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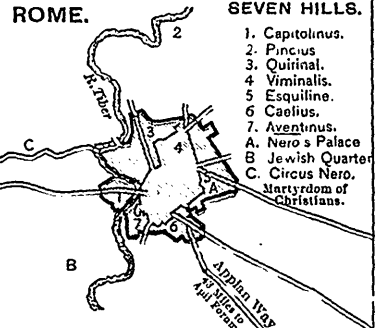
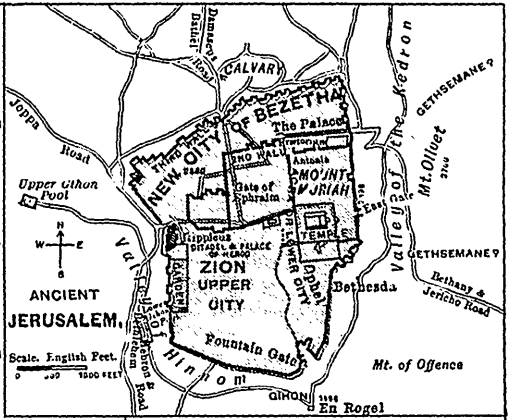
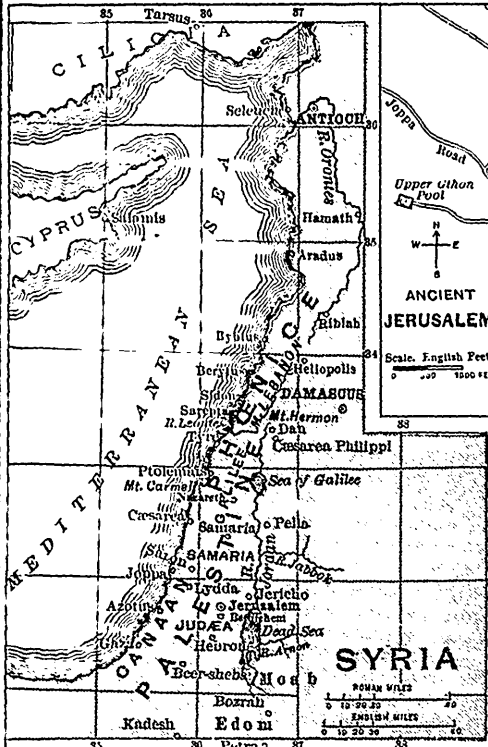
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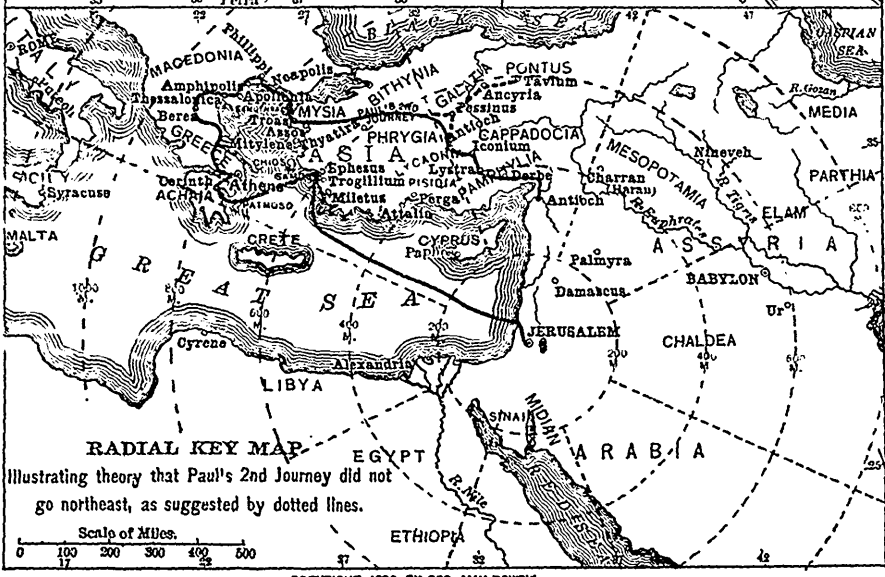
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- SEVEN HILLS.**
1. Capitolinus.
 2. Pincus.
 3. Quirinal.
 4. Viminalis.
 5. Esquiline.
 6. Caelius.
 7. Aventinus.
- A. Nero's Palace
 B. Jewish Quarter
 C. Circus Nero.
 Martyrdom of Christians.



RESOLUTIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN REGARD TO THE SABBATH SCHOOL HELPS.

The following are the resolutions finally adopted by the General Assembly in regard to the publication of our S. S. Lesson Helps.

1. "That the publication of the S. S. supplies be continued.
2. "That the Committee of the *Presbyterian Record* be requested to undertake this work and carry it out under the control of the editor of the *Record* from January 1st, 1898.
3. "That the S. S. Committee be instructed to take special steps towards the removal of the existing deficit, and that in this connection the total collections taken up on Children's Day be devoted as a help for this purpose, and that in the meantime the Assembly, in accordance with the decision of last Assembly, authorize the Convener of the S. S. Committee to obtain a loan sufficient to meet the present liabilities.
4. "That if it is found that the work of printing the *Record* and S. S. supplies can be more advantageously carried on in Toronto than in Montreal, the Assembly approve of its being done in Toronto.
5. "That thanks be given to the S. S. Committee, and especially to the Convener, and further that the Assembly express its appreciation of Mr. Fotheringham for his valuable services in connection with the publication of the S. S. supplies in some tangible form, and that in making its appeal for contributions, it be understood that the sum of \$500 be granted by the S. S. Committee to Mr. Fotheringham, if the funds received will allow."

The Convener had stated that about \$5,500 would have to be raised before September 1st, and that the authorization of the Assembly to raise a loan was of no value to him in negotiating with the bank. It would be necessary to obtain legal collateral, or a loan from some of the funds under the control of the Assembly. Thereupon Drs. Robertson, Thompson and Fletcher agreed to become personally responsible for the amount required, and the limit of their liability was engrossed on the minutes (page 64).

In regard to the fifth resolution it should be stated that, as required by the third, all contributions in connection with "Children's Day" services must be devoted to relieving Drs. Robertson, Thompson and Fletcher of the liability so generously assumed by them. Up to \$5,500 these collections are inviolable, over that sum, all receipts of the committee must be expended in paying the balance of the debt incurred in establishing our lesson helps. *The Convener wishes it to be distinctly understood that not one dollar will be paid to, or accepted by him while the debts of the committee remain unpaid.*

We hope that our Sabbath Schools will observe "Children's Day," September 26th, with enthusiasm. In appointing the day six years ago the General Assembly designated it as "a day of special prayer on behalf of the Sabbath Schools of the church" and directed "that such services be held as will bring prominently before our congregations the claims of the Sabbath School upon their prayerful sympathy, pecuniary support and personal cooperation." This is the main object of the day and to make the services uniform and interesting throughout the church the S. S. Committee have issued a brief, scriptural programme of exercises entitled THE LORD'S VINEYARD.

It is *simple*, requiring no rehearsal except practising the hymns, which are all taken from the New Hymnal, but are also found in the old one; *instructive*, being really a Bible reading on the theme, interspersed with hymns; *appropriate*, bearing upon the harvest season of nature and human life, with a slight reference to the Jubilee year; and *interesting* in its method of dealing with the subject. A parcel of them has been sent to every S. S. superintendent when the size of the school was known, and in every other case to the minister, taking the number required from the last Minutes of the General Assembly. Sample copies have also been sent to all superintendents to whom it was not possible to send parcels. If any have not received their supply by the first week of September, or have not received so many as they would like, they will please drop a card, stating the number required, to Rev. T. F. Fotheringham, St. John, N. B., and it will be promptly attended to.

Notes on the Lessons.

LESSON X—September 5th, 1897.

Gentiles giving for Jewish Christians. 2 Cor. 9: 1-11.

(Commit to memory verses 6-8. Read chapters 8 and 9.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." 2 Cor. 8: 9.

PROVE THAT—Liberality produces joy. 1 Chr. 29: 9.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 91. *How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?*

The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 8, 125, 219, 166.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Gentiles giving for Jewish Christians. 2 Cor. 9: 1-15.

Tuesday. Example of Macedonia. 2 Cor. 8: 1-12. *Wednesday.* Proof of love. 2 Cor

1: 13-24. *Thursday.* Collection for the saints. 1 Cor. 16: 1-9. *Friday.* Willing offer-

ings. Exodus 35: 20-29. *Saturday.* Acceptable giving. Isa. 58: 6-11. *Sabbath.* Pleasure

in giving. Rom. 15: 20-29. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. The *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* was written a few months after the events of last lesson from one of the places which Paul was visiting in Macedonia. It was sent by Titus, who had just come from Corinth and who returned to complete the collection which was being taken up for the poorer brethren in Judea.—Time A. D. 57, or early in 58.

LESSON PLAN. I. The sowing. vs. 1-5. II. The reaping. vs. 6-11.

1. For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you. The force of the "For" is this, "I do not require to exhort you on the subject of liberality, but (verse 3) I bespeak for those I have sent a cordial reception because it is desirable that your gifts should be in hand when I come." Nevertheless Paul does follow with some very earnest words on the subject, although politely declaring them unnecessary. "Ministering" refers not only to the work of the ministry but to any service—literally, "concerning the acting as deacons." (Acts 6: 1; 12: 25; Rom. 15: 31). All believers are called "saints," or "holy ones," because set apart, or consecrated, to God and presumably sanctified by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 8: 4; Acts 9: 13; Rom. 1: 7; 8: 27). The name points to what they should be.

2. For I know the forwardness of your mind (R. V. your readiness) for which I boast of you (R. V. I glory on your behalf) to them of Macedo'nia, that Acha'ia was ready a year ago; (R. V. hath been

prepared for a year past) and your zeal hath provoked (R. V. stirred up) very many. They had already shewn that they were a liberal church (8: 24). Paul had held them up as an example to the Macedonian churches and others were stimulated by their zeal. The use here of the word "Achaia" shews that there were other churches in Greece besides that at Corinth, and that the same spirit animated all (ch. 1: 1). Paul did not tell the Macedonian christians that they had taken up the collection at Corinth a year ago, but that they were ready to do so if desired. This boast of their alacrity would be falsified, if twelve months later they were still unprepared.

3. Yet (R. V. But) have I sent the brethren lest our boasting of you (R. V. glorifying in your behalf) should be in vain (R. V. made void) in this behalf (R. V. respect) that, as I said, ye may be ready, (R. V. prepared). The "yet," or "but," means "I do not need to write to spur you up, as if you were unwilling, but I send the brethren so that your contributions may

be ready when I come." The brethren were Titus and two others (8: 6, 18, 22), supposed to have been Timothy and Erastus.

4. Lest haply if they of Macedo'nia, come with me and find you unprepared, we (that we say not ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting. It was usual for some friends to go with Paul from place to place (1 Cor. 16: 6; Rom. 15: 24). As Corinth was a great commercial centre, and as the Macdonians had shewn this courtesy on a former occasion (Acts 17: 15) it was not unlikely that some of them would accompany him. "In this little sentence we may discover the extreme delicacy of Paul's feelings, and the affectionate civility which characterized his intercourse, but which are especially prominent in this most personal of all his epistles." (Besser) "He appeals to their better feelings when he calls upon them to save him from mortification, instead of exhorting them to save themselves from disgrace." (Hodge) "This is a great principle—one of the deepest you can have for life and action. Appeal to the highest motives; appeal whether they be there or no, for you make them where you do not find them. Arnold trusted his boys, and all attempts at deceiving him ceased forthwith." (F. W. Robertson).

5. Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort (R. V. intreat) the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before (R. V. your afore-promised bounty) that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness (R. V. extortion). The word for "bounty" means literally, "blessing," a token of good will. "See Questions for Study). Let it then, says Paul, be worthy of the name of "blessing," because given freely and largely, not as if exhorting by importunity.

6. But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. "Bountifully" is literally "with blessings." Giving is not throwing away, but sowing seed for a future harvest of blessing (Prov. 11: 24; Gal. 6: 7; Luke 6: 38). The best way in which to promote our temporal prosperity and happiness is to obey God and make a right use of what

we have. Selfish and avaricious people never win happiness, respect and love.

7. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver. One should give "as his heart freely prompts him." (Kling). If he exceeds that, the gift is marred, for the heart goes not with it. "Grudgingly" is, literally, "out of sorrow," from a reluctance to part with his money, or "out of necessity," compelled by circumstances, stress of conscience or fear of censure from others. "This reluctance spoils the gift." It loses all its fragrance when the incense of a free and joyful spirit is wanting." (Hodge). The word for "cheerful" is that from which "hilarity" comes, but it does not have the rollicking sense of the latter. (compare Rom. 12: 8). It means one to whom giving is a real pleasure, a joy more than a duty. The quotation is from the septuagint version of Prov. 22: 8 "a cheerful man and a giver God blesses, or loves." "Unless we feel it an honor and a joy to give, God does not accept the offering." (Hodge).

8. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. The word for "able" is emphatic and implies that God is willing and that he will abundantly provide for the cheerful giver. "The sacred writers often appeal to the power of God as a ground of confidence to his people (Rom. 16: 25; Eph. 3: 20; Jude 24). This is done especially when we are called upon to believe something which is contrary to the natural course of things. Giving is, to the natural eye, the way to lessen our store, not to increase it; the Bible says it is the way to increase it. To believe this it is only necessary to believe in the power, providence, and promise of God. God is able to make the paradox, "he that scattereth, increaseth prove true." (Hodge). By "all grace" every kind of earthly good is meant. This is clear from the context. "God is able to increase your wealth." But we need not exclude the wider sense of "grace." Spiritual prosperity is inseparable from christian liberality. As often as you practice this duty in an evangelical spirit, you must be conscious that the best part of your sanctified

nature is called into exercise; Your heart is partially discharged of its remaining selfishness; your mind is braced more for christian activity; your sympathy causes you to feel afresh your alliance with man; your beneficence enables you to rejoice in your union of spirit with Christ, and adds a new bond to that power of affection which binds you to his cause. And while other duties bring you nearer to Christ, this may be said alone to place you by his side, and to exalt you into a real, though humble, imitation of his divine benevolence." (Harris).—"Sufficiency" is everywhere else in the N. T. translated "contentment" (1 Tim. 6: 6; Phil. 4: 1). It is literally "self-sufficiency" in a good sense, "Having enough of everything always." "God is able to cause your riches to abound, that ye may have abundance." (Hodge). And therefore much to give away in good works literally, "that ye may overflow" (Phil. 4: 18) "have an overplus for." (Alford). Enough and to spare. Much wealth is not a necessary condition of great liberality (ch. 8: 2). A contented mind, a grateful heart and a loving spirit will "overflow" in good works.

