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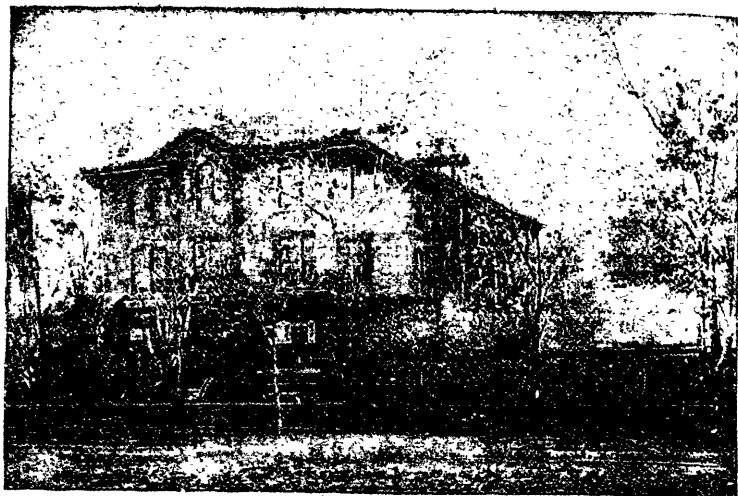
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The Teachers Monthly

Vol. VI.

OCTOBER, 1900

No. 10

Simple rule, and safest guiding,
Inward peace, and inward might,
Star upon our path abiding,
"Trust in God and do the right."

The New Year and the new century are
near by and we have been planning new and
better things for the teachers and scholars,
as our Announcement for 1901, which will
be sent to all ministers and Sabbath School
superintendents, will show.

The favor which our Church's publications
have met with is most gratifying, and we
trust that we have, in good measure, filled
the needs of the schools. We have, how-
ever, by no means reached the excellence at
which we aim. Probably, we never shall
reach it fully, for the standard we have set for
ourselves is high both as to matter and form.
The best that the best writers and printers
and engravers can do is what we wish to give
our readers older and younger.

As mentioned more in detail in THE
HOME STUDY QUARTERLY, the diploma for
the recitation of the Shorter Catechism will
be continued, and an additional diploma,
also authorized by the General Assembly,
will, after the New Year, be given for the
memorizing of Scripture. In various Sab-
bath Schools, as, for example, Central
Church, Galt, Ont., and Crescent Street
Church, Montreal, special attention is be-
ing given to memorizing. It looks as if the
good old practice were to be brought back.
In many a Sabbath School thirty years ago
"learning verses" was the chief feature.

No teaching, however thorough and earnest,
should be counted complete without it.

Have you our Lesson Helps and illustrated
papers in ALL your classes? Why not? The
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TERLY and THE HOME STUDY LEAFLET. These
are closely packed with the information
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In response to an increasing demand we
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very attractive form. For description and
prices see advertisement on page 365.

"The Son of Man"

In the Gospel of Mark there is an account
of our Lord's bearing and manner, when on
His way to the scene of His passion, which
is quite an exception to the usual silence of
the Evangelists as to such personal traits.
"They were in the way going up to Jeru-
salem, and Jesus went before them; and
they were amazed, and, as they followed,

they were afraid. And He took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto Him." He was laboring under deep emotion, and He pressed on before them with eager step. Knowing the perils which confronted Him daily, this eager pressing forward along the path of danger struck the disciples with fear. There was something about Him they could not at all understand. The enthusiasm of humanity beamed in His face and found expression in His gait.

Jesus is revealed to us in this incident as standing apart from the whole family of fallen man. What an incredible thing rationalism asks us to believe when it would persuade us that He was the product of His age, or that His disciples had the loftiness of aim and the generous unselfishness to invent His character! Any miracle attributed to such a person as Jesus was, is almost infinitely easier of belief than such a supposition.

No title given to the Saviour should be so dear to us as this. When touched by it, and we perceive its glory, we are in truest sympathy with Him. It is hard to say in which aspect it should call forth our deepest thankfulness. Very affecting is it to be assured that the Son of God has so completely identified Himself with us that in every sinless infirmity, in every liability to trouble and sorrow under which we labor, He also was a Son of man, and knows by experience the pressure and hindrance of these ills upon the aspirations and energies of our souls; more than this, with a sympathy which went as far as righteous sympathy could, He made the burden of our guilt His own, took to heart our shame, and voluntarily "tasted death for every man." This, indeed, first of all, should move our deepest gratitude, because, without it, the other aspect of His gracious humanity would have inspired no hope.

But when once we have found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and have obtained in some degree the new heart and right spirit, and can look up to God with the cry of Abba, Father; when once

the thirst for holiness and yearning after the vision of God has been excited within us, then the assurance that Jesus, in the perfection of His godliness, in the amazing disinterestedness, purity and compassion of His character, in all that lifts Him so far above apostles, martyrs and saints; did not exceed the possibilities and promise of human nature, but was still the Son of Mary, "the first-born among many brethren," should also move our deepest hope and profoundest joy. The hope of being one day like our Lord through seeing Him as He is, of tasting the blessedness of His human perfection, and entering into eternal communion with Him, stirs unutterable longings in the Christian soul, and raises a vision of bliss beside which every other grows pale and dim.

—Sunday School Chronicle

The Choice of Hercules

In ancient days, among the Greeks and Romans, there was a very favorite parable called The Choice of Hercules. It told how Hercules . . . went forth one day alone to commune with his own heart, just as he had arrived at that period, when youth is most wilful and most liable to fall into danger and temptation.

On that day, and in that place he made the great choice that he would eschew that which is evil and do that which is good.

As he sat on a green bank in silent thought, he saw two female figures approaching him; the one draped and veiled, and with stately and modest steps, the other loud and flaunting, and painted, swimming toward him with bold face and impudent mien.

And this one, thrusting herself before the other, claimed him for her votary, promised him every earthly delight of sense and luxury—the sparkling wine-cup, the voluptuous banquet, the life of ease and pleasure and wealth.

And when she had done, the other calmly bade him live, not for base pleasures, but for noble deeds, and instead of devoting himself to the vile indulgence which ends in

disgrace and death, bade him regard all unlawful pleasures as delusive and envenomed pleasure, "of which the hollowness disappoints at the time, the poison cruelly tortures afterwards, the effects deprave forever." She therefore urged him deliberately to devote his life to high purposes of labor and beneficence, the fulfillment of the will of heaven, the furtherance of the happiness of men.

And as the hero turned and gave his hand to her, whose name was Virtue, he saw the mass drop from the face of the other, whose name was Vice, and he saw in all their hideousness, her mean and withered ugliness, her painted but leprous face.—Farrar.

"The Presbyterian Record"

A certain famous preacher said: "I read my Bible to learn what God did in ancient times. I read the newspaper to learn what He is doing now."

The Sabbath School teacher's work is by no means done when he has expounded what the lesson contains. There are rich stores of illustration in the story of God's work, as it is now being carried forward at home and abroad. Teachers should keep themselves well informed and keep their scholars well informed as to what is doing in the mission fields of the world. The Word of God thus becomes a living thing, and a generation of young people are being trained to a living interest in the great enterprise that God is carrying on through His Church, of subduing the world to Himself.

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SCHOOL. Talk ye of all His wondrous works.

SUPERINTENDENT. Glory ye in His holy name.

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

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SUPERINTENDENT. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

SUPERINTENDENT AND SCHOOL. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

IV. CLOSING HYMN OR DOXOLOGY.

V. BENEDICTION OR CLOSING PRAYER.

**Bible Dictionary for Fourth Quarter
1900**

Ab'-ra-ham The patriarch from whom the people of Israel were descended.

Bar-ti-mæ'-us The blind beggar of Jericho healed by Jesus. His father was Timæus. "Bar" means "son of."

Beth'-le-hem The city of David, foretold in prophecy as the birth-place of the Messiah. Situated in the hill country of Judæa, it was a town of shepherds.

Gal'-i-lee The northern province of Palestine, about the size of Prince Edward Island, with a population of between one and three millions, who were engaged in farming, fishing and mercantile business. The people were much more frank and open, but also less learned, than those of Judæa.

Greek The language of the educated classes and of commerce in the cities of Syria and Asia Minor, as well as in Greece. A "Greek" would be a Gentile who spoke Greek.

Ha'-des The abode of the dead. Originally good and bad were supposed to dwell there in a shadowy existence; but in the time of our Lord the Jews had come to regard it as a place of punishment.

Her'-od The name given to the royal family that had rule in Palestine during the life of Christ and His apostles. The Herod of these lessons is Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea under the Romans; son of Herod the Great.

Jer'-i-cho A city of great age in the rich valley of the Jordan, from which a busy public road led up through the mountains to Jerusalem. It was on the caravan route to Arabia and Egypt.

Je-ru'-sa-lem Originally a Jebusite stronghold. David made it his capital. Solomon built the Temple there. There our Lord was crucified. Jerusalem has been destroyed either wholly or partially seventeen times. It is the chief city of Palestine still, but squalid under Mohammedan rule.

John Son of Zebedee and younger brother of James; also John the Baptist.

Jo'-seph The husband of Mary and thought by his contemporaries to be the father of Jesus.

Ju-dæ'a Southern province of Palestine, with Jerusalem as capital. A mountainous country, inhabited in the uplands by shepherds. Its towns, and especially Jerusalem, were filled with scholars and teachers, but it was not, like Galilee, of commercial importance.

Laz'-a-rus A common name in Palestine. There are two men so called in the

gospels, one the brother of Mary and Martha raised by Jesus from the dead, the other the Lazarus of the parable. (Lesson VI.)

Le'-vites In the time of our Lord an inferior order of priests, who had duties in the Temple services.

Mam'-mon A Syrian word meaning money. Personified, it denotes the god or evil spirit that was brought to use money as its instrument.

Ma'-ry The mother of Jesus; also Mt., the wife of Cleophas, Mary the sister of Lazarus, Mary Magdalene.

Mo'-ses The great deliverer and law-giver of Israel; died on Mt. Nebo.

Naz'-a-areth The home of Jesus, from which He was called "Jesus of Nazareth." A town of several thousands, beautifully situated among the hills in the south of Galilee and lying on a much-travelled trade road.

Pe'-ter Son of Jonah and brother of Andrew. The apostle of impulse and hope. The first to confess and the first to deny his Lord.

Phar'-i-sees Separatists. A Jewish sect zealous for outward forms, but bigoted and often of unholly lives.

Pub'-li-cans A class of men hated by the Jews because they had purchased from the Romans the right to tax the inhabitants of Galilee or Judæa.

Rab'-bi Hebrew word meaning "teacher"; used as a title of respect.

Sa-mar'-i-tan An inhabitant of Samaria, the province between Galilee and Judæa. The Samaritans were half-pagan and half-Jewish, and their cities had been much under the influence of Greek and Roman invaders. A rich and prosperous country, but with an inferior class of people, who were despised by the Jews. They accepted only the Pentateuch, and built a rival temple at Gerizim.

Scribes A class of learned men, usually belonging to the Pharisees; authorities on the law.

Sinners A term used in contempt by the Pharisees of all who did not keep the Jewish law according to their traditions and precepts. Often they were guilty of vices, but not always.

Son of Da'-vid A title of the Messiah, who was to be a direct descendant in the royal line of David. No one ever denied during the life-time of Jesus, that our Lord had David as His ancestor.

Son of man The favorite title used by Jesus of Himself to denote that He was the Head of the Kingdom of Humanity.

Zacchæus A rich publican of Jericho who gave up his former evil life to become a disciple of Jesus.

International Bible Lessons

Studies in the Life of Jesus

LESSON CALENDAR: FOURTH QUARTER

1. October 7.....Jesus Dining with a Pharisee. Luke 14: 1-14.
2. October 14.....Parable of the Great Supper. Luke 14: 15-24.
3. October 21.....The Lost Sheep and Lost Coin. Luke 15: 1-10.
4. October 28.....The Prodigal Son. Luke 15: 11-24.
5. November 4.....The Unjust Steward. Luke 16: 1-13.
6. November 11.....The Rich Man and Lazarus. Luke 16: 19-31.
7. November 18.....The Ten Lepers Cleansed. Luke 17: 11-19.
8. November 25.....Sober Living. Titus 2: 1-15.
9. December 2.....The Rich Young Ruler. Matt. 19: 16-26.
10. December 9.....Bartimæus Healed. Mark 10: 46-52.
11. December 16.....Zacchæus the Publican. Luke 19: 1-10.
12. December 23.....Parable of the Pounds. Luke 19: 11-27; or
Christmas Lesson. Matt. 2: 1-11.
13. December 30.....REVIEW.

LESSON I.

JESUS DINING WITH A PHARISEE

October 7, 1900

Luke 14: 1-14. Commit to memory vs. 12-14. Read Luke 13; John 10: 22-12.

1 And it came to pass, ¹as he went into the house of one of ²the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they ³watched him.

2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath ⁴day?

4 ⁵And they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go;

5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox falling into a pit, and will not straightway ⁶pull him out on the sabbath day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 And he ⁹put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief ¹⁰rooms: saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any *man* to a ¹¹wedding, sit not down in the ¹²highest room; lest ¹³thou a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

Revised Version—¹When; ²The rulers of the; ³Were watching; ⁴Or not; ⁵But; ⁶He said unto; ⁷Well; ⁸Draw him up on a Sabbath day; ⁹Spake; ¹⁰Seats; ¹¹Marriage feast; ¹²Chief seat; ¹³Haply; ¹⁴Shall; ¹⁵Then thou shalt begin; ¹⁶Place; ¹⁷Glory; ¹⁸All; ¹⁹Humbled; ²⁰Bid; ²¹Because they have not wherewith to; ²²In.

GOLDEN TEXT

Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. Luke 14: 11.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Luke 14: 1-14. Jesus dining with a Pharisee

T.—Matt. 12: 1-13. Sabbath healing.

W.—Matt. 23: 1-12. Pride condemned.

