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Banner

FOR TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



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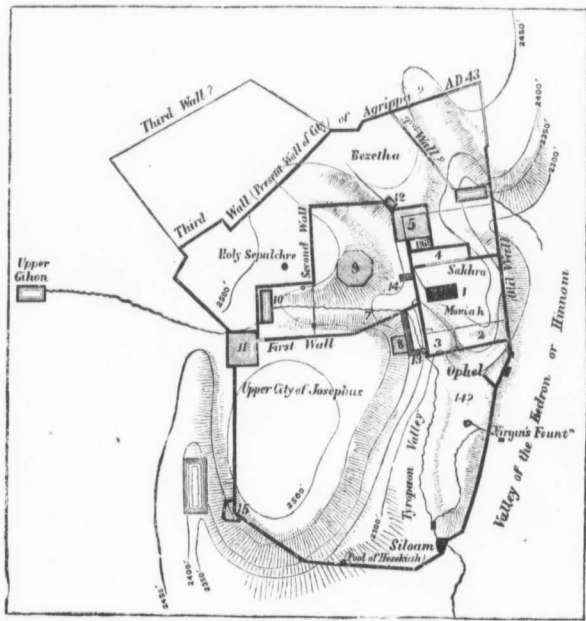
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By Tudor Jenks

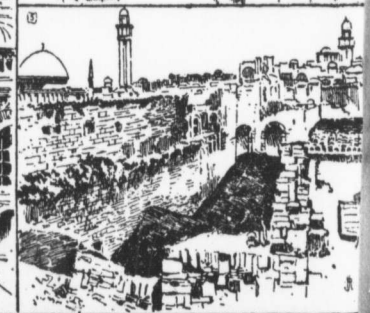
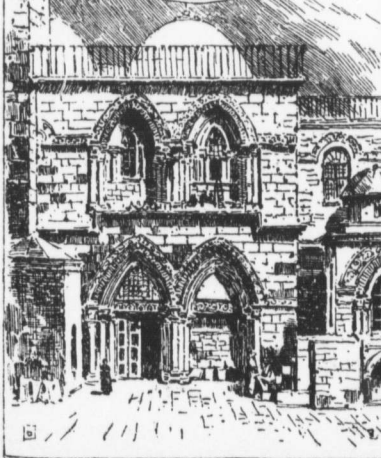
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PLAN OF JERUSALEM.



BITS ABOUT JERUSALEM.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL BARBER for TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 36

FEBRUARY, 1902

No. 2

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Home Religion.

BY REV. J. H. CHANT.

Go home, O man, and tell
 What great things God has done,
 How he hath saved thy soul from hell,
 Through his eternal Son;
 And show by words and actions kind,
 That thou art now in thy right mind.

Those olive plants, which grow
 Around thy ample board,
 Will all expect their sire to show
 The grace God on him poured;
 In heavenly aim, and tempers sweet,
 In worship true, and life complete.

No sight on earth so fair
 As a true Christian home,
 Though on it rest no worldly glare,
 Yet man, where'er he roam,
 Will oft recall the memories sweet
 That clustered round its mercy-seat.

'Tis needful that some men
 Should stand in foremost rank,
 Fill well thy place at home, and then,
 As one who never shrank
 From duties small, thine ears may hear
 The *Master's* call to higher sphere.

But if he should withhold
 The call to larger sphere,
 By this thy heart should be consoled,
 "His wisdom placed me here;
 And if my work be rightly done
 I shall at last shine as the sun."
 Newburgh, Ont.

What is prayer for? Not to inform
 God nor to move him, unwillingly, to
 have mercy, as if, like some proud prince,
 he required a certain amount of recog-
 nition of his greatness as the price of his
 favor, but to fit our own hearts by con-
 scious need and true desire and depend-
 ence, to receive the gift which he is ever
 willing to give, but we are not always
 fit to receive.—Alexander Maclaren.

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Sunday School Banner

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

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1902

Marvellous Blessings on Japan's Sunday Schools.

THE efficient International Sunday School Field Worker for Japan, T. C. Ikehara, in a recent letter, says the S. S. Times, reports a remarkable awakening in the Mikado's empire, the news of which will come as a welcome message of inspiration and encouragement to all Sunday School workers everywhere. His letter, in part, is as follows :

"This empire has received a marvellous blessing for the past two and one-half months. The Holy Spirit has poured down on her, and thousands of people have found Jesus. We, the Christian workers, have spared neither time nor labor. Since Japan began, there never was such a triumph of truth as this has been.

"Sunday School meetings, too, were pushed on, and specially aimed at the decision of the children for Christ.

Special meetings for the little folks were held from time to time, and from Sunday Schools hundreds of them were brought into the fold. There are many beautiful stories connected with this.

"The enclosed is the budget used at the third summer school at the sea-beach called Kamakura, where the Methodist people have a hotel. The meetings were very interesting, in spite of the fact that some speakers failed to put in their appearance, owing to the overwork of this new revival or waking up of Japan to Jesus.

"In the church in which I work, for instance, there were eighty-two converts in a single week, and this was so everywhere; and during this new epoch the Sunday School children did much to facilitate and to advance the work, while among those who were baptized, many, indeed, confessed beautiful faith with their little lips."

Plan for Securing a Library.

THE American Sunday School Union furnishes the following suggestion :

You solicit a contribution for your library, and you give an equivalent for the amount by granting to the contributor the use of the books in the library, as well as giving an invitation to all social and other privileges enjoyed by members of the school.

Every officer, teacher, and scholar in your school is an agent, who must call on every person in your neighborhood and explain the plan to them, laying special emphasis on the fact that each contributor will have the use of the library. If this point is presented strongly, very few persons will refuse to contribute.

Any one, young or old, who will pay into the library fund the sum of twenty-five cents may be a contributor.

This entitles the contributor to the use of the library.

The suggestion is made that the membership shall be limited to a period of one year, and may be renewed for another year upon the payment of another twenty-five cents. By adopting the suggestion, you may add at regular intervals new volumes to the library from the amounts collected.

The question of making the contributor pay for the use of the library for a

certain or specified time may be dangerous to the success of the plan, and should be adopted only after careful deliberation.

WHAT KIND OF BOOKS.

First, because the library is part of your Sunday School, books of religious fiction, having moral and religious teachings. Second, books of reference, for your teachers and all interested in the study of the Bible. Third, carefully selected general literature, suitable for adult readers, in which only the best thoughts and highest teachings occur.

Your library thus becomes a circulating library.

The library is a centre of education for the neighborhood, and may do great good.

The books will be read by many more persons, and go into more homes, than if confined to distribution among scholars only.

The collection of books may be more varied, and include a larger proportion of works for adult readers.

Sunday School Teachers and Strong Drink.

The late Mr. T. B. Smithies, while residing in York, was a constant visitor in "the King's Prison." Among the prisoners he found many who had been Sunday scholars. As he tried to lead them back to their early recollections, several of them were much moved, and said, one after another: "If I had practised what my teacher had taught me, all would have been well." "If I had remembered what I learned, and kept from drink, I should not have been here." "I had a good teacher, but the public house has been my ruin." "I should not have been here if I had kept from drink." "I durst not have done what I did if I had not taken some drink." "Drinking and gambling have brought me here. My mother's heart is broken."

Again and again Mr. Smithies questioned the prisoners: "Were you never warned at the Sunday-school against drinking?" "Did your teacher, amongst other good advice, never urge you to abstain from those drinks which have proved your ruin?" "No, sir," was the invariable reply.

The result was that Mr. Smithies took himself to task, with much self-reproach, concerning that which now seemed to him to be an imperative duty. "On the cold flags in one of the cells in York Castle," he says, "I was constrained, from what I there saw and heard, to make a solemn mental promise that no child should, from that time, pass under my oversight as a teacher without my advising the adoption of entire abstinence from the use of strong drink; so that, in the event of any of my scholars ever becoming drunkards or criminals, they might not be able to say, 'My teacher never warned me against that evil which has led to my ruin.'"

Are Hymns Doggerel?

Professor Oscar L. Triggs, of the University of Chicago, is reported to have informed his class in English literature that the hymns of Protestant churches are doggerel, and that orthodoxy and poetry cannot accord. He makes a single exception of Cardinal Newman's "Lead Kindly Light." In a letter of explanation promptly published in the Chicago Tribune, he said:

The public should understand that a teacher in the privacy of his classroom may state a thing playfully, paradoxically, with that exaggeration that belongs to good pedagogy, and so leave the class to discriminate the true and the false. A teacher is not required at all times to tell the truth. A class is under obligation at all times to investigate and discover for themselves the truth.

The Hartford, Conn., Times says: The statement that the hymns of the Protestant churches are doggerel could never have been made by a man of literary culture, even if he disapproved of the contents or ideas embodied, because one of the first things a literary man learns is to appreciate form independent of meaning.

The Omaha, Neb., World-Herald says: No chant has ever excelled the angels' hymn on the plains of Bethlehem. Excluding Dante, Milton, Mozart, Rossini, Benedictus, the author of "Stabat Mater," Hayden, Handel, and others, no work is more sublime than "Te Deum," whose author is still unknown. There is nothing more tender than "Come, Ye Disconsolate," by Tom Moore, or "Lead Kindly Light," by Cardinal New-

man. "I Would Not Live Alway," by Dr. Muhlenburg, has given hope to thousands of lives weighed down with hopeless sorrow.

The Chicago, Ill., Record-Herald says: Both in his lecture and his letter, Professor Triggs goes out of his way to prove that he is a glorious free-thinker. His light regard for the truth is manifest not only in the open confession, but also in his callous indifference to the effect of his words. When he intimated that all hymns but one were doggerel, he was not within hailing distance of the truth.

The Most Essential Education.

Mr. John Millar, Deputy-Minister of Education, in an important address given before the Dominion Educational Association, at Ottawa, thus enforces the importance of religious instruction of the young people of Canada:

"Unless democracy is guided by Christian principles, our boasted civilization must, like that of the nations of antiquity, pass away. No progress in mere intelligence and no zeal for Imperialism can save us from the fate of other great nations. No patriotism is worthy of the name which rests upon any platform lower than the one proclaimed nearly two thousand years ago by the Founder of Christian civilization. Puritanism, and not military success, is the force which has made the British nation what it is to-day. Puritanism is characteristic of the best elements in both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Churches. As thus understood, Puritanism is the salt of democracy; without it our fate will be like that of Rome."

Inasmuch as the amount of religious instruction in the day schools is very meagre indeed, it is all the more important that all classes in the community avail themselves of the opportunities furnished by the Sunday Schools for such instruction.

Methodist Magazine and Review for January.

This favorite family magazine begins its fifty-fifth volume with a notable number. Among its illustrated articles are an important paper by T. C. Keefer,

C.M.G., C.E., "Canadian Water-Power"; one on the late W. E. H. Massey, by Chancellor Burwash; "The City of the Sultan," with five full-page half-tones; "The Crusade Mother," by "Pastor Felix," and "The Italy of America"—all finely illustrated. Dr. Carman has a noteworthy and eloquent paper on the "Moral Momentum of Methodism," and F. H. Torrington one on "Church Music." "The New Meteorology," by Prince Kropotkin; "What Happened to Ted," by Isabelle Horton; "The Confessions of a Diplomat"; three short stories; Current Topics, with humorous cartoons, etc., etc., complete a specially good number. November and December numbers still given free to new subscribers.

Toronto: William Briggs. Montreal: C. W. Coates. Halifax: S. F. Huestis. \$2.00 a year; \$1.00 for six months.

Book Notices.

"The Legends of Genesis." By Hermann Gunkel, Professor of Old Testament Theology in the University of Berlin. Translated by W. H. Carruth, Professor of German in the University of Kansas. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 164.

This is a presentation of the very latest researches of German higher criticism. It reduces to legend and myth many of the records of the Hebrew Scriptures, describes the origin, variety, literary form and development of these "legends." Some of them are ethnological, etiological, etymological, and the like. Some have their origin in animal worship. For instance, the name Lebana means moon, hence Laban the shepherd is a moon-god, "so the moon-god may be represented as the shepherd of the clouds." How conclusive!

There is much plausible speculation, and we dare say some useful information in this book, but we deem it vitiated by the endeavor to minify and explain away the element of revealed religion. In trying to get rid of the supernatural and miraculous some higher critics will accept miracles greater than any which they explain away. Permanent institutions which are world-wide, and which have lasted a thousand generations, cannot be accounted for by myths or legends. The universal practice of sacrifice, the institution of the Jewish Sabbath, the celebration of the passover for 3,400 years, the stories in oldest literatures of the crea-

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tion and the deluge, are not the offspring of myth. Even in Germany itself there is a strong reaction against this destructive criticism.

"A Short History of the Hebrews to the Roman Period." By R. L. Ottley, rector of Winterbourne Bassett, Wiltshire, some time student of Christ Church and Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. Cambridge: University Press. Toronto: Copp, Clark Company. Pp. vi-324. Price, 5s.

We are glad to welcome from the Cambridge University Press this admirable, succinct history of the Hebrew people. Students have been expected to be familiar with the mythical history and minute geography of Greece and Rome. But often that of the ancient civilization of Palestine, which antedated both and which more profoundly influenced the history of mankind than any other, has been comparatively ignored. This book is a step in the right direction. It presupposed, and is intended to encourage a careful and intelligent study of the text of the Bible, the facts being here systematized and treated after the scientific manner of modern historical research. The gap of four hundred years between the Old and New Testaments is judiciously filled up. The appendices on the documentary sources of the narrative, the chronological tables, and the excellent colored maps add greatly to the value of the volume. The book will be of special value to Sunday School teachers as covering the subjects of the lessons for half of 1902.

"Nature and Character at Granite Bay." By Daniel A. Goodsell. New York: Eaton & Mains. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. xv-219.

"Earth's crammed with heaven
And every common bush afire with
God."

says Mrs. Browning. The common things of life possess a sacred awe could we but see them in their infinite relationships. Bishop Goodsell describes with sympathetic feeling the lowly life of his summer home by the sea—the fisherman, the hermit, the doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, the local genius and other elements of seaside life. The aspects of nature bird life, and bird lore, and the like, are vividly sketched. The story of "Gentleman Gad," the noble greyhound,

is as good in its way as Dr. Brown's immortal "Rab and His Friends." The book is a veritable "edition de luxe," with its wide margins and score or more of beautiful half-tones.

"Loiterings in Old Fields." Literary Sketches by James B. Kenyon. New York: Eaton & Mains. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 250. Price, \$1.

This is one of the most charming volumes of literary criticism we have read in a long time. It is a poet's book on the great poets, Tennyson, Morris, Keats, Lowell, the Rossetts, with chapters on George Eliot and Robert Louis Stevenson. From these oft-gleaned fields this writer brings fresh sheaves of golden grain.

"The Moral Universe." By Rev. G. W. King, Ph.D. New York: Eaton & Mains. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 92. Price, 50 cents.

This book is made up of four sermons preached during a revival to set forth the plan of salvation as expounded by the first great theologian of the Church, the inspired apostle in this Epistle to the Romans. It is a small book on a great subject, and packed full of Gospel truth.

"The Organized Sunday School." A Working Manual for Officers. By J. W. Axtell. Nashville: The Cumberland Press. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 111. Price, 50 cents.

This little book is full of helps, hints, and suggestions for better administration of Sunday Schools, counsels for superintendent and officers, advice on its music, libraries, and the like. We cordially commend it to all interested in Sunday School work.

"Unto Heights Heroic." A Biblical Interpretation. By Gardner S. Eldridge. New York: Eaton & Mains. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 186.

This is a volume of practical religion, dealing with the paramount claims of the Word of God, the influence of heredity, life, and its vision, voices and mission, and Jesus Christ, the central figure of the world's life.

The best commentary on the Sunday School lessons, says the S. S. Journal, is the large octavo volume called "The

Illustrated Lesson Notes." Large as it is, making nearly four hundred pages, it can be bought by anybody for one dollar and twenty-five cents, by teachers and ministers for one dollar, postpaid, or without postage for about eighty-eight cents. There are many excellent commentaries on the entire Bible. The inquirer probably seeks one that is not large either in bulk or in price. The best commentary of this kind is Whedon's Commentary, which is published by the Methodist Book Concern in New York and in Cincinnati. Another good commentary for the teacher is the "Biblical Encyclopedia and Museum," by James Comper Gray.

"Tekel." The Credentials and Teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg Examined. By Rev. David Tice. Cincinnati: Jennings and Pye. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 309. Price, \$1.25.

The scientific achievements and writings of Swedenborg have given an importance to his later religious maunderings to which they are not entitled. In this volume Dr. Tice has shown their extravagance, inconsistencies, and absurdities. They are evidently the product of an unsound mind dwelling in an unsound body. Yet on this tissue of so-called revelations of the unseen world is based the Church of the New Jerusalem, which finds some adherents even in Canada. For its delusions and unscriptural teachings Dr. Tice's volume will prove an admirable antidote.

"The Art of Soul-Winning." By J. W. Mahood, Evangelist. Author of "The Missing Wheel Found," etc. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. New York: Eaton & Mains. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 102. Price, 25 cents net.

This little book treats the greatest of all subjects. Its counsels are plain, practical, and have been tried and tested with much success.

A Call to Prayer.

The Rev. Geo. W. Henderson, President London Conference, makes this appeal:

Standing on the threshold of the new year we must all feel the supreme need of a revival. Not on one circuit but on every circuit, not in one department of the Church but in every department; not a revival periodical but perennial, an

old-time scriptural pentecostal revival, a mighty revival of heart religion wide and deep.

Under the constraint of this conviction we most affectionately and passionately appeal to every Leaguer to cry to God.

Pray the effectual, fervent, importunate prevailing prayer. The whole question of a revival turns mainly upon this other question, viz.: Can the Church by any means be brought to her knees? Right within our reach is the residue of the Spirit. Prayer taps the great reservoir and the outlet widens as we pray. Wait upon God till YOU receive the witness of the Holy Ghost, the assurance of acceptance, the joy of salvation.

Plead with God for complete cleansing through the atoning blood, for heart purity. Oh, beloved, we must have more holy living if we are to have anything worthy the name of a revival.

Pray. Yes, pray for the witnessing power. Filled with the Holy Ghost we shall speak with "other tongues" and the word will be in "demonstration of the Spirit and in power."

Then come to God in holy boldness, by believing prayer; besiege the throne, as you cry to God for the conversion of sinners. Ask for a very passion for souls. Pray for the grace to pray for the lost. Deliberately set yourselves to become prevailing intercessors before God for men.

After this manner pray ye, and the coveted, much-needed revival must come, nay, it has come.

Oh, for believing, patient waiting upon God! Oh, for his coming in power! Oh, for the repetitions of the pentecostal baptism, the pentecostal witnessing and then the pentecostal ingathering!

The King's Gift.

BY JEAN BLEWETT.

The angels open the windows wide

In the world so far above us,
Lo, all about us, on every side,
Falls the newborn year unstained, untried,

O, angel hearts that love us!

Ye take our yesterdays dim and old,
Touched with sorrow and sinning,
And ye give to us with a grace untold
The year's soft dew and the dawn of gold,
Ye give us the fresh beginning.

Unstained the new year falls at our feet
From the world so far above us,
And what it will bring of joy complete,
Or take of treasures tender and sweet.
Ye know, O hearts that love us!

Where Are The Boys?

It is noticeable in nearly all our schools that the number of girls is considerably in excess of the number of boys. As matters of the extent and importance of this do not happen without a general cause, it will be well for the superintendent and teachers in each school to inquire diligently into it. While a variety of elements may come into play here and there, it will be found on a close study of the subject that the result is due in the main to a general cause.

First of all, boys are the out-of-doors sex. It is more difficult to obtain and maintain an indoor assembly of boys than of girls, no matter what the purpose be, unless we except, perchance, an eating match. It therefore requires a stronger attraction within to secure their attendance. Boys tire more quickly of the merely spectacular and the perfunctory than do girls. On this account it is needful that a Sunday School which expects to hold the boys shall be full of life and proper variety.

But beyond this, boys are much more executive than girls. They are made to be so. It follows, therefore, that a teacher who would attract and hold boys must make them work. Make here does not mean to force, but to induce. It is remarkable how much boys will bear in the way of genuine work under the right kind of leadership. The highest notion of the average boy is that of victory. Make him triumph, and he is yours. But he will not follow to repeated defeats if he can help it. If many teachers who complain of their inability to hold boys will turn and see how little they are trying to hold them by, they will enjoy a season of wholesome disturbance. Let a flash of genuine candor fall on the fields and methods of work, and there will be recastings and readjustments.

But it may be said: "This implies that the chief cause of the absence of the boys is found in their teachers." No, not exactly that. We are simply beginning at the house of God. There is another house where the chief fault lies—that is, the house where the absent boy lives. It would be easy to show, if this were the place for it, that the home, according to the Christian system, determines almost everything in both the earlier and later life of the boys. One reason for the lack of interest on the

part of the boys is a failure on the part of parents to give regular attention to the preparation of the lesson in the home. A boy who has studied his lesson well in company with his parents, so that he feels sure of his own ground, and has an intellectual interest in the recitation and discussion of the lesson on Sabbath morning, will have something to go for, and is very likely to be on hand, and being on hand with something to contribute to the general result, he will feel that he is a partner in a great business.

But the chief error in the home is one of example, the failure of the parents to attend the Sunday School. Especially is this true of the fathers. There are doubtless many mothers also who could go, but do not. But there are very many who cannot go, and the boys have sense enough to know it. Nearly all the fathers can go if they want to go, but the most of them do not, and the boys have sense enough to understand that also. The boys rightly discern that a lack of interest in such work is the cause of the absence. The average boy gets his ideal of manhood from his father. Why not? How else could it be? And when he sees that his father treats Sunday School work with contempt, he is not far from doing the same thing. So soon as he really begins to imitate his father—that is, to make his father his model as well as his ideal—he is in danger of cutting the Sunday School.

On these accounts it happens that the teacher, the superintendent, and the pastor have a ministry to the home in connection with this subject which must be discharged in order to obtain the best results in the school. Parents need to be visited and talked with in regard to these causes of absence on the part of the boys. Some thoughtless boys have already grown up to be thoughtless men, and they are now fathers of the boys whom we wish to reach. Show them the situation candidly and affectionately, and many will do better. In the case of others a longer process will be necessary. Some fathers lack a conscience in such matters, and one will have to be built up. This will require, perhaps, patient continuance in well-doing, but the saving of any boy is well worth the work.

When the matter is put before a father in the right way, and he is made to feel that the teacher's only object is to secure his assistance in saving his own boy and building him up in wisdom and strength for life's truer and higher success, he will have to be a very dull or callous man if he finally refuses to turn in and help.

A man who cannot be reached by a sincere and affectionate approach through the welfare of his child is very far gone. It is high time for the pastor and neighbours to bestir themselves in his behalf. Where are the absent boys, anyhow? Are they off, and into mischief; or are they at home with their fathers? It will be well for the absent fathers to take a census of the absent boys.—Sunday School Magazine.

Teaching Young Men.

BY H. J. FARRELL.

"I WANT you to take charge of a class of young men," said a superintendent of a Sunday School to me a few years ago. I realized that the position was one of great responsibility, and perhaps I should stand between the scholars and life or death. I consecrated myself to his service, and resolved that I would bring them to Christ, taking for my ideal the example of him "who looked on a young man and loved him."

I found by studying the life of Christ that he taught young men as he found them, and not as idealized in visions; that he always had something new for them to do or think about. This was the way he "interested" young men.

I have found out in my teaching that only fresh conceptions warm and inspire young men; if I come to the class unprepared for my work as a teacher, that I have not only done poor work, but have subjected myself to criticism from them, which hurts my influence.

Christ also interests young men by his personal magnetism. If we expect to draw around us young men to be co-workers in the service of Christ, we must reflect Christ in our lives. We should not slight the power of attractiveness, whether it be of person or character.

I have also found that business methods appeal largely to the average young man. An organization with a president, secretary, and treasurer appeals very much to a class spirit, and helps to hold men together. Young men are social beings, and seek friendship. The Sunday School must be made helpful and attractive to them. A quartette or chorus of male voices is very attractive. One evening each week in games, reading, or music, or a bicycle ride, is recreation that holds young men together.

We find in the life of Christ that he

always "influenced" the people he taught. A teacher's privilege is not confined to one day in seven; there should be a profitable midweek companionship between teacher and scholar, and it is in this week-day relationship, in helping and sympathizing with them in their home, social, and business relationship, that I could influence my scholars. It requires indomitable energy, heart power, and common sense to get in close touch with young men. I have exercised in the gymnasium, studied in the classes, attended committee meetings, baseball, football, basketball, with the boys, and know something of how the evenings, days, and Sundays were spent, and what interested and occupied their minds.

"To instruct" his disciples was another element in Christ's teaching which I adopted, and tried to give the young men the true Christian ideas of living; to teach not only spiritual truth, but patriotism, morality, ethics, refinement, and culture. What an incentive to endeavor would come from instructions in the lives of young apostles, young heroes, young kings, and young prophets! I have found that a young man would carry away a positive influence if I knew precisely what I wanted to teach or impress.

