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\* Presbyterian Church in Canada \*

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# THE TEACHERS MONTHLY

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### PUBLISHERS NOTICE

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## OF THIS CATALOGUE

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Many new things of exceptional interest will be found in the 1918 Catalogue, among them being Intermediate Departmental Graded Lessons, New Standard Teacher Training Course, a little book for very young communicants, entitled "The Children's Guide to Christ and the Lord's Supper," by Rev. Robert Pogue, etc., etc.

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# The Teachers Monthly

E. Douglas Fraser, J. M. Duncan, Editors ; John Mutch, Associate Editor

Vol. XXIII.

Toronto, November, 1917

No. 11

## EDITORIAL

### The 1918 Catalogue

PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS has a very wide constituency. Its customers are from all over the Dominion and from many places abroad. The annual Catalogue is its principal means of cultivating acquaintance with these widely scattered groups and individuals. We have the best reasons for knowing that the Catalogue is a welcome visitor.

This is what we very greatly desire. And we are anxious that it should be considered a visitor with all-the-year-round privileges. This is the explanation of the loop on the upper left hand corner. It is an invitation to hang up the Catalogue on some convenient nail or hook, so that it may be at hand when needed. The richness and variety of the contents is a hint that the Catalogue may be serviceable often during the year.

If any customer has been accidentally overlooked in the sending out of our beautiful 1918 Catalogue, we should be glad if he would write for a copy. If any has received a duplicate copy, he will confer a favor on us by handing it on to some one else who is likely to be interested in what the Catalogue tells and offers.

### The New Intermediate Departmental Quarterlies

These are now before the church, the first issue being for October-December.

They are being tried out in many of our Sunday Schools. The unanimous verdict of experts who have examined them is that they are admirable.

The period covered is the 12, 13, 14 year period, a critical time, as every one knows, in the life of a boy or girl—a time when boys and girls often make the great life decision for Christ.

The Lessons, which are the International Graded Lessons, modified in a few instances, have been chosen with this great goal in view, and the writers also have kept it constantly in mind. To lead the scholars of this critical 12, 13, 14 year age into such a knowledge of the Word of God, and of Jesus Christ, Redeemer and Master and Friend as revealed therein, as will lead them into his love and service, is the great aim in the SCHOLAR'S QUARTERLY. In the TEACHER'S QUARTERLY, the aim is to help the teacher to help the scholars. The contents of both QUARTERLIES are full of meat. At the same time, the style is simple and direct. The QUARTERLIES are of a handy size for a pocket or a muff. They are beautifully illustrated, and are sure to be popular.

### Older Girls in Training

The Older Girls' Topic Card is a revelation of the possibilities for the girls of 12-14 (Juniors) and 15-17 (Seniors), 18-24 (Young People), if thought well ; and their leaders.

It is based on the four-fold standard,—Physical, Intellectual, Religious, and Service—and sets out a programme for one evening in the week from October to April inclusive, with suggestions as to how the training may be pleasantly continued during the remaining months of the year.

The evening meetings are of an hour in length, and the Topic Card provides for Business, Devotional Period, a Practical Talk, and Activities and Service.

As samples of the Practical Talks, these taken at random from the November, December, January schedule are enticing :—The Older Girl and the Food Problem of the Empire, How to Choose a Vocation, A Visit to a Famous Art Gallery, The Story of Some Famous Hymns, Right Principles on Which to Choose Companions, An Older Girls' Interest in Her Own Community, Personal Habits in Relation to Others, The Older Girl's Relation to Church, and the Question of Church Membership.

The charm of the plan is its simplicity. The Sunday School class or department is the unit. This is organized, the officers being from the girls themselves. Their teacher will usually be the leader. Any competent person can be called in to help with the practical talks, physical drill, activities, or amusement. The plan can be worked out in any congregation or community, large or small; and certificates and diplomas are granted for specified attainments.

The Topic Card is issued by our Church's Sunday School and Y.P.S. Board, but the curriculum is one cooperatively prepared by the principal Canadian Protestant Churches, along with the Canadian Y.W.C.A. and S.S. Association.

We look for a fine start to be made this season in this Older Girls' Work.

### The Dreary Month

"No sun—no moon—no morn—no noon,  
 No dawn—no dusk—no proper time of day,  
 No warmth—no cheerfulness—no healthful ease,  
 No road, no street, no t'other side the way,  
 No comfortable feel in any member—  
 No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees.  
 No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds,  
 November!"

Of course, Tom Hood wrote of England. It is only bits of our Canadian Novembers which answer to this description of gloom. But those bits are sufficient to rank November even in Canada as the dreary month of the year. Summer brightness, the glory of early autumn have departed, and the splendor of the winter has not yet come. It is a sort of natural waiting time.

Whether it is the climatic conditions, or not, that affects work and workers, it is frequently the fact that after the first rush of "getting together" and setting things going for the season, in October, November displays a sag—not a slump, but just a sag. Things go slowly: the brightness and freshness have evaporated.

It is good policy for the leaders to watch for these listless days, and to provide against them. A little more fuel on the fire is a great counteractive of November dreariness. The wise leader will have a reserve supply of fuel in the shape of additional suggestions, fresh plans, and above all, the personal incentive that comes from a cheery presence and hopeful outlook. The success of the season's programme of work, whether in School or Society, may be made or marred by the manner in which the leader handles it in the dreary November.

### A Campaign for Two Great Objectives

Two great objectives are set before Sunday School workers by the S.S. & Y.P.S. Board. One is found in the Curriculum of Religious Education and the other in the new Standard Teacher Training Course.

The Curriculum of Religious Education is a statement, contained in five pamphlets issued by the Board at 3c. each or 5 for 10c., under the three headings of Instruction, Worship and Training, of the provision which should be made for the religious needs of Children, Juniors, Older Boys and Girls, Young People, and Men and Women. This curriculum, put into operation will give definiteness and completeness to religious nurture and training in the home, the Sunday School and the church.

The New Standard Teacher Training Course is comprised in four excellent textbooks : I. THE PUPIL. II. THE TEACHER. III. THE TEACHER'S STUDY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST. IV. THE SCHOOL. Any one who masters the contents of these books should be able to take up the work of teaching and class management with a confidence which has in it the promise of success.

A campaign is on for the winning of these two objectives,—the adoption in every Sunday School of the Curriculum and the establishment in every School of a Teacher Training Class. Our soldiers in France and Flanders have shown us how to reach objectives,—it just requires resolute, well-directed effort which will not be discouraged or defeated.

### Leadership and Boys' Work Conferences

Twenty-one Leadership and Boys' Work Conferences, covering the various provinces of the Dominion, are announced by the Board of Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies for the fall and winter of 1917-18.

These Conferences, as their title indicates, fall into two parts. There is a Conference of leaders, present and prospective, in religious work amongst boys, opening on a Thursday evening and continuing until the close of Friday afternoon. At this gathering the best methods for the instruction and training of and the problems met by the workers among boys are fully and frankly discussed under the guidance of experienced specialists.

Following the Leadership Conference and lasting from Friday evening on to Sunday evening is a Boys' Conference, in which boys, in scores or hundreds, come together to have presented to them, in heart to heart talks, the claims of Jesus Christ upon their lives. No one has attended one of these Boys' Conferences but will testify to the quick response which these lads make to the appeals addressed to them.

Held at convenient centres, these Conferences offer to workers amongst boys a fine opportunity of receiving help and inspiration for their great task, and the influences for good which a single boy may carry home cannot be overestimated. Every leader in boys' work should make a point of taking part in at least one of these Conferences and should get as many as possible of his boys to attend the gatherings arranged for them.

### Mr. Robertson's New Book

The School, written by Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., our General Secretary for Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies, as Part IV. of the New Standard Teacher Training Course, is far more than a mere textbook. It is a thoroughly readable and interesting discussion of the great purpose of the Sunday School and the best methods of accomplishing that purpose.

This new book will, of course, be carefully studied by those engaged in, and preparing for, Sunday School work. For it contains a wealth of information and suggestion, in a singularly clear and concise form, on points of vital interest to every such worker.

But the book merits a much wider circle of readers than the students of a teacher training course. The Sunday School, by common consent, is the chief helper of the home in the religious nurture and training of the young, and upon its effectiveness depends, in large measure, the future of our church and our country. No one, therefore, can fail to be interested in the Sunday School, who is concerned about the development of a truly religious national life. And one would have to go far to find, in such short compass, a better statement of the nature and work of the Sunday School than that given by Mr. Robertson in his new book.

### Finishing up the Budget

Two months yet until the end of the year,—that is time enough for the missionary committee or treasurer in every Sunday School to secure that the School shall make good its full share of the church's Missionary Budget.

Schools which have been giving regularly and liberally during the past ten months of the year need only to be reminded that keeping up their efforts for just a little while longer will land them at the goal. Schools which, for any reason, have fallen short in their contributions, should be encouraged to do their very best during the weeks that remain of 1918.

Only two months before the year closes,—that is a short enough time to finish up the Budget for 1917. Everybody concerned must be up and doing if each School is to supply its quota and leave a clean slate for the new year.

One dollar out of every ten in the whole Budget is asked of the Sunday Schools. Out of every ten dollars asked of each congregation the Sunday School should give one dollar. The end of December should see the gifts of every School reach that proportion.

### The Sunday School and the Assembly's Commission on the Moral Issues of the War

The General Assembly's Commission on the Moral Issues of the War is very earnestly at work. Three great matters are engaging the Commission's special attention, namely: (1) plans whereby the church may most effectively do its part in caring for returned soldiers; (2) the quickening of the church's spiritual life; (3) ways in which the church can make its fullest contribution of national service.

Deputies from the Commission have visited every Presbytery in the three central Synods of the church, and similar deputations are arranged for the Synods which meet in the fall. In all the Presbyteries visited the representatives of the Commission have been most cordially received, and ministers and elders are entering with great enthusiasm into this most important movement.

The Sunday School is vitally interested in the work of the Commission. In a letter addressed by the Commission to ministers and sessions the following recommendation is found: "That the Sessions give special attention to work among young people, especially along the line of religious education and training, recommended by the Board of Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies of the General Assembly."

It is up to Sunday School workers throughout the church to see that this recommendation is carried into practical effect.

### Attention and Retention

By E. A. Hardy, D.Pæd.

#### I. DIFFERENT KINDS OF ATTENTION

"Johnnie, will you please pay attention?" And Johnnie straightens up, and fastens his eyes on the teacher. But in a minute or two Johnnie is miles away from what the teacher is saying, and the teacher is in despair. Do you know Johnnie? Do you know the teacher? Have you ever been Johnnie (or his sister) or the teacher, or both?

Now what can be done about it? Is there any way of getting Johnnie's attention? Better, is there any way of holding it? Certainly there is. But the way is not easy, and it takes the art of the skilled teacher to do it. It may be, however, that some suggestions will help any earnest teacher who really wants to understand how to improve in teaching.

Let us notice, in this article, that there are many kinds of attention. Does that seem obvious and trite? The sewing machine is obvious, now that its method is discovered.

So is the steam engine; and the telegraph. But it took many years of patient study to discover their secrets. And it has taken many hours of study by the psychologists to discover that there are many kinds of attention. Some Sunday School teachers have never discovered it, never even suspected it, and herein lies the source of much trouble, much disappointment, and many tears.

One pupil is naturally attentive to details. The little differences in things greatly interest him or her. This is true of this kind of pupil from Primary to Adult class. Little points about distance between places, about dress and social customs, about the kind of words used in the scripture passage, are of great interest to him, and you have his attention while you are making these things clear. The next pupil, however, has little interest in detail; his mind works on broad outlines. He loves mass effects. He does not care where a commander got his forces, nor for the details of how he placed them. He wants to know about the armies *en masse*, the general



plan of attack, and the grand results of the struggle. He is not so much interested in the details of the kings of Judah and Israel as in the general trend of the history of these kingdoms and the great teachings from their story.

There is another difference. One pupil can attend to only one thing at a time. His mind probably works rather slowly, and he can handle only one thing at a time. That other pupil is vastly different; he can seize what you are saying, can follow with his eye the secretary on his rounds through the room, can take in what the next teacher is saying, can flick the dust off his shoes, and perhaps softly hum the latest hymn. He can do all these at the same time, and at the end of the teaching period he may have the most thorough grasp of the lesson of any boy in the class. You may be greatly distracted at his apparent inattention, and yet all the while he has been following you clearly and distinctly.

It must be obvious, once it is realized that the human mind works in so many different ways, that the teacher's problem is different from what he often thinks it is. There is no one way in which you can hold the attention of all these different pupils. You must have something distinctive in your lesson for each one of them.

But, first of all, you must study your class and find out what types you have. One thing is certain: you cannot alter their mental makeup. If Johnnie is fond of detail and Robert of broad outline; if Sam is able to follow only one thing at a time and Jim can keep four or five things going at once; then you must take these boys as they are, and adapt your teaching and your discipline to the types before you. Have something for each, and don't worry Jimmie because he does not act like Sammie; he can't.

Toronto

## Worship in the Sunday School

BY REV. W. O. ROTHNEY, B.D.

Children have to be taught how to worship just as they have to be taught how to be courteous; and just as courtesy cannot be learned without practising it, so neither can worship be learned without worshiping. Worship is just as essential to a Sunday School as the study of the lesson.

A child may learn facts about God and yet live without God in the world. In God he may live and move and have his being and yet not know the God to whom he owes his existence. He must be taught to recognize God's voice speaking to him, he must learn to understand what God is saying to him, and he must learn to answer God in return. He needs to learn to sense God just as he needs to learn to sense the beautiful. God will be a stranger to the child until he and God do something together, talk together, or work together. The Sunday School through its service of worship must train the child to commune with God and live in the presence of God.

There must therefore be set apart a definite time for worship. If the Sunday School session is seventy-five minutes long, then thirty minutes may be devoted to worship. The exercises of this period should consist of a regular service of worship. The so called "opening exercises" which commonly include notices, reports, and incidental matters that may have to be disposed of, is merely an attempt to worship in the midst of distractions, and often a very unsuccessful attempt. The period set apart for worship should be kept sacred for that purpose, and no inter-

ruptions by making announcements, ringing bells, or arrival of late-comers should be allowed. These matters should be attended to either before or after the period of worship. A well trained adult might worship in spite of such distractions, but never a child.

Worship in the Sunday School should be reverent, dignified, cheerful, and should appeal to the feelings. It should afford training in the fundamental attitudes which religious education expects to develop, such as love, faith, loyalty, hope, and all others that characterize ideal family relationships and set God forth as a Father and our fellowmen as our brothers. The order of worship will usually have some central theme around which are gathered hymns, prayers, responses and a short story or talk by the leader, all of which will be suited to the age and development of the pupils. It is well, too, that the order of worship be varied from time to time, while the general form remains the same.