Th.—Isa. 53: 3-12. Care for the poor.

F.—Prov. 25: 1-7. The lowly place.

S.—Job 22: 23-30. There is lifting up.

S.—Rom. 12: 1-13. Preferring one another.

TIME

Probably early in A.D. 30, January. Jesus' last days on earth are drawing nigh.

PLACE

Jerusalem, possibly, or near Bethabara, at the fords of the Jordan, hard by Jericho. (John 10. 40.)

CATECHISM

Q. 43. What is the preface to the ten commandments?

A. The preface to the ten commandments is in these words, *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

LESSON PLAN

I. Closely Watched, 1. At the Pharisee's table; by the lawyers and Pharisees; as to how He spent the Sabbath day.

II. Convincing by a Miracle, 2-6. He heals the dropsical man; which deed of mercy none of them can reprove.

III. Giving Needed Advice, 7-11. To be humble, humility being the highway to honor.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—210; 32: 1-4 (Ps. Sel.); 219; 518; 429; 32.

EXPOSITION

Professor Talbot
Connecting Links—The evangelist gives toward Jerusalem." (v. 22.) During the previous chapter that Jesus was "journeying" (Luke 9: 51) Jesus seems to have preached in the period which begins on His leaving Galilee

parts of Samaria and Judæa, but always drawing toward Jerusalem. The hostility of the Pharisees was increasing daily and here we have an example of their constant practice, which Jesus rebukes with a parable going to the heart of religious conduct.

I. Closely Watched, 1.

And it came to pass; a general note of time. We cannot tell just when. (See "Time and Place.") *He went into the house of*; by invitation, though it is probable that curiosity rather than hospitality prompted the Pharisee in inviting Him. Compare the incident in Luke 7: 36-50. *Chief Pharisees* (Rev. Ver. "ruler of the Pharisees"); perhaps one of the chief local magistrates, who would also have much influence in the synagogue. *To eat bread*; i. e., to a meal. *On the sabbath*. The Sabbath, was, for the Jew, a day of rejoicing and it was quite usual to have feasts and gatherings of friends. The best food was provided in order to make the day a delight. But every kind of work, even the most trivial, was forbidden. *They were watching* (Rev. Ver.). It was their habitual attitude now.

II. Convincing by a Miracle, 2-6.

V. 2. *Behold*. Perhaps the man saw through the open door that Jesus was there, and came in to be healed. Others think that it was a trap set by the Pharisees, who had concealed Him, wishing to get proof against Jesus of breaking the Sabbath.

V. 3. *Answering*; their unspoken thoughts. *Lawyers*; who should have known the meaning of the law. They belonged to the Pharisee class, the more learned among them. *Is it lawful?* If they said "Yes!" they could no longer find fault with Jesus; if they said "No!" they were inhuman, and untrue to their own law, which allowed work to relieve suffering or to protect life on the Sabbath. (See verse 5, also Mark 3: 4.)

V. 4. *And they held their peace*. They were in a dilemma and could give no answer. *And he took him and healed him*; an open, courageous deed. For the sake of the poor suffering man Jesus would defy any power.

Vs. 5, 6. *Answered*; as in v. 3. *Which of*

you, etc. This was an event of frequent occurrence in a country in which there were many unprotected wells. It was quite lawful to do this on the Sabbath. It is implied that if they could do this for an ox on the Sabbath, surely it must be right to heal a man who, according to the teaching of the Old Testament, is made in the image of God. (Gen. 1: 26, 27.)

III. Giving Advice, 7-14.

V. 7. *A parable to those who were bidden*. The lesson was needed. *He marked*. Actions like these always attracted His attention. *Chief seats* (Rev. Ver.) It was a besetting fault of the Pharisees to seek honor from men. (John 5: 44.) For this purpose they wore distinctive dress and were sticklers for precedence on all occasions.

V. 8. *A wedding*. Here the rank of the seats and the dignity of the guests would be of great importance. *The chief seat* (Rev. Ver.). A curious story is told of a certain Rabbi who, at a banquet for some great Persian Satraps given by King Alexander Jannæus, had thrust himself between the king and queen at table. *A more honourable*; one of higher title or position.

V. 9. *Give this man place*. The rabbi just mentioned was rebuked for his intrusion.

V. 10. *Sit down in the lowest place* (Rev. Ver.). An example of true humility, which, instead of insisting on its rights, is willing to remain unhonored. *Go up higher*. The only possible change for such a man is higher.

V. 11. *Whosoever exalteth himself*. A frequent saying of Jesus. (Matt. 23: 12; Luke 18: 14. Compare also the story of the foot-washing in John 13: 3-15.) The lesson of this parable is that humility is an essential virtue for members of the kingdom of God. To humble oneself does not mean to practise mock-humility. It is the opposite of exalting oneself, standing on the outside edge of one's rights, estimating oneself at a supreme value. In the sight of God's holiness and the absolute purity of Jesus Christ, a sense of our own unworthiness should surely overwhelm us and drive us to the lowest seat, where we can only think of God's

mercy, not of our own claims.

V. 12. *Said he also to him that bade him.* The previous words were for the guests. These are for the host. *Call not thy friend.* The tense of the verb here denotes a constant practice—so that one never sees any but the rich at your table. Invite others as well. *Lest they also bid thee.* True hospitality never asks how much it will get back by inviting so-and-so to dinner. It cannot be a formal give-and-take. Hospitality is a virtue that springs from a generous heart and almost fears lest it should get back what it gave.

V. 13. *Call the poor,* etc. Send your invitations to those who need them most, and

who will get most enjoyment out of them.

V. 14. *Thou shalt be blessed.* Not with money, for those whom you have helped have none to give you, but with those blessings that shall come hereafter at the *resurrection of the just.* "He would be raised with them because his actions showed that he was one of them; he would have the rewards that God gives, and can give only, to those who are righteous. Compare Matt. 25 : 34-46."—Peloubet. The blessings with which true Christian hospitality will be rewarded are the heavenly joys of fellowship with all, rich or poor, high or low, who have lived righteous lives and so have entered the eternal kingdom.

Rev. J. M. D. means APPLICATION
Woodville, Ont

He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread, v. 1. The Pharisees hated Jesus. It was they who rejected Him, hunted Him down, murdered Him. Only a little while ago their anger against Him had blazed out in fierce flame. And yet Jesus accepted this invitation to the Pharisee's house and went, willing to do good to His enemy. This is always heaven's way, to answer earth's hate with love. "There was an infidel soldier of the Middle Ages who hated the Bible and all sacred things. He grew so fierce and mad in his defiance that he determined to test the power of the Christian's God. So he went out into a field, armed as if for battle. He threw his glove down on the ground as a challenge. Then he looked up to the heavens and angrily cried: 'God, if there be a God, I defy Thee here and now to mortal combat. If Thou indeed art, put forth Thy power of which Thy pretended priests make such boast.' As he spoke he saw a piece of paper fluttering in the air just above his head. It fell at his feet. He took it up and on it read these words: 'God is love.' Overcome by this strange response, he broke his sword in token of surrender, and, kneeling upon the fragments, gave his life thenceforth to the service of that God whom he had before defied. So it was that this world hated God and defied Him; and so it was that the

answer came from heaven to all this defiance and rebellion, 'God is love.' "

They watched him, v. 1. If the eyes of these men had not been blinded by prejudice, they would have seen the image of God mirrored in Christ. He preached as He walked. So should it be with His disciples. Many of the most powerful sermons are sermons without words. It is told of St. Francis of Assisi that he stepped one day into the cloister of his monastery and said to a young monk: "Brother, let us go down into the town to-day and preach." So they went forth, the venerable father and the young man, conversing as they went. Along the principal streets, around the lowly alleys to the outskirts of the town, and to the village beyond they found their way, returning at length to the monastery gate. Then spoke the young monk, "Father, when shall we begin to preach?" "My child," said Francis, looking down kindly upon the young man, "we have been preaching; we were preaching while we were walking. We have been seen—looked at; our conduct has been remarked; and so we have delivered a morning sermon. Ah, my son," continued the saintly man, "it is of no use that we walk anywhere to preach, unless we preach as we walk." It is the character, the disposition, the conduct, the temper of Christ reflected in us that will win others for Him.

And behold there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy, v. 2. Dean Farrar thinks that the man had been placed there by the Pharisees, to test Jesus. They hoped either to show that Jesus was a Sabbath-breaker, or that His power to cure was only pretended. If this is true, we have in the miracle an illustration of how God overrules the wicked designs of men for good.

Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? v. 3. Had the Pharisees answered "No" to this question, it would have been their duty to prevent the sick man before them from being healed. Even they dared not take this responsibility. Common humanity revolts against such a view of Sabbath observance as would hinder us from healing the sick on that day. It is a true test of what is lawful and right on the Sabbath to inquire whether it will benefit men physically, mentally or spiritually.

They held their peace, v. 4. Their pride prevented them from acknowledging that they were in the wrong and that Jesus was in the right. Such pride is a false pride. It was told of Mr. Moody, after his death, that in his home he was always ready to admit to his children any wrong he had done them. It is not easy to own to our faults, but it is a mark of true nobility to do so.

Which of you shall have an ox or an ass fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day? v. 5. The emphatic

However keenly the enemies of Jesus watched Him they never succeeded in finding any fault in him. v. 1.

For a sick man to be "before" Jesus was to be certain of healing. v. 2. So compassionate is our Saviour.

Jesus answered not the words but the thoughts of the company; nothing is so secret as to be hidden from Him. v. 3.

The Pharisees would not say "yes," they dared not say "no," to the question of Jesus. Obstinacy or fear tied their tongues. Prejudice or cowardice made them slaves. v. 4.

Jesus silenced His opponents by fair argu-

word here is "you." Jesus points out with great keenness that these Pharisees laid aside their Sabbath scruples readily enough, when these scruples interfered with their own interests. This was the difference between their Sabbath-keeping and the Sabbath-keeping of Jesus—theirs was selfish, His was unselfish. They would work on the holy day to further their own interests; He would work for the good of others.

But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room, v. 10. Jesus had given His critics a lesson in Sabbath observance: He now gives them a lesson in humility. He does not here place the ban on a true ambition. He does not forbid a student to work for a high place in his class or a doctor or lawyer to strive for advancement in his profession. What he condemns is the spirit which boasts of what we have done and is too eager in demanding recognition by others of our place or our doings.

Lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee, v. 12. The lesson on Sabbath-keeping and humility is followed by a lesson on hospitality. We may not say that it is always wrong to invite wealthy guests. Everything depends on the motive. Jesus condemns inviting the rich with the purpose of securing an invitation from them in return. He commends inviting the poor and friendless, because, in their case, the selfish motive is absent.

A man is of more importance than a beast. It requires more labor to pull a beast out of a pit than to heal a man. v. 5.

The chief place in heaven is held by Him who was and is the servant of all. v. 7.

The great apostle called himself the chief of sinners. (1 Tim. 1: 15.) He who takes the lowest place before God, holds the highest place in the opinion of God. vs. 8-11.

We need to be on our guard against selfishness in our hospitality. v. 12.

It is a proof of unselfishness to entertain those who can give us no entertainment in return. v. 14.

Key: *Rev. M. D. Moore, Woodville, Ark.*

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

It was a proof of courage as well as of kindness for Jesus to accept the invitation to the house of the Pharisees. It takes courage to be a follower of Christ. Luther on his way to Worms was warned and dissuaded by his friends as he passed by. When he was close to the town, a very dear friend sent to beg him not to venture into the dangers which he knew awaited him. The Reformer's reply will live forever. "Were there as many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the roofs I would go in," he said. This is the spirit which we should seek to get into our lives, the determination to do what Christ bids us in spite of terrors and enemies.

"There is a myth concerning an old painter, that by a happy chance he compounded one day a certain mordant, which, colorless itself, possessed the power of heightening every color with which it was mixed. By the help of his discovery, from being a common-place artist, he rose to the position of a noted master. His works were renowned for the marvellous brilliancy of their tints. On his canvas was produced, in exactest hue, the waving emerald of the forest, the silver gleam of the river, the swimming light of the sunset, and the infinite azure of the sky. Everywhere and always the charm of the picture was due to that colorless nurse of color, which, by its strange alchemy, transfigured the crudeness and coarseness of the common tint. That is what the Sabbath does for the pictures of our common lives."—Dr. Gregg, quoted in Peloubet's Notes.

"In the Dore gallery in London there is a picture, the foreground of which consists of groups of people, rich and poor, young and old, kings and beggars, all turning beseeching looks upon a far-away figure. It is the Saviour, clothed in robes of dazzling whiteness, bearing a cross, with a hand uplifted, beckoning all these broken-hearted ones, captives and sorrow-laden ones, to come to Him for rest. That is always a true picture of Christ." He is saying to every soul bound by the chains of sin, "I will set you free." He who delivered this man from the cruel power of disease is able and

willing to set at liberty all the slaves of sin.

AN ANCIENT TABLE

	6	5	4	
7	Middle			3
8	Lowest			Highest
9				
				1

The chief places were those numbered 2, 5, 8. The host usually sat at 9.

Dean Farrar relates the following anecdote to illustrate the pride and self-exaltation which were essential marks of Pharisaic religion. "The king Jannæus had on one occasion invited several Persian Satraps, and among the guests asked to meet them was the Rabbi Simeon Ben Shetach. The latter on entering seated himself at table between the king and queen. Being asked his reason for such a presumptuous intrusion, he replied that it was written in the Book of Jesus Ben Sirach, 'Exalt wisdom and she shall exalt thee, and shall make thee sit among princes.'"

There is a legend of a monk to whom, while he was at his devotions, was granted a blessed vision of the Master:

"Then amid his exaltation,
 Loud the convent-bell appalling,
 From its belfry calling, calling,
 Rang through court and corridor
 With persistent iteration
 He had never heard before."