"To inspire" was another method. With the exception of the traitor, every one of the twelve became by means of the Master's inspiration able to be a power in the world.

What am I going to do with my life? is the greatest of all questions for young men, and the teacher has the privilege to present for emulation the one absolutely holy life. To possess the mind of Christ, to be renewed after God's ideals, is a higher achievement than to gain wealth or fame or power, and the teacher who is living in close communion will voice the thoughts of God and give to his class practical help in noble and holy living.

I always tried to utilize in some way for positive good the talent of every one in my class. I always insisted that they should give, and found that they would be more interested in everything about the school when they gave.

An experience of ten years as a teacher of young men convinces me of the fact that the only way to attract young men who live in the earnest push and pull of our busy age is earnestness, that characteristic in religion that calls forth the common phrase, "He means business;" and every one will realize after a trial that to bring men to Christ, as a personal Saviour, is the only sure way of holding them.—S. S. Journal.

The Responsibility of Parents to the Sunday School.

BY REV. THOMAS BRYANT.

A LITTLE while ago, in one of our Sunday School papers—The Banner, I think—the question as to whether the Sunday School was “a necessary evil” was discussed, and I think a very good case was made out for the affirmative. Your susceptibilities may be a little shocked at the first mention of such a thing, and yet, when you consider how many there are, who look upon the Sunday School as a kind of “spiritual baby-farm” to which to send their children in order to get rid of them, that they may have a quiet snooze on Sunday afternoon, or a walk (for the benefit of their health), and that having done so much, think they have entirely relieved themselves from responsibility for the religious education of those committed to their care, you must arrive at the same conclusion, that, in so far as parents look at it in this light, it is indeed “a necessary evil.”

Should it, however, be unfortunately the case, that I am addressing parents belonging to this class, let me impress this solemn truth upon the minds of such, that our responsibility to our children is “God-given,” and therefore cannot be assumed and cast off at pleasure. That no superintendent or teacher, however godly, no school, however successful, can stand “in the place” of the parent. I cannot stay to quote the many passages of Scripture which support this contention, but if you are at all conversant with the Word of God, you will know that my statement is abundantly corroborated. Hence, I would state as my first point, that

1. As parents, we owe it as a duty to the Sunday School, that before our children enter the infant class, they shall have been prepared in the mother's arms, and at the mother's knee, for the teaching it will there receive. The sweet story of Bethlehem and Nazareth, and the tender meaning of Gethsemane and Calvary, will be more appreciated by the little ones, in proportion to the amount of preliminary parental training it has received in the home.

2. The Sunday School should always be regarded as a supplementary agency, and not as a substitute.

If I were asked, therefore, for a word which would present as concisely as possible, the responsibility of the parent to

the Sunday School, I would say “Co-operate!” But you say, how? Permit me to give you a few pointers in answer to this query.

a. Get to know the teachers. What a revelation it would be, if statistics could be prepared showing the percentage of parents who know even the name of the teacher with whom they have entered into partnership for the religious training of their children?

b. Pray for teachers. And see that your children do!

c. Remember that Sunday School teachers are highly susceptible of kind words from you, and appreciate your sincere regard. Check any disrespect in word or act, which your child might be inclined to show to the teacher.

d. Support the discipline of the school. Insist upon your children giving a respectful attention to the lessons.

e. See that your children do not go to school unprepared. Let the Daily Readings be used in family worship, and not forget the subject of those readings in family prayer; or at the Sunday meals, when all are at home, let the conversation bear on the subject of the lesson.

f. Have the Golden Text and the Catechism memorized, and after school let them be encouraged to give an account of the lesson.

g. Visit the school, and, if possible, attend the adult Bible class.

h. And finally, let your influence, and the relations of your home, as to the habits and tastes of its inmates, be of such a character, as shall emphasize the teaching of the Sunday School.

Nanaimo, B.C.

The New Year's Motto.

I asked the New Year for some motto sweet,

Some rule of life with which to guide my feet;

I asked and paused; he answered soft and low:

“God's will to know.”

“Will knowledge, then, suffice, New Year?” I cried,

And ere the question into silence died
The answer came: “Nay, but remember,
too,

God's will to do.”

Once more I asked: “Is there no more to tell?”

And once again the answer softly fell:

“Yes; this one thing, all other things
above,

God's will to love.” —Selected.

Descriptive and Explanatory Index

OF PERSONS, PLACES, INSTITUTIONS, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS REFERRED TO IN THE LESSONS.

Alexander.—Lesson V.—A member of the Sanhedrin. It has been conjectured that he was the Alexander who afterward became governor of the Jews in Alexandria, a brother of the celebrated Philo.

Alexandrians.—Lesson VIII.—Hebrews from the city of Alexandria, the principal seaport of Egypt, and second city in the Roman empire, founded by Alexander the Great. A third of its population were Jews. Alexandrian Jews doubtless had in Jerusalem a synagogue for themselves.

"All things common."—Lessons III., VI.—Concerning this "community of goods" five things may be safely said: (1) It was the natural outcome of both the doctrine and the environment of the apostolic church. The Lord had taught them to value worldly wealth lightly, and to lay up treasure in heaven by giving away, for God's sake, treasure on earth. Unusual demands were made upon them, because many of the early Christians were doubtless poor; many others, converted during the feasts in Jerusalem, were far from their homes; and nearly all, probably, had ceased for the time to be wealth-producers in their zeal for the Gospel. Besides all this the words of the angels still rang in their ears, "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven," and his return was expected every day. (2) The communism of the apostles was incidental to their great task of preaching the Gospel. They did not form a socialistic club because of any peculiar political tenets. They lived for months in the immediate and conscious presence of God; and that many of them sold their possessions, and that their wealth was brought in liberally to a common fund, were only natural consequences of that thorough consecration to the work of Gospel preaching to which every incident of their history testifies. (3) While practical socialism was a source of immediate strength to the little church, which without worldly means would have been like a flock of sheep among wolves, it also became a cause of immediate scandal, and led directly to the crime of Ananias and Sapphira. (4) Though a source of immediate prosperity, it became a cause of ultimate poverty. So far as we know, this "community of goods" was adopted only at Jerusalem, and to the poverty of the church there from this time on the Acts and the epistles make many references. (5) While it would seem injudi-

icious, and even impracticable, for any modern body of Christians, large or small, to adopt the financial methods of the apostles, it is nevertheless true that in so far as the apostolic spirit does not prevail we are not true Christians. It is as binding on us to-day as it was on Peter and John to have no treasure on earth, to regard the money that we incidentally handle as merely the means of doing our heavenly Father's will, and to live lives of cheerful self-abnegation, in which the interests of others shall be at least as much regarded as are our own.

Ananias.—Lesson VI.—A member of the early church in Jerusalem, who was punished by sudden death for "lying against the Holy Ghost."

Annas.—Lesson V.—A high priest of the Jews. He was first appointed by a Roman pro-consul about A.D. 7, and removed by another Roman official seven years later. He retained great political influence for nearly fifty years. Five of his sons were during his lifetime made high priests, and Caiaphas, who figured with Annas in the trial of our Lord, was his son-in-law.

Antioch.—The name of two cities, one in Asia Minor, the other in Syria, both founded by the same king, Seleucus Nicator. In Lesson VIII. Antioch in Syria is referred to. This was one of the leading cities of the Roman world, the first in which a Christian church of both Jews and Gentiles was formed, and the first to send out missionaries for the conversion of the world.

Asia.—Lessons II., VIII.—By "Asia" in these lessons is to be understood neither the continent of Asia nor Asia Minor, but a small Roman province divided from the latter, "much as Portugal is from Spain." The seven churches addressed in the early chapters of Revelation were all within the limits of this Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital.

Barnabas.—Lesson VI.—A Levite, originally named Joseph or Joses, from the island of Cyprus; an early convert to the Gospel. His liberal gift is noticed (Acts 4. 37). He was an acquaintance (perhaps before his conversion) of Saul of Tarsus, introduced Saul to Peter, and was his companion on the first missionary journey. A dispute relative to Mark, Barnabas' nephew, afterward led to the

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separation of Paul and Barnabas, the former going to Asia while the latter, with Mark, went to Cyprus. Nothing is known of the subsequent history of Barnabas.

Caiaphas.—Lesson V.—High priest of the Jews and son-in-law of old Annas, who seems to have been the controlling power in the hierarchy during Caiaphas' term of office. Caiaphas was made high priest in A.D. 24, and held the office for about five years.

"Captain of the Temple."—Lesson V.—The head of a band of Levite sentinels. He, as inspector, made his round by night and visited all the gates. Arrests within the temple inclosure were made by him.

Cilicia.—Lesson VIII.—The country of Paul's birth, a narrow strip of territory between Mount Taurus and the Mediterranean Sea, Asia Minor, in which dwelt many Jews.

Council.—Lessons V., VII., VIII.—A name often given to the Sanhedrin, or great council of the Jews. It consisted of seventy members, composed of three classes—chief priests, elders, and scribes. The chief priests were (in addition to the high priest) the ex-high priests, the heads of the priestly courses, and eminent men of the priestly order. The elders were laymen of age, wisdom, and ability. The scribes were the learned class, whether of Levitical descent or otherwise. How the members of the Sanhedrin were elected is not certain. Of this body the high priest was the usual summoner and president. At his right hand sat the vice-president, at his left the hakim, or counsellor, who gave legal opinion. From these the members, sitting, extended in a semicircle around the council room. The Sanhedrin's session room was at the hall Gazith, at the south-east corner of the Court of Israel, in the temple at Jerusalem.

Cyprus.—Lesson VI.—A large island in the Mediterranean, situated in the north-east part of that sea, between Cilicia and Syria. It is about one hundred and forty miles long, and varies from five to fifty miles in breadth. Its ancient inhabitants were plunged in all manner of luxury and debauchery. The principal deity was Venus, who had a celebrated temple at Paphos. The island was extremely fertile, and abounded in wine, oil, honey, wood, copper, agate, and a beautiful species of rock crystal. There were also large forests of cypress trees. Of the cities on the island, Paphos, on the western coast, and Salamis, at the op-

posite end, are mentioned in the New Testament. The Gospel was preached there at an early day (Acts 11. 19). Barnabas and Maason and other eminent Christians were natives of this island (Acts 11. 20; 21. 16). The apostles Paul and Barnabas made a missionary tour through it A.D. 44 (Acts 13. 4-13).

"Doctor of the law."—Lesson VII.—A professional expounder of the books of Moses and the Hebrew traditions. Such a doctor did not at all resemble a modern "LL.D.," nor had he much in common with the "philosophers" of ancient Greece. He burrowed like a modern lawyer among earlier "authorities"; but it was Hebrew law only, not Roman, which he expounded. It was this monotonous and tiresome reference of all questions to the decisions of dead rabbis which made the utterances of him who spake as "one having authority" so startling to the Jews of his day.

Gamaliel.—Lesson VII.—The grandson of the great Hillel, and the first of two celebrated men of his name. The estimation in which he was held by the lowly as well as the learned was altogether exceptional. A hundred years afterward Jewish writers said, "Since Rabbi Gamaliel died the glory of the law hath ceased."

Grecians.—Lesson VIII.—The Grecians, Grecizing Jews, or Hellenists, were Jews by birth and training, who, born in a foreign land, spoke a foreign language, generally the Greek, and were held by the native Jews to be tinctured with Gentilism, and so defective in the perfectness of their Judaism. They were inclined to liberalism, excepted when prompted by emulation to become more Jewish than the Jews themselves.

John.—Lesson V., verse 6.—An influential member of the Sanhedrin, of whom nothing beyond this mention is certainly known. It has been suggested, however, that he may be the same as Jonathan, the son of Annas, who himself afterward became high priest.

Judas of Galilee.—Lesson VII.—A seditionist among the Jews about 6 A.D. God was the only ruler of the nation he would recognize, and he thought it sinful to pay tribute to Caesar. After his death his followers probably formed the political faction called the Zealots.

Levite.—Lesson VI.—A descendant of Levi, and therefore hereditarily an official attendant on the temple services. The number of Levites in the apostolic days

was much greater than the needs of the temple; but the birthright seems to have given a social distinction.

Libertines.—Lesson VIII.—Jewish families, who, having been enslaved in war, were afterward emancipated by the Romans. About A.D. 19 the Emperor Tiberius expelled the Libertines from Rome, and many of them returned at once to Jerusalem.

Nazareth.—Lessons IV., V., VIII.—A small city of the tribe of Zebulun, in lower Galilee, where our Lord dwelt from his childhood till he began his public ministry.

Nicanor.—Lesson VIII.—One of the seven "deacons" (though that name is not given to them in the New Testament) appointed by the church at Jerusalem.

Nicolas.—Lesson VIII.—A Gentile of Antioch, converted to Judaism, and afterward to Christianity; and one of the seven appointed to minister to the poor in the church at Jerusalem.

Pharisee.—Lesson VII.—The Pharisees were an ecclesiastical party among the Jews in the days of Jesus. They were not "schismatics"; but did not form a separate church, as the Methodists and Presbyterians have done in later days; but they formed a clearly defined sect in the midst of the existing church, much as the High Church party exists in the Episcopal Church. They stood for all ancient traditions and forms, and controlled most of the "rabbinical teaching," most of the scholarship and thought of the day. As partisans they were disposed to act together, and were often felt in "politics," but the priestly party at the time of Christ was not under their control, and the chief priests were all of them Sadducees, members of a sect that was the deadly antagonist of the Pharisaic party. In their enmity to Christ, however, these two antagonistic parties acted together. The Pharisees were intolerant, aristocratic, and disposed to be rebellious against the Roman government, and most of them were intensely religious, though their religion was of a bigoted type.

Prison.—Lessons VII., X.—The "common prison," corresponding to our jail, consists of a single room in the governor's cellar, with a floor of earth, and one small window, where all manner of people, from the murderer to the insolvent debtor, are promiscuously crowded together. The only furniture consists of a bench, always occupied by the strongest;

the rest lie on the floor or stand. "We have visited prisons of this kind where we could only stand a few moments upon the threshold on account of the foul air. The keepers remain outside of the door (Acts 5. 23). But the prisoners are not bound. They mostly find their own food; hence they beg for bread of any one they may chance to see from the window; and in the rare cases in which the prison is situated high, and adjoins a public thoroughfare, the prisoners let down strings and sometimes little baskets, and beg the passers-by to send them up food."—H. J. Van Lennep.

Prochorus.—Lesson VIII.—One of the seven deacons in the church at Jerusalem.

Proselytes.—Lessons II., VIII.—Gentiles who, tired of idolatry and polytheism, were glad to learn from Judaism the doctrine of one true and holy God. One class went only so far as to accept the monotheism and the so-called moral precepts of Noah, without undergoing circumcision and the ritual of Moses; and, because thus stopping at the threshold (or, rather perhaps, because they were strangers "within thy gates"—Exod. 20. 10), they were significantly named Proselytes of the Gate, while the receivers of the whole law were proudly styled Proselytes of Righteousness.

Sadducees.—Lessons V., VII.—"This was the name of one of the most influential sects among the Jews in our Lord's time. The Jewish authorities state that this name (which they write Tsedukim) is derived from Tsadok (Zadok), and that the Sadducees were the followers of a rabbi of that name who taught that 'there was nothing for them in the world to come.' But it is more probable, from their constant connection with the priests, that the name of the Sadducees was derived from the more famous Zadok, who became high priest in the reign of King Solomon (1 Kings 2. 35). We read of the distinction of his descendants as 'the sons of Zadok,' and 'the priests the Levites, of the seed of Zadok,' even as late as the description of Ezekiel's temple (Ezek. 40. 46; 44. 15). The probability of this priestly descent of the sect of Sadducees is strengthened by the way in which they are mentioned in Acts 5. 17: 'Then the high priest rose up, and all that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees).' The derivation which makes their name the plural of the Hebrew adjective Tsaddik—righteous—has not much authority to support it. The teaching of the Sadducees is partly described (Acts 23. 8):

They say "there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit." In addition to this, they attached no authority to the oral law, while the Pharisees maintained that the greater portion thereof had been transmitted to them from Moses. The Sadducees also taught the doctrine of the freedom of the will of men. The statement that they rejected all the Old Testament Scriptures except the Pentateuch has no confirmation in Josephus, and has arisen from a confusion of the Sadducees with the Samaritans. Josephus says, 'Their doctrine is accepted only by a few, but yet by those

of the greatest dignity'—a statement fully borne out by the influential position in which we find them when the history of the Acts opens. They play no very prominent part in the Gospel history, because the teaching of Christ while on earth was directed more specially against the formalism and outward show of religion that prevailed among the Pharisees. When the doctrine of the resurrection began to be preached the hostility of the Sadducees made itself apparent."
—Lumby.

Timon.—Lesson VIII.—One of "the seven" of the pentecostal church.

LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS—FIRST QUARTER.

Studies in the Book of the Acts.

Lesson 1. Jan. 5.—THE PROMISE OF POWER. Acts 1: 1-11. Study Acts 1: 1-14. *Commit vs. 6-8.* (Read ch. 1.) GOLDEN TEXT: Acts 1: 8. Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.

2. Jan. 12.—THE PROMISE OF POWER FULFILLED. Acts 2: 1-11. Study Acts 2: 1-21. *Commit vs. 2-4.* (Read ch. 2: 1-36; Joel 2: 21-32.) GOLDEN TEXT: Acts 2: 39. The promise is unto you and to your children.

3. Jan. 19.—THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Acts 2: 37-47. *Commit vs. 37-39.* GOLDEN TEXT: Acts 2: 47. The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

4. Jan. 26.—THE LAME MAN HEALED. Acts 3: 1-10. Study Acts 3: 1-16. *Commit vs. 6-8.* (Read ch. 3.) GOLDEN TEXT: Exod. 15: 2. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation.

5. Feb. 2.—THE FIRST PERSECUTION. Acts 4: 1-22. Study Acts 4: 1-22. *Commit vs. 8-10.* GOLDEN TEXT: Acts 4: 12. There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

6. Feb. 9.—THE SIN OF LYING. Acts 5: 1-11. Study Acts 5: 1-11. *Commit vs. 3-5.* (Read James 3.) GOLDEN TEXT: Eph. 4: 25. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor.

7. Feb. 16.—THE SECOND PERSECUTION. Acts 5: 32-42. Study Acts 5: 25-42. *Commit vs. 40-42.* (Read ch. 5: 12-24.) GOLDEN TEXT: Matt. 5: 10. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Lesson 8. Feb. 23.—THE ARREST OF STEPHEN. Acts 6: 7-17. Study Acts 6: 1-15. *Commit vs. 7, 8.* GOLDEN TEXT: Matt. 10: 28. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.

9. March 2.—THE STONING OF STEPHEN. Acts 7: 54 to 8: 2. *Commit vs. 59, 60.* (Read ch. 7.) GOLDEN TEXT: Matt. 5: 44. Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.

10. March 9.—THE DISCIPLES SCATTERED. Acts 8: 3-13. Study Acts 8: 3-17. *Commit vs. 3-5.* GOLDEN TEXT: Acts 8: 4. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

11. March 16.—THE ETHIOPIAN CONVERTED. Acts 8: 29-39. Study Acts 8: 29-40. *Commit vs. 34, 35.* (Read Isa. 53.) GOLDEN TEXT: Rom. 10: 10. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

12. March 23.—TEMPERANCE LESSON. Eph. 5: 11-21. *Commit vs. 15-18.* (Read ch. 5.) GOLDEN TEXT: Eph. 5: 18. Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.

13. March 30.—REVIEW. GOLDEN TEXT: Acts 2: 36. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

OR, EASTER LESSON. John 20: 6-18. Study John 20: 1-18. *Commit vs. 13, 14.* GOLDEN TEXT: John 11: 25. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life.

ORDER OF SERVICES—FIRST QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

- I. SILENCE.
- II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psa. 125.)
- SUPT. They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion,
- SCHOOL Which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.
- SUPT. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem,
- SCHOOL So the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.
- SUPT. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous;
- SCHOOL Lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.
- SUPT. Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good,
- SCHOOL And to them that are upright in their hearts.

SUPT. As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways,

SCHOOL The LORD shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity; but peace shall be upon Israel.

III. SINGING.

IV. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, OR THE APOSTLES' CREED.

V. PRAYER, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.

VI. SINGING.

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. SINGING.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psa. 119. 83, 84.)

SUPT. Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes;

SCHOOL And I shall keep it unto the end.

SUPT. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law;

SCHOOL. Yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

International Bible Lessons.

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF THE ACTS.

LESSON V. The First Persecution.

[Feb. 2.]

GOLDEN TEXT. There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Acts 4. 12.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also Acts 4. 13-22. Read Acts 4. 1-31.]

Acts 4. 1-12. [Commit to memory verses 8-10.]

1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them,

2 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Je'sus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.

4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that they rulers, and elders, and scribes,

6 And An'nas the high priest, and Ca'ia-phas, and John, and Al-ex-an'der, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Je-ru'sa-lem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

8 Then Pe'ter, filled with the Ho'ly Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Is'ra-el,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Is'ra-el, that by the name of Je'sus Christ of Naz'a-reth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and
- 2 the Sadducees came upon them, being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from
- 3 the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it
- 4 was now eventide. But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.
- 5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; and Annas the high priest *was there*, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest. And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power, or in what name,
- 8 have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders, if we this day are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means this man is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* in him doth this man stand here before you
- 11 whole. He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made
- 12 the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.

Time.—A summer afternoon in A. D. 30.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Home Readings.

- M. The First Persecution. Acts 4. 1-12.
 Th. The First Persecution. Acts 4. 13-22.
 W. Rejoicing in persecution. Acts 4. 23-31.
 Th. Persecution predicted. Luke 21. 10-19.
 F. The rejected stone. Matt. 21. 33-44.

S. The only foundation. 1 Cor. 3. 1-11.

S. Not ashamed. 2 Tim. 1. 1-12.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 8.

Jesus! the name high over all,
 In hell, or earth, or sky;
 Angels and men before it fall,
 And devils fear and fly.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 11.

Take the name of Jesus with you,
Child of sorrow and of woe;
It will joy and comfort give you;
Take it, then, where'er you go.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 9.

There is no name so sweet on earth,
No name so sweet in heaven,
The name before his wondrous birth
To Christ the Saviour given.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Arrest of Peter and John.*

What was the motive of the priests and Sadducees?

How long were the disciples under arrest?

What was the result of Peter's second discourse?

Before whom were the disciples brought?

Who were Annas and Caiaphas?

2. *Peter's Impachment of the Council.*

What did he propose to prove in his defense?

By whose power did he declare the impotent man was healed?

With what did he charge the Sanhedrin?

What is meant in the reference to the rejected stone?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *First Night in Prison* (verses 1-4).

Where were Peter and John arrested?

What was the charge against them?

Did their Gospel work go on?

Which sect of the Jews were deniers of the resurrection?

Why did the priests oppose?

What great things in Bible times were done in prisons?

2. *First Preaching to the Rulers* (verses 5-11).

What opportunity did this arrest give the apostles?

What facts about Jesus did Peter relate to the rulers?

How explain their hardness of heart?

What change in the president of the Sanhedrin since Christ was tried?

By what power did Peter heal?

By what power did he preach?

3. *Obedying God Rather than Man* (verses 12-16).

Can you believe these rulers acted conscientiously?

Can we measure the possibility of self-deception?

Can we be safe unless we avoid the first act of deliberate rejection of Christ?

Did Peter and John promise to obey the command of the rulers?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

Where did Peter preach his first sermon?
In Jerusalem, standing on the street.

Where did he preach the second? *In the temple.*

Who listened to it? *The people, the priests, and the elders.*

What did they do to the apostles? *They put them in prison.*

Before whom were they brought the next day?
Before the Jewish council.

What was it called? *The Sanhedrin.*

Who belonged to it? *Seventy of the chief priests and rulers.*

Who was high priest at this time? *Caiaphas.*

Why is Annas also called the high priest?
Because he had once held that office and still had great influence.

How did Peter speak before the council?
Boldly, for he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

What did the apostles say about the only name? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. How many people now believed in Jesus?
About five thousand.

2. Where did the rulers bring Peter and John? *Before the council.*

3. How did the apostles say that the lame man had been healed? *Through the name of Jesus.*

4. What did they declare Jesus to be? *The only Saviour.*

5. How may we be saved? GOLDEN TEXT:
"There is none other name," etc.

The Church Catechism.

45. What are the more particular duties unfolded in the New Testament? The more particular duties unfolded in the New Testament are our duties to ourselves, to our family, to the Church of Christ, to the state, and to society at large.

Ephesians 6. 4-9.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The Apostles as Model Teachers.

I. THEY INSTRUCTED ALL WHO WOULD LISTEN.

They taught the people. v. 2.

Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim. Jer. 7. 2.

The poor have the Gospel preached to them. Matt. 11. 5.

Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel. Mark 16. 15.

II. THEY PRESENTED JESUS AS THE SOURCE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

They preached through Jesus the resurrection. v. 2.

In Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Cor. 15. 22.

He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies. Rom. 8. 11.

III. THEY PRESENTED JESUS AS THE SOURCE OF POWER.

By the name of Jesus Christ. v. 10.

whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. John 16. 23.

Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. Luke 10. 17.

IV. THEY PRESENTED JESUS AS THE SOURCE OF SALVATION FROM SIN.

Neither is there salvation in any other. v. 12. No one cometh unto the Father, but by me. John 14. 6.

Other foundation can no man lay than Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 3. 11.

V. THEY WERE PERSECUTED.

They laid hands on them. v. 3.

These also resist the truth. 2 Tim. 3. 8.

They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you. Luke 21. 12.

VI. THEY DEPENDED ON THE HOLY GHOST.

Filled with the Holy Ghost, said. v. 8.

The Holy Ghost shall teach you what ye ought to say. Luke 12. 12.

It is the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Matt. 10. 20.

VII. THOUSANDS WERE CONVINCED BY THEM.

Many of them which heard believed. v. 4.

I suffer bonds, but the word of God is not bound. 2 Tim. 2. 9.

So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed. Acts 19. 20.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

In a time of political agitation and suspicion a sudden crowd in Solomon's Porch was portentous, no man could tell of what. So, very naturally, the events of this lesson follow those of the last. The sudden popularity of the apostles, their arrest, and their arraignment before the Sanhedrin are dwelt upon in the notes that follow; but the teacher should master the entire chapter; indeed, our story is not complete without verses 13-31. The eloquence of Peter and John, "unlearned men," made the Sanhedrin "marvel," and caused the recognition that they were followers of Jesus. The prosecution was thwarted by the manifest restoration of the lame beggar; and in private conference the leaders decided to exercise their utmost power of command and threat against further Christian teaching, while for prudential reasons refraining from punishment of the preachers. With unparalleled boldness Peter and John defied them: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye," they said; "for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Following the account of the release of the apostles comes a prayer of thanksgiving (verses 24-30), which, as being one of the earliest of Christian documents, has peculiar historic value. When the apostles had prayed the place of meeting was shaken and all were filled with the Holy Ghost. This completes the story of the miraculous cure of the lame man, and the writer proceeds, in the closing verses of the chapter, to tell of the intense brotherly love which led the Church in Jerusalem to hold all worldly goods in common.

I. THE ARREST.

Verses 1, 2. The first scene of our lesson is a rude interruption of the apostles' sermon by representatives of the Sanhedrin, whose members were filled with vexation because the apostles were "able to produce an instance destructive of their theory that there was no resurrection." The words that the apostles *spoke unto the people* are given in the last chapter (verses 12-26). *Came upon them.* Literally, "stood

there;" implying suddenness. *The priests* (probably) were the chief priest and his associates, the controlling group of the hierarchy, or (possibly) the common priests whose turn it was that day to take charge of the temple services. Soon after this (Acts 6. 7) "a great company of the priests" became "obedient to the faith." *The captain of the temple* (called in the Old Testament "the ruler of the house of God") superintended the priests and Levites

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who kept watch in and around the sacred edifice, and would be held responsible for any disorder. We are not to wonder at the importance attached to the crowd which had gathered about Peter and John. Jerusalem, like most great ancient cities, was repeatedly at the mercy of a mob, and mobs at Jerusalem naturally formed in the temple courts. The chief characteristics of the sect of *Sadducees* in our Lord's time, so far as we can distinguish them, were "a disbelief of angels and spiritual creatures and the denial of the resurrection and a future state." The priests, the captain, and the Sadducees represent three classes, but they were classes closely interwoven, for the leading priestly families were Sadducean, and the captain of the temple would seem, from an allusion in Josephus, to have been, in one case, at least, the son of the high priest. In verse 2 the emphasis falls on four phrases—*they, the people, through Jesus, and the resurrection*. That *they*, "unlearned men," should assume the functions of doctors of the law; that *the people*, who had all their lives carried without murmur burdens grievous to be borne, independently should consider novel propositions in theology; that the offensive doctrine of *the resurrection from the dead* should be taught in the temple of which practically the Sadducees were owners; and, worst of all, that the force back of all this was the detested *Jesus*, the carpenter-rabbi whom they had killed—all this greatly grieved the hierarchy (Revised Version; "they were sore troubled;" literally, "they were thoroughly pained").

3. *It was now eventide* (the old English word "tide" meant "time"), and too late to call a meeting of the Sanhedrin to try the prisoners; so they were *put in hold* (or, in modern phraseology, "locked up") *unto the next day*. This was simply a commitment for trial; imprisonment as a punishment was not usual with the Jews. The "day" ended about six o'clock (with the twelfth hour), and it was already three (the ninth hour) when the cripple asked Peter for alms.

4. *Howbeit*. "But." In spite of the chronic opposition of the authorities, and in spite of this sudden arrest. *Many of them which heard the word believed*. Professor Seeley suggests that nearly all the moral worth in Jerusalem now went into the Christian Church. *The number of the men was* ["came to be"] *about five thousand*. In the earlier enumerations women apparently were included; not so here. The great increase from one hundred and twenty (at the time of the ascension, Acts 1. 15) and

three thousand (at Pentecost, Acts 2. 41) is not more remarkable than the careful organization implied by this registry of membership.

II. THE TRIAL.

5, 6. *Their rulers, and elders, and scribes*. The Sanhedrin was made up of representatives of three classes—the priestly, the wealthy, and the learned. The elders seem to have had magisterial duties apart from those of the council. The scribes were "doctors of the law," professional students. *Annas* was called *the high priest* (perhaps only by courtesy) and seems to have discharged functions which we would suppose belonged to that office, although he had been deposed and his son-in-law Caiaphas was now the titular high priest. The characteristics of both these men were displayed at the trial of our Lord. They were narrow ecclesiastics with skeptical hearts and corrupt political methods. *John and Alexander* are not elsewhere spoken of in the Scriptures, and they cannot certainly be identified with men mentioned in other histories. *The kindred of the high priest*. The high-priestly families. The officials enumerated, who when *gathered together* seem to have formed the Sanhedrin, met at *Jerusalem*, a phrase that strikes us oddly at first, for (according to our use of words) all the events we have been studying were there. But the phrase seems here to have the sense of *in the city*, as distinct from the temple courts. The Revised Version, however, places the words "were come together in Jerusalem" at the end of verse 5, instead of at the end of verse 6, and so indicates that some of the rulers, elders, and scribes lived in the suburbs. It was now the most beautiful part of summer, and they may have had summer homes.

7. The words *when they had set them in the midst* suggest the semicircle in which the members of the Sanhedrin always sat, the accused being compelled to stand facing the president, who was in the middle of the curved line of seats. *By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?* "What kind of power is at your command?" The cure itself they do not deny; the power that wrought it they assume to be evil. "Power" and "name" stood for mystic forces which sorcerers and exorcists were supposed to exert. The questioners knew well the apostles' use of the name of Jesus, but could not admit that his name could work such a cure. Their emphasis on "ye" gives the phrase in Greek something of the meaning that "you fellows" would have in English. They were preparing to accuse the apostles either of her-

esy (crime against the "Church") or of treason (crime against the State) or of both.

III. THE DEFENSE.

8. *Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost*, was one of the greatest forces exerted in this world. But until "filled with the Holy Ghost" he had lacked effectiveness. *Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel*. A formal address, of abundant courtesy, but without compliment.

9. This verse is masterly. *If we be*. Since we are. "We are to be examined, are we? About what? *A good deed done to an impotent man!* Made criminals for healing a cripple!" The absurdity of the policy of the Sanhedrin could not more forcefully have been stated. The Greek word for *made whole* is rendered "saved" in verse 12.

10. *Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel*. Here is an appeal from the Sanhedrin to the people, whose opinions, indeed, the Sanhedrin affected to despise, but of whom they lived in constant terror. *By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth* the deed was done. If there was successful incantation here is the Enchanter. Peter might with literal truth, as Dr. Whedon suggests, have claimed that the miracle had been wrought by the power of Jehovah, the God of Israel. And that would have appeased the Sanhedrin. But he was faithful to his high duty as a "witness" of Jesus. And he does not stop at Nazareth; *whom ye crucified*, he says, *whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole*. The more one studies the compact rhetoric of this defense the more is one amazed by its power. Viewed simply as a piece of oratory it is surpassing. The man who was cured was present with the apostles (verse 14). "His legs speak though his tongue be silent."

11. *This [Jesus Christ of Nazareth] is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner*. This is an allusion to a curious tradition of the

Jews. In the building of Solomon's temple a stone of peculiar shape could not be fitted by the builders into any niche, and was thrown aside by the master builder as worthless. But when the structure approached completion this stone was found to be needed to hold together the entire structure, and its peculiarities of carving were the culmination of the architectural glory of the completed edifice. The tradition is woven into Psa. 118. 22, 23, and the figure was used by our Lord against the chief priests and elders (Matt. 21. 42), as it had been used centuries before by Isaiah (8. 14, 15; 28. 16). Its applicability to Jesus was striking, and made it a favorite with the apostles (see Rom. 9. 32, 33; Eph. 2. 20; 1 Pet. 2. 4-8), for "the professional builders of the theocracy had now rejected the Corner Stone of the theocracy."

12. *Neither is there salvation in any other*. The modern theological use of the word "salvation" dulls a little the shade of meaning here conveyed by the apostles to the Sanhedrin. Revival phraseology and such titles as "The Salvation Army" have narrowed the use of the term. But in Peter's day not the Jewish nation only, but the whole Roman empire, shrank with terror from an approaching doom which they indefinitely but certainly foresaw. Plainly existing conditions were too rotten to continue, and in all directions men sought salvation. One instance of this search was the use of the word Saviour as a complimentary title for sovereigns, and another was the frantic question of the jailer at Philippi. The doom came—to the Jews, in the fall of Jerusalem; to the Romans, in the incursions of barbarians; to the whole world, in the collapse of the Roman empire. Peter presses home on the consciences of his enemies the truth that *there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*. The cure of human bodies was the sign and prophecy of the salvation of human souls; and it was so regarded by all in Jerusalem.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The book of Acts gives us the beginnings of the kingdom of Christ in the earth, and its statements have an ever-fresh interest by their fadeless charm of novelty. We see men and doings as on a horizon line between us and the morning, every feature and movement clearly marked and illuminated. In such radiance stands before us the first persecution. "Think

not," said Christ, "that I have come to send peace on the earth!" Persuasion was in Greek and Roman rhetoric counted the chief of all arts of speech, and its special quality was this, that the person persuaded is "grateful, as having been benefited," while the one compelled is "angry, as having been violated." But so intense is the wrongness of the human heart,

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such is its bent toward evil, and so averse is it to accepting the divine will, that ordinary human persuasion addresses it in vain. Yet so important is it to man's welfare that he accept the Gospel, and by its appeal be reconciled to God, that it is left to rely only in part on words which man's wisdom speaketh. "We persuade men," but the excellency of power for the work is not in the speaker.

THE POWER FROM ON HIGH.

The Holy Ghost gives energy to the preacher. He makes the word quick and powerful, penetrating to the thoughts and intents of the heart, so that a man's weak utterances become a vehicle conveying a force in them, not of them. The Spirit affects the hearer also, making him attentive and susceptible to the word delivered. Still, man is morally free. His self-jurisdiction, like that of the Supreme Court of the United States, though narrow, is clear. He can resist the divine appeal; he can do more—he can fiercely oppose it and crush those who present it. "Not to send peace, but a sword." Soon, then, comes collision and begins the long record of violence and murder.

THE FIRST COLLISION.

This had been an eventful day. At 3 P. M. Peter and John had wrought the first public apostolic miracle, a deed of mercy, restoring the lame man. The people, wondering, gathered at Solomon's porch, and, eclipsing its architecture, there stood whole the man whose misery had so long defiled the Beautiful Gate of the temple.

A WORD FITLY SPOKEN.

The man, the subject, and the occasion all concur in giving fit and timely character to Peter's thought, and of its fullness his lips speak out: "Not unto us;" faith in the Crucified, now the Risen, the Prince of Life, hath made this man strong, and has sent to bless you! Earnestness, authority, and love mingle in Peter's appeal, and his hearers, "greatly wondering," seem about to receive the word in good and honest hearts. Then cometh the devil and taketh away the word which was being sown in their hearts; perhaps not all of it; some may take root deeply. He that gave Peter this well-timed word, can he not give us a word in season for some brother-man? Do we wish him, ask him to give it?

THE INTERRUPTION.

"Do it with thy might!" Peter has entered upon the strenuous life with thoughts that

breathe and words that burn. The priests with whose routine he clashed, the captain who kept order in the temple precinct, and the Sadducees who disliked any talk of the resurrection, who had the high priesthood and many great offices, come suddenly upon the scene. "Through" or "in" Jesus goes not with "preach," but "the resurrection." With some violence ("laid hands") they lock them up for treatment in the morning. "The word of God is not bound," and the stars of evening shone on new believers. That is a teacher's or a preacher's hope and joy; salvation after he is gone; absent, he yet speaketh.

THE TRIBUNAL.

It was an imposing array of men high in station. Annas and his family were first in politics and society; the seventy-one Sanhedrin were eminent in learning and moral influence. Before them were two "unlearned and ignorant men," such as would easily break down before the wisdom and dignity of the court. The question is a dilemma. "Power" refers to magic art; "name," to authority. Moses ordered the death of wizards and magicians. To ascribe the miracle to any other name than the divine would be blasphemy, punishable by stoning. By either such power or name the deed was done; death, then, looks these men in the face. They are tasting their master's cup.

THE HOLY GHOST.

In this emergency he enlightens the understanding, controls the temper, and softens the affections. One sees this in Peter's clearness, courage, and gentleness of response. It was surely given him in that same hour what he ought to speak. This is the Spirit's gracious office. We believe in the Holy Ghost, and what he was pleased to do in Peter's need and for Christ's honor and for truth he is ready to do for us. Who would not wish such a Helper in his class or school, in any of his engagements? And we read and believe that our Father is willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. We sorely need his aid. Do we so ask as to receive?

A FRANK STATEMENT.

We may dislike yet we can but respect one whose courage keeps even with his convictions. "Will falsehood make a man immortal? Will he not die of *something*?" was Socrates's thought as to shunning death by a lie. Peter leaves the Sanhedrin in no possible doubt as to his meaning. He had once denied his Master before a servant girl; now, with no bravado, but

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calmly in front of mortal danger, he in this august presence confesses Jesus of Nazareth. It is a scene morally sublime. So did Luther at Worms stand by truth. Could we do that before our Master's bitter enemies? Could we before *one* enemy of his?

THE CHANGE OF TRIBUNAL.

"Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" Here are two men that perfectly understand the matter in question—"the truth as it is in Jesus;" the Lord's right statutes which henceforth require acceptance of Christ and loyalty to his service. They are in the light. Before them is the council, composed of men ignorant of this truth and of ill temper toward the Messiah, Israel's Hope and Consolation. They are in the dark. A sharp statement of this truth and of their relation to it is now Peter's plain duty. He has the moral dignity of a judge. He arraigns them as having crucified Jesus Christ of Nazareth. They were surely accomplices in spirit and temper, and what they did by Pilate they did by themselves. Their action may admit of defense or palliation, but not of denial.

AN OFFENSE AGAINST A WHOLE SYSTEM.

The familiar tradition was that in building Solomon's temple there was brought from the distant quarry a block that baffled the workmen. Its quality was excellent, but its shape such that there seemed no place for it. The temple rose like some tall palm with no sound of hammer, but there was one gap unfilled. Then one thought of this strange stone lying in dirt and neglect. It was set in the vacancy, and by its unusual shape filled it, giving strength and beauty to the majestic building. So in rejecting Christ the Sanhedrin left incomplete the fabric of law and prophecy, of type and sacrifice, which had for two thousand years been in process of construction. To the unbelieving Jew of our day it remains just as incomplete. So all systems of virtue and religion, all personal character, are incomplete without Christ. His accepted righteousness, the excellence shed from his love and sufferings, give to any natural goodness that we may have a beauty and completeness.

THE BINDING VIRTUE.

The arch was not known in ancient Jewish architecture. Had it been, corner stone would in rhetoric have been keystone, that which balances the arch, making every stone secure in its place in the structure. So Jesus in himself binds and holds together the former dispensa-

tions. He does the same in human character. All our born virtues, as truth, courage, pity, honesty, find their consummation in the mind of Christ. "We are complete in him." He holds our virtues together; without him they sprawl, half lost, and unreliable. He is thus the corner stone of personal character, binding and holding it, as he is also of institutions and of states. What he binds is strong, poised, and enduring. He is the Corner Stone.

NONE OTHER NAME.

"Name" represents character, authority, ability. Indorsed on a financial security, it involves the estate of the signer. On a petition or recommendation it involves its writer's veracity and sound judgment. To write a name is thus often morally and legally a serious act. The name of Jesus means his resources of love and power, the wisdom of his words, the meaning of his miracles. All these are needed for our salvation, and they cannot be duplicated any more than there can be two suns in the sky. His name is enough; all other means and appliances fail, and all efforts to save ourselves and others get from him all their virtue. What, then, is *our* relation to this one only saving name? Has his name through our faith in his name to us brought healing of our heart and life maladies?

Thoughts for Young People.

THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES.

1. *They taught.* "The idea of teaching is compounded of two elements. The first consists in drawing out the mind and making it work on the object-matter presented to it. This is *education*. The second consists in presenting the object-matter to the mind, in bringing within its ken the proper materials of knowledge. This is *instruction*. The first is training the eye of the mind; the second is giving light." Christianity has *taught the world to think*; it has called forth more thought than either philosophy or science; it stimulates the human mind wherever it goes. Christianity has *taught the world to know*; it is a revelation; it has brought within the sweep of our intellectual vision divine verities which before lay inaccessible. Ancient philosophers had good eyes, but lacked light. Jesus is "the Light of the world." Taught by him or by his apostles, the seeker will find.

2. *They taught the people.* No ancient philosopher had hope that the bulk of mankind could be enlightened, elevated, or made pure or wise. Jesus was the first teacher who lov-

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ingly cared for the people. Christianity is a revelation that God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

"Rank is but the guinea's stamp;
Man is gold for all that."

is thoroughly a Christian sentiment. Christianity is the only religion which covers the world's wants.

3. *They taught the people through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.* With this truth every sermon wound up. They did not stop by asserting and proving the resurrection of Jesus, but proceeded to show that he was "the first fruits of them that slept," and that all would arise from their graves. What they said affected the personal faith and experience of every hearer.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

BY REV. A. H. MCKINNEY.

HISTORY.

From Acts 2, 47 we learn that there were daily additions to the number that believed in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Master. In verse 5 of to-day's lesson we read that the number had increased to five thousand. This continuously growing number of believers naturally attracted the attention and excited the feelings of the leaders of the Jews. In order to stem the tide they must silence the apostles. In our text we have the record of one of the many attempts that were made to put an end to the preaching of the latter.

INTRODUCTION.

Having questioned the pupils to ascertain whether they understand the truths of Peter's sermon, explain that these truths were so distasteful to the leaders of the Jews that they were ready to proceed to any extreme in order that the common people should not listen to them.

NARRATIVE.

A number of persons are brought to our attention in the text. We will divide them into four classes:

1. *The rulers of the Jews.* Ask: Who of them are mentioned in verses 1 and 5? Who were the priests? the Sadducees? the captain of the temple? Who are named in verse 6? (The persons named in these verses formed the Sanhedrin. As this term is frequently used, its meaning should be explained to the class.)

2. *The preachers.* What were their names? What did the rulers do to them? (verse 3.) Who helped them to answer the rulers? How did they feel when they were before the rulers?

(verse 13.) What did the rulers say to them? (verse 17.) What did they answer? (verse 20.) What did they do when released? (verse 23.) What did they afterward continue to do? (verse 31.)

3. *Jesus.* What were some of the things that Peter had said about Jesus? See chapter 3:

(1) He was killed (verse 15).

(2) He was raised from the dead (verse 15).

(3) He made the impotent man strong (verse 16).

(4) He is coming again (verse 20).

Which of the teachings was particularly offensive to the Jews? (Acts 4, 2.) When Peter was questioned what did he say about Jesus? (verses 10-12.)

(1) He was crucified by his hearers.

(2) God raised him from the dead.

(3) He made the impotent man whole.

(4) He is exalted by God.

(5) There is salvation in no other.

4. *The Christians.* How many did they number at this time? (verse 4.) What did they do when they learned what God had done for Peter and John? (verse 24.) What did they receive in answer to prayer? (verse 31.)

TRUTH EMPHASIZED.

The name of Jesus Christ is better known to-day than it was when Peter and John were imprisoned for proclaiming it. It is often on the lips of both his friends and his enemies. Many know not what the name stands for; many know and are not much influenced by their knowledge. Foolish is the teacher who lets slip this golden opportunity by taking too much for granted. Print the word "Jesus" on the blackboard or on a sheet of paper; point to it and ask: What is the meaning of the word? Have some one read Matt. 1, 21. Ask: How may we be saved? When the various answers are given have some one read Acts 16, 31. Explain the meaning of the word "believe." Is there not some method of salvation other than belief in Jesus? Have the pupils answer freely and according to what they believe, rather than according to what you desire them to say. This will enable you to understand what they think and to correct mistaken notions. As some in the class may be Christians, a good closing for the lesson may be the following prayer, which the pupils may take with them and repeat often:

LORD, HELP ME TO
BELIEVE IN
TRUST
WITNESS FOR JESUS.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Have the class learn what practice prevailed among the Christians of this time, and what two persons turned this practice into an occasion for sin. Have them add to the list for Review Sunday:

A LAME MAN.
PETER AND JOHN.

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

Verses 1, 2. I went one day from a street service held by the Salvation Army to a church where ritual and ceremony prevailed, where there was everything to appeal to the eye and ear. In both places there was real worship, although neither of them appealed to me. General Gordon said: "The Church ecclesiastical is like a vast water company chartered to supply the Church spiritual from the great river of the water of life. But how absurd it would be for a water company to claim the right to interdict rain from heaven, or to say to the inhabitants of a particular district, 'You shall receive no water except it pass through the hydraulic machinery which I have constructed!'"

Verses 3, 4. In 1824 a great flood set in upon a coast town in England. The tide rose to an incredible height, the waves rushed in upon the houses, and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm an old lady who lived upon the beach was seen at the door of her house with a mop squeezing out the sea water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. This is the picture of those who are trying to sweep away the Gospel by persecution.

Believers increased to five thousand. A Christian man recently refused to make his usual gift to missions because our mission property in China had been destroyed and Christians had been put to persecution and death. He could not have been familiar with his New Testament, nor with the history of the Church from its earliest days until now. Already facts are proving that the blood of those martyrs in China means in the immediate future a great increase to the Church.

Peter and John with and without the Holy Spirit. These men, Peter and John, seem very different here from what they are in the gospels. There John was revengeful, and Peter was a coward. I was passing a machine shop the other day where this sign had been put out: "To rent, with or without power." And I remembered when I was a Christian worker,

"without power," and how hard the work went! But when I had received the Holy Spirit and was a Christian "with power," then there were results. I no longer carried the work; it carried me.—*Moody.*

Courage. We all like to read about brave men and women. The Bible is full of such stories, and it is the sort of invigorating reading which we need just now: Moses, fearing not the wrath of the king; David, who went out to meet Goliath; Elijah, who stood before Ahab; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, thrown into the fiery furnace; numberless nameless ones who were stoned, sawn asunder, and slain with the sword. These tell us that God's cause can prosper only when men have the courage of their convictions, and backbones perpendicular to the surface of the earth.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

A magnificent fact, true to-day as then, is set forth in one word in our lesson—"Howbeit." It is a queer sort of word that, like some people not prepossessing in appearance, has a great deal in it, and is worth considering—"Howbeit." I can almost see the smile of confident assurance upon the face of St. Luke as he wrote this account. Peter and John were "in hold," but the word they preached was not. It was free, and was setting free the souls of men. The persecution of the messengers was a small matter if the message found its way. Many which heard the word believed; the number was about five thousand. How contemptible it would have seemed to Peter and John had it been suggested that the work they were doing for the Lord Jesus and their testimony of him was not worth the cost of this personal sacrifice and inconvenience. Perhaps some of their friends did say so, for human nature was the same then as now; and very often we hear people nowadays say the results of missionary work are not worth what it costs the Church in money, nor what it costs the missionaries in the sacrifice of comfort and sometimes of life itself—a contemptible saying, indeed, when you consider the word, "howbeit." No matter what the cost, no matter who lives or dies, no matter who suffers persecution, God's great purpose of love to the world is carried on through the Gospel message; thousands hear and believe, and "the stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner." When you hear it said, as you will, that to send the Gospel all over this earth is not worth the cost, examine the facts;

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know for yourself what the knowledge of Jesus has done; get your own triumphant "howbeit" ready to answer these ignorant cavilers and critics.