9. As it is written. He hath dispersed abroad; (R. V. scattered) he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth (R. V. abideth) forever. This is a quotation from Ps. 112: 9. It proves the apostle's assertion that "he who is liberal, who disperses, scatters abroad his gifts with free-handed generosity, as a man scatters seed, shall always have abundance. This the psalmist expressly asserts. The Bible is full of similar declarations. (Prov 3: 9, 10; 11: 24, 25; 13: 7; 22: 9; Mal. 3: 10-12; Mark 10: 30). These passages were not designed to be taken literally, or applied universally. They teach three things. 1. The tendency of righteousness. It is the tendency of righteousness to produce blessedness, as it is the tendency of evil to produce misery. 2. The general course of divine providence. God in his providence does, as a general rule, prosper the diligent and bless the righteous. 'Honesty is the best policy,' is a maxim even of worldly wisdom. 3. Even in this life righteousness produces a hundred-fold more good than unrighteousness does. A righteous man is a hundred-fold more happy than a wicked man, other things being equal. A good man is a hundred-fold more happy in sickness, in poverty, in bereave-

ment, than a wicked man in the same circumstances. It is therefore, according to Scripture, a general law, that he that scattereth increaseth; he that gives shall have where-with to give." (Hodge).

The word for "dispersed abroad" means to scatter in every direction (John 10: 12; 16: 32), as insowing seed, "without anxious thought in what direction every grain may fall" (Bengel). A vivid picture of the good man's generosity. The "poor" here is literally those who work for their daily bread, who have the bare necessities of live and not always enough of these. Our liveliest sympathies should be aroused on behalf of such. In these days of keen competition and "sweet shops" there is ample room for proving our righteousness after the fashion admired by the psalmist. The word "righteousness," in Scripture, is often used in a comprehensive sense, including all moral excellence, and in such cases it depends on the context which particular form of goodness is intended. (Hodge). Here it means high moral character as manifested by liberality. Such conduct shews an abiding righteousness, a soul filled with the love which comes from God and makes like God. It is implied that if the character continues, its manifestation will continue and therefore that he will be supplied with the means for displaying it.

10. Now he that ministereth (R. V. and he that supplieth) seed to the sower, both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown (R. V. shall supply your seed for sowing) and increase the fruits of your righteousness. This verse is not a benediction but an affirmation, as in the R. V. Paul reiterates and applies the principle he has stated and proved, namely, that no man is the poorer for being liberal. The words are quoted from Isa. 55: 10. where God is described as the giver of seed for the sower and bread for eating. The apostle says, in effect, that there is something in the economy of grace analogous to the economy of nature. God's methods in the latter are a type and pledge of what he will do in the former. He who gives seed will make it grow. "Therefore your seed," your gifts for Christ's sake, will return you an increase in kind. The more you give the more you will have from which to give. "The fruits of your righteousness are not the rewards of

your righteousness, either here or hereafter. 'But your works of righteousness *i. e.* of beneficence, He will increase your means of doing good' (Hodge). But if the "fruits" are increased, they must indicate an increase of the "righteousness," or grace in the heart, of which they are the index. So the apostle really refers to the reflex good which the christian experiences from the exercise of the grace of liberality. The "fruits of righteousness" correspond to "bread for eating," that is, they are the rewards to the giver for the good deeds he has done. We do not sow bread, we eat it, enjoy it, grow by it; so liberality makes the liberal soul fat (Prov. 11 : 25).

II. Being enriched in everything to all bountifulness (R. V. liberality) which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. "Bountifulness" is, literally, simplicity, sincerity, *i. e.* right-mindedness (Rom. 12: 8). "The divine blessing upon those who sincerely loved their brethren and cheerfully assisted them in time of trouble, would be seen in their becoming rich in all spiritual and temporal blessings. The final result would be such a perfect simplicity or singleness of heart, and such a pure benevolence as knows nothing of selfish interests or painful forbodings, and manifests itself in a free and ample supply of other's wants. Such a simplicity is not only the fruit of an abundant spiritual life, but is an actual experience which blesses even with temporal benefits

those who kindly endeavor to alleviate the distresses of their brethren." (Kling) Charity not only relieves distress and benefits the giver, it also promotes the glory of God through the thanksgiving of the recipient.

ORIENTALISMS.

By Rev. R. G. Murlson, M. A., B. D.

Giving of alms: "The giving of alms is frequently commanded in the Koran, and often recommended jointly with prayer; the former being held of great efficacy in causing the latter to be heard; for which reason the Khali Dmar Ebn Abd'alaziz used to say "Prayer carries us half way to God, fasting brings us to the door of his palace, and alms procure us admission." Many Muslim have been illustrious in alms-giving; Hasan, Mohammed's grandson, is related to have thrice in his life divided his substance equally between himself and the poor, and twice to have given away all he had." (Sale's Introd.)

Alms, by Muslim law, is of two kinds, legal and voluntary, a distinction also in vogue among the Jews, and some commentators see in vs. 5 a reference to the two chests standing in the temple, the one to receive the obligatory gifts, the other for the free-will offerings. The legal alms of the Muslim is usually about 2½ per cent of the five things, viz. cattle, money, corn, fruits, and wares sold, but no alms is due unless they amount to a certain quantity and the owner has been in possession of them eleven months.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

When and where was *II Corinthians* written? Read the epistle carefully at one sitting and then say, why it seems to have been written, and who brought it to Corinth? What collection is referred to? (Rom. 15: 26; 1 Cor. 16: 1; 2 Cor. 8). What good effect would taking up this collection have upon the relations between Jewish and Gentile christians?

1. What are christians called in this verse? Why are they so called? To what should the name stimulate us? How may we become holy? Had the Corinthians adopted the weekly offering system? (1 Cor 16: 2).

2. Of what had the Corinthians already given evidence? What zeal had they shewn? (ch. 8: 10). What boast had Paul made con-

cerning them? Is emulation in good works commendable? (Heb. 10: 24).

3. Whom did Paul send to Corinth in advance of himself? Why did he send them? What might have interfered with the collection at Corinth? (1 Cor. 1: 11).

4. Was Paul usually accompanied in his travels? (1 Cor. 16: 6; Rom. 15: 24). What humiliation did he fear?

5. What did Paul wish done before his arrival? What method of collecting had he already recommended? (1 Cor. 16: 2). What would this shew regarding their motive in giving? Other instances of "Blessing" used for "Gift" Rom. 15: 29; Eph. 1: 3; Gen. 33: 11; Judg. 1: 15; 1 Sam. 25: 27.

6. Is giving wisely for a good purpose an unprofitable use of money? What general

law applies to this? The same idea is found in Prov. 3: 9; 11: 24; 22: 9; Ecc. 11: 1; Matt. 3: 10; Luke 6: 38; Acts 20: 35; 1 Tim. 6: 18, 19.

7. What is meant by giving grudgingly? What is meant by giving "of necessity?" What kind of giver does God love? Read Ex. 25: 2; 35: 5; Deut. 15: 10; Prov. 11: 25; Rom. 12: 8; 2 Cor. 8: 12.

8. What comfort is there in the thought of God's power? (Rom. 16: 25; Eph. 3: 20; Jude 24). What is meant by "all grace?" Do all temporal blessings flow from God's grace? (Deut. 8: 18; 12: 7; Ecc. 2: 24; 5: 18, 20; 1 Tim. 6: 17).

9. Where is this written? (Ps. 112). What is meant by "his righteousness?" How can it endure forever?

10. What is meant by "your seed?" What is meant by the "fruits?" Does the harvest always correspond with the seed? (Gal. 6: 7, 9). Spiritual results compared to harvest in Hos. 10: 12; Gal. 6: 7, 8, 9; Jas. 3: 18; Heb. 12: 11; Job. 4: 8; Prov. 22: 8; Hos. 8: 7.

11. How may we bring glory to God

through the use of our wealth? Notice the high spiritual tone of Paul's appeal (ch. 8: 5; 9: 7, 11-15).

TO BE ANSWERED IN WRITING.

(*Sensor*).

1.—What boast did Paul make about the Corinthians? (4)

2.—Why did he send this letter to them by special messengers? (5)

3.—In in what spirit should we give? (5)

4.—What special promise does God give to the liberal? (5)

5. What benefits result to others from christian liberality? (6)

(*Intermediate*)

1.—What had Paul told the Macedonian christians about the Corinthians? (4)

2.—For what purpose had he sent forward the brethren referred to? (5)

3.—In what spirit should we give? (5)

4.—In what respect does giving resemble sowing seed? (6)

5.—How is God's glory promoted by our liberality? (5)

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

The general topic of our lesson is one of the most important that can engage the attention of our scholars. If we wish to see the wealth of the next generation consecrated to the Lord we must instil right principles of giving into the minds of our children and youth. We teach men too late when after the selfish struggle to get riches they come to our churches in order to learn how to use it. They cannot approach the subject from the true standpoint. They feel themselves to be masters of the wealth they have won, not stewards of another holding all in trust for Him. They give then as an act of condescension not as the discharge of a sacred and delightful duty. We must educate the future financial supporters of the church, so that when fortune comes to them they will recognize at once their true relation to it. We group the thoughts of the apostle under two heads, I. *Sowing*, or the principles of liberality, and II. *Reaping*, or the results of liberality, and we shall take the liberty of completing our subject by reference to other passages of scripture.

I. SOWING—or the principles which should

govern our liberality. *First* as regards the *spirit* in which this grace should be exercised. A story is told that at a missionary meeting held among the negroes in the West Indies, three resolutions were agreed upon:—1. We will all give something. 2. We will all give as God has enabled us. 3. We will all give willingly. As soon as the meeting was over, a leading negro took his seat at the table, with pen and ink, to put down what each came to give. Many came forward and gave, some more and some less. Amongst those that came was a rich old negro, almost as rich as all the others put together and threw down upon the table a small silver coin. "Take dat back again," said the negro that received the money, "Dat may be according to de first resolution, but it is not according to de second." The rich man accordingly took it up, and hobbled back to his seat again in a great rage. One after another came forward, and as almost all gave more than himself, he was fairly ashamed and again threw down a piece of money upon the table, saying, "Dare! take dat!" It was a valu-

able piece of gold, but it was given so ill-temperedly, that the negro answered again, "No! dat won't do yet! It may be according to de first and second resolutions, but it is not according to de last;" and he was obliged to take up his coin again. Still angry at himself and all the rest, he sat a long time, till nearly all were gone, and then came up to the table, and with a smile on his face, and very willingly, gave a large sum to the treasurer. "Very well," said the negro, "dat will do, dat's according to all de resolutions."

1. All acceptable giving should proceed from a sense of *duty*. This seems but a cold word, yet it implies all that gives moral value to any act. Give because you ought to give. Not for that reason alone, but for that reason as the full and sufficient one. When a sense of obligation is wanting giving will be spasmodic, and out of proportion. The very highest motive should inspire our liberality. A Russian soldier, one very cold night, kept duty between one sentry box and another. A poor working man, moved with pity, took off his coat and lent it to the soldier to keep him warm, adding, that he should soon reach home while the soldier would be exposed out of doors for the night. The cold was so intense that the soldier was found dead in the morning. Some time afterward the poor peasant was laid on his deathbed, and in a dream saw Jesus appear to him. "You have got my coat on," said he to the Saviour. "Yes," was the reply, "it is the coat you lent me that cold night when I was on duty and you passed by. I was naked and you clothed me." The story illustrates this truth that every generous act done for Christ's sake is accepted as done to Him. Where the love of Christ constrains, gifts flow freely.

2. Along with a sense of duty there should be an appreciation of the *privilege* of giving. This aspect of duty is to little regarded. Men give because others do, or because the object appeals at the moment to their sympathies, or from a variety of other motives, some worthy, others the reverse, but they seldom consider that a favor is offered every time they have the opportunity and the means to exercise liberality. They will readily assent to the view that the Sabbath, Divine service, prayer, praise, Christian liberty, &c., are privileges, but they are not accustomed to rank with these "min-

istering to the Lord of our substance." (Luke 8: 3.) Yet the use of our temporal blessings for the relief of the poor and the extension of Christ's kingdom is just as truly a personal service to Christ as that rendered by Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and others to Jesus himself. An eloquent preacher has said, "The poor man is, as it were, an altar; if we bring our alms and lay them upon it, with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

"Dost thou not know? hast thou not understood?
The stagnant pool breeds pestilence, disease;
The hurrying stream brings bounty on its tide.
Pass on thy gold, a messenger of good;
Swift let it speed on gracious ministries;
Wing it with love and let its flight be wide."

In no other form of service can we wield a wider influence for good or receive richer blessings in our own souls.

3. Where giving is not a *delight* the full measure of blessing cannot accompany it. Yet the duty is so contrary to the impulses of the natural man that real joy in giving comes only with ripened Christian character and frequent practice. Dr. Parkhurst says, "Giving cannot be left to impulse any more than spelling can be left to impulse. We have seen what might be called *impulsive spellers*, and they make just the same wretched work with orthography that impulse-giving makes with charity." *Learning liberality is like learning a foreign language.* One only reads and speaks it with pleasure after much painstaking study and practice. Until that degree of proficiency is reached, only a sense of duty or hope of future benefits will keep one at it. Too many are like *idle and impulsive students*, they will not keep up their practice and rarely experience the happiness which consecrated benevolence brings. A poor blind woman in Paris put twenty-seven francs into the plate at a missionary meeting. "You cannot afford so much," said one. "Yes, sir, I can," she answered. On being pressed to explain, she said: "I am blind, and I said to my fellow straw-workers: 'How much money do you spend in a year for oil in your lamps when it is too dark to work nights?' They replied: 'Twenty-seven francs.' "So," said the poor woman, "I found that I saved so much in the year because I am blind, and do not need a lamp, and I give it to shed light to the dark heathen lands." Surely her giving

was a delight. What a happy, thankful, heart !
What a rich poor woman !