It was the hour when the blind and helpless and all the beggars of the street came to the convent gate to receive their allowance of food and this monk, now on his knees before the vision, was the one appointed to attend to their wants for this day. He hesitated whether to go or stay. Then a voice came:

"Do thy duty; that is best;
 Leave unto the Lord the rest."

So he went to perform his task and returned to find the vision standing where he had left it.

“Through the long hour intervening
It had waited his return,
And he felt his bosom burn,

Comprehending all the meaning,
When the blessed vision said,
‘Hadst thou stayed I must have fled.’”
We are never serving God better than when we are ministering to the poor and helpless.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

Take pains to *edit* give the true setting for this and the remaining lessons of the Quarter. Jesus is nearing the end of His earthly course. He is setting His face steadfastly toward Jerusalem (Luke 9: 51) where, as He knew, the tragedy of the Cross awaited Him. His words become, if possible, more searching, His dealings with men closer, as He perceives His days to be few. On the other hand, the hatred of His enemies is becoming more intense, just as the poison in the serpent's fangs becomes more deadly as summer advances and winter comes, when he will no longer be able to sting.

This first Lesson of the twelve is on PRIDE. The key to it is the Golden Text. Keep this, however, in the background. Do not even announce what the topic is, but bring topic and text out of the story of “Jesus Dining with a Pharisee.”

It is a stirring scene—the dinner table of a chief Pharisee. Describe the house, the table, the host, the guests, Jesus taking His place humbly amongst them, the keen watch kept on His every act and word. It was the Sabbath. He had been healing before on that day. Will He do it again?

Then comes *the man with the dropsy*, either attracted by the hope of healing or brought purposely by the Pharisees to entrap Jesus; they were quite capable of laying traps.

Mark *Jesus' question*, v. 3, and how it silences His foes. (See “Exposition,” and “Application.”) Then the man is healed and the mouths of the objectors even more completely stopped. (vs. 5, 6.)

Thus *the pride of knowledge* was rebuked. These Pharisees plumed themselves on their Sabbath keeping; and Jesus shows how absolutely mistaken they were.

Then follow *some wholesome words to the guests* present with Him at the feast. They

had been struggling for the most honorable seats and envying one another. He shows them how true the words of their own Solomon are. (Prov. 16: 18; 18: 12.)

The host also is instructed. Explain, as in “Exposition” v. 12, that “call” signifies a custom or habit of inviting. The point is—Do not habitually honor those who can honor you in return, but those who cannot. That is pride and self-seeking. The great motive is a share in the honor of the righteous at the last day. (v. 14.) Now for the Golden Text.

Questions for Juniors—1. Where was Jesus now teaching? Into whose house did He enter? For what purpose? On what day? By whom was He watched? Why? Who were the lawyers? The Pharisees?

2. Who was in the house? In what condition? What always called forth Christ's pity?

3. What question asked by Jesus? Of whom? Who instituted the Sabbath? (Gen. 2: 3.) Why did God bless and sanctify the day? (Gen. 2: 2, 3.) For whom was the Sabbath made? (Mark 2: 27.) How is the Sabbath to be sanctified? (Shorter Catechism, Ques. 60.) Which of the Ten Commandments refers to the Sabbath? Repeat it.

4-6. Why could not the lawyers and Pharisees answer Jesus? What did Jesus do for the sick man? By what question does He now test the Pharisees? How do they reply?

7-9. What lesson to be learned from this parable? What kind of conduct admired? For what reason?

10, 11. What is the greatest example of humility? (Matt. 11: 29; John 13: 14, 15; Phil. 2: 5-8.) What is the meaning of

"abased?" By whom shall the proud be abased? How exalted? (Matt. 5 : 3 ; James 4 : 6.)

12-14 Whom do men generally invite? Whom should they invite? What will the reward be to those who care for the poor and helpless? When will it be given? Is there any reward for it in this life? How does Christ regard kindness shown to His disciples?

For Seniors—1 On what did the Pharisees pride themselves? What is the meaning of "Pharisee?" Why were they so anxious to entrap Christ?

2-4. What other instances recorded of miracles performed on the Sabbath? (Luke 13 : 10-13 ; Mark 1 : 25-31 ; 3 : 1-5.) What was the law concerning the Sabbath? (Ex. 20 : 8 ; Lev. 19 : 3.) Of what was the Sabbath a sign? (Ex. 31 : 13-17.) Of what a type? (Heb. 4 : 4-9.) How should the Sabbath be employed? (Ex. 20 : 10 ; Luke 4 : 16 ; Rom. 10 : 17 ; Matt. 26 : 30 ; Isa. 66 : 23 ; Matt. 12 : 12.)

6-8. What advice offered by Jesus? Why needed?

9-11. Who are greatest in God's kingdom? (Matt. 18 : 4.) To what does humility lead?

(Prov. 22 : 4.) How was Christ's humility shown? (Heb. 2 : 16 ; Luko 2 : 51 : Matt. 20 : 28 ; John 13 : 5.)

12-14. What two sorts of invitations? Why is the one suggested and the other discouraged? What blessing is there to those who "consider the poor"? (Ps. 41 : 1.)

Ref 103
Bible Side Lights—THE SABBATH DAY—Gen. 2 : 1-3 ; Ex. 16 : 29 ; Lev. 19 : 30 ; Isa. 58 : 13, 14 ; Mark 2 : 27

A MARRIAGE FEAST—Ps. 45 : 15 ; John 1 : 2 ; Gen. 31 : 27, 28 ; Jer. 7 : 34.

EXALTED HIMSELF—Gen. 3 : 14 ; Prov. 16 : 5 ; Isa. 8 : 16, 17 ; 2 Sam. 24 : 10 ; Ezek. 28 : 17-19.

CALL THE POOR, ETC.—Ps. 10 : 2 ; Ps. 109 : 9-16 ; Prov. 22 : 2 ; Ps. 41 : 1-3 ; Matt. 14 : 15, 16.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST—1 Thess. 4 : 16 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 51-54 ; Rom. 8 : 23 ; Phil. 3 : 11.

Topics for Brief Papers

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. The Sabbath as a day for works of mercy.
2. Pride.
3. True hospitality.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

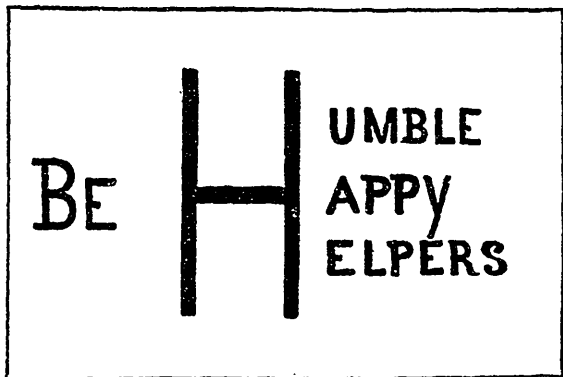
Connection—Recall last Quarter's Review Thought. God wants busy little Christians—workers. What are we doing?

Introduction—"I do not want to ask Jimmy

Parsons to my party, mother," said Frank. "He is always wanting the best things. When we are playing together he always

wants to play first, and when we have any candy or fruit, he grabs more than the rest get. If he came he would take the best seat at the table and would not give any one else a chance."

"Well, dear," said mother, "we'll ask poor little lame Harry, who is always so bashful, and we'll put him in the best place and see that he has a nice time. We'll leave Jimmy out this time, and perhaps he'll learn not to be selfish and proud."



The Lesson—Tell the Bible Story. Explain again the custom of people looking on at feasts. Among them this time is a sick man. Jesus is not proud or thoughtless (verses 3-5). Tell a simple story about kindness to dumb animals.

Jesus had been watching the guests. Each looked for the best seat he could find. All tried to get places of honor.

Jesus told them a story (parable) about a man who went to a wedding party and seated himself in the very best place, where everybody could see him. Another guest came and took a seat in a corner. The host came to this humble man, took him by the arm and led him to the place where the proud man had seated himself and asked the proud man to take the seat in the corner while the humble man was put in the best place.

The Reward of Humility—Jesus said (Golden Text). God rewards humble efforts (illustrations). He dislikes selfishness, pride and foolish show.

The Best Kind of Party—Dwell on the thought in verses 12-14. Picture two parties, one, where all the children are from rich

homes, beautifully dressed, who can give parties in return. The other child invited all the poor children in the neighborhood, who never had parties, whose eyes fairly danced with wonder at the beautiful rooms and the richly spread table, who appreciated the beautiful treat and the love that prompted it.

Which child got the most happiness out of his party?

Teachers will find a beautiful illustration of the latter kind of hospitality in "The Bird's Christmas Carol" by Kate Douglas Wiggin.

Practical Thoughts—Be humble little Christians.

"Oh Papa," said little Gracie,
"Where can that birdie be?
If I could sing a song like that,
I'd sit where folks could see."

"I hope my little girl will learn
A lesson from this bird
And try to do what good she can
Not to be seen, but heard."

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Before
Goeth HONOR
 HUMILITY

The Orientals are fond of short, pithy sayings, a volume of wisdom condensed into a sentence. The saying (Prov. 18 : 12, Rev. Ver.), written on the Blackboard is an example. The Golden Text is the same truth, with the reverse side also given—that pride will have its fall. There is no better way of illustrating the truth on the board than by a vivid review of the lesson, bringing out the discomfiture (but do not use so hard a word to the scholars) of the Pharisees, who were proud of their knowledge of how the Sabbath should be kept and proud of the way they kept it. Show also, as the lesson does, how the pushing, self-conceited man, socially, is likely to have his "come-downs" and the modest man to be honored. Finally, repeat our Lord's blessing on the man who seeks to show kindness rather than to vaunt his own pride, in his hospitality. Have the scholars repeat and re-repeat, till they know the words by heart, Solomon's wise proverb, "Before honor goeth humility."

LESSON II.

PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER

October 14, 1900

Luke 14: 15-24. Commit to memory vs. 21-24. Read Matt. 22: 1-14.

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

Revised Version—1 But he said; 2 Field; 3 Out; 4 And the; 5 Told; 6 Maimed and blind and lame; 7 Constrain.

GOLDEN TEXT

Come; for all things are now ready. Luke 14: 17.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Luke 14: 15-24. Parable of the great supper.

T.—Prov. 9: 1-10. Wisdom's call. W.—Matt. 22: 1-10. Invitation described.

Th.—Zech. 7: 8-14. Refusing to hearken.

F.—Isa. 65: 1-12. Refusers rejected. S.—Rev. 19: 4-9. Supper of the Lamb.

S.—Rev. 22: 8-17. Free invitation.

TIME AND PLACE

As in last Lesson, probably in January, A.D. 30, and either in Jerusalem or in a Pharisee's house in Perea, on the way to Jerusalem.

CATECHISM

Q. 44. What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us?

A. The preface to the ten commandments teacheth us, That because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all His commandments.

LESSON PLAN

I. The Supper Ready, 15, 16.

A great supper, and many bidden.

II. The Guests Called, 17.

When feast was in readiness.

III. Their Excuses, 18-20.

Lands and goods and loved ones prevent them.

IV. The New Guests, 21-24.

From the streets and lanes, and highways and hedges. They come willingly.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—26; 10: 1-4 (Ps.

Sel.); 135; 559; 146; 129.

Rev. Prof. Falconer, Halifax EXPOSITION

Connecting Links—The Pharisees were so self-satisfied that they laid little of Christ's teaching to heart. At the words "resurrection of the just" (v. 14) with which the lesson of last Sabbath closes, they at once thought of that blessed future which, they were persuaded, was to be the reward of every righteous Pharisee. Only a few of the common people, and no sinners or publicans, would, in their opinion, have a share in that resurrection. Jesus utters this parable to answer their complacency. Though the parable of Matt. 22: 1-14 is in some respects similar to this it was spoken in different circumstances, and it has so many details peculiar to itself that it cannot be identified with this.

I. The Supper Ready, 15, 16.

One of them. He expressed not only his own thought but the feeling of the Pharisees as a whole. *These things*; the words about the "resurrection of the just." *Blessed is he*. A remark of a man who was fully satisfied that he and all his friends would share in that resurrection. There was no religious

feeling in it. If he had said sincerely, "Would that I might sit down at the feast!" Jesus would have given a different answer to a request of faith. But the Pharisee really means, "How thankful I am that I am a good Pharisee who shall of course find my seat ready for me." *Eat bread in the kingdom*. They looked for a sudden coming of the kingdom from above, when this earth would be changed and all their enemies be overthrown. The final blessings of the Messianic age, when these changes would be brought to pass, were often pictured by the Pharisees under the figure of a feast. The righteous would rise from their graves and their joy would be like that at a great feast. They understood enough of Christ's teaching to recognize that in verse 14 He was referring to the completion and triumph of Messiah's kingdom.

V. 16. *A certain man*; a great lord who was able to entertain on a large scale. *Bade many*. This was the first invitation; a reminder was given on the day of the feast. The many here are the Jewish people as a

whole. They were the chosen of God. Long ago the invitation had been given to them through patriarchs like Abraham, lawgivers like Moses, and many prophets.

II. The Guests Called, 17.

V. 17. *His servant*; here Jesus Christ. Compare Is. 53; Acts 3: 13-26. After His death the apostles gave the invitation. *At suppertime*; the second invitation just before the feast, lest they should have forgotten. "The intended guests having been apprised some days before of the coming feast, servants are again sent on the morning of the day to remind those who have been invited. To refuse the second summons would be an insult which is equivalent among Arab tribes to a declaration of war." (Tristram's Eastern Customs in Bible Lands.) *Come*. Jesus and His disciples always began with the Jews in giving the gospel message. Indeed, but few Gentiles heard the message until after the death of Jesus. *All things are now ready*. Jesus and His disciples preached that the kingdom of God was already in their midst because Jesus had come. John the Baptist had said that it was near. (Matt. 3: 2,3.)