It is just as important that the worship of the Sunday School be graded as it is that the lessons be graded; and for this reason separate sessions are desirable for the different departmental groups, particularly in the case of the Beginners and Primary Department. Opportunity must be given the pupils to express themselves in worship in a way that is natural to them at their particular stage of religious development. The child's nature is different from that of the adult, and no adult service trimmed down to suit the child will serve the purpose. The long prayer, for example, has no place for children. One half



minute is long enough for a prayer in the Primary Department, and a two minute prayer is long enough for the Juniors.

It is possible, however, for the whole School to worship together, and in small Schools this is the only form of assembly possible. But where such is the case care should be taken to see that the greater part of the service is adapted to the youngest pupils present. Older pupils can worship in a service adapted to younger pupils easier than younger pupils can worship in a service adapted to the older pupils. The reason is obvious; the older pupils have already passed through the stages of development and experience known to the younger pupils, but the younger pupils have never had the experience that would enable them to appreciate all that appeals to older pupils.

In cases where the whole School worship together it is well to indicate the portions of the service intended for the different departments. A pupil fourteen years of age may refuse to sing "Jesus loves me, this I know," if he thinks the hymn is intended for his use, but will sing lustily if asked to do so to help the Primary Class. When all Departments worship together it gives opportunity for training in mutual helpfulness and deference to one another.

When children are learning to worship it is important that as many influences as possible, conducive to the spirit of worship, be brought to bear upon them. Good music, stained glass windows, architectural dignity, and reverential associations are more needed in children's worship than in that of adults. This does not mean that nothing can be done in a basement, or a room without form or beauty; it simply means that it is more difficult to secure results without these associations, and that the Sunday School should have the first claim on such assets.

Montreal



### The Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests

By Rev. W. R. McIntosh, B.D.

The church's attitude towards athletics has greatly changed,—for the better. Augustine tells us in his Confessions, that his love of sport was a matter of grave anxiety to his guardians and teachers. Bunyan represents the world of recreation and amusement as a place where the souls of the faithful were in danger of destruction,—and maybe they were at that time.

Now, we have come to see that moral and spiritual life have physical roots. Moreover, in addition to being a means of physical benefit and mental recreation, we are beginning to see in athletics a moral and religious

asset. Probably the best way to develop character in a boy and teach him the great virtues of courage, cooperation, self-control and public spirit is through group and team games.

But the question remains: Should the church itself foster and control athletics in connection with the Sunday School? Yes, and No.

The church which fails to see how large a place athletics occupy in the interests of teenage boys is not alive to its problem. During this period probably three fourths of a boy's propensities are physical, and this is so, not because of perversity, but by divine arrangement. God has all a boy's life in which to develop him mentally and spiritually, but he must build him physically by the time he is twenty or so. If the physical interests therefore are not properly appealed to or controlled it may bring to naught the entire work of the Sunday School, at least for the boy.

But how is it to be done? There is a right and a wrong way.

The wrong way we will call the Athletic League Plan. All over this country are ministers and Sunday School leaders who, alive to the physical interests of their boys, made the experiment of entering teams in town and church leagues, to win pennants and trophies; but they shake the head and say: "Never again." The tail wagged the dog. The church did not have the leaders or the experience properly to control the games. To win became the one ideal. Rules were broken. Ringers introduced, other professional features practised, with a resultant reaction upon the real life and work of the School far from beneficial.

The right way in our judgment is now being tried out in many churches. We call it the Standard Efficiency Tests Plan. This system of Sunday School athletics has several features about it that ought to commend it to church leaders:

1. It puts athletics in their proper place, as part of the all-round development of the growing lad. Athletics are not allowed to usurp an undue place in the four-fold programme. They are not introduced as a bait to catch or hold the boy but developed for their moral and vocational value. The old English ideal of playing the game is substituted for that of winning at all costs.

2. It enlarges the scope of athletics, giving prominence to group games and indoor activities, by means of which with little or no expense or equipment the boys of any Sunday School can secure their physical and social enjoyment and development for the most part in their own Schoolroom or hall.

3. It encourages every boy to take part. The tests are arranged on a basis of age and

weight, making the credits on the score card very close for all. Every fellow competes against himself to reach the assigned standard. His score also counts in the group competitions.

4. It puts team games and field day competitions under strong, well-organized, experienced church control. These must be carried out according to Canadian-wide, carefully

prepared standards under the supervision of the official mentors of the various Sunday School clubs competing.

By some such system as this it is not too much to expect that the church of the future will be able to claim the play life of its young people for God and control it for the advancement of his kingdom on earth.

London, Ont.

## Some Problems of the Small School

BY REV. JOHN MUTCH, B.D.

V. THE TEACHER'S TRAINING

One of the very common complaints encountered in the small School is from the teacher who is teaching, not because he feels qualified, but because there seems to be no one else. The complaint is: "I have so little education," etc. This is not a bad feeling to have; some do not have it who should have it. The point, however, is, that provision is being made by the church for this very need.

Some of our small churches have splendid classes in teacher training. But even though there is no such class in your church, why not write the PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS and secure one or more of the textbooks and read them? They cost little, are simply written, and are full of instruction. The individual teacher may secure one at a time. The superintendent or pastor may order a few at the expense of the School and distribute them where they would be most welcome.

Again, our S.S. and Y.P.S. Board is constantly issuing literature of one kind or another for the help of teachers. For example, there is a series of useful pamphlets dealing with the work of teachers in the various grades of the Sunday School which has just been issued. There are five of these pamphlets, and the cost is only 3c. each or five for 10c. Drop a card to the General Secretary of the Board, explaining your need, and he will be glad to forward any such literature at the cost of a few cents. Ministers and superintendents are constantly receiving such literature, and will be glad to place it at the disposal of teachers and officers.

Once more, use the library. Often the small School has more need of such a means than that which is in a town where there is a Public Library.

The teachers and officers might get together, write the General Secretary, tell him the nature of the School, number of classes and teachers, asking him for a short list of books, with their prices, which would be of service in teaching and conducting a Sunday

School, and then order them and place them in the library.

Lastly, there is the TEACHERS MONTHLY, published by the church, which every teacher should have. In this matter it is of twofold service.

In the first place, the lessons are generally fully and clearly treated, with illustrations, and hints, which, if the teacher seriously studies them, will greatly aid him in his teaching.

Secondly, at the beginning of the magazine, there are a number of pages, which, besides other interesting material, contain numerous articles written to help the teacher in dealing with his class, both as to teaching and management.

It is not too much to say that if the teacher carefully reads the TEACHERS MONTHLY month by month, and puts into practice what may be learned from it, he will soon acquire a skill and confidence, which will greatly aid both to the pleasure and effectiveness of his teaching.



### Preparing for Christmas

In most Schools the programme for the Christmas entertainment can best be arranged by a consultation of all the teachers and officers. It will likely be a mistake if each teacher takes his own way with his own small class.

Such cooperation has two advantages. In the first place, it will prevent overlapping in the preparation. Every scholar or class will not be getting up the same kind of feature. If each takes his own way the resultant programme may be lopsided. On the other hand, by planning beforehand, and assigning a part to each and each to his part, a rounded-out programme will be the result.

In the second place, it has very often the great advantage of securing the help of an expert. In most congregations there is at least one person who is recognized as having

great ability for this sort of work. When all the teachers act together and invite such a one to help them it makes it more worthwhile for him. By such means two or three classes may be joined together for one drill, play or chorus.

Those who are taking parts in drills, plays, and choruses will meet at the church or some other suitable place, at least once a week. The best time may be on Friday after school. In many places the practice may be held in the schoolhouse.

The teacher who is training one or two scholars to recite or sing may meet with them from time to time and enable them to understand what is being undertaken, to forget themselves in delivery so that they will enter with some abandon into the spirit of their part. In short, the teacher will see that what the scholar does is a finished product. In this will be the great educational value of the training. The better the quality of the performance, the more value it is going to be to

the scholar. Special effort should be made in the selection of all dialogues, choruses, drills, plays, songs and recitations, to secure those that express lofty sentiments, clear ideas and artistic beauty.

There are a great many drills, choruses, etc., published at from ten to fifteen cents which may be easily secured at any book store. One that should prove serviceable is the *New Christmas Book* edited by J. C. Sindelar. It contains plays, pantomimes, tableaux, drills, songs, and the novelty *A Living Christmas Magazine*. Another book by the same editor is *The Best Christmas Book*, which contains monologues and readings, pantomimes, tableaux, drills, marches, songs, etc., for boys and girls of public school age. Each of these books cost 35c. and they, along with other such literature, may be secured from the PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS.

Patriotic features will, of course, be in place on Christmas programmes for this season.

## Making the Most of Christmas

BY REV. F. W. KERR, B.A.

It is easy to overburden everybody with the Christmas preparations. Even children to-day,—with home lessons, music lessons, paper routes, clubs, etc.—are pushed all too soon into the everlasting whirl which we call modern life. I have seen conscientious Sunday School teachers spend a couple of months preparing an elaborate cantata for the Christmas tree. It was a creditable performance, and it was enjoyed by the children, or by those of the children who had survived the discipline of wading for six weeks through all kinds of pre-Christmas weather to the semi-warm place of rehearsal.

For the past two years our Christmas preparations have become wonderfully simple, and no less enjoyable. They have become resolved into three features :

1. *The Christmas Tree*. The teachers and officers meet only once. Each department becomes responsible for so many items on the programme. The Alerts Boys' Club (13-15 years) becomes responsible for the tree and its decoration. A small committee sees that there is a bag of candies, nuts and an orange for every child, and a small present for each one on the Cradle Roll and in the Beginners and Primary Departments. The older classes make plans of their own, the principle of their plan being "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and each class tries to spring the gladdest surprise of all. They have caught the new idea of a "White Gifts for the King" Christmas.

Well, how about the Christmas tree programme? Oh, there are only numberless little recitations requiring half a minute each, taught by the proud mothers; some little songs, little choruses from spontaneous groups, a tableau by the Cradle Roll, a little ten-minute play. Those little voluntary items, given under the shadow of the great Christmas tree, with its thousand, little, sparkling elves dancing in and out among the branches, and flinging everywhere their showers of the Christmas spirit, were enjoyed fully as much as any elaborate cantata.

Instead of spending time on the programme, the superintendent of the Cradle Roll worked to see that every last baby was not forgotten, and every lonely mother helped to get out to the Christmas tree. Here is a poor Scotch woman with three babies, and her husband in the trenches. That woman is going to get the loveliest surprise of her life, on the day of the Christmas tree, but that's a secret. Every one with an automobile is commandeered for that evening, to get all those lonely folk out.

And the next day there is almost as much fun. The flowers and little decorated trees are taken to the hospitals. Gifts are distributed to any who were not able to get out. And as for the Orphanage, those girls of the Wide-Awake Club (16-17 years) go laden with good things—and have such an evening of fun, and singing and romping as makes a bright Christmas indeed for the homeless children.

2. *Christmas Sunday.* For the Sunday School session, we are planning this year to have lantern slides of Van Dyke's *The Other Wise Man*, the story of which will be told by the pastor. Some of the older children will tell stories of how Christmas is spent in other lands, and the superintendent will tell of the land without any Christmas, so that the children will see what Christmas really brings to us.

The greatest and most largely attended service in the year in our church is Christmas Sunday evening. This is because of our carol service. The choir and pulpit space is crowded with children—the girls all in white. For half an hour, with only the choir lights turned on, the choir and the children sing over all the old-time carols. Then all the church lights are turned on, all unite in the Christmas hymns, and the minister preaches a Christmas sermon.

3. Perhaps no part of the Christmas plans is of greater importance than the *meeting of each class during the holiday week* at its teacher's home. Here again the Christmas carols are sung, Christmas stories told, games played, plans formed for the class work of the coming year, New Year's resolutions discussed. This holiday week is the teacher's best opportunity of enlisting the cooperation of her class, of seeking out new members, of becoming more intimate with all of them.

Many Sunday School workers are convinced that the whole objective side of Sunday School work is too little emphasized. Many believe that the point of weakness does not lie in the graded or in the uniform lessons; it lies in the fact that in too many Sunday Schools child-life is inoculated inevitably and unconsciously with the idea that religion is the inculcation of certain truths and the acceptance of certain ethical standards. Too often the Sunday School does not lead the children forth into religious living. Christmas is the best time of all for emphasizing the necessity of the Word's becoming life, of the indwelling Christ's becoming incarnate in the everyday world of the scholar's habits and motives. The Christmas theme is the strongest dynamic back of all the expressional activities of the Sunday School.

New Westminster, B.C.

### A Class Debate

A class debate might prove a welcome change. By this is not meant the time-honored custom of having two on a side, a resolution and three judges. The sort of debate intended in this article is one in which the teacher takes one side against the whole class.

On a given Sunday the teacher may point out three or four questions which arise out of

next Sunday's lesson. He will state the questions clearly for the scholars, and tell them that he is going to uphold one side and expects them to be ready to maintain the other.

Suppose he mentions three such problems. They will be put in such a way that will provoke debate. They will purposely be worded so that there is a real question, so that there is something to be said on both sides. The teacher will sometimes choose for himself what seems to be the weaker case in order to give the scholars an opportunity to stand up for the very principle he would otherwise teach them in another way.

Three questions to handle! The teacher will speak about his end of the first for five minutes, giving all the arguments he can for maintaining his position. The class will have five minutes in which to bring out counter arguments. The teacher sums up, in a minute or two, the results upon which all are agreed and which are most worthy of emphasis.

Such a debate would take at least half an hour. If this seems too long a time, two may be chosen. Indeed one question a Sunday, the discussion occupying ten minutes of the time, the rest to be devoted to the more ordinary form of teaching, would prove stimulating to the whole class. It would help to get out of a rut.



## Teaching Temperance Facts

By Rev. D. C. MacGregor, B.A.

In the teaching of temperance the aim should be to place the scientific facts in regard to the use of alcoholic liquors before the minds of the boys and girls in the right moral and religious atmosphere.

Here the average teacher needs assistance. Fortunately such assistance is easily available. Our own Board of Social Service and Evangelism will supply, at a very trifling cost, copies of a series of leaflets prepared by the writer of this article. The subjects treated in the leaflet, include: one on Alcohol and Heredity, which shows, from the testimony of scientific men, that the children of abstainers are, as a rule, much stronger and healthier than those of drinking parents; another on Alcohol and Accidents, in which facts are given to prove that the use of alcohol by workmen and others greatly increases the risk of accident; and a third on Alcohol and Labor, in which figures are given to prove that those whose labor is employed in the manufacture, receive a smaller share of the product of their toil than workers in iron and steel, bakers of bread, boot and shoe makers and those who work at making clothes.

