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# THE TEACHERS MONTHLY



Sabbath School Publications.  
Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Rev. R. Douglas Fraser,  
Editor & Business Manager  
Confederation Life Building, Toronto

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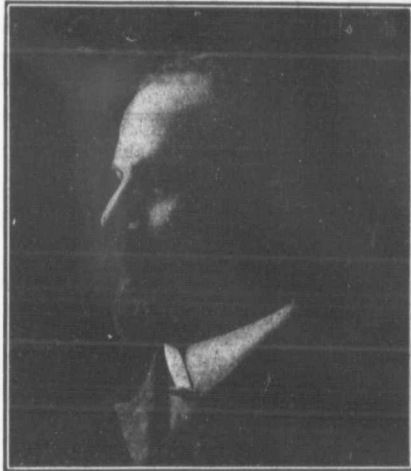
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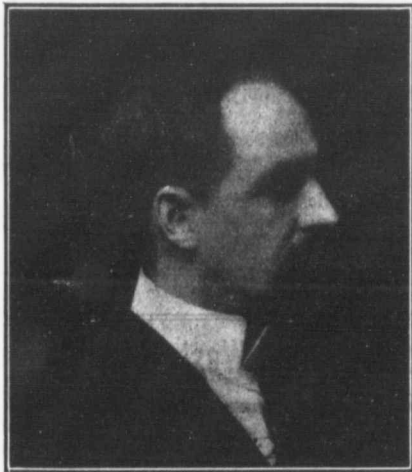
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# The Teachers Monthly

Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, D.D., Editor  
Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D., Associate Editor

Vol. XIII.

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No. 11

There can be no more important matter than the question of decision. To decide for Christ is *the* vital thing in life. All else turns on this. And not to have made that decision till childhood and youth are past, is to run a tremendous risk of never making it. We commend the articles on this subject in the present number to pastors, parents and teachers.

A sixth Teacher Training Handbook has now been published, its subject, The Books of the New Testament. The name of the author, Rev. Dr. H. A. A. Kennedy, Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis, Knox College, Toronto, is sufficient guarantee of its scholarship and spirit. It is a valuable addition to a valuable series.

## The Neutrals

By Rev. J. M. Millar, B.D.

The ancient curse fell on the people of Meroz because they held aloof at the critical hour, and sent no contingent to the battlefield on which Israel's freedom was to be lost or won. Their "masterly inactivity" became a by-word and a shame. The children of Israel smarted under the rod of the Canaanite; but no brave word of protest came from Meroz. Other communities bade the tribes "aspire", Meroz bade them "crouch".

This old incident illustrates a distressing weakness in many lives. Our temptation is not to commit flagrant crime, but simply to withhold our hands from the duty of the hour. It may be a very plain and modest duty, or it may demand sacrifice of ease, and we may have to offend the deities of popular favor. In any case, it is very tempting to acquiesce

in things as they are, and to be languid on the shore, while God's occasions go drifting by. It is easy to sink into the idle spectator, who forbears even to cheer while others are playing the game of life with all their might.

Let us ask ourselves, "What have the neutrals ever done for our world?" Our blessings come to us from the red-blooded men of the past, who had overwhelming convictions; and we too shall "give forth a like cheer to our sons", only if we have positive enthusiasm, a glowing love of Christ, and a burning hate of all hypocrisy and dishonor.

About us, alas! are many whose religious zeal flamed brightly for a season, but the light is gone now. They declined the tasks God set them, and so they failed. The church shall march prospering; but not through their presence. Like the ignoble citizens of Meroz, they have forfeited their share in the sweet joys of victory. It is the sad wail of the Meroz type that we hear in the lines—

"I hear the reapers singing go  
Into God's harvest. I, that might with them  
Have chosen, here below  
Grove, shuddering at the gates of night".  
Nanaimo, B.C.

## Hope Amid Tears

By Rev. Professor John E. McFadyen, M.A.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Thus wrote the Psalmist in one of the most beautiful songs in literature. He traverses swiftly, but in images of surpassing beauty, the strange vicissitudes of human life—its laughter and tears, sorrow and joy, dejection and exaltation, exile and redemption, spring and autumn, the beautiful dream, and the cruel reality: but the sorrow of it all is swallowed up in the lovely vision with which

it ends—of the harvesters coming home with shouts of joy, their arms full of sheaves.

The men who sang this psalm (Ps. 126) had passed through an experience of redemption. They had come back from the Babylon which they hated to the Zion which they loved. They knew and confessed that their God had done great things for them: and they were at once humbled, grateful and glad. They moved about as one in a dream, because they could not trust themselves to think that so good a thing was true. And they were so happy, that they could not find words to express their joy. Their mouth was filled with laughter, their tongue with ringing shouts; but all they could say was, "We were glad." That is all; but, on the lips of sincere men, that is everything.

Have we any such experience of redemption which enables us, even afar off, to appreciate the rapturous joy of the psalm? Have we ever been delivered from anxiety, from disappointment, from defeat, from danger, from oppression, from sorrow, from evil habits, from sin, from death? And if we have, do we acknowledge our Redeemer? and are we grateful and glad for our redemption? and have our sluggish hearts ever been moved to say, "The Lord has done great things for me; I am glad"? And if we have never made such a confession or known such a joy, are we quite sure that we have been redeemed indeed?

The psalm further reminds us of the duty of hope. Men to whom the dream of redemption has become a fact, may look to the future through eyes blinded by tears; but they see afar off the golden harvest, and to the listening ear the shouts of the merry harvesters are borne back from the future days, as they bring their sheaves in armfuls, home. In days of disappointment, this is a consolation of which no one can ever allow himself to be robbed who truly believes in God—that no honest effort is ever in vain, that in due time the faithful worker will reap, if he faint not, that the seed sown in weariness and tears will be brought back as sheaves with shouts of gladness—if not in this world, then in some other. No seed is ever flung from any faith-

ful hand in vain. In God's good time, if not in ours, it will spring up and bear its destined fruit. In this world, sometimes one sows and it is another that reaps; but God is as mindful of the sower as the reaper, and one day—how far away we know not—he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together.

Knox College, Toronto

### The Towel as a Weapon

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, D.D.

A sentence from the lips of a great living preacher ("living", in more senses than one), suggested the above caption: for it was a towel, not a sword, that the greatest of all Conquerors chose as the means of victory,—victory, first, with his closest lieutenants, and then, through them, in all the world.

It was His last hour with them, before He was to be delivered defenceless into the hands of His foes. He would bind them to His Person and service by a bond that nought could break. He had eaten and drunk with them. After supper, he laid aside his garments, and, servant-like, took a towel and poured water into a basin, that He might wash their feet,—a pattern, as He told them, of the service which they, as His followers, were to be ever ready to render. His willingness to serve won their hearts; even as their willingness to serve was to win the hearts of the myriads, who, before the course of these first valiant message-bearers was run, had yielded to the claims of their Lord and Master.

Not all of Christ's followers have remembered this lesson in conquering. The church has not infrequently rallied the sword to its aid, thinking the readiest way to win men to the Cross was to compel them by force. Possibly the sword is finally sheathed, so far as its actual use by the church is concerned. The days of persecution in the name of the gentle Jesus are ended. But does the spirit of service truly possess all who labor in His name? Is our work, for example, as teachers, always done with His meekness and self-effacement? Are we to our scholars "your servants for Jesus' sake"?

It is the temper that wins, this temper of service. For, even the most careless and unruly scholar recognizes it, and is, in the end, subdued by it. It is the gentle, persuasive atmosphere of utter devotion to his good, that melts, at last, the most obdurate; and it is so evidently the very exemplification of the Christ whom the teacher commends, that the Christ wins, too.

Besides, it ensures staying power to the teacher himself. Lack of appreciation, indifference, even rebuffs, have small weight with him who is seeking, in his work, not his own glory, nor even success, as the main end; but whose one thought is, in the spirit and name of His Master, to serve even the weakest and least worthy. He may not succeed; he will still serve.

## The Question of Decision

### Why Not the Little Ones?

*By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston*

"Why not the little ones?", said a little girl five years of age, when her mother was explaining that it was only the big people who joined the church and took communion, to show that they loved Jesus and wished to please Him. "Why not the little ones?" was the eager question of the child. It seemed to her small mind that the little ones could "love Jesus and wish to please Him". It is usually not well that children should be admitted to the communion at a very tender age. But there is no barrier to the child's deciding to love and serve Jesus. Children are not slow in making a very decided choice of companions. Why not make choice of Jesus to be their Friend?

"Did not our Saviour say, 'Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not'?" He did not want them to wait till they were grown up and could understand all about Him. He wanted them to come even out of the mother's arms, and He took them into His arms and blessed them; and so He will do even now.

"As a little child", we remember Jesus said to the disciples who rebuked the mothers for bringing their children. Ah, He knew just what simple loving trust is in the hearts of the little ones. "Jesus loves me, this I know, For the Bible tells me so". This is enough for them—no doubts, no fears, no thought of unworthiness, just the loving trust of a loving child to a loving Saviour! Think of Jesus Himself making "a little child" the object lesson, the model for all who come to Him, even the grey-haired seekers, with all the experience of age.

"Have you found the Saviour, Mary?" asked a gentleman, as he laid his hand gently on the curly head. The blue eyes were raised to his in simple astonishment. "Why, sir, I have never lost Him", was the sweet reply. And should this not be the position taken by all teachers of the little ones? Should we not take it for granted that they "have never lost Him", rather than urge them to take Him as their Saviour? He is theirs now: let the teacher aim to keep Him in the hearts and minds of the little ones, so that the cord of love that binds them to their loving Lord may grow stronger and firmer as the years go on. A little child may be frightened away from Jesus, as it were, by being too strongly urged to accept Him. He is her Jesus now, and the new step her teacher wants her to take is full of mystery, and she is afraid to do the solemn things she is wanted to do.

With little ones, let the question of decision be not so much as to whether or not they love Him, but whether or not they wish to work for Him and help others to love and serve Him.

Teachers of the little ones should find constant joy in their work; for they know that they are sowing the seed in the most fruitful ground, free from the thorns and stones and weeds of later life.

North Bay, Ont.

### At the Critical Age

*By Rev. W. D. Reid, B.D.*

Is there a critical age in the religious life of every individual? Experience answers, "Yes". We all remember a period in our

lives, when we carried with us a peculiar sense of the presence of God, and a continual consciousness of His nearness; and when we were particularly sensitive to appeals made to our better nature. Statistics answer, "Yes". 65 per cent. of all persons confessing Christ do so before they are 20 years of age. Out of every 1,000 converts, 540 become Christians between the ages of 12 and 21. Yea, verily, there is a "critical age", in matters religious.

Why is it critical? Because, somewhere between the ages of 12 and 20, boys become men, and girls become women. Hitherto they have been content to speak as children and think as children, and understand as children; but in that period they put away childish things and become men and women. They pass from the condition of dependence to that of independence, from simple reliance upon others to reliance upon self.

During this period the mind is peculiarly open to all sorts of influences. It is sensitive to every impression, because it is just forming independent conclusions upon everything. Later in life, we have to contend with fixed habits and customs, enslaving traditions and stubborn inertia. Not so with the boys and girls of the above-mentioned age. They are susceptible, they are at the "winnable" age.

Because of these facts, let the Sunday School teacher remember the awful responsibility devolving upon the one teaching during that period of life. The hearts of the boys and girls stand wide open for Jesus Christ, and their wills have not yet become "set" against the appeals of the Spirit.

Let us also remember, that if our scholars leave the school at twenty without having decided for Christ, the chances are two to one against their ever making that decision in the future. If this be the case, what are we to do? Let us try to win them by the lives we ourselves live. "Your life speaks so loudly, I cannot hear what you say", was the complaint that one boy made to his teacher, when the teacher was trying to lead him to Christ. Live a winsome life before the boy or girl, and it will help wonderfully. Don't be continually thrusting religion upon the pupil, but choose

the right time, when you are alone together, and the right place, when the heart has been stirred by some address or incident, and strongly urge to a definite decision. Plead also for an open avowal of that decision before the world. Pray for your class by name, day by day. Have faith and patience, and the decision will come. I am firmly convinced, that no Christian teacher should allow any boy or girl under his care to pass twenty years of age without a decision for Christ.

Taylor Church, Montreal

### A Boy's Religion

*By Rev. Professor T. B. Kilpatrick, D.D.*

Is it possible for a boy to have a religious experience? May parents and Sabbath School teachers and pastors expect to find, in those committed to their care, the existence, even in boyhood, of a distinct Christian character, the fruit of a real operation of the divine Spirit?

Some would answer such questions in the negative. They regard the boy as a young savage, and the girl as the same, only less so! Nay, they maintain that the boy ought to be, in the period of his boyhood, simply and solely a savage, reproducing, in his own life time a necessary stage in the evolution of humanity, and manifesting the rude strength and the few simple and manly virtues which are commonly associated with a condition of untutored and unsophisticated savagery.

When boyhood is past, we are told, comes the stage when it may be expected that the boy, now a boy no longer, shall intelligently accept the truths of Christianity, and be the subject of the regenerative and converting activities of the Holy Spirit. Is this correct? Are we to postpone conversion to the period of adolescence? Are we to endeavor no more for our boys than to conform them to a brief code of morals, and to seek to cultivate in them such virtues as courage, loyalty, truth, discipline, and purity, without attempting to lead them into a definitely religious experience, or expecting that they shall become really Christian?

It is certain that a boy's religion will not

be that of a grown man, and that the religious experience of a boy will not follow the discipline through which an adult will pass from beneath the power of darkness, into the light and liberty of the kingdom of God. This fact will shape the expectations and guide the efforts of those who seek the welfare of boys. But it is certainly not true that Christ has no claims on boys and girls, or that they may not, and ought not, to acknowledge that claim in conscious faith, or that they cannot exhibit the grace of Christ in life and character.

Parents, and pastors, and teachers will be able to verify and illustrate the following propositions:

1. Christ may be made, in the eyes of boys and girls, beautiful beyond comparison, the Ideal of all the excellence of which the young imagination can conceive, or after which the young heart can yearn. Christ may be so depicted from the page of the Gospel, that even a boy, vigorous, hearty, loving every kind of manly, open-air exercise, shall admire Him above every other Being in the universe, shall desire to be like Him in loyal obedience and simple confidence.

2. The grace of Christ as Saviour from sin may be presented to boys and girls in its winning and constraining power. His work of love, in seeking, helping, saving, the sinful and the lost, may be so set forth as to win the passionate admiration of the true boy, whose deepest quality is hero worship. More than this, the appeal of the Cross may be addressed to a boy's heart and conscience, so that, for Christ's sake, he shall hate evil and feel the shame of it, and turn with compunction and sincere desire to the goodness, which he sees in the Friend, who loved him so well as to die for him.

3. Fellowship with the living Lord may be explained to boys and girls as a possibility of present experience, and not merely of one which lies in the still distant future. Even they, in their abounding vitality and overflowing joy of living, know the need and the value of friendship, and cultivate it with an assiduity which only cynicism will characterise as absurd. This instinct of theirs may be expected to respond gladly to the presence of the unseen, most real, most loving,

and almighty Friend. Their converse with Him will be very secret; and it becomes adults to respect the all but impenetrable reserve in which the souls, especially of boys, is wrapped. Yet it may be real; and the school-boy, with his "shining morning face", may be a friend of the Lord Jesus, and be often in conversation with Him, and, because of this hidden fellowship, be the braver and stronger, and play the game more gallantly.

A boy, then, may surely be a Christian; and, as in the school-room and playing-field, he prepares himself for citizenship, so there also he may be trained to serve his Lord, and to fight the good fight, in the world's larger battle-field.

Knox College, Toronto

### The Communion Season as Decision Day

*By Rev. Geo. C. Pidgeon, D.D.*

Once, during a Sabbath School Convention in Peel County, Ont., Decision Day was being discussed. A Presbyterian minister said:—"We have Decision Day four times a year. Before every Communion season we strive to lead the children to decide for Christ, and to come forward to the Lord's Table". So thoroughly was that church's work done that, at the end of a ten years' pastorate, the minister was able to say that only five scholars had left his Sabbath School, in all that time, without becoming members of the church in full communion.

In the church of which the writer is pastor the question of decision for Christ is brought before the scholars every Communion season. First, the teachers are reminded of the need of special vigilance at that time. They talk the matter over frankly with their scholars and impress upon them their responsibility.

The advantages are many. The work of evangelizing the young is systematically done. Every scholar is reached and dealt with personally. Not only are they taught the truth, but they are also laid under a sense of obligation. The teachers realize that this is the goal of their labors and that all their teaching and influence must converge on this point, until the scholar definitely enters the Christian life. The whole life of



the school is quickened thereby. There is a spiritual earnestness generated in the school that breaks forth at every opportunity. For instance, in our last Children's Day Service, an appeal was made for decision. Twenty-five scholars took a stand for Christ. The work of grace was very deep, and a large proportion of them were received into full communion the following Sabbath. This is the second revival we have had inside of two years.

For our Presbyterian Church there is no time so fitting for Decision Day as the Communion season. For one thing, this method suits the spirit of our people. The genius of our church is against spasmodic effort as a means of leading persons to Christ. We believe in steady work, pressing unceasingly in the one direction. That young people may be prepared to accept Christ intelligently, we seek to provide for them sound instruction in the fundamentals of our faith and in the principles governing the Christian life. Then, when they take the step, it will be with full knowledge of what it means. Besides, there is no confession of faith so impressive and so significant as coming forward to the Lord's Table. Those who come, receive in symbol the body and blood of the Redeemer. They profess by this solemn action to take the benefits of the Saviour's death into their being. When people thus accept, in the way the Saviour directed, the benefits of His death, and do it before all the world, it is the best "confession of the Lord Jesus" that a human soul can make.

Toronto Junction, Ont.

### The Decision Card

*By Rev. Thurlow Fraser, B.D.*

The practice of observing one Sunday in each year as a Decision Day, on which scholars should be specially pressed to make a decision for Christ, has been adopted by many Sabbath Schools, and is urged by some Provincial and State Associations. To others this method has seemed too artificial and mechanical. Nevertheless, there has been felt the necessity of effective means to bring this all-important question before the mind

of the pupil, and to help him to overcome his natural backwardness about announcing his decision. One such means is the Decision Card.