III. Their Excuses, 18-20.

V. 18. *All with one consent*. As an actual fact, very few of the Pharisees or of the rulers of the Jews were willing to accept the invitation which Jesus brought. *I have bought a piece of ground*; a very poor excuse, for the ground might have lain as it was for another day.

V. 19. *I go*; or, I am just going. *To prove*; to test or try them. Both these men were too busy with their own concerns, which, however, were not so pressing that they might not have waited. So they refuse the invitation and insult him who invited them.

V. 20. *Have married . . . and therefore*. In the man's own eyes quite a good excuse. (Deut. 24: 5.) The three excuses are examples of reasons given for refusing to accept the Lord's invitation to His feast. Men are either too absorbed in worldly affairs or too much pre-occupied with their own private enjoyment to give heed to the spiritual

call. This is the secret, in most cases, of the rejection of Jesus Christ.

IV. The New Guests, 21-24.

V. 21. *Being angry*; for he had been insulted, treated with contempt by the friends who should have honored him. *Go out quickly*. It was the very day and hour of the feast and no time was to be lost. "At a great feast nothing could be more dishonoring than that the place of entertainment should not be filled." (Tristram.) *Streets and lanes of the city*; the open squares and narrow streets where the diseased basked in the sun and the beggars asked for charity, appealing with their maimed limbs to the passers-by. These were not busy like the first invited and, socially, they were far inferior. Note that the invitation is still to those within the city walls. By these are meant the publicans and sinners, who were outcasts, social and religious, in the eyes of the Pharisees, as were the beggar tribe. They were Jews, but their practices were abhorrent to the self-righteous Jews, who put them under the ban. Jesus, however, always offered the gospel to the publican and sinner. If the rigid and self-righteous Pharisee will not enter the kingdom, there were other guests. In Matt. 9: 13, Jesus says "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

V. 22. *What thou hast commanded is done*. The command had been executed at once. Jesus had, during His ministry in Galilee, been preaching to the publicans and sinners. *Yet there is room*. How vast is God's grace and the kingdom of God!

V. 23. *Highways and hedges*; i.e., outside the city. This means the Gentiles, who were beyond the borders of Israel. The law was like a wall that protected the Jew in the city of Zion. The Gentile lived without a knowledge of God's law. *Compel*; or as in the Rev. Ver. "constrain." The invitation is such a surprise that, at first, they will not believe it. So every effort must be made to persuade them. Paul sought, not the Jews only, but "was made all things to all men," that he "might by all means save some." (1 Cor. 9: 20-22.) *That my house may be filled*.

Very soon after Christ's death the gospel passed from the Jews to the great Gentile world. Christ's commission was to "disciple all nations" (Matt. 28 : 19), and His assurance is that His gospel shall be preached in all the world before the end come. (Matt. 24 : 14.) The whole world shall be

invited to the feast of God's salvation.

V. 24. *None of those men . . . shall taste.* The Jewish nation perished at the fall of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. What a terrible answer to the complacency of the Pharisees as seen in verse 15 ! It was a calamity which they had brought upon themselves by their obduracy.

Redmond Duneau APPLICATION

Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God, v. 15. This remark showed how little the man who made it had taken in the teaching of Jesus. "He said nothing, you observe, of the condition on which the Lord had said they would be recompensed, but contented himself with a fervent ejaculation about the happiness of those who should feast in the kingdom of God ; much as if one, on hearing a present duty faithfully enforced, should indulge in a fervent outburst about the blessedness of heaven. It was pure sentimentalism, holy humbug, or—to use the expressive modern word—absolute cant. The man was talking about that of which he knew nothing. The kingdom of God, in his view, was eating and drinking ; and there was, withal, in his mind no doubt that he would be in it. But then it was still a long way off ; and this flourish about its blessedness might turn the current of conversation away from the disagreeable channel in which it had been flowing." Dr. W. M. Taylor.

But he said unto him (Rev. Ver.), v. 16. What the man said (v. 15) was correct ; his spirit was wrong. Jesus taught that, if men would enjoy the blessings of the kingdom of God, they must be ready to give up earthly things and reckon them as of small account in comparison with spiritual things.

Come, v. 17. This was a great word with Jesus. He was continually saying "Come." On His lips it was a gracious invitation, but it was also an authoritative command. It was natural for Jesus to use the imperative mood. At His word, the stormy wind ceased its raging and the fierce waves grew calm. He spoke and disease let go its hold of its victim. Death gave back its captives at His bidding. Evil spirits crouched and cowered

before Him. He ruled over the forces of nature, over disease, over death, over the world of spirits. Had He not the right to command men ? That right is His still. He is a king and His invitations are commands. There is a world of gentleness in His voice as He says, "Come unto Me." "Follow Me." "Abide in Me." But there is a tone of divine authority in that voice. We disobey it at our peril.

All things are now ready, v. 17. The feast of the parable represents the gospel. The gospel blessings are now prepared. But who can measure the cost of that preparation ? There is a Japanese legend which describes the making of a wonderful bell. Long ago, the emperor wrote to the maker of bells, commanding him to cast a bell larger and more beautiful than any ever made before. He bade him put in it gold and silver and brass, that the tones might be so sweet and clear, that when hung in the palace tower, its sounds might be heard for a hundred miles. The bell-maker put gold and silver and brass into his great melting-pot, but the metals would not mingle and the bell was a failure. Again and again he tried ; but in vain. Then the emperor was angry and sent, saying that if the bell were not made at the next trial, the bell-maker must die. The bell-maker had a lovely daughter. She was greatly distressed for her father. Wrapping her mantle about her she went by night to the oracle and asked how she could save him. He told her that gold and silver and brass would not mingle until the blood of a virgin was mixed with them when they were melted together. Again the maker of bells prepared to cast the bells. The daughter stood by and at the moment of casting she threw herself

into the midst of the molten metal. The bell was made and found to be more wonderful and perfect than any other ever made. It hung in the great palace tower and its sweet tones were heard for a hundred miles. It owed its sweetness to the blood of sacrifice mingling with the gold and silver and brass. So the gospel feast was not fully ready for us until the Son of God took our nature upon Him and lived and died for us, through His infinite love.

And they all with one consent began to make excuse, v. 18. It is quite clear that all these excuses were not reasons, but mere pretexts. There was no reason why the visit to the field or the proving of the oxen should not have been postponed, to make way for so important a duty as accepting the invitation given, nor would any true wife have objected to her husband's absence for such a purpose. The pretexts covered up the one reason which really kept all these invited guests from the feast—their unwillingness to come. Their conduct finds its counterpart in the treatment which the Jews accorded to the invitations of Jesus, and which led Him to say—oh, so sadly—"Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." (John 5 : 40)

I have bought a piece of ground . . . I have

bought five yoke of oxen . . . I have married a wife, vs. 18-20. Notice that these men found excuses for not going to the feast in things which were right in themselves. So, things perfectly lawful may prevent us from giving to Jesus our whole heart. His word is: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." (v. 23.)

That my house may be filled, v. 23. "The saved shall vastly, and many times over, outnumber the lost, and the House of God shall be filled. Only the first few stragglers, as it were, from the streets and lanes and highways, have yet taken their seats; but the messengers of the Lord of the feast are busy over an ever-widening area, carrying the invitation to an ever-increasing multitude. Thus far, the few only have accepted it, but by-and-bye the nations shall flock in to the feast, 'as the doves to the windows.' When the number of the elect shall be accomplished, it shall be seen to be no mere fraction of the race, but the great majority of mankind; and the place of perdition shall be to heaven only as the prison is to a populous community."—Dr. W. M. Taylor.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. 14 : 17.) v. 15.

The use of the word "feast" to describe the gospel, suggests the ideas of preparation, provision, abundance, fellowship. v. 17.

God's invitations leave us without any excuse for rejecting them. v. 16.

All wish to go to heaven, but not all are willing to perform a present duty. vs. 18, 19, 20.

These guests told the truth, but not the whole truth, in making their excuses. It was true that one had bought a field and another a yoke of oxen, and that a third had married a wife. It was not true that these things were the real reasons for their conduct. vs. 18, 19, 20.

There is no base passion in the anger of God, but there is holy indignation against sin. It is holy wrath. v. 21.

The refusal of the invitation leads to its being offered to a larger number. So infinite is the grace of God. v. 21.

The largest "room" in the world is the room for improvement. v. 23.

The gospel compels man to come to Christ, not by force, but by love. v. 23.

The gospel will triumph even though we should reject. v. 23.

The exclusion of the guests first invited was due to their own fault. We shall not be able to blame God if we are lost. v. 24.

"The Jews connected the advent of the Messianic kingdom with banquets of food

more delicious than manna, the flesh of Leviathan and the bird Bar Jachus."—Cambridge Bible.

"It is still customary in the East, not only to give to an invitation sometime beforehand, but to send round servants at the proper time to inform the invited guests that all things are ready."—Kitto.

It was easy to do this, because "the guests were close together in an Eastern city." And it was necessary to do it, because "they were not generally supplied with time-pieces." Another reason for this second invitation was that, from the habits of Orientals and their manners of preparing the feast, it was impossible to know just when the meal would be ready. v. 17.

"For each of us all things are ready; the atonement made, the mansions prepared, the Father willing to receive, the angels waiting to welcome, the doors open, the Holy Spirit present, duties awaiting."

Worldly possessions often blind men to the value of the heavenly inheritance. A small coin held close to the eye will shut out from view the sun shining in the heavens.

"A finger's breadth at hand may mar
A world of light in heaven afar:
A mote eclipse a glorious star."

Not one of these excuses can stand a moment's examination. They remind one of Mark Twain's Oriental, who declined to lend an axe, saying that he needed it himself to eat soup, and who, when he was reminded that one does not eat soup with an axe, replied: "When one is determined not to do a thing, any excuse is good enough." So all the excuses which men offer for rejecting the gospel spring from unwillingness to accept it.

Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in. The great commission is not: "Come ye from all the world and hear the gospel," but "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." It is the business of the Church to go out into the highways, in which open and notorious sinners are

found, and into the hedges, where less known and secret offenders lurk, and constrain them by loving entreaties to come into the feast.

In verse 24, we have the application of the parable and also the answer of Jesus to the man whose exclamation (v. 15) had led to it. Our Lord, in effect, says to the guests then present: "I have shown you what the eating of bread in the kingdom of God really is, and how you treat the invitation, while professing to look forward to participation in the feast. It is God's feast, and He invites you to it. But it is 'My supper,' given in My honor, and the invitation comes through me, sent of God 'in the form of a servant.' You will refuse to enter because, in refusing Me and My teachings, you refuse to obey the direct call of God, who previously invited you by His prophets and through His word."—Dr. M. B. Riddle.

Reasons and excuses are often very different things. Men are often ashamed of their real reasons for their conduct, and for rejecting Christ, and have to hide them, not only from others, but from themselves, by some plausible excuses. It is the same with neglect of church and religious services. There is little in the excuses given, as the minister, the sermon, the music, no social recognition, no time; but we must look much deeper for the real reasons. And we should be far more careful to understand and remove the reasons than to try to answer their excuses. It is for this reason that much of the arguing with irreligious men is so useless. It is like scraping the furred tongue, but leaving the fever. It is tearing down a flaunting flag from the enemy's ship, but leaving the crew and the guns.—Peloubet.

If you knew God, and what those "things" are "which He has prepared for them that love Him," all "excuses" would be flung to the winds. It would not be, "Have me excused!" but, "I come!" "Me first—me now—me forever! Lord, bid me—Lord, let me—Lord, make me come!"—Vaughan.

Editor

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

The first words of the lesson will recall that of last Sabbath, the feast at the Pharisee's house and the severe but needed lessons on self-sufficiency and pride.

The words of the man who speaks in v. 15 make it evident, both that the lessons were needed and that they were still needed. This Pharisee, at least, has not recognized his own portrait.

The connection is this. Jesus had spoken of "the resurrection of the just." The Pharisee at once says: "Oh, yes, we are the just—we righteous Pharisees. Blessed, indeed, shall we be when Messiah's kingdom comes!"

The parable is spoken to set him right, and to encourage also the nondescripts, the publicans and sinners, who may have been within hearing, and the Gentiles, to whom the words might come.

There is an interesting field here in the matter of Oriental customs. See that the scholars have correct notions as to the preparations for a great feast; the number likely to be bidden ("bade many"—God has never been niggardly or "near" in His invitations; witness Isa. 55: 1); the second invitation when supper was ready; the purchase of land, the proving of oxen, the customs of marriage; the errand to the streets and lanes and the ingathering of the miscellaneous crowd therefrom; the mission to the highways and hedges outside the city; the wrath of the insulted host;—all these points should be made clear.

But leave room for this also, indeed let what has just been outlined lead up to it—the great spiritual teaching of the lesson. These four headings may serve a good purpose.

1. EXCEEDING GRACE. It is a "great" supper. He "bade many." He made "all things ready" and what a readiness, the mission of patriarch and psalmist and prophet, the foreshadowing ceremonial of the Old Testament, the life and teachings and death and resurrection and intercession of the Lord Jesus, and finally, the sending the Holy Ghost, the second invitation!

2. EXCEEDING FOLLY. To turn their backs

on their Lord and His invitations for the sake of the paltry things of this world, and never do they seem so paltry—ground, cattle, personal delights. It was the folly of Esau repeated. (Gen. 25: 29-34.)

3. THE WIDENESS OF GOD'S MERCY. It is verily like the "wideness of thesea." His own chosen and favored ones reject. What then? Others will be brought in—the outcasts amongst themselves (v. 21); the outsiders—Gentiles (v. 23); and what is not taught in this parable, but appears elsewhere, even the nation that then rejected, was to be brought in. (Rom. 11: 25-27.)

4. THE SHARPNESS OF GOD'S WRATH. "Who will by no means clear the guilty," is Jehovah's testimony to Himself. (Ex. 34: 7; Num. 14: 18.) "A consuming fire," the Epistle to the Hebrews calls our God. (Heb. 12: 29.) A judge executing swift judgment, our Lord declares Him here.

