John 5: 4). There is nothing impossible to faith (Matt. 17: 20), in so far as it is for the glory of God, and the confirmation of the truth. Difficulties in the spiritual life, apparently as insuperable as the displacing of a mountain, or the uprooting of a great tree, are possible to the child of faith (Mark 9: 23). 7. A servant ploughing or keeping sheep (R. V.)—

Jesus answers the apostles' request by a parable, teaching them that with a small measure of faith, coupled with the spirit of patience and humility, they would be able to keep themselves from transgressing against the law of love and charity of which he had warned them. Servants in the east were practically slaves, enjoying no recognized rights, save the will and pleasure of their masters. Required to be ever ready in the field or in the home to minister to their masters' comfort and pleasure, not even in the hope of receiving a reward, much less any praise, but of necessity. "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn." 8. Gird thyself—As a servant waiting on the table (John 13: 4). It is all important to have our "loins girt about with truth" (Eph. 6: 14). 9. I trow not—I think, or believe not. 10. So likewise ye—Christians are not their own (1 Cor. 6: 19, 20), children not slaves. Sonship in the family of God implies a life, not of slavery and drudgery, but of freedom and holy living (2 Tim. 2: 19; Rom. 12: 2). A service worthy of the fullest self-surrender, and the consecration of all our gifts and powers to the Master's service. It is a life of co-partnership and fellowship (1 Cor. 3: 9; 1 John 1: 3-7). Unprofitable servants—As stewards of God's possessions we must not for a single moment allow the spirit of self-complacency and self-satisfaction to assert itself. We must ever cherish the spirit of loving, loyal and

obedient servants. We must cultivate the spirit of humility. The more we grow in the Christ-life, and the more the character of Christ is reproduced in us; the more exalted our views of Christ, the more humble will we grow. **Our duty**—Eternal life is the gift of God, not an attainment gained by merit or works of righteousness (Rom. 6: 23). We can never make God our debtor, or cause him in any respect to be under compliment to us. "The Christian system sets before us such incomparable excellency, that we are always coming short of it." (Pulpit Com.) Alas, the blindness and folly of such as confide in the efficacy of works of supererogation (Rom. 3: 27; 1 Cor. 4: 7).

II. FAITH PLEADING. 11. **As he went**—Jesus ever went about doing good. Jerusalem and the thrilling scenes soon to be enacted there were ever before his mind. **Through the midst**—Along the boundary line between Samaria and Galilee. The "must needs" of life are all, however, in perfect accord with the divine plans and purposes. 12. **A certain village**—not known. With what accuracy, even in detail, are some of the incidents in Christ's ministry recorded. **Ten men that were lepers**—Leprosy, the most loathsome disease, incurable, long regarded a type of sin, believed among the Jews to be a special mark of God's displeasure on account of some particular sin. "Was nothing short of a living death, a poisoning of the springs, a corrupting of all the humors of life, a dissolution little by little of the whole body, so that one limb after another actually decayed and fell away." (Trench). **Stood afar off**—In compliance with the requirements of the law (Lev. 13: 45, 46). National barriers and religious prejudices broken down by a common disease. "Companionship established between men that were excluded from all other fellowship." (Bruce). 13. **Lifted up their voices**—What a blessing that their power of speech had not been destroyed by their disease. They dared not approach him, but arrested his attention with their hoarse, pitiful cry. The legal distance which lepers were compelled to keep from passers by, was a hundred paces. **Have mercy on us**—Conscious of their need and utter helplessness, recognizing the presence of a willing and able helper, they cried aloud for mercy. It was no round-about-world sort of prayer. It was short, specific, earnest and reverent. 14. **Go shew yourselves unto**

the priests—When a leper was healed, before he could become a member of society, he was required to go and shew himself to the priest; make an offering and receive of the priest a certificate of cure (Lev. 14). Jesus was careful to see that the requirements of the law were duly heeded, "for he came, not to destroy, but to fulfil the law" (Matt. 5: 17). There was an implied assurance of healing in Christ's command. **As they went**—Not while they were sitting, but in the path of duty they were cleansed.

III. FAITH SAVING. 15. **One of them**—True character revealed. No doubt nine of them continued on their way to shew themselves to the priests in obedience to Christ's command. The tenth, upon realizing that he had been cleansed, immediately "returned to give glory to God," not in obedience, but acting under the power of the higher law of love and gratitude. Doubtless he went afterwards and shewed himself to the priest. Two duties, both right, (1) to give glory to God, (2) to shew themselves to the priests. The former the higher duty, and the lower duty must always give way before a higher (Matt. 8: 21, 22). 16. **Giving him thanks**—Thanksgiving is the first act of a truly grateful heart in recognition of favors and blessing received. **A Samaritan**—Apparently nine were Jews and one a Samaritan. The Samaritans were hated and despised by the Jews (John 8: 49; 4: 9). At the present day in Jerusalem in the leper-houses "abodes of the unfortunate," persons of different races, Jews and Mohammedans, associate together. Under no other circumstances would these mutually hostile people do this. 17. **But where are the nine?**—How common is the spirit of ingratitude! Think of the untold thousands that are discharged cured from the different hospitals in the land. How few of them "return to give glory to God." The many use their regained vigor to feed upon the "husks" of pleasure and worldliness. The process of winnowing and sifting character: Gideon's army of 32,000 reduced to 300. 18. **This stranger**—An alien. Gratitude is often shown where least expected (Luke 7: 37, 38). God deals with mankind as individuals, not in the mass (Luke 12: 6; Matt. 10: 30). 19. **Thy faith has saved thee** (R. V. marg.)—The Samaritan's faith "mediateiy;" but Christ's power "energetically" saved him.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

By Rev. R. H. ABRAHAM, D. Sc., Burlington, Ont.

1. *The importance of strong faith.* Unbelief is limiting in its influence. This limiting power was felt by our Lord. We are told that in certain places he could do no mighty work on account of the unbelief of the multitude. Our Lord illustrates the power and importance of faith by showing that even a small amount of active faith would be able to remove great obstacles and overcome many difficulties that are in the way. In view then of the many dangers,

difficulties and trials of life which can only be overcome by faith, the importance of the prayer of the apostle will be realized. The stronger our faith the more vigorous our lives, and the more we will inspire faith in others. The more faith is exercised the stronger it will become.

2. *Our service of Christ must be in humility.* We are not to imagine that by any service of ours we can merit any favor from Christ. When we have done our duty we have simply

done that which if left undone would place us under the condemnation of unfaithful servants. We have no ground for pride of heart, or exaltation of spirit in any service we render, for, though it be more than others do, yet it is only our duty. Even the most consecrated and devoted servants of the Lord when they do all they can must in humility acknowledge that they are unprofitable servants, having fallen far short of what God would have them to be.

3. *The cry of faith.* The lepers had no doubt heard of the power of Christ to heal the afflicted, probably from some one already healed. They believed that he who had healed others, who had even raised a man from the dead, could help them. Now that they see him in their midst they cry to him with all their might. They do not ask for alms; they ask for that help which only God can bestow. Their cry reveals the fact that at least they possess a degree of faith. Their faith is again manifested when in response to his command they immediately obeyed. It was done unto them according to their faith.

4. *The willingness and ability of Christ to help.* He is the Almighty God. During his whole ministry on earth he revealed his readiness and willingness to help those who came to him asking aid. None ever went away disappointed; none ever made an appeal in vain. Not only was he willing but he had the power to help. He is the same loving, sympathizing Lord to-day. As in the days of his ministry he delighted to relieve and bless, so now he delights to heal and save. He came to save and that to the uttermost. There is an all-sufficiency of help in the arm of the Lord;

there is an abundance of healing, cleansing virtue in the blood of Christ.

5. *Our Lord expects an expression of gratitude from those he helps and saves.* Our Lord calls special attention to the lack of gratitude in the hearts of the nine. "They all had stood the test of faith, they had walked out on the promise of the Lord, but the nine failed in the test of love. The one who returned, returned not in disobedience to the Lord, but yielding to the impulse of the higher duty of gratitude and love. Ingratitude is one of the most prevalent of vices in the world to-day, and, sad to relate, is too frequently to be found within the church. We are all more ready to ask God for what we need, than to thank him for what we have received. Let us pray for a spirit of love and gratitude; it is the spirit which God loves and delights to honor.