About five years ago the superintendent of the Sabbath School in Knox Church, Portage la Prairie, prepared such a card. Its principal feature is a simple declaration of faith and purpose, entitled:

#### "MY CONFESSION"

"I believe that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

I believe that Jesus loved me and gave Himself for me.

It is my earnest desire to love Him who first loved me, and trust Him who died for me.

Realizing that I cannot save myself, and looking to God for strength, I accept the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and will endeavor to follow His example and obey His commands."

This confession was to be signed by the pupil who had come to the point of decision. There were also spaces for the signature of the parents as sanctioning the pupils' action. The card was then to be handed to the teacher of the class, or directly to the pastor.

At first the card was not made use of to any great extent. But as time has gone by, the teachers have become more and more convinced of its value. The teacher who has used it most has had from his class proportionately the largest number making a public profession of faith. In the whole school the results are steadily improving. In 1906, the total number uniting with the church on profession of faith was 54. Of these, 36, or two-thirds of the whole, were from the Sabbath School. Almost all, if not quite all of these, had the cards in their possession, and most signified their decision by signing them.

The cards may be given out by the teachers at any time; but they are always offered before the quarterly Communion. Attention is drawn to them by the teacher or the superintendent. There is no urging. The card presents the substance of a Christian profession in a simple form; constantly, but unobtrusively, keeps it before the mind of the

pupil; and when decision is arrived at, helps the diffident boy or girl to signify the desire to make a public profession of faith.

Portage la Prairie, Man.

### A Threefold Cord

*By Rev. J. B. Fraser, M.D.*

"A threefold cord is not quickly broken." If, for example, the parent, the Sabbath School teacher and the pastor shall all three work to each other's hand, how much more their work will count for.

The problem all three have in common is to save the children—to instruct them in the way of life, and lead them to decision for Christ. How may this best be accomplished? Broadly, the answer is by co-operation. The means used must be largely personal influence and persuasion.

The Sabbath School teacher who is content with mere instruction, falls far short of the true conception of his duty and privilege. He must make a special study of each of his class. He must enlist individual interest and confidence. He must observe closely and note the effect of the truth. Especially, must he be sympathetic in spirit, and cultivate the personal acquaintance of the scholars. It is individual work that costs most, and is worth most.

But to know his class, he must know them in their home; and to this end, he must have the hearty co-operation of the parents. Indeed, the parent should take the initiative, and plan for promoting the mutual acquaintance of the teacher and child. All references to the teacher in the home should be such as to impress the young people with respect, and, if possible, affection for the teacher. And when the teacher is a welcome guest in the home, he has opportunities for more intimate acquaintance and for acquiring a very much stronger influence.

Much, however, as parents and teachers can accomplish by such cordial co-operation, not even they can do the best that can be done for the child, without the help of the minister, whom they will almost invariably find more than willing to co-operate. The faculty of getting into touch with the

young is so essential to the highest ministerial success that it should be sedulously cultivated; and parents who do not do all they can to commend the minister to their young people are making the mistake of their lives.

Confidential, cordial, loyal co-operation of parent, teacher and minister, is the missing link in modern methods of leading the young to early and intelligent decision for Christ. Thus is the threefold cord, immensely stronger than the strength of all the strands separately. Annan, Ont.

### The Primary Class and the Home

IN TWELVE ARTICLES

*By Esther Miller*

#### XI. THE MOTHERS' DAY AT SUNDAY SCHOOL

If the Primary class has a room large enough to accommodate visitors, there will be much pleasure and profit for all concerned in having a day set apart for mothers to visit that part of the Sunday School.

Such a day will be helpful to the mothers, in arousing their interest and in showing them how another person does the kind of work they are trying to do at home. It will be stimulating to the teacher, by bringing her into touch with her helpers, and it will be of great value to the children themselves, by showing them that mother is very much interested in what goes on in their Sunday School.

Provided such a day can be arranged, the teacher should first see that she adheres strictly to her usual afternoon's programme. Very often, a day on which the parents visit the Sunday School is made an opportunity for class show. The pupils rise up, and give perfect answers to set questions prepared beforehand, repeat recitations, and sing solos, all for the benefit of proud and admiring mothers.

But this sort of exercise, while doing no good, is likely to do harm. It will not give the mothers a true idea of how the Sunday School is conducted, and, besides, will have anything but a good effect upon the little performers themselves. Any kind of public performance by a child is likely to be in-

jurious to him, the excitement, the flattery, and the undue attention of his elders incident to his appearance upon the platform, are all calculated to have a bad effect.

So the wise Primary teacher will see that the evil does not enter her door on Sunday afternoon. She will shun solos and individual recitations, and on Mothers' Day will strive to show her visitors, without varying one jot from her regular routine, that she is doing her best, not merely to amuse and entertain the children, but to train them in the way of life.

Then, at the close of the Lesson, perhaps some mother, more gifted in the art of child-training than the average, may take the class for ten minutes, and show the others how she conducts her lessons at home. After this, there will be a few minutes for questioning from other mothers, as to how this or that shall be done, and if every one is interested, there will be a little helpful experience meeting.

I know a Primary teacher who holds a Mothers' Day in her class twice a year regularly. It is well attended, and at the summer meeting, when the Lesson is over the little ones are dismissed, and while they wait out in the church grounds with the assistant teacher, the mothers and teacher gather round a table for a few minutes' talk over their common work.

This meeting never fails of benefit, she declares, and when closed, as it always is, with a short prayer, mothers and teacher bowed with one petition before one Father,

there can be no doubt that the children of that class are to receive faithful attention for some time to come.

If the teacher is truly anxious to hold a Mothers' Day, she can generally overcome any difficulties in the way. If the Primary class-room is small, two such days might be held and the number of visitors divided. The mothers who are skilled in teaching should go to the meeting prepared to help, those less well equipped, prepared to learn. But upon the teacher depends largely the making of the day a success.

### I. B. R. A. Daily Readings

The I. B. R. A. (International Bible Reading Association) Daily Readings form an important part of the Lesson Materials in the **TEACHERS MONTHLY** and the two senior **QUARTERLIES**. Following the line of the International Lessons, they bring light to bear upon these from all parts of the scriptures. For the permission to use these valuable Readings in our various publications, our thanks are again due to Mr. Charles Waters, Secretary of the I. B. R. A., London, England. The Readings are now used in seventy different countries, and, at the end of twenty-five years since the Association was formed, its membership is almost a million. The membership subscription fee in Canada is 3c. a member in branches; individuals 6c. Each member receives a card containing the Readings, a monthly leaflet of Hints upon them, and a Quarterly Circular Letter.

### Lesson Calendar: Fourth Quarter

#### THE BEGINNINGS OF THE HEBREW NATION

1. October 6 ..... Joshua, Israel's New Leader. Josh. 1: 1-11.
2. October 13 ..... Israel Enters the Land of Promise. Josh. 3: 5-17.
3. October 20 ..... The Capture of Jericho. Josh. 6: 8-20.
4. October 27 ..... Caleb's Faithfulness Rewarded. Josh. 14: 6-15.
5. November 3 ..... The Cities of Refuge. Josh. 20: 1-9.
6. November 10 ..... Joshua Renewing the Covenant with Israel. Josh. 24: 14-28.
7. November 17 ..... Gideon and His Three Hundred. Judg. 7: 9-23.
8. November 24 ..... World's Temperance Sunday. Rom. 14: 12-23.
9. December 1 ..... The Death of Samson. Judg. 16: 21-31.
10. December 8 ..... Ruth's Wise Choice. Ruth 1: 14-22.
11. December 15 ..... The Boy Samuel. 1 Sam. 3: 1-21.
12. December 22 ..... Samuel the Upright Judge. 1 Sam. 7: 1-13.
13. December 29 ..... REVIEW.

## Lesson V

## THE CITIES OF REFUGE

November 3, 1907

Joshua 20 : 1-9. Commit to Memory vs. 2, 3. Read Numbers 35 : 6-34.

GOLDEN TEXT—My refuge is in God.—Psalm 62 : 7.

1 <sup>1</sup> The Lord also spake unto Josh'ua, saying,  
2 Speak to the children of Is'rael, saying, <sup>2</sup> Appoint out for you cities of refuge whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Mo'ses :

3 That the <sup>3</sup> slayer that killeth any person <sup>4</sup> un-  
aware and unwittingly may flee thither ; and they shall be <sup>5</sup> your refuge from the avenger of blood.

4 And <sup>6</sup> when he that doth flee unto one of those cities <sup>7</sup> shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, and <sup>8</sup> shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, <sup>7</sup> they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver <sup>9</sup> the slayer up into his hand ; because he smote his neighbour <sup>10</sup> unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, <sup>11</sup> and until the

Revised Version—<sup>1</sup> And the Lord spake ; <sup>2</sup> Assign you the ; <sup>3</sup> manslayer ; <sup>4</sup> unwittingly and unawares ; <sup>5</sup> unto you for a ; <sup>6</sup> he shall flee ; <sup>7</sup> and ; <sup>8</sup> Omit shall ; <sup>9</sup> up the manslayer ; <sup>10</sup> unawares ; <sup>11</sup> Omit and ; <sup>12</sup> set apart ; <sup>13</sup> the hill country of ; <sup>14</sup> Kirjath-arba (the same is Hebron) ; <sup>15</sup> beyond the ; <sup>16</sup> at ; <sup>17</sup> in ; <sup>18</sup> appointed cities ; <sup>19</sup> unwittingly.

## LESSON PLAN

- I. The Manslayer's Peril, 1-3.
- II. The Manslayer's Protection, 4-6a.
- III. The Manslayer's Privilege, 6b-9.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—The cities of refuge, Joshua 20 : 1-9. T.—The previous command, Deut. 19 : 1-10. W.—Cities of the Levites, Numbers 35 : 1-15. Th.—Refuge in God, Psalm 18 : 1-19. F.—Sure and steadfast, Heb. 6 : 11-20. S.—My Refuge, Psalm 91. S.—My Refuge, Psalm 91. S.—The only Refuge,

death of the high priest that shall be in those days ; then shall the <sup>2</sup> slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7 And they <sup>12</sup> appointed Ke'desh in Gal'ilee in <sup>13</sup> mount Naphtali, and She'chem in <sup>13</sup> mount E'phraim, and <sup>14</sup> Kir'jath-ar'ba, which is He'bron, in <sup>15</sup> the mountain of Ju'dah.

8 And <sup>16</sup> on the other side Jor'dan <sup>16</sup> by Jer'icho eastward, they assigned Be'zer in the wilderness <sup>17</sup> upon the plain out of the tribe of Reu'ben, and Ra'moth in Gil'ead out of the tribe of Gad, and Go'an in Ba'shan out of the tribe of Manas'seh.

9 These were the <sup>18</sup> cities appointed for all the children of Is'rael, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person <sup>19</sup> at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

## Psalm 62

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 76. Which is the ninth commandment ? A. The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

The Question on Missions—5. How many Indian missions have we now ? There are 21 in all, with a staff of 60 missionaries, of whom 9 are ordained ministers ; a large number are women, who act as teachers and matrons in schools ; and a few are educated Indians.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 80 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 152 ; 23 (Ps. Sel.) ; 148 ; 34 (Ps. Sel., from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 151.

## EXPOSITION

By Rev. Principal John Scrimger, D.D., Montreal

Time and Place—Perhaps about B. C. 1444 ; Shiloh, a town ten miles northwest of Bethel.

Connecting Links—The division of the land amongst the twelve tribes was made by lot, under the direction of Joshua and Eleazar, the high priest, ch. 14 : 1. Two urns, say the Jewish rabbis ; were chosen, in one of which were placed little tablets with the names of the tribes, and in the other similar tablets with the names of districts, and one tablet was drawn from each at the same time. The tribe of Levi, since they had special charge of the tabernacle and its services, and were therefore to be supported by the whole nation, received no separate inheritance by themselves ; but forty-eight cities with lands in the immediate vicinity were assigned to them (Num. 35 : 2, 7), so that they were scattered throughout the tribes and thus enabled to act as instructors

for them all in religious matters. Certain of these Levitical cities, according to Moses' directions (Num. 35 : 6), were to be set apart as Cities of Refuge for the protection of the unintentional manslayer against the hand of the "avenger of blood", until he could obtain a fair trial.

## I. The Manslayer's Peril, 1-3.

Vs. 1, 2. *The Lord spake unto Joshua* (Rev. Ver.) ; immediately after the division of the land amongst the tribes. The arrangements for the government of Israel in Canaan were made by divine authority. *Assign you* (Rev. Ver.) ; from among the Levitical cities (see Connecting Links and compare ch. 21 : 1-3, 13, 27, 32, 36, 38). *The cities of refuge* (Rev. Ver.). Detailed instructions regarding the selection of these cities had been given in Num. 35 : 9-15.

V. 3. *Manslayer. unwittingly and unawares* (Rev. Ver.) ; literally, "by error, with-

\*The Scripture Memory Passages of the Supplemental Lessons are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. They will be found in the Supplemental Lesson Leaflets.

out knowing," that is, by mistake or accident, with no intention of killing. The distinction between the wilful murderer and the accidental slayer is carefully drawn in Num. 35 : 16-24; Deut. 19 : 4-13. *Unto you for a refuge* (Rev. Ver.); but only for the unintentional manslayer. One who had killed another intentionally was to be punished by death, Num. 35 : 31, 32. *From the avenger of blood.* Amongst all the Semitic nations, that is, those descended from Shem (Gen. 10 : 1), to whom the Hebrews belonged, the nearest relation of a murdered man, called the "goel", inherited his property, and had laid on him by custom the duty of avenging his death. This was certainly not a desirable method of administering justice; but it was so firmly established that it could not readily be changed. The provision of the cities of refuge was to regulate it, so as to protect innocent victims of the system, and especially those who had unfortunately slain any one by accident, without hatred or malice, until they had had a fair trial. The practical effect of this was to secure a trial for all manslaughterers, even the most guilty, before being punished.

### II. The Manslayer's Protection, 4-6a.

Vs. 4. *He shall flee* (Rev. Ver.); pursued by the enraged avenger. *Stand at the gate;* in the public square, near the city gates, used as a place for meetings and trials at law (compare Ruth 4 : 1, 2). *Declare his cause;* state his case. *The elders;* the magistrates. The manslayer must show to their satisfaction that the killing had been purely accidental. *Give him a place;* receive him, care for him, and assign him a residence if they were convinced by his statement.

Vs. 5, 6a. *Avenger of blood pursue;* doing what it was held to be his duty to do. *Not deliver the slayer up;* but keep him securely until he should have a fair trial, at which he and the avenger of blood would be brought face to face and each receive a just hearing. *Before the congregation;* that is, the local court representing the people of the city. It is not stated where the trial was to take place, but probably it was in the City of Refuge, so that these cities would become the centres of justice for the trial of the more serious forms of crime. In the event of the

manslayer being found guilty of murder, he would be put to death, probably by stoning, in which execution the avenger would have a part, but would not act alone.

### III. The Manslayer's Privilege, 6b-9.

Vs. 6b-9. If innocent of wilful murder, the manslayer was to reside in the City of Refuge, where alone he would be safe, *until the death of the high priest*, when he was allowed to return home, and any attempt to molest him would be punished as a fresh crime. *And they appointed, etc.* The six cities chosen were selected so as to have three on each side of the Jordan, and were so distributed that hardly any place in the country would be more than thirty miles from one of them. It was required by Deut. 19 : 3, that roads should be built to these cities. Later Jewish writings give regulations for keeping the roads in good condition and well marked with guide posts, so that the fugitive might have a better chance to escape being overtaken by the avenger. (See also HOME STUDY QUARTERLY, Oriental Sidelight.)

The inhabitants are said to have made it a point to treat the innocent manslaughterers confided to them with special consideration, providing them the means of earning a livelihood. The family of the high priest also showed them special kindness, lest they should pray for his death to hasten their release. Cities of Refuge are not again referred to in the subsequent scripture history, and we do not know when they ceased to be needed, owing to the rise of a better system of law.

### Light from the East

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London, Ont.

REFUGE—Amongst wandering tribes where there was no settled means of justice, when a man was killed either by accident or design, his nearest male relative was bound to pursue the slayer to the death. Thus interminable blood feuds arose, and to counteract this evil there was developed the right of asylum, possessed by certain holy places from which the fugitive could not be dragged. In Greece, the right of asylum for ill-treated slaves and criminals was possessed by the Altar of Pity in the market place, the Thes-eum and a number of other sanctuaries.



This right was so much abused that it was confined to a few places and its limits rigidly defined. The right of sanctuary hospitality may be demanded of any chief by a fugitive Arab to-day, and his host is bound to protect him until he has been tried, and to avenge his death if his appeal be not heeded. In England, in the Middle Ages, the right of

asylum possessed by many churches seriously interfered with the administration of justice. The Cities of Refuge were an adaptation of a custom of the time; they were within easy reach of the whole land; their elders were the wisest men in Israel; they regulated the rude justice of the age, and substituted judicial investigation for personal vengeance.

## APPLICATION

By Rev. Professor E. A. Mackenzie, B.D., Montreal

*Cities of refuge*, v. 2. Shelter is suggestive of storm. We should not need places of refuge, but for the danger of being buffeted and beaten by tempest. And what a storm it was from which the manslayer fled! The fierce rage of the "goel", the avenger of blood, was pursuing him. It was a sweet moment when his foot pressed the threshold of the gate of the city where he was safe. The gospel points us to a shelter from God's wrath against sin. Christ is our City of Refuge; and the more urgently the gospel urges us to seek shelter in Christ, the more clearly does the greatness of our peril away from Him appear.

*Manslayer . . unawares and unwittingly*, v. 3. "God cares more for adverbs than verbs", said a preacher. A verb expresses the mere doing of an act, while an adverb points to the motive, the purpose, the manner of the act. Saul, offering sacrifices of the sheep and oxen he had taken in battle, seemed to be doing a good and praiseworthy thing. But the Lord, and Samuel, the Lord's prophet, knew the rebellious heart and the disobedient will in which this pretended worship had its source, and the king was unsparingly condemned (1 Sam. 15: 22). We may cheat men as to the real springs of our actions; but God's vision reaches the heart, and there is no deceiving Him.