Notice that the punishment is simply exclusion: "None of those men . . . shall taste of my supper" (v. 24). There are other and stronger words elsewhere in regard to the fate of those who resist and reject, but even to be shut out of heaven, shut out of the glory and the gladness, shut away from the feast and the Master of it, is enough. "The blackness of darkness forever." (Jude 13.)

Questions for *Miss M. M. M. M.*
15, 16. Where was the parable spoken? With whom had Christ been dining? About what had He been talking? How did He represent the kingdom of heaven? Who gave the feast? Whom does he represent? How many invited? Who gave the first invitations?

17. When was the second call sent? By whom? What was the message?

18-20. How did the guests act? What excuse made by the first? On what ground did the second refuse the invitation? What plea was made by the third? What was the real reason in each case?

21, 22. Why was the Master angry? What four classes were now invited? Where were they to be found? How urgent was the invitation?

23. Where was the servant next sent? How was he to act? Why was he so anxious? How can we help to fill up the kingdom of Christ? How can each scholar help to fill up the Sunday School?

24. What was the fate of those who refused? Whose fault was it? Whom does Christ invite to come? (Matt. 11 : 28-30; Isa. 55 : 1.) How did the Jews use Christ? How were they punished? Who were called in their stead?

For Seniors—15. To what has the kingdom of heaven been compared? Who shall enter this kingdom? (Luke 9 : 62; 2 Thess. 1 : 5; Rom. 14 : 17.) Describe the position of guests as seated at an Eastern feast.

16, 17. Who prepared the gospel feast? For whom? (Mark 16 : 15; Col. 1 : 23.) How long will it last? At what price purchased? How excellent is it? (1 Cor. 2 : 9, 10.) What has it been called? (Isa. 25 : 6; Rev. 19 : 9.) What expressed by it? (Isa. 61 : 10; John 3 : 29.) To whom was the invitation first given? When is the accepted time?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Connection—The subject of parties is always of interest to little people. Recall the feast at the Pharisee's house. The children should now be able to describe to you the scene at an Eastern feast, the tables, couches, seats for onlookers, etc. Something might be told of the probable kinds of food, bread, honey,

18-20. On what grounds were the invitations refused?

21, 22. Why were new invitations issued? To whom? What glorious declaration made?

23, 24. Name some modern "highways" and "hedges." What comes from neglecting Christ and His invitations?

Bible Side Lights—EAT BREAD—Gen. 18 : 3-8; 43 : 16-32; 24 : 17; Judges 19 : 16-21.

SENT HIS SERVANT—1 Cor. 7 : 21-24; Philem. 10 : 14; Eph. 6 : 5-7; 1 Tim. 6 : 1, 2.

WITH ONE ACCORD—1 Sam. 11 : 7; Ps. 83 : 5; Hos. 6 : 9; Zeph. 3 : 9.

BEING ANGRY—Job 32 : 3-5; Matt. 20 : 24; Prov. 16 : 32; James 1 : 20.

THE POOR, ETC.—Ps. 9 : 18; 12 : 5; James 2 : 5; Ps. 34 : 6; Matt. 19 : 21; Luke 4 : 18.

Topics for Brief Papers

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

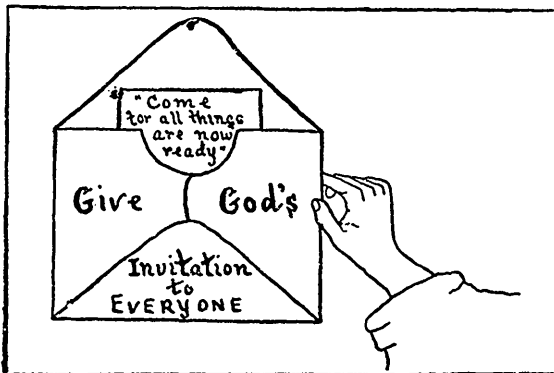
1. The customs in regard to invitations to feasts in Bible times.
2. "Come," on the lips of our Lord.
3. Excuses.

Mrs. Johnston

grapes, figs, etc., no doubt, as these were all plentiful in Palestine. Do the children remember the kind of party Jesus was telling us about—whom we should invite, etc.?

The Lesson—We are going to talk about a supper party of which Jesus was talking to the Pharisees at the last feast. Tell the parable in simple words.

What a lot of excuses these rich rulers made! There were so many things they would rather do than accept this invitation. Their own cares and pleasures took up all their time. (verses 18-20.) How ungrateful they were to the good giver of the supper! He was angry at them for their carelessness. (verses 21-24.) They would not get another invitation. How foolish they were!



The Heavenly Supper—This parable was meant to tell us the story of our heavenly Father's feast of love and pardon, to which He has invited us all. He first invited His own chosen people, the Jews. They would not accept the invitation from Jesus. Then God sent the invitation to everybody the world over (verses 21-23) to come and partake of His feast of love and eat of the Bread of Life, Jesus.

Are we acting like the rich rulers, refusing to come, too busy with our own pleasures and work? God is inviting us to-day. (Teach Golden Text.) He will not be always asking us. (Repeat "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.") Wherever God's word is read or taught in home or church or Sabbath School, there is the feast ready for us,

Practical Thoughts—Tell a story to illustrate some excuses little people sometimes make for not coming to God's house, for not trying to please Jesus. So many things keep us from Jesus. We would rather be

with playmates and friends out walking or driving or playing, than going to church and Sabbath School. The thought of Sabbath observance may be dwelt upon, but Jesus' invitation is for week days as well. How ungrateful we are to the good God when we do not accept it!

The Streets and Lanes—We should be little servants carrying God's invitation into the "streets and lanes" of our own towns, the new parts of our own country. (Home Missions.) Tell the children of the thousands of people coming into our country, the Galicians, the Icelanders, the Doukhobors. There are little children in the North-West from twenty-one different countries speaking different languages from ours.

The Highways and Hedges—Then we are to go into "the highways and hedges," (Foreign Missions), into every nook and corner of God's big world, telling of Jesus and His love, telling them to "come for all things are now ready."

Hymn No. 562, Book of Praise.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Edith

Call
GOD'S Offer
Mercy
Exceeding wrath

The great word of the lesson is the opening word of the Golden Text. It may be written on the blackboard in bold capitals, as above, at the beginning of the Review. The rest of the board should be clean. Then write before it "God's"—"God's COME." It must be with authority; it may be in anger, or it may be in grace. It is imperative, in any case, that when God cries "Come," we should give heed. Impress this thought deeply. Now, what does God's "Come" include, as brought out in the parable? Show that it includes (1) a "Call" and a very distinct one, to come to the feast which He has made ready; (2) an "Offer," of a rich, soul-satisfying repast. Have the school read in concert 1 Cor. 3: 21 (2nd clause), 22, 23; (3) "Mercy"—brought out both in His gracious invitation to His own and in vs. 21-23: (4) "Exceeding wrath," against those who despise and reject His precious offer.

LESSON III.

THE LOST SHEEP AND LOST COIN

October 21, 1900

Luke 15: 1-10. Commit to memory vs. 4-7. Read Luke 14: 25-35.

1 Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?

5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice

with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house and seek diligently till she find it?

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Revised Version.—Now all the publicans and sinners were drawing near unto him; 2 Both; 3 The; 4 And having lost; 5 Even so there shall be joy; 6 Righteous; 7 Lamp; 8 Even so.

GOLDEN TEXT

There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Luke 15: 10.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Luke 15: 1-10. The lost sheep and lost coin.

T.—Ezekiel 34: 11-16. Seeking the lost.

W.—Mark 2: 13-17. Sinners sought. Th.—Titus 3: 1-8. Lost and saved.

F.—Eph. 2: 1-10. The dead quickened.

S.—1 Tim. 1: 12-17. Joy of the saved.

S.—Rev. 9: 17. Joy in heaven.

TIME AND PLACE

Soon after the last Lesson, winter of A. D. 30, likely in Perea, beyond Jordan.

CATECHISM

Q. 45. Which is the first commandment?

A. The first commandment is, Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Q. 46. What is required in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment requireth us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify Him accordingly.

LESSON PLAN

I. The Pride that Scorns, 1, 2.

The Pharisees and scribes ignorant that Jesus received and ate with publicans and sinners.

II. The Love that Saves, 3-10.

In three matchless parables, one of which is reserved for our next Lesson, Jesus shows what God thinks of these same despised ones.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—595: 14 (Ps. Sel.); 45; 141; 588; 134.

EXPOSITION

Connecting Links—It was in these last days of our Lord's ministry that the parables of grace in Luke 15 were spoken. His practice of mingling with the outcasts of society in order to bring them into His kingdom had scandalized the self-righteous classes. The three parables have the same theme, God's gracious salvation of the erring, the lost, the sinful. The first two, which are very similar, are simpler than that of the prodigal son.

I. The Pride that Scorns, 1, 2.

All the publicans and sinners were drawing near. (Rev. Ver.) It was their constant habit. The publicans, though Jews, had so fallen from sympathy with their own nation that they were willing to lease from the Romans the right to collect taxes and revenue in the name of the hated oppressors. Their unjust exactions, as well as their lack of patriotism, made them objects of hatred to the strict Jews. Even to-day the collector of taxes or the appraiser is not as a rule popular. The "sinners" were either those who disregarded the strict commands of the ceremonial law or were guilty of vices. Both publicans and

sinners were beyond the pale of respectability. For to hear Him. Jesus had been willing to go to them with His gospel. He had indeed chosen one of His most intimate disciples, Matthew, from the publicans (Matt. 9: 9), and His graciousness towards them brought them to Him in crowds.

V. 2. Pharisees and scribes; guardians of the sacred law, moral policemen, who showed their displeasure against anyone whose conduct was not up to their standard of what was proper. They had added many petty and foolish interpretations and requirements to the law as Moses gave it. Receiveth sinners and eateth with them. The eating was worse than the receiving. Laws as to the proper food were very strict. A "sinner" who disregarded these laws might, as easily as not, partake of unclean food; so a strict barrier was placed between the Pharisee and him, lest the former should be defiled. (Compare the incident of Peter and Cornelius in Acts 10.) The Pharisees thought it nothing less than a scandal that Jesus, who professed to be a religious teacher, and

Rev Prof Falconer

who had such great influence with the common people, should associate with the promiscuous company of publicans and sinners.

II. The Love that Saves, 3-10.

Vs. 3, 4. *This parable*; which, with those that follow, is Jesus' blessed answer to their miserable "murmuring." (v. 2.) *If he lose one.* Here, as in ch. 14: 5 Jesus appeals to their instinctive kindness to a dumb animal for an equally generous treatment of a human being. Only one lost; but it is worth searching for. *In the wilderness*; on the unfenced moorland or hilly pasture, where a sheep might easily get astray. "After the corn fields near the village end, the whole is treated as common land, where the flocks of the villagers pasture together. It is called a wilderness, but by wilderness is meant not a desert, but the grassy downs and shrub-clad hillsides which are to be found in a state of nature not far from every village." (Tristram.) *Go after . . . until he find it.* Note the eager, hard search. He will not abandon his quest till he find the sheep. *That which is lost.* The silly sheep strayed without intending to get lost. So, of the publicans and sinners, many had wandered and were lost, more because of thoughtlessness or ignorance, than of premeditated wickedness. *Until he find it.* The owner goes to look for his sheep. One sheep is for him of great value. "The shepherd in the East is generally the owner, or the son of the owner, of the flock." His sense of ownership urges him on. He will be the poorer for the loss. But there was a strong feeling of affection between the Eastern shepherd and his flock, so that love as well as ownership prompted him to go in search of the sheep. Jesus both owns and loves.

V. 5. *Layeth it on his shoulders*; exhausted, wounded, bleeding. The shepherd must carry it all the way back. But in spite of the burden he is rejoicing. What more beautiful picture of the love of Jesus for the lost? He had to come all the toilsome journey and after His wearisome search, to carry the sheep home, but the

labor and hardship are swallowed up in love and joy at having found the lost.

V. 6. *Callecth together his friends.* The intense joy in the shepherd's heart on the safe return, evinces the value he sets upon the sheep. It is one of the great lessons of the parable that the poorest sinner is of infinite value to God.

V. 7. *Joy in heaven*, "in the heart of God" (Bruce); and God calls the angels and the redeemed to rejoice with Him. *More than over ninety and nine just persons.* It is a question of proportion. The "just person" may be the self-righteous Pharisee or it may mean the truly pious. In either case the rescue of a sinner excites the greater joy. He has wandered further and there is the more gladness by reason of his return. *Need no repentance.* Men like the publicans and sinners might seem to have got beyond the care of the shepherd, as compared with the quiet Israelite who had always sought to do the will of God. Those who have always been in safety under the shepherd's care are not a cause of anxiety and so they have never afforded the same transport to the shepherd as he had at the moment when the lost was found.

V. 8. *Either*; another parable with the same lesson. *Woman having ten pieces of silver.* A piece of silver or *drachma* was worth about eighteen cents—a day's wage. She was poor and had kept count of every coin. The silver pieces, too, were often used as ornaments. *If she lose one piece.* The silver does not, like the sheep, lose itself. *Light a lamp* (Rev. Ver.); not because it was night, but because there were no windows in the dwellings of the poor. *Sweep the house and seek diligently.* The emphasis in this parable lies on the seeking, as in that of the lost sheep on the carrying home. It takes many ways to express God's eagerness for our salvation.

V. 10. *In the presence of the angels of God.* They see His face and reflect God's glory (Matt. 18:10.); so that it means in the presence of God Himself. *Over one sinner that repenteth.* This is really the lesson which Jesus intended to teach in both parables. The sinner is

God's property, the humblest soul, the vilest sinner, is of such precious value to Him that His love is unwearied in its search, His joy unbounded when he is found. "In the

kingdom of God, so much love is lavished on the lost that, by comparison, it might seem as though God had no joy in those who had never strayed."