Besides getting these materials provided



by the Board of our own church, it will be worth while writing to the Dominion Alliance, Lumsden Bldg., Toronto, about suitable literature.

With the material at hand, there is no reason why any teacher who is willing to give a little time to preparation, should not make the temperance lesson one of the most interesting and profitable in the whole Quarter.

In the effective presentation of temperance facts, charts and lantern slides are simply invaluable. The chart or slide helps to focus the attention of the scholar, while the teacher impresses the truth that it illustrates. Splendid charts can be secured from the Scientific Temperance Journal, 23 Trull St., Boston, illustrating such subjects as: Alcohol and Athletics; Alcohol and Efficiency; Alcohol and Accidents; Alcohol and Crime, etc.,—any one of which would provide the basis of a most interesting lesson.

Perhaps the most effective work for tem-

perance would be done if the necessary equipment for teaching the subject were provided for the School, and the presentation of the lessons left to one teacher specially qualified to deal with the subject. There ought not to be any particular difficulty in grouping the Junior, Intermediate and Senior Departments for this study.

But the thing that must be kept in mind is that temperance will never be an interesting subject as long as it is presented as a series of exhortations based on a few scripture selections that often have only a very remote reference to the question under discussion.

When scientific facts are presented in a simple and attractive form by some one who has made special preparation, the temperance lessons will no longer be dreaded by teacher and pupil alike; but will become a source of real inspiration and interest to the whole School.

London, Ont.

## The Sunday School Secretary: A Man's Job

BY REV. R. B. COCHRANE, M.A.

Only a man who has never had to do with Sunday School secretarial work, speaks of the task as a light one. Definite gifts in leadership, marked executive ability, a passion for accuracy, a grasp of details, a knowledge of up-to-date business methods,—these are essential in any one who will make a success as secretary of the modern Sunday School.

It is not hard to justify such a statement. For example, the keeping of the roll of teachers and scholars sounds like a simple matter. For one who is content with slipshod and imperfect work, this duty may not be very burdensome. But the enrolling of new scholars, the keeping track of changes in address, the noting of removals from class to class, the reporting of these changes to the minister, the giving of the names of absentees to the visitor, the tracing of families who move from one district to another,—only a man who knows modern filing and card index systems can possibly attend to these little details of a secretary's work.

Reporting the weekly attendance seems a trifling task. But to assign a definite task to each assistant, to prepare a complete statement within the limited period each Sunday, to show the attendance by Departments, to give frequent comparisons with the corresponding day a year previous, to visualize the report attractively before the whole School,—all this is not as simple as it looks at first. It is not the work of an inexperienced novice, but rather the task of a trained business man.

The selection and ordering of Sunday School supplies has become a somewhat com-

plicated business too. We have only to remember the dimensions to which the catalogue of our own PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS has grown, to realize how extensive the equipment of the modern Sunday School may be. These are the days of Graded Lessons, of Helps and Papers, of Promotion and Church Attendance Certificates, of Special Programmes, of Cradle Roll and Home Department supplies, of organized classes, of Teacher Training Courses and of Standard Efficiency Tests.

And no secretary is really "on his job" who is not acquainted with the latest announcement of the Sunday School Publishing Houses. He must be on the lookout for suggestions from other Schools. This means that he ought to have some time for consultation with other secretaries and for attendance at occasional conferences and conventions. His School looks to him to draw their attention to the newest ideas he can get from anywhere. This all takes time and thought; but it is always the busiest man who knows how to find time for things worth while.

If any practical man of affairs in any congregation is waiting for a place where his executive ability can be used to the fullest extent, the first time the office of Sunday School Secretary is open, he ought to volunteer for the vacancy. The longer he occupies the position the greater its possibilities and opportunities will appear. It is without doubt "a man's job."

Toronto





*Some members, The Presbyterian Teen Age Club, Grandview, Man.*

## A Teen Age Club

BY REV. HISLOP DICKSON, B.D.

Many small Schools have a habit of promoting to the Adult Bible Class, their groups of teen age boys or girls. But boys and girls do not take kindly to this sort of promotion and often stop attending Sunday School soon afterwards. Such was the situation with the boys and girls of the Sunday School at Grandview, when the minister saw an opportunity and became their teacher.

The next step was to organize the class, including both boys and girls, numbering ten in all. A programme of midweek activities was arranged, fashioned to some extent on the Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests.

The club is now in its second winter's work, and has nearly trebled its membership. It meets every week in the home of one of its members. There is no limit to the variety of the programme. Each week there is a paper on the previous Sunday School lesson by one of the members, and another paper on the news of the week, with a discussion on this. Sometimes the entire programme is given by the boys and girls. Often outside speakers are present. Here are some of the subjects they have spoken on: Surveying, Nursing, Municipal Affairs, Astronomy, Church Names, Music, Mormonism, Social gatherings and

debates are frequently held. The minister is the leader of the club in all its enterprises.

Before last Christmas the club sent a gift to some thirty soldiers, whose names were on the church's Roll of Honor. The oldest boy of the club recently enlisted, and the club presented him with a wrist watch. The ages of the members are from 13 to 17 years. The accompanying picture shows a meeting at the manse when only the girls were present.

Grandview, Man



## Relating the Sunday School to the Home

*By Rev. H. G. Crozier, B.A.*

Two or three methods of increasing co-operation between the home and the Sunday School may be suggested.

Recently, in New York, I was present one afternoon at a reception given by a Sunday School to the mothers of the children. This gathering was a distinct success. A good programme of music and readings, etc., made the affair very pleasant, and although no instruction was given to the mothers the possibilities of this plan struck me so forcibly

that, on coming home, I tried the experiment with considerable success and now hope to make this mothers' meeting a regular function.

Another method of securing the cooperation of the home in Sunday School effort is through persistent correspondence. Many pastors use this method of keeping in touch with their church members and some Sunday Schools have already made a weekly letter experiment with quite definite results.

Perhaps the best way to relate the Sunday School to the home is for the teacher to visit the homes of the children. The only way to do this successfully is to have regular monthly meetings of the teachers and ask for a report from every teacher on visits made during the month. Unless the parents cooperate with the Sunday School much of our effort is in vain. If we can secure this cooperation we can hope for success.

Winnipeg



### An Institute of Religious Education

The Community Training School is one of the latest answers to the question, "How shall we train our Sunday School workers for their tasks?" And to many thoughtful workers that question reaches the very heart of the Sunday School problem. Is there anything else more vital, more fundamental? The problems of evangelism, missions, instruction, organization, and administration are all bound up in this one central task.

The Toronto Institute of Religious Education is one of these Community Training Schools. Early in 1915 several of the leaders in Sunday School work called the pastors and superintendents of the city into conference and an organization was effected to undertake and carry on the work proposed. The organization is as follows:

- (a) The Board of Directors. This Board, composed of experienced educators, is responsible for the curriculum, for the arrangement of courses of study for each year, and for the appointment of the staff. Members of the Board hold office for one year, but are eligible for re-election.
- (b) The Advisory Committee. This Committee has charge of the business and publicity arrangements of the Institute. Whenever it may seem desirable to the Board of Directors, the Advisory Committee may be asked to meet with them in joint session.
- (c) The General Council. This includes the Board of Directors, the Advisory Committee, and representatives duly appointed by the Sunday Schools of the city. Each Sunday School has the right to appoint representatives to sit

in the General Council, which shall be called together at least annually, on the day of the election of the members of the Board and Advisory Committee, as well as at such other times as may be expedient.

The purpose of the Institute is stated as follows: "to provide for Sunday School teachers and other workers in the field of religious education such instruction and training as shall best fit them for their work."

The courses of study are on the four main topics as adopted in the new Teacher Training Course of the Sunday School Council:

- (a) The Pupil: elementary general psychology, and special studies of the different periods of life.
- (b) The Teacher: principles, problems, and methods of religious pedagogy.
- (c) The Bible: general outlines and special studies.
- (d) The School: its history, purpose, and administration.

The courses cover 24 evenings, divided into two terms of 12 evenings each. There are on each evening two sessions: a general session of 45 minutes, and a series of parallel sessions of 45 minutes. The general session of one term is devoted to Bible study and for the other term to principles of teaching or some topic connected with the pupil or the School. The parallel sessions cover the different sections of the School from the Beginners to the Adult department, and include Bible teaching, and Sunday School organization and administration. Every phase of the work of the Sunday School will be covered in the three-year course mapped out by the Board, and additional courses may be given at any time on request of a sufficient number of students. Examinations are provided at the end of each term, and credit given, and at the end of the three years' work diplomas will be awarded to those who have completed the courses and passed the examinations.

A very comprehensive eight-page programme is issued each year. The programme for year 1917-1918 contains a general outline of the three year course of studies adopted as the result of the work of the first two years of the Institute and from comparison with the work offered at other Community Training Schools.

The first year, 1915-1916, the Institute was held for the Fall Term in the new Sunday School building of the Walmer Road Baptist Church, an ideal place. The Winter Term was held in the new Knox College, one of the finest theological colleges in America. During the second year, 1916-1917, the Institute was fortunate in holding its sessions in Wycliffe College for most of the year, with the closing

sessions at Walmer Road. For the coming year the Board of Education of Toronto have granted the use of Brown School, on Avenue Road, one of the newest and best equipped public schools in the city. This is especially valuable to the Elementary Division, for they will be able thus to keep in touch with all the latest equipment in primary and junior work. The kindness and generosity of all these church and educational authorities is very gratifying, and is very encouraging as an evidence of the growing appreciation of the value of the Sunday School.

As to results. The enrolment for the first year was about 750, with an average attendance of over 200. The pressure of war conditions and other causes reduced the enrolment the second year to about 275 and the average attendance to about 125. It is expected that the third year will see a very large increase, although the demands on the time and

strength of our Sunday Schools continue to be very heavy. The general recognition, however, that our Schools ought to measure up to the new demands imposed upon them by the world War and that they should be ready for the boys when they come home is a motive power that will send our workers into new activity to prepare themselves for these new responsibilities.

It is not enrolment, however, that is the only or the supreme test. The training has been of a high order and the testimonies from the students are most encouraging. The Board of Directors and the Advisory Committee are planning great things for the future, and are looking forward to a time when not only will the Toronto Institute of Religious Education touch every School in this city, but when every other city in Canada will have a similar Institute developing and inspiring our workers everywhere.

## The Rural Sunday School

BY M. CUMMING, B.S.A.

Principal, College of Agriculture, Truro, N.S.

It is very easy to get away from the real purpose of the Sunday School, which should be the teaching of the Bible. Thinking back to younger years, when I attended both rural and urban Sunday Schools, I am impressed with the fact that the rural School was responsible for more Bible verses, psalms, paraphrases and catechism memorized, while the town School carries memories of more pleasantly and interestingly taught lessons but less real work done by myself as pupil. The former, the memorizings, etc., have remained; the latter have left their general impression for good but the impression lacks the specific content of the former. That was a third of a century ago.

A week ago, I met a church elder three score and ten years or more of age, still in harness in a Sunday School near the scenes of my early rural memories, and I asked him if it were still the case that the young folk in his class memorized and studied the Bible itself. His reply was that "things had changed;" young people even in the country would not study the Bible and memorize passages as they did in former years. "And are you as well satisfied with your work as a teacher as in those former days?" I asked. "No," was his reply, "but I do not seem to be able to help myself. They will not study."

There are exceptions both in the rural and the urban School, but the exceptional cases are in the main the younger members of the Sunday School, and they soon seem to get out of the habit. Whether it will ever be

possible to get back to the days of more real study and memorizing that called for application of effort, I do not know. That it is desirable, every one, I am sure, realizes. It would make the Bible a more real book in modern life. The home, perhaps more than the Sunday School, is responsible for the general spirit of laxity that prevails, but I know of instances now where, here and there, a thorough Sunday School teacher is encouraging good old fashioned memorizing and studying of the Bible.

But while this Bible study and memorizing in the rural Sunday School in the old days built character and real worth, it did not solve the rural problem. Rather, the problem became more acute.

The facts are that the rural problem, which in the main is one of depopulation, is not a religious problem at all. People leave the country because they believe that life in the country is not socially and financially as satisfying as life in the city. Therefore to solve this problem we must solve the social and financial problem of the country.

And where does the Sunday School fit into the solving of the rural problem if its solution lies largely along what may be regarded as purely material lines? To my mind, it should fit in just as the church and the pastor should, namely, in the realm of leadership. In doing this, the Sunday School must never give up one bit of its essential work, the teaching of the Bible. But if the leadership of the Sunday School will aim to identify the Sunday

School organization and its individual members with the progressive life of the community, it can accomplish a great deal. To do this the Sunday School must get beyond its individual point of view and must look at things from the standpoint of the whole community in which it is located. In this connection, an Ontario lady once told me that the best contribution which the Women's Institute has made to her community was that it had proven the means of drawing together people of all denominations who heretofore had worked in separate units and that so much more had been accomplished by this united effort than by the former more or less individualistic effort.

Perhaps this point of view can be most clearly presented by giving a specific illustration, the underlying principles of which are, in the mind of the writer, applicable to all kinds of community development work. A leader in a community may develop a policy to encourage boys and girls to grow crops. His policy will probably involve the element of competition and it may be prizes to be awarded. This leader may not be a member of the Sunday School, or even of the church of which the Sunday School is a part. None the less his policy may be the very best one from the standpoint of the general welfare of the community. In such a case, the Sunday School would accomplish more by casting its lot in with this organization and so identifying itself with the community as a whole than by endeavoring to conduct a similar but smaller policy of its own. Nor should this manner of dealing with a specific rural question take the responsibility out of the hands of Sunday School leaders. Rather the more should they endeavor to encourage those scholars who are placed under their care to take their part in the general community scheme. It would often prove helpful to stimulate a competition within a competition, pitting for example the crop growers of one Sunday School against those of another. Reciprocally other community interests would unite with the Sunday School in its own conceived community development schemes.

Space does not permit a further development of this idea but I hope that by presenting it in concrete form, I have impressed the fact that there is a danger that our Sunday School or church organizations may work too much as units when experience has shown that for the accomplishment of results that will tell for the whole community, there must be an amalgamation of all its forces amongst which, however, none should count for more than the leadership of the Sunday School and church.