*Refuge from the avenger of blood*, v. 3. Says Canon Tristram, "On the chief door of Durham Cathedral still remains the great bronze knocker, which, if any fugitive should touch, he was entitled to protection and maintenance for thirty-seven days, until his case could be investigated. This custom, which lasted

down through the Middle Ages, beautifully illustrates the way in which we find refuge in Christ. The way is so simple and plain any one can find it. It is just the touch of the hand, the look of the eye, the trust of the heart, that brings us into the peace and joy of His salvation.

*Take him into the city . . give him a place*, v. 4. There are people who are color blind, so that red or green to them is gray. Sometimes the color-blindness is in the mind and heart, and God is thought to be stern and hard, quickly ready to condemn men. The truth, all the while, is that He is infinitely eager to save men, to make the best and most of them, to give them a second chance when they go astray. The Old Testament City of Refuge was first meant to give the unwitting manslayer a second chance. The cross of Jesus Christ offers a second chance to all men. All the guilty past may be covered over with His blood, and on the white pages of the future, by His grace, may be written better and nobler deeds.

*Shall not deliver the manslayer up*, v. 5. Between the man slayer and the avenger was the closed gate of the city and the refusal of its rulers to give up their charge. But far stronger and more enduring is the barrier that keeps the believer in Jesus Christ from harm. This is nothing less than the omnipotence of God's divine Son. "Father", said He, "I will that . . they be with Me where I am". And there is no power in the whole universe which can break through that will, or destroy those protected by its purpose and power.

*Stand for judgment*, v. 6. God is merciful beyond the measure of human language or

Shelter from  
the Storm

Verbs and  
Adverbs

Only to touch  
the Knocker

A Second  
Chance

An Unbroken  
Barrier

thought; but He is also just. By His law that cannot be broken the guilty must be punished. 'We cannot balance our transgressions by our tears. Our sins can never be blotted out by our sighs. Some one must die for us, some blood must be shed. And the very heart of the gospel is, that Jesus, the Lamb of God, has shed His blood, has laid down His life, to atone for the sins that have separated us from God.

*Unwittingly*, (Rev. Ver.), v. 9. There is great danger of our doing harm to others without intending it. Paul tells us that the harm he did before he was converted was done ignorantly (1 Tim. 1 : 13). But when he saw his errors and turned from them, he never made an excuse of his ignorance, nor on account of it did he look lightly on his past. Rather did he look on his former life with deepest horror, and the thought of

The Heart of  
the Gospel

Without In-  
tending it

the untold injuries he had done, spurred him as far as possible to undo the mischief of which he had been guilty. In this he is our example. There is not one of us but has injured others without even knowing it. How eager we should be, as far as may be, to neutralize the evil we have done, by doing good.

### Lesson Points

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

God's providence prepares the way for the revelation of His grace. v. 1.

No man can be a judge in his own cause. v. 4.

Public men should be more concerned about responsibilities of office than of its rewards. v. 4.

No enemy can destroy the believer, until he have first vanquished the Saviour. v. 5.

Not our own innocence, but Christ's righteousness, is the only plea that saves from condemnation. v. 6.

Want of care is sinful, as well as evil intent. v. 9.

### TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

By Rev. W. H. Smith, Ph.D., Sydney, N.S.

The Lesson is a study of one of the institutions in the national life of Israel. In the distribution of the land certain cities were selected to meet the requirements of justice. Study the whole section of history since last Lesson, also Num. 35 : 11-34 and Deut. 19 : 2-13. Shiloh became the religious capital of Israel, ch. 19 : 51. It was situated near the centre of Palestine on the road between Bethel and Shechem, about 18 or 20 miles from Jerusalem. The tabernacle and ark were placed here, and here remained for about 300 years. Joshua made it his home and the people met there for the great festivals. Review the religious condition of Israel. The tribe of Levi had no section allowed to it, but instead, received 48 cities among the tribes, and were supported by a tithe of all the produce of the land. They were free to give all their time to religious and educational service. Another arrangement was the Cities of Refuge for the restraint and punishment of crime.

1. *The Cities of Refuge*. Note : (a) Their necessity. In early society, even when there was not central government, murder was regarded as a very serious crime, and was avenged by the nearest relative of the murdered person. This was the origin of blood revenge common in Israel (2 Sam. 14 : 7) and amongst many other peoples. The danger was that justice should become retaliation and lead to crime rather than prevent it. The Cities of Refuge were designed to meet this danger. It was a concession to the semi-barbarism of the people, and shows God's method of education. (b) There were six cities, three on each side of Jordan : on the west, Kedesh in Naphtali, Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and Hebron in Judah; on the east, Golan in Bashan, Ramoth-Gilead in Gad, Bezer in Reuben. The map will show that the choice was an excellent one as to location. The Cities of Refuge were under the control of the Levites.

2. *The person protected*. Any who had killed another unwittingly, v. 3. Those guilty of intentional murder found no shelter in them. No place could shield him or rank protect him (compare Num. 35 : 31, 32). Where there was no malice, there

was no murder; so the offender was sheltered in the city. He was detained, tried, judged, and, if innocent, was kept until the death of the high priest. He thus paid a penalty for his carelessness, and was made to feel that he was responsible in a very real sense.

3. *The method of justice in the city.* There was a preliminary examination. If the result was favorable, the manslayer was detained until the avenger came, when the formal trial took place. The law of evidence was clear (Num. 35 : 19-30; Deut. 17 : 6-12; 19 : 12-17). In this way the interests of justice were fully conserved, while the guilty could gain no special favor.

A great truth to be taught is the sacredness of human life and the duty of guarding it not only from malice but from carelessness. The Cities of Refuge have been considered as a type of Jesus, the sinner's refuge from the enemy of souls. Let the teacher urge the necessity of being safely sheltered in Him.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, D.D.

"Also" in v. 1 is a good string to pull at. It brings up a review (be sure it is by question) of what has gone before. The crossing of the Jordan by the Lord's command and the fall of Jericho; the division of the land amongst the tribes (bring in Caleb's share of it); the setting up of the tabernacle in Shiloh (ch. 18); and (a little glance forward) the eight and forty cities set apart for the Levites (ch. 21). Amongst all these doings in a great scale, there is this arrangement for unfortunate individuals, of which the Lesson tells.

"*The Lord spake*", v. 1. Emphasize afresh that all these arrangements and provisions were made by the Lord, and made for the good of His people. Perhaps the class can quote a promise from the Psalms to match—Ps. 34 : 11.

"Where are The Cities of Refuge first mentioned?" is a question which will call out Ex. 21 : 13 (see also Num. 35 : 6, 11, 14; Deut. 19 : 2, 9). It was no new thought on God's part. His mercy is "from everlasting" (Can any pupil find the place?), Ps. 103 : 17.

"*By the hand of Moses*", v. 2. Can the

class explain the expression? Make sure that they can; it is not well to take for granted that expressions which are quite clear to us, are as clear to children.

This applies to "unawares and unwittingly," v. 3. Explain the words, so that it will be distinctly understood that the cities were for those who had done wrong, without meaning to do it.

"The avenger of blood". The Exposition and Light from the East give all necessary information as to who this was, and what was his right to avenge. Don't hesitate to grant that the custom was a crude, semi-barbarous way of doing justice; and show how God took people and customs as they were, and made them better. For example, the New Testament, nowhere, in so many words, condemns slavery; but lays down principles (as love for all men as brethren) which, when carried into effect, do away with slavery.

Vs. 4-6 contain a series of moving pictures. Six scholars may describe them in succession (this to be arranged for the Sabbath previous):—(1) The manslayer fleeing from the avenger. (2) His breathless arrival at the city gate and his declaration of his case to the elders of the city, who were to be found assembled in the open space just within the gate. (3) What they did for him. All these in v. 4. Then, (4) the hot pursuit of the avenger of blood; his demand for the delivery up of the refugee, and the refusal. (5) His trial before the "congregation", or representatives of the people; to be set free if innocent, to be delivered up for punishment if guilty. (6) His final return home in safety. These from v. 6.

A bit of map work comes in here, vs. 7, 8. Have the scholars name and point out the six cities on the sketch map, or, better still, to make a little skeleton map and mark in the cities. See Exposition as to distances, and note that no place in all the land was more than 30 miles away from one of these places of refuge: every one was to have a chance.

Here is a little group of closing texts:—Ps. 46 : 1; 48 : 3; 62 : 7, 8; and especially Heb. 6 : 18.

And a Hymn—162, Book of Praise.

## The Cities of Refuge

## THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.



In teaching this Lesson, locate, first of all, the Cities of Refuge (see <sup>Map</sup> QUARTERLIES). Bring out—(1) that they were so situated that no district was far from one or other of these cities (not more than thirty miles in any case), and (2) that they were Levitical cities, each having a suburb of 2,000 cubits or a little over half a mile, Num. 35 : 5, so that the refugees were not absolutely confined within the city walls.

Dr. Mackie gives the following interesting account of an Oriental city. "The chief feature was its wall. This gave it the right to be called a city (Lev. 25 : 30, &c.). The wall had one or more gates, which were closed from sunset to sunrise. The newspaper office and court of tribunal were found at the city gate by which strangers entered and the habitants went out to their daily occupations in the fields. Domestic news circulated round the fountain while the women waited their turn to fill the water jar. The bank was represented by the seat of the money changer."

Another writer says, "The plan (namely of Cities of Refuge) did not result, as might

be supposed, in giving these places a bad character by filling them with murderers. On the contrary, these six cities were of the highest rank in every way: they were all Levitical cities—Shechem and Hebron being royal cities, and Hebron, in addition, being a priestly city".

## ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

## Some Test Questions

[NOTE: These Questions are not intended for use in the class, but as samples of questions by which the teacher may test the thoroughness of his own preparation of the Lesson. He will also find it of great advantage to be familiar with the Questions set for the scholars in the HOME STUDY, INTERMEDIATE, and PRIMARY QUARTERLIES and LEAFLETS.]

1. Describe the method, according to the Jewish rabbis, by which the division of Canaan amongst the tribes of Israel was made.
2. To which tribe was no inheritance given? Why?
3. How many cities were given to this tribe? Where were they situated? What purpose did the arrangement serve?
4. For what purpose had Moses directed

that some of those Levitical cities should be set apart?

5. Who was now commanded to carry out these directions?

6. Who only might be sheltered in the Cities of Refuge? How was the wilful murderer to be punished?

7. Who was the avenger of blood? What was expected of him?

8. What persons must the manslayer satisfy that the killing had been accidental? What were these then required to do for him?

9. Before whom was the manslayer tried? If found innocent of wilful murder, where was he obliged to live? For how long?

10. Where were the Cities of Refuge? What requirements were laid down as to the roads leading to them?

**Something to Look Up**

[From the INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY AND LEAFLET]

1. Find a passage in the Psalms where we are told that God is our Refuge.
2. Where, in the Hebrews, is a great assurance given to those who have "fled for refuge"?

ANSWERS (Lesson IV.)—1. Num. 26 : 65. 2. Phil. 4 : 13.

**For Discussion**

[From the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY AND LEAFLET]

1. The provision for the manslayer : (1) its mercy, (2) its justice.
2. The Cities of Refuge as a type of Christ.

**Prove from Scripture**

That God is our Refuge.

**The Catechism**

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

Ques. 76. *The Ninth Commandment*—There is a point of resemblance between this Commandment and the Third. Both deal with the use of speech. The one requires reverence in speaking of divine things, the other enjoins truthfulness towards men. The following are some of the reasons why we should obey this Commandment : (1) We cannot be like God unless we are truthful, Ps. 31 : 5; 57 : 10; John 14 : 6; Rom. 3 : 4. (2) The Word of God requires truthfulness of us, Ps. 51 : 6; Eph. 4 : 15, 25. (3) Our

life and happiness depend upon God's faithfulness to His promises, Gen. 9 : 12; 1 John 1 : 9. Since God has been so faithful towards us, we should show ourselves worthy of confidence from our fellow men. (4) The business of life could not be carried on without truth between man and man.

**The Question on Missions**

By Rev Professor A. B. Baird, D.D., Winnipeg

Ques. 5. The 21 missions to the Indians are scattered over the country, from New Ontario to Vancouver Island. Most of them have a missionary, ordained or unordained, and a school. The missionary not only preaches, but becomes as intimate as possible with his charges, so that he may influence them for good. He visits them constantly, helps them in their business, encourages them to greater thrift and industry, and above all he keeps constantly before them the highest ideals in life. We have not now any native Indian missionaries who have the standing of ordained men, but there are some five or six native unordained missionaries who are doing valuable service. Those who have been longest in harness are Jacob Bear of Round Lake, and Thomas Stromson of Muscowpetung's Reserve, both of whom are elderly men, and John Thunder, a Sioux, who has charge of the Pipestone Reserve, and who is still in the prime of life.

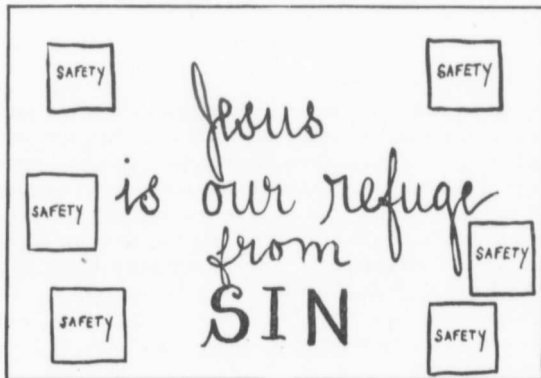
**FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES**

By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, North Bay, Ont.

*Lesson Subject*—God providing a place of safety.

*Introduction*—The teacher should be quite familiar with the geography of the Lesson,

and should know how the land was divided by the casting of the lot (see Exposition). For very little ones, it is not necessary to enter into these matters minutely. Recall the reward given to Caleb for his faithful service. The twelve tribes each received a part of the land for its own special home. From the tribe of Levi were chosen the priests, who were to be the teachers of the people, and that tribe must therefore be scattered all over the country; so Joshua gave them forty-eight cities for





their share, in different parts of the land (see Num. 35 : 7).

"Home Free"—Every little boy and girl knows how to play "hide-and-seek". How you all run to get into the "goal", to get "home free", so that you cannot be caught!

*Cities of Refuge*—We shall make this line for the river Jordan. On this side we'll make three squares, and on the other side we'll make three squares. How many? Count. These six cities have a wall around each (circle). God told Joshua to tell the people to choose six Cities of Refuge (places of safety), into which people could run for safety and get "home free", so that no one could catch them. If you saw a boy running down the street and a policeman running after him, you would be sure that the boy had done something bad.

The people who God said were to run to these cities for safety, were those who had killed some one, but who had not done it "on purpose". God is so kind. He is willing to give everybody a chance to go free, to get to a place of safety, to be forgiven.

See that man running toward this city (stroke)! He has killed some one by accident. Look! there is another trying to catch him (stroke) and kill him in turn. But the first

man reaches the City of Refuge, and tells his story to the elders of the city. If they believe that the killing was accidental, they take him in and care take of him, till he can be properly tried by the judges. Everybody was welcome to these Cities of Refuge, v. 9. God is not willing that any should perish, (2 Pet. 3 : 9, Repeat). There was one of these safety spots within thirty miles of every place in the land, within reach of everybody.

Repeat—

"To write the love of God to men,  
Would drain the ocean dry;  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,  
If stretched from sky to sky."

*Our Refuge*—Print and repeat Golden Text:

MY REFUGE IS IN GOD.

Jesus is our Refuge. We can run to Him in all times of trouble (by prayer). We can run to Him, away from sin, and ask Him to keep us safe.

Repeat—

"Ask the Saviour to help you,  
Comfort, strengthen, and keep you;  
He is willing to aid you.  
He will carry you through."

*Hymn*—Sing Hymn 585, Book of Praise, vs. 1, 2.

*Something to Think About*—Jesus is my only Saviour.

FROM THE PLATFORM  
By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

## CHRIST OUR REFUGE

Tell the story of Luther's agony on account of his sin, and his longing to be saved from its guilt and power. Recall his visit to Rome and his climbing of the Holy Staircase, said to have once formed part of Pilate's house. Freedom from penance for a thousand years is promised to pilgrims who climb it on their knees. Luther began the ascent, repeating the usual prayers and hoping in this way to find peace; but when he was half way up, he remembered the text, "The just shall live by faith (Rom. 1 : 17). He rose from his knees, stood erect a moment, and then went down the stairs again. Like the manslayer, fleeing from the avenger of blood, he had found a REFUGE (Print) from his sins in CHRIST (Print). He saw, that by simply trusting in Christ, he could be saved. Press home the truth that Christ is OUR (Print) Refuge, that we, too, are saved by trusting in Him. Sing, "Just as I am without one plea" (Hymn 151, Book of Praise).

Lesson VI.

**JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL** November 10, 1907

Joshua 24 : 14-28. Commit to Memory vs. 22-24. Read Joshua, chs. 23, 24.

**GOLDEN TEXT**—Choose you this day whom ye will serve.—Joshua 24 : 15.

14 Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth : and put away the gods which your fathers served <sup>1</sup> on the other side of the flood, and in E'gypt ; and serve ye the LORD.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve ; whether the gods which your father served that were <sup>1</sup> on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Am'orites, in whose land ye dwell : but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve o<sup>r</sup> gods ;

17 For the LORD our God, he *is* that brought us <sup>2</sup> up and our fathers <sup>3</sup> out of the land of E'gypt, from the house of bondage, and <sup>4</sup> which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the <sup>5</sup> people through <sup>6</sup> whom we passed :

18 And the LORD drave out from <sup>7</sup> before us all the <sup>8</sup> people, even the Am'orites which dwell in the land : *therefore* <sup>7</sup> will we also serve the LORD ; for he *is* our God.

19 And Josh'ua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD : for he *is* an holy God ; he *is* a jealous God ; he will not forgive your <sup>8</sup> transgressions nor your sins.