Secondly, as regards the *measure* according to which we should give. The Old Testament standard was "Of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (Gen. 28 : 22), and many hold that the same rule is binding upon the Christian as a minimum, but that he is urged far to exceed it "of his own voluntary will." Certainly the New Testament standard is not lower than that of the old, but should so far exceed it as the clearer light and higher blessings of the Gospel dispensation surpass those of the former economy. If a child should go to his father and say, "Father, how many times in the day must I come to you with some testimonial of my love? How often will it be necessary for me to show my affection for you?" The father would of course reply, "Just as often as your feelings prompt you my child, and no oftener." So Christ says to his people, "Look at me, and see what I have done and suffered for you, and then give me just what you think I deserve. I do not wish anything forced." (Payson). If every Christian were to devote the tenth of his income to religious and benevolent objects the rest of his substance would be blessed to him and the promises contained in our lesson abundantly fulfilled. Certain general principles, however, govern the amount to be given whatever its strict arithmetical ratio to the whole income.

1. Giving should be with generous *liberality*. A rich merchant in St. Petersburg, at his own cost, supported a number of native missionaries in India, and gave like a prince to the cause of God at home. He was asked one day how he could do it. He replied, "When I served the Devil, I did it on a grand scale, and at princely expense ; and when, by his grace, God called me out of darkness, I resolved that Christ should have more than the devil had had. But how I can give so much you must ask of God, who enables me to give it. At my conversion, I told the Lord his cause should have a part of all that my business brought me in ; and every year since I made that promise, it has brought me in about double that it did the year before : so that I can and do double my gifts in his cause." Be generous with God and he will be munificent with you, unsown seed brings no harvest.

2. Giving should be in proportion to our

ability. What this is, every one should conscientiously determine for himself. We often judge one another harshly, not knowing all the claims against their income, or all the channels in which their beneficence flows. Each one should feel bound in honor and conscience before God in such a matter. A deeply grateful heart will far exceed the limits which selfish prudence would set. A missionary to India gives the following touching incident illustrative of this. "Some time since I went to the house of an aged woman who worshipped God. For several months she had been unable to leave the house, and was fast wearing out with consumption. She has four children, but one is blind and another is deaf. She is very poor. The house might have been worth fifteen rupees, and all in it fifteen more. She could talk but little on account of her cough, but expressed great anxiety for the eternal welfare of her children. After about an hour spent in conversation and prayer, I rose to take my leave, when the poor woman bade me remain a little longer. She crept along to another part of the house and returning soon, she put into my hand a rupee. I could not comprehend what she meant, and said : 'What is to be done with this?' 'This is very little, she replied, 'but it is all I have, and it is to help the cause of Christ.' 'But you are old and infirm, and poor.' 'Yes, but I love Christ, and this is very little.' Surely, I thought, here in the midst of poverty and decrepitude, is a converted heathen exercising the enlightened faith which works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world. When I thought of the withered hand and wrinkled face of her who gave it, that rupee was magnified to a thousand times its real value." The Russian merchant, we have referred to, did not do more than this poor Hindoo. Contrast this with the conduct of the rich deacon who while the plate was being passed around, with closed eyes and a loud voice joined in singing the hymn "Fly abroad thou mighty gospel." Of course he was too much absorbed in his devotions to perceive the bearer of the contribution plate until the latter touched him on the shoulder saying, "Oh yes ! but you just give something to make it fly." There are too many who notwithstanding their professions of gratitude for mercies received and admiration of the self-denying zeal of missionaries, close their eyes when called up-

on to give practical expression to their prayer and hymns.

3. Giving should be in proportion to the *necessity* of the object. A right apportioning of our beneficence is as important as a conscientious proportioning of it. Some are willing to give much more for one scheme than another, not because the claim is more pressing, but because they have elected to patronize it. Others respond with dimes when denominational agencies appeal to their loyal support, but give dollars when their names are to be printed in the public papers as contributing to some outside cause. The maintenance of ordinances and the support of our own particular church should be the first duty, then the various schemes of the church in the ratio of their magnitude and importance; after these other religious and benevolent objects deserving the support of the general christian community. In no case ought this order to be reversed. Our own church and its organized agencies has a right to the largest share of our beneficence, and in regard to these we should take the time and trouble to make our scholars acquainted with the nature of the work done by each, the names of the missionaries or agents, the amount required and the claims upon our sympathy and support.

II. REAPING, or the results of liberality—These are both of a temporal and spiritual nature. *First*, as regards the temporal blessings following. These are neither few nor in stunted measure.

1. To the cheerful giver there is true *pleasure* of the highest and purest kind. No element of selfishness mingles with the satisfaction which he feels. His joy is more than doubled in beholding the happiness he brings to others, and the progress of the kingdom of Christ towards which he contributes.

"The Holy Supper is kept, indeed
In whatso we share with another's need;
Not that which we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare.

Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three—
Himself, his hungry neighbor, and Me."

2. The liberal and benevolent win the *respect* and *affection* of others. Naturalists tell us that in the struggle for life that particular blossom, or species of blossoms, which under given conditions secretes the largest quantity of honey, will draw the largest number of insects, and therefore its pollen will be most

widely distributed and its variety most numerously increased. But where through weakness or sterility there is little or no honey the variety, unless it has other means of propagation will die out. So those who have most of the honey of life to bestow, in pleasant words and kindly deeds will draw around them hosts of friends whose regard will ever be a source of sincere pleasure and whose help will materially augment temporal prosperity. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."

3. Contrary though it may seem to the nature of things, yet it is true, that those who give largely from a proper motive will increase in *wealth*. There is a pretty German legend illustrative of this. A poor boy, the son of a widow, had gathered in the wood a dish of strawberries. Returning home, a venerable old man met him and said, "My lad, let me have thy full dish and thou take my empty one." Pity for the old man's weakness and helplessness overcame the boy's reluctance to part with his berries, and he made the exchange. Soon he had filled the empty dish and returned with it to his mother, to whom he told the story of his adventure. "Ah, happy are we, my child," she exclaimed. "The dish is pure gold." Give the contents of your dish for Christ's sake and the dish itself is transmuted into gold. *The Bible is full of promises to this effect. (See Questions for Study)*—

We lose what on ourselves we spend,
We have as treasure without end
Whatever, Lord, we to Thee we lend,
Who giveth all.

Whatever, Lord, we lend to Thee,
Repaid a thousand-fold will be;
Then gladly will we give to Thee,
Who giveth all.

Secondly, and most important of all, are the *spiritual* benefits accruing to the generous giver.

1. His whole *spiritual life* is quickened. There is an old legend of St. Brandan, which relates that in his northward voyage he saw a man sitting upon an iceberg, and with horror recognized him to be the traitor Judas. On enquiring the reason of his being in such a strange place he was told that, at Christmas every year, he was permitted to cool his agony for one hour because he once, at Joppa, gave

his cloak to shelter a leper from the wind. Grotesque although the story is, it impresses the imagination and emphasizes the truth that no good deed can be without its reward in the spiritual condition of the man here and hereafter. In Connecticut there lived a lady who had a beautiful flower garden in which she took great pride. The whole country was proud of it too and people drove miles to see it. Most unselfish in her love for her flowers she gave away enormous quantities. Two large baskets were fastened by the side of her gate, and these were filled every morning with cut flowers, to which passers by were invited to help themselves. School children, business men, tramps, alike blessed the good lady's kindness. "You cut such quantities," one said to her, "aren't you afraid you will rob yourself?" "The more I cut the more I have," she answered. "Don't you know if plants are allowed to go to seed they stop blooming?" The beauty goes out of the Christian life that is not full of good works and alms deeds. The soul loses its fragrance when the hand is restrained from giving.

2. The bonds of *Christian brotherhood* are strengthened. One feels a deeper interest in that which they have contributed to support, and those who benefit by the donations are bound in gratitude to their benefactors. Where all the members of a church emulate one another in the practice of this grace, they are likely to abound in every other, that of brotherly love especially. When the reverse is the case and for trifling excuses contributions are withheld, and when given, grudgingly bestowed, there is every form of unbrotherliness. Illiberality is frequently the root cause of disunion in congregations.

3. The *glory of God* is enhanced. The virtues of a regenerate nature are exercised and displayed; God's work is advanced, or the sufferings of His poor are relieved; and the grateful thanks of many rise to the Father of mercies, called forth by the gifts of His people.

"The pilgrim and stranger, who, through the day,
Holds over the desert his trackless way,
Where the terrible sands no shade have known,
No sound of life save the camel's moan,
Hears at last, through the mercy of Allah to all,
From his tent-door at evening, the Bedouin's call
"Whoever thou art, whose need is great,
In the name of God the compassionate
And merciful One, for thee I wait.

For gifts in his name, of food and rest,
The tents of Islam of God are blest.
Thou, who hast faith in the Christ above,
Shall the Koran teach thee the law of love?
O Christian!—open thy heart and door—
Ory east and west to the wandering poor—
"Whoever thou art, whose need is great,
In the name of Christ, the compassionate
And merciful One, for thee I wait."

ADDED POINTS.

1. We should give to the cause of Christ and the relief of the poor and distressed.
2. Encourage and stimulate others by a good example.
3. Our giving should be prompt, cheerful and generous.
4. A regard for the good opinion of others is right if kept subordinate to higher motives.
5. Christian liberality blesses the giver as well as the receiver.
6. Unless the heart goes with it our gift is valueless.
7. No one is the poorer for giving wisely and liberally.
8. Our gifts are like seed sown, yielding a harvest of increase and blessing.
9. Liberality causes others to praise God.
10. Christ gave himself for us.

THE BLACKBOARD.

SOW.

REAP.

Bountifully
Conscientiously
Joyfully

GOODS
GOOD WORKS
GRACE

"It is more blessed to give
than to receive."

LESSON XI—September 12th, 1897.

Christian Living. Rom. 12: 9-21.

(Commit to memory verses 16-18. Read chapters 12 and 13).

GOLDEN TEXT: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Rom. 12: 21.

PROVE THAT—We should be diligent in business. Rom. 12: 11.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 92. *What is a sacrament.* A. A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed and applied to believers. Quest. 93. *Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?* The sacraments of the New Testament are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 15, 101, 109, 118.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Reasonable service. Rom. 12: 1-8. *Tuesday.* Christian living. Rom. 12: 9-21. *Wednesday.* Loyalty and love. Rom. 13: 1-10. *Thursday.* Clean hands and pure heart. Psalm 24. *Friday.* Dead to sin. Rom. 6: 11-23. *Saturday.* A shining light. Matt. 5: 1-16. *Sabbath.* Family religion. Eph. 6: 1-9. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. This chapter begins the second or practical part of the Epistle. The Apostle has shown that there is but one way of salvation, namely, justification by faith in Christ. Redemption and all the blessings that accompany it flow from free-grace. "O, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." What, then, should the life of one be who has been saved by the blood of Christ? This is answered in the last half of the Epistle. The Epistle was written at Corinth early in A. D. 58. Paul was residing in the house of one Gaius (Rom. 16: 23; I. Cor. 1: 14), and the Epistle was dictated to Tertius (16: 22), who wrote it out. It was carried to Rome by Phebe, a deaconess (16: 1, 2).

LESSON PLAN. I. Loving our Friends vs. 9-16. II. Loving our Enemies vs. 17-21.

9. Let love be without dissimulation (R.V. hypocrisy). Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Let your love be no mere parlor pretence, or mask for selfishness (2 Cor. 6: 6; 1 Pet. 1: 22; 1 John 3: 18). Love, in the general sense of the word, is the fundamental feeling, the principle of all the active virtues following. (Godet). If there be a guileless love which joins itself to an abhorrence of whatever is evil and an ardent attachment to whatever is good. There is preparation in the man for each and every one of the works of the christian life which are mentioned in the following verses. (Dwight). "Hypocrisy" was originally the playing of a part on the stage by an actor, hence feigning to be what one was not. The word for "abhor" is in an intensified form, and signifies not merely "to dislike," but "to hate utterly" and manifest this unmistakably. "cleave to," is literally "be glued to" indicating the most firm and constant attachment. "evil" and "good" may mean moral evil and good generally, but in view of the context, most commentators take these words in a restricted sense as meaning what is mischievous to others (Matt. 5: 39) and what is beneficial (Matt. 7: 11). "Avoid what is injurious to others and earnestly endeavor to do whatever is kind and useful" (Ps. 34: 14; 97: 10; Amos. 5: 15). Love is not pure

except when it is the declared enemy of evil, even in the persons of those whom we love, and applies all its energy to labor for their progress in goodness. Destitute of this moral rectitude, which is the spirit of holiness, love is only a form of selfishness." (Godet).

10. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another. R. V. "In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another." The word translated "kindly affectioned" expresses properly the strong natural affection between parents and children, brothers and sisters, those closely *kindred* to one another. The same word is translated natural affection in Rom. 1: 31 and 2 Tim. 3: 3. "Nothing ethical was connoted in the word *kindly* once: it was simply the adjective of *kind* [*i. e.* species]. But it is God's ordinance that *kind* should be *kindly*, in our modern sense of the word as well; and thus the word has attained this meaning." (Trench). The R. V. "tenderly" does not give the true force of the original, and the word "kindly," in the A. V. in the sense intended, is obsolete. The apostle means "love one another as if really brothers and sisters." "In honor" means, with regard to the deference and respect which is every one's due, in his measure. "Preferring" is literally "going before" as a guide to shew the way, "setting

an example." Instead of waiting for others to do us honor, we should be forward to show them respect (Phil. 2: 3; 1 Pet. 3: 8; 5: 5). "Christianity, therefore, is so far from banishing all civility and good manners from society, that it enjoins the greatest attention to this subject." (Stuart).

11. Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. R. V. "In diligence not slothful." The word for "business" properly means "haste," "activity." It is the effect or outward manifestation of zeal. The exhortation has not the reference which our version would naturally suggest, namely, to the active performance of our several vocations; it refers rather to religious activity (Hodge). The interests of the christian life in whatever relation. (Meyer). There should be no drones in the church hive. The word for "slothful" means "shrinking," "hesitating" "unready" and this may arise from weariness, timidity, unfaith, luke-warmness &c., as well as from indolence. (Compare Matt. 25: 26). The common view is supported by Prof. Stuart, who says that the passage accords with Ecc. 9: 10, and this is expanded eloquently by Dr. Caird. "The words imply that religion is not so much a duty as a something that has to do with *all* duties; not a tax to be paid periodically, but a ceaseless all-prevading, inexhaustible tribute to Him who is not only the object of religious worship but the end of our very life and being. It suggests to us the idea that piety is not for Sundays only, but for all days; that spirituality of mind is like the act of breathing, like the circulation of the blood, like the silent growth of the stature, a process that may be going on simultaneously with all our actions—when we are busiest as when we are idlest; in the church, in the world; in solitude, in society; in our grief, and in our gladness; in our toil and in our rest; sleeping, waking; by day, by night—amid all the engagements and exigencies of life. For you perceive that in one breath, as duties not only not incompatible but necessarily and inseparably blended with each other, the text exhorts us to be at once, not slothful in business, and "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Although not strictly the point of the passage these thoughts are too important to be passed by. With them compare Ecc. 9: 10; 1 Cor. 10: 31; Col. 3: 17; 1 Pet. 4: 11). The word "spirit" does not

naturally suggest the Holy Spirit to one's mind. No doubt such "boiling" zeal is stirred up by his influence (Luke 12: 49; Matt. 3: 11). But the clause is simply the opposite of the previous one. "In reading these words, we see the believer hastening, with his heart on fire, wherever there is any good to be done." (Godet). "Serving the Lord" describes the motive from which zeal and diligence should proceed—a desire to serve Christ. (Hodge) (Col. 3: 22, 23; Eph. 6: 5-8). The margin of the R. V. gives another reading. "Serving the opportunity." That is, making the most of every opportunity of doing good, or suiting your action to the occasion, tempering zeal with prudence. (Compare Eph. 5: 16). This expression is a very unusual one in the N. T., having no strict parallel, but it is supported by some of the best commentators. Dr. Dwight in his notes to the American edition of Meyer's commentary says, "The insertion of so general and comprehensive a duty as 'serving the Lord' in the midst of a series of such special and individual matters is an argument against the A. V. not lightly to be set aside. 'Serving the opportunity,' the 'occasion' or 'critical season,' on the other hand, is a suggestion most appropriate as following and modifying the other two exhortations of the verse. It belongs both to christian duty and to the highest christian wisdom for the man who is not sluggish in respect to zeal, but fervent in spirit, to serve the occasion so far as to temper and direct his zeal by what it demands." The English reader will prefer the ordinary form of the verse, because the thought is familiar and lofty, but the other is suitable to the context and contains a caution deserving of more than passing notice, in these days of unguided enthusiasm. Which is the really correct reading will probably never be decided beyond question. The principal letters in the Greek words for *Lord* and *time* are the same, so that, in an abbreviated form, they could easily be mistaken for each other.

12. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant (R. V. steadfastly), in prayer. The hope which inspires the christian's joy is salvation, in its most comprehensive sense, including its fruits here and the glory hereafter (Phil. 3: 1; 1 Thess. 5: 16, Heb. 3: 6). This hope nerves him with courage to bear present trials (ch. 8: 18; Jas. 1: 4; 1 Pet. 2: 19) and he can be-

joyful and patient only by maintaining constant communion with God in prayer. "Instant" is an old word combining the meanings of "perseverance" and "ardor;" importunate, earnest, fervent, (Luke 7: 4; 23: 23; Acts 26: 7; 2 Tim. 4:2). The Greek word here translated "instant" occurs also in Acts 1: 14 (continued); 6: 4 (continually); Eph. 6: 18 (perseverance); Col. 4: 2 (continue); see also Luke 18: 1; 1 Thess. 5: 17; Acts 12: 5.

13. Distributing (R. V. communicating) to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. The word for "distributing" commonly means "to be a partaker in," and taken in the usual intransitive sense the meaning here is a beautiful one; "Be, by your sympathy and help, a sharer in the wants and trials of God's people." (Gal. 6: 6; Phil. 4: 14; Heb. 13: 16; 1 Cor. 16: 1; Heb. 6: 10; 1 John 3: 17). "Given to" is literally "pursuing," eager to shew hospitality. (Godet). Seeking opportunities for exercising " (1 Pet. 4: 9; Heb. 13: 2; 1 Tim. 3: 2; 5: 10; Tit. 1: 8). There was special need for the exercise of this virtue in eastern lands where public houses for the entertainment of travellers were unknown and at a time when christian brethren were exposed to persecution, but the injunction is not limited by time or circumstances, it applies to all christians everywhere.

14. Bless them which persecute you : bless, and curse not. This is a quotation from the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5: 44; Acts 7: 60; 1 Cor. 4: 12). We should sincerely desire their good and pray for them. Paul returns to this subject a few verses on.

15. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. The connection of thought with the preceding verse is the idea of unselfishness. We are to make the joys and griefs of others our own. Only in this way can we really help them and win their confidence and affection. This is the secret of the wonderful power of Christ over the sinful. They felt that he understood them and wanted to transform them by his love and sympathy (John 11: 35; Phil. 2: 4; 1 Cor. 12: 26).

16. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things (R. V. set not your mind on high things), but conde-

scend to men of low estate (R. V. things that are lowly). **Be not wise in your own conceits.** Be characterized by that loving harmony, when each, in respect to his neighbor has one and the same thought and endeavor. (Meyer). Do not let discords arise, but yield to one another in opinions. The causes of disharmony are referred to in the succeeding clauses of the verse 1. Ambition, desire for distinction, social or ecclesiastical (Jer. 45: 5; 3 John 9). Class distinctions in the church are a fruitful source of jealousy and unbrotherliness. They are due mainly to pride and selfishness. 2. Exclusiveness, a haughty spirit is most unbecoming in those who own their place in the church to the free mercy of God. Who made one to differ from another, or what has anyone that he hast not received? The word for "condescend" means, usually, "to be carried away with," so that the idea is not that there should be an unwilling mortifying of pride, but lowly persons and things should find us heartily in accord with them and happy in our relations to them. " 'Things that are lowly,' ought to have for the christian a force of attraction, in virtue of which he yields himself to fellowship with them, and allows himself to be guided by them in the determination of his conduct." (Meyer). 3. Self-conceit. "Conceit may puff a man up, but never prop him up" (Ruskin). "One must not fall into that conceited self-sufficiency of moral perception, whereby brotherly respect for the perception of others would be excluded" (Meyer). "The temper which the gospel requires is that of a little child, docile, diffident, and humble" (Hodge). "To suppose that we monopolize all the knowledge and wisdom of the society we belong to, to refuse to co-operate in works of importance to the common good of the society, because our plans are not followed, and we have not assigned to us the place which we think due in executing the work, is folly and sin in the most gifted church member. We ought to cherish habitually a deep sense of our own ignorance and fallibility, and preserve a mind ever ready to receive instruction from whatever quarter it may come. This is the way to make progress in personal improvement; and this, too, is the way to promote the peace and prosperity of the church, otherwise we have 'strife and division,' 'biting and devouring one another,

'confusion and every evil work'" (Brown). (Prov. 3: 7; Isa. 5: 21).

17. **Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest** (R. V. take thought for things honorable) in the sight of all men. "To be kind to the kind argues civility; to be unkind to the unkind argues corruption; to be unkind to the kind argues devilishness; to be kind to the unkind argues christianity" (Jenkins). A vindictive and revengeful spirit, a desire for retaliation, is strictly prohibited, but we are not forbidden to take lawful means to protect our rights, or vindicate our character (Prov. 20: 22; Matt. 5: 39, 43-48; 1 Thess. 5: 15; 1 Pet. 3: 9). The word for "thing honest" or honorable" is, literally, "beautiful things" *i. e.* in a moral sense, things seemly, and commendable to all right thinking persons, whether heathen, Jews, or christians. "It is a happy thing when worldly men are constrained to say of a christian what Tertullian makes a heathen say of a christian in his time. 'He is an excellent man that Caius Servius only he is a christian.'" (Brown). (2 Cor. 8: 17-21; Rom. 14: 16; Prov. 3: 4). We have no right to disregard the sentiments of those around us in matters of propriety. The honor of religion is compromised when, through our indifference, or imprudence, our conduct may be misconstrued by the public.

18. **If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably** (R. V. at peace) with all men. But we are not required to preserve peace at the cost of truth and principle (Jas. 3: 17). But the cause of strife must not lie with us. If in doing what conscience requires, or bearing testimony against evil, we stir up antagonism, we are not transgressors. Fidelity to higher obligations demands sometimes that even peace be sacrificed. But we must ever bear ourselves with a meek, and gentle spirit that would disarm opposition by patience and love (ch. 14: 19; Heb. 12: 14).

19. **Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord.** Literally, "give room to wrath," *i. e.* anger generally. Do not receive it into your breast, let it pass by, avoid it. There is no need for your cherishing resentment, God has promised to act as your avenger. Leave the injurious person to

be dealt with by him (Deut. 32: 35; Ps. 94: 1; Lev. 19: 18; Prov. 24: 29; Heb. 10: 30).

20. **Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.** That is, "this will be the most effectual method of subduing him," you "overcome evil with good." You kill your enemy by making him your friend (Prov. 25: 21, 22; Ps. 140: 10; 11: 6). Fire brands and burning pitch were frequently used by the defenders of besieged cities. They were thrown from the wall upon the heads of the attacking soldiers effectually beating them back. Others derive the figure from the smelting of ore. "The native tendency of persevering, disinterested goodness is to produce gratitude, even in a very depraved heart.

'So artists melt the stubborn ore of lead,
By heaping coals of fire upon its head,
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And, loose from dross, the silver runs below.'

There must be many coals heaped upon the sullen ore—many favors must be done, which produce little or no effect—but the tendency is to melt." (Brown).

21. **Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good.** Do not let the evil word or deed of others arouse the evil in your heart; but conquer the evil in them by your kindness. "This noble sentiment is peculiar to christianity. Nothing like it is to be found in heathen classics, and nothing like what it enjoins ever existed among heathen nations;" yet so divine is it, that were it universally acted upon by christians, evil would become well-nigh extinct and the world be converted to Christ.

ORIENTALISMS.

In diligence not slothful:—The Oriental is as a rule not much addicted to willingly killing himself with overwork. A more pleasant thing has always been to sit at the gate and gossip, or listen to wandering story-tellers, to which pursuits, in the case of the Arab men at least, fighting and robbing give the needful relaxation. The Oriental is the equal of his western brother in scheming how to get a living without working. Lane tells of a class in Egypt called Tufeylees, or Spongers, the counterpart of our tramp.

Given to hospitality—Hospitality is a virtue among Orientals, as among all nomadic peoples, and this is so ingrained that city life while it has modified its expression, has not exterminated it. Rich and poor feel its obligations and discharge them willingly; especially is this true of the poor of the desert. Layard tells how this trait was shown by his Arab laborers at the excavation of Nineveh. If one of the workmen was wealthy enough to buy a handful of raisins, or a piece of camel's, or sheep's flesh, or if he had a cow, which occasionally yielded him butter or sour milk, he would immediately call his friends together to partake of his feast. I was frequently invited to such entertainments; the whole dinner per-

haps consisting of half a dozen dates or raisins spread out wide, to make the best show, upon a corn sack; a pat of butter upon a corner of the ashes. And yet the repast was ushered in with every solemnity; the host turned his dirty keffah, or head-kerchief, and his cloak, in order to look clean and smart; appearing both proud of the honour conferred upon him, and of his means to meet it in a proper fashion.

Avenge not yourselves. This was a new and strange teaching to the Oriental to whom vengeance was not only a pleasure, but a sacred duty, and among whom blood revenge is still taught as a duty most strictly binding upon all.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

Where was Paul when he wrote this epistle? With whom was he residing? Who was his secretary? Who carried it to Rome? In what year? Of what great subject does it principally treat?

9. How should Christians love one another? What should they abhor? What "cleave to?" What does Timothy say about law and love? (1 Tim. 1: 4). What does Peter say of the relation between obedience and love? (1 Pet. 1: 22). How should love be shewn? (1 John 3: 18).

10. What does Christ say of brotherly love? (John 13: 35). Brotherly love a test of true discipleship. (John 13: 35). Respect for others enjoined. (1 Pet. 3: 8; Phil. 2: 3; Rom. 13: 7, 8).

11. How should we do the Lord's work? In what spirit? What should we remember in all religious work?

12. What should be the chief cause of joy to the Christian? (Luke 10: 20; Rom. 5: 2). Is joy a grace bestowed by the Holy Spirit? (Rom. 15: 13) Is joyfulness a Christian duty? (Phil. 3: 1; 4: 4; Heb. 3: 6). What should be the result of tribulation? (Rom. 5: 3-5). What is meant by being "instant in prayer?"

13. Who are meant by "saints?" Why are they so called? Is hospitality enjoined upon Christians? (1 Pet. 4: 9; Heb. 13: 2; Titus 1: 8; 1 Tim. 5: 10).

14. What is implied in blessing? What is implied in cursing?

15. Why should we rejoice with others? (1 Cor. 4: 12). Should our own interests

have our first thoughts? (Phil. 2: 4). How may we comfort the sorrowful?

16. What is meant by being "of the same mind" with another? What "high things" are referred to? What is meant by being "wise in one's own conceit?" What does David say about brotherly concord? (Ps. 133: 1). Is this a characteristic of true religion? (Acts 4: 32). What church was noted for the absence of it? (1 Cor. 1: 10; 2 Cor. 13: 11). Read Phil. 1: 27; 2: 2; 3: 16; 1 Thess. 5: 13; 1 Pet. 3: 8.

17. Is revenge forbidden? (Lev. 19: 18; Prov. 20: 22; Matt. 5: 39; 1 Thess. 5: 15; 1 Pet. 3: 9). What is meant by "things honest?" Should Christians regard the world's standard of propriety so far as it is not wrong? (Rom. 4: 16; 2 Cor. 8: 21).

18. Is it sometimes impossible to avoid disagreements with others? Why? When these occur how should we act?

19. What is meant by "giving place" to wrath? To whom should we leave the avenging of all wrong?

20. Was returning good for evil commanded in the law of Moses? (Ex. 23: 4, 5; Prov. 25: 21, 22). What was Christ's rule? (Matt. 5: 44). What is meant by "heaping coals of fire" on the head?"

TO BE ANSWERED IN WRITING.

(Senior).

1.—What is meant by "in honor preferring one another?" (5)

2.—What is meant by "continuing instant in prayer?" (5)

3.—How should we treat those who bear ill-will towards us? (4)

4.—When would it be wrong not to oppose ourselves to others? (6)

5.—How should we overcome our enemies? (5)

(Intermediate).