The development of the social side of life seems in some ways to come nearer what is ordinarily considered legitimate Sunday

School work than the business side. Here also cooperation, rather than division, of the forces of the rural community should be sought. Fully marshaled, these forces are small enough. Divided, the units are too small. In the day school, boys and girls of all denominations play together. Church functions are often marred for them because their best friends go to some other church or perhaps do not go to church at all. United church functions, picnics, etc., which have in them the elements of community interest are in the mind of the writer, what are needed if the Sunday School and the church are to make their contribution to the solving of the social side of the rural problem.



### Foreign Children in Cape Breton

Dear Jim :

I have been down to Cape Breton, and I used to think (until I saw it) that it was the jumping off place, but I know better now, it is a great little island. The immense coal fields with the great iron and steel works have brought people from all over Europe to get work here, so crowds are here, and my father says we have to teach them *our laws* and the *Christian religion*, so as to make them good citizens of this great Canada of ours, and if we do not they will pull down Canada instead of helping build her up.

Our church is beginning with the children. One day I thought I would like to go down to see a School our Mission Bands are helping. This one is in Sydney (Coke Ovens) just where all the foreigners live. There is a church here for them and a kindergarten school taught by Miss Melvor, 36 scholars, all nationalities, Hungarian, Polish, Italian, Slavs, German, Russian, Bohemian, African and English. I was quite interested looking up on the map just where they came from. You will be too.

They are all learning English fast. A year ago they did not know a word. I felt rather ashamed when I found nearly 20 of them were getting the Assembly's Diploma for scripture verses and I never had one. They have a Mission Band, too, and are very interested. The teacher there has got some money from her friends and with what the children have done themselves, they have enough money to buy a bell for the church which will ring for the first time this month.

Then I took a car, went out to Grand Lake, then walked a quarter of a mile, took train to New Waterford, then walked a mile to Scotchtown, when I came to a village of foreigners living among the trees in their shacks. We have a Mission there too, 104



scholars, two teachers, Miss Grant and Miss Munro. My, but they are learning fast. Just think of 50 getting Diplomas from General Assembly, besides learning all their school lessons. My mother says we are helping to make them Christians.

Now all through Cape Breton and Nova Scotia we have lots of these foreign boys and girls and I am going to save more of my pennies, and very soon they will be able to help themselves and also help others. I know if all *our* boys and girls could visit these Schools, they *all* would want to help and have these Schools wherever we have foreigners in Nova Scotia.

Good night, Jim.

Will tell you a lot more when I get home.

DICK.

—The Message

## Christmas with the Beginners

BY RAE FURLANDS

Of all the holiday seasons during the year the one most peculiarly belonging to little children is Christmas. Even personal birthdays take quite a secondary place.

A teacher of Beginners is the most fortunate of all women, saving only a mother. She has the opportunity of making impressions during the years when they mean the most.

If Santa Claus, with all the commercialism imparted to that title by unthinking people, be allowed to get possession of the child's mind first there will be little or no room for the real Christmas thought.

The children should not be deprived of the true Santa Claus spirit, but it is so much perverted, especially in our large cities at the present time, that its helpful side is frequently lost sight of altogether.

It will not be out of place here to implore teachers never to let a person dressed to represent Santa Claus come into your School unless the children are fully informed that he is only a representative.

It seems unnecessary to add that even this should not take place during the Sunday session, and yet one Sunday School did have such a performance on the Christmas Sunday of a year ago. True, it was to receive gifts for the poor, not to give them, but the afternoon was utterly spoiled for one visitor at least. It is doubtful if the older pupils got any good and certainly the Primary and Beginners Departments appeared to have no thought for anything but that Santa Claus was there, so were all excitement.

### Sunday School Work in China

A unique feature of the Sunday School work in China is, that the children are taught to read in connection with their Sunday School lesson. The China Sunday School Union issues a Lesson Primer, which has upon it, "Life Problem Pictures" from Chinese life. The lesson is begun by a discussion of some point of conduct suggested by the picture; class discussion follows, and the whole class session brings itself to a decision regarding some "specific act" which they are urged to "will to do" during the week following. One of the simplest things a member of the class may do is to take this little Lesson Primer and teach the big characters inside to some one in his own home or elsewhere. In the lessons for a year or two, some six hundred characters are taught, making it possible to read nine tenths of the characters in the New Testament.

With the Beginners, then, let us start the Christmas thought early. Shortly after Thanksgiving Day would not be too soon to first make mention of it. It grows so naturally out of the Thanksgiving thought. After talking about the gifts of grain, fruit and all the other things God sends to which special attention is paid until the time of ingathering is over, then the thought of God's greatest gift to the world follows in orderly sequence. Beginning to learn a Christmas hymn gives a good reason and forms a basis for conversation on each succeeding Sunday.

Bit by bit the Bible story is told and enlarged upon until it is all thoroughly familiar. The little ones will not enjoy it less, but more, when told in its entirety on the Christmas Sunday, because they have thus become familiar with it. A special illustration may be saved for that day if you so desire. For example, you may show how the Christ-child was swaddled or you may have some particularly attractive picture which the children have not seen before.

A gift from the teacher to each child of the half-cent size picture of a Madonna and Child, or other Christmas picture, mounted and supplied with a hanger is a much appreciated memento of the day, if you feel inclined to go to the expense and trouble of preparing them.

Unless the children are of the poorer class, they are usually surfeited with gifts at this season and have little opportunity of sharing of their very own, thus they lose the best side of Christmas giving. The Sunday School may



supply this deficiency by arranging for some little experience in this line. The locality in which you live will help to decide what form it shall take.

It may be planned that a small offering, Sunday by Sunday, shall be received for some special purpose. If the children can earn the money in some way it will mean more to them. Cooperation with the home will be necessary to arrange for this. Perhaps an appreciated toy may be given up for a less favored child.

If there are no needy people within the knowledge of the children, it might be possible to have them meet some day during the week to make a very simple gift for mother. Mothers know how to appreciate their children's work, if it is only a folded paper or crude drawing.

It is not necessary to entirely drop the Christmas songs as soon as Christmas is over. Others will, of course, gradually take their place as the year goes on. But, as you have endeavored to make the Christ-child a living reality, so continue to make his presence felt during the year. As one of the hymns says :

"Sing, little children, sing  
Not only on Christmas day,  
But every day of the year ;  
Still is the Christ-child here.  
He is here, and we always may  
Be glad, as on Christmas day."



### Teaching Missions to the Beginners and Primaries : An Experience

By Rev. W. J. Knox, M.A.

In First Presbyterian Church, London, Ont., the children of the Primary and Beginners Departments assemble on Sunday morning with their parents in the pews of the church auditorium at eleven o'clock, and remain during the first half hour of church worship. After a story-sermon, a short prayer and a children's hymn, the children proceeded to the schoolroom for their session. Once a month the story-sermon deals with some missionary topic.

On the first Sunday of each month the whole session is devoted to the study of missions in a manner suitable to the little folk. The graded studies, which are in use, are not dated and a missionary study may be interjected without particularly disturbing the course.

A missionary story is told by the superintendent of a Department, or one of her assistants. Two or three days are given to the same mission field, and an exhibit made of objects of interest from the field, which can be procured from friends for the purpose.

Provision is made for the expressional side of the education by devoting the offering of the day to missions, by taking flowers to the Military Hospital at Easter and toys and other gifts to poor children at Christmas.

Thus all the children, in their early years, have their missionary interest developed by instruction and giving, as an *integral part* of their regular School work in a manner suited to their taste and capacity.

London, Ont.



### Primary Interests

By Professor O. J. Stevenson, D.Pæd.

During the Beginners age the child lives in the realm of "make believe," and tries to learn something of the world around him by imitating the actions of others. About the age of six or seven, however, a change comes over him, and make believe games begin to lose their interest for him. From this time forward, instead of taking his pleasure out of imitating others, he wishes to live for himself and to investigate things at first hand. At the same time, too, he begins to feel a growing confidence in his own powers, and likes not only to try them out in all possible ways, but to show them off before others.

His desire to find out for himself what things are like and how they act, is in reality an evidence of the new instincts that are springing into birth at this period. One of the strongest of these instincts is seen in his interest in the world out of doors. Those people who believe that the child lives over again in brief form the experience of the race, see in these instincts a revival of the outdoor life of the savage. The woods and fields, the rocks and streams, the trees and flowers and birds, everything which he can test out by taste or smell or sound or touch, must be examined.

This is the age for collecting,—whether it be bugs, or stamps, or useless odds and ends ; for how can a boy learn what a stone or a shell or an insect is like unless he has brought it home and kept it among his treasures where he may examine it and gloat over it from time to time ? It is an age, too, for pets, whether it be pigeons or rabbits, or a pony or a collie, or a wild creature, such as a squirrel or a raccoon. To live with a dog or a horse or any other animal and to know it intimately, is in itself a part of a boy's liberal education.

The games of the boy and girl at this period are those which belong to the outdoor life of the savage age. In the life of the savage hunter, speed in pursuit and escape, skill in throwing and striking and hitting the mark, and the delights of rapid movement, through the water, over the snow, and down the steep slope, must have formed an important part.

And so among boys and girls we find such sports as hide and seek, prisoner's base, duck on the rock, sheep-pen down, tops and marbles, ball, climbing, coasting, swinging, and swimming.

Many of these games involve the element of contest and competition, and the would-be hero has an opportunity to try out his own powers, to show off his prowess, and afterwards to brag of his exploits. This is the fighting age among boys, and the fighting itself cannot be looked upon as an unmixed evil. The boy who has never taken part in a fight has missed one of nature's great opportunities for development. Along with this fighting instinct, the small boy of this age seems to have an unlimited capacity for mischief. But when these pranks and depredations are traced back to their source they are found in most cases to be signs of vigorous healthy growth. It is not deliberate wrong-doing that makes the eight-year-old bandit rifle his neighbor's garden, but rather the spirit of adventure, the desire to see how his irate neighbor will behave, and the longing to prove his own prowess and show off before his companions. The fact that there is a law which he must not break is in itself a very excellent reason for breaking it.

Fortunately, too, the spirit of investigation which sometimes leads the boy of this age into mischief proves a stimulus to more valuable

activities. This is the age when puzzles and conundrums must be solved, when tools must be tried out, when machinery must be examined, and when the properties of all sorts of materials must be tested. Things in themselves are a challenge, and at all costs the boy must see what he can do with them,—and as a result he himself must grow in mental stature and knowledge.

And what is true of a boy during these years is also in a milder degree true of a girl. When she gives up the make-believe play with her dolls she enters into the tomboy age. And it is a good thing for every girl at this time of childhood to know the pleasures of being a tomboy.

For the teacher of a Primary class, whether of boys or girls, it is important to know something of these instincts so that in so far as possible she may adapt her lesson and her methods to the needs and interests of her pupils. In every Primary class there is a would-be hero, an eager investigator, a "savage" with the instincts of a wild man of the woods, and at the same time an egoist who is confident of his own powers and eager to try them out against all comers. In the direction of instincts and interests such as these, neither dry facts nor fine-spun sentiments are of much avail.

Ontario Agricultural College,  
Guelph, Ont.

## Providing for Juniors in a One Roomed School

BY MABEL CREWS RINGLAND, B.A.

The teacher who faces the problem of providing for Juniors in a one roomed School is working against great odds, for no matter how ingenious she may be, she can never fully overcome all the difficulties she will meet. The only real solution to her problem is the securing of some seclusion, whether by the use of curtains or screens, or the finding of a quiet corner outside the main School-room, for the lesson teaching. As long as there is the faintest possibility of improvement, we should never be satisfied until we have done our utmost and secured our end. If we are content with poor conditions simply because we are not energetic enough to work for better ones, it is a sure sign that we have not the best interests of our pupils at heart.

As every teacher knows, children of all ages are more susceptible to distractions of sight than those of sound, and this is specially true of Juniors. As long as they can see what is going on about them, their teacher will find it difficult to secure their attention, but if they merely hear voices from other classes, the distraction is greatly lessened. For this rea-

son, curtains or screens are practically a necessity where Juniors must be taught in a room with other scholars.

If a corner of the room can be secured and curtained off, so much the better, for then the equipment that aids a teacher so wonderfully can be used and kept in a stationary place—small table, blackboard, maps, cabinet for missionary curios, honor roll, and the like. If, however, the class is obliged to meet in the centre of the room where there is no wall space, but where screens can be used for separation, the maps and posters may be pinned to them and a small lap blackboard used. A table about which the scholars may gather is a valuable addition, and in it may be kept the various class supplies.

When the other alternative is possible,—the withdrawing of the class to another room for the lesson period—this should always be done, for so much greater freedom is possible when voices do not have to be subdued to a whisper. In a separate room, the expressional activities which are so necessary to the proper development of Juniors may be carried on,—

the memory work, the Bible exercises which teach them to know and use their Bibles, the handwork that is prescribed in the Pupil's Work and Study Book, in short, the drill without which a boy or girl of the Junior age can learn and retain very little.

In many Schools the number of Junior scholars is relatively large. Small groups of six to eight is the best number to have in a class. Individual work is thus made possible, and attention is more easily secured. If there are not enough to form a class of boys and one of girls for each year, the 9 and 10-year-old boys should be grouped together, girls of these ages together, with the boys of 11 and 12, the girls of these ages forming two other separate groups. This arrangement has been found much better than keeping boys and girls together, for at this time there is a mutual antagonism which cannot be overcome. Junior boys will often take no interest in a thing for the simple reason that girls are interested in it too.

The Departmental Graded Lessons are a boon to the one roomed School, for with them, all Juniors are taught the same lesson which may be adapted by the teachers to the varying needs of the different ages. When using them, the teacher is able to meet the spiritual needs of the child in each stage of his development. We have come to realize that the pupil in the small School has the same spiritual requirements as one who attends a large School, and that he has an equal right to have these needs met.

Toronto



### How to Use the New Quarterlies

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

THE TWO NEW QUARTERLIES, the INTERMEDIATE TEACHER'S QUARTERLY and the INTERMEDIATE SCHOLAR'S QUARTERLY, Departmental Graded, have been for a month in the hands of the users. The two together provide a fine equipment for the teachers and scholars in classes of boys and girls from 12 to 14 years of age.

In order that this equipment may be made to yield the best results, there are a few points to which the teacher should give special attention.

1. It is essential that the teacher shall know all that is in the SCHOLAR'S QUARTERLY. It is supposed that the scholar, during the week, has been diligently studying his QUARTERLY, and expecting to have the results of his work brought out in the questioning and discussion of the class session. Only if the teacher is thoroughly familiar with the material of the scholar's studies will he be able to frame his questions and guide the discussion so as to elicit the knowledge which

the scholar has gained. Unless the scholar is afforded the opportunity of giving forth what he has acquired, he is likely to lose interest and become discouraged.