Redmond
APPLICATION

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him, v. 1. "There is a story of an artist in the olden days who was falsely charged with crime and cast into prison. He was given his paints and brushes, but not a thing on which he might paint. One day a man came to his cell door and said to the artist, 'I wish you would paint me a picture.' 'I would,' he replied, 'if I had anything on which to paint it.' The visitor looked about him and on the floor of the prison corridor he found an old soiled napkin. 'Paint it on this,' he said, as he passed it into the cell. The artist began at once, and continued his work until the picture was finished. It was a picture of the Christ, a marvellously beautiful one, which afterwards found a place in one of the old cathedrals. Thus the artist redeemed the napkin from destruction and dishonor and consecrated it to highest honor and sacredness." (Dr. J. R. Miller.) So Christ took the poor, debased, soiled lives of the publicans and sinners and caused them to reflect His own image. He is the Great Artist, who can redeem human lives from ruin to their true and holy use.

This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them, v. 2. These words were spoken with a sneer by the scribes and Pharisees. "They meant it in scorn, but it was, in reality, the great glory of the Lord; and even their sneer, uttered in contempt, has become a jewel in the crown which He now wears." Dr. Wm. Taylor.

And he spake this parable unto them, v. 3. It was the murmuring of the proud and exclusive Pharisees which furnished the occasion of the three parables found in the chapter. As the sandal-wood gives forth its richest fragrance only when it is cut, the scornful words of the self-righteous drew out some of the most precious teaching of Jesus little as they were meant to do so.

There are two great encouragements for the sinner in the parables of this chapter. One of these is found in the first two and the other in the third. The story of the lost sheep and the lost coin sets forth the truth that God is seeking the sinner, as men search diligently for something of great value which they have lost. In the story of the prodigal we see a picture of the sinner seeking God. The light which shines from all three parables is the soft and kindly radiance of divine grace. Here, that grace sends forth the Good Shepherd to seek the lost and wandering one and bring him back in safety to the fold. There, the same grace receives with joyful welcome the repentant and returning son. We have not here two separate ways in which men are saved. The lesson is not that some men are saved because God seeks them and others because they seek God. No one is saved without both of these things being done. Whenever a sinner is saved, God brings him, yet he comes; he comes, yet God brings him.

What man of you . . . doth not . . . go after that which is lost, until he find it, v. 4. "All the way from the bosom of the Father to the tomb of Joseph, Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost; and while that was the goal which He had in view at the last, He was all the time giving illustrations of His great work as He went along. He was seeking His sheep which He had lost, when He sat by the well of Sychar, and talked with the woman of Samaria; when He called Zacchæus down from his perch among the leaves of the sycamore tree, and when He bade Matthew follow him from his toll-booth." When He died on Calvary, when He sent forth the Spirit at Pentecost, He opened the way for a wider search. Today He continues His search in all lands whither His servants have gone with the gospel. And the search is not in vain.

And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing, v. 5. Faber sings in his beautiful hymn, "The True Shepherd" :

I was wandering and weary
When my Saviour came unto me ;
For the ways of sin grew dreary,
And the world had ceased to woo me ;
And I thought I heard Him say,
As He came along His way,

O silly souls ! come near Me ;
My sheep should never fear Me ;
I am the Shepherd true.

At last I stopped to listen,
His voice could not deceive me ;

I saw His kind eyes glisten,
So anxious to relieve me ;
And I thought I heard Him say,
As He came along His way,
Oh silly souls ! come near Me ;

My sheep should never fear Me ;
I am the Shepherd true.

He took me on His shoulder,
And tenderly He kissed me ;
He bade my love be bolder,
And said how He had missed me ;
And I'm sure I heard Him say,
As He went along His way,

O silly souls ! come near Me ;
My sheep should never fear Me ;
I am the Shepherd true.

There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, v. 10. Throughout all three parables there runs like a golden thread the idea of the value of the individual. The search is for one sheep, one coin. The welcome and the feast are to celebrate the return of one son.

POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

There must have been something very winning about Jesus when such people as the publicans and sinners came in crowds to hear Him. v. 1.

The Pharisees and scribes were like those who are too much afraid of soiling their fingers to be of much use in the world. v. 2.

Jesus was not afraid to shock the sense of propriety in respectable people in order to do good. v. 3.

The law commanded the Israelites to bring back the ox or the ass even of an enemy if they saw it straying. (Exod. 23 : 4.) v. 4.

The parables of the Lost Sheep and of the Lost Coin teach the particular love of God for the individual soul. v. 4.

An old writer says : "Rich therefore is the shepherd of whose flock we (the whole human race) are the hundredth part." v. 4.

The shepherd did not reproach the sheep for wandering away. Neither does Jesus reproach us as He seeks to bring us home again. v. 5.

It is a great joy, which seeks the sympathy of others and a joy is doubled when shared with a friend. v. 6.

Note again the value which God and the angels place upon the individual. One ought to be ashamed that the question could ever have been asked, "Is life worth living?"

The sinner, however great his sin, still bears the image of God, as the coin, however used or worn, has still, if faint, the Queen's head upon it. v. 6.

The diligence of the woman is an example to all those who seek to save souls. v. 8.

We must expect that the gospel will cause a disturbance. The woman could not sweep without raising the dust. v. 8.

Jesus speaks about what goes on in heaven as one who knows. v. 10.

The following story is told of the Koh-i-noor, or "Mountain of Light," one of the most famous diamonds in the world, which now belongs to England, but which came from India. This precious gem was put into the hands of Lord John Lawrence for safe-keeping. Half-unconsciously Lord John thrust the diamond, which lay in a little box, into his waistcoat pocket. Engrossed with many cares, he forgot all about the valuable stone. Six months afterwards he received a message from the Queen, ordering the great

jewel to be sent to her at once. Then Lord John remembered that the gem had been given to him and remembered also his carelessness. He called his native servant and asked him if had found a little parcel some months before in one of his pockets. Lord John awaited the man's answer with great anxiety. "Yes, Sahib. I found it and put it in one of your boxes." The little box was brought and when fold after fold of wrapping had been removed there lay the brilliant diamond shining like the sun. The old servant had no idea of the immense value of the stone which he held in his hand. "There is nothing here, Sahib, but a bit of glass," he said. Then Lord John told him its value and the gem was most carefully guarded until the Queen herself laid it among the jewels of her crown.

Jesus saw in the breast of each publican and sinner whom the Pharisees and scribes despised a far more costly and precious gem than the Koh-i-noor. The redemption of a single soul was in His eyes worth the price paid for it on Calvary. What values are we setting on our souls and on the souls of others?

The Jews had a story that Moses, while tending Jethro's flocks, went after a lamb which had gone astray. As he thought it must be weary, he carried it back on his shoulders. Then God said, that, because he had shown pity to the sheep belonging to a man, He would give him His own sheep, Israel, to feed. v. 4.

Jesus said: "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." The Pharisees said: "There is joy before God when those who provoke Him perish from the earth." What a contrast, the one teaching and the other! How the teaching of Jesus proves itself to have come from heaven, and how it must have fallen like healing balm upon the hearts of the sinners who heard it. v. 7.

In the "Reminiscences of William Jay," this incident is recorded: One day when Jay called on John Newton, the latter said: "I am glad to see you, for I have just received a letter from Bath, and you may know

something of the writer," mentioning his name. Jay replied that he did, and that the man had been for years a hearer of his, but was a most awful character, and in almost all evil. "But," said Newton, "he writes now like a penitent." "He may be such," was the answer, "but if he be, I shall never despair of the conversion of anyone again." Newton said: "Oh, I never did since God saved me." No one is beyond the reach of salvation.

What we call feminine virtues and graces are needed for the deliverance of souls that have fallen—patience, and diligence, and minute observation—not less than what we think of as the more manly qualities of courage, and enterprise, and endurance.—Plumptre.

Of this same search Professor Marcus Dods says: "God's search is also persistent. Possibly the woman required the coin to make up a sum for a purchase. Certainly God needs us for some end He has in view. This is not our whole history, that with immense outlay of divine resources we are to be restored to permanent rectitude. There must be much beyond, and for this God prepares us now, The experiences of earth, however exalted, do not exhaust the eventfulness of our eternal life. Therefore God seeks us with earnestness, as if we were necessary not only to His love but to His purposes."

The intimation that there is greater joy in heaven over the return of a single wanderer than over ninety and nine who never strayed, presents indeed a difficulty; but here, as in many other similar cases, the difficulty lies more in the way of the scientific expositor, whose task is to express the meaning in the form of logical definitions, than in the way of the simple reader of the Bible, who desires to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn the one thing needful from His lips. In this, as in many other portions of Scripture, a hungry laborer may live upon the bread, while it may baffle a philosopher to analyze its constituents, and expound its nutritive qualities. A devout reader may get the meaning of the parable in power upon his

heart, while the logical interpreter expends much profitless labor in the dissection of a dead letter.—Dr. W. Arnot.

“Kisses of peace, feasts of plenty, robes of honor—this world can never again be wholly dark to any sinner.”—Bishop Warren.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

S. L. S.
Where the present writer habitually works at his desk, he has but to raise the curtain in the morning, to look out upon the green sward and the beautiful flowers of a public garden. Every day it brings some new delight. The shadows and colors, the sweet-scented air, and the merry voices of the children at their play floating through the open window, give rest to the spirit. Our Lord in the parables of this chapter draws back the curtain from the unseen and the heavenly and oh, what solace and uplift in the vision, solace and uplift to weak and wandering and sin-stricken souls!

It is worth while to bring out, first, the contrast between the senseless, hard, and hateful pride of these self-righteous scribes and Pharisees and the tender compassion of the meek and lowly Jesus. (vs. 1, 2, compared with vs. 3-10.) They would crush down and thrust out all but their own sort. He seeks men of every sort, the vilest of the vile even, that He may transform them into His own image.

It may be convenient to take the two parables together. The following points will be noted:

1. We understand heaven through earth and God through man. The shepherd seeking, finding, rejoicing; the woman searching, discovering, rejoicing—these are God, the gracious Lord to whom we belong. And the gladness of a neighborhood where friends rejoice in the good fortune of a friend, is a picture of how all the high and lowly are glad together, each one the gladder for the other's joy.

2. It is the lost and not the safe that, if one may so speak, weigh upon God's heart. All Scripture testifies to this. God comes from the company of the angels in heaven to visit Eden, when it has been desolated by sin. The Old Testament is throughout the story of God seeking wanderers. Take as an example the work of such prophets

as Elijah, Jeremiah, Jonah.

3. God spares no pains in finding the lost. He Himself searches like the shepherd and the woman. God entrusted not men's salvation to any other, but Himself came in the person of Jesus Christ, and is Himself here in the person of the Holy Spirit. What pains He takes—His word, His ministers, His gracious providences, His chastisements.

4. God rejoices when the lost are found. He has a tender heart, like the shepherd. He sets a high value on souls, as does the woman on her coin.

5. He shares His joy with those about Him. There are some joys we can bear alone. There are others, when we must speak, sing, shout, must tell them all abroad. It gives us some conception of how glad God is when sinners repent, that He proclaims His joy to the heavenly hosts.

6. The joy-bells of heaven ring for one, as for a multitude. This is, perhaps, the sweetest thought of all. Re.: 19: 5-7 does not surprise us, for it is the whole Church that is rejoiced over; but as the child's hymn says:

Wonderful things in the Bible I see;

This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me,

Even me.

Wm. Moncrieff
Questions for Juniors—1, 2. What was Christ's object in using parables? How many recorded in this chapter? What their subjects? What two classes of despised people here mentioned? Who were the publicans? (Luke 3: 12; Matt. 18: 17.) Did any of them believe in Christ? (Luke 5: 27; 19: 2-9.) What brought sinners to Jesus? Who were the Pharisees? Give meaning of "Pharisee". What their chief sin? Whom did Christ come to save? (Matt. 9: 13.)

3-6. Relate the parable of Lost Sheep. Why was the flock safe? How many lost? How did the shepherd act? Who is our "Good Shepherd?" Whom does He know?

How does He call? What search made for the lost sheep?

7. What cause for rejoicing? What is repentance unto life? (S. Catechism, Ques. 87.) How is the repentant one treated?

8-10. Give story of ten pieces of silver? What use made of coins by Eastern women? What the value of this coin? What efforts put forth by the woman? Why so great? What reward? How did the woman express her joy? About what should all be busy?

For Seniors—1-3. What brought out the three parables? Who found fault? What their grievance? How did Christ enforce the truth?

4-6. Who alone can restore wanderers? Where does Christ lead His sheep? (Psa. 23.) What promise given? (John 14: 1-3.) How great His love? Describe the search, the return, the joy.

7. What said of angels? (Heb. 1: 14.) How great is God's desire for man's salvation? (Ezek. 18: 31, 32.) How may we have redemption? (Heb. 9: 12; 1 Pet. 1: 9.) What does it procure? (Rom. 3: 24.) What are four subjects of redemption? (Rom. 8:

23; Psa. 10: 3, 4; Psa. 49: 15; Eph. 1: 14.) Who were preachers of repentance? How will true repentance show itself? (Matt. 3: 8; Acts 26: 20.)

8-10. Why the woman's anxiety? How did she show earnestness? What her recompence? How imitate her?

Rev. J. B. Threlk.
Bible Side Lights—MURKIN—Ex. 15: 24; Mark 14: 5; Luke 5: 30; John 6: 41; 1 Cor. 10: 10.

REJOICE WITH ME—Rom. 12: 15; 1 Cor. 12: 26; Phil. 1: 18; 2: 17, 18.

JOY IN HEAVEN—Job 38: 7; Ps. 16: 11; Isa. 35: 2, 10; 1 Pet. 4: 13; Jude 24.

PIECES OF SILVER—Gen. 37: 28; 45: 22; Judges 16: 5.

ONE SINNER—Ecc. 9: 18; Isa. 65: 20; Luke 7: 37; James 5: 20.