ADDED POINTS.

1. Faith is the main-spring of the moral machinery.
2. Faith is a humbling principle.
3. Faith will inspire faithfulness in service.
4. The Lord tests our faith and then rewards it.
5. If we would have blessings for Christ we must go to him in prayer.
6. Gratitude should be manifested for every benefit we receive.
7. Hearts that are truly grateful for earthly blessings are in the way of spiritual blessings.
8. Without faith it is impossible to please God.
9. By faith, and never without it, can the soul be made whole.

THE BLACKBOARD.

By Rev. D. STILES FRASER, Upper Stewiacke, N. S.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR

Teaching about

FAITH.

(Catechism 86.)

LET US PRAY;—"LORD INCREASE OUR FAITH."

FAITH, ^{a LIVING} ^{GROWING} ^{POWER.} (v. 6.)

HUMBLE, "Unprofitable servants." (v. 10.)

OBEDIENT, { "They rolled away the stone." (John 11: 41.)
"They went." (v. 14.)

REWARDED, { "They were cleansed." (v. 15.)
Lazarus raised. (John 11: 44.)
{ Made whole. (v. 19.)

He that believeth in the Son, hath everlasting life.

Impress NEED OF FAITH. Want of faith prevents the blessing, (Matt. 13: 58.) Now have all reverently bow, and join in the prayer,—“LORD INCREASE OUR FAITH.” A deep impression can thus be made on all hearts. Then take each point in the outline, and emphasize it, illustrating by references to marked passages; e. g. FAITH is a LIVING thing even if small,—“A mustard seed.”—a GROWING thing, when in proper conditions,—a POWER to root out evils, (v. 6.) to remove great barriers, (Matt. 11: 22, 23.) In like manner emphasize the other points, and conclude by enforcing the closing text.

LESSON VI—May 10th, 1896.

Lessons on Prayer. LUKE 18: 9-17.

(Commit to memory verses 15-17).

GOLDEN TEXT: "The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18: 13.

PROVE THAT—We should pray humbly. Eccl. 5: 2.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 58. *What is required in the fourth commandment?* A.

The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word, expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 45, 46, 213, 214.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Lessons in prayer. Luke 18: 1-8. *Tuesday.* Lessons in prayer. Luke 18: 9-17. *Wednesday.* Unacceptable prayer. Isaiah 1: 10-20. *Thursday.* Penitent prayer. Nehemiah 1. *Friday.* Humility in prayer. Psalm 25: 1-14. *Saturday.* Prayer for pardon. Psalm 51: 1-13. *Sabbath.* As little children. Matt. 18: 1-6. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. In the first part of the chapter our Lord impresses upon his disciples the duty of importunate prayer by the parable of the Unjust Judge. But prayer should also be offered in a humble spirit, a spirit of felt unworthiness and penitence. Self-righteousness is offensive to God, but the broken-hearted find mercy.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Pharisee. vs. 9-12. II. The Publican. vs. 13, 14. III. The Children. vs. 15-17.

I. THE PHARISEE. 9. This parable—Teaching by parable, one of the most interesting, attractive and instructive methods of teaching. The parable in the preceding verses teaches the need of perseverance and importunity in prayer. This parable "exhibits the spirit and conditions of effectual prayer." **Unto certain**—To whom or when spoken is uncertain, only they were persons in whom the pharisaic spirit displayed itself. **Trusted in themselves**—Self-satisfied, self-confident, self-deceived. Like the ostrich that buries its head in the sand in time of danger and thinks itself secure from its pursuers. **Righteous**—Not the righteousness that God appoints and approves (Rom. 1: 17); but a righteousness of their own (Phil. 3: 9). **Despised others**—"Set all others at nought" (R. V.) Everything must square with their standard of life and conduct. No beauty, no excellency of character outside that standard (Is. 65: 5). **10. The temple**—The temple stood on Mt. Moriah. There the daily sacrifices were offered, the great festivals celebrated. To the Jewish mind it was the only place where God could be worshipped acceptably (Jno. 4: 20). **To pray**—Prayer is an essential element in the religious life. It is a duty binding on every Christian, it is his highest privilege (Luke 18: 1; Matt. 21: 22). Prayer is to the soul what natural food is to the body. No spiritual growth, no communion and fellowship with Christ possible without prayer. **A Pharisee**—The pharisees were practically the leaders of religious thought and life among the Jews. They claimed to be "God's own elect," spoken of in (v. 7). They based their claim on two grounds, (1) because they belonged to the chosen race, they were descendants of Abraham, the father of the faithful, (2) because of their punctilious observance of the rites and ceremonies enjoined under the law. They considered themselves entitled to all the privileges and rights of the children of God. They were bitter and cruelly unjust in their denunciations against any who dared differ from their opinions, or "neglected rigidly to observe the ordinances and ritual of the law." **A publican**—A tax-gatherer. A class of persons despised and hated among the Jews. No respectable Jew could act as a publican. **11. Stood**—Standing was the usual posture in prayer. Standing or kneeling in prayer has scriptural warrant (2 Chr. 6: 13; Ezra. 9: 5; Dan. 6: 10; 1 Kings 8: 22; Mark 11: 25); but the custom that so widely obtains in many of our churches, that of sitting and bowing the head has none. It is the spirit however, not the place or attitude that gives value to prayer (Jno. 4: 23, 24), "stood" implies "being put in position," deliberately assuming a certain attitude. **With himself**—"Apart by himself"—or that he offered up a silent prayer. "Such a prayer he would not dare to offer up aloud." (Meyer). **God I thank thee**—A good beginning—the form commendable, but his spirit as revealed in what follows was selfish. Thanksgiving to God in a right spirit is praiseworthy; thanksgiving to God in a selfish spirit is blameworthy. This was no prayer but a eulogy upon self. "His spirit was censorious, his prayer a mere criticism." No adoration, no real thanksgiving, no confession of sin, no repentance, no supplication of mercy, wanting in all the true elements of prayer. Instead of praying he spent the time in telling God how good he himself was, and how bad others were. **Not as other men**—The root of all spiritual pride is the measurement of self by "other

men" instead of the standard of eternal truth. Measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves with themselves (such) are without understanding (2 Cor. 10: 12). **Extortioners**—"Rapacious, avaricious, who take away the goods of others by force and violence." (Barnes). **Unjust**—Acting dishonestly and dishonorably. **Adulterers**—Unchastity in thought as well as in act. God was not in his thoughts. It was all "I" which he mentions no less than five times. **12. Fast twice in the week**—(Over-religious, over-zealous in a life of doing, wholly regardless of a life of being. Alive as to the letter, but dead as to the spirit of acceptable service; straining at a gnat, but swallowing a camel (Matt. 23: 24). According to the Mosaic code, there was only one annual fast day appointed; the day of atonement (Lev. 16: 19). Instead of one the pharisee kept one hundred and four fast days in the year. **Give tithes of all that I get** (R. V.)—The law required tithes only of corn, wine, oil and cattle (Deut. 14: 22, 23). The pharisees were scrupulously exact in the matter of tithes, but culpably negligent of weightier things as mercy, judgment, and faith (Matt. 23: 23). The pharisee thought vainly to make God his debtor. "Religion with him was a mere matter of ritualism, and ceremonial observance." "The ministry of Jesus was a protest against a religion of form." **13. Standing afar off**—"Coming in merely and remaining in no studied place or position." "Afar off" from the pharisee, for fear, possibly, of offending him. His whole bearing gave evidence of a spirit of deep humility, reverence, and sincerity. "Not so much a self-consciousness as a God-consciousness. **So much as his eyes**—Conscious of his guilt he was ashamed to lift up his eyes. **Smote upon his breast**—An expression of grief and great distress. **Be merciful**—Under the power of deep conviction, awakened to a sense of his lost and sinful condition he cried aloud for mercy. "There can be no real prayer until that cry. The beginning of all prayer is taking the sinner's place, and the simple appeal to mercy." **A sinner**—"the sinner," or "sinner that I am." "Seeing that I am a sinner have mercy