**Revised Version**—<sup>1</sup> beyond the River ; <sup>2</sup> *Omit* up ; <sup>3</sup> up ; <sup>4</sup> that did ; <sup>5</sup> peoples ; <sup>6</sup> the midst of ; <sup>7</sup> we also will ; <sup>8</sup> transgression ; <sup>9</sup> evil ; <sup>10</sup> the ; <sup>11</sup> unto ; <sup>12</sup> hearken ; <sup>13</sup> he ; <sup>14</sup> against ; <sup>15</sup> sent the people away.

**LESSON PLAN**

- I. A Choice Presented, 14, 15.
- II. A Choice Made, 16-18.
- III. A Choice Confirmed, 19-28.

**DAILY READINGS**

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—The Assembly, Joshua 24 : 1-13. T.—Joshua renewing the covenant with Israel, Joshua 24 : 14-25. W.—Joshua renewing the covenant with Israel, Joshua 24 : 26-33. Th.—Samuel's exhortation, 1 Sam. 12 : 1-15. F.—Choose life! Deut. 30 : 11-20. S.—Reasonable service, Rom. 12 : 1-8. S.—The first choice, Matt. 6 : 24-34.

**EXPOSITION**

**Time and Place**—B.C. 1427; at Shechem, between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim.

**Connecting Links**—For a number of years after the division of the land, the people are represented as living under the rule of Joshua in peace and quiet, interrupted, however, by occasional wars with the native Canaanites. These wars, for a time, were practically at an end, ch. 21 : 43-45. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh were sent back to their territory on the east side of Jordan, ch. 22. When Joshua, who had grown to be a very old man, felt his end approaching, he summoned first the elders of the people, and then a public gathering of all, in order that he might speak to them his parting words, as Moses had done before him, chs. 23, 24. On each occasion he recalled the great things Jehovah had done

20 if ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you <sup>9</sup> hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Josh'ua, Nay ; but we will serve the LORD.

22 And Josh'ua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, *We are witnesses*

23 Now therefore put away, *said* he, the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD <sup>10</sup> God of Is'rael.

24 And the people said unto Josh'ua, The LORD our God will we serve, and <sup>11</sup> his voice will we <sup>12</sup> obey.

25 So Josh'ua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in She'chem.

26 And Josh'ua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and <sup>13</sup> took a great stone, and set it up there under <sup>10</sup> an oak, that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD.

27 And Josh'ua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness <sup>14</sup> unto us ; for it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us : it shall be therefore a witness <sup>14</sup> unto you, lest ye deny your God.

28 So Josh'ua <sup>15</sup> let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.

**Shorter Catechism**—*ques. 77. What is required in the ninth commandment?* A. The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbour's good name, especially in witness-bearing.

**The Question on Missions**—6. What is done for Indian boys and girls? There are 15 schools, in which the children are trained to speak English and to live in a civilized way. The boys learn to farm and take care of cattle, and the girls to keep house. Especially, they receive Christian instruction.

**Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel. 80 (Supplemental Lesson); 210; 216; 90 (Ps. Sel.); 240 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 211.

for them, and urged them to remain true to Him alone as their God. The second address from which the Lesson is taken—led to the renewing of the covenant between the people and Jehovah.

**I. A Choice Presented, 14, 15.**

V. 14. *Fear the Lord and serve him*; because of all that He had done for them and for their fathers before them. God's wonderful grace laid upon Israel the strongest obligation to grateful homage and obedience. *In sincerity and in truth.* Wyclif's translation is, "with perfect heart and most true". No other service would be acceptable, nor prove enduring. "Sincerity" is the equivalent of a Greek word supposed to contain the idea of something held up in the rays of the sun and thus proved to be without speck or flaw. God hates pretence, and is

*He has been given from the first address*

never cheated by it, Jer. 17 : 10. *Put away the gods, etc.* Joshua knew that these earlier idolatries actually continued to no small extent among the people.

V. 15. *If it seem evil . . . choose, &c.* Joshua urges the people to the service of Jehovah, by forcing them to face the possible alternatives. If they discard Jehovah, let them deliberately look for another god. For some god, he knows, men must serve; it is a question between the true God and false gods. He meant them to see that there was none other than Jehovah worthy of their homage: neither (1) the Babylonian gods . . . beyond the River (Rev. Ver.) Euphrates, the birthplace of Abraham; nor (2) the gods of the Amorites, the most powerful of the Canaanitish tribes, whose name was therefore often given to all the inhabitants of the land, Gen. 15 : 16. *As for me and my house* (family), etc. Joshua's own mind was made up, and he hopes that his decision will influence theirs in the same direction. He would not force them, however, but only persuade them to the right course.

### II. A Choice Made, 16-18.

Vs. 16-18. *God forbid . . . forsake the Lord . . . serve other gods*; an expression of the utmost horror at the thought of idolatry. *The Lord our God, he it is.* The people base their promises of fidelity to God on: (1) their deliverance from Egypt; (2) the great signs wrought by God in that land (notably the plagues and the opening of a way through the Red Sea); (3) their preservation in the wilderness; (4) the driving out of the Amorites.

### III. A Choice Confirmed. 19-28.

Vs. 19-21. *Ye cannot serve the Lord.* Joshua is afraid the people's pledge may be given too lightly, and as lightly broken. He therefore points out to them that the service of Jehovah is one that cannot be easily rendered: indeed, without the help of divine grace, it is impossible. *Holy*; and therefore will not tolerate impurity or selfishness in His people. *Jealous*; will not endure the presence of any rival god in their hearts. *Will not forgive.* This means that there would be certain judgment for disobedience, if it was persisted in. *He . . . consume you, after . . . done you good.* God's past goodness would furnish no safe ground for

presuming that they would escape punishment, if they turned away from Him. *Nay; but we will.* They repeat their pledge, notwithstanding his apparent discouragement, as he hoped they would.

Vs. 22-24. *Witnesses against yourselves.* They could not change without condemning themselves. *Put away . . . the strange gods.* Joshua knew that there were remnants of idolatry still surviving amongst the people, and he urges them to rid themselves of all these, that they may give undivided allegiance to Jehovah. *The Lord our God will we serve.* For the third time they renew their pledge (see vs. 18, 21).

Vs. 25-28. *Joshua made a covenant.* This was a confirmation of the covenant made in Moses' time at Sinai (Ex. 24 : 3-8) and renewed on the Plains of Moab, Deut. 29 : 1. Every generation must make anew its covenant with God, if that covenant is to be maintained. The virtues of our forefathers will not advantage us, unless we practise them ourselves. *In the book of the law.* Joshua wrote these words to recall the transaction to mind, when there should be danger of its being forgotten. The record was placed in the book (roll) containing the Law of Moses. *A great stone*; a further memorial of the people's pledge. *Under the oak* (Rev. Ver.); the tree at which Abraham had received his first recorded promise of Canaan, and had built his first altar, Gen. 12 : 6, 7. *By the sanctuary*; holy place—regarded as such, because Abraham and Jacob (Gen. 33 : 18-20; 35 : 2, 4) had worshiped here. Perhaps the very altar used by them was still standing. *Let the people depart*; having done all he could to confirm them in their fidelity.

The remaining verses of the chapter give an account of Joshua's death and burial, which closes the Book of Joshua

### Light from the East

OTHER GODS—The Babylonians, amongst whom Abraham, the founder of the Hebrews, grew up, worshipped a triad, Anu, Bel, Ea—the god of heaven, the god of earth and the atmosphere, and the god of the watery element. With these were associated Ishtar the goddess of fertility, Shamash and Sin,

that is, the sun and moon, and a host of others. Abraham's native city, Ur, was a centre of moon worship. Some of their psalms show great devotional exaltation of spirit and are worthy of a purer faith, for example: "In heaven who is great? Thou alone art great. On earth who is great? Thou only. When thy voice soundeth in heaven, the gods fall prostrate. When thy voice soundeth on earth, the spirits kiss the dust. Who can resist thy words, O God? Who can rival them? Among the gods thy brothers thou

hast no equal. God, my Creator, may he stand by my side. Keep thou the door of my lips. Guard thou my hands, O Lord of light. O Lord, who trusteth in thee do thou benefit his soul." The hope of immortality appears in the following prayer for a soul: "Like a bird may it fly to a lofty place; to the holy hands of its God may it ascend. The man who is departing into glory, may his soul shine as radiant brass. To that man may the Sun give life. Grant him an abode of happiness."

#### APPLICATION

*In sincerity and in truth*, v. 14. The late Dr. Dale of Birmingham once said that there were three essentials of worship: first, be real; second, be real; third, be real.

**Be Real** To worship God with the lips while the heart is far from Him, is to be guilty of the basest mockery. When we pray, God wants the desires of our hearts. When we praise Him in some psalm or hymn, He requires that there should be love and gratitude in our hearts corresponding to the great words we utter.

*If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord*, v. 15. Many a time it has seemed "evil", according to the world's reckoning, "to serve the Lord". For the apostle James it meant death by the headsman's ax, for Peter, so the tradition runs, crucifixion head downwards; probably for all the Twelve, a violent death. In the early days of Christianity, serving the Lord brought multitudes of men and women, youths and maidens, to a martyr's end. Even at this day, and in our own land, we must lay our account with the scornful sneer, the biting sarcasm, the clever ridicule of companions, the loss of popularity, perhaps injury to business, if we would serve the Lord. But over against this, there is the joy and satisfaction of living the noblest and best life possible on earth, and the rewards, more glorious than mortal tongue can tell, of the world to come.

*Choose you*, v. 15. At a religious conference, not long ago, a successful business man said that, as a young man, his ambition had been to build up the greatest business in its

own line, in the country. He soon found out that, if he was to succeed in this, he must give up active work in the church. This he felt he ought not to do, and he therefore contented himself with a small measure of success. He deliberately faced the question whether God or business was to have the first place, and he decided for God, a decision which he never found reason to regret.

*This day*, v. 15. A thousand voices are telling us that "this day" is one of most momentous importance in the history of our country. New districts of immense area are being opened up in the north and west. Immigrants are flocking to our shores in astonishing numbers. Soon our land will have taken its set for God or evil. Our time will tell tremendously on all future times in Canada. There is need for each one of us to line up on the side of the forces that make for righteousness. No earthly sovereign, but the King of kings, is calling us to enlist in His army, to fight His battles, to drive out, and keep out, of this fair land all that injures men's bodies and souls, and to establish all that makes life noble and true.

*As for me*, v. 15. The writer spent a Sabbath recently in a small town, where one of the churches has a beautiful set of chimes. In the quiet evening hour, before the evening service, these sweet bells peal out the tune of one gospel tune after another. All over the town sound the message and the invitation of the bells. Like those bells, is a life that is sincerely and resolutely devoted to God. It bears continual witness to

**This Day, in  
Canada**

**Counting the  
Cost**

**The Message of  
the Bells**

**God First**

His power and grace. Without words, it rebukes sin, and calls men to a life of righteousness.

*God forbid that we should...serve other gods,* v. 16. A recent story pictures a young minister listening, in one of the public parks of London, England, to an attack upon Christianity. Obtaining permission to speak, he challenges the assailant to mention the schools and hospitals and asylums which have sprung up in the soil of unbelief. In this way, the edge of the attack was completely turned, and the young champion carried with him the enthusiasm of the crowd. We have but to count up the blessings which Christian lands possess, and contrast them with the misery and darkness of heathen countries, to be convinced that the religion of the Bible rightly commands our heartfelt homage and our unreserved obedience.

*This stone...a witness,* v. 27. As one enters the mouth of the Niagara River from Lake Ontario, there looks down upon him from the stately monument on Queenston Heights the soldierly figure of Sir Isaac Brock, the hero of the war of 1812. That monument is an enduring witness to the splendid courage, in leader and soldiers alike, which, at a critical moment preserved Canada for the British crown. That graceful shaft reared against the sky, and that silent figure of the hero who

died for king and country, are a constant reminder, more eloquent than words, of the loyalty required of each Canadian citizen. In like manner, when we read and hear the gospel, and especially when we come to the Lord's Table, we behold the cross, where the Son of God became "obedient unto death". That cross summons us, with a constraint more powerful than speech, to give our lives to the service of Him who has redeemed us at so great a cost.

### Lesson Points

God does not compel us by His might to serve Him, but sweetly constrains us by His mercies. v. 14.

To compromise with evil is, in the end, to be conquered by it. v. 15.

We live by God's bounty; we should live to His praise. vs. 16-18.

To keep heaven's laws, we must have heaven's strength. v. 19.

The gospel offers salvation from sin, not in sin. v. 20.

Difficulties do not check the manly soul, but spur it on to nobler endeavor. v. 21.

Practice is the test of profession. v. 23.

We should be slow to make pledges and steadfast in keeping them. v. 24.

In God's house we receive power to do God's will. v. 26.

Our deeds furnish the testimony on which we shall be judged. v. 27.

### TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades of the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

This is the last study in the life and work of Joshua. The six years of conquest had not wholly exterminated the Canaanites (ch. 23 : 12 ; Judg. 2 : 2, 3), but it had practically subdued the land, so that almost 20 years of peace followed. Immediately after the war, the soldiers of the tribes settled on the east side of Jordan returned to their homes and divided the spoil with those who had remained at home. The building of an altar on the east side led to some jealousy, but the difficulty was soon satisfactorily settled.

Joshua feels his work is almost over, being now 110 years of age, and having watched the whole life and tendency of the people in Canaan, he feels there is need of an urgent message. He gathers them together at Shechem, between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, in a solemn manner, and, in the presence of the elders, judges and officers, makes his final appeal. After a brief historical review, in which he exalts the presence of God in all their conquests, he presses the question of their personal allegiance to God.

1. *The great choice offered,* vs. 14, 15. He appeals to their experience, and holds it is only reasonable to serve God, in view of all God had done. It is the argument of known fact. He wishes them to choose with all



the evidence before them. If it is hurtful to serve God, do not do so. If it is hurtful to serve idols, do not do so. They had tried the gods of the Amorites and the gods of the Chaldees, and had found them discredited and vicious. They had worshiped God, and had found power, joy, victory. He thus demands a reasonable choice. He further insists that the worship of God must be wholehearted. They had been mingling idol worship with the worship of God. He asks that false gods be wholly abandoned.

2. *The choice of God*, v. 16-18. They decided to serve God, and Joshua had them confirm it, (vs. 16, 21, 24); and it was permanent for that generation (compare ch. 24 : 31; Judg. 2 : 7). Note the reason: God had shown himself their God by redeeming them from Egypt, keeping them in the journey, and aiding in the conquest; therefore they would serve Him. Gratitude demanded it.

3. *The principles of service*, vs. 19-20. These were very high. God is holy and jealous, therefore must be worshiped in sincerity. Transgression, sin, idolatry are all an outrage and must be punished. It was a powerful plea for uprightness.

4. *The witnesses*, vs. 21-28. The people themselves publicly committed themselves to God. A covenant was made; and a written testimony to it placed by the sanctuary. A stone memorial was built to commemorate the decision.

It was the splendid closing of Joshua's long and honorable career. Review his work. He was a soldier, who settled the people and gave Israel rest. He thus fulfilled the promise of God, and gave Israel a new beginning. The Lesson is an illustration of the secret of his success, God first. Let the teacher bring this home to the class. See Jesus' principle in Matt. 6 : 33, 34.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The Lesson being the last of the six from Joshua's life and deeds, it will be in order to review the Lessons of the Quarter, which begin with Joshua's call to lead the people across the Jordan into the Promised Land. The scholars should be asked the week previous to read over the Carrying on the Story

in the six Lessons, in the INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY. This will give them the narrative, while the questions of A Backward Glance will test their knowledge. The present writer sets great store by the boys and girls knowing the Bible story, in its order.

Joshua's crowning life's work was to conquer Canaan in God's name and by God's help, for God's people. He had done this, and established the people securely in it. He is now a very old man. We are to listen to his last words to them.

Have the scholars turn to chs. 23 and 24, and note that there were two assemblies: first, of the rulers (ch. 23: 2), and then of the rulers and all the people (ch. 24 : 1, 2). It is of the second the Lesson tells. Where held? Ch. 24 : 1 gives the answer, Question about Shechem, and the gathering of all the people between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim. When the people entered Canaan, Joshua had there solemnly rehearsed in their hearing the law of the Lord. (See Geography Lesson and ch. 8 : 30-35.)

"Now therefore"—the Lesson begins. "Therefore" gives a reason. Question for this. There will not be time for all the answers. The substance of them is, "The Lord has done wonderful things for you; therefore —." Have the scholars turn for parallel passage, to Rom. 12 : 1.

"Therefore"—what? The class will pick out the items from v. 14—"fear" and serve the Lord and put away idols. Some questions as to the meaning of "the other side of the flood", and as to what idols they were, will be of interest.

Now comes the climax—a challenge to choose between the Lord and the idols. The scholars will hold their breath as you describe it, v. 15. Have them give reasons for the one side and the other, encouraging free discussion—why choose idols? why choose the Lord?

The choice: What is it? Why this choice? Let the five great reasons which the people gave be named. Get the scholars to say how many of these reasons we have for choosing God, and to tell who is our great Deliverer, and from what He delivered us, and what blessings He has brought to us.

Does this end the work of the day? Let

one read aloud vs. 19, 20. Talk the matter over with the class. Why is it so hard to serve the Lord? (Be sure that the word "jealous" is explained—jealous of His own honor and of holiness; and make plain that even the loving Saviour—who is the Lord—can be and is angry, and will punish when we persist in sin: compare Ps. 2:12).

The people's answer, v. 21.

The solemn oath which they take; for that is what v. 22 means.

The proof they are to give of their sin-

cerity, v. 23.

Their final response, v. 24. The solemn covenant, v. 25 (explain the various words).

The words written down, and the monument set up as a witness, vs. 26, 27.

The hardest part of the choice was still to come. "What can that be?" the class will ask. V. 28 answers: it is so much easier to come out on the Lord's side in response to a great appeal and when others do it, than it is to keep on His side alone in our daily task.

### THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

(SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON V.)