Only about two months before the scenes of our lesson Peter and John were together in the presence of Annas and Caiaphas. But how different the circumstances, and how different the men! Then Jesus was on trial, and both of these, his disciples, were afraid to own him as Master and Friend. Their cowardice and faithlessness make one ashamed and sorry. Now they are themselves on trial before the same Annas who "sent Jesus bound unto Caiaphas." But they are not ashamed or afraid. The unseen Jesus is more real to them than when they saw him with the eyes of flesh. They know him better now than in all their years of earthly intercourse with him. Peter once thought he was ready to go with Jesus to prison and to death, but when the test came he denied that he ever knew him. Now he truly was ready to die for him; with reverent, loyal love he boldly exalted before all men that Name above every name. What had so transformed him? The day of Pentecost gives the answer: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." The promise was fulfilled. Peter spoke with another tongue. "And when they bring you unto magistrates and powers take no thought how or what thing ye shall answer or what ye shall say; for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye shall say." It is a promise for you and for me when we come to an emergency, and a promise, too, for occasions that are not emergencies when we are called to witness for Jesus. But never let us presume upon it by neglecting to prepare by thought and prayer and study to be efficient teachers and witnesses of the truth. The Holy Spirit will not be a substitute for our indolence or indifference.

Annas and Caiaphas were impressed with the change in Peter and John. All who were with them were forced to acknowledge that they were under the sway of a new power; and that power was the personality of Jesus made real and vital through the Holy Spirit. They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. This is the secret of a Christian's strength. Not soundness of doctrine, good though that may be; not propriety of behavior; not ready speech; not familiarity with the written word alone; not careful observance of forms of religion—but a realization of the personality of Jesus through the inward revelation of the Spirit; an intercourse with him as real as

with an earthly friend; a living with him in the fellowship of daily experiences. Only so can we show Jesus to men. They do not need to see us or our good works, but they do need to see Jesus. As Caleb Bateson says, "It isn't my love for my wife that makes my little home like heaven to me—it's my wife herself; it wasn't my children's faith in their father that fed and clothed them when they were too little to work for themselves—it was me myself; and it isn't the religion of Christ that keeps us straight in this world and makes us ready for the next—it is Christ himself."

Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.



Truth is ever confronted with opposition, and has no immunity from persecution. While yet feeble in earthly resources, the Church faced the terrors of a tyrannous priesthood; but fearlessly and dauntlessly, nevertheless, and with strong faith in God and belief in their risen Lord. With the consciousness of God's favor, and in the Spirit's strength, they spoke of the all-prevailing name, and when they reunited with their own company in the fellowship of prayer they were heard and answered of God.

Coloring.—Book, white and brown; rays, yellow; initials, light and dark blue; wording, purple, outlined in alternate white and yellow.

The Teachers' Meeting.

I. SUGGESTIVE OUTLINES. *The power of the name of Jesus:* 1. How the apostles proclaimed it; 2. How the cripple felt it; 3. How the Sanhedrin challenged it; 4. How in spite of the Sanhedrin it triumphed. *Four word pictures:* 1. The scene in the porch; 2. The scene in the prison; 3. The scene in the hall of judgment; 4. The second scene in the porch. Or, 1. The Sermon; 2. The Arrest; 3. The Trial; 4. The

Threat; 5. The Triumph. A very comprehensive analysis is that suggested in the *Lesson Handbook* and the *Senior Quarterly*: 1. The Council Arrests the Apostles; 2. The Apostles Impeach the Council.

II. SUGGESTIVE LINES OF THOUGHT. 1. The holiest of men may be misunderstood and falsely accused. 2. Infidelity is intolerant of faith. 3. Goodness triumphs in adverse circumstances. 4. The badness of "the kindred of the high priest." 5. Cliques and sets in administration tend to corruption. 6. Evil-minded men are willing to give credit to anything but the Holy Ghost. 7. The wonderful speech of "Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost." 8. Verse 9 shows by the illumination of the Holy Spirit that evil is as absurd as it is wrong. 9. Jesus is the only source of salvation. 10. Allegiance to God and the right should be supreme, no matter what it may cost.

Study the Lesson Homily in the *Illustrative Lesson Notes*.

Library References.

BY REV. S. G. AYRES, B.D.

SADDUCEES.—Schurer, *Jewish People in the Time of Christ*. Stapfer, *Palastine in the Time*

of Christ. The Bible dictionaries and the lives of Christ and Paul.

CAIAPHAS.—Evans, *Scripture Biography*, vol. ii, page 257. *The Expositor*, vol. ix, page 476. Fouard, *St. Peter*, page 23. The lives of Christ and Paul. Graetz, *History of the Jews*, vol. ii, pages 163, 172. Geikie, *New Testament Hours*, vol. ii, pages 2, 46, 104. Moulton, *Visions of Sin*, page 117.

PETER'S SERMON.—Consult the lives of Peter given in last month's references.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 4.—*Preacher's Magazine*, 1897, page 65.

Verse 8.—Nadal, *New Life Dawning*, page 403.

Verse 10.—Edwards, *President, Works*, vol. vi, page 35.

Verse 12.—Liddon, H. P., *Sermons*, vol. ii, No. 658. Stockton, *Sermons for the People*, page 266. Banks, *The Fisherman and His Friends*, page 238. *Free Church Pulpit*, vol. ii, page 325. Wright, *Patience of Hope*, page 94.

LESSON VI. The Sin of Lying.

[Feb. 9.

GOLDEN TEXT. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor. Eph. 4. 25.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also Acts 4. 32-37. Read James 3.]

Acts 5. 1-11.

[Commit to memory verses 3-5.]

1 But a certain man named An-a-ni'as, with Sap-phi'ra his wife, sold a possession,

2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Pe'ter said, An-a-ni'as, why hath Sa'tan filled thine heart to lie to the Ho'ly Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

5 And An-a-ni'as hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 But a certain man named Ananias, with
- 2 Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part,
- 3 and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?
- 4 Whiles it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? thou hast
- 5 not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost: and great fear came upon all
- 6 that heard it. And the young men arose and wrapped him round, and they carried him out and buried him.
- 7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was
- 8 done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for

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8 And Pe'ter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

9 Then Pe'ter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband *are* at the door, and shall carry thee out.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

Time.—A. D. 30.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Home Readings.

M. The Sin of Lying. Acts 4. 32-5. 11.

Th. Swift punishment. 2 Kings 5. 30-27.

W. God's anger. Jer. 9. 1-11.

Th. The deceitful tongue. Psa. 52.

F. The false tongue. James 3. 1-10.

S. The penalty. Prov. 19. 1-9.

S. The contrast. Prov. 12. 13-22.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 35.

I need thee, precious Jesus,
For I am full of sin.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 42.

Saviour, lead me, lest I stray,
Gently lead me all the way.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 420.

Once I heard a sound at my heart's dark
door,
And was roused from the slumber of
sin.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. Christian Fellowship.

What was the peculiar character of the fellowship of the disciples?

To what numbers had the Church increased at this time?

To what did the disciples witness with great power?

What mark of the divine favor was upon them?

What practical evidence did they give of their unity?

To whom did they bring the prices of the things that were sold?

For what purpose was this money used?

Whose liberality is specially mentioned?

For what reasons, probably, is special mention made of Barnabas?

so much. And she said, Yea, for so much.

- 9 But Peter *said* unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and
- 10 they shall carry thee out. And she fell down immediately at his feet, and gave up the ghost: and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and
- 11 buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all that heard these things.

2. A Bad Use of a Good Example.

Who attempted to practice deception upon the Church?

What were the peculiarly offensive features of their act?

How did Peter receive Ananias?

What question did he ask him?

Was Ananias compelled to sell his property and bring his money to the Church?

What was the effect of Peter's rebuke?

How did this judgment of God affect the people who heard and saw it?

What part had his wife in his act of hypocrisy?

What question did Peter ask her?

Who passed judgment upon her?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. The Acted Lie (verses 1-3).

What is a community of goods?

Did this last through all the early Church?

What moved the first converts to do it?

Were there many who gave all?

Was the lie of Ananias spoken?

Who joined him in lying?

Who rebuked him for it?

To whom did Ananias lie?

2. The Lie without Excuse (verses 4-6).

What led to this lie?

How was it without excuse?

What are some characteristics of it?

How was this lie punished?

Is it ever right to lie?

3. The Spoken Lie (verses 7-11).

Who put the lie into words?

Is this worse than acting a lie?

What made this lie so mean and wicked?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

How many believers were there now? *About eight thousand.*

How did they live? *In love and peace.*

How did they show their love? *By sharing their goods.*

What did Barnabas do? *Sold his land and brought the money to the apostles.*

[Feb. 9.]

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What did Ananias and Sapphira pretend to do? *As Barnabas had done.*

What did they really do? *They kept a part of the price.*

Did they think it would be known? *No.*
Who can never be deceived? *The all-seeing God.*

What power was given to Peter? *To read the heart of Ananias.*

What did he tell him? *That he had lied to God.*

What then happened? *Ananias and Sapphira both died.*

What did God want to teach the Church by this? *To be true.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. What was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira? *Lying against the Holy Ghost.*

2. What led them to lie? *The love of money.*

3. To whom did they tell the lies? *To the Church.*

4. Whom did Peter say they tried to deceive? *God.*

5. What punishment came upon them? *Sudden death.*

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"Wherefore putting away lying," etc.*

The Church Catechism.

46. What are our duties to ourselves? Our duties to ourselves are to guard the health, temperance, and chastity of the body; to cultivate the mind in the knowledge of truth, and to preserve the spirit in purity and communion with God.

1 Corinthians 6. 19, 20.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

An Awful Sin and Its Consequences.

I. CONSECRATION.

Sold a possession. v. 1.

Every devoted thing is most holy. Lev. 27. 28.

Pay that which thou hast vowed. Eccles. 5. 4.

II. COVETOUSNESS.

Kept back part of the price. v. 2.

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. Mal. 3. 8.

Covetousness is idolatry. Col. 3. 5.

III. HYPOCRISY.

At the apostles' feet. v. 2.

Not every one that saith. Matt. 7. 21.

Hypocrites heap up wrath. Job 36. 13.

IV. LYING TO GOD.

Lie to the Holy Ghost. v. 3.

Lying lips are abomination to the Lord. Prov. 12. 22.

He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God. 1 Thess. 4. 8.

V. CONSPIRACY.

How is it that ye have agreed together. v. 9.

Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished. Prov. 11. 21.

Have no fellowship with the works of darkness. Eph. 5. 11.

VI. DEATH.

Gave up the ghost. v. 5.

The wages of sin is death. Rom. 6. 23.

Sin bringeth forth death. James 1. 15.

VII. AWE.

Great fear came on all. v. 5.

Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body. Matt. 10. 28.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Phil. 2. 12.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The "Additional Verses," Acts 4. 32-37, inform us that the earnest, mutual love of the Christians led them to hold "all things common;" but this "commonness" was, as Dr. Hackett says, "in the use of the property, not in the possession of it;" for there is no indication that property ceased among the disciples, or that they lived in a "common" house, or dined at a "common" table. Rather, the spirit of love was so aggressive among them that they fulfilled the command of the Saviour, and loved their brothers as themselves. There must have been at this time many "nonproducers" in the Church, men without secular employment or income. Among other results of the astonishing development of Christianity, was the temporary removal of hundreds of men from ordinary business activities. To meet the needs which this condition brought some of the richer converts placed the whole of their wealth at the service of the Church. The view of this happy condition of affairs presented by Luke contrasts with modern socialistic philosophies; here is no scheme to take privileges from any class, but rather desire on the part of those who had to give to

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those who had not, because "great grace was upon them all." The one admirable permanent quality in the arrangement was LOVE, and the practical methods of love must vary according to varying conditions. The gift of Barnabas is especially mentioned, probably because of his exceptional wealth and his prominence in the later story. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira was not only in the fact that they lied, but that while pretending to special consecration they lived for themselves. This is a somber lesson, which emphasizes the deep viciousness of the Pharisaic spirit—a pretense to holiness for selfish ends.

Verse 1. *But.* In contrast with the liberality of Barnabas was the conduct of *Ananias, with Sapphira his wife.* Like Barnabas, these two were probably relatively rich. The word "with" incidentally illustrates the high social position of women among the Jews. *A possession* here means "real estate" (verse 3).

2. *Kept back part of the price.* Deceptively, after having publicly consecrated the whole "possession" to God. This is implied throughout the story. The word translated "kept back" is in Titus 2. 10 translated "purloined." It is probable that because the property was dedicated to charitable purposes it brought a larger price than it would otherwise have brought. *His wife also being privy* [privately or confidentially related] *to it.* "With" her he had sold the property, and now she joins him in the deliberate fraud. Their temptation may have been an overweening desire for popular esteem, or a desire to secure for themselves a "permanent maintenance" from the common fund. It is not unlikely, as Dr. Schaff has suggested, that new Ananias and Sapphira believed that the new sect had a great financial future, and wished early to secure their share in its coming prosperity. The phrase *laid it at the apostles' feet* may be merely a figure for the surrender of the money, or the apostles may have sat in a prominent place in the meeting room, and the gifts may have been actually laid out before them. Evidently the guilty pair "thought more of the display thus made than of the offense before God's eye." Their act was a deceitful abuse of the community of goods. The words of 2 Pet. 2. 3 and of Jude 11 will throw light on the beginning of their sin.

3. *Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?* This question is one of stern reproof. The apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost; Ananias was filled with Satan; neither could have been filled with either without personal consent. The narrative can be understood only when we constantly recognize that our Lord's promise was now fulfilled, and that the Holy Ghost was directing every act and thought of the apostles. Peter's mind was divinely enlightened to perceive a sin which was imperceptible to the rest of the Christians.

He distinguishes this particular lie from ordinary falsehood; it was a lie to the Holy Ghost. The venomous spirit of Pharisaism which had saturated with poison every religion, false and true, especially permeated the Jewish hierarchy, and now for the first time showed itself in the Christian Church.

4. *Whiles.* An old English word for "while." *It remained.* Unsold. There was no compulsion on Ananias to sell. The common fund was a product of voluntary enterprise. *Why hast thou conceived this thing* [fixed this deed] *in thine heart?* We use a similar figure of speech when we ask children to learn passages *by heart*; meaning not merely to commit them to memory, but to take their substance into thought and will. *Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.* As the old psalmist sobbed, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." The deception of men comes hardly into consideration, so great is the sin against God. This was not merely lying; it was sacrilege, defiance, blasphemy.

5. *Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost.* We are here to understand "a direct intervention of the divine power." "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me," says God. Christian life had come to a turntable, and if the spirit of greed and hypocrisy were not now divinely reprobated the entire Church would be perverted. "The ghost" here stands for the principle of life. Whether this sudden death was the only punishment God inflicted on this sinner, or whether it was a foretaste of the more awful punishment awaiting him in the eternal world, it is idle to guess. God, who sees and knows all hearts, thoroughly understood Ananias's character, and meted out to him, as to all, justice tempered with mercy. *Great fear came on all them that heard these things.* A fear which perhaps checked growth in numbers, but assisted growth in grace. The Church had just been in danger from popularity.

6. *The young men arose.* Note the presence of young people in the very earliest Church. *Wound him up.* "Wrapped him about." Coffins were not in use, and the ordinary grave-clothes were long swathings of white linen. *Carried him out, and buried him.* The funeral

rites of the Jews were simple, but great attention was paid to them. Some of the ancient prayer books promise special rewards in the world to come to those who honor fathers and mothers, to those who do acts of mercy, to those who reconcile enemies, to those who study the law, and especially to those who bear forth the dead—for this last was an act of benevolence. This man's death was due to the direct act of an indignant God, and instinctively the usual honors were omitted; the flowing robe is tightened around the poor dead feet, and the young men with solemnity hasten to the grave. Such graves were always ready in the ancient East—caves with niches in their walls. This burial may have been only temporary, and supplemented afterward by conventional services, but this is not certain, for by becoming a Christian Ananias had probably cut himself off from Hebrew ordinances, while in becoming a sinner he had cut himself off from Christian services. The careful medical and civic superintendence of burial, which is the chief safeguard of life in modern days, was unknown in the ancient world, and, indeed, is a product of Christendom.

7. *The space of three hours* seems a long interval for the wife of Ananias to be in ignorance of his tragic death. We cannot at this distance of time answer satisfactorily every question that might arise around this verse. The home of Ananias and Sapphira may have been at a considerable distance from Jerusalem.

8. *Peter answered.* This English verb is often used by the translators where no question has preceded. But Bengel says, "The entrance of the woman was like a speech." It usually is. *Tell me.* Sapphira has joined in the telling

of one lie, and she will not hesitate to tell another. *For so much* means, "For no more," and probably Peter mentioned the sum which Ananias had laid at his feet.

9. *Ye have agreed together* ["have harmonized"] *to tempt the Spirit of the Lord.* "To tempt" means to test, to try. You have hazarded a deception of God's Spirit. You have risked your souls on a lie to God. *The feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door.* We almost hear the footfalls of those young men to-day. *Shall carry thee out.* The story assumes that Peter was still full of the Holy Ghost. He simply proclaimed what the divine Spirit revealed to him.

10. *Then fell she down straightway at his feet.* "Close to the place where the money for which they had sinned had been laid, and where perhaps it was still lying." *The young men came in, and found her dead.* Possibly the worship went on during the interval between the death of Ananias and the death of Sapphira, but we do not know. There seems to have been none to follow them to the grave; but the social conditions of the time and place are so far beyond our cognizance that it is idle to attempt to explain details.

11. *Great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.* This is the first mention by Luke of "The Church." Christians became afraid to sin, while worldlings became afraid to join a society whose purity was preserved in such an extraordinary way. This example, hung up at the gateway to Christian history, reminds all who pass that, whensoever the pay day may come, "the wages of sin is death."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

DISCIPLINE.

The object of personal discipline is to give the individual self-control, absolute command of the muscles of his body and of the faculties of his mind, that they may effectually work together to produce a desired result. And as it is with one person, so it is with a company. A regiment of soldiers drilled and disciplined is better than ten times their number confused and sprawling. Especially is discipline indispensable on the battlefield, or anywhere in the presence of an enemy. Great harm may come from one man's independent or reckless conduct. The rising Church was now, the Church always is, in front of foes keen, watchful, and malignant. A break in character or behavior at just this time would do serious damage. The young community, forming now its habits

and ideals, needs clear, impressive, even severe, discipline.

THE TRUTH.

"My kingdom is of the truth," a kingdom that cannot be moved. Zerubbabel at the court in Babylon had said, "Truth is great and will prevail." "Write this," says Carlyle, "as the first Gospel—a lie can't last forever." But the Most High now sets up an everlasting kingdom of which the pillar and foundation is truth. Now is the crisis come for the Church to bear witness to the truth, to the truth of statement and conduct as well as of doctrine. The old Greek sculptures from pure marble are sound and strong to-day. The event of our lesson shows how Christ requires of his followers "truth in the inner parts," for on that he builds and of that he rears his kingdom.

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THE BROTHERLY SPIRIT.

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" That was the charm of these early days, when in fresh, glad experience of surprising grace all hearts like kindred drops seemed melted into one. Barnabas, the last Levite named in Scripture, "a good man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost," sets a noble example of putting heart and treasure into the sacred enterprise. Love feasts and sacraments and temple prayers, and often speaking to each other, cherished their new faith and affection. So, bright as a spring morning with song and sunshine were these loving, generous days, repeated yet in the convert's experiences of redeeming love.

HALF MEASURES.

A half-truth is a whole falsehood, and conduct half right is wholly wrong. "He hath followed the Lord fully" was the praise given to Caleb, and "How long halt [Heb., *shuffle*] ye between two opinions?" was Elijah's rebuke to Jews serving Baal. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Ananias, like Pliab in *Pilgrim's Progress*, bends to this current of warm brotherly feeling that moves in the air of the new community. His rising impulse is to join the generous movement, and as they take sweet counsel together his thought is, "I go, sir," but he took a second thought. Wealth is in all lands and ages a power, and who readily lets power go from his hand? The conviction must be very strong or the temper reckless that freely parts with money. The heart of Ananias clings where his conviction yields. He hesitates between duty and inclination, and patches up a sad compromise.

PROBABLE MOTIVES.

Human nature is always and everywhere the same, and we may easily see something of this man's reasons for his course. He had convictions deep and sincere enough to prompt him to the new faith with a share in its duties and burdens. The example of Barnabas and probably of others lifted him as on a wave of self-sacrifice, and he set sail in so fair company. So far all is well. Now comes into play the impulse of vanity. He is ambitious of the repute of doing as the best are doing, and that this he seen of men. Deeper than this is his greedy hold on wealth for its own sake. These impulses, like Paul's ship "where two seas meet," come into conflict, and their struggles bring the moral wreck. "Peace! Be still!" would Jesus's voice have said, but "Lord, save!" was not said to him.

THE POWER BEHIND PETER.

"On this rock will I build my Church," but who laid the rock in its place? Peter, now the visible leader of the believing company, sees laid before him an offering, such as the need of the Church made very welcome. The human style would be to ask no questions for conscience' sake. "See thou to that!" With us gamblers have freely given to churches and charities. An insight and a word now come to Peter. A mind in him, not of him, discerns the intents of the case, searching this heart more keenly than cathode rays. What a view of Omniscience, all seeing, itself unseen! So are our hearts before him with whom we have to do! And his words from Peter's lips are quick and powerful. "Speak the speaking that I bid thee!" No Tiresias in a Greek drama ever uttered Apollo's mind like this, so prompt, so clear, and so commanding.

"JUSTICE AND JUDGMENT

are the habitation of thy throne."

"Justice, like lightning, ever should appear

For few men's ruin, but for all men's fear." Sentence against an evil work is not often executed speedily, but it is clearly shown that our Father is also the Judge of all the earth and capable of judicial displeasure. In emergent cases, as in the outset of a great enterprise, the blow may fall suddenly. Such was the prompt stroke on Achan when he baffled Israel's effort of war. None can tell how the company of believers might have been demoralized had this offense not been thus crushed. It would soon have been told as from the rooftops, and what would have become of Peter's authority or of Christian Morals? "It is time for thee to work, for they have made void thy law."

THE PRIMAL SIN.

A history of lying would be a history of the human race—it might be a history of Satan and his angels. Lying began with him; pity it did not end with him! "How the world is given to lying!" was the comic utterance of a great liar. In days when skill in lying was the Greek's fascinating attainment Socrates stood for truth in every particular, a light shining in a dark place, and at his death he warned his judges that they must take their own sentence at the lips of *truth*. Yet they went on lying. Mr. Moody urged a criminal whose crime was unproved to confess and take sentence. The man did so, and went to prison with a heart glad and free through the truth. "The truth shall make you free."

THE LIAR'S DOOM.

Our lesson is a moving panorama. One may read it over and over, and it brightens with the lapse of ages. Ananias falls untouched by human hand; his robe is wrapped around him, and vigorous hands carry him beyond the walls for burial. Sapphira, sharing his sin, (who knows but, like Eve, she suggested it?) anxious at his long absence, enters. "Infirm of purpose?" Not she! This Lady Macbeth has "courage to the sticking point." She falls, and we leave them in the Eternal Hand with "who-soever loveth and maketh a lie." How cancerous is lying! Falsehood may have a goodly outside seeming, but within how odious! Funston's treachery to Aguinaldo can have no excuse but that "war is hell." He that is of the truth is open to hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear that voice shall live.

Thoughts for Young People.

LESSONS FROM THE FATE OF ANANIAS.

1. *Christian love knows no limit.* Christian fellowship is practically shown in relieving the distresses and afflictions of our brethren. We are to love our neighbors as ourselves, with a love that is born not of their virtues or charms, but of their deeds, and we are to regard as our neighbors all whom we meet. But our fellow church members—our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus—must, if always sharing the love of our Master, be especially dear to us, and the genuine Christian will feel no sacrifice to be too great to minister to the needs of his brothers and sisters.

2. *Hypocrisy is a lie.* Like other lies, it can maintain itself only by continued lying. But hypocrisy in the Church of God is not so much a lie told to men as a lie told to God. The wickedest of all deceptions is what we sometimes call self-deception—an effort to persuade ourselves that wrong is right. This assuredly is lying to the Holy Ghost.

3. *Truth destroys falsehood.* This is self-evident, and at first it may seem unnecessary to state it, but it is a profound and a manifold truth. Even a human life with unselfish ideals and transparent conduct forces hypocrisy out of the way; a dead thing, let it be carried out to its burial.

4. *God protects his Church* from its foes whether they are within or without its fold. The sudden deaths of Ananias and Sapphira were an exception to the divine rule of dealing with falsehood, but they were not exceptions to the divine rule of defending the Church of

Christ. Whatever God sees necessary to be done to protect the purity of his Church and vindicate the presence of the Holy Spirit will be done promptly and fully.