on me." **14. Justified**—Accepted and approved of God. The pharisee brought his self-righteousness to the temple, and returned under a greater load of guilt and sin. The publican brought his sin and went down from the temple "justified," and with the favor of God. **Exalteth himself**—Self-exaltation always precedes abasement. **Humbleth himself**—Self-abasement always leads to exaltation. **15. Infants**—"Their babes" (R. V.) In all the covenant promises made with Abraham and since then, the children are included. None are too young to bring them to Jesus. **Touch them**—Not to teach them, they were too young for that, but to lay his hands on them and bless them (Matt. 19: 13-15; Mark 10: 13). **Rebuked them**—The parents, likely the mothers, as they thought it an unnecessary and uncalled for interruption. **16. Suffer little children**—Christ's "interest in the little children was real and for their own sake." **Forbid them not**—Do nothing to prevent them, or that may prove a hindrance in the way of their coming to Jesus. The promise is to us and to our seed (Acts 2: 39; 3: 25). **Of such is the kingdom of God**—The little child is represented as a type of the true disciple, in likeness, disposition, and spirit. All true believers irrespective of race, age, sex, or class, are all children in the great family of God (Rom. 8: 16, 17). **17. Receive the kingdom of God**—The kingdom of grace implanted within us by the Holy Spirit. It is a gift, unmerited favor. Cannot be obtained through merit, nor works of righteousness; it is all of grace, and must be received and enjoyed as such. Salvation is all of grace (Eph. 2: 8; Jno. 1: 12, 13). **As a little child**—Child characteristics, (1) Believes the word of the parent without question. (2) Real, says just what is in its mind. (3) Trustfulness, "confides itself and all that it has to its parents, wisdom and love." (4) Powerful imitator, learns more from example than from precept. (5) Grows up in the full enjoyment of the privileges of sonship in the home (Luke 15: 31). **Shall in no wise enter therein**—Wanting in childlikeness and disposition excludes from "the kingdom of God."

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *The duty of prayer is implanted in our nature.* It is a necessity of our being, called forth by our relation as needy, helpless, dependent creatures to that Being to whom we look up and whom we recognize as our creator, preserver and benefactor. The consciousness of this relation and condition of which prayer, in the natural expression, is born with us, and is common to our race. All men in some way and at some time or other pray. All implore the protection or deprecate the wrath of some real or imaginary deity. Prayer is prompted by a deep conviction of our need, a firm conviction that God alone can supply that need.

Prayer is the soul holding converse with God. It is an important duty, an absolute necessity, to our spiritual life because it is necessary to its continuance.

2. *The attributes of acceptable prayer.* They are such as flow from the heart under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who is the Author of all true prayer, viz., adoration, thanksgiving, confession and petition. See how beautifully they are combined in the prayer of the publican. In approaching God the believer is humbled when he compares his nothingness with God's greatness, his folly with God's wisdom, his sinfulness with God's purity; he

is abased in spirit and prostrated in soul before God; he acknowledges himself a sinner and cries to God for mercy. Out of the depth of his need, from a desire to receive, he cries to God.

3. *True prayer will receive the divine regard.* "He shall pray unto God and he will be favorable unto him" (Job 33: 25). God has revealed himself as the hearer and answerer of prayer. "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears are open to their cry." Though the Lord delay, yet he answers prayer. This is the experience of his people. God saw through the thin guise of the pharisee and despised his mockery and parade, while on the other hand he beheld the afflicted, contrite heart of the publican, he looked on him with compassion and delight. The mercy he sought was freely given. He retired rejoicing in the blessing of a merciful, prayer-hearing God.

4. *The great need of childhood—the blessing of Jesus.* These Jewish mothers knew something of Jesus, something of his wonderful teaching and his wonderful power. We are not at all surprised that they brought their children to him that they might receive his blessing. Is there not in this incident in the ministry of our Lord and in his treatment of the children, a very important lesson and a

very great encouragement? It sets before us that it is our duty to bring the children to the Lord by every possible means in our power, and have we not great encouragement when we remember his words and actions upon this occasion: "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

ADDED POINTS.

1. Prayer is one of man's greatest privileges.
2. We should cultivate the gift and habit of prayer.
3. He that needs much will pray much.
4. If we do not ask we shall not receive.
5. True prayer, like true piety, is always humble.
6. Man's true state and character, "a sinner."
7. His manifest need of mercy.
8. The hateful, ruinous nature of self-righteousness.
9. What a man gives thanks for is a good test of his character.
10. It is a blessed privilege to lead a child to Christ.
11. Jesus loves the children and bids them come to him.
12. The childlike characteristics of a true disciple: affection, trust, humility, teachableness, simplicity.

THE BLACKBOARD.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR

Teaching about TRUE SPIRIT OF PRAYER. (Catechism 98.)

"AS A LITTLE CHILD."

SPIRIT of Pharisee's UNANSWERED PRAYER.

PROUD, "I" "I"
 VAIN, "I"
 BOASTFUL, "I"
 UNCHARITABLE, "not even as this publican."
 SELF-SATISFIED, "I."

HE FELT NO NEED,—HE RECEIVED NO BLESSING.

SPIRIT of the Publican's ANSWERED PRAYER.

HUMBLE,
 EARNEST,
 PENITENT.

HE FELT GREAT NEED.—HE RECEIVED GREAT BLESSING.

"THE LORD LOOKETH ON THE HEART." (1 Sam. 16: 7.)

"Suffer little children to come unto me."

Start out with the definition of PRAYER in the Catechism (Quest. 98.) and note each point in it. The TRUE SPIRIT OF PRAYER is "AS A LITTLE CHILD."

The prayers of the Pharisee and Publican are illustrations of the FALSE and TRUE spirit of prayer. Make the ATTITUDE of these two men clear; and emphasize it by the words in the outline. Contrast the results;—FELT NO NEED—RECEIVED NO BLESSING: CONFESSED GREAT NEED—RECEIVED GREAT BLESSING. Enforce the importance of having the heart right with God, for "THE LORD LOOKETH ON THE HEART." Close by showing the scholars,—especially those who are children—that, as Christ welcomes the Child Spirit, so He welcomes—INVITES EVEN LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO HIM.

LESSON VII—May 17th, 1896.

Parable of the Pounds. LUKE 19: 11-27.

(Commit to memory verses 15-15.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much," Luke 16: 10.

PROVE THAT—We are responsible for our privileges. Luke 12: 48.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 59. *Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?* A. From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 112, 175, 224, 174.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Parable of the pounds. Luke 19: 11-27. *Tuesday.* The talents. Matt. 25: 14-30. *Wednesday.* Integrity rewarded. Gen. 41: 37-45. *Thursday.* Serving God. Mal. 3: 13-18. *Friday.* Spiritual gifts. 1 Cor. 12: 1-11. *Saturday.* Right use of gifts. Rom. 12: 1-9. *Sabbath.* The day of the Lord. 2 Pet. 3: 1-14. (*The J. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. Jesus had crossed the Jordan on his way to Jerusalem. At the entrance of Jericho he had opened the eyes of Bartimaeus, and was now seated in the house of Zacchaeus, the publican, whom he had honored with his presence as his guest. Read the narrative in the first part of the chapter.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Trust Conferred. vs. 11-14. II. The Trust Discharged. vs. 15-19. III. The Trust Neglected. vs. 20-27.