To-day's Lesson is occupied with the vale and town of Shechem. The vale (see QUARTERLIES) lies between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim, where Joshua assembled the tribes of Israel to hear the blessings and the cursings of the law, Josh. 8:30-35. Canon Tristram says that "a natural amphitheatre exists at the base of Mount Gerizim, and exactly opposite in the base of Mount Ebal is a similar one, and that the voice may be easily distinguished from one to the other. The natural features of these two mountains are striking, Ebal being bare and stony, while Gerizim is clad with verdure."

Mr. C. G. Trumbull, in *A Pilgrimage to*

Jerusalem, gives the following description, Nâblus being the modern name of Shechem: "Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim towered above us as we rode between them into our camp on the edge of Nâblus. We were traveling southeast; on our left, the north, was Ebal, the mount of cursing; on our right, Gerizim, the mount of blessing. Red-roofed and sheltered in the valley between them, nestled the city that was Shechem. Through narrow streets and dark, damp alleys and corridors, closed overhead like subterranean passages, we were led on what must have been a walk of half a mile before we reached our goal, the Samaritan synagogue".

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

#### From the Library

It was at Shechem that Joshua's last meeting with the people took place. It lay a few miles to the northwest of Shiloh, and was not only distinguished (as we have already said) as Abraham's first resting-place in the country, and the scene of the earliest of the promises given in it to him; but likewise as the place where, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, the blessings and curses of the law had been read out soon after Joshua entered the land, and solemn assent of the people given to them. Shechem was therefore the scene of Joshua's farewell address. Possibly it was delivered close to the well of Jacob and the tomb of Joseph; at the very place where, many centuries later, the New Testament

Joshua sat wearied with His journey, and unfolded the riches of divine grace to the woman of Samaria.—Dr. W. G. Blaikie.

#### Some Test Questions

1. Describe the condition of Israel after the division of Canaan amongst the tribes.
2. What two gatherings did Joshua summon before his death? For what purposes?
3. Of what did he remind the people? What did he urge upon them?
4. On what ground was Israel urged to fear God?
5. What choice did Joshua present to them? What example did he set them?
6. How did the people respond? What proofs of God's goodness did they recall?
7. With what apparent discouragement did Joshua receive the people's offer of service? Explain his purpose.

8. What effect had his words upon the people?

9. How did Joshua require them to prove their sincerity?

10. What covenant was renewed?

11. What sign of the covenant was set up?

### Something to Look Up

1. Find the passage where the Israelites were required to choose between the Lord and Baal.

2. What does Jesus say about serving God and mammon? Turn to the verse.

ANSWERS (Lesson V.)—1. Ps. 46: 2. Heb. 6: 18.

### For Discussion

- Reasons for choosing the services of God.
- Why confess Christ?

### Prove from Scripture

That we should choose God's service.

### The Catechism

Ques. 77. *What the Ninth Commandment requires.* A lie is a very ugly thing. And it often does a great deal of harm. Sometimes people suffer a great deal, because others said bad things about them that are not true at all. Their good name is taken away, that is, those about them are made to think badly of them. We like to be thought well of. We ought to be glad when people

think well of our neighbors. But there is something more important than to have the good opinion of others. It is to deserve it by acting rightly. We may be witnesses in a court of law. Then we should be specially careful to tell the exact truth. For what we say, may cause another to lose his property, or be put in prison, or even be put to death.

### The Question on Missions

Ques. 6. Nine of the Indian schools are boarding schools, in which the children live, in some cases, for as many as eight or ten years, with only occasional visits to their Indian homes. They are surrounded by kindly Christian influences, under which their natural fear and suspicion speedily disappear. The older pupils spend half of each school day at the usual school course of study, and the other half at some useful kind of work, which will fit them to become useful members of the community. In the six day schools, the special features are that considerable time is given, as in the boarding schools, to religious instruction, and that as much as possible is done in the way of manual training. Indian children are just as bright as white children, and in some lines, as in writing and drawing, they are superior. They learn English quickly, especially in the boarding schools.

### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*Lesson Subject*—God calling His people to serve Him.

*Introduction*—Show an oak leaf and acorn (or outline). Draw a picture of an oak tree.

Did you ever see an oak tree? What great spreading branches it has! How strong it is! How you little ones love to play under the big trees! We are going to hear about a stone that was placed under an oak tree at Shechem (map). Under this oak, Abraham, the friend of God, had sat when God promised to make of his children a great nation, and to give them the land of Canaan for their own home. We'll print ABRAHAM under the branches, and PROMISE at the side. God has kept that promise,



and now Abraham's descendants (the children of Israel) were living in this Promised Land.

To-day we see JOSHUA (print under branches) placing a great stone (sketch beside "Joshua") under the oak tree; and our Lesson to-day tells us why Joshua placed the stone there.

*Bad Habits from Bad Companions*—You know that the children of Israel had got into some very bad ways, from being with bad companions, the Egyptians, and many of them worshiped idols such as they had seen the Egyptians worshiping.

Joshua is getting to be an old man, and he knows that God will soon take him to the home in heaven. Therefore, one day he gathered all the tribes and all their leaders together at Shechem, near the oak tree, and reminded them of all the great things God had done for them. ch. 24 : 1-13. He tells them to put away their idols and serve God only.

*Golden Text*—Print Golden Text and repeat, CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE (idols, or the true God?). Tell the reply of the people (vs. 16-18), and Joshua's warning, vs. 19, 20. All repeat the First and Second Commandments.

*The Choice*—We will serve the Lord.

*Something to be Done*—

Put away the Strange Gods

Incline Your Hearts unto the Lord.

*The Choice Recorded*—Joshua wrote their choice (decision) in "the book of the law" (see Exposition). Draw a roll, and print on it: THE LORD OUR GOD WILL WE SERVE (v. 24, repeat). Who would like to have their names printed under this promise?

*A Stone of Remembrance*—Now we see Joshua placing this great stone (outline) under the oak tree, to help the people to remember their choice and the promise they had made. We'll call it a Remember Stone.

*Decision for Christ*—Can the little ones make a choice? Here is what little ones, as well as big people, are asked to choose between:

SIN  
or JESUS  
SELF

Explain that if we are selfish, we are making an idol of self. If we are sinful, we are making an idol of sin.

Let us choose Jesus, to-day, for all our life. God will write our name and our choice in His book of remembrance. We can set up a Remember Stone for ourselves.

*Something to Think About*—I should choose God's service.

#### FROM THE PLATFORM

CHOOSE YOU WHOM  
WHY  
WHEN?

Print on the blackboard, CHOOSE YOU. The scholars will tell, in answer to questions, whose words these were, and to whom and on what occasion they were spoken. Let the conversation gather round the questions WHOM? WHY? WHEN? (Print). In connection with the first of these questions, bring out clearly the difference between Israel's God and the gods of the heathen. The second question will be answered by recalling all that God had done for Israel since the days of their bondage in Egypt. The answer to the third question is, of course, "this day" (v. 15). Refer to the paragraph of the Application on these words. Picture vividly the great opportunities there are for serving God in our country. Indicate how our church is seeking to win Canada for Christ, especially by her Home Mission work, and urge all to enlist in this glorious enterprise. Emphasize the great importance of the present day, in this, as in other parts of the church's work.

## Lesson VII.

## GIDEON AND HIS THREE HUNDRED November 17, 1907

Judges 7: 9-23. Commit to Memory, vs. 17, 18. Read Judges chs. 6 to 8,

**GOLDEN TEXT**—Ye shall not fear them; for the Lord your God he shall fight for you.—Deuteronomy 3: 22.

9 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down <sup>1</sup> unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.

10 But if thou fear to go down, go thou with <sup>2</sup> Phu'rah thy servant down to the <sup>3</sup> host:

11 And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down <sup>1</sup> unto the host. Then went he down with <sup>2</sup> Phu'rah his servant unto the <sup>4</sup> outside of the armed men that were in the <sup>3</sup> host.

12 And the Mid'ianites and the Amal'ekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like <sup>5</sup> grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand <sup>6</sup> by the sea side for multitude.

13 And when Gid'eon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the <sup>7</sup> host of Mid'ian, and came unto <sup>7</sup> a tent, and smote it that it fell, and <sup>8</sup> overturned it, that the tent lay along.

14 And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gid'eon the son of Jo'ash, a man of Is'rael: <sup>9</sup> for into his hand <sup>10</sup> hath God delivered Mid'ian, and all the host.

15 And it was so, when Gid'eon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and <sup>11</sup> returned into the <sup>3</sup> host of Is'rael, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Mid'ian.

16 And he divided the three hundred men into

**Revised Version**—into the camp: <sup>2</sup> Purah: <sup>3</sup> camp: <sup>4</sup> outermost part; <sup>5</sup> locusts; <sup>6</sup> which is upon the sea shore; <sup>7</sup> the; <sup>8</sup> turned it upside down; <sup>9</sup> Omit for; <sup>10</sup> God hath; <sup>11</sup> he; <sup>12</sup> into the hands of all of them trumpets, and; <sup>13</sup> with torches; <sup>14</sup> For the LORD, and for Gideon, and for Gideon; <sup>15</sup> when; <sup>16</sup> in pieces; <sup>17</sup> torches; <sup>18</sup> and they shouted, and put them to flight; <sup>19</sup> they blew the three hundred trumpets; <sup>20</sup> and against all; <sup>21</sup> as far as; <sup>22</sup> toward Zererah, as far as; <sup>23</sup> by; <sup>24</sup> were gathered together; <sup>25</sup> Midian.

**LESSON PLAN**

I. Midian's Camp, 9-14.

II. Midian's Conqueror, 15-21a.

III. Midian's Flight, 21b-23.

**DAILY READINGS**

(By courtesy of B. I. R. Association)

M.—Sin and its consequences, Judges 6: 1-10. T.—Gideon's call, Judges 6: 11-24. W.—Gideon encouraged, Judges 6: 25-40. Th.—Gideon and his three hundred, Judges 7: 1-14. F.—Gideon and his three hundred, Judges 7: 15-23. S.—"Not by might," Zech. 4: 1-10. S.—Power in weakness, 1

Cor. 1: 20-31.

**Shorter Catechism**—Ques. 78. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment? A. The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbour's good name.

**The Question on Missions**—7. What do the boys and girls do after they leave school? Most of them go back to the reserves, and make a living as farmers; and some of these are bright examples of success as civilized and Christian leaders amongst their own people.

**Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel., 80 (Supplemental Lesson); 255; 260; 62 (Ps. Sel.); 252 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 256.

**EXPOSITION**

**Time and Place**—About B. C. 1249; the valley of Jezreel.

**Connecting Links**—The Book of Judges consists of a number of episodes in the history of Israel, covering a considerable period; but the story is not continuous, nor are the incidents given in chronological order. Again and again, as the result of defection from Jehovah and of disunion among themselves, they became subject to various foreign enemies. Amongst these last were Midianites from the Arabian desert, who, along with other tribes from the same region, swept across the Jordan and laid waste the fertile valleys which the Israelites were seeking to cultivate. God raised up a deliverer in

Gideon of Ophrah in the tribe of Manasseh, who raised his standard in the name of Jehovah. An army of 32,000 men rallied around him for a time, but two-thirds of them melted away in presence of the enemy. The remaining 10,000 were ultimately reduced to 300. By a clever ruse, these proved sufficient to put the invading tribes to flight. (See chs. 6: 1 to 7: 8.)

**I. Midian's Camp, 9-14.**

Vs. 9, 10. *The same night*; immediately following the reduction of Gideon's army to three hundred men, as described in vs. 4-8. *Arise, get thee down unto the host*; a command from God to make an attack upon the invading Midianites, who were encamped in



the valley of Jezreel (see Geography Lesson) *I have delivered*, etc. God had already formed His purposes; it was for Gideon to carry them out. *If thou fear*; to make the attack. It seemed a foolhardy thing to go with a little band of three hundred against so great a host. *Go . . . with . . . thy servant*; as spies by night, to find out the real strength of the enemy, and learn something of their temper and their plans.

Vs. 11, 12. *Went he . . . outside of the armed men*; the warriors of Midian, who were encamped on the side nearest Gideon's army, to protect the unarmed women, children, shepherds, camel drivers (see v. 12), etc., in the camp of the invaders. *Midianites and Amalekites*; who made up the main part of the invading army. *Children of the east*; a general name for the wandering tribes of Arabia. *Like grasshoppers*; that is, swarms of locusts such as sometimes sweep over Palestine, darkening the air as they fly, and, when they light, covering the ground for miles. *Camels . . . as the sand*. These would be required for carrying the women and children and the baggage of so vast a multitude.

Vs. 13, 14. *A man* (a Midianite soldier) *. . . told a dream*. Compare the dreams of Joseph (Gen. 37 : 5-10) and Pharaoh (Gen. 41 : 1-8) as other examples of God's making His purpose known in this way. *A cake of barley bread*; a flat, circular bannock. Barley was distinguished from "fine flour", as being the commonest sort of food. *Tumbled into the camp . . . overturned . . . the tent*; (Rev. Ver.) doubtless the tent of the commander. The teller of the dream saw in the barley cake a symbol of the insignificance of Gideon's army. *His fellow . . . the sword of Gideon*, etc. The second man saw deeper than his companion, and knew that the Israelitish army was to be greatly dreaded, not lightly despised.

### II. Midian's Conqueror, 15-21a.

Vs. 15, 16. *Gideon heard . . . worshipped*; praised the Lord with joy, seeing in the soldier's dream an assurance that God would give him the victory. *Arise*; a summons to Israel's army to make the attack without delay. *Divided . . . men into three companies*; so as to spread them out and make them seem like three attacking forces coming on Midian

in the night. *Trumpet in every man's hand*; to make it appear, still further, that the Israelites were a great host, since there was commonly only one trumpet for a considerable company of soldiers. *Empty pitchers*; made of earthenware and of considerable size, used to hold meal or water. In these the lamps were to be concealed.

Vs. 17-21a. *The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*. With such a battle cry, Israel must conquer. Against the courage and skill of such a leader as Gideon, linked with the might of Jehovah, the little band of heroes was invincible. *Middle watch*; about midnight, there being three watches in the night. *Blew . . . trumpets . . . brake . . . pitchers . . . held . . . lamps*. Gideon could hope to overcome only by terror throwing them into a panic, as if a mighty army were at hand. *Stood . . . about the camp*; so that it appeared to the Midianites as if they were surrounded by an overwhelming force.

### III. Midian's Flight, 21b-23.

Vs. 21b-23. *Fled*, etc. The situation of the places named is not precisely known; but the general direction of the flight was towards the fords of the Jordan, across which the invaders had come into Palestine. *Every man's sword against his fellow*. In the panic and darkness, each man took his neighbor as a probable enemy, and struck out indiscriminately. *Naphthali . . . Asher . . . Manasseh*. From these tribes and from Zebulun, all bordering on the valley of Jezreel, Gideon's army had been recruited, ch. 6 : 35. The soldiers who had been sent away before the battle (vs. 3, 7) were recalled to take part in the pursuit.

### Light from the East

LAMPS AND PITCHERS—The lamps of the East are of clay burned in the kiln, and are oval, with one end tapering to a spout. The hollow for the oil is often covered, except a small hole for pouring it in, and a hole in the point of the spout for the wick, which is usually a small piece of rag. On the wide end is a handle. But the lamps here are probably torches of some inflammable material, which would only smoulder in the pitcher, but would burst into flame when swung round in the air. The pitchers were

long, narrow jars for carrying water, but in this case were used for concealing the torches, just as the Syrian peasants still carry their lamps in these jars on a windy night. Gideon had discovered the unwarlike and panicky condition of his foes, and took his measures accordingly. We can scarcely conceive what a noise in the stillness of the night the sudden

smashing of three hundred jars would make. And when this was instantly followed by the blazing forth of three hundred torches, and the fierce Hebrew war cry sounding from three sides at once, the effect must have been terrible. Once thrown into a panic, the host could not distinguish friend from foe in the darkness, and slaughtered one another.

## APPLICATION

*Get thee down unto the host, v. 9.* No force can prevail against those for whom God fights. It is a stirring tale, the siege of Leyden in Holland, during the fierce persecutions of the Protestants in that country by Philip II. of Spain. The besiegers were pressing the town hard. William of Orange advised the cutting of the dykes to let in the sea, so that the brave Dutch sailors, known as the Sea Beggars, might come to the rescue. This work was begun, but the dykes took long to cut, and when the water at last began to flow slowly in, a violent wind swept it back to the sea. Within Leyden the supply of food was melting away. The Spaniards urged the citizens to surrender, offering them favorable terms. But the reply came from the brave defenders of the walls, "We have two arms, and when hunger forces us we will eat the one and fight you with the other". At last, after four months, the sea reached the walls, and the gallant Sea Beggars were soon upon the foe. The Spaniards were put to flight, and Leyden was saved.

*Go, hear what they say, vs. 10, 11.* One who was himself skilled in the art of war, said that the best general is the one who knows what is going on behind a stone wall. If we would win the victory, we must know the opposition with which we have to reckon. A fierce conflict is on between the church of God and many kinds of evil. Some timid souls suppose that the forces of wickedness are so strong and united that they cannot be overcome. But the truth is that in every supporter and defender of an evil cause there is a secret consciousness of weakness and a constant dread of defeat. The army of the Lord has but to go boldly forward in His strength, and its triumph is assured.

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,  
The eternal years of God are hers;  
While error, wounded, writhes in pain,  
And dies among its worshippers."

*A cake of barley bread . . . came unto the tent, and smote it, v. 13 (Rev. Ver.).* The Sea Beggars who saved Leyden belonged to a confederacy whose emblem was the beggar's sack. Its first members were three hundred young nobles of Holland, who had presented a petition to the Regent Margaret, half sister to Philip II., asking that the king should be recommended to stop the persecutions. A nobleman amongst the Regent's counselors said to her, "Madam, is Your Highness afraid of these beggars?" They accepted the name, multitudes joined their company, and the powerful and cruel king was made to feel their strength in the defence of civil and religious liberty. This is but one example, of which history furnishes many others, in which God has chosen instruments despised of men to accomplish His mighty purpose.