5. *"The wages of sin is death"* always, but not always so immediately apparent as in this case. Public sin requires public punishment.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

The community of possessions, which for a short time characterized the early Church, was a means of great blessing to those who gave and of great helpfulness to those who were in need. With human nature as it is, however, such a system of economics would naturally be attended with grave evils. Our lesson brings before us one of those evils, and shows how the Holy Spirit expressed his indignation against the evildoers.

INTRODUCTION.

Question the class on what they have studied during the week. See that they have a clear comprehension of the meaning of Acts 4. 32, and cite Barnabas as an example of what the Spirit of Jesus can lead a consecrated person to do.

NARRATIVE.

The action in to-day's lesson is very rapid. The pictures may be made very vivid, and the person thereof very real. Teacher, see the pictures, and then help your pupils to see them.

1. *The conspirators* (verses 1, 2). What were their names? What was their relationship to each other? What did they do with their possessions? What did they do with the price thereof? Why?

2. *A death and burial* (verses 3-6). Who spoke to Ananias? What question did he ask? What did he then say? (Explain the meaning of verse 4.) What did Ananias say? What did he do? What was done to him?

3. *Another death and burial* (verses 7-10). How long did Sapphira wait for her husband? What did she do at the end of that time? What did Peter ask her? What did she answer? What did Peter say? What effect had these words on her? Who buried her? Where?

4. *The Church* (verse 11). Who composed the Church? How did they feel about what was done? What other effects were there following the death of Ananias and Sapphira?

(1) Power came to the apostles.

(2) Outsiders feared.

(3) The unworthy were kept out of the Church.

(4) Multitudes of true believers were added to the Lord.

TRUTH EMPHASIZED.

Too lightly is the sin of lying regarded in our day. Not only is the worldling guilty of it, but, alas! in too many instances, the follower of the Lord Jesus Christ is not immune. Like a plague, it destroys the souls of men. And yet truthfulness is one of the foundation stones on which the fabric of society must be reared, or society will crumble to pieces with dry rot. Hence, how important is it to show our young people the heinousness of the sin of lying! Time need not be wasted in answering the threadbare question, Is a lie ever justifiable? or in discussing supposititious cases, as those, for example, that may be grouped under the question, Ought one to tell a lie to save one's life? when there is so much barefaced lying all around us. A very profitable class exercise will consist in the teacher preparing beforehand a number of slips of paper, on each of which is written a verse of Scripture bearing directly on this subject. These may be read in the class, and then given to the pupils to think over at home. The following are specimens: Lev. 6, 2-4; 19. 11; Psa. 40. 4; Prov. 6. 16, 17; 12. 22; Eph. 4. 25; Rev. 21. 27; 22. 15. After these texts have been discussed the teacher may ask: What resolves will be made in respect to lying? When all have stated these resolves let the teacher sum them up thus:

MORNING, NOON, AND NIGHT
I WILL WATCH AND PRAY
THAT I MAY NOT LIE.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Have the class read at home Acts 5. 12-21, and bring in written answers to these questions:

1. Who put the apostles into prison?
2. Why?
3. Who delivered them?
4. How?
5. What did the apostles do after their deliverance?

By Way of Illustration.

Sin in the Church. The little taste of persecution which the apostles had suffered seems to have united them and strengthened their faith. But now trouble comes from within. An enemy is in the camp. The birds of the air that hovered about the wayside to pluck up the scattered grain were not so formidable as this sudden development of rank tares in the midst of the field of ripening grain. The whole his-

tory of the Church is aptly epitomized by the parable of the tares. No sooner does God work a good work of grace and cast into the soil of human nature the good seed of the kingdom than the devil comes by night and sows tares. Moses had his Korah, Joshua had his Achan, Elisha had his Gehazi, Jesus had his Judas, the apostles had their Ananias, Paul had Alexander the coppersmith. The danger of the Church has never been from without, but from within.—*Pentecost.*

Hypocrites in the Church. "You don't deny that the Church has hypocrites," said a man with the air of having given a knockdown blow. "No, of course not," was the answer, "and hypocrites incidentally prove the genuineness of the profession assumed. Few men think it worth their while to counterfeited pennies, but gold pieces are often imitated in base metal. The better the cause the more likely it is to attract hypocrites."

Christ's condemnation of hypocrites. Christ compared them to wolves in sheep's clothing; sepulchers adorned without, but full of corruption; to dishes cleansed without, but full within.

In *Pilgrim's Progress* Christian and Hopeful put up a signboard over the way that led to Giant Despair's castle, warning men not to go that way. Jesus put this sign upon hypocrisy: *Woe unto you.*—*Select Notes.*

Ananias and Sapphira a warning. Bishop E. O. Haven in his *Autobiography* says: "I remember that in my New England home the lesson about Ananias and Sapphira was read in a very solemn and impressive way by my father. On one occasion, when under great provocation I told a lie, the condemnation from within was so terrible that I could bear it no longer and went at night to my father's bed to confess my sin. It's a good lesson to put in young—the fear to tell a lie."

The severity of the punishment. The first Sabbath-breaker was stoned (Num. 15. 36). And Achan, the first criminal when the people entered the Holy Land, was punished with death (Josh. 7. 20-25). Nadab and Abihu at the first founding of the priesthood (Lev. 10. 1-6), and Uzzah when he broke the law concerning the ark of the covenant, were punished with death (2 Sam. 6). These examples hung up at the commencement of things emphasized the truth that the wages of sin is death. A surgeon who cuts off a limb to save a life seems cruel; but in reality it is an act of great mercy. James Russell Lowell says, "Exact justice is commonly more merciful in the long

run than pity, for it tends to foster in men those qualities which tend to make them good citizens."

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The sin of lying is so mean, so contemptible, so destructive, that I dislike to talk about it. I would rather speak of the beauty of truth and have our hearts so in love with it that from the depths of our being we would abhor dishonesty and deceit. Yet, to be strictly truthful right here, can any one of us say, "I am not and never have been guilty of this sin"? Would conscience allow us to cast the first stone at another? While I am glad to say my personal acquaintance among men and women gives me a cheerful faith that their word can be depended upon, I am nevertheless afraid that lying, in many forms, is a very common sin far too lightly thought of. Men are false in business; women are false in society; children are false at school. They say, "It is nothing, only a bit of policy; we mean no harm;" but it is something very grave, very displeasing to God, and very destructive of character. Sorrow and sin came into the world through a lie told by one of whom Jesus says: "He abode not in the truth, because there was no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." In the case of Ananias, with its awful punishment, Peter says, "Satan hath filled thine heart to lie." The source of all lying is Satan; sufficient reason that we should fear and hate it. Think how dreadful it is for us to speak that which is "his own," his spirit, his tactics, his character, his speech, his own essential vileness, malignity, and hypocrisy.

"Six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Prov. 6, 16-20). With such fearful crimes as these the word of God associates a lying tongue. Of the holy city, the New Jerusalem, the blessed heaven where we all hope to be some happy day, it is said, "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that maketh a lie," and far away, outside of its light and joy, are "murderers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart."

The habit of truthfulness must be cultivated. Be watchful; watchful of the secret springs of your heart, watchful of the expression of your lips. When you relate an incident, and attempted to "make a good story" by the embellishment of your own fancy, rein yourself up to the strict telling of the facts as they are. It is all right to weave fancies for the pleasure of your listeners if they know they are fancies, but when you attempt to tell facts let them be facts. When you catch yourself—I say "catch" intentionally, for yourself runs away with you if you are not alert—when you catch yourself saying what you do not really in your heart feel, stop at once and change your words or else change your mind. Let mind and words agree. For instance, if you are obliged to meet some one you do not at all care to see, courtesy and regard for another's feelings will not allow you to say you are not glad to see them; neither need you say you are glad. There are ways of expressing yourself without telling an untruth or being discourteous. In business it pays to be truthful. An established reputation for honesty will in the long run bring greater success than the deceits which some dealers for a while impose upon the public. Shams are sooner or later discovered.

Cultivate sincerity in word and thought and act. Resist the temptation to slight your work where you think it may not be seen. I speak earnestly, because insincerity destroys the very basis of character; there is nothing to build on without the foundation of truth. In the words of President Roosevelt, let us have "a standard of unflinching rectitude on every point of public or private duty."

The Teachers' Meeting.

I. SUGGESTIVE OUTLINES. 1. A Study of Sin, verses 1-4, 7-9; 2. A Study of Penalty, verses 5, 6, 9-11. . . . Studies of representative Characters: 1. Barnabas; 2. Ananias and Sapphira; 3. Peter. . . . 1. The tiniest deceit is an open door for Satan to enter; 2. Deceit harmonizes with every vice; 3. Deceit often requires no words; 4. Deceit of others leads to self-deceit. . . . 1. Deception; 2. Detection; 3. Doom. . . . 1. A Picture of Sincerity and Love, Acts 4, 32-37; 2. A Picture of Insincerity and Selfishness, Acts 5, 1-11.

II. SUGGESTIVE LINES OF THOUGHT. 1. Faith in Christ binds Christians together in mutual love. 2. Love of Christ makes men unselfish. 3. The more like Jesus one is the completer his

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self-sacrifice for others will be. 4. As forgery proves the existence of a genuine signature, as counterfeits prove the existence of true coin, so hypocrites are evidence that there are true Christians. 5. Husbands and wives help each other toward heaven or away from it. 6. Satan can fill no one's heart without that one's permission. 7. What is it to lie unto God? 8. The only noble fear is fear of doing wrong. 9. The peculiar injuriousness of the sin of Ananias. 10. Lying unto the Holy Ghost from conscious hypocrisy. 11. The judgment was a warning to others, and of necessity had to be speedy. 12. Do not close without presenting the love of God.

Study "The Lesson Homily" in the *Illustrative Lesson Notes*.

Library References.

ANANIAS.—Taylor, *Peter the Apostle*, page 217. Fouard, *St. Peter*, pages 29-33. Neander, *Planting and Training*, vol. i, page 31. Simeon, Works, vol. xiv, page 310.

SAPPHIRA.—Wharton, *Famous Women of the New Testament*, page 275. MacDuff, *Footsteps of St. Peter*, page 346. Green, *Apostle Peter*, page 79. Olin, S., Works, vol. i, page 417.

COMMUNITY OF GOODS IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH.—Ewald, *History of Israel*, vol. vii, page 145, sq. Schaff, *Apostolic Church*, sec. 114. Schaff, *Church History*, vol. i, Eden, *Churchman's Dictionary*. Neander, *Planting and Training*, vol. i, page 253; vol. ii, page 64.

LYING.—On this subject consult the various treatises on Ethics.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 32.—Brodbeck, W. N., *Memorial*, page 266.

Verse 33.—*Homiletic Review*, vol. xxxvii, page 515.

Verse 44.—*Homiletic Review*, vol. xxiii, page 162.

Verse 1.—*The Homiletic Monthly*, vol. vii, page 572.

Verse 3.—Watkinson, *Lessons of Prosperity*, page 84.

Blackboard.



The little company of believers were one in heart and soul, but into that unselfish circle came two professing disciples, who, while drawing near with their lips, nurtured in their hearts the greed of gain. The password "believe" was strangely altered by the lust of money hidden in each unsympathetic heart, and when circumstances tried their loyalty they lied. Such pride and greed were incompatible with the religion they professed, and being unfit for that holy fellowship, they were removed by God, to whom only they had lied. Let the lesson be one of guarded consistency and straightforwardness in all our dealings with God and men.

Coloring.—Bag, yellow and brown; letters, red; heart, white; snake (denoting deceitfulness), brown, white, and green; sentences, deep blue and white.

LESSON VIII. The Second Persecution.

[Feb. 16.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 5, 10.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also Acts 5, 25-32. Read Acts 5, 12-24.]

Acts 5, 33-42. [Commit to memory verses 40-42.]
33 When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space:

REVISED VERSION.

- 33 But they, when they heard this, were cut to the heart, and were minded to slay them.
34 But there stood up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honor of all the people, and commanded to put the men forth a little while.
35 And he said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves as touching these

35 And said unto them, Ye men of Is'ra-el, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.

36 For before these days rose up Theu'das, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

37 After this man rose up Ju'das of Gal-i-lee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him; he also perished; and all, *even* as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:

39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Je'sus, and let them go.

41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Je'sus Christ.

36 men, what ye are about to do. For before these days rose up Theudas, giving himself out to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed, and came to nought.

37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrollment, and drew away *some of the* people after him; he also perished; and all, as many as obeyed him, were

38 scattered abroad. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it

39 will be overthrown: but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against

40 God. And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles unto them, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 They therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the

42 Name. And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ.

Time.—Uncertain; probably within three years of our Lord's ascension.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Home Readings.

- M.* Delivered from prison. Acts 5, 12-24.
Th. The Second Persecution. Acts 5, 25-42.
W. Responsibility accepted. Matt. 27, 17-25.
Th. God first. Dan. 3, 8-18.
F. Suffering for righteousness. 1 Pet. 3, 8-18.
S. Partakers with Christ. 1 Pet. 4, 12-29.
S. Blessed are ye! Luke 6, 17-26.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 134.

Talk with us, Lord, thyself reveal,
 While here o'er earth we rove;
 Speak to our hearts, and let us feel
 The kindling of thy love.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 106.

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,
 Hear my humble cry;
 While on others thou art calling,
 Do not pass me by.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 64.

Yield not to temptation,
 For yielding is sin,
 Each victory will help us,
 Some other to win.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Apostles Again Arrested.*

How were the apostles released from imprisonment?

Where were they found teaching?

Why were they brought to the council of the priests without violence?

Who composed the council?

What question did the high priest ask them?

With what did Annas charge them?

2. *Peter's Restatement of the Truth.*

What principle of religious liberty did Peter announce in his defense?

How did he refer to Christ's ascension?

What is declared to be Christ's office as Prince and Saviour?

What did Peter mean by being witnesses of these things?

Upon what condition is the Holy Ghost given to men?

3. *Gamaliel's Council.*

How did Peter's address affect his judges?

What new evidence did they give of their bigotry?

Who was Gamaliel?

To what recent events in their history did he refer the council?

What did he advise?

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Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *The Sin of Persecution* (verses 25-33).

Did Jesus know his followers would have to suffer?

Did persecution really help or harm Christ's cause?

What proof of the truth of Christianity are the sufferings of the apostles?

What shows the hardening effect of sin in these rulers?

How do we explain such a continuance in opposing Christ?

2. *The Sin of Neutrality* (verses 34-40).

What great man's advice prevailed?

What do you think of such advice in this case?

Why is investigating better than letting alone?

How many proofs of Christ's divine mission had these rulers?

3. *Progress against Both* (verses 41, 42).

How did the apostles regard persecution?

What do you think of complaining now because people ridicule or oppose?

Were any of the rulers who opposed converted?

Was Gamaliel converted?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

What power was given to the apostles? *The power to work miracles.*

In whose name did they do this? *In the name of Jesus of Nazareth.*

What was the high priest's command? *That they should be put in prison.*

Were they there long? *No, for an angel set them free in the night.*

What did they do the next morning? *They preached in the temple as the angel told them to do.*

Where were the judges? *In the hall of judgment.*

What surprised them? *To hear where the apostles were.*

What did they do then? *They sent for them again.*

What did the high priest ask? *Why they kept on preaching about Jesus.*

What did Peter answer? *"We ought to obey God rather than men."*

Whose counsel did the judges follow? *Gamaliel's.*

Who was Gamaliel? *A wise doctor of the law.*

What did he see? *That it is foolish to fight against God.*

What did they do to the apostles before letting them go? *They beat them.*

For whose sake did they suffer? *For Jesus' sake.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. Where were the apostles put by the rulers? *In the common prison.*

2. How were they set free? *By an angel.*

3. What did they then do? *They preached in the temple.*

4. Before whom were they again brought? *Before the council.*

5. What was their testimony concerning Jesus before the council? *That he was Prince and Saviour.*

6. What did Gamaliel advise? *To let them alone.*

7. What did the council do? *They beat them and told them to preach no more.*

8. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"Blessed are they which are persecuted," etc.*

The Church Catechism.

47. What are our duties to our family? Our duties to our family are the duties to each other of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, master and servant, as set forth in the Scriptures.

Colossians 3. 18-22.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Gamaliel's Advice.

I. THE FOLLY OF THE COUNCIL.

Took counsel to slay them. v. 33.

The wicked plotteth against the just. Psa. 37. 12.

Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked. Psa. 64. 2.

II. THE WISDOM OF GAMALIEL.

Take heed to yourselves. v. 35.

Have nothing to do with that just man. Matt. 27. 19.

Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall. 2 Pet. 3. 17.

III. THE INSUFFICIENCY OF HUMAN PLANS.

If this work be of men, it will come to nought. v. 38.

The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought. Psa. 33. 10.
Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Matt. 15. 13.

IV. THE SUFFICIENCY OF GOD.

If it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it. v. 39.
My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Isa. 46. 10.
There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord. Prov. 21. 30.

V. THE PROMISED TRIBULATION.

Beaten them. v. 40.
They will scourge you. Matt. 10. 17.
Ye shall be beaten. Mark 13. 9.

VI. THE PROMISED TRIUMPH.

Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer. v. 41.
Blessed are ye when men . . . shall persecute you. Matt. 5. 11.
Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings. 1 Pet. 4. 13.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

From the verses that intervene between the last lesson and this we learn that stated meetings were held by the believers in Christ (probably at the hour of prayer) in Solomon's Porch; that these assemblies were uninterrupted by the authorities; that the common people "magnified" the disciples; that converts were daily added to the Church; that the wonder-working power of the apostles became famous throughout all Jerusalem, and was accepted with a reverence at times verging on superstition, and that not only from the metropolis but from all "the cities round about," "sick folks" were brought to the apostles to be healed. This steady growth in influence aroused the high priest, and his Sadducee counselors, and again the apostles were arrested and held over night (the words "in the common prison" should be "in public ward") to be tried by the council. But those who taught that there were neither angels nor spirits found their plans frustrated by an angel, who released the apostles. When next morning the Sanhedrin assembled, their messengers found the prison "shut with all safety, and the keeper standing before the door," but the prisoners gone. This threw the officials into consternation, which was increased when they heard that the apostles were teaching in the temple. This brings us to the Introductory Verses (25-32) of our lesson. The captain with the officers rearrested the disciples, but "without violence, for they feared the people." Before the council the high priest reproached them with their disobedience to his orders; "Did we not straitly command you, that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." The answer given by "Peter and the other apostles" should be closely studied. No clearer statement was ever given of Christ's work on earth and in heaven. It is a marvel of condensation.

Verse 33. *When they heard that.* Heard the "defense" of the apostles. *They were cut to the heart.* "Sawn through;" but rendered furious rather than penitent. *Took counsel to slay them.* "Wished to slay them." As lying leads to lies, so murdering leads to murder. Sin reproduces itself.

34. But the thought of the Sanhedrin was suddenly directed into a new channel by the words of one of its conspicuous members. *Gamaliel*, probably the grandson of Hillel and the teacher of Paul. (But there were two famous Gamaliels.) This man was *had in reputation among all the people*, so that when he died, eighteen years before the temple was destroyed, other rabbis wrote, "The glory of the Torah has ceased, and purity and sanctity have expired." He was a *Pharisee*, and therefore a political and theological opponent of Annas and Caiaphas. Probably he had quiet sympathy with the doctrine of the resurrection, which seems more than all else to have stirred the chief priest's anger. He began his speech by a cautious request that the prisoners should be excluded from the council.

35-37. *Take heed to yourselves.* Think before you act. The argument that follows maintains that fraud and hypocrisy will die if left to themselves. *Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody*, cannot be identified with any leader whom history records, but, as Josephus tells us, there were ten thousand rebels at this time. False Messiahs were numerous, and the implication is that Theudas professed himself to be Messiah. *Judas of Galilee* is mentioned by Josephus as "a Gaulonite." *In the days of the taxing.* "Judas said that this taxing was no better than an introduction to slavery, and exhorted the nation to assert its liberty."—*Josephus.* Much people followed him, but he perished, and they were dispersed.

38. *I say unto you.* Gamaliel commends his policy of inactivity with emphasis. *Refrain from these men, and let them alone.* Let the strength of the movement be tested by time. *It will come to nought.* "It will be overthrown."

39. If it is God's movement it cannot be overthrown. The last part of this verse connects with the beginning of the sentence in

verse 38, "Let these men alone, lest ye be found to fight against God." The principle here expressed is only right conditionally, for interference with a spiritual development must be morally judged according to the nature of the case. Gamaliel's remarks applied only to the present critical state of affairs, and are to be explained from his predominant opinion, that a work of God was perchance at stake.

40. *To him they agreed.* The novel problems presented by this new religious movement puzzled all, and the popular favor shown to the disciples greatly increased the difficulties; so that almost any definite policy would now be welcomed. As political and theological partisans nearly one half of the Sanhedrin probably in any case would be ready to follow Gamaliel's lead, and his well-known wisdom, humanity, and strict religiousness would give his wise words additional weight. A policy of mere procrastination would be supported only by the timid, but Gamaliel's proposal was favorably received because it "afforded the Sadducees a method of compromising the matter with the popular parties." *When they had called the apostles.* When they had brought them back to

the court room. *Beaten them.* For the law see Deut. 25. 1-3. This was contrary to Gamaliel's advice, which they had determined to follow. *They commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus.* A foolish command in view of the words of Peter (verses 29-32). *Let them go.* A lame conclusion of a boastful attack.

41. *They departed from the presence of the council.* Ordinary prisoners would have slunk out without observation; but every movement of these men was watched. *Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame* ["to be dignified by indignity"] *for his name* (or, "for The Name"). (See Acts 4. 12.) With bared and bleeding backs they left, but with smiling faces doubtless, and with songs on their lips. Compare Matt. 5. 12.

42. *Daily in the temple, and in every house.* "In the temple and at home," in both of which places they labored for Christ. *To teach and preach.* To indoctrinate those who already believed, and to proclaimed the truth to those who had already accepted it. *Jesus Christ.* Jesus, the Messiah. Literally, "To teach and preach the good news of the Christ, even Jesus."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

THE FIRST PERSECUTION A FAILURE.

The first effort to put down Christianity was not very energetic. It was of the nature of an experiment, to see if the apostles when "straitly threatened" would not be scared from further preaching, and so the new movement be arrested and its influence vanish. It was a skirmish, as when military men wish to ascertain the temper and design of an enemy. There was a brief detention of the apostles "in hold" and a hasty half trial before an informal tribunal that seemed conscious of its own weakness. The result was as when blacksmiths dash water on the flame to make it blaze the fiercer. Peter and John went out the stronger; the people magnified them and glorified God for the fresh energy of his working. The persecution brought a new development of the kingdom of heaven. In history special persecutions, as in France, or Italy, have not been soon followed by revival, but in general the crushed Church has risen again.

THE DOCTRINE.

The city authorities are now alarmed. "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. Happy the city—Halifax, Montreal or Toronto—that such doctrine fills! Souls penitent, pardoned, walking in the statutes of the Lord;

falsehood rebuked and abhorred; generous and brotherly tempers growing; the sick, the frantic, and the suffering healed; the sweet influences of Jerusalem which is above coming down upon Jerusalem that now is! The rulers attest a good thing.

PETER'S WORD.

It is none other than it was in the beginning. He, with John, has been a night in prison, but an angel has opened the prison door, and his morning Gospel at the temple is clear, calm, and unchanging as the new-risen sun. It is not irritated or impatient; it speaks of sin; it calls to penitence and tells how men shall obtain joy and gladness in pardon and new life. There is something sublime in these sweet, earnest, unchanging tones.

THE SAVIOUR'S TRIAL DUPLICATED.

Not, of course, in all its elements. "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." Here is a notable gathering. The high priest and the sect of the Sadducees had political sway; the Sanhedrin, "council," was largely of Pharisees, but these bitter foes, like Herod and Pilate, are friends in this one effort. Peter quietly utters the truth, but what is truth to them in their hot anger? This was an array of all that was imposing and powerful in the

Jewish commonwealth, and it had the sacred charge of the ancient religious usages and of the covenant Church, with its adoption and its glory, its imperishable record and its illustrious hopes. Not even in the Roman senate was so much of moral dignity as in this before which Peter now stands to answer for the faith.

WORDS THAT BURN.

Peter, who now "converted strengthens his brethren" with clarion tones of courage, loses neither heart nor voice before this company. He tells them of Christ "whom ye slew," now "exalted to be a Prince and Saviour," the Hope and Consolation of Israel. The Sadducees would feel annoyed at the utterance of "Him hath God exalted," for they held that death ends all, and they behaved in harmony with their creed. Such words aroused their consciences, and as in presence of truth one must either surrender or struggle they chose the latter.

A COOLER HEAD.