I. THE TRUST CONFERRED. 11. As they heard—It is very important to give good heed to what we hear, and how we hear. **These things—**of which Jesus had spoken in the home of Zacchaeus, especially the great mission of "the Son of man" (v. 10). **Added and spake—**indicates the close connection with the incidents that had just taken place. The additions of the Lord spoken of in the Acts of the apostles are full of interest (Acts 2: 41-47; 5: 14, see R. V.) **Nigh to Jerusalem—**16 to 19 miles, only a few hours' journey; his last solemn visit, when his earthly ministry would close. **Immediately appear—**or "be displayed." There was a feeling of general expectancy that Jesus would establish a temporal kingdom, that his reign would begin at Jerusalem, the capital, in David's city and on David's throne (Acts 1: 6, 7). With a view of correcting their false notions, and guarding them against disappointment, the following parable was spoken. **12. He said—**This parable closely resembles the one recorded in Matt. 25: 14-30. While they have much in common, they are undoubtedly different, spoken at different times. The parable of the talents recognizes the difference of capabilities for service. "To every man according to his several ability" (Matt. 25: 15). The parable of the pounds proceeds on the principle that all possess certain endowments for service. **A certain nobleman—**A certain man wellborn, "of high rank and noble blood." Two nobles, Herod and his son Archelaus, did actually go to Rome "to receive a kingdom" from Caesar. ("Josephus Ant." 14: 14; 17: 9). By the "nobleman" is doubtless to be understood the Lord Jesus Christ. "He was the realization of the highest ideal of nobility, noble in character, in power, in deeds, in ability." (Peloubet). **A far country—**meaning heaven, whither Christ ascended in glory after his resurrection, where he now is as our great Intercessor, and where he shall remain till the time of his second final coming (Luke 21: 27; Acts 1: 11). **13. Ten pounds—**The mina was equal to 100 drachmas, or "pence" and was worth about \$17. A pound was of little value compared with a talent—"£3, or a little over, as compared with £160." A pound to each, the same in each case. **Occupy—**"Trade ye herewith" (R. V.) Personally held responsible during the absence of the "nobleman," for the use made of the trust conferred. The true servant will be equally faithful in the absence, as in the presence of the master. **I come—**The return of the nobleman is certain, the time of his coming uncertain. The one thing respecting which Jesus professed ignorance (Mark 13: 32). "The time of the nobleman's absence stands for our mortal life." (Pulpit Com.) **14. Citizens—**Primarily, the Jews (John 1: 11), secondly, all who hold the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1: 18). **Message—**"Ambassage" (R. V.). The Jews had sent a delegation after Archelaus in order to prevent the emperor from making him a king. (Josephus). The Jews expressly refused to acknowledge Jesus as their king, saying, "We have no king but Caesar." (John 19: 15). They hated Jesus without a cause (John 15: 25).

II. THE TRUST DISCHARGED. 15. Received the kingdom—It is not on earth but in heaven that Christ is to receive his kingdom. When that time is fully come, then will Jesus gather home all the subjects of his kingdom of grace, to abide with himself evermore in his kingdom of glory. **He might know—**No

hearsay reports, but with full knowledge of each case shall the "nobleman" in person hear each man's report. **Every man gained**—Personally responsible in full measure of the gifts, blessings and privileges enjoyed (Matt. 12: 36; Rom. 14: 12; 2 Cor. 5: 10). **16. Thy pound**—"He gives the Master all the profit and all the credit too." "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory" (Ps. 115: 1). Gained the pound. "The hand of the diligent maketh rich (Prov. 10: 4). The story of the successful merchant of Bristol is full of interest, the beginning of whose merchant life was the horseshoe that he picked up one day on his way to school, and carried three miles, and sold to the blacksmith for a penny. That penny was the foundation of a business pronounced after his death the largest in the west of England, turning nearer millions than thousands in the course of the year. All was the result of the judicious use of what he had. (Pulpit Com.) **17. Well done** (R. V.)—The delight and satisfaction of the "nobleman," a sense of which he expressed in these words of approval and admiration. **Good servant**—reliable, manly and trustworthy. **Faithful**—Not great endowments, not great achievements, not great opportunities, not a great reputation, but true faithfulness in the path of duty secures the divine approval and wins the crown of life (Rev. 2: 10). **A very little**—Faithfulness in little things is the true path leading to promotion. Many are anxious to do great things, forgetting that the great things of life consist in the faithful performance of the little ministries and duties of everyday life in the home, in the field, in the market, anywhere and everywhere (Luke 16: 10). **Ten cities**—Archelaus had given the government and revenues of cities to adherents who had remained faithful to him. When Christ returns in his glory he will reward his servants on a nobler and more munificent scale (2 Tim. 2: 12). **18. The second came**—He, too, had won for himself a high and responsible position in the kingdom. **19. Five cities**—He did not earn "the noble title, Well done" and "good servant." He was rewarded not praised. His cup of enjoyment was full. Some are capable of greater enjoyments than others; "some an hundredfold, sixtyfold, thirtyfold" (Matt. 13: 8). "Very accurately, indeed, it seems, will places and names and power be awarded in the heaven-life, exactly in proportion to merits and deserts."

III. THE TRUST NEGLECTED. 20. Here is thy pound—gifts unused, opportunities neglected, powers lying dormant, faculties uncultivated, laid up in a napkin. He was commanded to trade with his pound. He simply folded it in a "handkerchief" and laid it aside. All are held guilty that do not use their abilities and opportunities faithfully. **21. I feared**—The secret of this servant's trouble was that he failed to understand his master's character, hence his unmanly, unworthy conduct. Had he truly feared his master he would have been the more careful to make a diligent use of the pound entrusted to him. Unworthy thoughts about God always lead to unworthy actions. The service of God is a service of love, not of slavish fear. **Austere**—harsh, severe, stern, inconsiderate about the interests and rights of others. **Takest up**—exactingly and unlawfully more of a servant than lay in his power to render. **22. Out of thine own mouth**—With thine own words. His plea for excuse groundless, he now stood before his master self condemned. **Judge thee**—"It is not the atheist, or the criminal, or the perpetrator of vicious deeds; it is not the outward and flagrant transgressor who is here judged and condemned: it is the man who made nothing of his life." The man who plays the hypocrite, proclaims that to be good and valuable which he counterfeits. (Howe). **23. Wherefore**—introduces a very simple, practical and pointed question. **Into the bank**—to the money exchanger. How many opportunities and fields lay open, where we can use all our gifts and talents in advancing the interests of Christ's kingdom "at home and abroad." **Usury**—simply the interest for the use of money. **24. Take from him the pound**—He whose it is to give has the right to take it from his unprofitable servant and punish him. Idle christians will grow more and more careless and unspiritual. Gifts or members unused will in due time lose the power for service at first possessed. **Give to him that hath**—The same law of growth or increase holds good in the spiritual world as in the natural world. A diligent use of what one has tends to increase his capital. **25.** Evidently the words of Jesus were a matter of considerable surprise to his hearers as is clearly indicated in their words of reply. **26. For I say**—The "nobleman" is here represented as proceeding to lay down the principles upon which he will distribute the rewards of his kingdom, and the punishment that would be meted out to those "citizens" who would not that he "should reign over them." **Shall be given**—He that turns to good account that which he has now, though it be "a very little," shall find enlarged opportunities for greater service. "Aptitude comes with effort and exercise." **Shall be taken away**—Lukewarmness and indifference in the matter of religion lead to spiritual poverty and ruin (Rev. 3: 15-17). **27. Slay them**—The awful and impending doom awaiting all faithless souls. We should diligently use every means to increase and cultivate our christian graces, and carefully guard against the spirit of indolence and slothfulness.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *God commits to every one a certain amount of capital.* This capital consists of *life*—the time, circumstances, condition and surroundings of our being; *reason*—that power

which enables us to apprehend cause and effects, duties and obligations, and to judge between right and wrong; *influence*—power arising from our rank, station, knowledge or wealth; *religious privileges*—the word of God, preached gospel, Sabbath ordinances, the gift of the Holy Spirit, opportunities of growth and usefulness.

2. *God will require an account of the employment of our capital.* This truth is made amply clear in the teachings of our Lord. To this truth our conscience responds; this is essential to accountability. Everyone has to give an account of all that God has entrusted to him; none too great to evade, none too small to escape. Improvement will be expected from each, for this purpose the capital was given. It is to be used wisely, conscientiously, according to the opportunities given. Men will be judged not according to their talents, but according to the use they have made of them. Fidelity in the use will be the test.