*Gideon heard . . . worshiped . . . returned . . . and said, Arise, v. 15.* David Livingstone begged the directors of the London Missionary Society, wherever they sent him, to be sure that it was "forward". He was ambitious to spend his life, not in some missionary station already established, but to push the line of Christian missions in advance of points already held. Captain Allan Gardiner chose Tierra del Fuego as his mission field, just because the people were so ferocious, the climate so trying, and the work so difficult, that no one else was likely to take it up; He and his companions were starved to death, but a second band took up their work. And when these were massacred by the natives, a third band went out, influenced simply by

For Whom God  
Fights

"These  
Beggars"

The Weakness  
of Evil

For Heroic  
Living

the fact that the case was apparently so desperate. How these noble examples—and they could be multiplied indefinitely from the history of missions—stir our blood, and nerve us for heroic living, whatever our appointed sphere may be!

*Divided the three hundred men into companies*, v. 16. Gideon's "plan of campaign" was a stroke of military genius, which is nothing else than an intelligent use of the opportunities of the moment. It would be well if Christian workers in the cause of Christ practised the same common sense, the same wisdom, which men of the world display in their affairs. Dullness is not holiness, and tact and shrewdness, if consecrated to God, may find ample scope in Christian service.

*Trumpets . . . pitches . . . torches*, v. 16 (Rev. Ver.). Much of the world's best work has been done with imperfect equipment. Michael

Angelo carved his masterpiece, the statue of David, out of a block of marble which had been cast away as useless. Charles

Darwin made his great experiments with the rudest and cheapest instruments. The main thing is that we go straight at our work with prudence, intelligence and enthusiasm. Then our efforts will count, however poor our tools may be.

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

The Lesson begins a short series of studies taken from the Period of the Judges. It is well to briefly consider the Book in its general plan, purpose and contents. It extends from Joshua's death to the birth of Samuel, not a continuous story, but incidents illustrating the progress of the people and God's overruling providence. The "Judges" were the recognized authority in certain centres, and some exercised jurisdiction over the whole of Israel. The fact that the conquest had not been completed left the possibility of rebellion and moral danger from heathenism. Follow the course of events. Note the rebuke for adopting heathen rites (ch. 2 : 1-5), the death of Joshua (ch. 2 : 6-9); and the begin-

*Every man in his place*, v. 21. It takes many colors to make up the white rays of the sun. It takes various sorts of food to

build up the healthiest and strongest bodies. It takes many tones of harmonies to make an anthem. It takes a great variety of instruments to make an orchestra. So, men of different temperaments and abilities and capacities are required for the working out of God's purposes. Our place may be a very lowly one, but, if we fill it well, we shall have our share in the final success and triumph.

#### Lesson Points

When God summons, He at the same time strengthens. v. 9.

Faith is the unfailing antidote to fear, v. 10.

With heaven as our ally, the whole world cannot prevail against us. v. 12.

Average ability multiplied by extraordinary energy can accomplish wonders. v. 13.

"Conscience does make cowards of us all." v. 14.

The fear of God in the heart drives out the fear of man. v. 15.

Plans that grow out of prayer are sure to prosper. v. 16.

If our work is to be effective, it must be timely. vs. 17, 18.

There is as great need of loyal followers as of wise leaders. vs. 19, 20.

#### TEACHING HINTS

ning of the rule of the Judges. It will be helpful to make a chart showing the judges in their relation to time and leading events. During the 200 years following the death of Joshua, there had been three serious lapses into idolatry, followed by oppression, and when the people repented, God raised up deliverers (see ch. 2 : 5-11; 12-35; chs. 4, 5).

1. Study the oppression by the Midianites (ch. 6 : 16), the cause of this oppression (vs. 7-10), the call of Gideon, vs. 11-24. In his early years he is a courageous reformer, vs. 25-32. Note his preparations, and the tokens of God's favor (vs. 33-40), the call to Israel and the various tests which reduced his army from 32,000 to 300 men, ch. 7 : 1-8. Observe the strange equipment and the readiness to meet 135,000 (ch. 8 : 10) Midianites. Pause to consider the purpose of

this. God's plan was not merely to save their farms, but to save the people from sin, and this plan was fitted to exalt God and awaken faith in Him. It was to get quality rather than numbers, consecrated spirits who would obey. The whole plan would teach the people the secret of their strength.

2. *The encouragement*, vs. 9-15. Study the night survey of the enemy, the conversation. Note the "barley bread"—the food of the poorest, the incident and its interpretation showing the sense of disaster already brooding in their minds. This greatly inspired Gideon.

3. *The battle and the victory*, vs. 16-23. Observe: (a) The arrangements of the men in three companies, with trumpets, lamps and pitchers. (b) the order of battle. They were to follow their leader, blow the trumpet, break the pitchers, and give the cry the enemy feared. (c) The effect. Disorder at once arose, leading to slaughter and panic. In the confusion, Gideon sent men to seize the ford of Jordan. Many joined in the pursuit, and the ruin of the enemy was so complete that the Midianite does not appear again in history.

The Lesson illustrates three things. First, the value of good leadership. Second, the value of character in action. Third, the value of faith in God. (Compare Heb. 11:32.) Gideon's secret is still the secret of successful spiritual warfare, watchfulness, wisdom, perseverance, until the enemy is slain forever.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Two Lessons now from a new Book, Judges. Some questions and information,—preferably information through questions,—about the period, and the Book (see, for material, Connecting Links and For Teachers of the Older Scholars, where full details are given). Be economical of time in this preliminary work; the Lesson passage is rich in incident.

The two Lessons from Judges are on Gideon and Samson, respectively. The former held by God, the latter failed to do so. The one succeeded. The other failed. This much, perhaps, the teacher may say at the very beginning.

Clear the ground by bringing out these four things (chs. 6 and 7:1-8): (1) The hordes of the Midianites had swarmed over the land of Israel and held the people in complete subjection for seven years. They seemed too numerous and too powerful ever to be got rid of. (2) God called Gideon to the rescue; and (3) gave him promise of victory, confirming it by miraculous signs. (4) By God's instructions Gideon's army of 32,000 was reduced to 300 picked men.

The events of the Lesson may be grouped under five headings:

1. *The Lord's command*, v. 9. Explain "the same night"—as soon as the choice of the attacking band had been completed. The King's business requireth haste. "Get thee down"; picture the 300 on the hill and the 135,000 (ch. 8:10) in the valley, and the blackness of the night. Then, the Lord's command: enough to stagger the bravest; and His assurance; God always backs up His commands with *Himself*. If we go where God sends us, He goes with us (compare Matt. 28:19, 20).

2. *The reconnaissance*, vs. 10-15. "But"—. "How very patient God is. He had said enough; but Gideon still feared. So He will fortify him still further (compare Jesus' dealings with the doubting Thomas, John 20:24-28). Let one of the scholars be prepared to tell the story of Gideon's reconnaissance—the cautious descent into the dark valley, with his one attendant; what they heard; and in v. 15 Gideon's fresh accession of courage: he felt sure now, that the Lord was to be as good as His word.

3. *The plan of battle*, vs. 16-18. Another scholar,—perhaps a school cadet,—will delight to describe the ruse which Gideon was to employ. When he has described it, ask questions such as these: Wherein consists the cleverness of the ruse? How does it show Gideon's confidence in his men? How, will it show their confidence in him? How, the confidence of both leader and followers in God? On which did they most rely—the Lord's "sword" (why so called?) or Gideon's?

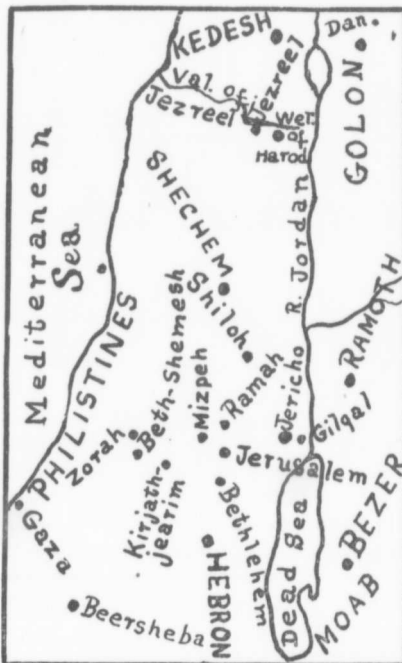
4. *The attack*, vs. 19-21. Even if it seems like a repetition, the class will relish the story of the carrying out of the plan of battle—

at the midnight hour, when slumber was heaviest; the watch new set, and therefore possibly unready; every man of the 300 standing in his place and carrying out his instructions; the sudden flashing of the lights, the blare of trumpets, and the shout of war. The little army made the most of itself.

2. *The rout*, vs. 21-23. The boys and girls will likely not take much interest in the

detailed geography of the rout. The rush was toward the Jordan fords miles from the scene of the battle and on the way to the Arabian wilderness. They will, however, be interested in these two things,—the completeness of the victory, and the fact that it was God that did it (v. 22). Impress the Golden Text, as applying to all the battles which, as soldiers of Christ, we have to fight.

### THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



and fought on this famous plain. The Well of Harod, where Gideon's three hundred were chosen, was thirteen miles from the Jordan. (See the QUARTERLIES.)

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

#### Some Test Questions

1. Of what does the Book of Judges consist?
2. Why did Israel become subject to foreign enemies?
3. Whence did the Midianite invaders of Israel come?
4. Whom did God raise up as a leader

Well to the north, on the coast of Palestine, the bold promontory of Carmel juts out into the Mediterranean. From the Bay of Acre, to the north of Carmel, a broad plain runs right through the country to the Jordan. This plain is called the Valley of Esdraelon, which is the Greek form of the Hebrew Jezreel. The name Jezreel was sometimes given to the whole valley, from the sea to the Jordan, but more strictly it applied only to that portion of it from Jezreel eastward, about twelve miles long and three miles wide. The rest of the plain is sometimes known by the name Megiddo. The Plain of Esdraelon has been called the battle field of Palestine. Four great battles are recorded in the Old Testament as having been fought here:

- (1) The Israelites under Barak routed the Canaanites under Sisera (see Judg. chs. 4, 5).
- (2) Gideon put to flight the invading Midianites.
- (3) Saul was defeated by the Philistines, 1 Sam., ch. 31.
- (4) King Josiah was vanquished and slain by the Egyptians, 2 Kgs. 23: 29, 30. In later days the Syrians, the Romans, the Crusaders, and the French armies under the great Napoleon marched against these?
5. How large was his army, to begin with? To what number was it first reduced? What further reductions was made, and how?
6. By what means did Gideon discover the real strength and temper of the enemy?
7. How is the number of the invading host described?
8. What stratagem did Gideon contrive? Explain his purpose in this.
9. At what time was the attack made



and with what result?

10. Whither did the Midianites flee? Who came to aid Gideon's army in the pursuit?

### Something to Look Up

1. Gideon had another name. Find what it was.
2. Afterwards the people wanted to make Gideon their king; and he made a very noble answer. Where is it found?

ANSWERS (Lesson VI.)—1. 1 Kgs. 18 : 21.  
2. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon"; Matt. 6 : 24.

### For Discussion

1. God's part, and Gideon's, in the rout of the Midianites.
2. Ways in which God strengthens the faith of His servants.

### Prove from Scripture

That our real strength is in God.

### The Catechism

Ques. 78. *What the Ninth Commandment forbids.* Long ago, as we read in 1 Kings 21 : 1-13, the wicked queen, Jezebel, formed a plot to secure the vineyard of Naboth for her husband, Ahab. She got false witnesses to say that Naboth had been guilty of great crimes. In this way, though she was innocent, the queen got him put to death. In

the New Testament (Matt. 26 : 60-66), we read that it was through the testimony of false witnesses that Jesus was condemned to death. This bearing of false witness in a court of law is called perjury, and a hateful crime it is. How we should shun it, and all speech that hurts the good name of our neighbor or deceives others in any way.

### The Question on Missions

Ques. 7. Indian boys and girls are usually docile and teachable, and give little trouble in school. It is when they are discharged at the age of about eighteen, that the missionary's greatest anxiety begins. They still feel the need of somebody to lead them, and a few become discouraged without such leadership, allow themselves to be laughed out of their civilized ways and go back into barbarism. Some become tradesmen, especially carpenters, or the girls become domestic servants and live among white people. Some become interpreters and helpers for Indian agents. But most go back to the reserves, and, especially in recent years, these band together to encourage one another and keep one another in countenance, and the whole tone of the native community is uplifted by them. Having received the benefits of civilization and Christian teaching, they are becoming missionaries to their own people.

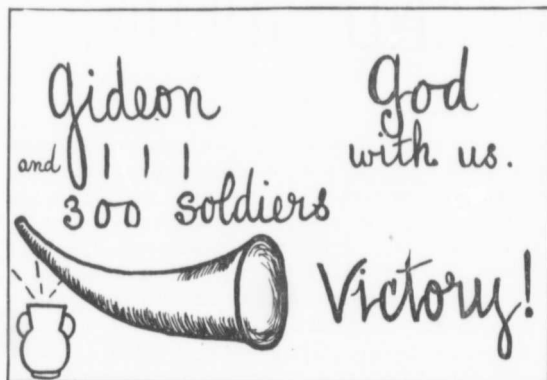
### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*Lesson Subject*—God choosing brave men.

*Introduction*—Use a set of toy soldiers, or place on the black board a great many

short strips of red paper, with a longer one for the captain, or cut out pictures of soldiers. All stand and "mark time", to show how the soldiers march. Our Lesson is about some brave soldiers and their brave captain. His name was GIDEON (print).

*Review*—Do you remember the choice the children of Israel made? Sad to say, after Joshua died the people forgot their promise and forsook God, and got themselves into no end of trouble through their sin. Enemies kept troubling them and



destroying their farms and their cattle.

*Lesson*—We'll print the name of some very powerful enemies of Israel—THE MIDIANITES. The Israelites turned again to God in their trouble. God heard their cry, although they had forsaken them. Our Lesson tells how God helped them.

*Gideon's Orders*—A young farmer named Gideon is busy threshing wheat on his father's land one day. An angel of the Lord comes and sits under an oak tree near by, and speaks to Gideon, giving him an order from God, "Go in this thy might," etc, (repeat ch. 6 : 14). Gideon was humble. He was from a poor family. He did not feel worthy to do this great work. But God said, "Surely I will be with thee", (ch. 6 : 16).

*"Not by Might, Nor by Power"*—Gideon gathered a great army, and said, "Now, Lord, we are ready to fight" (all hold up fingers straight, to show what a great crowd of soldiers there were). God said, "No, Gideon, you have too many soldiers. The people will think your army did it without My help. You must have a small army of very brave men" (vs. 2-8).

*Gideon encouraged*—Then God told Gideon to take his servant, Phurah, and go down near the enemies' camp and listen, to hear what they were saying. What a great army Gideon saw! And camels without number!

Hark! Gideon hears a man telling his dream (vs. 13, 14). Gideon knew what the dream meant (see Exposition). How brave he felt! He gave thanks to God.

*Golden Text*—Repeat Golden Text.

*The Attack*—Gideon divides his 300 soldiers into three companies (strokes), and puts a trumpet (outline) into the hand of each soldier, and a pitcher (outline jar) with a lamp inside. Describe the attack, vs. 19-23. God helped Gideon.

*Brave Little Soldiers*—Boys and girls should be little soldiers in Jesus' army. Their enemy is sin. They must fight sin in themselves and in all around them. Be brave soldiers, and Jesus will help you to fight and to win. Sing a verse of "Onward, Christian soldiers", Hymn 262, Book of Praise.

*Orders for Little Soldiers*—Repeat :

"There are orders meant for you!  
Swift and jubilant they ring;  
O, the bliss of being trusted  
On the errands of the King!

Fearless march in royal service :

Not an evil can befall  
Those who do the gracious bidding,  
Hasting at the Master's call."

*Something to Think About*—God wants me to be brave.

#### FROM THE PLATFORM

## THE LORD AND GIDEON!

Tell the story of the bridge over a certain stream in Scotland, which bears the inscription "God and We". It was erected by a young lady, who was rescued from drowning at this point in the stream. The inscription expresses our need of God's power in the work of life, amid its dangers, and the need also of effort on our own part. Now ask the scholars for the battle cry of Gideon's brave little army (see v. 20). Print on the blackboard, THE LORD AND GIDEON. Bring out by questions, first, the Lord's part in the great victory of the Lesson. Go back to the call of Gideon in ch. 6, and follow up the story, fixing attention on the points where God's hand appears with special clearness. Then, turning to Gideon's part, bring out, in a similar way, his faith and courage and generalship. The lesson to be enforced is, that, when we do our best, in obedience to God, He will back up our efforts by His power and grace,

## Lesson VIII.

## WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY

November 24, 1907

Romans 14 : 12-23. Commit to Memory vs. 19-21.

GOLDEN TEXT—Judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.—Romans 14 : 13.

12 So then <sup>1</sup> every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more : but judge <sup>2</sup> this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock <sup>3</sup> or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded <sup>4</sup> by the Lord Jesus, that <sup>5</sup> there is nothing unclean of itself : <sup>6</sup> but to him <sup>7</sup> that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean.

15 <sup>8</sup> But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not <sup>9</sup> him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of :

17 For the kingdom of God is not <sup>10</sup> meat and drink ; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Revised Version—each ; <sup>2</sup> ye ; <sup>3</sup> in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling ; <sup>4</sup> in ; <sup>5</sup> nothing is ; <sup>6</sup> save that ; <sup>7</sup> who accounteth anything ; <sup>8</sup> For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love ; <sup>9</sup> with thy meat him ; <sup>10</sup> eating and drinking ; <sup>11</sup> herein ; <sup>12</sup> well-pleasing ; <sup>13</sup> So then let us ; <sup>14</sup> Omit the ; <sup>15</sup> whereby we ; <sup>16</sup> one another ; <sup>17</sup> Overthrow not for meat's sake ; <sup>18</sup> clean ; howbeit it is ; <sup>19</sup> not ; <sup>20</sup> to do anything ; <sup>21</sup> Omit or is offended, or is made weak ; <sup>22</sup> The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself ; <sup>23</sup> judgeth ; <sup>24</sup> Omit thing ; <sup>25</sup> approveth ; <sup>26</sup> But ; <sup>27</sup> condemned ; <sup>28</sup> and.