Topics for Brief Papers

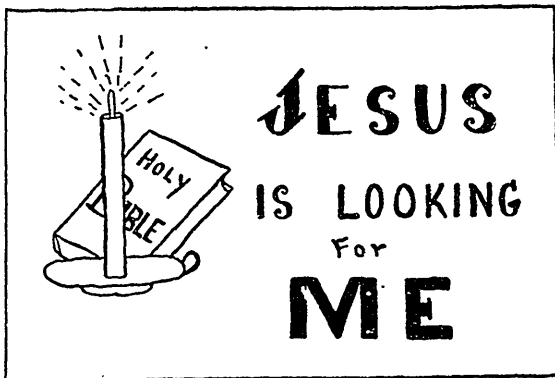
(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. What is it for a person to be lost?
2. "But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed,
Nor how dark was the night that the
Lord passed through
Ere He found the sheep that was lost."

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Connection—We are going to have a "birdie" exercise. Shall we all show how the birdies fly? (All stand, raise arms and make the motions of flying), repeating—

"What do happy birdies say,
Flitting through the gloomy wood?
We must sing the gloom away—
Sun or shadow, God is good."



What did we hear last Sabbath about God's goodness to us? Have you given God's kind invitation to anybody? Have you tried to bring any of your playmates nearer to Jesus?

Introduction—Did any of the children ever lose anything? (Let them talk about it.) Did they search very long for it? Were they not glad when they found it? We are going to talk to-day about some

"lost things" that were found.

The Lost Sheep—Draw outline or pin on the board the form of a lamb. Describe the little stray lamb—the good shepherd missing it, seeking, finding, carrying in his bosom, rejoicing. Tell the parable. "We all like sheep have gone astray." Who is our shepherd? Picture the joy in the Heavenly Fold when the "lost sheep" is brought home. "Little deeds of kindness" to a wandering soul blessed of God, may lead it back to Jesus' fold.

The Lost Coin—Show a piece of silver money. (The lost coin was a silver penny worth about 18 cents.) Tell the parable. Picture the searching with the lighted candle in every nook and corner, the sweeping and brushing away of dust, all the seeking, then the finding and rejoicing. (Teach Golden Text.)

The sheep wandered away from the shepherd, but the lost coin was still in the owner's house, but hidden by dust; was lost and of no use to the owner, till found. Sometimes people get covered up with the "dust of the world"—cares, pleasures,

friends. God has to use the brush of trouble perhaps in order to find us for His use again. It would be harder to find the coin the longer it was left. More and more dust (cares, etc.), would cover it. The cracks and corners (sins) would get bigger. It is easier for God to find young people than those who are older and more covered with "dust," and who have fallen into "cracks and corners." "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

Lost Little Girls and Boys—Tell a story about a little lost child in the streets of a big city or in the woods. Describe the grief of the parents, the searching, the finding, the joy!

Jesus is looking for the little lambs of His flock. He wants you all in His fold. You are more precious to Him than silver or gold.

Practical Thoughts—Jesus is looking for me, waiting to carry me in His bosom, longing to see me "shining for Him." Some of Jesus' friends are searching for me too, my parents, Sabbath School teacher, my minister, are all trying to find me for Jesus.

Hymn 553, Book of Praise.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

LOST — FOUND

The two words, as printed above, carry their own lessons. Let the review be simply the enforcing of the lessons. We are amongst the elemental emotions—despair, love, joy.

"Lost." The awfulness of it! Bring out from the parables and have the scholars read together such passages as Isa. 53: 6; Rom. 7: 18-24; Eph. 2: 1, 3; Rom. 6: 23. Be careful to impress the sad estate and the helplessness of the sinner.

Then turn to the bright side of the shield. "Found." For the shepherd's love in searching, give such passages as John 3: 16; Phil. 2: 6-8; Isa. 53: 4-6, and for the joy in heaven, such as Luke 2: 13, 14; Rev. 12: 10, 11, and first clause of v. 12.

Why can we resist such love? How, refuse to add to heaven's joy?

LESSON IV.

THE PRODIGAL SON

October 28, 1900

Luke 15: 11-24. Commit to memory vs. 20-24. Read Luke 15.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:
 12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.
 13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.
 14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land: and he began to be in want.
 15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country: and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.
 16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.
 17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,
 19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.
 20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.
 21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.
 22 But the Father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:
 23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:
 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Revised Version—1 Thy substance; 2 Country; 3 One of the citizens; 4 Been filled with the husks; 5 But; 6 Here; 7 In thy sight; 8 I; 9 While; 10 Afar off; 11 Was moved with; 12 Quickly; 13 Omit hither; 14 Make.

GOLDEN TEXT

I will arise and go to my father.
 Luke 15: 18.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Luke 15: 11-24. The prodigal son.
 T.—Luke 15: 25-32. Lost and found.
 W.—Eccles. 2: 1-11. The world unsatisfying.
 Th.—Prov. 13: 1-15. The way of transgressors.
 F.—2 Chron. 33: 1-13. Learning by adversity.
 S.—Jer. 50: 1-7. Returning and weeping.
 S.—Hosca 14. Return!

TIME AND PLACE

As in last Lesson, of which the present passage is the completion. Probably in January, A. D. 30, and somewhere in Perea beyond Jordan.

CATECHISM

Q. 47. What is forbidden in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment forbiddeth the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God as God, and our God; and the giving of that worship and glory to any other, which is due to him alone.

EXPOSITION

Prof. Falconer
 Connecting Links—In this third parable of the series, a new element is added, the sinner turning towards the Father, who is waiting to receive him. The two parts—the younger and the elder son—are really two pictures to illustrate the same truth, that the Father receives with overflowing joy him whom He feared was lost. The parable of the Prodigal Son is the pearl and crown of all parables. "It is a world of wisdom and hope condensed into a few words, as a whole landscape is painted on the retina of the eye." It is, verily, the gospel in miniature.

I. At Home, 11, 12.

V. 11. *A certain man*; representing the Heavenly Father. *Two sons*; who are two types, the elder of the Pharisees and their sort, the younger of penitent publicans and sinners.

V. 12. *The younger*; who would have a smaller portion of the estate and less inter-

LESSON PLAN

I. At Home, 11, 12.

But not content. He wants his own portion of goods and his own way.

II. From Home, 13-16.

Having received his portion, and being free to follow his own will, he spends all in rioting, and comes to want and shame.

III. Home again, 17-24.

Poor, penitent, welcome, and forgiven.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—93 (Ps. Sel.); 590; 579; 144; 587; 161.

est in its improvement. *The portion*; i. e., one-third of the father's possessions. (Deut. 21: 17.) *He divided*. Often an old man might renounce his whole property to his sons, but they were required to support him in comfort to the end of his days. In this story the father still retains the chief authority over the estate. *His living*; lands and flocks and herds.

II. From Home, 13-16.

V. 13. *Not many days after*. He had already made up his mind what to do. *Gathered all together*; and so had no further claim on the home when he finally quitted it. It was a sad parting for the old father, but the young man went forth with a light heart now to be his own master. *Far country*; beyond reach of the restraints of home, so far indeed that his father thought he was lost.

V. 14. *A mighty famine*; not uncommon in Palestine. (Acts 11: 28.) Coming as it

did when he had spent all his own substance in sinful waste it fell very sore upon him. "The worst famine of all is 'not a famine of bread or a thirst of water, but of hearing the words of the Lord' (Amos 8: 11); and in such a famine even 'the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst' (v. 13). 'They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns; broken cisterns, that can hold no water.' Jer. 11:13."

V. 15. *He went and joined himself to.* He was not asked, but in his need he pressed himself upon him. *A citizen.* This man was evidently not a Jew for *he sent him into his fields to feed swine.* In famine-time even a kind-hearted man might not be able to do more for him than this. The occupation was most loathsome for a Jew. (Lev. 17: 7.) It shows how low he had fallen. In the eyes of the Pharisees he would be the vilest of sinners.

V. 16. *Husks*; pods of the carob tree, a kind of locust tree, swine's food. *No man gave.* Pity dies in famine when each has little enough for himself. A strange fall, from affluence to the life of a beast.

III. Home Again, 17-24.

V. 17. *When he came to himself.* He began to think who he was. The true self is always lost in a life of selfishness. (Luke 9: 24.) To regain self-respect is the first step upwards. *How many servants.* etc. "What a rich home I left!" He dare not claim it as his own now. He merely pictures the comfort of the place that was once his. The first step in repentance is to think with desire on the pleasures of that father's home. *And I*; the son of a father who had given me such love.

V. 18. *I will arise and go.* True repentance issues in immediate action. *My father.* He knows enough of him to be sure that he will not be utterly disowned. *I have sinned*; hard to say, but far better to say it than to perish in pride too foolish to own to having done wrong. No excuse, no claim, nothing but the simple hard fact of sin, and no refuge but in the father's mercy. *Against heaven and before thee.* Heaven here stands for God.

Every sin is against heaven first, whatever woe it may have caused, whatever injury it may have inflicted.

V. 19. *No more worthy.* He has neither claim to, nor fitness for, a son's place. He scarce dare ask even for a servant's.

V. 20. *Yet a great way off.* On the first sign of his return the father is ready to receive. *Had compassion.* Not justice, but love, provides the reception. His present woful plight and the fact that he has come back remove all thought of stern justice. *Ran and fell on his neck*; eagerness. The attitude of the father throughout towards his son, even before he returned, seems to have been not anger but sorrow. God does not hate the sinner. (Ezek. 33: 11.) *Kissed*; here means kissed tenderly or fervently.

V. 21. *Father, I have sinned.* The son is true to his purpose and repeats all but the request to be made a hired servant. After the warmth of his father's welcome his heart tells him that such a request would be out of place. Or perhaps the father's reply cut him short.

V. 22. *Bring forth quickly* (Rev. Ver.). That reply is to load him with honor; not forgiveness alone, but a joyous restoration. *Best robe.* "These tattered garments hide his true sonship. On with his proper garments, the robe that will honor him most, *quick!*" *Ring*; a signet ring as a sign of authority, not only for wearing but for sealing documents. *Shoes.* Slaves went barefoot.

V. 23, 24. *The fattened calf.* The custom was to slaughter meat just before cooking, and a calf was always kept ready in prime condition for any great occasion. *Was dead*; to all intents and purposes so far as the father was concerned. *Was lost*; out of sight for years though never out of mind. *They began to be merry*; a great welcome for one who has come home, as he thought, in deep disgrace from a famine-stricken country. So the sinner is welcomed by the Father, who says no word about the past. It is blotted out forever. This loving Father, whose sons sinners and publicans were; was very different from the God of the Pharisees.

Red Ink
APPLICATION

A certain miph had two sons, v. 11. It is not said: "A certain king had two subjects"; or "A certain master had two servants." Sin is not merely treason against a sovereign, or disobedience to a master, but is, above all, ingratitude towards a Father. We cannot find language too strong to express our condemnation of the conduct of Absalom towards David. (2 Sam. chap. 15, etc.) Yet every sinner is, in God's sight, guilty of the same wicked ingratitude and disloyalty. There is no one of us to whom the words do not apply: "I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me." (Isaiah 1: 2.)

Father give me the portion . . . And he divid- ed unto them his living. God sometimes grants our foolish and ignorant requests in order to convince us by our experience of our folly and wickedness in asking. When the Israelites in the wilderness cried to God for supplies, we are told that "He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul." (Ps. 106: 15.) Again, when the tribes desired a king, he gave them Saul, that through their sufferings from the arbitrary and capricious tyranny of that monarch, they might be shown how foolish and wrong their desire was. God gives to us the portion we desire, and allows us to go, as the father in this parable permitted his son to leave home, that we may learn our lesson in the hard and bitter school of experience.

And there wasted his substance in riotous living, v. 13. Sin is the great waster. It wastes money. It turns bodily strength into weakness. But worse than all else, it wastes manhood. It robs the sinner of intellectual strength. It destroys the moral nature. Sin weakens the will; sears the conscience; hardens the heart. A Scottish wife once said of her husband, who had yielded to the power of strong drink and had been led away by evil companions: "He used to be a firm and manly fellow, but he is a bairn noo." Alas! such have all the weakness, but none of the innocence of children.

To feed swine, v. 15. The progress of the prodigal began with riotous joy; the next

stage was want; and the end was bondage. Sin deceives by making fair promises to lure us on to our ruin. Detectives have sometimes captured a criminal whom they have tracked down, by pretending to be his friend and so gaining his confidence, until some day they have persuaded him to try on a pair of handcuffs as a mere jest, and then snapping the spring that locked them have taken him an easy prey. In like manner sin ministers to the enjoyment of its victim and then, when he is thrown off his guard, readily enslaves him.

And when he came to himself, v. 17. As long as we are living away from God we are not acting out our true self. The man who lives in sin is *beneath* himself. No honest work is beneath us, but every kind of wrong-doing is. Gareth was not beneath himself when he served in the kitchen of King Arthur's palace, but he would have been beneath himself if he had joined in the low conversation and ribald jests of his fellow-servants. Work never degrades, sin always does. Sin keeps us living in a dark and dismal cellar, when we ought to be enjoying the brightness and beauty of the upper rooms in the palace of life. We come to our true self when we forsake sin; until then we are beneath ourselves.

I perish with hunger, v. 17. It is our need that brings us back to God. A man will not go to the physician until he feels that he is sick. We will not seek the Saviour until we see that we are lost sinners. This parable does not tell us how men come to see that they are sinners and that without Christ they must perish; but we learn elsewhere that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to show us our guilt and danger. (John 16: 8.) Until He comes to open our eyes, we keep on believing the devil's lie that we shall not perish though we live in sin. But He convinces us that as sinners we must either repent or perish.

I will arise and go to my father, v. 18. After all, we have the power of choice. We can resolve to forsake the service of sin and return to our true position as sons of God.