3. *God will reward his faithful servants.* The servant who gained ten pounds had rule over ten cities; the man who had gained five over five cities. The reward granted to fidelity consisted of three things: First. Increased spiritual capital. Faithful use always increases capital. Who, for example, can faithfully study their Bible and not gain deeper insight into its great and comforting truths, and so in every department of christian experience and service? Second. The hearty approval of the Master. The "well done" of the Lord cannot but increase our joy and delight in his service. Third. A larger sphere of usefulness with its increased responsibility, power and influence. Fidelity

in the lesser duties and responsibilities of life lead to larger spheres, higher duties, greater opportunities.

4. *God will punish the unfaithful and slothful.* "Take from him the pound." In the case of those who are unfaithful the opportunities pass away, the abilities diminish, the power to work disappears, and they lose the very means by which they might have been useful. The sin of omission proves the servant wholly unfit for the position of trust. We are responsible not only for our sins, but for all the good influences which would have resulted from our lives if we had been faithful. Though the unfaithful may attempt to excuse themselves for their want of fidelity, the Lord will show them that on the very ground on which they base their excuse they should have been doubly concerned to improve their talents.

ADDED POINTS.

1. Christ is king and we should be obedient servants.
2. God gives most precious gifts to all.
3. The attitude of sinners towards Christ is "we will not have this man to reign over us."
4. The account to be rendered is a personal.
5. The account is of opportunities as well as possessions.
6. The importance of fidelity and diligence in the service of God.
7. Exemption from flagrant sins will not save us.
8. Fidelity is the test and will be rewarded.
9. Neglect, unfaithfulness will be punished.
10. The awful fate of those who reject the Lord.

THE BLACKBOARD.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR

Shewing us OUR ACCOUNTABILITY.

1. EVERY ONE has BLESSINGS, OPPORTUNITIES, &c.
2. EVERY ONE MUST give an ACCOUNT to CHRIST.

USED MULTIPLY.

3. BLESSINGS, &c., UNUSED, ARE LOST.

4. FAITHFULNESS REWARDED BY GROWTH,—Gained ten pounds.
CHRIST'S APPROVAL,—"WELL DONE."
A WIDER SPHERE,—"Ten cities."
NEW CAPITAL,—Give to him. (v. 24.)

5. WHAT ARE MY OPPORTUNITIES?
AM I USING THEM FAITHFULLY?
6. BE FAITHFUL IN ALL THINGS. (G. T.)

Enforce 1. EVERY ONE has blessings, &c. 2. EVERY ONE must give an account of how these blessings, &c., are used, or not used. 3. Contrast the RESULTS of USING and NOT USING blessings, &c. 4. Point out REWARDS if FAITHFULNESS in using blessings, &c. 5. Apply the teaching to EACH ONE. Make these questions PERSONAL. 6. Emphasize the importance of applying the lesson to LITTLE THINGS, —to ALL THINGS, in EVERY-DAY LIFE. This will give your teaching a practical application, which should be followed by prayer that it may bring forth GOOD FRUIT.

LESSON VIII—May 24th, 1896.

Jesus Teaching in the Temple. LUKE 20: 9-19.

(Commit to memory verses 15-16).

GOLDEN TEXT: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner." Luke 2c: 17.

PROVE THAT—Our hearts are deceitful. Jer. 17: 9.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 60. *How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?* A. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days; and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 29, 111, 69, 113.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Jesus teaching in the temple. Luke 20: 9-19. *Tuesday.* An unprofitable vineyard. Isaiah 5: 1-7. *Wednesday.* Despising warning. 2 Chr. 36: 11-21. *Thursday.* God's message unheeded. Jer. 25: 1-11. *Friday.* The servant rejected. Jer. 26: 8-15. *Saturday.* The Son rejected. John 11: 47-57. *Sabbath.* Day of Pentecost. Acts 2: 1-21. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. On the day following his triumphal entry, Jesus drove out the profaners of the temple for the second time, and received the Greeks who came to see him (John 12: 20-50). Our lesson is one of a series of parables spoken in the temple on Tuesday. This was our Lord's last public discourse. Parallel passages. Matt. 21: 33-46; Mark 12: 1-12. Read the whole narrative in Matt. 21: 1-25; 46; Mark 11: 12-13; 37; Luke 19: 45-21: 38.

LESSON PLAN. I. The Rejected Servants. vs. 9-12. II. The Rejected Son. vs. 13-15. III. The Rejected People. vs. 16-19.

I. THE REJECTED SERVANTS. 9. The Sanhedrim having put forth the plea of ignorance respecting "the baptism of John," Jesus declined to answer in a direct way their question bearing on his "authority," and at once proceeded to speak a parable in which the answer is implied. **A certain man**—Householder (Matt. 21: 33), representing God himself. **A vineyard**—He employs a well-known figure, and seems to say "listen to Isaiah's well-known story of the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts, which is the house of Israel, I will expand it a little and shew you how it stands with you as regards this matter of authority, that we may see whether you have as much respect for the ascertained will of God as you pretend, so that you should be sure to submit to me if only you were satisfied that I was an accredited Messenger of God." (Bruce). By the "vineyard" we understand God's church in the world. **Husbandmen**—It was quite a usual thing in the east, as indeed it is among ourselves, for estate holders to rent their lands to tenants, for the use of which they received a certain annual rental in kind. The reference is undoubtedly to the Jewish nation, to whom the interests of the church or kingdom were entrusted. The vineyard was thoroughly equipped with everything necessary for its profitable management, hedge, winepress, tower. **Far country**—"Another country" (R. V.) God is (figuratively) represented as withdrawing for a season and entrusting the guidance and rule of the nation to his prophets, priests and faithful servants, unto whom "are committed the oracles of God" (Rom. 3: 2). **A long time**—The period that elapsed be-

tween the giving of the law at Sinai until Christ was made manifest in the flesh was about 1500 years. **10. At the season**—No season in particular, but at different times, and on different occasions during the Mosaic economy. **A servant**—The servants represent the prophets and holy men of old, whom God sent, time after time, to reprove and reform the nation. **Fruit**—Fruit-bearing is an essential characteristic of true discipleship (John. 15: 8). God has a right to expect fruit at the hands of all his people. "He looked that it (vineyard) should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes" (Is. 5: 2). **Beat**—The hatred and violence of the husbandmen become more and more intensified, and the reception accorded the servants becomes more shameful and cruel: apt illustration of the character of the ungodly—standing—walking—finally at ease in the seat of the scornful (Ps. 1: 1). **Empty**—"Having nothing," disappointed, rejected, ill-treated. **11. He sent another**—"He added to send another." Great indeed was the forbearance and longsuffering of the owner of the vineyard towards the wicked husbandmen. "When the servants came for fruit they were simply surprised. Fruit! did you say? We have occupied the position of vine-dressers, and duly drawn our wages; what more do you want? (Bruce). They cared nothing for the vineyard or its owner; their only concern was to make sure of their own position and wages. The fault lay not in the vineyard, but in the unfaithfulness of the husbandmen. How many of the prophets were in one way and another ill-treated by the Jews? Think of the noble

band of martyrs to whom reference is made in Heb. 11 ch., among whom might be mentioned Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, Zechariah, all of whom witnessed to the power of the truth in their lives and in their deaths (1 Kings 22: 24-27; Jer. 37: 15; 2 Chr. 24: 21; 1 Kings 18: 13; Neh. 9: 26; Acts. 7: 52).

II. THE REJECTED SON. 13. What shall I do?—Matters were assuming serious proportions. It was clearly evident that the sending of more servants would complicate rather than improve the condition of things. **Send my beloved Son**—“Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them” (Mark 12: 6). The last opportunity given, and the greatest of all. (Heb. 1: 1, 2, R. V.) The measure of God’s love to man (John 3: 16; Rom. 5: 8). **Will reverence**—Duly regard and respect him, accord him the honor due him as a son. **14. Reasoned among themselves**—Instead of receiving him gladly, they deliberately set to work to plan and to scheme. “The rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his anointed” (Ps. 2: 2). **Saying**—They give expression openly to their evil designs. **This is the heir**—They recognize him to be the heir and son, which makes their treatment of him entirely inexcusable. **Come**—Calmly, deliberately, and “with malice aforethought,” they enter upon their fiendish plot. **That the inheritance may be ours**—In eastern lands it was the rule that if an occupier paid taxes for six years, and no owner could be found, he might claim the property. The chief priests wished to destroy Jesus in order that they might retain their power over the people (John 11: 47-53; Mark 15: 10). **15. Cast him out**—They rejected him. Jesus “came unto his own, and his own received him not” (John 1: 11). **Killed him**—“They filled up the measure of their iniquity by killing the heir.” A vivid prophecy of what actually took place “in the eventful story of Israel.”