## LESSON PLAN

I. Our Judge, 12, 13.

II. Our Brother, 14-21.

III. Our Conscience, 22, 23.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—World's Temperance Lesson, Romans 14 : 12-23. T.—Our neighbour's good, Romans 15 : 1-7.

W.—Avoiding offence, 1 Cor. 8 : 1-13. Th.—The mind of Jesus, Phil. 2 : 1-11. F.—The better life, Rom. 8 : 8-17. S.—Walking wisely, Eph. 5 : 6-21.

18 For he that <sup>11</sup> in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

19 <sup>13</sup> Let us therefore follow after <sup>14</sup> the things which make for peace, and things <sup>15</sup> wherewith one may edify <sup>16</sup> another.

20 <sup>17</sup> For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed *are* <sup>18</sup> pure ; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

21 *It is* good <sup>19</sup> neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor <sup>20</sup> any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, <sup>21</sup> or is offended, or is made weak.

22 <sup>22</sup> Hast thou faith ? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that <sup>23</sup> condemneth not himself in that <sup>24</sup> thing which he <sup>25</sup> alloweth.

23 <sup>26</sup> And he that doubteth is <sup>27</sup> damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith : <sup>28</sup> for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

S.—Avoiding the appearance of evil, 1 Thess. 5 : 14-28.

Shorter Catechism—Review Questions 76-78.

The Question on Missions—8. What is the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society doing for the Indians ? This Society, together with the mission bands of children, provides all the money for work amongst the Indian women and children, and the ladies also provide bales of clothing to protect the destitute Indians from the cold winters of the Northwest.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, Ps. Sel., 80 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 54 ; 50 ; 116 (Ps. Sel.) ; 585 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 46.

## EXPOSITION

**Time and Place**—The Epistle to the Romans was written by the Apostle Paul from Corinth in the year A. D. 58.

**Lesson Setting**—At the close of his three years' ministry in Ephesus (Acts, chs. 19 : 20 : 31) Paul left that city, intending to go through Macedonia and Achaia, then to Jerusalem, and afterwards to go to Rome (Acts 19 : 21), the chief city of the world, where he had longed, for many years, to preach the gospel, Rom. 15 : 23. Having reached Corinth, he stayed in that city three months, and during this period he wrote the Epistle to the Romans. The church at Rome included both Jews and Gentiles, and between these two parties differences had arisen. Amongst other points, there was a dispute as to whether it was right for Christians to eat certain sorts of food prohibited by the Jewish law. Paul deals with this point in the Lesson.

## I, Our Judge, 12, 13.

Vs. 12, 13. *So then.* In v. 11, Paul has quoted from Isa. 45 : 23, the prophecy that

every creature shall honor and worship God as Lord of all. V. 12 pictures the coming judgment at the last day. *Each one* (Rev. Ver.); as if there were no other. *Give account*; face every deed of his life. *Of himself*; not for others. *To God*; who searches the heart, and is never deceived, Jer. 17 : 10. *Not therefore judge one another*; not pass sentence on what others do, as if we were wise enough or good enough to decide whether they are right or wrong. *Judge this rather*; make sure that our own deeds are right. *Stumblingblock . . . occasion to fall*; two pictures of temptation, the first likening it to an obstacle in the path, the second, to a trap or snare, such as is used in catching birds or animals. *In his brother's way.* Only God has the right to judge us, but all about us have a claim upon our sympathy and help.

## II. Our Brother, 14-21.

V. 14. *I know, and am persuaded.* Paul has no doubt whatever as to the point in dispute between Jews and Gentiles in the church at Rome. *In the Lord Jesus* (Rev.

V. 13

Ver.); and therefore able to see things as with His eyes, the guarantee to Paul that he was right in his view. *Nothing unclean of itself.* The old Mosaic regulations declaring that certain kinds of food defiled by being touched or eaten had been abolished, so Paul teaches, at the coming of Christ. *To him that esteemeth,* etc. It will really, however, be defiling to one to eat food forbidden by Moses' regulations, if his conscience tells him that these regulations are still binding.

Vs. 15, 16. *If thy brother be grieved; troubled and perplexed by your example, which draws him in one direction, while his conscience directs him in another. Not charitably; Rev. Ver., "in love". Destroy not him...for whom Christ died.* Christ gave His life to save your brother; it is a small thing for you to give up the food which in itself is harmless, rather than endanger him by leading him to act contrary to his conscience. *Good...evil spoken of.* Your liberty to eat and drink is a good thing, Paul would say. But if using that liberty gives others the opportunity of saying that you are placing temptation in the way of a brother, it is better not to use it. ~~A practice or course~~ of conduct, which may be perfectly right for us in itself, may be so misunderstood by others, that it will lead to evil results and so bring discredit on the cause of Christ, and thus hinder the very work we are most desirous to help.

Vs. 17-21. *The kingdom of God...righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* After all, there are far more important marks of a true member of God's kingdom than liberty to eat and drink, namely, spiritual character,—uprightness, peace, joy. *These things* commend us to God and men, as constituting the essentials of the religious and moral life. *Follow...peace;* one of the main features of the kingdom of heaven, Matt. 5: 9. *Edify* (build up). *overthrow not* (Rev. Ver.). This is Paul's touchstone for conduct—Does it build up, or destroy, Christian character and the kingdom of God? When this test is applied to the use of strong drink, there can be but one decision. *Eateth with offence;* so as to cause others to sin against their conscience. V. 21 puts in another way the test as to whether we should use strong

drink or not. Is it a thing *whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended* (caused to sin), or is made weak? Then Paul bids us abstain.

### III. Our Conscience, 22, 23.

Vs. 22, 23. *The faith which thou hast* (Rev. Ver.); that is, the conviction of being free. *Have it to thyself before God.* Be satisfied with possessing it, without always asserting it before men. *Happy is he;* the man, on the one hand, who does not selfishly disregard the interests of others in his conduct, and, on the other hand, who does not weakly follow the example of others in doing what his conscience condemns. *Doubteth...condemned* (Rev. Ver.); that is, by his own conscience, and therefore by God. *Not of faith...sin.* What we cannot do, in full view of the fact that we are Christ's, with the coming judgment (v. 12) and the cross of Calvary (v. 15) before our eyes, is wrong.

### Light from the East

DRINK WINE—At the close of a festive meal the entertainment was usually turned into a symposium, or drinking party. The wine, which was often eleven or twelve years old and very strong, was sweetened with honey and mixed with water, never less than half and half, and very old Maronean wine, with twenty times its own weight of water. A master of the feast was elected by casting dice, whose commands all had to obey, and who regulated the manner of drinking and proposed the amusements. The wine was mixed in a large vessel, and poured into goblets which varied in size. Socrates emptied one which held nearly four pints. When the goblets were first filled, a small portion was poured out of each on the floor as a libation to "the good spirit", and this was accompanied by the singing of the pæan and the music of flutes. It was to this ceremony often repeated during the feast, that the Christians objected. The guests drank to one another, to absent friends, to the emperor and the army. If the toast was a lady, the number of glasses drunk consecutively must equal the letters of her name. Witty conversation, games of hazard, music, and professional dancers were among the means used to entertain the guests.

APPLICATION

*Every one of us shall give an account of himself to God, v. 12.* It is a fine thing to have a comfortable balance to our credit in the Savings Bank. We like to watch it grow. It fills us with a glow of independence, and sets us free from anxiety. But how about our account with God? The debit side is full to overflowing. Health, home, friends, education, the chance to work, opportunities to do good,—all these and many other things we have received from God. It is a disgrace to us if the credit side is empty or scant of entries. But there is time yet to fill it up,—time before our Judge, who is also our loving Saviour, shall call us to our reckoning. Let us so live that we shall not dread that reckoning, or be covered with shame at the final casting up of accounts.

*A stumblingblock . . . in his brother's way, v. 13.* A poet has pictured a soldier in battle, running through with his bayonet a man fighting on the other side, and, lo! when he stooped to draw it out, looking into the face of the fallen foe, he recognized his own brother. God has linked us in bonds of brotherhood, not alone with members of our own families, but with all men the world over, whether they be white or black or brown or yellow. When the revealing light of the judgment day throws its searching rays on our lives we shall see in every fellow man we have injured or failed to help, one who had a claim on us for a brother's kindness.

*Destroy not, v. 15.* On the coast line of some countries, the sea has been encroaching for centuries. Acre after acre has tumbled into the waves; and homes and churches, now threatened by every high tide, are pointed out, which at one time stood, it may be, a mile from the sea. Like that encroaching sea, is the drink habit. Every one knows lives in which it has eaten away nearly all that is noble and beautiful, and homes where, bit by bit, the comforts and joys have been broken off, to fall into the devouring waves of this un pitying curse. Who that loves his fellow men will not, by personal influence and by working for prohibition, put forth

all his energy to build up a strong and solid breakwater to protect their lives and homes?

*For whom Christ died, v. 15.* A rich man once conceived the idea of building a mansion from the fragments of ruined vessels. That is a picture of what those engaged in the drink traffic are doing. They are building up fortunes from the wreckage of ruined bodies and lost souls. And yet every soul thus destroyed is worth, in God's sight, more than the whole world. To redeem each one, He paid the price of His own Son's life. We cannot speak too strongly about the utter selfishness and heartless cruelty of the traffic in drink. But we, too, stand convicted of a like selfishness, if, by our neglect, or, worse, through our example, any one perishes whom we might have helped to save. It is "up to us" to prevent, according to our power, the evils of the most accursed business on the face of the earth.

*Let not your good be evil spoken of, v. 16.* A little girl once prayed that all the bad people might be made good, and that all the good people might be made nice. It is our business to attract others to the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ. We must be winsome as well as holy. Indeed, what we need is just the "beauty of holiness". Sincerity and sourness have no necessary connection. It is all important that our religion should be firmly rooted. But let us seek, as well, to have it adorned with the lovely, fragrant flowers of all the Christian virtues.

*Happy is he that condemneth not himself, v. 22.* "I should have to live a long time with myself afterwards." This was the reason a young man gave for refusing to do a thing he knew to be wrong. After all, next to what God thinks of our conduct, the most important matter is the judgment our own conscience pronounces upon it. If His voice above us and the voice of conscience within us agree in their approval, we can well enough endure the faultfinding of others.

Lesson Points

The praise of men weighs light compared with the approval of God. v. 12.

Debit and Credit

His Own Brother

Build a Breakwater

Nice, as Well as Good

To Live With Himself



Helpfulness is a large part of holiness. v. 13.  
Abstinence is a nobler use of freedom than indulgence. v. 14.

Where there is a fountain of love, there will be streams of kindness. v. 15.

The essence of true religion is not outward forms, but inward purity. v. 17.

Drink is a frequent cause of discord. v. 19.  
Love to our neighbor is the best proof of our love to God. v. 20.

Not our own pleasure, but our brother's profit, should be the rule of our life. v. 21.

It is the glory of the strong to help the weak. v. 21.

### TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

#### For Teachers of the Older Scholars

In the Lesson Paul considers the question of Christian conduct in reference to things indifferent, from two points of view :

1. *Its influence upon others*, vs. 13-18. Having condemned the passing of judgment on others, Paul warns against acting in such a way as to cause another to sin. Note "*stumblingblock*", referring to sins that are both common and hurtful. Paul takes high ground in principle. He has no scruples about meats or drink or days. Everything can be sanctified and used. To a weak brother who has the conviction that certain things are unclean, they are to him what his conscience makes them; and his conscience is to be respected and enlightened. Hence, do not injure a weak brother by doing what he believes to be sinful. Such conduct gives him pain, causes him to stumble, and is therefore un-Christlike. Paul thus condemns the indifference of the strong Christian, who, in his strength, needlessly crushes the tender conscience of the weak. He then (vs. 16-19) concludes his argument. "Good" refers to the freedom of conscience gained in Jesus, which well be evil spoken of, if it acts in a thoughtless, loveless way. To show Christians how they may have the best influence, he points out what is essential in life, righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Concerning these there is no doubt before God or men. One may serve Christ, either eating or abstaining, but all must exalt the things of the spirit.

2. *The consideration due to others*, vs. 19-23. The principle here laid down is, that, before doing anything morally indifferent, we must ask how it will affect the peace of the church and growth of others. Paul

insists on love as the law of life. He sums up this law in v. 21. Verse 22 is full of meaning. When you have faith which makes you free, even when you do not insist upon it, keep it pure. It will help you to solve other problems. The law of life is, that the Christian must justify his conduct on the ground of his relation to Jesus as Saviour and Example.

This Lesson views intemperance as a social custom. The Christian's attitude toward drink is determined by the effect its use has on others, especially the weak ones. If others feel it is sinful, if his use of it causes them to go astray, then the love of Christ demands that he abstain for their sake. This is conclusive, in view of present conditions and customs.

#### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

It will strike out a fresh pathway, if, instead of beginning with the Lesson passage, you start with a conversation on the fact that every one is connected with every one else : no one can live without others, nor without influencing others. The church is called, for example, the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12 : 27), and its members are "members one of another", Rom. 12 : 5. This is true also of mankind in general. We are all members one of another, every one's life and actions affecting, more or less, every one else, like the ripple in the still lake which finally extends to its utmost shore.

This will naturally lead on to the question, How the strong should bear themselves toward the weak. The Christian principle is, the strong must help the weak, ch. 15 : 1.

This again opens the way to the special point about which Paul writes to the Christians at Rome—What was to be done in regard to certain meats, or foods, esteemed by some Christians as sinful to be eaten, because they had been offered to idols.

The Lesson is part of Paul's answer.

Try this step-ladder; questioning all the way up it:—

*Step one*—Everyone is responsible for himself to God, v. 12. Make this quite clear—for *himself*. None can lay upon another the responsibility for his own sin.

*Step two*—Don't add to this account by causing those weaker to sin, v. 13.

*Step three*—To do this is to be unkind, v. 15 (first part), and to dishonor Christ, v. 15 (second part).

*Step four*—Therefore, seek to build up, not to pull down, v. 19. Gain (see v. 17) that, after all, the essential things are not, what we eat or do not eat, drink or do not drink: but are the graces of Christ in heart and conduct. If we seek after these and keep

from even innocent things that may lead others astray, then we shall "edify": that is, build them up, make them strong.

*Step five*—In particular, don't drink strong drink, for, in our time, this is the great stumbling block, v. 21. Bring out afresh the two great reasons why we should abstain—First, because it is the only safe thing for ourselves to do; Secondly, because it is the only way to keep clear of leading others astray. The former of the two reasons will appeal most directly and powerfully to children, and should be pressed. But the latter also has its appeal, namely, to their chivalry, and should, like the former one, be imbedded in heart and conscience.

A total abstinence pledge should certainly conclude the Lesson.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Rome, the great capital of the ancient world, was situated on the Tiber, fifteen miles from its mouth. In the days of Paul, it occupied a space of which the circuit was some twelve miles. The famous group of seven hills, on which the ancient city mainly stood, were on the left bank of the river. The boundaries of the empire of which Rome was the capital were the Atlantic, on the west; the Euphrates, on the east; the Black Sea, the Danube and the British Channel, on the north; the deserts of Africa and Arabia and the Cataracts of the Nile, on the south. Various estimates have been made of the population: it probably lay between 85,000,-

000 and 120,000,000. It can only be conjectured how Christianity first reached Rome. It is known that there were Roman Jews in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10), and many suppose that it



was through these that the gospel was originally carried to the capital.

Corinth was situated on the isthmus between the Peloponnesus and the northern division of Greece. It had two seaports,

Lechæum, 1½ miles away on the Gulf of Corinth, and Cenchrææ, at a distance of 9 miles, on the Saronic Gulf. To the south was the Aerocorinthus, an isolated rock, 2,000 feet high.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Some Test Questions

1. How long did Paul's ministry in Ephesus continue?
2. What were his plans when he left that city?
3. From what city did he write the Epistle to the Romans?
4. Of what two classes was the church at

Rome composed?

5. To whom does Paul say each of us must give account?
6. Why should we refrain from passing judgment on the deeds of others?
7. What two figures are used to describe temptation?
8. What was Paul's view as to the point of dispute amongst the Christians in Rome?
9. What reason does he give for abstaining

even from things lawful in themselves.

10. On what ground, do we learn from the Lesson, should we avoid the use of strong drink?

### Something to Look Up

1. Amongst the sayings of Jesus, find this one: "Judge not, that ye be not judged."
2. Find what the apostle James says pure religion is.

ANSWERS (Lesson XI.)—1. Jerubbaal; Judg. 6 : 32. 2. Judg. 8 : 23.

### For Discussion

1. When to insist upon our rights; when to yield them.
2. What is the best way of dealing with the drink traffic?

### Prove from Scripture

That we should make sacrifices for others.

### The Catechism

Ques. 76-80 (Review)—In talking over the Questions for this month, which all deal with the duty of truthfulness, there are two or three quotations which are worth repeating: Said Sir Philip Sidney, the brave soldier and brilliant statesman of Queen Elizabeth's court, "When God hath brought me into a dilemma, in which I must assert a lie, or lose my life, He gives me a clear indication of my duty; which is to prefer death to false-

hood". Longfellow's words:

"But if a word could save me, and that word  
Were not the Truth; nay, if it did but swerve  
A hair's breadth from the Truth, I would  
not say it".

And Tennyson thus praised the famous Duke of Wellington:

"Truth-teller was our England's Alfred  
named;  
Truth lover was our English Duke;  
Whatever record leap to light,  
He never shall be shamed".

### The Question on Missions

Ques. 8. Each Indian mission school receives a government grant (\$300 per annum, if it is a day school, and \$72 per pupil, per annum, if it is a boarding school), but beyond this, all the money needed for carrying on our Indian schools is provided by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. They have also, in many cases, provided the school buildings, and, what counts for even more than money gifts, the occasional visits of some of the ladies have done much to cheer the lonely lives of the missionaries and to give them new heart for their work. The gifts of clothing not only relieve distress and save money outlay in clothing the children in boarding schools, but in many a case these contributions have opened a way for the gospel into a suspicious heart.