1.—What kind of love should Christians have to one another? (4)

2.—How should we serve the Lord? (5)

3.—How should christians show their interest in others? (5)

4.—Why should we not seek revenge? (5)

5.—What is meant by being overcome with evil? (6)

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

This is a grand lesson on the subject of unselfishness. The essence of sin is love of self. The essence of christianity is love of others. Self-forgetfulness in view of the welfare of those around us is the spirit of practical religion. We are justified freely by divine grace through faith in Christ, therefore we should be wholly consecrated to Him who has bestowed this priceless boon without money and without price. A consecrated nature will shew itself in a consecrated life—how to regulate such a life is the theme of our lesson.

9. There is one gift which lies at the root of all the others, love, and as it is most vital it ought to be kept most pure. Exaggerated, or simulated, we suspect not only its absence, but the presence of selfish motives instead. The sincere heart will loathe flattery and honest lips will refuse to speak it. We are not always bound to say unpleasant things because they happen to be true, but we are bound not to say pleasant things when they are untrue. There never is a case where a kind heart cannot find words both kind and true, or perform some act which will show sincere good will.

True love is holy, but never harsh. It shrinks with abhorrence from sin, but it looks with tenderest pity upon the sinner. It is one of the commonest mistakes to treat evil doers with aversion and to turn from them instead of trying to turn them from their sin. We should do everything to shew them that while we detest the evil in them we love them and would gladly help them by our kindness to overcome it.

We shall do harm of the worst sort if we make light of wrong doing and comfort the transgressor by telling him that his sin is not such a serious matter after all, or that there are others quite as bad as he, if not worse. True love will never do this. But while pointing

out the full enormity of his guilt will yet stand by him in his efforts to do better, and encourage him to seek divine grace as his only effectual deliverance.

True love shews its real affinity by its delight in goodness—doing good and commending it whenever it is seen. It is not enough that we abstain from evil, we must bend our energies to the work of promoting the happiness of others. Love's home is heaven, and as native tendencies shew themselves in creatures, revealing the habits of the species to which they belong, so love shews a man to be "born of God," for "love is of God" and "God is love."

10. Sincere and deep affection should exist between church members. As parents and children who do not love one another are unnatural—moral monsters in fact—so christian brethren who do not shew the reality of the bond which unites them in Christ by the affection which belongs to their spiritual kinship are wanting in the most essential trait of the christian character. In some churches it is the custom to address one another as "brother" and "sister," and the object of doing so is doubtless to help to keep in mind the family character of the "household of faith." Without the true spirit of love this will only breed most repulsive insincerity, yet we ought to shew our fraternal feelings more than we generally do, and this not by any fixed rule but, as in the home, by unselfish yielding to the wishes and interests of others.

The spirit of the true home should rule in the church. Parents live for their children, and sons and daughters rejoice in one another's success. Envy, jealousy, mutual detraction, and depreciation of manifest excellencies should have no place amongst brethren. We are not called upon to pretend respect which we do not feel, but we are required to put the best possible construction upon a brother's

conduct and motives, and to refrain from gossiping about the frailties and shortcomings of others. We ought to be willing to be forgotten if only the work of Christ prospers. What is it to us though others should reap the honors that men give, the Master will not fail to note the real workman and accord him his due meed at last. Let others be the figurehead at the prow, be thou rather the propeller deep underneath, the throbbing life of the ship.

At a Sabbath-school anniversary two girls presented themselves for the prize. One had recited one less verse than the other. The minister asked her, "Could you not have learned one more verse?" "Yes, sir," she replied; but I loved Martha and I kept back on purpose." "What verse taught you to do this?" She said, "In honor preferring one another." When the naturalist, Cuvier, was engaged upon some scientific investigations, he learned that Agassiz had also been following up the same subject for some time. He at once, instead of preferring his claim to the honor of discovery, placed all his notes and papers at the service of his friend, begging him to use them in perfecting the researches which he was pursuing. In a similar spirit Mr. Wallace withheld from publication his work on *Natural Selection*, of which he was the real discoverer, in order that Mr. Darwin might not lose the reward of his long labors in establishing by observation and experiment the same scientific doctrine. Thus "in honor" should christians "prefer one another." Compare Luke 14: 10.

11. This willingness to give place to others does not imply indolence or indifference. "The king's business requires haste." The Lord's service is worthy of our most strenuous efforts and our most self-denying zeal. We are not doing our duty if we have not some share in the active work of the church. We might well learn a lesson from the thorough organization of many Roman Catholic parishes where it is the endeavor to have every man, woman and child, even, enrolled in some of the numerous sodalities and confraternities of that church. Every one connected with our church should be a member of the Sabbath School either as teacher, scholar, officer, or student of the Home Department. The Ladies' Societies, the Young People's Association and the various juvenile organizations afford ample scope for concerted effort. No

one need say "There is no niche that I can fill." Besides these there are countless ways in which willing hands and earnest hearts may work for Jesus.

12. Gloomy and despondent christians are in bad health spiritually and must come to the physician for restoration to soundness. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." The aim of Christ's teaching and fellowship is to uplift the heart and fill the future with bright anticipations. Not even tribulation should dim that joy, for "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope." So patience, hope, joy are successive enrichments of the soul that is being filled more abundantly with the love of God. (Rom. 5: 3-5). But how are we to maintain hope and firm endurance? By communion with God. "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." This verse has been very accurately paraphrased as follows: "In so far as we have cause to hope, let us be joyful; in so far as we have cause of pain, let us hold out; in so far as the door of prayer is open to us, let us continue to use it."

13. The force of "distributing," or communicating to the necessities of others is well illustrated by the little girl who coming home one day said to her mother, "Mother I saw a little girl sitting on a door step crying. I could not tell what was the matter, but I sat down beside her and took hold of her hand and I cried too." We are to make the wants of others our own. "Christians are 'partners' in everything, because they are all members of the body of Christ. The joy or sorrow of one member, is the joy or sorrow of all the others. The necessities of one are, or ought to be a common burden" (Hodge). In the natural virtues of charity and hospitality the christian should aim to excel. He is to "pursue" them, regard it as a privilege and an honor when he has opportunity to exercise them. Old Testament examples are Abraham (Gen. 18). Lot, Laban, (Gen. 30: 27), Rahab (Josh. 6: 22-25). The widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17: 8-24). The Shunamite (2 Kings 4: 8-37). To these we may add Martha and Mary with whom Jesus made his home, Zacchaeus, Lydia at Philippi, Justus, Gaius, (1 Cor. 16: 15; Acts 16: 15, 40; 18: 7; Rom. 16: 23; 3 John 5, 6). When we open our homes to delegates to conventions and mem-

bers of synod or assembly we are only doing our duty in accordance with this precept. We are not required to entertain every idle tramp and vagabond that lives on society, for "if any man will not work, neither shall he eat," is the judgment of charity as well as of justice. But the spirit that helps in distress and shelters in adversity will always be ready to minister to the homeless and the foodless even if they are not "deserving," and try by goodness to lead them to repentance.

14. The injunction of the preceding verse extends with increased force to those who are not by any means "saints." Even those who wish us evil and make us the objects of their malevolence are to be regarded with pity and good-will. It is not always easy to feel well disposed towards such. We may be willing to refrain from revenge, or even to say no more about the wrong we have suffered, but this is not enough, we must retaliate, but with gentle words and kindly deeds; we must remember the injury, but only to bestow our good offices upon him who considers himself our enemy. A missionary in India asked a class of boys what they did to those who treated them badly. They replied, "We strike those who strike us, and abuse those who abuse us." He asked, "What would happen if you should bless those who curse you?" They replied, "We should only be abused the more." He told them to try it and see what would happen. They tried it for a month. At the end of the month they reported to him. Out of the whole class only three failed. He asked those who had kept their promise if they had suffered in consequence of it. "No," said they, "why should they abuse us now?" He asked, "What did you do when they abused you?" One said, "When they cursed me, I said, 'A blessing attend you!'" "Well, what then?" "Then I laughed and they laughed too." Another said he shut his lips tight and said nothing. "Well, what did the other party do to you?" "Oh, they turned up their noses and walked off." It is often the second blow that makes a quarrel. A soft answer will turn away wrath.

15. The Christian's general frame of mind should be oblivion of self.

"The man who melts
With social sympathy, though not allied,
Is than a thousand kinsmen of more
worth."

And such an one should the follower of Jesus be. The secret pang of envy which we are so apt to feel when we see the success of another where we had wished to excel is only evil, mean and unworthy. Let our congratulations be sincere. Do not try to depreciate merit or belittle the honor won. How common it is to do this. We are more willing to ascribe success to mere good fortune than to acknowledge worth, to hint at unworthiness, and ignore the industry and fidelity which were the real causes of prosperity. All this betrays secret jealousy. Be frankly glad when joy comes to another and truly sorry when calamity overtakes him.

16. The temporal and spiritual welfare of others should be as dear to us as our own. If every one is striving to have his own way there can be no concord in the society. There must be mutual yielding if amity is to prevail. But alas! there are ambitious ones who, like Diotrephes, love to have the pre-eminence; there are others puffed up with the pride of wealth and social exclusiveness who will not associate with their humble brethren on equal terms; and there are some who have such an over-weening sense of their own wisdom that they will let no one have an opinion but themselves. How unlovely all this is. No one really respects Diotrephes. Those who are so deferential to the brother with the gold ring and gay clothing shew regard to the purse and not to the man, he is often insignificant enough from a moral point of view. If self-conceited and opinionated men could hear what others say of them they might perhaps grow humbler minded. No one loves them. Their tyranny is the ruin of many churches.

17. Some one has said that the only lawful way in which a christian can recompense his enemies is (1) "with his pity; (2) with his patience; (3) with his prayers; (4) with his pardon; and, if need be, (5) with his purse." Retaliation always inflicts more moral injury on him who practices it, than on him who is the object of it. It provokes further reprisals and so perpetuates wrong doing. It is wholly contrary to the word, example and spirit of Christ.

Christianity is not unmindful of the proprieties of life. Christians must maintain the good name of religion. As excellent workmanship reflects credit upon the maker, so

christians being the manufactured product, so to speak of religion, bring credit or discredit upon the divine Artificer as they conform or depart from the standard of conduct which the natural conscience sets up. We are not bound by all the fashions and fads which have their ephemeral popularity, nor are we in any case to countenance folly or insincerity, but we should conform to the useful and wholesome conventionalities of society, and commend our religion by the propriety of our conduct and the manner in which we bear our part in all the relations of life.

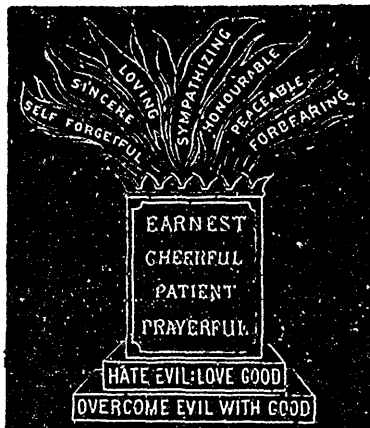
18. Much as we may desire to maintain peace it is sometimes impossible. Some people are so unreasonable, so contentious, so overbearing, so obstinate, so selfish, that to be at peace with them would be to sacrifice all peace of mind and freedom of conscience. As long as evil is in the world we will find some people so much under the influence of it that to yield to them would be to "give place to the devil." But we should see to it that we are not the cause of the quarrel; that we have yielded as far as conscience will permit; that we are not animated by an obstinate, or unreasonable spirit; and that we are ready to treat our opponent with all kindness and consideration. We should be careful to avoid everything that might irritate or provoke to disagreement, such as offensive language, taunts, unpleasant reminders, imputation of unworthy motives; significant looks, nods, actions, insinuations; unnecessary contradiction and saying provoking things; tale-bearing, talking about the faults of others indiscreetly, "speaking out our mind," in a word, "If our neighbor's tempers are gunpowder, let us not play with fire." (Spurgeon).

19. Were we to attempt to right our own wrongs, under the smart of injury, we should most certainly do so unjustly. We are not in a position to judge correctly the degree of our enemy's guilt. He may deserve to be punished but we have no authority to pass sentence and carry it out. This God has reserved in his own hands. Our duty is forgiveness, God's prerogative is vengeance. "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly father forgive you yours." When Joseph's brethren feared that, after their father's death, the long delayed vengeance would descend upon them he said to them "Fear not: for

am I in the place of God" (Gen. 50: 19). And Peter reminds us that Jesus "when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." (1 Pet. 2: 23). When we retaliate we descend to the level of our adversary, when we forgive we place ourselves under the protection of almighty justice and love.

20, 21. A Scotch officer on the eve of an engagement said to his soldiers "Lads, there they are; if ye dinna kill them they'll kill you." We must overcome evil, or evil will overcome us. But how? By avenging every insult and exacting every due. As well try to extinguish a fire with kerosene. "Evil for evil is an edged tool which cuts the man who uses it." Try another method. In the year 1818, Tomatoo, the king of Huahive, one of the South sea islands, embraced the gospel. Some of the heathen islanders thereupon resolved upon his overthrow and the extermination of the christians. But their plot was discovered. The small band of converts gained an easy victory and the heathen looked for nothing short of the horrible death they themselves would have inflicted. But to their astonishment a sumptuous feast was prepared at which they participated as honored guests. Some were so amazed that they could taste nothing. At last one of their leaders arose and, melted by kindness, declared his intention of becoming an adherent of that religion which could teach such humanity and mercy. In a very few days every idol in the island was destroyed and all had embraced the faith of the king. Well would it be if that could be said of every christian which Cicero said of his friend that "Caesar forgot nothing but injuries." A Chinese ruler heard that some enemies were trying to destroy his kingdom. He said to his people, "Come, my friends, follow me, and I promise you that we shall destroy our enemies." He marched against his foes and they submitted to him. His people supposed that he would now kill these enemies, but he treated them very kindly. "Is this the way you keep your promise?" asked one of his officers, "You said your enemies should be destroyed, and now you have pardoned them all and shown them favor." The emperor replied, "I promised to destroy my enemies. This I have done, for I have made them my friends by kindness."