III. THE REJECTED PEOPLE. 16. He shall come and destroy—Literally fulfilled with “terrible exactness” when Jerusalem was destroyed and the temple burned, 70 A. D., “after the most terrible siege on record; 97,000 were taken prisoners and 1,100,000 perished.” (Peloubet). **Give the vineyard to others**—The Jews by their own act rejected the privileges and blessings offered them in “the Gospel of Christ,” the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1: 16). Their rejection of Jesus led to their own rejection and dispersion: paved the way for the gospel being offered to the gentiles (Rom. 9: 26; 11: 11-17.) **God forbid**—Lit. “might it not be.” An exclamation of horror at the very thought of such a crime, and the severity of its punishment. They were beginning dimly to realize that Jesus referred to them. **17. Beheld them**—It was a look full of meaning; he read their hearts. **Written**—In Ps. 118, the very psalm from which the “Hosannas” of two days before were taken. **The stone**—Jesus himself. The true foundation stone upon which the church of God, the body of true believers is built (1 Cor. 3: 11; 2 Tim. 2: 19; Acts 4: 12). **The builders rejected**—There is an old tradition, that the builders engaged on Solomon’s temple laid aside one stone as useless, and it was not till the building was almost completed that they discovered the place for the rejected stone, as the “key” or “king” stone of the building. **The head of the corner**—The place of chief honor and distinction (Eph. 2: 20). **18. Shall be broken**—Christ alone is the foundation stone upon which Christian character must be built. Those who stumble at a suffering Messiah shall suffer great injury; but those that continue persistently to reject him will be utterly destroyed. **19. Sought to lay hands on him**—They were anxious to have him arrested that they might get quit of him; but “they feared the people.” Guilty consciences make cowards of men.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. *God has intrusted to each of us a vineyard.* The figure of a vineyard is often used in the Old Testament to represent the peculiar privileges of Israel. As God’s peculiar people they enjoyed many special privileges. The same privileges are now given to all who have heard the gospel of Christ. Every one has a vineyard and must render to God a due return. We have only to consider a moment or two and our great privileges come to mind. National position and privileges which flow from it, religious privileges, ordinances of the gospel, the word of God with all the promises and rich blessings of the gospel dispensation. Think of our personal Saviour, pious parents, religious friends, the influence of the spirit, grand opportunities for spiritual growth, &c.

2. *God expects fruit from our lives.* In return for the privileges and blessings with which God has surrounded us, the opportunities

of getting good and doing good placed in our way, God has a right to expect the fruits of gratitude, love, obedience and consecrated service. For the blessings of the new life imparted, the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit in his indwelling power, God has a right to expect all that goes to constitute higher christian life. More devotion, more love, more perfect obedience, purer lives and more entire consecration of time, talents, &c.

3. *God’s rightful claim is refused.* The action of these wicked husbandmen is only a type of the action of hundreds of impenitent sinners in the world to-day. They do not deny the claims of the Lord upon them; they will admit the reasonableness of the claims, but yet they will not yield themselves to the service of the Lord. The patience of the owner speaks to us of the marvellous mercy and wonderful forbearance and long-suffering of God towards

impenitent sinners. Could we conceive of anything more unjust than the continued refusal of the claims of God, while we are daily enjoying the blessings of his favor and love.

4. *God's greatest gift rejected.* "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." What greater manifestation of his desire for the salvation of sinners could God have made than was made in the gift of his Son? In this gift he exhibited his great love for man. In nature we have many things that suggest his love, but in the gift of his Son there is left no room for doubt or uncertainty of his wonderful love. We should dwell on the infinite greatness and preciousness of this expression of God's desire that all men should be saved, and on the greatness of the sin of rejecting Christ. How many there are who are acting just as the Jewish nation did when they rejected Christ.

5. *God will punish those who refuse the gift of his love.* God having done all things that it was possible for love to do to save sinners. If the heart of the sinner will not be influenced by the gift of God's love and the sufferings of Christ, then nothing will touch it and lead it to choose God. The last possible hope is gone when the soul rejects Christ. There is nothing left but death and that eter-

nal. Christ is the way to eternal life; if we reject Christ then we are lost. In the destruction of the wicked husbandmen we have a sure exhibition of God's terrible wrath upon all who finally reject the Lord Jesus. There can be no escape for those who despise the gospel and neglect so great salvation.

ADDED POINTS.

1. Rightly to estimate and improve our privileges.
2. God has done all that wisdom could do to make us good.
3. The privileges with which God has blessed us are often perverted and misused.
4. The enemies of Christ will not acknowledge him as king.
5. Ever be ready to render an account of our stewardship.
6. The greatest possible proof of God's love for sinners is the gift of his Son.
7. Men imagine they are making a good bargain when they reject Christ for the world.
8. The fearful fate of those who reject Christ.
9. The final triumph of the kingdom of Christ.

THE BLACKBOARD.
JESUS THE SAVIOUR
AND
HIS REJECTORS.

1. THE CHARGE GIVEN. (v. 9.)

THEN ?

A VINEYARD
TO HUSBANDMEN,

NOW ?

A CHARGE TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR,

"He sent" for "fruit."

THEN ?

2. HIS SERVANTS
THE SAVIOUR **REJECTED.**
BY UNFAITHFUL HUSBANDMEN.

NOW ?

THEN ?

3. **REJECT-**ED TRIUMPHANT. (G. T.)
ORS CAST OUT. (v. 16.)

NOW ?

4. WHAT ABOUT MY CHARGE ? "Be thou faithful."

WHAT AM I DOING WITH JESUS ?

"Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

This is a lesson on the DANGER of REJECTING CHRIST. Let your teaching centre around this thought, and make a practical application by the use of THEN ? and NOW ? e. g. THE CHARGE GIVEN,—A VINEYARD. What was it THEN ? What is it NOW ?—TO HUSBANDMEN. Who were they THEN ? Who are they NOW ? Use the words in this way all through. Conclude with the personal questions,—WHAT ABOUT MY CHARGE ? and urge FIDELITY ; and,—WHAT AM I DOING WITH JESUS ? and urge a LOVING TRUST IN HIM.

Primary Department.

Edited in connection with the *Primary Quarterly for Little Folks*, by MR. & MRS. GEORGE H. ARCHIBALD, Montreal, P. Q.

LESSON V—May 3rd, 1896.

Faith. LUKE 17: 5-19.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Lord, increase our faith." Luke 17: 5.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Faith.

III. REVIEW: What were the names of the two men in the last lesson story? In his lifetime what did the rich man think most of? What do you know about Dives and Lazarus after they died? What does the Golden Text teach us? What was my prayer last week? (See "Primary Quarterly for Little Folks.")

IV. INTERVENING EVENTS: Further instruction of Jesus.

V. LESSON STORY: Leprosy is a dreadful disease. It was very common in Palestine when Jesus lived there. When a person had this disease they had to leave home, friends and loved ones and go outside of the city to live. When they saw any persons coming near them, who were not lepers, they had to cry out "Unclean, Unclean," so that they might not come near and catch the disease. Sometimes a lot of lepers lived together outside the city. Our story to-day tells us about some of these lepers and how faith cured them. As Jesus was journeying and was going into a certain village, ten men, who were lepers, met him. They had been told how he had cured lepers in other places and most likely were wishing that he would come their way and cure them. How glad they must have been when they heard that he was coming! They would be sure to get in a place where Jesus could see them, and as he came along they cried out as loud as they could, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Jesus heard them, saw them, and spoke to them, and told them to go and show themselves to the priest. They went, and as they went they were cured. If they had not believed that Jesus could cure them they would not have gone to the priest, who had to see that they were perfectly cured before they were allowed to go back to their friends and into the city again. Their going showed their faith, showed that they believed that Jesus could, and would, cure them, and so he did. Our Golden Text to-day is, "Lord, increase our faith." We should believe every word that Jesus has said.