It is not "the way to hell" that is "paved with good resolutions," but the way to heaven. The way to hell is paved with broken resolutions. Till this life ends there is always "another chance" for the worst of men. The past may be bad and we cannot change it. What we have written, we have written. But the pages of the future are still white and clean. We can, by God's grace, write on them a noble record.

"I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping stones,
Of their dead selves to higher things."

Red *Prodigal* *Son*
POINTS AND PARAGRAPHS

The true son asks not what the father is to give him but what he can give the father. v. 12.

God will not compel us to remain in His service against our will. v. 13.

The famine was not responsible for the prodigal's want, but his own folly. We should not blame circumstances for evils which we bring upon ourselves. v. 14.

At the last, sin brings us into bondage and disgrace. v. 15.

When we determine to be "lords of ourselves," we often find that ours is "a heritage of woe." v. 17.

There is hope for the worst sinner because he can say "I will." v. 18.

It is a manly thing to take the blame of our sin upon our own shoulders instead of laying it upon companions or circumstances v. 18.

God, like this earthly father, "kisses the past into forgetfulness" for the repentant sinner. v. 20.

We call God, "Father" not because we are worthy to be His sons but because of His wonderful grace. v. 21.

Instead of taunts for his guilt God offers the returning sinner His choicest gifts. v. 22.

The joy of the father, overflowing in his commands to the servants, is the shadow; the joy of God when sinners repent is the substance. vs. 23, 24.

But when he was yet a great way off his father saw him, etc., v. 20. "A single dew-drop, as it quivers on a leaf on a June morning, mirrors and reflects the whole blue sky; yet what a miniature picture it gives of that vast expanse of heaven! So human fatherhood is a dew-drop, which mirrors the divine fatherhood; but it is only a picture compressed into minutest size, and with only dim broken reflection of a glorious love which is infinite in its length and breadth and height and depth." The Heavenly Father's love is infinite. His very name is "Love." He loves with an everlasting love.

Is there anything more touching in literature than the poem written by Lord Byron on his thirty-sixth birthday? No genius ever more brilliant than his, not often in the history of genius any pace in evil more swift. This is what it came to:

" 'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it has ceased to move
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love.

" My days are in the yellow leaf,
The flowers and fruit of love are gone,—
The worm, the canker, and the grief,
Are mine alone.

" The fire that in my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile."

A mere flash of remorse is not enough; a journey must be taken; the back must be at once and finally turned on the far land; and all the shame of abandoned duties and forsaken friends be faced. "The course to the unific rectitude of a manly life" always appears to the sinner to be and sometimes really is, "in the face of a scorching past and a dark future.—Cambridge Bible.

" There is a story of a widowed mother in the Highlands of Scotland, whose daughter, her only child, left her home and went away into a sinful life. The mother could only pray for her wandering one, but she

never ceased to plead with God for her. At last, one dark night, at midnight, the lost child came home. Creeping up to the cottage door, she found it unfastened. Entering she was welcomed by her mother with great joy. When the greeting was over, the girl said, 'Mother, why was the door unfastened to-night at midnight?' The mother replied, 'Never, my child, since you went away, has the cottage door been locked by day or night. I prayed God to

bring you home, and I left the door unfastened, that whenever you might come in, you might know you were welcome, and might enter at once.'—Miller. So God welcomes those who turn from sin to Himself.

God receives and forgives a sinner who comes back repenting and He delights in the act of forgiving the repentant sinner: on these points no ambiguity is left, and no room for controversy.—Arnot.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

S. de la

The two cuts, taken from Peloubet's Notes, and which the teacher may show to the scholars, give the pith of the lesson. In the one the prodigal is at his moment of direst distress; but the sunlight is breaking through the dark clouds. In the other he is in his

father's arms and on his father's bosom and the benediction from his father's heart is falling like sweet music upon his ears.

The connecting link is the Golden Text: "I will arise and go to my father."

An interesting study can be made of:

I. *The steps downward*, each one sadder than the last.

(1) Discontent; (2) A foolish choice; (3) A reckless journey; (4) Riotous living; (5) All spent; (6) Famine; (7) Beggary; (8) Feeding swine.

Each step has its counterpart in the spiritual sphere, which the teacher will readily trace.

II. *The steps upward*, ever toward light and joy and peace.

(1) Coming to himself; (2) Thought of better things; (3) The resolve to return; (4) Penitence of spirit; (5) The journey fatherward; (6) Into the father's arms; (7) In the father's home.

Again these steps may and should be identified in the experience of those who turn from sin unto God.



With an older class, a quick and careful analysis of Question 87, Shorter Catechism, will clench the truths taught by the parable.

Questions for Juniors—11. What two parables had Jesus just spoken? Why had He spoken them? What is the parable usually called? Who is meant by the father? How many sons? Which one represented by the scribes and Pharisees? Which by the publicans and sinners?

12. What request made? By whom? Why? What was the law of inheritance? (Deut. 21: 17.) Was the request granted?

13, 14. What did he then do? How are lives wasted now? What happened when he had

spent all? How did he find himself? Do sinful pleasures satisfy the soul? Why not?

15, 16. What does he now do? To what depths reduced? How were swine regarded by the Jews? (Lev. 11: 7; Isa. 65: 4.) By whom was the young man deserted? What warning to be taken from this?

17-21. What the first step in his return? What the second? Whom did he envy? Why? What the third step? What resolve made? What treatment to be asked? What the fourth step? What did his father do? What did the son say?

22-24. What did the father say? What four gifts bestowed? What cause for rejoicing? What set forth by the feast? (vs. 7-10.)

For Seniors—11, 12. Compare the two sons. What request made? For what reasons?

13-16. Where did the younger son go? Why so far away? How did he act? Did the enjoyment last? What were four consequences? What does the "far country" stand for? What two messengers sent to the prodigal? How does God call? (Matt. 11: 28-30.)

17-21. Give first step in his repentance. What comparison made? What resolve?

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Connection—Recall the "lost things" of last lesson. Has Jesus found Mary, or Willie, or Charlie yet?

Introduction—Tell the story of a little run-

Did he make any excuse? What did he acknowledge? How does God treat those who repent? (Isa. 1: 18; Isa. 55: 7.) What was the turning point? How was the father's love shown? What confession made? Why did he not ask for a humble position? (Rom. 8: 14; Gal. 4: 6; John 15: 15.) What the result of confession? (Prov. 28: 13; 1 John 1: 9.)

22-24. Why such rejoicing? What is God's message to-day? (Isa. 44: 22.)

Bible Study Lights—Riotous Living—Eccl. 7: 6; Prov. 23: 20; 28: 7; Rom. 13: 13; 2 Pet. 2: 13.

A MIGHTY FAMINE—2 Kings 8: 1, 2; Jer. 14: 1-6; Lam. 4: 4, 8; Ezek. 14: 13.

SWINE—Lev. 11: 7; Prov. 11: 22; Isa. 66: 3.

I HAVE SINNED—Lev. 26: 40-42; Job 33: 7, 27, 28; Prov. 28: 13; Ps. 51: 3, 4; Isa. 6: 5.

Topics for Brief Papers

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous.)

1. Taking one's own way.
2. The prodigal's return.
3. The elder brother.

away lad and his return.

We are going to hear another parable that Jesus told. Write "A Lost Boy and How He Came Home." His name was "The Prodigal Son." He did not lose his way, like the sheep, nor was he covered up with dust like the coin, but just made up his mind to leave his father's house and go away into a far country alone.

(Teachers should read "Probable Sons" by Amy Le Feuvre, in order to get a child's idea of this parable.)

Lesson — Picture frames may be drawn and marks made within as the scenes are described.



No. 1. "Home." Describe the happy home of wealth, the loving father, the two lads, equally loved by the father.

No. 2. "Leaving Home." The younger son says to himself: "I'll get my father to give me my share of money and I'll go away off where I won't have to obey anyone and I can do just as I like and have a good time. He goes to his father. (v. 13.)

No. 3. "Away from Home." What a gay time he had! Spending all his money in rich food and drink and foolish company. Then came a *famine*. All his money spent, he began to be ragged and hungry. (He was suffering for his sins.) He went to a farmer and lived as his servant. The farmer sent him to feed swine in his field, the very lowest kind of work and very abominable to a Jew! He was so starved and miserable he would gladly have eaten the husks, the food of the swine. No one gave him food. He thought of his home of plenty. His father's servants well-fed, and happy, and he starving. He decided to return. (verses 15-19.)

No. 4. "The Welcome Home." Picture the long, tiresome journey on foot and alone. At last he sees the house. Will the gates be shut and the door locked against him? He feels that is what he deserves. Will he have to turn away and die in his misery? How anxious he is! Nearer and nearer he comes! See! there is someone at the door! Yes, it is his father. The old man sees his boy coming home. What does he do? See! he runs to meet him, throws his arms about him and kisses him. The boy confesses his sins and begs forgiveness. How glad the father is! He calls to the servants to bring the richest robe and a ring and shoes and to make a grand feast and be merry. What rejoicing over the returned Prodigal Son!

Practical Thoughts—There are boys and girls like the Prodigal Son. They do not want to obey their Heavenly Father. Our Heavenly Father is watching for us to return to Him. How He will welcome us! The Golden Text should be our motto.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW

Editor

WILFULNESS
WANDERING
WASTE
WANT

PENITENCE
PARDON
PEACE

It will be well, as we turn away from the study of this inimitable parable, to endeavor to fix in the mind of the scholars the various steps in the downward course of this foolish son and how he retraced his way.

Let there be printed on the board in capitals THE WAYWARD PRODIGAL. It is he that is described in the lesson. A few touches as to appearance, clothing, or of a well-to-do young man in the East would not be amiss.

Then blot out every thing but the initial letters W and P, and ask the scholar to mark with you the various steps by which he went so low and by which he came back again. They will readily indicate them. The sweet hymn, 189, Book of Praise, may fitly serve to close the lesson; or for the little ones, Hymn 587.

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THE BOOK PAGE

Books for review to be sent to Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, Editor TEACHERS MONTHLY, Room 37, Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

The Life of Lives: Further Studies in the Life of Christ. By F. W. Farrar, D.D., F.B.S., Dean of Canterbury. William Briggs, Toronto; 444 pages, with index of topics and of Scripture passages. Price \$1.50.

The eight closely packed double-column pages of the topical index reveal the richness of this latest book of Dean Farrar's for the general reader, and more especially for ministers and teachers, to whom every item of fresh information on the life of our Blessed Lord should be a thing to be eagerly sought for. Twenty-six years ago Farrar's "Life of Christ" appeared. Its picturesqueness, the eloquence of its periods, and the wide sweep of its learning, have rendered it abidingly popular, and led to its translation into many languages. This new volume is a further study of the points then treated. The contents of its forty-three chapters are most varied. There are indeed few matters mentioned in the Gospels that are not here touched upon, and fresh light is thrown upon many of them. Such chapters as those on "Christ's Titles," "Pharisaism," "Christ and the Sabbath," "Religion in Palestine," abound in curious information. It is not likely that Dean Farrar's views,

for example, on the Atonement, will commend themselves to our readers, but the whole tone and temper of this study of the Christ and the things pertaining to His kingdom, are eminently according to the spirit of the Master.

Arabia: The Cradle of Islam. By Rev. S. M. Zwemer, F.R.G.S., with maps and numerous illustrations, fine drawings and photographs. Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto; 8vo. cloth; price \$2.00.

Mr. Zwemer graphically describes the "Holy" cities of Mecca and Medina, the Pearl Diving of the Gulf, the "Ship of the Desert," and the Date Culture of the Euphrates Valley. The accounts of his travels inland are full of lively incident and adventure, and the story of the pioneer Christian missionaries, Keith-Falconer, Bishop French, and Kamil, the martyr Mohammedan, contain much that is heroic and thrilling.

The Pastor's Congregational Record. By Rev. S. G. Carson, B.A., Halifax, N.S.; A. & W. MacKinnay; 352 pages; price \$2.00. Orders may be sent through TEACHERS' MONTHLY.

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London to Ladysmith via Pretoria. By Winston Spencer Churchill, author of "The River War," etc. **The Copp, Clark Co., Toronto.** 496 pages, with maps; price, paper, 75c.; cloth, \$1.25.

From Capetown to Ladysmith. By G. W. Steevens, author of "With Kitchener to Khartoum." Same publishers, 180 pages, with map. Price, paper, 75c.; cloth, \$1.25.

These two Khaki books have had a great "run", and the run continues, for both are by remarkable writers, who were eye-witnesses of stirring scenes of present interest.

Poor Steevens, indeed, "is not," for death, slow death by fever, overtook him before the siege of Ladysmith was raised, but his description remains as the most vivid which the war has produced or is likely to produce. What can exceed this, for example, for lurid picturesqueness? The bombardment is proceeding.

"Then the tearing scream . . . horror! it was from Bulwan.

"Again the annihilating flash, and not ten yards away. A roof gaped and a house leaped to pieces. A black reeled over, then terror plucked him up again, and sent him running.

"You come out of the dust and stench of the melinite, not knowing where you were, scarcely knowing whether you were hit—only knowing that the next was rushing on its way. No eyes to see it, no limbs to escape, no bulwark to protect, no army to avenge. You squirm between their fingers. Nothing to do but endure."

It seems likely that to Winston Churchill will fall the honor of the final and complete history of the South African war. Meanwhile, this story of his personal experiences—and they were sufficiently varied, on shipboard, at the Cape, on the armored train, capture by the Boers, imprisonment, escape, the relief of Ladysmith—is given as a foretaste of what we may look for. The account is eminently fair to foe as well as friend, and is as readable as a romance.

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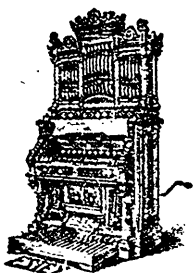
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We can supply new Estey organs (for either church or house use) at prices ranging from \$70.00 upward. And the lowest-priced Estey organ possesses the same wonderful purity of tone and the same degree of durability as the most expensive style. They differ in size and capacity—that is all.

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