1. It is not enough to hate what is bad, we must love what is good.
2. Let a loving spirit rule over all we say and do.
3. True politeness comes from the heart.
4. Idleness is a sin, industry a virtue.
5. A prayerful christian should be hopeful, cheerful and patient.
6. Be kind, generous and sympathetic with everybody.
7. Good wishes should be followed by kind deeds.
8. It takes two to make a quarrel, don't be one of such a pair.
9. Don't be too sure that you are right when wise and good men differ from you.
10. Overcome enemies by turning them into friends.
11. Let your life be unselfish, industrious, forgiving and helpful.



"Kindle a flame of Sacred Love on the mean altar of my heart."

LESSON XII—September 19th, 1897.

Paul's Address to the Ephesian Elders. Acts 20: 22-35.

(Commit to memory verses 22-24. Read verses 3-38.)

GOLDEN TEXT: "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20: 35.

PROVE THAT—The strong should help the weak. Rom. 15: 1.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Quest. 94. *What is baptism.* A. Baptism is a sacrament wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our engrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal.*—Nos. 119, 120, 182, 102.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* Paul's address to the Ephesian elders. Acts 20: 17-27. *Tuesday.* Paul's address to the Ephesian elders. Acts 20: 28-38. *Wednesday.* Exhortation to elders. 1 Pet. 5: 1-11. *Thursday.* Beware of deceivers. 2 John. *Friday.* Established in faith. Col. 2: 1-9. *Saturday.* Self-sacrifice. 2 Cor. 12: 10-19. *Sabbath* Out of tribulation. Rev. 7: 9-17. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. In Lesson ix we saw that Paul left Ephesus, after laboring there for three years, in order to revisit the churches that he had founded in Europe. From Corinth he wrote the epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans. After remaining three months at Corinth he set out on his homeward journey, carrying with him the contributions which had been made towards the relief of Jewish Christians (Acts 24: 17; Rom. 15: 25, 26). The incidents of this journey are given in the preceding part of our chapter. Time—April A. D. 58. Place—Miletus 30 or 40 miles south of Ephesus. Paul did not wish to delay his journey by visiting Ephesus, and therefore sent for the elders of the church to meet him at Miletus that he might bid them an affectionate farewell.

LESSON PLAN. A Servant of God. I. Courageous. vs. 22-24. II. Faithful. vs. 25-27. III. Watchful. vs. 28-31. IV. Independent. vs. 32-35.

22. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there—He was “bound as regards the spirit” *i. e.* his own spirit. His mind was set upon going to Jerusalem. He was irresistibly drawn thither by an inward spiritual compulsion. This was no doubt the constraining of the Holy Spirit, yet he was carrying out a purpose previously formed (ch. 19: 2). A “necessity was laid upon him” (1 Cor. 9: 16) but there is no hint in the words that he felt himself in bonds already by prophetic anticipation. He disclaims any such foresight.

23. Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth (R. V. testifyeth unto me) in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me—*i. e.* “await me.” In Rom. 15: 30, 31, written just before this voyage, we have no hint of Paul’s apprehensions. These warnings must have been given on the way from Corinth through Thessaly and Macedonia and at Troas. Some of them are recorded but there must have been many others (ch. 13: 2; 21: 4, 11; 9: 16). Paul was a true soldier. To him the post of danger and duty was the post of honor (ch. 9: 16). “The perpetual martyr can smile at martyrdom. The soles of Paul’s feet had long trodden upon the fear of death.”

24. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life (R. V. I hold not my life of any account as) dear unto myself so that I might finish (R. V. accomplish) my course with joy (R. V. omits “with joy”) and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God—“My life is not worth speaking of in comparison with the completion of my course with joy.” The Master’s “well-done” and the “Crown of Life” were worth it all a thousand times over (ch. 21: 13; Rom. 8: 35-37; 2 Cor. 4: 16). Life is like a foot race, we reach the goal when death comes, it is ours to stretch every muscle till then (1 Cor. 9: 24-27; Phil. 2: 16; 3: 12-14; 2 Tim. 4: 7). Paul always claimed to have received his commission, like the other apostles, directly from Christ himself (Gal. 1: 1; Titus 1: 3; Acts 9: 6, 15). He was sent “to testify,” that is, to bear witness from his own experience that salvation was God’s free gift to all, even to the chief of sinners. He shews how well qualified he was to do this

by his wonderful conversion (See 1 Tim. 1: 12-15).

25. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more—“We cannot be sure that the apostle never again came to Ephesus. For we learn from Philemon 22 that, towards the close of his imprisonment at Rome, he had hopes and the intention of visiting Philemon, who was at Colossae, and we can hardly think that if he went to Colossae he would fail on the way to stay at Ephesus. Some have therefore been inclined to lay a great stress on the word “all” in this verse, as though the apostle only meant that they were sure, some of them, to be dead before he paid their city another visit. It seems better to take the words as the conviction of the apostle’s mind at the moment. He was impressed with the belief that he would never come back. We have seen, however, just above, that the Spirit did not give him definite knowledge of what would befall him in every place. And the sense that he was to be seized and imprisoned might make him sufficiently alive to the chances of his martyrdom for Christ to warrant the words which he here uses.” (Lumby). “From the later epistles it is clear that Paul did afterwards revisit Asia Minor, including Troas (2 Tim. 4: 13) and Miletus (2 Tim. 4: 20) and in all probability Ephesus also.” (Ill. Notes). “It is impossible to say whether Paul ever did go back to Ephesus. If he was released from his Roman prison, he probably did revisit Ephesus; and the historical probabilities are in favor of his release. But Paul is speaking under the influence of a subduing sadness, which made him think his end was near.” (Lindsay). It will be seen by the foregoing quotations that the point cannot be decided with certainty. “I have gone” is in the R. V. “I went about.” Paul’s ministry extended into the whole region round about Ephesus.

26. Wherefore I take you to record (R. V. I testify unto you) this day, that I am pure (R. V. free) from the blood of all men—“I solemnly affirm, God is my witness, that I am blameless if any one perishes in his sin” (Ezek. 3: 18-21). The apostle not only gives his own testimony but he challenges them to confirm or refute it.” (Lumby). The old version is better than the revis-

ed, for the Ephesian Elders and not Paul are placed in the witness box. (Compare 1 Sam. 12: 3, 5). The blood stands for the life, and that represents the soul's life, or salvation.

27. For I have not shunned to declare (R. V. I shrank not from declaring) **unto you all the counsel** (R. V. the whole counsel) **of God**—The "counsel of God" means the whole plan of salvation; what God offers and what he asks of men. This includes the "repentance and faith" as well as the "grace and mercy." (Lumby). "He who suppresses what he ought to declare, is not pure from the blood of his hearers." (Bengel). Paul did not conceal any truth because it was disliked, nor did he refrain from rebuking sin through fear of losing his popularity (verse 20).

28. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over (R. V. in) **the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers** (R. V. bishops) **to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood**—We must first be cleansed and then cleanse others—be instructed and then instruct others—be enlightened and then enlighten others—be conducted to God and then conduct others to him. (St. Gregory Naz.) "He commits to them, as Christ had at first to St. Peter, the charge to feed both lambs and sheep, in the name, and with the word, of the Good Shepherd himself." (Lumby). Their appointment came from the Holy Spirit who endowed them with the necessary qualifications, put it into their hearts to desire the work (1 Tim. 3: 1); directed the action of the church in appointing them (ch. 13: 2; 1 Pet. 5: 2); and supplied them with grace to enable them discharge their duties effectively (1 Cor. 12: 8). The office-bearers in the apostolic church are variously called elders, pastors, bishops, leaders, presidents—all these names denoting the same office. (Lindsay). Every presbyter, or ordained minister of the gospel, is a bishop in the New Testament sense of the title. We find no trace, in the apostolic church, of any permanent officials superior to the ministry, or presbyterate. Those who claimed to be such were summarily dealt with at Ephesus (Rev. 2: 1, 2). (Compare also Titus 1: 3-7). "Pastor" is the Latin word for shepherd, and the Greek word translated "feed" is literally "shepherd"—"tend them as shepherds do their flock" rule over it, guide it, and instruct

it. "It implies more the idea of government and guidance than instruction." (Lindsay). The margin of the R. V. says "Many ancient authorities read *the Lord*" that is "the church of the Lord" not "church of God" (Matt. 16: 18). But this expression does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. Even "churches of Christ" is found but once in the writings of Paul. His usual phrase is "church of God," which he uses eleven times. This is therefore most probably the correct phrase here. In that case the verse asserts most strongly the divinity of our Lord,—he is called God definitely and distinctly and his blood is the blood of God. The word for "purchased" is not the usual one for buying, it means to acquire for one's self in any way, to gain possession of. The "blood of Christ" is the emblem of his propitiatory sacrifice. By bearing the penalty and making thereby full satisfaction to divine justice, our Emmanuel, God manifest in the flesh, acquired for himself as his "peculiar" (Titus 2: 14) or personal, possession (1 Pet. 2: 9), the church of the redeemed. (See Rom. 3: 25; 1 Cor. 6: 20; 7: 23; Col. 1: 14; Heb. 9; 12-14; 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19; Rev. 5: 9.)

29. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock—Paul does not refer to his death, but to his final departure from Asia to Rome and the West. He calls false teachers "wolves" from the analogy of the church to a flock of sheep. They were cruel and relentless enemies because their doctrines destroyed the spiritual life and eternal hope of the church. Several of these are referred to in 1 Tim. 1: 20; 2 Tim. 1: 15; 2: 17; 3 John. 9; Rev. 2: 2, 6; Matt. 7: 15; Luke 10: 3; John 10: 12; 2 Pet. 2: 1.

30. Also of (R. V. from among) **your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away** (R. V. the) **disciples after them**—These were false brethren, who, after their own apostasy, would try to "tear away" (as it is literally) others from their attachment to the truth (1 John 2: 19; Jude 4). Their teachings were distortions of the truth rather than pure error. They were all the more opposed to the gospel and destructive of faith and morals.

31. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased

not to warn (R. V. admonish) every one night and day with tears—Paul speaks in round numbers (ch 19: 8, 10). He bids them remember the fervor, earnestness and faithfulness of his own work as a model for them to imitate (Col. 1: 28; 2 Cor. 11: 29; 2: 4). "The approving words to the angel of the church at Ephesus (Rev. 2: 1-7), written about a quarter of a century (or ten years, according to others) after these warnings of St. Paul, tell us that the earnest wishes and affectionate pleadings of the apostle were not in vain" (Schaff).

32. And now brethren I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an (R. V. the) inheritance among all them which are sanctified—The word translated "commend" means to deposit anything with another for safe keeping (14: 23). "I entrust you to God, to protect and bless you, and to the gospel as the rule of your whole conduct" (Meyer). The "word of his grace" means the gracious promises of the gospel, such as those which Christ gave to his disciples when he foretold the mission of the Comforter (John 17: 7-12) and which the christian preachers might repeat as His words to the converts who believed on His name (Lumby). The "which" refers to "God," God is able to build up the believer and bestow upon him the inheritance. "The figure was a natural one anywhere (1 Cor. 3: 10), but it would gain additional vividness from the stately architecture of Ephesus" (Plumptre). (Eph. 2: 20, 21; 4: 12-16, 20). An "inheritance" is something which we have not earned or purchased but comes to us by virtue of our relation to the bestower of it. (Matt 5: 5; Gal. 3: 18; Eph. 1: 11, 14; Col. 1: 12). "The figure is taken from the apportionment of the promised land among the Israelites. The part of each of God's servants in the heavenly Canaan is to be regarded as definitely as were the possessions of the chosen people in the earthly Canaan" (Lumby). By the "sanctified" the apostle does not mean the glorified saints in heaven, but those who have been consecrated to God by faith in Christ (Acts 26: 18; Eph. 1: 18; Tit. 2: 14; 1 Pet. 1: 3-5; 2: 9),—the meaning is the same as "saints, the term so frequently applied to believers.

33. I have coveted no man's silver,

or gold or apparel—Rich and costly clothing formed a large part of an oriental's wealth. Hence the allusion to the moth and rust in Matt. 6: 19 and Jas. 5: 1. Compare also 1 Kings 5: 5; Gen. 24: 53; 45: 22; 2 Kings 7: 3. (2 Cor. 7: 2; 12: 17).

34. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me—No doubt holding out his toil worn hands as he spoke. From ch. 18: 3 we learn Paul's trade. He was not ashamed to work for his own support. He wished to be grandly independent, and to avoid any charge of mercenary motives. Other references to his manual labor are 1 Cor. 4: 11, 12; 9: 9, 6, 12; 1 Thess. 2: 9; 2 Thess. 3: 8-10; 2 Cor. 11: 9, 12; 12: 13).

35. I have showed you all things, (R. V. In all things I gave you an example) how that so laboring ye ought to support (R. V. help) the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he (R. V. himself) said, it is more blessed to give than to receive—the word for "laboring" denotes severe toil, laboring to weariness (2 Cor. 11: 27). By the "weak" the apostle means those who are of weak faith (Rom. 15: 1; 1 Thess. 5: 14). He is addressing elders who, like himself, ministered to the people in word and sacrament. He urges them to follow his example by voluntarily relinquishing their claim to pecuniary support. "If, among new converts, large demands should be made for the support of those who minister, they who are weak in the faith as yet, may be offended thereby, and becoming suspicious, regard the preacher's office as a source of temporal gain. An example like Paul's would remove the scruples of such men, and when they became more grounded in the faith, these matters would trouble them no more. For the use of "weak" in the sense of moral, rather than physical, weakness, see Job. 4: 3, 4; Isa. 35: 3." (Lumby). This is the view of Calvin, Bengel, Meyer and many others, and it is based upon the usual meaning of the word for "weak" those who require alms to some extent, the poor or infirm, and it is claimed that this meaning is the most natural and suits the context better. But on this point Meyer says "The recommendation of liberality is remote from the context; the faithfulness and

wisdom of the teacher manifesting itself in gaining his own support by labor, of which the text speaks, must have a spiritual object, like the teaching office itself—not the giving of alms, but the strengthening of the weak in faith. Had Paul meant the poor, he would naturally have used an entirely different word." (1 Thess 4: 11; Eph. 4: 28). This verse contains the only saying of Jesus not recorded in the gospels and referred to by the apostles. There may have been others current in apostolic times and preserved in the phraseology of the sacred writers without any mark by which we may recognize them. In early christian writings outside of the New Testament we have 19 or 20 more, some of them of very doubtful genuineness. To refer this saying of our Lord merely to giving or receiving earthly goods, would be limiting it in a manner unworthy of the apostle's theme. "What would be given in this special case, would be spiritual strength and trust; what is referred to in 'receive' is the temporal support of the preacher, which St. Paul refrained from claiming. We cannot doubt that he felt how much more blessed it was to win one waverer to Christ, than it would have been to be spared his toils at tent-making by the contributions of his converts" (Lumby).