VI. HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON STORY: Make a little sketch on the board of a road, and a cross for Jesus, some dots here and there for people, and ten strokes for the ten lepers. Here tell the story, and lead up to the application.

VII. HOW TO TEACH THE APPLICATION: Here is another grand opportunity to teach that trusting comes before doing. It is so easy to teach the children "to do," and so difficult to get them "to trust." The point we want to emphasize in this lesson is that trusting comes

before doing. The ten lepers first "trusted" and then "went" and were cleansed. So we must first trust and then, like the ten lepers, and like David and Gideon and Abraham, and many more we learn of in the Bible, *trust* and then *do*. By going the lepers showed that they trusted, and we by our doing will show that we trusted. Trusting comes first. Bring out from the children some things that they find hard to do, and teach them that if they only trust God it will be easy to do, and if they find it hard it is because they are not trusting.

LESSON VI—May 10th, 1896.

Lessons on Prayer. LUKE 18: 9-17.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "The Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18: 13.

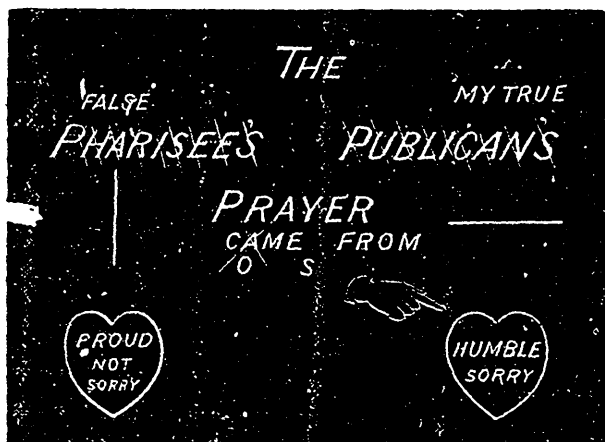
II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Prayer.

III. REVIEW: How many men came to Jesus to be healed? What was their disease? How were they cured? What is faith? What was my prayer last week? (See "Primary Quarterly for Little Folks.")

IV. INTERVENING EVENTS: Teaching concerning the kingdom of God. Parable of the importunate widow.

V. LESSON STORY: Our story to-day is one that Jesus told his disciples when he wanted to teach them the meaning of true prayer. It is about two men. One was a humble man and the other was a proud man. One had true sorrow for sin, the other was satisfied with himself. One was called a Pharisee and the other was called a Publican. They both went up to the temple to pray. The Pharisee was the proud one, and he thought he was very good. He thought he was better than other people, and much better than the Publican. He stood up to pray in a place where everybody could see him. He was not really praying; he was talking—not so much to God as to the people who were round about. This is what he said: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, or even as this Publican," and then he tried to show what a great man he was by telling the good things which he did. The other man, the Publican, was very different; he truly prayed to God. He did not choose a place where everybody could see him, but bowed his head very humbly before God. He was not satisfied with himself; he did not compare himself with others, but showed how ashamed and sorry he was for his sins by smiting himself upon his breast, and saying from his heart, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." As Jesus was telling his disciples this story, mothers brought their babes to him. When the disciples saw them coming they wanted to send them away, fearing they might trouble Jesus, but he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of God." Jesus wanted to teach the disciples that true prayer comes from a humble, child-like heart.

VI. HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON STORY—Build a representation of the temple with blocks. With two different colored pieces of wood, one for the Pharisee the other for the Publican; represent the two men as going up to the temple to pray. Tell the story as told by Jesus and get the children to repeat it to you. Or make a sketch on the board, and represent by strokes the two men praying, the one standing up, the other in a lowly attitude. Or simply make the marks as suggested in the cut, without any sketch, and tell the story.



VII. HOW TO TEACH THE APPLICATION: We want to teach what true prayer is, and we have the story of the two men as our illustration. As the children tell the story to us, draw out from them and write upon the board that the Pharisee's prayer came from a "proud" and not a "sorry" heart, also that the publican's prayer came from a humble and a sorry heart. Show the difference between true and false prayer, and end with the thought that prayer must come from a "humble, sorry" heart, if I would have God hear it and answer it.

LESSON VII—May 17th, 1896.

Parable of the Pounds. LUKE 19: 11-27.

I. **GOLDEN TEXT:** "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke 16: 10.

II. **PREVIEW THOUGHT:** Work.

III. **REVIEW:** What kind of a man was the Pharisee? What kind of a man was the Publican? How did Jesus receive little children? What kind of prayer does God like? (See "Primary Quarterly for Little Folks.")

IV. **INTERVENING EVENTS:** Precepts respecting divorce. Jesus blessing little children. Jesus' interview with the rich young ruler. Full prophecy of his death, sufferings and his resurrection. The ambitious request of James and John. The healing of the two blind men near Jericho. The visit to Zacchaeus.

V. **LESSON STORY:** Every child who has a strong body must use it or it will become weak. All the good gifts which God has given us must be used, or they will become weak, or taken away from us. Jesus wanted to teach this to the people, so he told them this story: A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, "Trade with this till I come." And it came to pass that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds." And he said unto him, "Well, thou good servant, because thou has been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities." And the second came, saying, "Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds." And he said likewise to him, "Be thou also over five cities." And another came, saying, "Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man; thou takest up that thou layest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow." Then he said unto him, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: wherefore then gavest thou not my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with interest?" And he said unto them that stood by, "Take from him the pound and give it to him that hath ten pounds: for I say unto you, That unto everyone which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath, shall be taken away from him." Our Golden Text teaches us that we should faithfully use for him everything God has given us.

VI. **HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON STORY:** Before the lesson begins, pin to the black-

board pictures of hands, an eye, and something to represent money or pennies, Bible, &c., as shown in the cut. Cover them over with six pieces of tailor's black pattern paper. If thumb tacks instead of pins are used for pinning the hands, &c. to the board, they can be more easily covered up. As you tell the lesson story write on the black paper over the hands the word



"one pound," and the same over the "eye," and the "money." Then as the story is continued, over the words "help mother," &c., write the gain made by the servants, "ten pounds," "five pounds" and "nothing."

VII. HOW TO TEACH THE APPLICATION: Make it clear to the children that everything God gives them should be used. Bring in the Golden Text and the words of Jesus, and teach that if we do not use a thing we lose it. This could be illustrated by showing that muscles of the body, unused, become useless, or by two bunches of keys, one rusty because they are not used, and another bright because they are used. What are some of the good things that God has given to us? Unpin the "one pound" and underneath show the "hands," then below show how they should be used to "help mother," and so on to the end.

LESSON VIII—May 24th, 1896.

Jesus Teaching in the Temple. LUKE 20: 9-19.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner." Luke 20: 17.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT: Reverence.

III. REVIEW: What is the name of the parable or story that Jesus told in our last lesson? Who has given pounds or gifts to us? Name some of those gifts? How can we use them? What was my prayer last week? (See "Primary Quarterly for Little Folks.")

IV. INTERVENING EVENTS: Jesus' arrival at Bethany. Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The cursing of the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple. The finding of the fig tree withered. Jesus' authority questioned.

V. LESSON STORY: God wants us always to remember that he made us, that we are his, that we should live for him, and work for him, and when he sends messengers to us we should listen to them. When Jesus, God's Son, lived on the earth, he wanted to teach the people this and he told them this story about a vineyard: A certain man planted a vineyard and let it out to men to take care of while he was gone into another country for a long time. At the proper time he sent a servant to receive the fruit of the vineyard, but the men in the vineyard beat him and sent him away without any. Then he sent another; he, too, was badly treated. Then he sent a third; him, they wounded and cast out. Now the owner of the vineyard said, "I will send my beloved son, it may be they will reverence him when they see him." But when the men in the vineyard saw him they said to one another, "Let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours," and they cast him forth out of the vineyard and killed him. Then the owner of the vineyard came and cast out these men, and gave the vineyard to others.