This Gamaliel, though the wisest of the council, is no Christian. He puts the case on the level of some well-known outbreak, ill-timed and unsuccessful, and he has no good word for Peter. The best man in the Sanhedrin advises merely a little delay. The movement will soon run its course. It may possibly have come to stay, but he rather thinks not, and that its fate will come without their stirring. His advice is of that cheap sort which often causes men to be reputed wise. It is but negative, yet it opens the way to a convenient compromise. The council really stood in some fear of the people, lest this might grow to an outbreak for the dreaded Romans to handle. So this man, shallow in policy, has sagacity for the hour and gets a hearing.

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD.

This is well worth saying. That men do answer against God and resist his will has from the beginning unto our day been sadly frequent. Gamaliel is still negative. He says nothing of working with and for God, as Peter was doing. He had read history, and Pharaoh's career might come unbidden to his thought. This "haply" is enough to give force to a call for a halt. Alas! he and his people did forty years hereafter fight against God, and went down in the disaster which through his Palm Sunday tears our Lord had seen.

WHY BEAT THEM?

"Let them alone!" was not to the liking of the council. More than one nation of old held

in usage that one accused, even though acquitted, must have done something to have caused the arrest. "I will therefore chastise him and release him," Pilate had said of Christ, and now the apostles taste of his cup. Scourging was by the Mosaic law a penalty of proven guilt—in some offenses—but in this case it was simply an outrage. The fierce wrath of most of the council breaks hot over Gamaliel's mild advice, and even suggests that his words, if more positive, could have gained no hearing.

NOT SPEAK IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

More than four centuries were gone since Socrates had under like circumstances said to his judges, "Condemn me or acquit me, but know this—that I shall still say what the Divine bids me say!" In moral courage, obeying the divine rather than the human, the great heathen agrees with the great prophet. "His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." It may be that the council gave this command on purpose to be broken, that so they might in a new issue have a more aggravated charge and so the more plausibly proceed to final and murderous violence.

WHICH WAS THE CONQUERING PARTY?

The apostles, insulted and sore from scourging, went forth rejoicing. They knew what eye looked down upon, what Presence filled the air around them. Their work had fresh charms for them and its accompaniments no terror. Awaiting them was the loving company of believers and, more, the Master's approval. The council was angry, gloomy, and baffled and broke up scowling and dissatisfied. A painter's art would without words plainly show which were victors and which were vanquished.

GOOD FROM THINGS EVIL.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity," and this trial, not joyous, but grievous, yielded valuable fruitage. Storms and stress of weather make perfect the sailor. The apostles grew stronger in confidence and courage as they saw the Master's work prospering in their hands, and they set themselves at it with fresh energy. Their foes, balked of their desires, held for "those days" their peace. A disciple of Gamaliel watched all this, unaware of his own future. When he was converted, what Paul had seen and heard made him all the more a mighty worker in the spread of this same Gospel.

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Thoughts for Young People.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TASK AND REWARD.

1. *The Christian's Commission.* For the extension of his kingdom in the earth God has commissioned us to preach and to suffer in the name of Jesus. For the sake of order in the Church certain men are set apart "to the office and work of the ministry," to administer the sacraments and to perform certain other duties of administration, but the commission to proclaim the Gospel and to stand firm for the honor of the Saviour was given not to the ministry alone, but to all who believe on the name of Christ.

2. *The Christian's Duty.* The law of the Spirit which God has put in the heart of the believer is the supreme law of the Christian's conduct. It is, however, maintained in the heart only by a careful study of the written word. He who claims to have revelations of the will of God which contradict the word of God is an impostor. It was largely from the Holy Scriptures that Peter learned the doctrines that he now preached; so Paul's great arguments for the truth as it is in Jesus were based on the Old Testament. But the Bible is to us a dead letter when not illuminated and vivified by the Spirit of Christ. Let us never deviate from the law of the Spirit which God has put into our hearts.

3. *The Christian's Triumph.* Peter's defense came from a heart filled with the Holy Ghost. It is thus that the most enduring triumphs of God's people have been won. No Christian need seek to secure justice from this world. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," and the Lord is one's best defender. He sends his angels to minister to us; he indorses our testimony by the witness of the Holy Spirit (verse 32); he gives to the dutiful the delight of an approving conscience; he comforts us by the assurance that the Prince is on our side. The little powers of earth may be arrayed against the Christian; but the King of kings, whose throne is exalted by God, lovingly watches him in this life, and hereafter will say to him, "Well done; enter into the joys of your Lord."

4. *The Christian's Glory.* The reproach of Jesus is the glory of his disciples.

"In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

The essence of Christian experience is identification with Christ in sorrow and joy.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

The evident presence of God himself with the apostles led multitudes to believe (Acts 5. 14), and the miracles performed by these Spirit-filled men drew other multitudes to them for healing. Naturally, the already awakened indignation and jealousy of the Jewish rulers were increased as they beheld these manifestations of the power and the popularity of the hated messengers of Jesus. Hence they made another attempt to silence them by casting them into prison.

INTRODUCTION.

Examine the answers to the questions given out on last Sunday, and endeavor to have the pupils understand the feelings of the Jewish leaders toward the apostles. Then take up the

NARRATIVE.

which we may consider under five headings:

1. *Witnesses for Jesus* (verse 32). What is it to witness for Jesus? Who are the witnesses referred to? What had been done to them because of their witnessing? Ask the questions assigned for home study.

2. *Enemies of Jesus* (verse 33). Who were they? (verse 27.) How did they feel? What did they wish to do to the apostles? Why?

3. *Gamaliel's plea* (verses 34-39). Who was Gamaliel? (Have some one read aloud verse 34, and question as to the meaning of "council," "Pharisee," "doctor," "reputation.") What did he command? What did he say? (Have some one read aloud verses 35-37.) What advice did he give? (verse 38.) What important principle did he state? (verses 38, 39.)

4. *The result of the plea* (verse 40.) How did the council receive Gamaliel's plea? What did they do to the apostles? What did they command the apostles? Had this order ever been given before? (Acts 4. 18.)

5. *Rejoicing apostles* (verses 41, 42). What is it to rejoice? Why did the apostles rejoice? What did they do? When? Where?

TRUTH EMPHASIZED.

Notwithstanding the emphatic teaching of the New Testament to the contrary, there is to-day a very widespread notion that material prosperity and temporal success are evidences of God's favor. Even Christians forget that the Master himself declared, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." (Compare Matt. 16. 24; John 15. 19; 17. 14; and 2 Tim. 3. 12.) The youth of our Church need to be taught that

there is great blessedness even in this life for those who are sincere followers of Jesus, but that this blessedness does not always consist in possessing the things which are so dear to our human nature. It is inward, not outward. It is derived from Christ, not from our environments. Ask: Who wants this blessedness? Show that it results from doing God's will. Illustrate from the lives of Abraham, Joseph, Daniel, the apostles, Luther, Moody, and some one known to the pupils. Ask: Who will obey God in spite of the persecutions that may arise? Urge all to learn the hymn beginning:

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?"

Then give the pupils this truth to think over, explaining that the power is spiritual:

OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

BRINGS PERSECUTION,
PEACE,
POWER.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to learn during the week all they can about Stephen, the first Christian martyr, and to add to their list for review:

ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA,
STEPHEN.

By Way of Illustration.

"We must obey God rather than men." The Church of the first three centuries sealed this declaration with the blood of countless martyrs; Wyclif, Huss, and Savonarola reaffirmed it amid flames. Luther dared the wrath of the pope upon this issue; Cranmer and Latimer died for it upon the plains of Smithfield. Through the ages it has been the inspiration of those who have contended for both religious and civil liberty. Senator Seward in the crisis of the antislavery reform said upon the floor of the United States Senate, "There is a higher law than human constitutions." It was simply the truth that Peter announced before the Sanhedrin spoken in another form.—*Dr. E. Horr.*

"If it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." There is a picture frontispiece in Wyclif's Bible which was issued contrary to the commands of the Church authorities. There is a fire burning and spreading rapidly, representing true Christianity. Around this spreading fire are gathered a number of significant individuals, all trying to devise methods whereby they can put the fire out. One with horns and tail represents Satan. Another is the pope with his red-

coated cardinals, who forbade the circulation of the Bible among the common people. Another represents infidelity. At length one suggests that they all make a united effort to blow on the fire till they blow it out. The resolution is adopted, and there they are with swollen cheeks and extended lips blowing upon the fire with all their might, but instead of blowing it out they are blowing it up, and they only blow themselves out of breath. The fire is inextinguishable.—*Richard Roberts.*

"Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." A little Christian Chinese boy during the late persecution in China was asked to worship idols. He refused. His persecutors said, "We will have to kill you if you don't." "O, I can die," he answered, calmly, as though that were a small thing to do compared with offering incense to idols.

When the Marquis of Montrose was condemned to have his limbs nailed to the gates of four cities the brave soldier said he was sorry he had not limbs sufficient to be nailed to the gates of all the cities of Europe as monuments of his loyalty.

Verses 12. "Are revivals a proof of the Holy Spirit's presence," was asked of a wise religious leader. "Yes," was the answer, "and other very sure indications of the Spirit's presence are steadfastness and continuity of work." In the early Christian Church they not only had Pentecost, but the power to keep on working day after day. In the temple and in every house they daily taught and preached Jesus Christ, and souls were daily added to the Church.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

There is a stir in the forces of evil when the Lord's people are accomplishing something. A true revival of the faith and practice of the Gospel makes a busy season for Satan. The conflict is not over yet. The old adversary does not yet acknowledge the Conqueror, and has not given up the battle in the world, nor in your heart nor mine. If you live and do business in the open arena of the world's mind and ways you will find opposition to true Christian mind and ways. I believe consistent Christian living commands respect, but at the same time it arouses the hate of evil-minded persons because it is a rebuke to them. It is not unusual that one avoids or treats with unkindness another whose loving, Christlike conduct condemns their own selfishness and wrongdoing.

It was not merely a difference of opinion or belief that made the Sadducees and Pharisees

so hot against the apostles. They were cut to the heart by their plain words denouncing sin, and by that peculiar power which they recognized as the result of close fellowship with Jesus. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." A strange fact; the perversion of mind and spiritual darkness resulting from sin can alone explain why a man should be at enmity against his best Friend. The apostles were comforting and healing multitudes; they harmed no one; yet those who hated the doctrine were filled with indignation against its good fruits. Human nature has not changed. The same spirit in some form assails the true Church of Jesus in every age. He knew it would be so. It is cheering to know that nothing which befalls his people is a surprise to him. He told his disciples they would be put in prisons and brought before kings and rulers for his name's sake, and this should be a testimony to their faithfulness and fellowship with him. These words were probably brought to their remembrance by the Holy Spirit, and made them rejoice to suffer shame for his name. There are many to-day just as glad to suffer for his sake. You may have your love and loyalty tested this very week by the taunt, the laugh, or the temptation of a companion. I hope if you do you will find the "rejoicing." It is a pleasure to stand up for a friend if one speaks ill of them, or slights them. So it is indeed a joy to one who truly loves him to stand up for Jesus always.

The angels of the Lord are at hand to help his people in times of need. They encamp round about them to deliver. I believe they do so for us as really as for Peter and John. Many times in the distressing days a year ago the besieged people in Peking felt that an unseen power turned away the imminent peril. When Elisha's servant cried out in fear, "Alas, what shall we do?" the prophet prayed, "Lord, open his eyes that he may see," and he saw the mountain full of heavenly allies and defenders. We do not see them nor hear them speak, but they are sent to minister to the heirs of salvation. The words of the angel who opened these prison doors were worthy of one coming from the heavenly world, where they see clearly what is wise and right. An earthly adviser possibly would have said: "Be more careful what you say. Be true to your faith, of course; preach it wherever you can do so safely, but be less aggressive. Do not rouse opposition; it does no good and makes you trouble. It isn't worth while to die for this cause; you can do more for it by living longer."

But the heavenly adviser said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." You know you have the truth, and the Lord has sent you to tell it; the people need to hear it. Go where they are; stand up boldly, and tell all the message without fear or shame.

It is said by some worldly wise ones that we have no right to "thrust" the Gospel upon peoples of other religions and stir up strife among them. If the first apostles had adopted such sentiments the good news of salvation would not have gone beyond the few who heard it in Jerusalem. We should never have heard it ourselves. We who know the Lord Jesus possess great riches; is it an intrusion to offer a share to others? In a Northfield meeting last summer a Harvard student said he had maintained his Christian life and practice in college but he felt sure he had been too quiet about it; and he proposed on his return not only to let his views be fully known, but to win others to the same blessed faith. We need this "holy boldness." Gamaliel's counsel was wise: Let this new doctrine be tested, and if it is not true it will come to an end; if it is of God you cannot overthrow it; wait and see. It was good reasoning. But faith is higher than reason, and has clearer sight. There was no "if" in the apostles' thought of the new doctrine. They were sure of their message, and could but speak the things they had seen and heard. They were not reasoners; they were witnesses; not full of wisdom only, but "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." And the Holy Spirit is "given to all that obey him."

The Teachers' Meeting.

I. SUGGESTIVE OUTLINES. 1. The Arrest; 2. The Defense; 3. The Consultation; 4. The "Shame" and "Glory;" 5. Continued Preaching. . . . 1. The Sin of Persecution; 2. The Sin of Neutrality; 3. Christian Progress against Both. . . . Three speeches: 1. Of the high priest; 2. Of Peter; 3. Of Gamaliel. . . . A Character Study: 1. Believers in Christ; 2. Enemies of Christ; 3. Undecided people. . . . Contrast the Believer's Spirit (Bold, Workful, Conscientious, Witnessing, Rejoicing) with the Unbeliever's Spirit (Fearful, Hateful, Illogical, Persecuting), and the Undecided Spirit. Which animates you?

II. 1. Peter's supremacy, due to his supernatural gifts and his supernatural endowments. 2. Christianity is the ripe fruit of which Mosaism was the bud and blossom. 3. Peter shrinks not from denouncing sin; neither should we.

4. Unrepentant champions of evil always hate champions of goodness. 5. The responsibilities of a popular man. 6. Learning by history and experience. 7. Almost every social movement is essentially moral or immoral. 8. The attempt to thwart God bringeth disaster to man. 9. "It is an honor to be dishonored for the name that is above every name." 10. In spite of opposition proclaim the Gospel.

Study "The Lesson Homily" in the *Illustrative Lesson Notes*.

Library References.

GAMALIEL.—Evans, *Scripture Biography*, vol. iii, page 279. Pask, *The Apostle of the Gentiles*, pages 46, 49. Goulburn, *The Gospel of Childhood*, page 105. Green, *The Apostle Peter*, page 82. Taylor, *Paul the Missionary* (Index).

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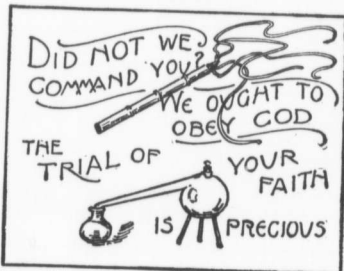
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SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 38.—Dwight, T., *Sermons*, vol. ii, page 216. Hamilton, W. R., *Sermons*, page 92. Disney, J., *Sermons*, vol. iii, page 197.

Verse 42.—*The Preacher*, vol. v, page 33.

Blackboard.



It is much to endure evil with constancy, but how magnificent was the spirit shown by these men who in the hour of unmerited shame and affliction rejoiced that they were "counted worthy to suffer." The trial served to make manifest the bright gold of character, and revealed to the assayers of the Sanhedrin the quality and temper of those with whom they had to do. In like manner will the Spirit prompt and strengthen every faithful follower.

Coloring.—Lettering, dark red and green, bordered with white; scourge, light brown; retort, white, blue-tinted; contents, yellow.

LESSON VIII. The Arrest of Stephen.

[Feb. 23.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.
Matt. 10. 28.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also Acts 6. 1-6.]

Acts 6. 7-15.

[Commit to memory verses 7, 8.]

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

REVISED VERSION.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people. But there arose certain of them that were of the synagogue called the synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with

9 Stephen. And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he

11 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Mo'ses, and against God.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council,

13 And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law :

14 For we have heard him say, that this Je'sus of Naz'a-reth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Mo'ses delivered us.

15 And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

11 spake. Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and seized him, and brought him into the council, and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law: for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us.

15 And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

Time.—Uncertain.

Place.—In and around Jerusalem.

Home Readings.

M. The Arrest of Stephen. Acts 6. 1-15.

Tu. A shining face. Exod. 34. 29-35.

W. Promise of victory. Isa. 54. 11-17.

Th. Wicked accusers. 1 Kings 21. 1-14.

F. False witness. Matt. 26. 59-66.

S. Reproaches and afflictions. Heb. 10. 33-39.

S. For His sake. Phil. 1. 19-30.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 226.

When storms around are sweeping,
When lone my watch I'm keeping,
'Mid fires of evil falling,
'Mid tempters' voices calling

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 224.

My faith looks up to thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine;
Now hear me while I pray.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 140.

Now I have found the ground wherein
Sure my soul's anchor may remain,
The wounds of Jesus, for my sin
Before the world's foundation slain.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. Development of Church Organization.

What was the complaint of the Grecians against the Hebrews in the early Church?

What plan did the apostles suggest?

How did they distinguish between their work and the work of the seven?

What were the qualifications of the seven?

Whom did they choose?

How were they formally installed into their office?

What classes of persons were now represented among the converts?

Did Stephen confine himself to the duties of the office for which he was chosen?

2. The Persecution Continued.

In what places of Jewish resort did Stephen preach?

Who was probably one of his listeners?

How was the force of Stephen's message shown?

What means did his enemies use to silence him?

What was the testimony of these false witnesses?

Was there any truth in what they said?

Before whom was Stephen brought?

What special evidence of his presence did the Lord give to Stephen at this time?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. Great Success and Power (verses 7, 8).

What two things grew mightily?

Name all the kinds of people converted?

What man was specially active?

What was his character?

What were his works?

2. Opposing by Word (verses 9, 10).

How did the enemies first try to stop the work?

Whence did some of these opposers by debate and discussion come?

From which of these places did Saul of Tarsus come?

How did they fare in the discussion?

What two things in Stephen were irresistible to them?

3. Opposing by Physical Force (verses 11-15).

What wickedness did they do to arrest Stephen?

What did they accuse him of?

Was there any shadow of truth in this charge?

Did Stephen resist being arrested?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

Why did the apostles ask for helpers? *Because the work was too great for them.*

How many helpers were chosen? *Seven men.*

Who was the most prominent? *Stephen.*

What do we learn about him? *That he was full of faith and power.*

Why did the Jews hate him? *Because he was like the Lord.*

What did they do? *They arrested him.*

How did they treat him? *They brought false witnesses against him.*

What should a witness speak? *Only the truth.*

What did they tell about Stephen? *False and cruel things.*

Did Stephen answer them? *No, he spoke not a word.*

How did his face look? *Like that of an angel.*

Why did he look like this? *Because the Holy Spirit in him shone through his face.*

What did the Holy Spirit give him power to do? *To speak the truth, and not to afraid.*

When should we be afraid? *When sin is hiding in our heart.*

When may we be as bold as Stephen was? *When we obey God as he did.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. What are we told about the disciples? *They multiplied in Jerusalem greatly.*

2. What did Stephen do? *He preached the Gospel with power.*

3. What did his enemies do? *They accused him to the council.*

4. How did his face appear before the council? *Like that of an angel.*

5. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"Fear not them which kill," etc.*

The Church Catechism.

48. What are our duties to our country? Our duties to our country are to render due honor to rulers; to observe the laws of the land in the fear of God, and to support their authority; to contribute our just share to the expense of government; to promote the public well-being; and to exercise our franchise for the public good.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Four Effects of a Holy Life.

I. HOLY LIVING ACCOMPLISHES WONDERS.

Full of faith and power, did great wonders. v. 8.

Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come. Acts 1. 8.

If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matt. 17. 20.

He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also: and greater. John 14. 12.

All things are possible to him that believeth. Mark 9. 23.

II. HOLY LIVING COMMANDS DIVINE WISDOM.

Were not able to resist the wisdom . . . by which he spake. v. 10.

I will teach thee what thou shalt say. Exod. 4. 12.

I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. Luke 21. 15.

The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak. Isa. 50. 4.

III. HOLY LIVING IS HATED BY WORKERS OF INIQUITY.

They stirred up the people, and the elders. v. 12.

Hatred stirreth up strifes. Prov. 10. 12.

There are that raise up strife and contention. Hab. 1. 3.

Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 1 John 3. 13.

Because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John 15. 19.

IV. HOLY LIVING MAKES A GLAD HEART AND A SHINING FACE.

Saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. v. 15.

A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine. Eccles. 8. 1.

Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory. 2 Cor. 3. 7.

[Our Lord's] face did shine as the sun. Matt. 17. 2.

[The ange[le]s] countenance was like lightning. Matt. 28. 3.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The "Additional Verses" of this lesson follow immediately after Lesson VII, and connect with verse 14 of the last chapter, where we are told that "believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." "In those days," while the Church was so rapidly increasing, "there arose a murmuring;"

amid the general peace and between the joyful songs came disturbing sounds of complaint. The Church was feeling its growing pains. Its leaders must learn to adapt themselves to changing conditions. "The Grecians" were Hellenists, that is, Jews born in Greek countries, or proselytes, that is, heathens who had become Jews. "The Hebrews" were Jews native to the Holy Land. This was not, therefore, a complaint of Gentile Christians against Jewish Christians, such as in Paul's time repeatedly troubled the Church, for as yet the doctrines of Christ had not been preached to any but Jews, either by birth or conversion. That the Grecian widows were to some degree neglected was not strange, because they were foreigners and probably not long residents of Jerusalem; in the "daily ministration," the distribution of the charities of the Church, those that were best known naturally would be first helped. Needy "widows" were appallingly common in that time of turbulent political and irregular social conditions. The twelve apostles recognized the justice of the complaint, but excused themselves by saying that "the word of God," the direct proclamation of the Gospel, engrossed their energies. To "serve tables" means to become money-changers, not to attend to eating and drinking. So seven men, "of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," were appointed to supervise the "daily ministration." Their names are all Greek: Stephen (who is especially mentioned as being "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost"), Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch. These men were specially set apart for their work by "imposition of hands." Often they have been referred to by writers on the history of the Church as "deacons," but that title, though it often occurs in the New Testament, is not applied to these men. Their duties seem to have been somewhat like those of the "stewards" of early Methodism.

Verse 7. *The word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied.* The apostles were now able to give themselves, with full concentration of power, to the ministry of the word, and immediately the result was seen in Jerusalem, which seemed now almost to have become a Christian city. The lofty love for others manifested by the apostles was winsome to citizens of a capital which had been for centuries "cursed by party spirit and sectarian hatred." *A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.* "Probably to them the sacrifice would be greater than to the ordinary Israelite." Their conversion would call public attention to the gradual decay of the old hierarchy. There were thousands of them, and they had unusual opportunities to hear the Gospel since the apostles had formed the habit of preaching in Solomon's Porch. "The Faith" seems to have become recognized as a name of the Christian religion (see Acts 13. 8; 14. 22; 16. 5; 24. 24), because "faith in Christ was the first demand made of those who desired to enter the new communion."

8. *Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders* ["was working wonders"] *and miracles among the people.* During the increase in numbers and popularity just recorded one disciple's words were making enemies. The repeated characterization of Stephen (see verse 5) marks the unusual impression he made on the early Church. Although what we would call a layman, he was unusually gifted by the Holy Ghost for "evangelistic" work.

9. *There arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines.* We are to understand five synagogues as being

mentioned in this verse. In Jerusalem there were many synagogues; the people naturally grouped themselves according to languages and crafts, and each little class or knot had one of its own. So in modern Malabar, as described in a manuscript of the eighteenth century, quoted by Professor Lumby, "The black Jews and the white Jews have separate synagogues, and neither recognizes the others as members of their congregation." *The Libertines* are generally understood to be descendants of the Jews who had been taken as captives to Rome to grace Pompey's triumph, and had been made freedmen by their captors, and afterward banished. After returning to Jerusalem they would naturally form a congregation and have a synagogue by themselves. Dr. Marvin R. Vincent suggests that their bitter opposition to Stephen came from their supposition that by his preaching their religion, for which they had suffered at Rome, was endangered at Jerusalem. The Jews of Cyrene were numerous, that north African city having given special welcome to them, and permitted them to enforce their ancestral laws. Of the *Alexandrians* almost the same may be said; Alexandria was the chief seat of Hellenistic Judaism. *Cilicia* was a Roman province near the southeastern angle of Asia Minor, and Tarsus, the birthplace of Paul, was one of its principal towns. "He was probably a member of this synagogue." *Asia* was the coast province at the other end of Asia Minor, the region about Ephesus. *Disputing with Stephen.* Rather Stephen disputed with them. Admitted to their company as a teacher of eminence, he preached the doctrines of the Gospel, and at once met with opposition.

10. *They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke.* In the entire narrative of Stephen's brief ministry abundant evidence is given of his lofty abilities and great energy. But it was not these qualities that made him so powerful. It was his spiritual wisdom, his endowment by the Holy Spirit.