ORIENTALISMS.

Elders of the church:—The rule by elders is a very primitive semitic order, and has existed among them from time immemorial. As soon as two or three families united themselves together into a clan for mutual protection &c., the rule devolved upon the house-fathers, each of whom had complete control over his own

household. By the exigencies of the time, the necessities of warfare, the session gradually gave way to the single ruler or king; as we see in the case of Israel. In Hebrew the name king comes from a root meaning "to counsel," and the elder of the Nestorian villages of Orumiah, in Persia, are to this day called by a name from the same root. The rule by elder was universal—the Romans were governed by a "Senate," and the English alderman is "elder-man."

To feed the church:—Better translated "to shepherd" *i. e.* herd the church. This is a truly Semitic conception of the shepherd, in whose duties feeding has only a minor place. The chief duties of an eastern shepherd are to guard his flock from wild beasts, wild dogs, robbers &c. So it is whenever the word shepherd or pastor, or the verb to shepherd, occurs in the Bible, it is the idea of ruling that is expressed, feeding may be of course incidental, but ruling is the main idea. The king is spoken of as the Shepherd, so in Homer. In the Second Psalm (lxx version) God is said to shepherd the people with a rod of iron. Among the Greek Christians the pastors (rulers) were called bishops, among the Jewish christians elders, each using the name for ruler in common use among themselves, but the office of pastor, bishop, and elder, are exactly the same, and in the Scriptures refers to ruling, not to the peculiar offices of the holy ministry, namely, preaching the word, administering the sacraments, leading the worship, visiting the sick, &c. Hence the Scottish church has ever preferred the better, fuller, truer designation. Minister, the *Servant* (not ruler) of the church and of its Head (2 Cor. 4: 5.)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

Why did Paul leave Ephesus? What epistle did he write before leaving? Where was he when he wrote *11. Corinthians*? What new regions did he visit? From what place did he write *Galatians* and *Romans*? What change did he make in his arrangements for return from Corinth, and why? What contributions did he carry with him? Who accompanied him into Asia? What accident happened at Troas? Trace the voyage on the map. Why did Paul decide not to visit Ephesus? At what neighboring city did he land? Whom did he ask to meet him there? Read over the whole ad-

dress and give a synopsis of it in simple language, for your scholars.

22. What is meant by "bound" in the spirit?" Does Paul ever mention such constraint on other occasions? (2 Cor. 5: 7; Heb. 11: 8). Did Christ ever experience it? (John 4: 4). Should uncertainty in regard to the future hinder us from going forward in the path of duty? (Heb. 11: 8). What two things did Paul apprehend might happen? (Rom. 15: 30, 31).

23. What was told him in every city? From Whom did the warnings come? How

were they made known? Where are some of them recorded? (13: 2; 21: 4, 11; 9: 16).

24. What sustained Paul's courage? (Rom. 8: 35). How does Paul speak when nearer the end of his life? (2 Tim. 4: 7). What is the reward at the end of the course? (Matt. 10: 22; Rev. 2: 10). By whom was Paul made an apostle? (Gal. 1: 1; Titus 1: 3; Acts 9: 6, 15).

25. How long did Paul reside at Ephesus? (ch. 19: 8, 10; verse 31). How did the elders feel when Paul said this? (verse 38). Where did he intend to go? (Rom. 15: 23, 24). Did he ever again visit Ephesus?

26. Was Paul ever thought to be a murderer? (ch. 28: 6). What solemn passage of the Old Testament, applicable to all ministers and teachers, is here referred to? (Ezek. 33).

27. What woe is denounced against those who add to or take from God's word? (Rev. 22: 18, 19). To what does God's purpose extend? (Eph. 1: 11). What special purpose or counsel is referred to? (Luke 7: 30; 2 Pet. 3: 9; Eph. 2: 11).

28. To what should teachers first of all take heed? (1 Tim. 4: 16). By whose authority do church officers rule? (1 Cor. 12: 28). By what two names are the rulers of the Ephesian church designated? What principle maintained by our church does this prove? Does Christ himself speak of his death as a price paid? (Matt. 20: 28). How does Paul constantly represent the nature of the atonement? (Eph. 1: 7; 1 Tim. 2: 6; Heb. 9: 12; Rev. 1: 5). Prove from this verse that Jesus Christ is God?

29. Who are meant by "wolves?" Were Paul's fears realized? (Rev. 2: 6; 2 Pet. 2: 1).

30. What are "perverse things?" Name some of these apostate brethren (1 Tim. 1: 20; 2 Tim. 1: 15; 2: 17; 3 John 9; Rev. 2: 6). Had Paul already some experience of them? (2 Cor. 11: 26; Gal. 2: 4).

31. Give other proofs of Paul's love for the churches (Rom. 1: 11, 12; 2 Cor. 2: 3-5; 6: 11-13; 7: 3, 4, 12-14; 8: 16, 17; 11: 28; 12: 15; 1 Thess. 2: 8, 17-20).

32. Why is the Bible called the "word of His grace?" ("It originates in His grace; records His grace; and is the instrument of His grace"). In what are Christians built up? (Knowledge, Faith, Love and Holiness).

33. Paul often asserts his disinterestedness and challenges criticism (Acts 20: 18, 19; 2 Cor. 4: 1, 2; 6: 3-10; 11: 6; 12: 14. Compare 1 Sam. 12: 3).

34. Other references to Paul's self-support (1 Cor. 4: 11, 12; Acts 18: 3). Were any of Paul's companions in need of his help? (1 Tim. 5: 23).

35. Is "weak" ever used in a moral sense? (Rom. 15: 1; 1 Thess. 5: 14; Job. 4: 3, 4; Isa. 35: 3). Why need we not be surprised at finding this new saying of Jesus? (John 21: 25).

TO BE ANSWERED IN WRITING.

(Senior).

1.—What was Paul warned to expect at Jerusalem? (4)

2.—What was the ministry which Paul had received from Christ? (5)

3.—Against what two dangers does Paul warn the elders? (6)

4.—To what does he commend the elders? (5)

5.—What saying of Christ, not recorded in the gospels, does he quote? (5)

(Intermediate).

1.—To what place was Paul journeying? (5)

2.—What was he told to expect there? (5)

3.—To what did he bid the elders take heed? (5)

4.—Prove from this lesson that Jesus Christ is God. (6)

5.—What saying of Christ does Paul quote in this lesson? (5)

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Our lesson is taken from one of the most tender and pathetic addresses ever delivered. In it we see the great heart of the apostle swelling with sorrow at parting, yet bold to face calmly, unknown but certain danger. We see too his burning zeal for Christ and his intense love for those whom he had brought to Him. He illustrates the character of the

true servant of Christ: *Courageous, Faithful, Watchful, Independent,*

I. COURAGEOUS. A strong sense of duty urged Paul forward. He was ever ready to obey implicitly the divine monition. "Lord what would'st thou have me to do?" was the only question that decided his conduct. We can see but a little way into the future and what

is uncertain is apt to create forebodings. Yet into that dark and uncertain future we must press. Let us not do so thoughtlessly. "In the dungeons of ancient castles there was often a dark winding stair called the *oubliette* which terminated suddenly in a treacherous opening through which the unwary captive was precipitated into a deep abyss and dashed in pieces on the rocks beneath. [The reader of Sir Walter Scott's *Kenilworth* will remember one such described, in Cumnor place, through which the unfortunate Amy Robsart met her death]. The future is, to some men, in imagination such an *oubliette*. We tremble to take another step lest we should leap into sudden calamity, or into the jaws of death. But if we could only look at the matter aright, from the standpoint of faith, the tremors of apprehension would give place to the complacency of hope and trust. I have met somewhere with the anecdote of a father who, desiring to illustrate to his little daughter the nature of faith, concealed himself in a dark chamber in the basement of the house, and called upon the child to jump down into the darkness, assuring her that he would catch her in his arms. For a moment or two she hesitated, but the tones of the familiar and well-loved voice reassured her, and making one bold leap, she found herself the next instant clasped in her father's embrace. The heart of the darkness was her father's bosom. So will it be with us who have grace to trust God for the future. Let us advance, not tremblingly, but confidently. That advance, if a leap *in* the dark, is not a leap *into* the dark. We shall find ourselves safe in a Father's arm, and feel a Father's heart beating next our own" (J. Halsey).

II. FAITHFUL. There was no gloominess in the thought of the hidden future. In whatever way it should please God to lead him, Paul was confident that by following the path of duty he would reach the goal of triumph. "If you think that cloud before you is of your own creation, you may well be dejected as you look upon its magnitude and density; but if you can say, 'This also is part of the school discipline of God, . . . it means my spiritual culture and noblest education,' You will advance without laughter, but with a solemn joy, a grand, deep joy, full of melancholy, full of expectation: not a discipline undergone because the imposer of it is stronger

than you are, but undergone with solemn cheerfulness because of the conscious assurance of your own heart that every stroke is meant for your good, and every loss is a contribution to your gain" (Parker).

A sense of stewardship, of responsibility, was dominant in the apostle's life. He did not live for himself but for his Master." "To me to live is Christ, and to die gain." Yet that absorbing sense of duty was not crushing as it would be with men of weak faith. It was inspiring. And in this way our "deaconship" or "ministry" should affect us. You are called to be a servant of others; to direct important enterprises; to hold positions in which life and property depend upon your fidelity; to teach in the Sabbath school; to labor in the sacred office, or to any other sphere—do not shrink back and say "I am not able to do these things." If God calls you he will furnish you, he has already thoroughly equipped you, with everything necessary. You have only to be up and doing in His name. Faith in God will give confidence in yourself. And his guidance will enable you to finish your course with joy.

III. WATCHFUL. Our first duty is to watch ourselves. Self-discipline in the Christian's first duty. Heed well the habits we permit ourselves to fall into. Neglect of prayer will rob us of peace and spiritual power. Neglect of God's word will impoverish the mind and deaden the conscience; our absence from the post of duty, or our neglect of due preparation for it, will easily lead to another and that to another still, until intermittent and perfunctory work results in disappointment and failure. We will never raise others above our own standard. We must lead where we wish others to go. We cannot be too careful about our companions. We reciprocate influence with them, and there is such an innate tendency to evil in the best of us that the evil in others is sure to leave some impress upon us, if they are evil.

Within the sphere of his class the Sunday-school teacher is a pastor, and he has been placed by the Holy Spirit in his sacred and honorable office. Christ has purchased our scholars with His own blood, and He charges us with the duty of informing them of their precious covenant relation to Him, and the value of the inheritance to which they have

been destined by His grace. There are "wolves" watching for them, against which we must warn and defend them. They will hear many "perverse things," which we must correct, by the wholesome instruction of the Sabbath School. We must engage their affections for Christ and holiness, or else the world and sin will seduce them from their allegiance to Him to whose service they have been dedicated in Baptism, and who has in that sacred rite accepted them as His own. They are "holy" to Him (I. Cor. 7: 14). Some of the "wolves" are, bad books and papers, evil companions, tempters to drink, smoke, and other forms of dangerous indulgences. Some of the "perverse things" are, profanity and "filthy communications," sneers at religion, mocking of the Sabbath strictness of former times, low views of the obligation to attend church, false opinions regarding important doctrines of the Bible, etc. Parents, teachers, and pastors, cannot be too vigilant in shepherding the lambs under their care.

IV. INDEPENDENT. How grandly Paul maintained his independence of character. He had no conceited pride about him. He did not refuse gifts, but accepted them frankly and gratefully in the spirit in which they were given. Yet he would not have it said that he had made gain of godliness. He asked as a special favor that he might be allowed to teach a special lesson by his own example. He wished to enforce a precious saying of Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We don't know when, or under what circumstances, these words were spoken, but of their genuineness there can be no doubt. They are like Christ, who gave himself. Paul had caught the secret of the Master's joy, self-abnegation. He, therefore, leaves as his parting message two injunctions: Live to God; Live for others.

What we read goes far to strengthen or weaken character. Trashy books and papers will dissipate the mental powers and enervate the moral strength. They give false views of life, and distort the ideas of justice, truth, and purity. The Bible, and all literature based upon it and true to its teaching, can alone be a lamp to the feet and a true light to the path of men. Through it divine grace operates upon the soul, and the Saviour's prayer is answered, "Sanctify them through the truth; Thy word is truth." By it we be-

come partakers of the divine nature, and mee for the inheritance of the saints in light.

The blessedness of giving is thus witnessed to by the late George Peabody, whose munificent liberality, on both sides of the Atlantic, has immortalized his name. At a reunion in his native town, he said: "It is sometimes hard for one who has devoted the best part of his life to the accumulation of money, to spend it for others; but practice it, and keep on practicing it, and I assure you it comes to be a pleasure." A liberal contributor to a good cause was on one occasion thanked for his generosity, but at once replied: "I beg you will give me no thanks; I thank you for giving me an opportunity of doing what is good for myself. I am thankful to God for the experience I have had that 'it is more blessed to give than to receive'."

ADDED POINTS.

1. Our future is safe for it is in God's hands.
2. Danger should not turn us from the path of duty.
3. The faithful worker has joy in his work.
4. It is sad to part from those we love.
5. It is well if we have not to reproach ourselves with failing in our duty to them.
6. We are safe from wolves if near the Shepherd.
7. We should take heed to our own hearts and lives if we would help others.
8. The Bible is the guide book to heaven.
9. An independent spirit is commendable.
10. The essence of love is self-denial.

THE BLACKBOARD.

GOD'S SERVANT
IS
P ERSEVERING
A TTENTIVE
U RGENT
L OVING
"To me to live is Christ."

LESSON XIII—September 26th, 1897.

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven." Matt. 5: 16.

PROVE THAT—We are all sinners by nature. Rom. 3: 23.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Review Quest. 82-94.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 147, 176, 171, 163.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* First converts in Europe. Acts 16: 6-15. *Tuesday.* Paul and the Philippian Jailer. Acts 16: 22-34. *Wednesday.* Paul at Thessalonica and Berea. Acts 17: 1-12. *Thursday.* Paul preaching at Athens. Acts 17: 22-34. *Friday.* Paul's ministry in Corinth. Acts 18: 1-11. *Saturday.* Excellence of christian love. 1 Cor 13. *Sabbath.* Christian living. Rom 12: 9-21. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

REVIEW CHART—THIRD QUARTER.