VI. HOW TO TEACH THE LESSON STORY: Our story to-day is about a vineyard that was planted by a certain man. As you tell the story draw a watch tower and a wine vat and some

grape vines, and then with green chalk, in a very simple way, draw a fence around it. Then tell the story of the first messenger being beaten, and the second badly treated, the third wounded, and the son killed, and write these as the children repeat to you what you have told them.

VII. HOW TO TEACH THE APPLICATION: God has given to me a vineyard (draw a heart) and he has put a fence about it. Get the children to tell you and thus learn that the day school, and the

home, and the church, and the Sunday school is the fence that is put around us to keep us safe. As the man who owned the vineyard expected fruit from those to whom he had given it, so God expects fruit from our lives. Like the owner of the vineyard, God sends messengers to us. Who are they? First, mother. How are you treating her; kindly or unkindly? How are you treating the teacher? Bible? God even sent his own Son, Jesus. How are you treating him?

<p><i>A VINEYARD</i></p>	<p><i>MY VINEYARD</i></p>
<p>1ST BEATEN</p> <p>2ND BADLY TREATED</p> <p>3RD WOUNDED</p> <p>SON KILLED</p>	<p>1. MOTHER</p> <p>2. TEACHER</p> <p>3. BIBLE</p> <p>4. JESUS</p>

Teacher Training.

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

TEXT-BOOK : REDFORD'S "PRIMER OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES."
ANALYSIS, NOTES AND ADDITIONS, by Rev. Professor Ross, B. D., Presbyterian College,
Montreal, Quebec.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH:

I. THE CHURCH IS THE CHIEF WITNESS TO THE CHRISTIC AND APOSTOLIC ORIGIN OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH :

1. *The church has remained, from the death of Christ, essentially the same.* (1) In her doctrines. The centre of them all is that Jesus Christ is an incarnation of God and trust in him is the condition of salvation. (2) In her rites. Public worship on Sabbath and the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper have always and everywhere been observed. (3) In her morals. Really devout and sincere Christians have always been distinguished for self-denial, benevolence and hopefulness. 2. *This substantial sameness of the church is proved by the writings of the church fathers.* (1) Of different countries : Asia Minor, Italy, France and Syria. (2) Of different periods back to the latter part of the first century. 3. *Any radical change in Christian belief before this was not possible.* Between the death of Christ and the end of the first century it would have been impossible to have imposed upon the church a mass of legendary matter wholly different from the facts on which the society was at first founded. (1) Most of the Apostles lived from thirty to forty years after the crucifixion, and John survived until almost the end of the century. (2) A great multitude of men, personally taught by the Apostles, many of them of wide influence in the church, survived to the end of the first century, and some of them to the middle of the second. (3) Throughout that period all sections of the church were united in their belief of the resurrection of Christ. (4) While perhaps some of the legendary matter which was afterwards incorporated in apocryphal gospels was already floating about in this period, none of it found a place in the books of the New Testament, nor was it regarded as of any importance by the early church writers.

II. THE RAPID GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES POINTS TO A DIVINE ORIGIN :

1. *The facts of this growth.* (1) Fifty years after the death of Christ there were churches in all the principal cities of the Roman empire. (2) Seventy-five years after, the Christians had pervaded the villages and country places. [Pliny]. (3) In the middle of the second century they had filled the castles, towns, council-houses, camps, and even the senate and forum. [Tertullian]. (4) The extent of the church's influence is seen in the complete extinction of the religions of the Roman empire. Their idols have not had a single worshipper for centuries. 2. *The obstacles to the progress of the church.* (1) The selfish, national ambition of the Jews which Christianity opposed. (2) The scepticism of cultured Pagans. (3) The prejudice and hatred of the common people. (4) The persecutions set on foot by the government. These were wide-spread, long-continued, and several millions of Christians must have perished in them. 3. *The means by which some religions have been rapidly spread.* (1) The sword (Mohammedanism). (2) Indulgence granted to immoral practices (Mohammedanism). (3) Deliverance from the burdens of the previously prevailing religion (Buddhism). (4) Readiness to amalgamate with existing faiths (Buddhism). Christianity was diametrically opposed to all these. 4. *The natural insufficiency of the means employed to spread Christianity.* (1) Its first preachers and missionaries were unlearned men belonging to a despised nation. (2) Its central doctrine was salvation through faith in a crucified Jew. (3) Its gospel opposed all human tendencies. It humbled pride, destroyed favorite sin, and demanded a life of toil and self-sacrifice. (4) Its claims were most exclusive and aggressive and so were well fitted to rouse the jealousy of all other religions. In view of all the facts only the divine truth of Christianity is sufficient to account for the early progress of the church.

III. THE CHURCH HAS EXHIBITED A WONDERFUL POWER OF REVIVAL AFTER DECLENSIONS. ILLUSTRATIONS :

1. *The Reformation.* It shows that the corruption and abuses of the Middle Ages were not of the essence of Christian truth. (1) In the marvellous expansion of the European mind in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Christianity, if effete, would have been overthrown. (2) Christianity not only survived, but in its purified form became the central force in the new movement. (3) Out of it every intellectual advance of modern times has sprung. 2. *Other revival movements.* (1) The Methodist revival of last century, which numbers its converts by millions and has extended its missions into many climes. (2) The missionary revival which has stimulated all the churches to return to some measure of Apostolic zeal. (3) The revival of the spiritual life of some of the ancient but lifeless Oriental churches through Protestant missions. No other religion has shown in any marked degree this power of throwing off errors and corruptions and returning to its primitive faith. In this Christianity shows the vital energy of truth.

IV. THE CHURCH HAS SUCCESSFULLY RESISTED MANY DIFFERENT ASSAULTS :

1. *The assaults of force.* (1) The persecutions of pagan Rome. (a) The whole military might of the empire was again and again put forth to crush out the Christian faith. (b) Every policy which statesmen could devise was employed for the same end. (2) The persecutions of papal Rome. The argument is not affected by the fact that these were instituted by a corrupt form of Christianity. They serve to show how a purer form of the same faith can successfully maintain itself against the utmost endeavors of remorseless cruelty. (3) The persecutions of Christians by Mohammedan and heathen rulers of to-day. 2. *The assaults of intellect.* (1) The philosophical heathens of early days. (2) The deistical writers of last century. (3) The pantheistic materialistic and critical writers of to-day. 3. *The results.* Opinions will differ as to how much these assaults have accomplished. The following points can scarcely be seriously disputed: (1) The church still exists. (2) The blood of her martyrs has generally been the seed of new accessions. (3) Every assault of scepticism has resulted in the emphasizing of some neglected truth or in the abandoning of some error or abuse. (4) If the falsity of Christianity had once been clearly shown, its doom would have been sealed by the fearless truth-loving spirit of the present age.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN MAN.

That Christianity is true appears from the effects which it produces on the heart and life of the man who believes it and lives it.

I. CHRISTIANITY MAKES A GREAT CHANGE IN A MAN'S CHARACTER AND LIFE.

In contrast with other men and with his own previous life the following advantages of a true Christian may be noted :

1. *He is delivered from the power of sin.* Drunkards and other slaves of vice have often tried in vain to reform themselves, but the submission of the heart and life to Christ immediately set them free. *He has obtained a higher ideal of life.* It is not the standard of worldly honor or conventional morality, but the life of the perfect man Jesus Christ. As the Christian grows his ideal grows before him. 3. *He has a more sensitive conscience :* (1) To the evil of sin. He shrinks now not only from the act, but from the very thought of evil. (2) To moral obligation. All his duties are a loving response to a personal benefactor. 4. *He has a fuller and richer joy.* (1) His sense of guilt and consequent fear of punishment have been removed by the atonement. (2) He has constant fellowship with the purest, wisest and most loving of beings. (3) His earthly trials are an apprenticeship for higher service and happiness. "His worst sufferings here are only growing pains." (4) Death is his final deliverance from all evil and his introduction to inconceivable blessedness. 5. *He is much better able to serve others.* (1) His Christ-like Spirit is itself a blessing to those around him. (2) Christ has given him a much higher idea of the value and possibilities of every man. (3) All his mental and material possessions are held as a stewardship to be administered for Christ in the service of man. (4) His own experience enables him to be helpful to all earnest seekers after truth.