11-14. *They suborned men.* "Secretly instructed them." What they said, *We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God,* would be sufficient to check the sympathy which nearly all classes were now extending toward the Christians. So strong was this sympathy that, when conspiring against Stephen, it was found necessary, first of all, to "stir up" the people, to arouse their prejudices against him. "But a legal process was necessary to his overthrow." Having arrested Stephen and brought him to the council, the Sanhedrin, they charge him with blasphemy,

and depend for proof on false witnesses. *This holy place, the temple, and the law,* seemed to them to be Stephen's two points of attack; so they swore that they had heard him say, *This Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.* This charge was essentially false while perhaps literally not far from the truth. "A lie that is half the truth is ever the worst of lies." Exactly what Stephen said is unknown to us, but we know his character, and chapter 7 gives a specimen of his arguments.

15. *All that sat in the council.* Members of the Sanhedrin. *Looking steadfastly.* With absorbed attention. *Saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.* "Angelically glorified." This superhuman illumination awed the Sanhedrin, and led them to listen with respect to his words of defense, which, otherwise, would have been scorned and contemned.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

SEVEN GOOD YEARS.

Our lesson dates at about seven years from Pentecost, and in all history can be found no other such seven. The Church had grown from a hundred and twenty to many thousands, and was ready to spread far and wide among nations. In seven years Mohammed had gained about a hundred converts, and in ten years it was unknown beyond the walls of Mecca. Like wheat in Joseph's fruitful years, the faith, squarely opposing the ways of the human heart, had filled Jerusalem and by persuasion was baffling and overcoming its foes. Success does not always prove character, but success under these conditions proves the work to be of God. "Ye cannot overthrow it."

DIVISION OF LABOR.

This principle, which plays so valuable a part in modern industry, now comes to service in the early Church. These Grecians, foreign-born Jews, might be slighted in the distribution of supplies, for they were strangers, and the better-known homeborn be first served. So comes an "evolution" easy and reasonable. Private prayer, waiting upon God to renew their own strength; public prayer set in careful order to guide the thoughts of others and be to them a vehicle of the Spirit; daily discourse and appeal to listening crowds—this was enough for the Twelve. An order of helpers was needed, and the Church thus, like the English constitution, grew by unfolding. The laity began work, and happy the church where preaching and pastoral energy is thus relieved.

THE LAYMAN'S SHARE.

Serving tables was not setting out and distributing food. "Tables" were as banks and counters with us, and one sees that financial management is here chiefly meant, a needful and serious matter. The Saviour, "that he might fill all things," gives men various gifts, that his Church in its sum and altogether may come to be as a perfect man with various limbs and faculties which as a whole give efficiency for complete service. Preaching, with its spiritual and intellectual demands and its relation to each hearer, is intensely exhausting, enough for one man. Few can add to it another burden and prosper. All outside of it is layman's work, though "for the present distress." Many a preacher, like Issachar, crouches down between two burdens and needs to be very strong if he is to rise and carry them. Laymen should take one of these.

SOWING AND REAPING.

The reaper overtakes the sower, for the Church is "as a field which the Lord God has blessed." "He that is of the truth heareth my voice," and the Jews who were willing to give the matter fair thought saw and felt how the law and the prophets bore witness to the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Thus enlightened and quickened of the Holy Ghost, they found the law their schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. The priests, too, led by the same kindly light, came to see how Jesus had put away sin offerings by the sacrifice of himself and had entered once for all into

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the holy place evermore to make intercession for mankind. Souls thus convinced were daily coming to obtain mercy and find grace, and so the apostles scattered with one hand the truth while in the joy of harvest they, like the priest in the temple, waved toward heaven the sheaf of gathered golden grain. Such was our faith's first fruitage.

A PRINCE IN ISRAEL.

One must think of Stephen as one of those rare men who can do two things well. This Jew, Greek-born and Greek-trained, has a Jew's financial skill, or he would not have been chosen first on this finance committee. His method in rhetoric, purely Greek, rapid, luminous, and tuneful, is the effort of a master of Isacus and Demosthenes, and back of all this the energy of the Holy Ghost. All this must have been housed in a noble personality, itself one of heaven's choice gifts, so that one may hang this picture as in the air before him near that of Christ before Pilate, and gaze now on the blessed Master and now on the servant with glowing, kindred emotion.

DEBATE.

"Discussion elicits truth" may be as well read in reverse. The fine old saying, "If Truth could appear to mortal eyes embodied all men would be captivated by her charms," is not so accurate as the Miltonic thought that truth is as some perfect statue by a Phidias, broken and scattered widely. Men find it in fragments, but debate if the piece be genuine, and where in the statue it, if genuine, belongs. So the Gospel statements, of which the words are truth, awoke debate. So it was in the beginning, is now, and for long will be. These debaters were, as their names suggest, of Greek habit. High and free debate on biblical and Christian themes, for truth, not for victory, is a goodly exercise, and from it religion has nothing to fear, and to listen to Stephen were a rich delight. His contestants learned that gentleness may be strong, and a loving heart not close the brain or clog the tongue.

BLASPHEMY.

This is an offense in speech, and in Scripture is some word of insult, direct or indirect, to the Divine Being. As Moses was servant and representative of the Almighty, to speak slightly of him was a blow at his Master's dignity, as a slighting of a foreign minister is a slight to the state which he represents. This divine dignity extended to persons and places in the divine service. So Jesus forbade swearing

"by the gold of the temple" or "by Jerusalem, the city of the great King." Blasphemy was punishable by stoning, and was the only capital offense of which the Jews could, now that the Romans dealt with all others, inflict the penalty. It was by its very nature a charge easy to bring and not easy to defend; on more than one historic occasion it was made a mode of vengeance on the innocent. In itself it is shocking, the eruption of a heart fierce with volcanic passion.

THE SPECIFIC CHARGE.

The charges sustained by these men "suborned," induced to perjury, hung upon this "against God" and took character from it. Moses himself had said that a Prophet would later rise at whose coming his own mission would end, being absorbed in the later and greater. "Him shall ye hear!" But in the present anger of these leading Jews such points were well taken. Men were clinging to their city, temple, and customs with hot, frantic affection such as later came to its crisis in the desperate struggle when Jerusalem went down in the ashes of her temple, and the blood of her children. They were in the mood of those who would have lynched the murderer of McKinley; who on slight pretense have in wanton outrage lynched thousands in these years. To do away with Stephen, that they intended.

A RADIANT PERSONALITY.

In his position now so desperate Stephen, like Socrates, like his Master, has no air of bravado. He does not proudly put his courage on as a diadem to wear. He is calm and courteous, and speaks as if speaking to his friends. The hour was one of which the Master had said, "It shall be given you what ye shall say and what ye shall speak." To this servant, now sore beset, it was also given how he should look! "If Truth could appear in human form," said Plato, "all would be ravished with her charms." Truth had so appeared in Christ, and now Stephen's soul beams forth upon his features. "He had no beauty that they should desire him." The charm was lost on the scowling throng. But there for us is the picture. Truth and love make the human face divine. Majestic sweetness sat on Stephen's brow; into his lips grace was poured.

Thoughts for Young People.

CONCERNING POPULAR FAVOR.

1. Popular favor should be highly valued. In Stephen's day it led to the great increase of the word of God and the multiplication of the

number of the disciples. It will be of as great help to any modern Church or Sunday school or private Christian. He who defies public sentiment except for definite moral cause is both wicked and foolish.

2. *Popular favor is very uncertain.* Causes very trivial have repeatedly, within one generation, changed the idol of a nation (even so intelligent a nation as France) into an object of contempt, and that in two or three days.

3. *Popular favor should lead the favored ones to examine themselves.* "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you" does not mean that it is a misfortune or a sin to be popular (we have just noted the reverse), but that in a sinful world absolute rectitude will, sooner or later, offend somebody, and that long-continued praises from all sources can hardly be expected if one inflexibly maintains the right.

4. *Popular favor is no sign of right or wrong.* Often in our own country men have been elected and afterward thrown out of office for maintaining what they were elected for. They were self-consistent, but public sentiment had changed.

5. *Popular favor should be defied when it is the price of wrongdoing.* "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven."

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

The Church increases in numbers, and the work that falls to it becomes greater and more diversified. Seven men, full of the Holy Spirit, are selected to relieve the apostles of some of the more secular duties. Among these seven is Stephen, about whom we are to study in two lessons.

INTRODUCTION.

Ask the class to tell what they have learned concerning the character of Stephen, and sum up the distinguishing traits as follows:

STEPHEN A MAN FULL OF

FAITH,
THE HOLY SPIRIT,
GRACE,
POWER,
THE WORD,
COURAGE,
LOVE.

That is the kind of a person God needs and can use to-day.

NARRATIVE.

The text presents Stephen under five aspects:

1. *Working* (verse 8). What did Stephen do among the people? What enabled him to do these? Where did he get these two gifts?

2. *Questioned* (verse 9). Explain how he meant by the synagogue of Libertines, Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and that the word "disputing" here means questioning for sake of finding fault.

3. *Accused* (verses 10, 11). How did Stephen meet the fault-finding of his enemies? What did his enemies do? (Explain the meaning of "suborned" and "blasphemous.")

4. *Arrested* (verses 12-14). What effect had the words of those who testified against Stephen? Who came upon Stephen? What was done to him? Who appeared against him? What did they say?

5. *Inspired* (verse 15). Like what did Stephen's face appear? Why? (See verse 36.)

TRUTH EMPHASIZED.

Recall last week's lesson, and have some one give the summary of the teaching and show how Stephen is an illustration of the truth of that teaching. He obeyed God. His obedience resulted in his having great spiritual power and inward peace, but he was subjected to bitter persecution. Nor is Stephen unique in these aspects. His experience has been duplicated in the lives of many of God's most faithful saints. Many Christians would like Stephen's peace and power, but they shrink from persecutions.

While on the earth Jesus strove to teach his disciples that it is not one's surroundings, but what that one is in himself, that constitutes the real life and the real person. This is one of the fundamental truths of to-day's lesson, and yet how loath even Christians are to recognize and live according to it. This is all the more reason why we should strive to have our pupils grasp it while they are young. In order to help impress it, question upon and explain the following, which the pupils should be requested to print in order that they may take it home and frequently think about it:

NOT WHAT IS **WITHOUT**,
BUT WHAT IS **WITHIN**,
MAKES THE PERSON.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to read during the week Stephen's sermon, which is recorded in Acts 7. 1-53.

By Way of Illustration.

"They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." His work in the church was to administer funds and supplies for the needy. The members of the early Church who cast their ballots for these officers believed that a Spirit-filled man was needed to administer the secular affairs of the church. Would not the present-day church do well to heed this example? Should not elders, deacons, class leaders, stewards, and even trustees be men full of the Holy Ghost? "He is an honest man, and has good business ability and influence in the community; let us elect him trustee." "Is he a man full of the Holy Ghost?" "O, I don't know as to that; that don't matter so much; he has influence." Is it strange that churches languish spiritually when the officary, who are to administer their affairs lack the one qualification deemed essential by the early Church—"full of the Holy Spirit"?—*J. H. Myers.*

"They resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." It was a Yale professor, Mr. Lounsbury, who remarked that his experience in the class room had taught him "the infinite capacity of the human mind to withstand the introduction of knowledge." Some of you preachers must often feel the same way about the ability of mankind to resist the introduction of truth.—*Vice President Roosevelt in an address before the Long Island Bible Society.*

The angel face on man. Facial brightness, if you have it—and you may have it with any kind of features, plain, rugged, storm-beat; sunshine is nowhere more beautiful than on rough rocks—what is it but an overflowing from the light of God within? Love God with heart and soul and strength and mind, and your neighbor as yourself, and you will never need to think of putting up a face-advertisement of what will be found within. The poor will bless you; and the fallen will look up in your face, as they looked in the face of Christ, and see pity and help written there; and the little children will play about your knee. Be a Christian man through and through, in belief and practice, and the Lord your God will put his beauty on you.—*Dr. Raleigh.*

Joy in trial. When mists have hung low over the hills and the day has been dark with intermittent showers, great clouds hurry across the sky and the rain comes pouring down, then we look out and say, "This is the clearing-up shower." And as the clouds part to let the blue sky reappear we know that just behind them are singing birds and glittering dewdrops. So the Christian on whom chilling rains of trouble

have fallen, when the last sudden storm breaks, knows it is but the clearing-up shower. Just behind it he hears the songs of angels and sees the glories of heaven.—*Becher.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The spiritual reign of Jesus cannot spread over the earth without the aid of material things. Religion would die out of the community, though not necessarily out of individual hearts, if there were no houses of worship. Churches must be built, and money must be raised to build them. Missionaries are not angelic beings, although some seem very near it in their heroic devotion; they are human, and need houses to live in and bread to eat, and some one must see that these things are provided. Hospitals and schoolhouses must be built in mission lands; the poor we have always with us in our own land, and we must not cease to help them. To get money, to take care of it, to properly disburse it, is a necessary part of the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom, not more to be neglected than the preaching of the Gospel or keeping up the prayer meeting. If we all could see that the faithful administration of money for the Church and for all charities is religious worship, "begging" for the Lord's treasury would be known no more, and "deficit" would be a forgotten word. Happy day! Will it ever come for burdened finance committees?

Plainly the Church in apostolic days believed this responsibility did not properly belong to the preachers. Their business was to preach the word of God and not to serve tables. This view "pleased the whole multitude" because it was reasonable. How can a man do thoroughly well the spiritual work of a pastor and at the same time give his energies to raising money? It is not a small matter to bring a living message each Sunday to the people. To do it a minister needs hours of study and prayer. To carry the spiritual perils and wants of individual members of his flock upon his heart requires more physical nerve than those who have no such care realize. Too little do people consider the travail of soul of those who "watch for souls" as true shepherds. Do you think they should be expected to "keep up the finances" too? "The twelve" said it was "not reason" So they asked the brethren to choose seven men of honest report full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom to attend to this part of the work, recognizing it equally honorable with their own by the qualifications they regarded as necessary for its administration.

This was a model finance committee: men

full of wisdom; business men of reputation who would apply the same principles to church affairs that they did to their own, not letting things "run behind" here any more than in the store or office. But they were not worldly minded business men; they had a rare qualification for their important place; they were full of the Holy Ghost. The chairman, Stephen, was full of faith. If all finance committees were full of the Holy Ghost and faith they might perhaps so train the people in conscientious giving that Christian finances would be carried on in a way more worthy the cause for which they exist. There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. Let us learn from this lesson the true place of the secular side of church work. The Holy Spirit should be recognized as its inspiration and guide, as he is in the spiritual life.

Only two of those set apart for this service are afterward prominent in Church history. But those "neglected widows" knew them, and blessed them for kindness and care. God knew them too; for "he is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which ye have showed toward his name in that ye have ministered to the saints." Faithful collectors and disbursers of missionary and other funds, working often at personal inconvenience and with cheerless discouragement from those whose gifts they ask, will have the reward of those who do their best work in secret, not to be seen of men, but to please God. If such service falls to you make it joyful with the thought that it is truly service for Christ; and may you, like Stephen, be full of faith and power and do great wonders and miracles (in a financial way) among the people. The Church has need of such consecrated ability.

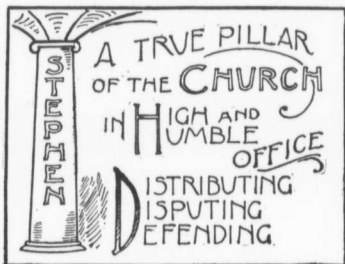
The Teachers' Meeting.

I SUGGESTIVE OUTLINES. 1. The Secularities of the Church—How to Manage Them. 2. The Spiritual Work of the Church—Work for Laymen as Well as for Ministers. . . . 1. The common work of everyday life is of great importance in the sight of God. 2. Where God sees that a servant of his is ready for higher opportunities he will certainly give them. 3. The highest opportunities involve the severest trials. . . . For Senior Classes: 1. The Development of Church Organization; 2. The Continuation of Persecution. . . . A Study of Opposition to Christ by Physical Force.

II. SUGGESTIVE LINES OF THOUGHT. In a condition of faithfulness to its great commission the Church will be divinely guided and inspired in the care of all its interests. Church

officers, first, should have a good reputation; second, they should be constantly guided by the Holy Spirit; third, they should be intelligent and judicious. Piety and profession are not enough for an officer of the Church. Anyone to-day, who, like Stephen, has faith, the Holy Spirit, and power, will work wonders. The force of the truth declared in the power of the Spirit is irresistible. The only refuge of the opponents of the Gospel was in a false witness. God gives special witness of his glory to them who suffer for his sake.

Blackboard.



Foremost among the seven in his allegiance to God and the Church is Stephen, full of faith and power. No consideration of worldly gain and honor influenced him in accepting the responsibility of an office which, while it involved the humble task of distributing food, gave him the vantage ground of an exponent and defender of the truth. His life presents an illustrious example of loyalty under all circumstances. In the face of calumny and malicious persecution he proved faithful and constant to the position to which under divine direction he had been appointed.

Coloring.—Pillar, cream, lined in black; name, red and white; phrases, alternate light blue and yellow, shaded in dark colors.

Library References.

STEPHEN.—Adams, *Christ a Friend*. Cave, *Lives of the Fathers*, vol. i. Taylor, *Paul the Missionary*, page 7. Evans, *Scripture Biography*, vol. i, page 334. Iverach, *St. Paul: His Life and Times*, chap. i, and other lives of St. Paul. Geikie, *New Testament Hours*, vol. ii (Index).

SYNAGOGUE OF THE LIBERTINES.—Ewald, *History of Israel*, vol. vii, page 157. Graetz, *History of the Jews*, vol. ii, page 68.

Primary Teachers' Department.

Concerning Cooperation.

"It is such a help to be able to talk over plans and methods with some one who cares!"

This from the primary teacher who had just learned the value of the Primary Union. Have you learned it, dear teacher?

It is the cooperation of spirit, of interest, of hope and love that we all are needing to enable us to do the best work, and this the Primary Union furnishes.

SUBJECTS TO DISCUSS IN THE PRIMARY UNION:

The true value of pictures in our work.

How to teach benevolence attractively.

How to make spiritual truth clear to little minds.

How far to use the story in teaching the lesson.

How to direct the child's activity.

How to win the interest of the parents.

How best to utilize the child's love of melody.

A CREED FOR THE CHILDREN. Ask your teacher-friend when next you meet how she teaches the Creed to her little ones. What do they know of "conceived by the Holy Ghost," "judge the quick and the dead," "communion of saints," etc.! A friend suggests the following simple statement of belief which may be of use to some inquiring teacher:

"I believe in God, the Father.

And in Jesus Christ, our Lord,

And in God, the Holy Spirit.

And in God's most blessed word.

I believe that Jesus loves me—

'Little ones to him belong;'

I believe that God forgives me

When I'm sorry for the wrong."

THE ADDITIONAL LESSON. Five minutes can be found in a well-regulated class for this little lesson. The children do not need so much time for the regular lesson as do the older pupils, and many a useful seed may be planted in little minds and hearts in this five minutes. Be faithful in it, and let the class understand that it is surely coming. Also, that the previous one is to be recalled in the first moment or two, and that you expect them to be able to tell you something on the subject. As a rule, a class measures up pretty well to the expectations of its teacher.

Writing Out the Lesson.

BY A TEACHER.

I FIND it profitable to have my scholars write me letters about the lesson. After teaching it, I sometimes have distributed a box or two of the smallest size of note paper and envelopes to match. I instruct the children each to write on his sheet the lesson story of that day and to bring it to me on the following Sabbath.

Many are pleased to do so. Others refuse to take the paper, for, like some adults, letter writing is not a pleasure to them. If a child does not bring back his sheet of paper as a letter he receives no other sheet. The tiniest children, who are unable to write, often dictate their letters to a parent or some one else.

The children generally give the story in their own language, or several copy it from their picture paper, but even this method is an advantage to them. Some fill more than their sheet and resort to paper of some other size and shape.

The letters are collected before the opening exercise. A better way would be to have the children drop them into a box as they enter the room.

The letters are carefully read, and those that are especially praiseworthy are judiciously commended.

The Unruly Member.

BY A TEACHER.

WHAT shall be done with the unruly child who is harder to manage than all the rest of the class taken together? This is indeed one of the most perplexing problems the Sunday school teacher has to face, and it requires much grace and tact to settle it satisfactorily; in fact, in many it seems never to be settled at all.

What a trial one disorderly boy is! He is capable of nearly every kind of mischief. He will divert the attention of others from the lesson. He will sometimes turn the most sacred truths of the lesson into ridicule, and his words will leave a lasting impression upon the other children.

The first thing to do with the unruly scholar is to interest him, to make the teaching so intensely interesting that he will have to attend to it whether he wishes to or not. Give him some special work to do. Call him an assistant secretary, and let him pass the papers and

wards. If he cannot keep from annoying those who are near him, give him a seat by himself—a chair next to your own on the platform, for example, as your helper, allowing him to count the offerings or to engage in some other labor.

The Primary Teacher's Illuminating Art.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

THE teacher of little people must have some command of the art of illustrating. To illustrate is to illuminate. What is it we wish to make luminous? The truth. What do we long to make clear and bright each week as we have the priceless opportunity? The lesson teaching. It is for this that we illustrate the thought with symbol and story, with picture and parable. We wish the child to see, to grasp, to remember the helpful truth, to receive and to retain the impression and the influence of it.

The advantage of an illustration is its light-giving character, not its power to interest alone. Proceeding from the known to the unknown, the simple and familiar nature objects which a teacher may show and the stories from real child life which she may tell have a wonderful effect in making clear a new truth.

What is the danger to be avoided? The likelihood of making the child see the light only, and not that which it is meant to make luminous. An illustration that does not illuminate, either because it has no power or because it is wrongly placed, avails nothing in teaching, however it may attract. A benighted traveler cannot find his way by gazing at a lantern, or noticing particularly its form or decoration, but by looking at the path on which the light is shed. Do we not often make the mistake of holding up a dazzling light and fixing the attention upon that, instead of so placing it that its rays will illuminate the lesson? The trouble is apt to be with the placing as often if not oftener than with the nature of the illustration. There is light, but it does not shine upon the truth. The children miss the connection. It is here that we need to exercise the greatest care. We depend too much upon the reasoning faculties, which develop slowly in the child mind. We do not put ourselves in the children's places; we take too much for granted; we forget that what is perfectly clear and forceful to us may have no meaning to the little ones groping among strange new truths continually.

A company of primary teachers gathered for study listened to the teaching of the lesson for the coming Sunday by one of their number. It was admirably done. The approach, the con-

struction, the illustration, the impression, seemed to the listeners to be quite flawless and altogether inspiring. Especially did the point of contact seem to the grown-ups to be apt, and in close connection with the whole trend of the teaching. It would not have occurred to one of them to question its adaptation. But afterward it did occur to one of them to question a little girl who was present, and who had been much interested in the lesson, as to her understanding of it all. To her surprise, she found the child of eight had missed the point of the introductory illustration altogether, seeing no connection between the teacher's "point of contact" and the lesson, while she had no recollection of the Bible story told, remembering only the anecdote of a little girl, which was told to illustrate and impress the lesson truth in conclusion. This was a sad surprise, you may be sure. It was rather disheartening, you will admit. But it did not prove that the lesson was a failure, by any means. It did not prove that other children might not have seen the connection more clearly, although this was an average child. It only showed the need of measureless care in preparing and presenting a lesson to come close to the child mind and to see to it that the connection should not be missed, but that illustrations should really make the lesson luminous. Be sure that they show the truth, and that the child sees what you wish to show.

Keeping the Record.

THE following method has been used for keeping the attendance in the secular school, and it may be found helpful in the Sunday school. A board is placed near the door. It contains the names of all of the pupils written on slips of paper, to the right of which are places for the reception of other slips, marked absent, present, or late. A child acts as monitor and puts in the slips. The originator of this plan has written out the following directions for making the board: "Get a board two feet square; one inch from and along the left side lay a fine wire, and every inch along fasten it with small wire staples; at a distance of two inches lay another wire parallel and fastened in the same way; an inch and a quarter to the right fasten another wire; at the same distance another wire. Do not have the wires come tight to the board. Between the first two wires put the names of the pupils; between the second and third put the slip saying present or absent; between the third and fourth put a slip, if late, so marked."

Five-Minute Additional Lessons.

[It is suggested that these lessons be given following the opening exercises, and be set apart from the lesson teaching by song or other exercises.]

THE BEATITUDES.

Lesson I.

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5. 7).

What is mercy? It is kindness—a kindness which is loving and forgiving toward those who cannot, or do not, deserve it. And the merciful are those who have this kindness in their hearts and show it in their acts. The One who said, "Blessed are the merciful," came down to live among us to show us how to be merciful by himself showing mercy toward his enemies and toward every sick and blind and sinful person who came to him. The only way by which we may become merciful is by coming to him and taking his own merciful Spirit, which he freely gives us. When we have him in our hearts it is easy to show mercy to others, for it is he who is merciful within us.