2. The teacher should take the utmost pains at each session of the class in assigning the work to be prepared by the scholar for the following session. The TEACHER'S QUARTERLY contains suggestions for this assignment, and some help should be given to the scholar in the way of showing him where, in his own QUARTERLY, he may find help for the task of the week.

3. The assignment of work to be done should be followed up, at the next class session, by careful examination to test whether it has been done. Scholars of this age are accustomed to have their work tested in this way in the day school, and the Sunday School will gain a new respect in their eyes if a similar method is employed there.

4. Every effort should be made, in the teaching of the lesson and the management of the class, to impress the scholars with the idea that it is a piece of real, serious work in which they are engaged,—that it is even more important for them to know their Sunday School lesson than to have their arithmetic or geography lesson well up for the day school.

5. And, finally, never for a moment should the scholars be permitted to lose sight of the fact that it is God's Word which they are studying,—that each lesson is a part of the great message of love and grace which he has sent to the world and that this message is meant to lead all who receive it to Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

No teachers have a finer opportunity than those whose work lies with scholars of the critical years that follow upon childhood and look towards the years of youth. Great will be the reward of those teachers who wisely instruct and guide these boys and girls.



Lord, who am I to teach the way  
To little children day by day,  
So prone myself to go astray?

I teach them knowledge, but I know  
How faint they flicker and how low  
The candles of my knowledge glow.

I teach them love for all mankind  
And all God's creatures, but I find  
My love comes lagging far behind.

Lord, if their guide I still must be,  
Oh, let the little children see  
The teacher leaning hard on Thee.

—Leslie Pinckney Hill



# WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

## A Good Man and a Good Guide

In a quiet little burial place at the foot of the Apennines there is a lonely grave with this modest inscription graven upon the tomb, "He was a good man and a good guide." It is enough. Would that I as one ordained and commissioner, to serve as a shepherd of the sheep in the church of God might be found worthy at the last to have inscribed upon my tomb an epitaph as simple but as definite and as eloquent in its spiritual appraisal!—Dr. Charles R. Brown, in *The Congregationalist*

## How Prohibition Prohibits

The following comparative statement of the arrests for drunkenness in Toronto during 1915-16 and 1916-17, respectively, illustrates in a very striking manner the results of prohibition, which came into force in September, 1916:

	1916-1917	1915-1916
September.....	192	423
October.....	303	981
November.....	302	947
December.....	344	992
January.....	298	784
February.....	334	811
March.....	420	882
April.....	415	845
May.....	419	1,039
June.....	339	1,013
July.....	349	1,027
August.....	370	1,146
September (to the twelfth).....	200	543

## "Pass It On"

An "Ever-Ready" class of girls have for their motto Henry Burton's poem, "Pass It On." One of the practical applications of this spirit is their monthly "correspondence course." The names and interests of shut-ins and invalids, especially those connected with the church, are secured and listed. On a set day each month every girl writes to one of these persons. Some write cheery greetings, others nonsense verse and rhymes, some send clippings of interest, and one girl with artistic ability usually contributes a clever sketch, illustrating one of the other contributions.

The girls save all clippings, articles and poems that they find that may interest any of their "students." On Easter and Christmas they make a special effort, remembering each name on these days.

Needless to say, this silent way of cheering house-bound friends is greatly appreciated, and the girls are indeed many times over "a star in some one's sky."—*The Pilgrim Teacher*

## How James Wilbur Chapman Was Won

"I was a scholar in a Sunday School in Richmond, Indiana, when some one was making an appeal to the scholars to confess Christ by rising. The most of my class of boys were standing, and I was saying to myself, 'Why should I stand? My mother and father are both Christians. I think I believe in Christ. For me to stand is not a necessity,' when suddenly I felt a touch on my shoulder, and my teacher, Mrs. C. C. Binkley, was saying, 'Hadn't you better stand?' And somehow she got her hand just under my elbow and seemed to lift me up. I shall never forget my standing that day. Whether I had been accepted of God before that day or not I cannot say, but I do know that the deepest impression of my life was made at that minute, and under God my Sunday School teacher was the channel through which the blessing came."—*The Sunday School Magazine*

## Times or Seasons

I went into the factory where men were making shoes and watched them work. This one was trimming soles. I said to him, "For whom is that shoe intended?"

"I do not know," he replied.

"For what will it sell? When will it be marketed?"

To all my several questions he returned the same answer. He did not know.

"It is my business," he said, "to trim soles."

I went out to the farm. I saw them sowing wheat. "Who will buy your wheat?" I asked.

"We do not know," was the reply.

"Will there be a good stand of grain? Will you get a good price?"

Again to all my questions I received the same answer.

"It depends on the season. It is not for us to know times and seasons."

Then I stepped into the private room of a Sunday School teacher. I found her blue and

dejected. "If I only could see the results, and know just precisely what the outcome of my efforts will be," she sighed.

And I, enlightened by my walk in the world of men, made answer: "The Father hath set times and seasons within his own authority."

—D. R. Piper, in *The Continent*

### Gladstone a Bible Student

No nobler statesman lived in English life during the nineteenth century than William E. Gladstone. His life was founded on "The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture," as the title of his book reads. John Morley says that one constant entry in his diary from twelve to eighteen was, "Read Bible." In his university days at Oxford he constantly read and studied his Greek New Testament. This enriched his vocabulary and filled his mind with illustrations, and did much to shape his very expressions and gave him that classic and powerful English style that was at once the admiration and despair of his colleagues.

More than his style, his character and career were shaped by its teachings. His chief rival, Lord Salisbury, called Gladstone "a great Christian." Mr. Gladstone himself testified as to the worth of his Bible study to his own life: "On most occasions of very sharp pressure or trial, some word of scripture has come home to me as if borne on angels' wings. Many could I recollect. The psalms are the great storehouse."—*The Pilgrim Teacher*

### The Ideal Sunday School Superintendent

He selects his teachers with great care.

He works in harmony with the pastor.

He gets inspiration from the fountain head.

He is found at the mid-week prayer meeting.

He provides for a regular teachers' meeting.

He attends the preaching services of the church.

He has a well conducted Normal Class in his School.

He is in close touch with every member of the School.

He quiets the School for opening by being still himself.

He reads the very best literature on Sunday School work.

His influence is felt for good inside and outside of the School.

He greets cordially all visitors and strangers who are present.

He is to be found in the Schoolroom before time to open the School.

His soul is happy when he sees the young people joining the church.

He remembers that the Sunday School is to bring the children to Christ.

He announces the revival meetings and urges the young people to attend.

He lifts up Christ in song and prayer, and talks to the School as the great friend of the children.

He cooperates with the pastor in his revival work, and works hard to have his School a power for good in revivals.

### How I Get My Bible Students to Prepare the Lesson

Well, I do not succeed perfectly. Usually 90 per cent. prepare. One Sunday last month only 75 per cent. prepared, but we are improving.

About a year ago we adopted what we call Study Centres. That is, each family represented in the class on every Friday evening, from seven to eight o'clock, gather about the table, read over the Sunday School lesson, and each member writes out five questions on the lesson, then they ask the questions aloud and each one leads in a short prayer. By this means parents can show their children that they are praying for them, and children taught to pray aloud. Particular attention is given to find the spiritual meaning and modern application of God's Word.

We had great help from our pastor, who took the matter up from the pulpit, and asked every family in the church to join us in keeping Study Centre and prayer service for one hour each week.

On Sunday, under the division of business, we ask those who have kept Study Centre to rise. Nearly the entire class now rise on that call.

Then, before we read the lesson, I ask about twenty questions on the lesson, which tests their preparation. On Monday evening, when I start to prepare my lesson, I send cards to five members, giving a character study or a question concerning spiritual truth to answer on the following Sunday.

I give fifty questions on a printed slip at the end of each month. The slip has a four or five-inch margin, in which they write the short answers. Mothers and fathers ask these questions at the next Study Centre and at the monthly reunion of the class they ask the teacher to crack any hard nuts, also all debate is postponed and brought up at the reunions.



During the last year not only our class but the whole church had improved spiritually.—Mrs. H. E. Monroe, in the Augsburg S.S. Teacher

### The Word of Life

The Bible is the word of life. I beg that you will read it and find this out for yourselves—read, not little snatches here and there, but long passages that will really be the road to the heart of it. You will find it full of real men and women not only but also of the things you have wondered about and been troubled about all your life, as men have been always; and the more you read the more it will become plain to you what things are worth while and what are not, what things make men happy,—loyalty, right dealing, speaking the truth, readiness to give everything for what they think their duty, and, most of all, the wish that they may have the real approval of the Christ, who gave everything for them—and the things that are guaranteed to make men unhappy,—selfishness, cowardice, greed and everything that is low and mean. When you have read the Bible you will know that it is the Word of God, because you will have found it the key to your own heart, your own happiness and your own duty.—Woodrow Wilson

(A message for Soldiers and Sailors)

### The Class in the Corner

It was the first Sunday in the month, which in the Herndon Sunday School is Missionary Day. The classes were called by name and one member of each class came forward with the offering, named the amount, and recited an appropriate verse of scripture.

A group of twelve boys calling themselves the C.I.C. (Class in the Corner) are interested workers, but, as in any group, there are differences in both gifts and graces. Edwin and Conway are the only two orphans in the class, and yet these two lads had the largest contributions, each bringing the same amount. Edwin had earned his by chopping wood, Conway by running errands.

The teacher bowed her head in gratitude for such boys, but was puzzled to decide which of these two should have the honor of carrying forward the gifts of the class. Edwin settled the question by saying cheerfully and quietly, "Let Conway do it; I don't mind." His had been the heavier work.

The banner was won by the C.I.C. boys, but that was not the cause of the greatest joy to that teacher. She knew why Edwin had exhibited an unselfish spirit. Every day for a year he had read and studied his Bible. He

had faithfully completed the first year of his junior work, showing a steady growth in strength of character, and in the hour of testing he proved true. It was Abraham giving Lot first choice. It was the love that "envieth not," the Golden Rule in action.

There is no room for discouragement in this work of training young souls for the master. We may surely rejoice as we sow the seed; for his promise is that his word "shall not return unto him void."—The Graded Sunday School Magazine

### Why He Was "Always Ready"

"You are always ready. Come and teach my class to-day."

It was a high compliment, and one who listened to it made a bit of investigation afterward to find out how it was that this gentleman came to be worthy of it. This is what he discovered:

"There is no secret and no mystery about it. I just get ready. At the stationery store I get a little blank book costing perhaps ten cents. You can get more expensive ones if you prefer, but this one has good enough paper for me. It takes ink all right and looks good.

"Sunday afternoon I begin to work out my lesson for the coming Sabbath, beginning with a careful reading of the story in the Bible. Then I cut from one of the religious papers, or perhaps from a quarterly, the text as it is found for that day. For this I prefer to have the lesson in as fine print as possible, so as not to take up too much room in my book. On a new, clean page I paste this slip. It is just a fancy of mine, I suppose, but I like to have a pretty heading over every such clipping. It looks good to me, and somehow inspires me to make all my work as neat and attractive as possible.

"By the side of my clipping I write out the outline of the lesson as I intend to teach it. And right here let me say that I believe many teachers often miss the mark by trying to cover too much ground at a sitting. The time is too short! There is so much to be said! If we try to bring to the front every truth, we may miss them all, and see our classes go away without taking in a single really big fact to be worked out in the life of the future. So I say, hunt for a few real big truths and grapple to them with a grip of steel. Push them for all you are worth. Make them the biggest possible. It is the only way to do anything worth while—for me, I mean. Other teachers may have the faculty of compassing more, but they are, in my opinion, few.

Next, I go over to the next clean page, and at the top write down the heading under

which I mean to group my thoughts on a given subject. I give a little more than one-half of the page, reckoning from the left, to this. Down through the page I draw lines of red and black, leaving a couple of inches for what I think the most important points of all.

"Every paragraph is separated from that following by a dash in ink. After the subject is exhausted, I enter the 'red ink' thoughts at the right and go to the following page. This plan I pursue to the end. The last page of all I reserve for quotations from other workers, gathering them up under some such heading as 'Harvest Gleanings,' or 'From Other Fields.'

"Some of these quotations I write down, some are clippings from current papers and magazines, bearing on the lesson. It is wonderful how many illustrations and other helpful matter one may find in the papers which come into the home. Even the secular papers afford a great deal of good material to the man who has an eye out for it."

And this is why he is always ready.—Edgar L. Vincent, in *The Convention Teacher*

### How to Hold a Teen Age Class Together

The efforts put forth in the case of one teen age class of boys to strengthen the class have been most gratifyingly rewarded. That class endures in spite of the fact that its ranks are regularly depleted by the annual exodus to other fields as the boys finish high school. Their places are taken by younger boys, for whom the class is always on the lookout. And vacation time always finds some of the old members returning to the class-room, though they have been absent for several years. The explanation of this is that during the period of absence relations with the class have been maintained by correspondence.

The annual banquet, though a simple affair, is the pride of the class. For this occasion the absentees send home letters, or "toasts," to be given at roll-call.

When a member leaves town the class obtains from him his future address and a promise to write. The secretary of the class sends after him an occasional card of greeting, while the teacher aims to conduct a little personal correspondence of his own with the absentee.

The class photograph is taken about once a year. It is used on postal cards for class correspondence, and also has a place in the large class scrapbook along with various class pledge-cards, banquet souvenirs, press-clippings, etc. The press-clippings are from the local paper and record various class doings.

Of course this is an organized class. Organization itself is the framework upon which to construct class unity. Really worth while activities, such as supporting some special missionary work, rendering community service, taking charge of a definite department of church work, are the best kind of class ties; they enlist cooperation, entail both individual and class responsibility, and afford that incentive to achievement which always appeals to youth.—*The Sunday School World*

### How to Teach a Lesson

1. Don't procrastinate; don't put off study of the lesson until the end of the week. Give the lesson time to grow.

2. Don't begin with the lesson-book, but begin with the actual passage in the Bible.

3. Don't study merely the words, but the people—real, living, struggling people.

4. Don't forget to take a definite aim, or you will hit nobody.

5. Don't attempt too much. One truth driven home is better than half-a-dozen forgotten.

6. Don't forget the emotions and the will. It is not enough to store the mind with facts. Knowledge without feeling is a curse.