LESSON.	TITLE.	GOLDEN TEXT.	LESSON PLAN.	TEACHINGS.
I. Acts 6: 6-15	F. C. E.	The entrance of....	D. G.—M. C.—O. H.	God's Spirit directs his servants.
II. Acts 16: 22-34	P. P. J.	Believe on the.....	S. C.—R. T.—P. C.	Confession of Christ should follow acceptance of Christ.
III. Acts 17: 1-12	P. T. B.	They received the...	G. P.—M. R.—S. S.	Jesus is the Messiah of the Old Testament.
IV. Acts 17: 22-34	P. P. A.	God is a spirit.....	G. C.—M. B.—C. S.	Christ will be our Judge.
V. Acts 18: 1-11	P. M. C.	Other foundation...	H. H.—S. P.—J. N.	Never be ashamed of work.
VI. 1. Thess. 4: 9; 5: 2	W. W. C.	If I go and.....	W. C.—W. C.	We don't know when Christ will come.
VII. 1. Cor. 8: 1- 13	A. O.	For none of us.....	L. S.—C. W.—D. L.	We should practice self-denial.
VIII. 1. Cor. 13: 1- 13	E. C. L.	And now abideth.	G. T. W.—W. G.— E. C.	We should love one another.
IX. Acts 18: 21-34	P. O. E.	Take heed and.....	T. T. C. P.—D.—H.	Christ's enemies oppose the Gospel.
X. II Cor. 9: 1- 11	G. J. C.	Ye know the.....	S.—R.	Liberality produces joy.
XI. Rom. 12: 9- 21	C. L.	Be not overcome....	L. F.—L. E.	We should be diligent in business.
XII. Acts 20: 22-35	P. A. E. E.	Remember the.....	S. G.—C.—F.—W.—I.	The strong should help the weak.

MAP DRILL REVIEW.

TROAS. Point it out on the map. In what province was it situated? From what city did Paul set out? What cities did he visit on his way to Troas? Through what provinces did he pass? What provinces did he wish to visit but was forbidden? What vision did he have there? For what port did he set sail? What island did they sail by? When did he visit Troas again? (20: 6). What miracle did he perform there?

PHILIPPI. Point it out on the map. In what province is it situated? By whom was it founded? What special political privileges did it possess? Where did Paul go to find friends? Who showed him hospitality? What miracle did he perform? Who stirred up the people against him? How did the magistrates treat him? What happened at midnight? How did the magistrates treat them in the morning? What letter did Paul write to the church at this place?

THESSALONICA. Point it out on the map. How far from Philippi? Through what cities did Paul pass on his way to it? What is its modern name? How did Paul employ himself on the Sabbath? With what success? Who stirred up a riot against him? What letters did he write to the church at this place? To what city did Paul and Silas then go? How were they received? Why did they leave Berea?

ATHENS. Point it out on the map. With whom did Paul hold discussions? Before what court did he preach? What did he take for his text? Did he make any converts? Do we read of his visiting Athens again?

CORINTH. Point it out on the map. What is peculiar in regard to its situation? With whom did Paul reside at Corinth? How was he supported? How did the Jews receive him? In whose house did he preach? How long did he stay there? What vision did he have? How did the governor treat his accusers? What letters did he write to the church at Corinth, and from what places? Did Paul return to Corinth? How long did he make his second visit? Trace his route from Corinth to Miletus. What did he carry with him to Judea?

EPHESUS. Point it out on the map. Who went with Paul when he first visited Ephesus? To what place was he then journeying? For what purpose? When did he return to Ephesus? Where did he preach? What miracles did he work? What false miracle workers were exposed? How long did he remain at Ephesus? Who stirred up the people against him, and why? Where did he go? Did he return to Ephesus? Where did he bid farewell to the Elders of the church? What letter did he write to the church at Ephesus?

Primary Department.

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LESSON X—September 5th, 1897.

Gentiles Giving for Jewish Christians. II. CORINTHIANS 9: 1-11,

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich."—II. Cor. 8: 9.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's word giveth light.

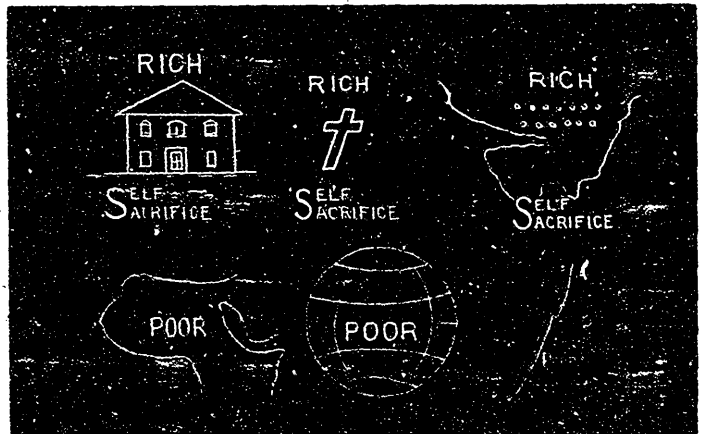
III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: God's word teaches us TO BE SELF-SACRIFICING.

IV. REVIEW:

1. How many commandments are there?
2. What is the tenth commandment?
3. What is covetousness?
4. What other sins is it likely to lead to?

V. SYNOPSIS OF LESSON: After the uproar in Ephesus Paul went over into Macedonia. From there he wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, from which book our lesson for to-day is taken. He praises the christians of Corinth for their forwardness and zeal. He suggests

to them that they should be ready, so that when he visited them they should be prepared with their gift for the poor of Judea. Let every man give "as he purposeth in his heart, not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God



loveth a cheerful giver." God will reward you for your liberality. Your very giving will be a means of doing yourselves good. Good men scatter their good things as the sower scatters seed, and are enriched, both temporarily and spiritually.

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON:

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand.
2. I want to show you two pictures. Here is the picture of a beautiful house. In it there once lived a RICH man. (Pin a picture of a nice house to the board.) Here is the picture of Africa (draw a map of Africa), a country far away, where many poor people who have never heard of Jesus, live. Tell about the rich man giving up his beautiful home and going to live among the poor heathen of Africa. The rich man becoming poor for the sake of others. This is what we call SELF-SACRIFICE.

3. The Jews in Jerusalem were very poor. Paul wanted to help them. He appealed to the Gentiles living in Corinth, and asked them to give money to the poor in Judea, which they

did. They were willing to give up themselves for the sake of others. As they at Corinth gave to the poor at Jerusalem, so should we give some of our good things to others. The rich man gave everything he had, and himself too.

4. One time a brother and sister named Johnny and Susie were playing together on the grass. Susie said to her brother: Johnny, "God wants the very best you have." Johnny thought a moment or two, and said, "Well, I'll give him my gold dollar, that's the very best thing I have." Susie said, "No, there is one thing you have better than that, for God's word says, 'My son, give me thine heart.'"

If we give God our hearts it will be easy for us to give him our money. We will want to do it, and we'll do it gladly. Giving the heart to Jesus and allowing Him to control and manage the life is the beginning of self-sacrifice.

5. Hold in the hand a small paper cross. Hold it as high as possible, and tell of Jesus once living in heaven. He was rich; he had everything he wanted in heaven; yet, for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.

What a dark place this world would be if Jesus had not sacrificed himself for us! So, in our turn, we can make others happy by giving up self. Who will do it?

LESSON XI—September 12th, 1897.

Christian Living. ROMANS 12 : 9-21.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Be not overcome of evil; but overcome evil with good."—Rom. 12 : 21.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's word giveth light.

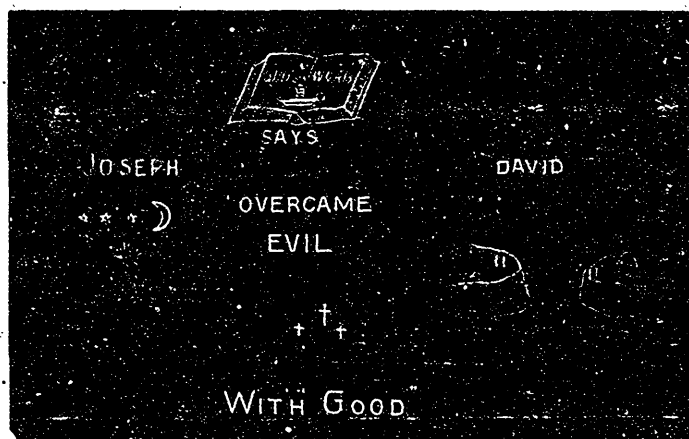
III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: God's word teaches us TO BE FORGIVING.

IV. REVIEW:

1. What was last Sunday's Golden Text?
2. Who spoke these words?
3. How did Jesus become poor?
4. If Jesus makes us rich what ought we to do?

V. SYNOPSIS OF LESSON: Our lesson to-day is from Romans. Paul was hindered from visiting Rome because of the necessity for his visit to Jerusalem. A church had been estab-

lished in Rome and so Paul sent them a letter there. For logic and close reasoning it is unsurpassed. The lesson is full of advice of an exquisite nature. Abhor evil, he says, Love the good. Love one another with brotherly love. "In honour



preferring one another." Rejoice. Be patient; be prayerful. Help those who need help. Return good for evil. Be sympathetic; be of one accord. Be not high-minded; be humble. Live peaceably; avenge not yourselves. Love your enemies.

The Golden Text is chosen from the last verse of the lesson : Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON :

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the blackboard beforehand, in the form suggested in the cut.

2. Begin the lesson with the Golden Text. Suppose a boy treats us badly, how ought we to treat him?—Badly? What does the Golden Text say? Which is the best way to get rid of enemies? Get some answers from the children, and then suggest—make them friends, and then they will not be enemies any longer. How can we do this? Our Golden Text answers, "Overcome evil with good."

3. Tell the story of Joseph, as found in Genesis, chapters 37 and following. Although he was treated so badly by his brothers, he forgave them, and overcame evil with good.

4. Tell the story of David and Saul.—I. Sam. 24th chapter. Although Saul followed David and tried again and again to kill him, yet David had the forgiving spirit and again and again forgave him. He could easily have killed Saul; but he overcame evil with good. God had filled his heart with the forgiving spirit. He will fill ours with the same spirit if we are truly his children. If we have this spirit we will be able to do as Paul tells us in this lesson. "Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not." And, again, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but, rather, give place unto wrath. If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt keep coals of fire on his head."

Joseph overcame evil with good. David overcame evil with good. Paul says, overcome evil with good; but what about Jesus; did He do so? When He was betrayed he could have called twelve legions (72,000) of angels, and they would have killed all his enemies. When He was being tried, and they mocked Him and spat upon Him, and struck Him with their hands, He answered not a word. When they were nailing Him to the cross He said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He could easily have freed himself; for if He could raise the dead He could easily have got away from those who were treating Him badly; but He did not, because He wanted to show His great love for us, and provide a salvation even for those who were thus evil-treating Him.

Jesus overcame evil with good. Who will be like Him? How will you do it?

LESSON XII—September 19th, 1897.

Paul's Address to the Ephesian Elders. ACTS 20 : 22-35.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts 20 : 35.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's word giveth light.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO DAY'S LESSON: God's word teaches us TO BE KIND.

IV. REVIEW:

1. What was last Sunday's Golden Text?
2. What does it mean to overcome evil with good?
3. How did Jesus say we should treat our enemies?
4. How did Jesus overcome evil with good?

V. SYNOPSIS OF LESSON: Our lesson to-day returns again to the book of "The Acts." The third missionary journey of Paul was drawing to its close and he was on his way to Jerusalem with the money he had collected from the Gentile churches for the poor of Judea. The ship in which he sailed stopped at Miletus, thirty miles south of Ephesus, and Paul was enabled to have a conference with the Elders of the church of Ephesus. Not knowing how long the ship would stay, the Elders went to Paul, rather than have him go to Ephesus. The record of Paul's words to his brethren, which forms our lesson to-day, gives us one of the most touching and beautiful addresses found among the writings of the Apostle.

Bonds and afflictions are before me, but yet I go. None of these things move me. I must preach the gospel of the grace of God. Ye shall see my face no more. All these years I have faithfully preached the gospel to everyone. Without reward I have labored with my own hands. Help those who need your help, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS IN TEACHING THE LESSON :

1. Have the Golden Text printed on the black-board beforehand, in the form suggested in the cut.

2. WHICH IS BEST, getting or giving? Which would you rather do—Get Xmas. presents, or give them? What does God's word say about it?

3. Teach the Golden Text. But

is it really better to give than to receive! Explain that the word—Blessed—means happy. And the Golden Text might read thus; It is more happy (or it makes people more happy) to give than to receive.

4. Does giving make our lives happier than getting? Is there really more happiness brought to us by our giving to others than by others giving to us? If so, where does it come from? This is one of the hardest lessons for us to learn, but let us try and learn it to-day.

5. Just as God clothes the flower and makes it beautiful, so will He make our lives peaceful and happy, if we are willing to give up ourselves for others. Here is a little flower seed. (Show one.) God speaks to it, and says, "Little flower seed, I can make you very much more beautiful if you will give up your life for others, but you must be willing to be buried in the ground." If the little seed is willing, it goes into its cold bed, under the ground, and, because of its willingness to give up its life, God makes it grow, and grow, and grow, until it is like this—a beautiful flower. (Show one.)

Which is the most beautiful? Which gives the most happiness—the seed or the flower? I think we will all say the flower. People who make the most happiness in the world are always the happiest themselves.

If, by being willing to give up self, we will allow God, He will make our lives like a beautiful flower. It was by giving up its life that the seed became a flower; so we see that it is true, that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

6. The illustration used in Lesson VIII.—namely, Abraham and Lot—might again be profitably used here, as also that of Stephen. Indeed, this being the last lesson of the quarter, a number of the illustrations which have been used during the quarter can be recalled and reviewed.

7. It is hard to be willing to give up self; but if we will allow the Lord Jesus into our hearts He will make it easier and easier. "Each victory will help us some other to win." Gradually, as we give, we will get back again better things than we gave away.

Truly, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