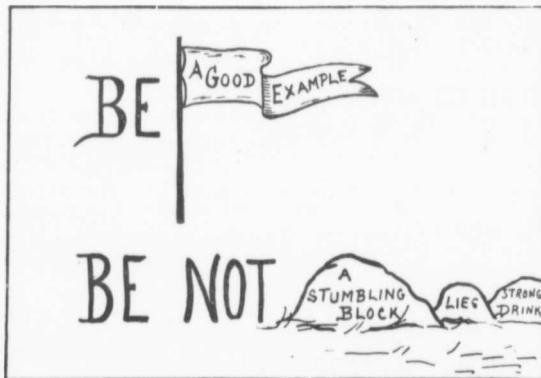
### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*Lesson Subject*—The need of setting a good example to others.

*Introduction*—Joe came home with his clothes, and even his little curls, all wringing

wet. "I just knew the ice was not strong enough", he grumbled. "Then, why did you go on it to slide?" asked mother. "Cause all the other boys did", said Joe. His mother gave him dry clothes, set him down behind the stove, and made him drink hot ginger tea. Then she told him a story.

*Silly Sheep*—Joe's grandfather had a great flock of sheep. One day, a big sheep found a gap in the fence, and he thought it would be nice to see what was in the next field. So he



jumped, without looking where he was going, and down he tumbled to the bottom of an old dry well into which grandfather used to throw stones and rubbish. The next sheep never stopped to see what had become of him, but jumped right after him, and the next did the same, till the well was full. Then grandfather had to pull them out as best he could, and the sheep at the bottom of the well were almost smothered to death. "What silly sheep!" exclaimed Joe. Then he looked up at his mother and laughed.

Many boys and girls are like those silly sheep. They do just as they see others doing, never thinking into what trouble it will lead them. When we know that others will follow our example, we should be very careful to do nothing that will cause them to do wrong.

*Lesson*—Our Lesson is about being a good example. Paul, a true and faithful follower of Jesus, wrote a letter to the followers of Jesus at Rome. They had asked him, "Is it wrong to eat certain kinds of food?" (See Exposition.) Paul tells them there is nothing bad in the food itself: but if any one thinks it is wrong to use it, the follower of Jesus should not use it. (Why?)

Paul also told them they should never

blame one another, but leave everybody to God, the great Judge. He will one day ask, "Did you do that wicked thing?" (Repeat v. 12.)

*Golden Text*—Paul also told them they must not put a stumblingblock in anybody's way. (Repeat Golden Text.)

*Stumblingblocks*—What would you think of a boy who should put a piece of iron on a railway track and cause the train to run off the track, and perhaps many lives too be lost? What would you think of a boy or girl who should put a block of wood where baby brother would stumble over it and be hurt, or perhaps killed, by the fall? Paul did not mean that kind of stumblingblock; but he meant this (outline a block of wood named BAD EXAMPLE). A little sister heard her sister tell a lie, and soon fell over that stumblingblock, too. A boy sipped wine left in a glass by an older person. He fell over that stumblingblock, and, in turn, another boy, seeing him, sipped wine, too, and later became a drunkard. What a dreadful fall! (Repeat v. 21.)

Outline "stumblingblocks" named, Lies, Strong Drink, Bad Words, &c.

*Something to Think About*—I should set a good example.

#### FROM THE PLATFORM

## THE CHRISTIAN'S LIBERTY LAW

Picture a Jewish and a Gentile Christian at Rome debating whether it is right or wrong to eat certain kinds of meat. Get from the scholars the Jew's argument, that these meats were forbidden by the law of Moses, and the Gentile's reply, that all such regulations were abolished when Christ came. With which of these did Paul agree? The scholars will tell you that he took sides with the Gentile. Print on the blackboard, THE CHRISTIAN'S LIBERTY, and emphasize our freedom from the laws about eating and drinking which were binding on the Jews before Christ came. Now, picture, Paul debating with the Gentile Christian about the same matter. This man argues, that he may eat and drink just what pleases him. But Paul replies, that if he eats meat forbidden by Jewish law, he may give offence to others, or even cause others to fall into sin. This, he argues, is a reason of the very strongest why the Christian should abstain. Print, THE CHRISTIAN LAW. In a few closing words, make the application to the use of strong drink.

## \*AN ORDER OF SERVICE : Fourth Quarter

## Opening Exercises

- I. SILENCE.
- II. SINGING. Ps. Sel. 80, Book of Praise.  
(It is expected that this hymn from the Supplemental Lessons will be memorized during the Quarter.)
- III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Ps. 67.  
*Superintendent.* God be merciful unto us, and bless us;  
*School.* And cause His face to shine upon us;  
*Superintendent.* That Thy way may be known upon earth,  
*School.* Thy saving health among all nations.  
*Superintendent.* Let the people praise Thee, O God;  
*School.* Let all the people praise Thee.  
*Superintendent.* O let the nations be glad and sing for joy :  
*School.* For Thou shalt judge the people righteously,  
*Superintendent.* And govern the nations upon earth.  
*School.* Let the people praise Thee, O God;  
*Superintendent and School.* Let all the people praise Thee.
- IV. THE LORD'S PRAYER (in concert).
- V. SINGING.  
O day of rest and gladness,  
O day of joy and light,  
O balm of care and sadness,  
Most beautiful, most bright !  
  
On Thee the high and lowly,  
Before the eternal throne,  
Sing Holy, Holy, Holy,  
To the great Three in One.  
—Hymn 383, Book of Praise.
- VI. PRAYER.
- VII. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.
- VIII. BIBLE WORK. From the Supplemental Lessons.
- IX. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.
- X. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.  
(This Hymn may usually be that marked, "From the PRIMARY QUARTERLY".)

## Class Work

[Let this be entirely undisturbed by Secretary's or Librarian's distribution, or otherwise.]

- I. ROLL CALL, by teacher.
- II. OFFERING, which may be taken in a class envelope, or class and report envelope.
- III. RECITATION. 1. Scripture Memory Passages from the Supplemental Lessons, or Memory Verses in Lesson Helps. 2. Catechism. 3. The Question on Missions from the Supplemental Lessons.
- IV. LESSON STUDY.

## Closing Exercises

- I. ANNOUNCEMENTS
- II. SINGING. Hymn selected.
- III. REVIEW FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK; which, along with the Blackboard Review, may include one or more of the following items : Recitation in concert of Verses Memorized, Catechism, Questions on Missions, Lesson Title, Golden Text, and Heads of Lesson Plan. (Do not overload the Review : it should be pointed, brief and bright.)
- IV. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Eph. 6 : 10, 14-17.  
*Superintendent.* Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.  
*School.* Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth,  
*Superintendent.* And having on the breastplate of righteousness;  
*School.* And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel peace;  
*Superintendent.* Above all, taking the shield of faith,  
*School.* Wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.  
*Superintendent.* And take the helmet of salvation,  
*School.* And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God :
- V. SINGING.  
Fight the good fight with all thy might,  
Christ is thy strength, and Christ thy right;  
Lay hold on life, and it shall be  
Thy joy and crown eternally.  
—Hymn 251, Book of Praise.
- VI. BENEDICTION, OR CLOSING PRAYER,

\* Copies of the above ORDER OF SERVICE on separate sheet may be had at 50c. a hundred.



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[For additional information in regard to certain of the Places, see Geography Lessons.]

**Ad'-am.** The city on the Jordan where the waters were held back while Israel crossed over.

**A-mal'-ek-ites.** A desert tribe descended from Esau.

**Am'-o-rites.** A Canaanitish tribe inhabiting the highlands on both sides of the Jordan.

**An'-a-kims.** A stalwart race settled about Hebron.

**Be'-zer.** The southernmost City of Refuge east of the Jordan.

**Ca'-leb.** One of the twelve spies sent into Canaan, who afterwards received from Joshua the uplands of Hebron as a possession.

**Ca'-na-an-ites.** The lowlanders of Canaan inhabiting the coast lands and the Jordan valley. The name was also given to the inhabitants of Canaan generally.

**Eb'-en-e'-zer.** "Stone of help". A memorial stone set up by Samuel at the place where the Lord discomfited the Philistines, 1 Sam. 7 : 10, 12.

**E'-li.** The high priest during the early days of Samuel. He lived at Shiloh.

**E'-phra-im.** One of the twelve tribes of Israel. Their territory was in central Palestine.

**Esh'-ta-ol.** A town 13 miles to the west of Jerusalem.

**Eu-phra'-tes.** A large river of Western Asia, flowing into the Persian Gulf.

**Gid'-e-on.** One of the most famous of Israel's judges. He inflicted a great defeat on the Midianites, and governed Israel for forty years.

**Gil'-gal.** Near Jericho, the first camping place of the Israelites after crossing the Jordan, and their headquarters during the conquest of Canaan.

**Gir'-ga-shites.** A tribe of Canaan; their dwelling place is unknown.

**Go'-lan.** The northernmost City of Refuge east of the Jordan.

**He'-bron.** The southernmost City of Refuge west of the Jordan. See also on Caleb.

**Hit'-tites.** A powerful tribe in the north of Canaan.

**Hi'-vites.** One of the tribes dwelling in Canaan before the conquest of the country by the Hebrews.

**Jeb'-u-sites.** A mountain tribe of Canaan dwelling at Jebus, that is Jerusalem.

**Je-phun'-neh.** The father of Caleb.

**Jer'-i-cho.** An important city in a plain six miles west of the Jordan.

**Jor'-dan.** The famous river of Palestine. It flows from Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea.

**Josh'-u-a.** Successor to Moses, and the leader of Israel in the conquest of Canaan.

**Ju'-dah.** A tribe of Israel settled in southern Palestine. From this tribe Christ sprang.

**Ke'-desh-bar'-ne-a.** A place 50 miles south of Beersheba.

**Ke'-desh.** A City of Refuge situated in Naphtali.

**Kir'-jath-ar'-ba.** "City of Arba", the old name for Hebron, so called from its founder, Arba, a famous giant.

**Kir'-jath-je'-a-rim.** The "Forest City". Situated in the hill country on the western border of Benjamin.

**Leb'-a-non.** Meaning "white"—a range of snow-covered mountains to the north of Palestine.

**Ma-na's'-seh.** The tribe of Israel descended from Joseph's elder son.

**Mid'-i-an-ites.** A wandering tribe of the Arabian desert.

**Miz'-peh.** "Watchtower". A small town on an elevation, some 3,000 feet above sea level, 4 miles northwest of Jerusalem.

**Mo'-ab.** The district east of the Dead Sea inhabited by the Moabites, who were descended from Lot.

**Mo'-ses.** Son of Amram and Jochebed. The deliverer of Israel from Egypt; and their lawgiver and leader through the wilderness. He died on Mt. Nebo, not being permitted to enter the Promised Land.

**Na'-o-mi.** A woman of Bethlehem, who migrated from that place, with her husband and two sons, and afterwards returned with Ruth, her daughter-in-law.

**Naph'-ta-li.** One of the twelve tribes of Israel. Their territory was in the far north of Canaan.

**Pe-riz'-zites.** A Canaanitish tribe.

**Phil'-is-tines.** A nation, noted for their progress in agriculture and commerce, and for their warlike spirit, inhabiting a strip of country on the southwestern coast of Canaan.

**Ra'-hab.** A woman of Jericho who showed kindness to the spies sent by Joshua.

**Ra'-moth.** The central City of Refuge east of the Jordan.

**Reu'-ben.** One of the twelve tribes, whose territory was east of the Jordan.

**Ruth.** See Naomi.

**Sam'-son.** A judge and deliverer of Israel from the Philistines, and famed for his great strength.

**Sam'-u-el.** The son of Elkanah and Hannah. The name means "asked of God". He was the last of the judges and first of the prophets.

**She'-chem.** An ancient and important city of Palestine, beautifully situated in a sheltered and fertile valley. It was a City of Refuge.

**Shi'-loh.** The place where the Israelites under Joshua set up the tabernacle. It long remained the religious centre of Israel.

**Zar'-e-tan.** A hill near the ford Damieh (see Adam).

**Zor'-ah.** The town about 2 miles southwest of Eshtaol (which see), where Samson was born, and where he was buried.



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## THE BOOK PAGE

Mr. Carson, who is already widely known as the author of a very valuable Primary Catechism, now presents a new and most attractive work, **Stories from the Life of Jesus**: Told in the Words of the Bible (Hodder & Stoughton, London: Presbyterian S.S. Publications, Toronto, about 200 pages, 25 full page illustrations, \$1.00 postpaid). The distinctive feature of the book is the telling of the stories in the very language of scripture. This is invaluable for the instruction of the little ones. They have nothing to unlearn or learn over again. The stories are skilfully woven together, and set forth that Life of lives in its proper order. The selections will also be of much service for family worship and the Bible reading of the day school. The pictures are from the great masters, and are a very valuable feature of the volume.

Dr. William Adams Brown, in the preface to his **Christian Theology in Outline** (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, U.C. Tract Society, Toronto, 468 pages, \$2.50 net), declares his belief that theology is "a progressive science, dealing with the living convictions of living men", and refers with approval to modern efforts to free this science from "the bonds of a scholastic phraseology", and to express its great truths in pure and untechnical English. These two views influence the whole book, with the result, that the main doctrines of our holy religion are exhibited throughout as not only derived from "God's historic revelation in Christ", but as "verifying themselves progressively in Christian experience"

and that the style is clear and readable. This is a book, not for the minister alone, but as well for the thoughtful layman who is interested in getting a view of the great beliefs constituting the Christian faith, in the light of modern scientific investigation. An unusually complete list of books dealing with the subject matter of the volume and a very full and convenient index add greatly to the usefulness of Dr. Brown's altogether most satisfactory treatise.

"If the kingdom of justice and love comes first with power in the hearts of many individuals, it will be saved from coming with blood and ruin as in former days, and as it is even now coming in Russia." This sentence indicates the scope of Professor John Alexander Leighton's, **Jesus Christ and the Civilization of To-day** (The Macmillan Company of Canada, 248 pages, \$1.50 net). The author is profoundly convinced of the supremacy of the ethical teaching of Jesus and of its power to remedy the ills of our modern civilization. In the working out of this thesis there is great fulness of exposition, while the application of gospel principles to present-day conditions is rich in suggestion and stimulus.

**A Shepherd of the Stars** (The Copp Clark Company, Toronto, 306 pages, \$1.25). An English aunt and her two young nieces, one of them of a decidedly piquant cast, journey through Morocco, with exciting situations and experiences in plenty. The author, Frances Campbell, knows that little traversed country at first hand, having penetrated its interior under the protection of the royal-born Raisuli and his followers. The fascinating love story of the book has therefore

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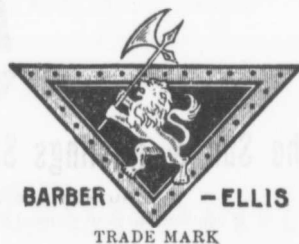
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a rarely interesting setting, the Morocco of the present day, with its scenery and its wild mysterious life.

Valuable statistical information, interspersed with vivid description of the conditions among newsboys in Chicago, and what is being done for them, is given in, **Walls of the Slums and Their Way Out**, by Leonard Benedict (Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto and New York, 234 pages, 18 illustrations, \$1.00 net). To teach these lads of the city streets "how to make a living," and, more than that, "how to make a life", is the object of the very successful Chicago Boys' Club of whose work the book tells. Those who have to face similar conditions will find valuable hints in it.

More than fifty years have passed since the first publication of Dr. Joseph Angus', **The Bible Handbook**: An Introduction to the Study of the Sacred Scripture. The Religious Tract Society, London, has issued a new edition of this work, "thoroughly revised and in part re-written, by the late Samuel G. Green, D.D." The book has thus been brought fully up to date, by additions and changes made in the light of modern discoveries and research. It would be difficult to mention a book in which so much information regarding all parts of the Bible is packed in so convenient and usable a form. The price, too, for this volume of 832 pages is astonishingly moderate—\$1.25 (U.C. Tract Society, Toronto).

"More exquisitely done than ever, if that could be", is one's first exclamation on opening the 1908 volume of Peloubet's **Select Notes**, by F. N.

Peloubet, D.D., and Prof. Amos R. Wells, M.A. (386 pages, \$1.25, W. A. Wilde Company, Boston). A perfectly constructed book, this is, in paper, printing, and cuts, the four full page illustrations in color being specially attractive. The matter is up to the very high standard set in previous volumes. It is a mine of information on the Sabbath School Lessons. A large number of suggestive questions interwoven with the information presented, is a new and useful feature.

Other books received are as follows:

From the Macmillan Company of Canada:

**Bible Lessons on Genesis**, by Miss E. M. Knox, Principal of Havergal College, Toronto, a series of outline lessons prepared originally for use in the author's own classes (171 pages, 40 cents net).

From the U.C. Tract Society, Toronto:

**New Light on the New Testament from Records of the Græco-Roman Period** (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 128 pages, 90 cents net), a scholarly and interesting account of ancient inscriptions on stone, writings on papyrus and on potsherds and wooden tablets, and the bearing of these on the interpretation of the New Testament.

**Israel's Golden Age**, by Rev. Professor J. Dick Fleming, B.D., of Manitoba College, Winnipeg. This volume belongs to the series of Handbooks for Bible Classes and Private Students (T. & T. Clark Edinburgh, 160 pages, 50 cents), and as its sub-title, *The Story of the United Kingdom*, indicates, it deals with the period extending from the settlement of the Hebrews in Canaan to the end of Solomon's reign.

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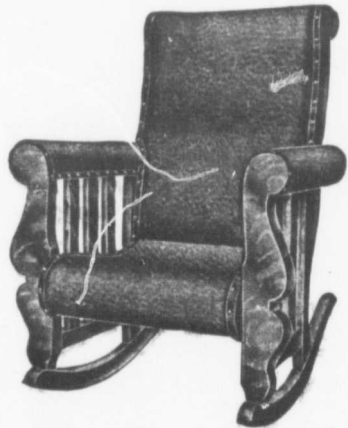
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