7. Don't forget your scholars: their capacities, their needs, their limitations.

8. Don't leave the introduction and opening questions to chance.

9. Don't start off at Jericho, but at home. Commence with the homely, the familiar.

10. Don't forget the end, the personal application of the lesson.

11. Don't neglect the greatest help in lesson preparation—prayer.—Rev. H. A. Lester, in the *British Church Family Newspaper*

### A Community Centre

The country church should be a community centre. There is no other institution universal among farmers and freely supported. The church differs from the school, which has the support of the government, in that grown-up people use it seriously. The grown-up interests of the community, therefore, ought to have a place in the church. Nothing of a universal character is unworthy. To be a leading church means to be "servant of all," and this universal usefulness lays a great duty on the church. It is, then, the one institution in which the community has a home.—Warren H. Wilson, in *The Church at the Centre*

## THE S. S. AND Y. P. S. BOARD

*The Space in this Department is at the Disposal of the General Assembly's Board of Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies, of which Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., and Rev. C. A. Myers, M.A., Confederation Life Building, Toronto, are the Secretaries, and is devoted to the plans, policies and work of the Board.*

### What the Outline Curriculum Is

During the past few months frequent reference has been made in these pages to the Board's new Outline Curriculum, in which an attempt has been made to make the work of the Sunday School a little more systematic and definite. Copies of the Curriculum may be had on application. Some of the advantages of this plan of work are at once apparent:

1. *It is a clear cut and definite course.* Teacher and pupil alike know exactly what is expected of them during the year. If each year the Sunday School teacher is able to secure even this minimum amount of work done in religious instruction and training on the part of any group of boys or girls very much will have been accomplished in say ten years of a child's life. Many a teacher has sighed heavily at the thought that she was not getting anywhere. There seemed to be little definiteness or concreteness in her work. Now it may be definite and progressive and lead somewhere.

2. *It gives parent and teacher a chance to cooperate.* The public school gets the co-operation of the home among other reasons because the home work required is specified day by day. It is not a general instruction to do home work, but to do this particular bit of arithmetic or spelling. So parents can now see clearly what the Sunday School requires of each child, and how much week by week.

3. *It provides incentives for the child.* While bribes in the shape of prizes and rewards of intrinsic worth are not desirable, yet incentives in the shape of recognitions for work done through simple Certificates and Diplomas showing progress and development have a real place. These are provided by the Board.

1. A Certificate for all pupils who complete any year's work, as outlined.

2. A Diploma on completion of the work in all the years of any department. This Diploma may also be used as a recognition of promotion from one Department to the next higher.

### Getting Help

Every good teacher and Sunday School worker is anxious to get all the help possible so that they may be better able to do their work. A number of very successful methods are being followed in order to provide this help to teachers and leaders.

One of the best ways is the Summer School. More than a score of these were held last summer in various parts of the country, attended by hundred of workers for training in leadership.

The following plans will be in full swing during the fall and winter months:

#### PRESBYTERIAL INSTITUTES

At its last meeting the General Assembly passed the following resolution in connection with the report of the Board:

"In order that there may be a systematic presentation of our programme of Christian Education to all our volunteer workers throughout the church, Presbyteries are asked to arrange for a series of Presbyterial institutes annually, and wherever possible, each series of Institutes culminate in a Young People's Rally for the purpose of enlisting the young people of the churches for Christian service."

These Institutes are under the direction of the Presbytery's Committee on S.S. and Y.P.S. work. This committee is composed of ministers and lay workers specially interested in this particular work. Will not every teacher and worker plan to take advantage of any such Institutes in their district and if none are being planned, see that they are provided?

#### LEADERSHIP AND BOYS' WORK CONFERENCES

Great efforts have been put forth during the last two years especially, to place within the reach of all men working with boys, the very best help known to-day.

During the fall and winter 21 Provincial Leadership and Boys' Work Conferences will be held for the purpose of bringing to all men teachers and workers with boys a knowledge of the principles and methods of Boys' Work. The Leadership Conferences open on Thurs-



day evening and run through till Friday afternoon. On Friday evening the Boys' Conference begins and runs through till Sunday.

#### LEADERSHIP AND OLDER GIRLS' CONFERENCES

Similar help is being planned for workers with Older Girls and for Older Girls themselves as rapidly as leadership can be secured.

In Ontario, and in some at least of the other provinces, Leadership and Girls' Work Conferences will be held this year. These will, in general, follow the same lines as in the case of men and boys and should be taken advantage of by teachers and other workers with girls.

#### CITY TRAINING INSTITUTES

In an increasing number of centres, Training Institutes are being organized for a consecutive course of study in Teacher Training throughout the winter. These Institutes usually run about ten weeks before Christmas and ten weeks after, one night a week. Why not have one started in your city?

#### SHORT TERM TRAINING CLASSES

A very popular sort of training class has come into vogue in a large number of places in connection with Boys' Work known as Short Term Training Classes. This has so far been used as a special effort to get busy men together for a practical brief four or five weeks' course on how to put into effect successfully the C.S.E.T. Programme among boys. Literally hundreds of men came to-

gether in this way last year and there should be such groups of men in every town and city this year, where Boys' Work is receiving the attention it deserves.

#### A TRAINING CLASS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

This plan is indispensable for the sake of the great bulk of teachers who are not able to take advantage of other plans. Every teacher should have a chance in this way to become fitted for the work. This class usually meets on Wednesday evening in connection with the regular mid-week meeting or on a separate evening devoted entirely to that purpose.

#### A TRAINING CLASS IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

But we must be prepared to fill up the ranks. Who will take the vacant places? Why not a Normal Class right in the Sunday School, made up of a picked few young men and young women who wish to fit themselves for this great work of leadership in the religious teaching and training of the young. Wherever given a faithful trial this plan has been found to work out most satisfactorily. The church by this means can in a few years graduate from its own ranks young people qualified and trained to teach and lead the boys and girls of the congregation into the fuller Christian life.

In these two last plans the New Teacher Training Course should be used. There are four books, 10 lessons each, a good year's work for the group.

### RESULTS OF TEACHER TRAINING EXAMINATIONS

The following have successfully passed the Teacher Training Examinations, and have received Certificates and Diplomas from the office of Rev. J. C. Robertson, General Secretary for Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies, Toronto, in the First Standard and Advanced Standard Teacher Training Courses, respectively:

FROM AUGUST 16, TO SEPTEMBER 15, 1917

#### I. FIRST STANDARD COURSE

*Sydney Mines, N.S.*—Rev. H. L. MacKinnon, Minister. *The New Testament*: Phebe K. Christianson, Orpha Harvey, Margaret McLeod.

*Wilton Grove, Ont.*—Rev. W. J. M. Crawford, Minister. *The Old Testament*: Helen Crawford, Bessie Elliot, Martha I. Nichol, Mary Nottingham.

*Moose Jaw College, Sask.*—*The Old Testament*: Alfred J. Towne, Alfred J. Porter, Harry Bell, Calman A. Cyeto, Eric C. Poole, Stanley Mahaffy, Grant J. McMaster, Richard J. Dunbar.

**N.B.**—Those interested in the work of Teacher Training should take notice that a new course has been arranged with new textbooks, to begin this fall. It is strongly recommended that all beginners take up the new course rather than the courses formerly recommended as the latter are out of date in some important particulars, and that those who have covered part of the old course should transfer to the new. Arrangements have been made, however, to provide diplomas and furnish examinations on the old course for all who wish to complete it and to give ample credit for work done on the old course to those transferring to the new at the present time. Leaflet giving full information in regard to the new course may be obtained by writing the General Secretary, Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., Confederation Life Building, Toronto.



## HOW THE WORK GOES ON

At Elfros, Sask., where the population is half Icelandic, a young American, who is an enthusiast in Boy Scout work, organized a camp for boys last summer at Fishing Lake in the neighborhood.

The C.C.C.'s are the College Conquerors Class, an organization of boys from 13 to 16 of College Street Presbyterian Church, Toronto. There are 35 of them. Last winter, in charge of a young man, they followed the Canadian Standard Efficiency Course with great delight and profit.

The Korean Christian boys and girls at Yong Jung took up a collection to provide a Christmas treat for the non-Christian children, and the small children of the Christian homes who are too young to attend day school, but who all attend heathen Sunday School.

A British officer who has served for two years in the present War, testifies that, of all the soldiers with whom he has come in contact who were brought up in Christian homes and under Christian influences, fully 95 per cent. have remained true to Christian ideals. "There is," he says, "something about a religious training that, when a man faces the fierce temptations of a soldier's life, keeps him in the right way."

Rev. G. McArthur, B.A., of Sintaluta, Sask., after visiting the mission fields in the Presbytery of Qu'Appelle, as the representative of the Board of Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies, states that he was greatly impressed with the interest shown in

Sunday School work in nearly all the places visited and was convinced that had he the time he could organize every group of children in the Presbytery into a Sunday School.

A Sunday School worker in Saskatchewan tells that he visited the day school in a Hungarian settlement and addressed the children. He took the teacher to be a Hungarian, but later noticed that she spoke with a Gaelic accent and turned out to be from Cape Breton. The missionary was found in the grist mill making flour for the people, as there was no one else to do it. From him the visitor learned that there was a good Sunday School conducted in the Hungarian language. The whole settlement gathers in the church once every Sabbath for Sunday School and public worship.

Mr. James Strachan, for twenty-five years superintendent of St. Andrew's Institute Sunday School, Toronto, has had many interesting letters from his boys who testify to the influence of the Sunday School and how it has steadied them in their trials. One boy was in the attack at Vimy Ridge. While waiting for the time to go over the parapet, the post arrived and he was the only one that morning in his company to receive any mail. He received a card from a little child he had made friends with in the house where he was billeted. On it was printed in childish letters: "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." He handed it to his officer, who passed it round among the men and it had a wonderful message of comfort. The lad sent it to Mr. Strachan and told him the story. Mr. Strachan has had it framed with a footnote and hung in the Institute Sunday School.

## A WORD FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

November is the logical month to make plans for next year's work in the Sunday School. Most people are so busy in December making preparation for Christmas, that plans for the Sunday School are sometimes overlooked, with the result that the New Year is entered upon without definite plans of action.

The year 1918 will offer a grand opportunity to Sunday School workers to increase the efficiency of their Sunday School. The New Intermediate Departmental Graded Lessons will fill a long-felt want in the classes for 12, 13 and 14 year old scholars, the ages at

which so many boys and girls are lost to the Sunday School because the lessons are not made sufficiently interesting to them.

There is the New Teacher Training Course which will enable every Sunday School to start a Teacher Training Class, and thereby insure a band of trained teachers who will by reason of their training be better able to influence the lives of their scholars.

A little booklet for communicants' classes, *The Children's Guide to Christ and the Lord's Supper*, by Rev. Robt. Pogue, will also prove of inestimable value to the Sunday School worker.

Make your plans now to use all these helpful publications. You will wonder how you ever got along without them.

Another matter: Don't put off the ordering of next year's Supplies till the end of the year, at which time mails are so terribly con-

gested and therefore uncertain; to delay may mean being without supplies for a Sunday. Write out your order while the matter is fresh in your mind; we will do the rest. PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS, Church and Gerrard Streets, Toronto.

## OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL PERIODICALS

### ILLUSTRATED PAPERS

EAST AND WEST (Weekly). 75c. per year. Two or more to one address, 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter. (May begin with any date.)

THE KING'S OWN (Weekly). 40c. per year. Five or more to one address, 36c. per year, 9c. per quarter. (May begin with any month.)

JEWELS. 30c. per year. Five or more to one address, 25c. per year, 7c. per quarter. (May begin with any month.)

### UNIFORM SERIES

TEACHERS MONTHLY. 70c. per year, 18c. per quarter. 2 or more to one address, 64c. per year, 16c. per quarter.

PATHFINDER. (A monthly Bible Class and Y.P.S. Magazine), 50c. per year, 13c. per quarter. 2 or more to one address, 44c. per year, 11c. per quarter.

HOME STUDY QUARTERLY. 5 or more to one address, 20c. per year, 5c. per quarter.

INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY. 5 or more to one address, 20c. per year, 5c. per quarter.

PRIMARY QUARTERLY. 5 or more to one address, 20c. per year, 5c. per quarter.

HOME STUDY LEAFLET. 5 or more to one address, 9c. per year, 2½c. per quarter.

INTERMEDIATE LEAFLET. 5 or more to one address, 9c. per year, 2½c. per quarter.

PRIMARY LEAFLET. 5 or more to one address, 9c. per year, 2½c. per quarter.

COLORED LESSON PICTURE ROLL, \$3.25 each per year, 82c. each per quarter. (Includes American postage.)

COLORED LESSON PICTURE CARDS (Corresponding to Roll), 14c. each per year, 3½c. each per quarter. (Includes American postage.)

### DEPARTMENTAL GRADED SERIES

#### BEGINNERS DEPARTMENT

##### FOR THE TEACHER:

BEGINNER'S TEACHER'S QUARTERLY. 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter.

BEGINNERS PICTURE ROLL. \$3.25 per year, 82c. per quarter (American postage included).

##### FOR THE SCHOLAR:

BEGINNERS BIBLE STORIES. 24c. per year, 6c. per quarter.

#### PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

##### FOR THE TEACHER:

PRIMARY TEACHER'S QUARTERLY. 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter.

PRIMARY PICTURE ROLL. \$3.25 per year, 82c. per quarter (American postage included).

##### FOR THE SCHOLAR:

PRIMARY BIBLE LESSONS. 24c. per year, 6c. per quarter.

PRIMARY HAND WORK (13 sheets per quarter in envelope.) 40c. per year, 10c. per quarter.

#### JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

##### FOR THE TEACHER:

JUNIOR TEACHER'S QUARTERLY, 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter.

##### FOR THE SCHOLAR:

JUNIOR WORK AND STUDY LESSONS. 40c. per year, 10c. per quarter.

#### INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT

INTERMEDIATE TEACHER'S QUARTERLY (for teachers of 12, 13 and 14 year old scholars), 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOLAR'S QUARTERLY (For 12, 13 and 14 year old scholars), 50c. per year, 12½c. per quarter.

#### CLOSELY GRADED LESSONS (Ages 15 and upward)

INTERMEDIATE TEACHER'S MANUAL. (For ages 15 and 16.) 60c. a year, in four parts; 15c. a part. (Specify the age.)

INTERMEDIATE PUPIL'S TEXT-BOOK. (For ages 15 and 16.) 50c. a year, in four parts; 12½c. a part. (Specify the age.)

SENIOR TEACHER'S MANUAL. (For ages 17 and upward.) 60c. a year, in four parts; 15c. a part. (Specify the age.)

SENIOR STUDENT'S TEXT-BOOK. (For ages 17 and upward.) 50c. a year; 8 pages in four parts; 12½c. a part. (Specify the age.)