Did you ever feel a tender pity springing up in your heart for a poor abused horse or suffering animal of any kind? That, if it led you to do something to help, was mercy. Think what wonderful mercy was that of Christ upon the cross, when he said of his cruel enemies, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Lesson II.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5. 8).

It is a great comfort to be clean. A splash of mud, a smear of tar, can make us feel very unhappy until it is washed away. Our Father made us with a love for purity, cleanliness without and within, and it is only sin that changes us so that we are after a while willing to be unclean. The first sins make us unhappy, too. They are the spots upon the soul, and we cannot be "blessed" until they are taken away. If we do not go to Jesus to have them taken away other spots will come, and soon we shall be all dark and unclean with sin, and, what is saddest of all, we shall not mind it!

But you are still little children, and very near and dear to the Lord. You are among the "blessed." You have only to keep looking to Jesus. That is, you are to let your mind think of him and your heart love him, and he will keep you from the stains of sin. As you grow older he will help you overcome temptations, and grow dearer to you the longer you live. Then the eyes of your spirit will see God.

Lesson III.

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5. 9).

When Annie and Alice, two little cousins, forgot that it was Thanksgiving Day, and quarreled over a doll, they broke two things—the doll, and the peace of that happy day. What could be done? Cousin Dora—blessed girl—first tried to mend the broken peace by putting her arms around the two little girls and whispering to them. Very soon the two tearful little girls were kissing each other, and Cousin Dora was putting the doll's head together with cement and little strips of adhesive plaster, and by and by the trouble was all over. "She is a dear child," said Uncle Frank. "She is a child of God," said her father.

Quarrels are wrong and childish, yet the world is full of them, and among grown people, too. Jesus came to make the peace of the world, and the angels sang, "Peace on earth," when they told the shepherds of his birth; yet men and nations are still fighting, and there is sorrow in thousands of homes because of the cruel wars. But there are many, many people who are trying to help in bringing about the peace of nations, for our world cannot be the kingdom of heaven until we are all at peace.

Will you belong to a peace society, and try as long as you live to help to make peace? Then you will be one of the children of God.

Lesson IV.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5. 10).

It is hard to be blamed when you have done wrong, isn't it? How much harder, then, to be blamed when you have done right. Righteousness is a long word to speak, but it means the rightness we have when God has made us right. Do you think it would be easy to be patient with one who hurt you, and hated you for doing right? Yet the Lord has promised to give us so much love that we may love, and help, and pray for our enemies. When the cruel Jews were killing our Lord upon the cross they were persecuting him even to death, but he is love itself, so he said, "Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do."

We have no love of our own, but he has promised to give us of his divine love, so that we can be patient when others are impatient, and love those who hate us and try to do us harm. You are too young to know what persecution is, but not too young to be patient, loving toward both the evil and the good.

International Bible Lessons.

FIRST QUARTER.

LESSON V. (February 2.)

THE FIRST PERSECUTION. Acts 4. 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT: "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4. 12.

Primary Notes.

BY JOSEPHINE L. BALDWIN.



Truth. Jesus helps those who love him to be brave.

Impression. I can be brave with his help.

Expression. Loyalty to right in the midst of opposition.

Point of contact. School experiences.

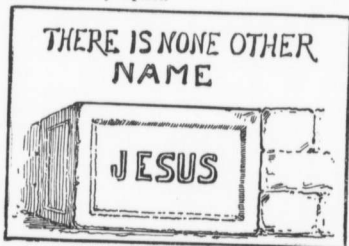
Approach. Brief review.

Lesson story. Should be an outline of events narrated in Acts 3. 12 to 4. 31, inclusive.

Open this lesson with a talk about school. Why do you go to school? Do you have rules in your school? Why are such rules made? I know about a school where for a good many weeks one fall everyone had a very happy time. The teacher loved her scholars and they loved her and wished to please her; they loved each other, too, and played and studied together so pleasantly that no one had to think about rules at all. But one day a new boy came, and he did not wish to obey the rules himself and did all that he could to make the older boys disobedient too. At recess he said, "Let's go over in the woods." "We can't," was the reply; "it's against the rule." "Well, what of it? Are you afraid to break the rule? I'd be ashamed to be such a coward. Come on! I am going." No one likes to be called a coward, and some were tempted to go, but that afternoon they were very glad they had not done so, for Miss Merry told them a beautiful story about a knight, and she ended the story in this way: "He was brave, was he not? Would you like to know who is even more brave? The boy who does what he knows is right even when made fun of for doing so."

Who can tell Mary [child absent last Sunday] what our lesson was about last week? Very soon after the lame man was healed the

priests heard about it, and when they went to see what had happened they found Peter telling the crowd of people who had gathered about them not to look at them as if by their own power they had done this thing, for he said, "The power was given by the Son of God, Jesus, whom you crucified, but whom God raised from the dead; and his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong." The priests and rulers were angry when they heard these words, and had Peter and John put in prison, and I think perhaps the man who had been lame went with them. The next morning when they were brought before the priests and others who had put Jesus to death they were asked, "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" Peter answered bravely, "By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead; and he has power not only to heal sick bodies but to forgive sin." [Golden Text.] The man who had been healed stood with Peter and John, and the priests could not say he had not been cured, so they did not know what to do. They decided to tell Peter and John that they must not speak any more in the name of Christ, but they answered, "We must speak of what we have seen and heard, and we must obey God." They were set free then and went to their friends and told what had happened, and together all prayed that they might have strength to speak the word of God boldly. Jesus answered the prayer, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.



Special Primary Suggestions.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.

GOLDEN TEXT: "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4. 12.

Introductory: A little talk about a name. Impress fact that a name stands for a person and for the power he has. Mention a name and you think of the one who bears it, and what

he has done. Abraham Lincoln is a name that stands for a great and good man. Illustrate what a name will do by telling of the Emancipation Proclamation. Explain briefly the fact of slavery in the land, and the need of setting free the slaves. But one man could do it; only one had the right, the President. He wrote a paper saying all should be free, but until he signed his name it was worth nothing. With his name it had power to give freedom to every slave in the country. When these poor black people were told of their freedom it was in the name of the President, not in any other.

Lead on to Golden Text, telling how we need to be saved, and the One whose name is Jesus, Saviour, is the only One who can do it. Review last lesson, emphasizing thought that in Jesus's name the lame man was made well. But everyone did not believe in this great name then any more than now, and trouble came to the apostles, and a chance, with it, to tell in whose name they trusted. So we come to the

Lesson story. What caused the trouble? The crowd that came to hear Peter and John, as the lame man now healed, held them fast in the temple porch, and the great number—five thousand—who now trusted in Jesus made the chief men, who did not believe, very angry. They could not understand and did not like all this. They must ask about it and stop it before any more became friends of this Jesus. So they put Peter and John in prison, and next day took them before the officers to see what could be done to punish them. What is this sort of trouble called? Persecution. As this was the first time such a thing had happened to the early Christians it is called "the first persecution." Persecution is troubling and hurting people because they do not believe as their persecutors do.

Drill upon the questions and answers, "By what power—in what name?" and the Golden Text answer. Finish the wonderful story with the further threats and the dismissal, and what these good men did when they went to their own company.

Prayer thought: Pray in trouble. No child in the class will ever be persecuted as these men were, but little mates may make fun of them for going to Sunday school and trying to do right. There are many kinds of trouble, but one way out of them all. Jesus saved from sin, which is the greatest of all trouble and sorrow, and he will save from every other. Don't try any other way, for "there is none other name." Impress again the lesson of trust in the God who answers prayer, recalling this motto of the quarter: *God answers prayer.*

Thought for teachers. We ought to familiarize ourselves with the troubles and perplexities of childhood. It never helps anyone, big or little, to say, "You never have any trouble." It is better to admit the fact with hearty sympathy, and then give help to bear it cheerfully.

The study of child life includes this phase of it, and by observation and intercourse upon childhood's plane, and by talk with mothers and day-school teachers, we may gain helpful knowledge of childish griefs.

LESSON VI. (February 9.)

THE SIN OF LYING. Acts 5. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor." Eph. 4. 25.

Primary Notes.

Truth. Sin is the only thing that need be feared.

Impression. Jesus will help me to conquer sin.

Expression. Honesty and truthfulness.

Point of contact. Story of a tree.

Approach. Review of last lesson.

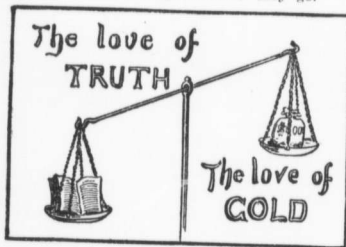
Lesson story. In telling the story keep Barnabas prominently in view, and close with emphasis on the beauty of his gift and his loving spirit, rather than on the sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

How many of you were out in the country last summer? Did you see any trees? Did you anywhere see one tree standing alone in a field? I am going to tell you to-day something about such a tree. It stood on the top of a little hill and had been there many years. It had sent its roots deep into the ground, down where cool springs of water were running; and its branches stretched far on every side. The wind said one day, "This tree has stood here long enough; I will blow it down." It blew very hard, but the roots held so firm that the tree only bent before the blast and was not harmed. Then the sun said, "I will dry it up," and it burned fiercely upon the tree day after day; but the roots far down in the cool ground sent life through the branches, and the heat of the sun only made them grow the faster. The careful gardener, who was watching the tree, was not afraid of these things, but one day he saw a worm eating its way into the tree, and he knew that if it stayed there the strong roots would be destroyed



so they could no longer hold firm or send life into the branches, and then the tree that the wind could not uproot nor the sun wither would die. So he quickly destroyed the worm and saved the tree.

Do you remember how the priests tried to make Peter and John stop telling about Jesus? Did they stop? No, because they loved Jesus so much that they wanted to tell others about him. Many other men and women in Jerusalem loved Jesus, and they showed their love in different ways. Some of the richer ones brought money to the apostles to be used for those who were poor. One man named Barnabas sold some land which he owned and gave all the money, because he loved Jesus so much. Another man named Ananias, seeing what Barnabas did and how the people praised him, planned with his wife to seem to do the same thing. But they did not really love Jesus. They were going to give only to be praised by the people, and they agreed together to give a part of the money from the land they sold, pretending that they were giving all, as Barnabas had done. When Ananias brought in his money the Spirit of God told Peter that Ananias was acting a lie. Peter asked, "Is this all the money you received for the land?" Ananias said, "Yes." Then Peter told him what a dreadful thing he had done, and as he spoke the life of Ananias went out and his body was taken away to be buried. [Tell briefly of the coming of Sapphira, her repetition of the falsehood, and her death.] What was it that destroyed these two people? It was sin, which is the only thing that can really harm anyone. Barnabas, who had truth in his heart, lived many years to help and bless many people, and those who love God are always a blessing wherever they go.



Special Primary Suggestions.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor." Eph. 4. 25.

Introductory. A little talk about the true and the counterfeit, to impress wide difference between the real and the false. Show a coin, preferably with inscription, "In God we trust." Explain that it is made by the government and has a right to bear the stamp of the government of the Dominion. It is made by the rule given, in the amount and kind of silver or gold, or whatever it is. Show or describe counterfeit, and impress the fact that though they look alike one rings true and the other false, and it is what the thing really is that counts, not its looks; also, that the great wrong lies in making the false coin look like the true. It is the make-believe, the intention to deceive and to cheat, that makes the sin so great.

Explain need of coins—the gold and silver in the mines could not be used conveniently unless coined. So, we put our thoughts into words, and we tell what has happened, so as to pass on the truth. If our words are not made out of the truth they are as bad as counterfeit coins. Lead on to Golden Text, and drill upon it; then explain the need of such a command, for there is danger of cheating with words. Even in the early Church this trouble came, and so we have the

Lesson story. It should be tenderly, guardedly, but faithfully taught. Do not frighten children with too realistic description of the terrible punishment, but say that these people were taken away to show in the beginning what God thought of truth and a lie, and lead the little ones to truthfulness for fear of grieving the loving Lord who cares so much for it.

Tell story graphically—the way Barnabas did when he sold his land, and what Ananias and his wife did, how they wanted to be praised for giving all and yet keep some for themselves. The difference between the outside and inside of what they did may be represented by circles for coins, one for the make-believe true, containing within the words Love, Unselfishness, and Generosity, explaining latter words, and the other, Love of Praise, Selfishness, Greediness. They wished to seem full of love for the rest, but it was really love of the praise of men that filled the heart. They thought they could put on such a make-believe of truth and goodness that no one would know. Picture the sad mistake, as shown by Peter's words and the sorrowful ending of the story, which, sad as it was, made people understand what God thought, and made many listen to the apostles' preaching as never before.

Prayer thought: Pray to be true. Impress thought that truth is like a straight line and

any turning aside is a little crookedness and not right; that, though none may be tempted to tell such a lie as Ananias and Sapphira did, children are tempted in work and play, at home and in other places, to say what is not quite true, or to keep back what is true and deceive by a look or by silence. Also impress the need of prayer to Him who answers, because it is hard to be perfectly true.

Thought for teachers. Can we be too careful about exact truthfulness in all our intercourse with our scholars? Broken promises, insincerity, any make-believe, will tell upon our influence, which is more potent than our instruction. Part of our work, too, is watchfulness against any swerving from truth in giving experiences of childish life, from a desire to appear well.

LESSON VII. (February 16.)

THE SECOND PERSECUTION. Acts 5. 33-42.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5. 10.

Primary Notes.

Truth. The Golden Text.

Impression. Deepening and enlarging that of Lesson V.

Expression. Finding joy in loyalty to right even when it involves enduring hard things for Christ's sake.

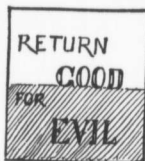
Point of contact. Boy being made fun of for doing right.

Approach. Teaching Golden Text.

Lesson story. (Omit Gamaliel's appeal.)

Two brothers, Harry and George, went to visit their cousins, who were boys about their own age. The four had a fine time all day, and at night slept in the large nursery where there were two beds. Harry and George had always been taught to pray to God every night, but their cousins had not been taught in the same way, and thought it smart to make fun of such things. Harry and George both knew that they ought to kneel and pray, but they knew that they would be laughed at, and Harry was not brave enough to endure that, so he crept into bed without speaking to his heavenly Father. George knelt and prayed, and asked specially for strength to bear the hard things that his cousins were saying. After he got in bed they kept it up until they fell asleep, prais-

ing Harry and calling George names. Which do you think was happier—Harry or George? Harry was not happy because he knew he had done wrong. Do you think George was happy? Of course you know he did not enjoy being laughed at and called names. That was hard to bear, but away down in his heart something was saying, "You have done right," and that made George glad. Jesus can make people happy even in the midst of trouble. He says, "Happy" (or blessed) "are they"—[teach Golden Text.] You remember, I am sure, how Jesus helped Peter and John to be brave when they stood before the priests and rulers who wished to make them stop preaching about Jesus. To-day I have a story to tell you about those same men and the other apostles. They kept on preaching about Jesus, healing the sick, and helping people so much that crowds were with them listening to their words all the time. [Read verses 15 and 16.] This made the priests very angry, and they finally took the apostles and put them in prison. But in the night an angel came and, opening the prison doors, told the apostles to go to the temple and tell the people about Jesus. In the morning when the priests came together to try these men they sent to prison for them, but the messenger came back saying the prison doors were closed and the guards there but no prisoners inside! While they were wondering what this could mean another man came to say that those men were preaching in the temple again. They were sent for and brought before the council, where Peter said very much the same things that he had said before about Jesus whom they crucified. The priests would have been glad to kill all the apostles, but they feared the people. Still they were determined to do something to make these men stop preaching, so they had each one beaten, and then let them go after tell-



ing them not to speak in the name of Jesus. The apostles went away—not in tears and sad-

ness, but *rejoicing*, the Bible says—glad that they had been thought worthy to suffer for Jesus' sake. [Read verse 42.]

Special Primary Suggestions.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5. 10.

Introduction. A little talk on the uses of hard things. Make a parable of a little tree upon a hillside. The storms beat upon it, the winds shook it, and it often seemed as if it must be torn up by the roots, but all the while it was growing stronger as every wind made the roots take deeper, stronger hold of the ground, fixing the tree better in its place. A tree that is never shaken is not half as strong as one the winds blow upon. One little puff of wind, one storm, will not do this, but many are needed, and the tree grows straight and strong and sends its roots down deep to drink in what is needed from the earth.

Trouble is good for people in the same way, when it makes them feel after God with their thoughts, and makes them cling close to him for help and strength. One trouble will not be enough to make one hold tight to God always. It often takes many hard things, and they are good, although not easy, because they make us cling to our Lord. It was so in the earthly Church with those Christians long ago.

Review the first persecution, recall definition and explanation of persecution and reasons for the hatred of the apostles' enemies. Make clear the jealousy of those opposed to them, when so many came together and listened and believed, so that again there came persecution.

Lesson story. Begin with verse 12, and tell how the people came together and believed and were helped and healed, and how the Sadducees were angry and had the apostles put in prison, and, being released by the angel, were tried before the council, and Peter told them that they had put Jesus to death, which cut them to the heart and made them want to kill these brave men. Tell how Gamaliel warned them to be careful for fear they might be fighting against God, and how, listening and agreeing with them, they beat the apostles, told them not to speak in Jesus's name, and let them go. Impress especially their joy in suffering for Jesus' sake, showing how great was their love, as they were glad to bear so much because of it.

Teach Golden Text, and explain how they are happy who are persecuted for sake of the right, while they are miserable who suffer for wrongdoing. Show the difference between feeling that

one is right and feeling that one is all wrong, though the treatment by others may be the same.

Prayer thought: *Pray and rejoice in suffering.*

This may be a hard lesson to impress, but it is taught in the Golden Text. No matter how hard things may be, we ought to ask help to bear them and be glad to suffer if Jesus wishes us to show in this way how much we love him, while all the time we are growing stronger because holding fast to him in our trouble. Children are apt to think that "a good time" is worth more than anything else, and should early be taught that a good soldier must not be afraid of hardness.

Thought for teachers. We can find out much more about our methods and manner of teaching by looking back over a lesson taught than by looking forward and planning what we wish to do. We should put away all needless discouragement in reviewing our work, as a snare of the evil one, but in a calm and candid way we would do well to note afterward how far we have followed our plans of construction and presentation, for our constant improvement.

LESSON VIII. (February 23.)

THE ARREST OF STEPHEN. Acts 6. 7-15.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Matt. 10. 28.

Primary Notes.

Truth. Those who love Jesus need never be afraid.

Impression. I can trust Jesus at all times.

Expression. The perfect love which casteth out fear.

Point of Contact. Tell in simple words the story

of the boy at Dothan with Elisha.

Approach. All who love Jesus are taken care of.

Lesson story. Should not include reference to the trouble which led to the appointment of Stephen as a deacon.

There was once a man named Elisha who loved the Lord and served him faithfully every day. The king of another country became very angry at Elisha. The reason he was so angry was that he had tried many times to surprise the king of Elisha's country but never could do so. All his plans seemed to be known no matter



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how hard he tried to keep them secret, and he thought some one of his own soldiers must be telling his plans to the enemy. But the real reason was that God was letting Elisha know, and he told his king. When the other king found out that Elisha was the one who was telling he went to the city where Elisha lived, and took a great army of soldiers with him. In the morning when the boy who worked for Elisha woke up and saw the whole city surrounded by soldiers he was very much frightened, and cried out, "O Master, what shall we do?" Elisha was not at all afraid, and he asked the Lord to open the eyes of the boy so that he might see there was no cause for fear. When his eyes were opened by the Lord he saw a great host of angels taking care of Elisha, many more than the soldiers who had come to do him harm. All who love and obey Jesus need never be afraid, for he is always caring for them.

Our story to-day is about a man named Stephen. He was not one of the apostles, but was chosen to help in the church to see that the money given for the poor was spent in the right way; but besides doing this he was able to preach and heal the sick as the apostles did. When he talked about Christ some of the rulers tried to talk against him, but they were not able to withstand the wisdom with which he spoke. Then they tried another way, and got men to say things that were not true about Stephen. They said they had heard him speak against Moses and against the temple, God's holy house, and against God himself. These men went among the people saying such things, and stirred them up so that some of them began to believe what they said and to hate Stephen too. Before that so many of the people loved Stephen, because he had cured their sick and

they had made the people believe that Stephen was a wicked man, who would speak against God and God's house, they were able to take him a prisoner, and they brought him before the council. Then the witnesses who had been taught to say false things about Stephen repeated their falsehoods. The high priest asked him, "Are these things so?" and as all turned to look at him and hear his answer they saw that his face was shining like that of an angel. Stephen was not afraid, for he knew that God was taking care of him.

Special Primary Suggestions.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Matt. 10, 28.

Introductory. A little preparatory talk upon the title of the lesson, showing what an arrest is. Children are all too familiar with policemen, who arrest people, that is, stop them, catch them, take them up, making them go to the courthouse, or the calaboose, or the judge's room to be tried. Avoid details, or encouraging children to give them, but impress the fact that there may be an arrest, which is only a stopping, without one's having done anything wrong. Introduce the character of Stephen, telling the need of men who should see that the poor all got their share of the food and money given by the Christians, and describe this man Stephen, full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and how the disciples prayed and set him apart with the others for this work.

Lesson story. First, we have Stephen, "full of grace and power," and what he did, besides waiting on the poor and caring for them. Second, we have the men from other countries who did not think as Stephen did, and quarreled with him, in their talk in their churches. Third, the stirring up the people against Stephen, and making wicked men come forward to tell untruths about him, saying Stephen spoke against Moses and the prophets that they all pretended to think so much of. Fourth, we have Stephen's arrest, when they took him and brought him before the officers, called the council, while the false witnesses told their stories about him over again and again. Fifth, we have the sight of Stephen's face, which looked like the face of an angel, shining with the very light of heaven, while all these wicked men spoke against him.

Keep these steps of the story in mind, and carry class with you as you present the scenes one by one, till they seem to see that shining face in the midst of the angry crowd, with the



preached to them of the loving Saviour who would forgive their sins, that the priests and rulers were afraid to touch him. But after

peace of God upon it. Do not think it impossible to impress little ones with this sublime confidence and serenity of the first martyr. They are susceptible to it, and should know the source of the confidence.

Prayer thought: Pray and trust. No matter what happens or who is against us, we may pray and trust, for God answers prayer. See how he did it for Stephen, who was afraid in that angry crowd that wanted to kill him. Teach Golden Text, and illustrate by a broken jewel box with unhurt diamonds within. The box may be very pretty, but it is nothing to the jewels inside. If they are safe, no matter about the box. The diamond is almost impossible to hurt, but a box may be easily broken. Stephen's soul could not be hurt. It was more precious than a diamond, and God cared for it. Men might hurt his body, but they could not touch his spirit. We need be afraid of nothing, so long as God keeps the soul safe, and he will keep it. Pray and trust.

Thought for teachers. Dearly beloved, an angel is a messenger, and such each of us should be to the little ones. Have we "the face of an angel" to them? If we really are full of the message delivered to us, will not the light shine out so that the children may see and feel it if they cannot understand? Let us be so filled with the lesson that it will illuminate us and the light will fall upon the little ones who look so eagerly and trustingly into our faces.

Whisper Songs for February.

FIFTH LESSON.

O Saviour of the children,
Still call us by thy name,
And gladly we'll confess thee,
Though all the world should blame.

SIXTH LESSON.

Dear Saviour of our childhood,
Still guide us in our youth,
And keep our feet forever
Within the way of truth.

SEVENTH LESSON.

Dear Lord, should pain and sorrow
Roll o'er us like the sea,
We will not fear or falter,
We will remember thee.

EIGHTH LESSON.

Among thy angel children,
Dear Lord, give me a part,
And I shall bear the beauty
Of heaven in my heart.

Order of Service.

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

First Quarter.

Teacher. Praise ye the Lord.

Class. Sing unto the Lord a new song.

All. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their king.

SONG. "Praise him for the Sabbath day,
Sabbath day, Sabbath day,
Praise him for the Sabbath day,
Praise ye the Lord."

GOD'S WORDS FOR CHILDREN :

T. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

C. Little children, keep yourselves from idols.
SONG. (Preferably one on the theme of the lesson.)

Boys. I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help.

Girls. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.

Teacher. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

PRAYER. (Closing with the Lord's Prayer repeated by all.)

GIVING SONG.

WORDS ABOUT GIVING :

Teacher. Freely ye have received; freely give.

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

Boys. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly.

OFFERING. (Followed by brief prayer giving the offering to God.)

ADDITIONAL LESSON.

MOTION SONG OR EXERCISE.

LESSON TEACHING. (It is well to introduce this with a brief, bright review. If the children expect this they will for the most part try to carry some of the facts of the last lesson in mind "to tell teacher.")

ECHO PRAYER.

CLOSING EXERCISE.

T. The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear?

C. The Lord is the strength of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?

ECHO PRAYER.

"O Lord and Saviour, hear my prayer,
Keep my spirit undefiled;
Guard and lead me everywhere—
I am but a little child."

Amen.

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