#### THE MISSIONARY LESSON

For teachers of Uniform or Departmental Graded Lessons, published quarterly, 10c. a year, 3c. a quarter.

### Lesson Calendar: Fourth Quarter

1. October 7... Psalms of Deliverance. Psalms 85 and 126.
2. October 14... Returning from Captivity. Ezra, ch. 1.
3. October 21... The Temple Rebuilt and Dedicated. Ezra 3: 8-13; 6: 14-18.
4. October 28... Ezra's Return from Babylon. Ezra 8: 21-32.
5. November 4... Dieat through Drunkenness. (Temp. Sunday). 1 Kings 20: 12-21.
6. November 11... Nehemiah's Prayer. Nehemiah 1: 1-11.
7. November 18... Nehemiah's Prayer Answered. Nehemiah 2: 1-11.
8. November 25... A Psalm of Thanksgiving. Psalm 103.

9. December 2... Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall of Jerusalem. Nehemiah 4 : 7-21.  
 10. December 9... Ezra and Nehemiah Teach the Law. Nehemiah 8 : 1-4a, 5, 6, 8-12.  
 11. December 16... Nehemiah Enforces the Law of the Sabbath. Nehemiah 13 : 15-22.  
 12. December 23... Christmas Lesson—Preparation for the Messiah: Advent of the  
 | | | | | Messiah. Malachi 3 : 1-12; Matthew 2 : 1-12.  
 13. December 30... REVIEW—God's Redeeming Love. Read Psalms 123 and 124.

### AN ORDER OF SERVICE: Fourth Quarter

#### Opening Exercises

##### I. SINGING. Hymn 90, Book of Praise.

All hail the power of Jesus' name!  
 Let angels prostrate fall;  
 Bring forth the royal diadem,  
 To crown Him Lord of all.

##### II. SHORT PRAYER. All remain standing.

##### III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Proverbs 3: 13-17.

*Superintendent.* Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

*School.* For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

*Superintendent.* She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

*School.* Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor.

*Superintendent.* Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

##### IV. SINGING. Hymn 250, Book of Praise.

The Son of God goes forth to war,  
 A kingly crown to gain;  
 His blood-red banner streams afar:  
 Who follows in His train?

##### V. PRAYER.

VI. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn Selected. (This selection may usually be the "Lesson Hymn" in the PRIMARY QUARTERLY. See each lesson.)

VII. READ RESPONSIVELY. See SCRIPTURE PASSAGE FOR OPENING WORSHIP in the TEACHERS MONTHLY, in connection with each lesson (given also in the DEPARTMENTAL GRADED QUARTERLIES.)

VIII. SINGING. See Memory Hymns in the TEACHERS MONTHLY in connection with each lesson (given also in the DEPARTMENTAL JUNIOR, PRIMARY and BEGINNERS TEACHERS QUARTERLIES.)

##### IX. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.

X. SINGING. See HYMN FOR OPENING WORSHIP in the TEACHERS MONTHLY in connection with each lesson (given also in the DEPARTMENTAL GRADED QUARTERLIES.)

#### Class Work

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

I. ROLL CALL; by teacher, or Class Secretary.

II. OFFERING; which may be taken in a Class Envelope, or Class and Report Envelope. The Class Treasurer may collect and count the money.

III. RECITATION. 1. Scripture Memory Passages. 2. Catechism. 3. The Question on Missions.

##### IV. Lesson Study.

#### Closing Exercises

I. SINGING. Hymn 464, Book of Praise.

II. REVIEW FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK; which, along with the Blackboard Review, may include one or more of the following items; Recitation in concert of Verses Memorized, Catechism, Question on Missions, Memory Hymn (see also DEPARTMENTAL JUNIOR, PRIMARY and BEGINNERS TEACHER'S QUARTERLIES), Lesson Title, Golden Text and Heads of Lesson Plan. (Do not overload the Review: it should be pointed, brief and bright.)

III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Romans 8 : 27, 28.

*Superintendent.* He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit.

*School.* Because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

All. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

IV. BENEDICTION.

V. NATIONAL ANTHEM.

Lesson V.

## DEFEAT THROUGH DRUNKENNESS— November 4, 1917 WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY

1 Kings 20 : 1-21. \*Scripture Memory Verses.

**GOLDEN TEXT**—Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast himself as he that putteth it off.—1 Kings 20 : 11 (Rev. Ver.).

1 And Ben-ha'dad the king of Syr'ia gathered all his host together; and there were thirty and two kings with him, a d horses, and chariots; and he went up and besieged Samaria, and warred against it.

2 And he sent messengers to A'hab king of Is'rael into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-ha'dad,

3 Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine.

4 And the king of Is'rael answered and said, My lord, O king, according to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have.

5 And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-ha'dad, saying, Although I have sent unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and thy children;

6 Yet I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their hand, and take it away.

7 Then the king of Is'rael called all the elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my gold; and I denied him not.

8 And all the elders and all the people said unto him, Hearken not unto him, nor consent.

9 Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-ha'dad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the messengers departed, and brought him word again.

10 And Ben-ha'dad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that follow me.

11 And the king of Is'rael answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast

**Revised Version**—1 fought; 2 It is according to thy saying, my lord, O king; 3 I sent indeed unto thee; 4 but I; 5 thou not, neither consent; 6 armour; 7 a prophet came near unto Ahab; 8 By the; 9 begin; 10 surmised; 11 from; 12 went out of the city, the young; 13 Omit five words; 14 Omit the.

### LESSON PLAN

I. A Drunken King, 12.

II. An Encouraging Prophet, 13-15.

III. A Mighty Victory, 16-21.

### DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)

M.—Defeat through drunkenness, 1 Kgs. 20 : 1-12.

T.—Defeat through drunkenness, 1 Kgs. 20 : 13-21.

W.—Woe to the drunkard, Isa. 5 : 11-23. Th.—Proud and drunken, Isa. 28 : 1-7. F.—Drunkenness and ruin, Dan. 5 : 1-9. S.—Punishment of pride,

himself as he that putteth it off.

12 And it came to pass, when Ben-ha'dad heard this message, as he was drinking, he and the kings in the pavilions, that he said unto his servants, Set yourselves in array. And they set themselves in array against the city.

13 And, behold, there came a prophet unto A'hab king of Is'rael, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.

14 And A'hab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Even by the young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall order the battle? And he answered, Thou.

15 Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty two; and after them he numbered all the people, even all the children of Is'rael, being seven thousand.

16 And they went out at noon. But Ben-ha'dad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him.

17 And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Ben-ha'dad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men come out of Samaria.

18 And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.

19 So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them.

20 And they slew every one his man; and the Syr'ians fled; and Is'rael pursued them; and Ben-ha'dad the king of Syr'ia escaped on an horse with the horsemen.

21 And the king of Is'rael went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syr'ians with a great slaughter.

Dan. 5 : 18-23, 30. S.—"Be not deceived," Gal. 6 : 1-8.

**Primary Catechism**—*Ques. 54. What did Jesus tell his disciples the Holy Spirit would do for them? Jesus said the Holy Spirit would help them to remember and to understand what he had taught them.*

**Shorter Catechism**—*Ques. 104. What do we pray for in the fourth petition? A. In the fourth petition (which is, Give us this day our daily bread) we pray, That of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.*

**Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise : Memory Hymn—Primary, 17; Junior, 19, 250, 246, 528, 530.

**Special Scripture Reading**—Matt. 7 : 7-11; given

\* The Scripture Memory Verses for each Sunday are from the General Assembly's Lists of Scripture Memory Passages, for the correct recitation of which Certificates, Diplomas and Seals are awarded by the Assembly's Sabbath School Board. The various **QUARTERLIES** and **LEAFLETS**, both Uniform and Graded, give the passages appropriate to the various grades in the School. For Form of Application for the awards, and also for a scholar's Card Certificate to be given for the recitation of any one of the yearly Parts and exchanged later for Certificate or Diploma in Colors when all the Parts have been completed, with a sample copy of Lists of Passages, write to Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., our General Secretary for Sabbath Schools, Confederation Life Building, Toronto.



also in Departmental Graded Teacher's Quarterlies. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.) It is expected that each scholar will have his or her Bible, and so be prepared to take part in this reading, which may form part of the opening exercises of the School.

**Hymn for Opening Worship**—Hymn 18, Book of Praise; given also in Departmental Graded Quarterlies.

**Lantern Slides**—For Lesson, B. 1252, Defeat through Drunkenness (Temperance Lesson). For Question on Missions, C. 669, Mission Hospital, Changte, Honan. (These slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto. Schools desiring slides made may procure them on short notice by sending negatives, prints or photographs. Slides are colored to order.)

## THE LESSON EXPLAINED

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

**Time and Place**—About B.C. 900; Samaria.

**Lesson Setting**—The lesson describes an episode in the conflict for supremacy which had been going on between Israel and Syria for more than a century. In the reign of Ahab, the king of Syria, Benhadad, invaded Israel with a huge army and laid siege to Samaria, the Israelitish capital. The Syrian king sent an imperious message, demanding of Ahab the surrender of his throne. Ahab basely yielded; but when he sent a second message, declaring that he was coming to strip the houses of Ahab and his officers of all their treasures, he was met with a spirited defiance, vs. 1-9.

Benhadad returned the boastful reply of vs. 10, 11, in which he threatened utterly to destroy Samaria. The great city is pictured as ground to powder. The Syrian king declares that his army is so numerous that the dust of the city would not make a handful for each,—a truly Eastern exaggeration. Ahab's retort is a pithy proverb like the Latin, "Do not sing songs of triumph till the victory is gained," or our, "Praise not the day till evening;" "Do not sell the skin of your bear till you have caught him."

### I. A Drunken King, 12.

V. 12. *Ben-hadad*; the second of three Syrian kings of this name mentioned in the Bible (compare ch. 15 : 18 and 2 Kgs. 13 : 24). *Heard this message*; the bold defiance of Ahab. *As he was drinking*; at a banquet, so confident was he of success in the siege. *He and the kings*; rather, "kinglets," petty princes, vassals of Benhadad, who commanded the thirty-two divisions of his army, v. 1. *Pavilions*; booths or huts made of branches, like those used at the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23 : 42), built, during military expeditions, to shelter the king and his chief officers. *Set yourselves in array*; all

one word in Hebrew. It is a technical military term, used either of the formation of attacking parties or of the erection of battering engines.

### II. An Encouraging Prophet, 13-15.

V. 13. *Behold . . . a prophet*. At every important juncture in the history recorded in Kings, a prophet appears, sometimes to give counsel, usually only to predict the issue. His appearance and message would make it clear that the victory to be achieved was due, not to human power, but to the might of Jehovah. *Unto Ahab*; who, in this dark hour, would welcome help and guidance even from one of those whom he had permitted Jezebel to persecute (see ch. 18 : 4). *Thus saith the Lord*; whose representative and spokesman the prophet was. *This great multitude*; of Benhadad's army, numbering more than 130,000 (see vs. 25, 29, 30). *I will deliver it*. Even so great a host is helpless before Jehovah. *Into thine hand*; into thy power. *Know that I am the Lord*. Jehovah's power to reveal the future testified to his supremacy.

V. 14. *By whom?* Ahab seeks guidance about the strategy which is to win success. Nor is he unwilling to take advice from one of those prophets whom he and his wicked queen, Jezebel, had despised and persecuted. *By the young men*; the squires or attendants of chieftains, who were in training for military leadership; they had little experience, but plenty of courage and dash. The answer is practically a bidding to trust wholly in Jehovah, who made victory depend upon faith shown in implicit obedience to his command. *Princes of the provinces*; leaders from the various districts of Israel. *Order the battle*; make the attack. *Thou*. Ahab was to take the offensive,—a wise plan, even from a purely military point of view.

V. 15. *Mustered* (Rev. Ver.) . . . *young men*

.. two hundred and thirty two; to lead the van. The smallness of the number indicates the modest size of Ahab's kingdom, as does also the seven thousand forming the main body of the army. This, however, was likely not Israel's whole army, but rather the number which had found refuge in Samaria when the Syrians swooped down on the land.

### III. A Mighty Victory, 16-21.

Vs. 16. *At noon*; a favorable hour for a sally, when, in that hot Eastern land, the besiegers would be resting. *Drinking himself drunk*; as if to mark his utter contempt of the foe.

Vs. 17, 18. *Ben-hadad sent out . . . they told him*. The king received tidings from the pickets of his army on duty. *Men . . . out of Samaria*; the 232 of v. 15. *Take them alive*. Wine had so taken away Benhadad's wits, that, instead of drawing up his soldiers in battle array, he sent them to capture alive the tiny band of Israelitish youths.

Vs. 19-21. *The army . . . followed them*. The 7,000 (v. 15) hastened to take advantage of the confusion in the Syrian ranks. The meaning becomes clearer if vs. 20, 21 are transposed. *The king . . . went out*; Ahab leading his army. *Smote the horses and chariots*. The Greek Old Testament reads "captured" instead of "smote." *Slew every one his man*. Perhaps the meaning is that "each repeatedly killed his man." *Syrians fled . . . Israel pursued*. The defeat became a complete rout. *Ben-hadad . . . escaped on an horse*; on a chariot horse, not being able to secure a riding horse.

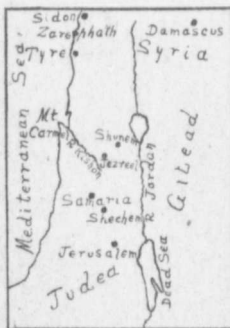
### Light from the East

By Rev. Professor E. Davidson, D.D., Toronto

BENHADAD OF DAMASCUS—The tribes of Israel were never without rivals. When they were trying to establish themselves in Canaan there were Moabites, Ammonites and Midianites trying to do the same. Champion after champion arose to vindicate his tribesmen. Thus Ehud fought against Moab and Jephthah against Ammon. Thus Gideon drove back the Midianites to the East, and Shamgar and Samson and Saul and David drove back the Philistines to the West. At last the land had rest; the kingdom was firmly established under the hand of David.

David's reign saw the advent of another and a very tenacious rival. For while Israel was making good her hold on the hills and valleys of Palestine, kinsmen of Israel were building up a wealthy and powerful state in the Lebanon country with Damascus as its capital. For 250 years the struggle went on intermittently between Israel and the Syrians of Damascus. Success was not always on the same side, but pressure from the north steadily abridged Israel's opportunities, cut off her trade and robbed her of territory in Galilee and beyond the Jordan. The only relief Israel had came when Assyrian armies from the far East ravaged Damascus and left her helpless for a generation. In the days of Ahab and his sons the pressure was very heavy and embarrassment of life at Samaria very galling. The hated memory of Benhadad and Hazael, kings at Damascus, lives still in the words of Amos (see Amos, ch. 1).

### THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



Samaria (the Hebrew name "Shomeron" means a watch mountain). The ancient city was built upon a hill rising from 300 to 400 feet above a broad fertile valley and isolated on all sides but the east, where it is connect-

ed with the hills by a low, narrow saddle. Commanding the roads from Shechem northwards

to the great Valley of Esdraelon and westward to the coast and situated within easy reach of the Mediterranean, no better site could have been selected as the fortified capital of the Northern kingdom of Israel. "On three sides it is surrounded and overlooked by hills clothed with olive and vine, but they are beyond the range of catapult and bow, and so were not a source of danger. On the fourth side the hills are low, and the view over them to the west, with the blue waters of the Mediterranean in the distance, is one of exceptional beauty. This charm of position, in a rich 'fat' valley, bordered by

vine-clad hills, formed part of that 'glorious beauty' which made Samaria the 'crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim'" (see Isa. 28 : 4).

### THE LESSON APPLIED

By Rev. F. H. McIntosh, M.A., Lindsay, Ont.

"Let not him that girdeth on his armour boast himself as he that putteth it off" (1 Kgs. 20 : 11 : Golden Text).

It no doubt appeared to Benhadad, the king of Syria, that he could easily overcome the king of Samaria, but Benhadad had an enemy in his own camp which did great things for Ahab. Benhadad and his chiefs and soldiers were addicted to the habit of taking strong drink and when the great crises came the drinkers of intoxicating liquor went down unexpectedly before the enemy. That incomparable man, Lloyd George, the Premier of England, warned the folk of the tight little island that drink was, after all, Britain's most formidable foe. That being true, it follows that total abstinence on the part of the whole empire would be now the very best ally we could secure. Why ?

1. Because we need money for the prosecution of this War. All our leaders are exhorting the people to save and invest in the War Loans. In the last analysis, this War may be won through "a well directed cheque." All money spent in drink is money turned aside from the sinews of war. In the year 1913 it was stated at the Pre-Assembly Congress, that the annual burden of drink for Canada was a trifle over \$80,000,000. The immense sum would go a long way toward furnishing those things now so vitally necessary to victory.

2. Because we need man power for the manufacture of munitions. It is a well known fact that in the most critical hour since the Marne there was such a shortage of shells along the front that the Germans, had they known it, could easily have broken through and driven our troops into the sea. Happily they turned against Russia. In that dread hour British labor fell far short of 100 per cent. through drink. Though the need of munitions is not now quite so urgent, it is nevertheless immense and the drink traffic handicaps the output. Dr. Denney says of his own country (and it is equally true of Canada) : "The man who lives in Scotland

and does not know that whiskey means a vast sum of broken time and inferior work is blind."

3. Because we need to conserve our food resources. The War is fast becoming an effort to reach a decision through starvation. Should either side in this strife come to such a pass, then defeat would be certain long before money or munitions were exhausted. It is stated that in the production of spirits there were consumed in Canada in the year ending March 31, 1916, the following :

Barley.....	2,353,273 bushels
Indian corn.....	589,394 "
Rye.....	123,801 "
Oats.....	4,975 "
Molasses.....	14,884,460 pounds

Surely this is a reckless waste that some day may bring us a woeful want. If this empire goes down the wind because of strong drink then indeed will the liquor traffic have added to all past injuries and indignities the climax of a crown of thorns and mockery insufferable.

4. Because we need to conserve our manhood. We need money and munitions and food for the waging of the War, but we need manhood most of all. From the very first it has been realized that the chief factor making for success is the moral reserves of the nation, —those qualities of foresight, patience, perseverance and courage which go to make up the unconquerable soul. It was of the absence of these qualities that Byron was thinking when he said :

"'Tis Greece but living Greece no more."

Do we wish the day to come when posterity shall say of the British empire :

"Shrine of the mighty can it be

That this is all remains of thee ?"

We desire no such day. If ever such a day could come, we should curse it as Job cursed the day of his birth, and yet the drink habit and the drink traffic through the impairment of manhood makes such a day possible. It will never do. This empire and all that this empire espouses at the present



moment cannot be sacrificed on the altar of an appetite. The liquor habit and the liquor

traffic must go. This waste of resources and impairment of manhood is anathema.

### THE LESSON GRADED

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

#### For Teachers of Bible Classes

By Rev. Professor W. R. Taylor, Ph.D., Toronto

Explain the occasion of this war between Syria and Israel. (See 1 Kgs. 20 : 34 ; 22 : 1-3.)

1. *The will to power*, vs. 1-11. Point out that Benhadad is an ancient representative of those statesmen and rulers who have believed that material forces and organization alone can cleave a path to dominion and power. There was some excuse for him since he lived in an age when religion seemed to sanction such ideals; and yet, there was a deeper law written in his heart by which he is to be condemned. (See Amos, chs. 1, 2.) Men who hold Benhadad's viewpoint usually blunder as he blundered. They fail to allow for: (1) The moral resources of the enemy in consciousness of innocence, in nobility of purpose. Not all men are moved by only two motives, interest and fear, as one world conqueror learned. (2) The unseen forces, or God's presence in history. When Napoleon was warned that a certain projected campaign would cost a million men, the latter replied: "What are a million men to me?" But he discounted other forces which no numbers can subdue. Nothing in the affairs of men or of nations can be permanently successful that is not right. As Lincoln said, "It is not a question as to whether God is on our side, but whether we are on God's side."

2. *Unreckoned resources*. Ahab appears at his best in this chapter. He is willing to act in harmony with Jehovah's will at this moment. Was it a permanent condition of heart? (See 1 Kgs., chs. 21, 22.) How does he contrast with Hezekiah in a similar situation? (2 Kgs., ch. 18.) However, there are two features of Ahab's character that are worthy of note: (1) Ahab did not count Jehovah among his resources until he was faced with calamity, vs. 13, 14. He appealed to Jehovah only as a last resort. Is this

uncommon among men? "H. Clay Trumbull tells us that a soldier in the civil war, wounded in a terrific battle at Fort Wagner, was asked by an army chaplain: 'Do you ever pray?' 'Sometimes,' was the answer. 'I prayed last Saturday night when we were in that fight at Wagner; I guess everybody prayed then.'" (2) Ahab has so little in common with Jehovah that he learned his will only through another. Though Jehovah was his greatest ally he was not on speaking terms with him.

3. *The vulnerable spot*. The finest organization of Syria was vulnerable through drunkenness. At present many nations are learning that the drink-habit is a treacherous ally. Let us pray that our empire may overcome this evil forever. Drunkenness, however, is often a symptom of more subtle evils. No society is safe until every demon of society is removed. Let us apply to Canada the words of Blake:

"I will not cease from mental fight  
Nor shall the sword sleep in my hand,  
Till we have built Jerusalem  
In England's green and fertile land."

#### For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

By Rev. A. Wylie Mahon, B.D., Toronto

Question the class about the progress made during the year in Canada in prohibiting the sale of strong drink. To what extent is prohibition prohibiting? Refer to the statistics of the police courts in the matter of arrests for drunkenness. Ask the scholars what they think of the campaign which is on for Dominion-wide prohibition. Ask for the title of the lesson. Drunkenness has nothing but defeats to record; it has no victories, except the victory over manhood, over everything that goes to make this world a good place to live in. Note that its victories are all defeats. In this lesson we have a good illustration of how drunkenness contributed to the defeat of the Syrian king, Benhadad and his host, that had invaded Israel and besieged Samaria. The following outline will serve for teaching purposes:



1. *Benhadad's Notes*, vs. 1-12. Remind the class that Benhadad was the man of ancient history who had a craze for sending notes. What was his first insulting message (vs. 2, 3), and what was Ahab's cowardly answer? (V. 4.) How can we account for a shameful answer like this? Perhaps Shakespeare's words may throw some light upon this matter: "Conscience does make cowards of us all." Ahab had sinned away his manhood. What was the second irritatingly insulting message which Benhadad sent? (Vs. 5, 6.) What did Ahab do about it? Heartened by the elders, he refused to submit. What was Benhadad's third message? (V. 10.) What did he mean by this? What was Ahab's reply? (V. 11.) Note that Benhadad was getting too drunk to exchange any further notes.

2. *A Divine Message*, vs. 13, 14. Note that a prophet appears on the scene with a message of encouragement from the Lord. Why did God intervene to save a poor miserable sinner like Ahab? How was the victory to be won? (V. 14.) Refer to the victories which have been won largely by the young men in the great War. Note what a power for good a young man often is when all his strength and enthusiasm are under Christ's controlling power.

3. *A Great Slaughter*, vs. 15-21. Ask for a description of the scene, how the victory was won. Why was the victory so easily won? Note that a drunken soldier is of less value than a dead one. Show how drunkenness takes all the good out of men. Let us abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. Harold W. Lyons, B.A., Toronto

To-day's lesson for the boys and girls might be centred around one word in v. 16,— "But." Benhadad, at the head of his great army, might easily have defeated the insignificant force of Samaria; *but*—he was drinking when the attack of the defenders came. Ahab might have basely submitted to the demands of his enemy and have been justly punished for his baseness and his idolatry; *but* (the first "but")—a prophet came with a message: "Thus saith the Lord."

Many a boy might have been an honored man and a useful citizen: *but*—he started to drink and lies now in a potter's field. Many a boy might have remained a drunkard: *but*—the grace of God and the helping hands of their friends transformed them into good men. The depth of tragedy, the height of hope there is in that one little word!

1. Help the scholars to realize the force of this word from the story. Have them picture the assembling of the Syrian army, its equipment, its method of marching and transport. Why did Benhadad attack Samaria? Was it because of the fertile fields, the vines and the olive trees, and the wealth and the luxury of the capital? Did the Syrians wish to conquer Samaria in order to give it better government, or mainly to secure plunder?

2. Have one of the scholars represent a member of Ahab's council, and tell of its deliberations upon Benhadad's demands. Note carefully that when things were blackest for the city, when defeat seemed certain, there is the first "but"—although it has been translated "and." The prophet brought his message from Jehovah. Bring out the effect of this message upon the defenders of the city.

3. Have another scholar represent one of the nobles in the army of Ahab, and relate what would have been his experiences. Two things will be emphasized: (1) the surprise attack upon the Syrians at noon, in the heat of the day when all work is usually at a standstill; (2) the second "but," the great reason for Ahab's success—"but Benhadad was drinking himself drunk . . . he and the kings . . . that helped him."

4. What do the scholars wish the record of history to be upon their lives? Is it to be: "He would have been a great man, *but*—he drank and could not be depended upon in a crisis. He had a splendid education, *but*—drunkenness robbed his memory and bewitched his senses. He would have been an honor to his father and mother, *but*—he broke their hearts, destroying their happiness and killing his own soul." Or is it to be: "He was an average boy, *but* God gave him strength and his heart was pure, his hands clean, his record free from all reproach." Which "but" will the scholar choose?

## ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

ANSWERS, Lesson IV.—(1) Prov. 11 : 1.  
(2) 2 Chron. 9 : 7.

## Something to Look Up

[From the INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY and LEAFLET.]

1. "Before honour is humility," says Solomon. Find this proverb.

2. Where is it written that wine bites like a serpent and stings like an adder?

## For Discussion

[From the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY and LEAFLET.]

1. Is it safe for any one to use strong drink?
2. Can one use drink and be efficient?

## Prove from Scripture

That drink leads to error.

## FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, Toronto

*A Look Forward*—We see God teaching his people that strong drink is dangerous.

*Lesson Thought*—Impress the thought that those who use strong drink are unfitted to do their work and bring trouble upon themselves and others.

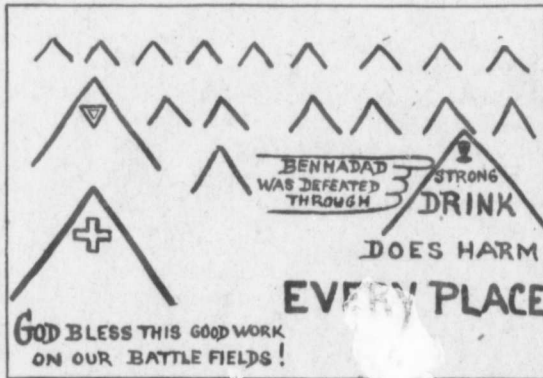
*Approach to the Lesson*—Outline two tents.

*Some Tents on our Battlefields*—On one tent make a red cross (red chalk, or cut from picture). The red cross stands for a society which takes care of sick and wounded soldiers.

This tent is a Red Cross hospital tent. (Perhaps the little ones have seen a nurse with a red cross badge on her arm.) On this tent outline a red triangle and print Y.M.C.A. (explain). This is another kind of tent which may be seen upon our battlefields. In the Red Cross tent the doctors and nurses help to make the sick and wounded soldiers strong men so they will be able to fight for us. In the Y.M.C.A. Red Triangle tents the workers do all they can to help to make the soldiers good men, who will fight against wrong-doing and do what Jesus would like to see them doing (explain). There is sometimes a Red Triangle hut right in amongst the trenches where the soldiers are keeping watch day and night and into these huts the soldiers go to get a warm drink of tea or coffee.

*A Harmful Tent on a Battlefield*—Our lesson tells us about quite a different kind of tent on a battlefield long, long ago, when Benhadad, the heathen king of Syria, came with his great army to fight against Samaria in the

land of God's people of Israel. Let us look into one of these tents. The men are all drinking wine and strong drink. King Benhadad is there with a drinking cup at his lips and there are thirty-two kings with him who are his allies or helpers in this war.



*Lesson*—Here are the tents of Benhadad's soldiers around the city of Samaria (outlines).

Tell v. 2. The king of Israel was afraid when he saw their big army and promised to give the enemy king all he asked for. But Ahab's wise old men advised him not to give in to the boastful king, so Ahab sent messengers back to tell Benhadad that he would not obey him, v. 9. Tell his boastful reply.

*Golden Text*—Explain and repeat. This made Benhadad angrier than before. Strong drink was taking away his senses so he could not lead his soldiers to battle himself, but he ordered them to begin the battle.

*A Message from God for his People*—Tell vs. 13, 14. Picture that small army of the young men of Israel coming out to fight that great army. God had promised them victory

and they were not afraid. Tell the rest of the story.

*Strong Drink Caused the Defeat*—Impress the thought that it was strong drink that caused Benhadad to lose the battle. Let us ask God to put "strong drink" tents away from our battlefields, so that our soldiers will

be sober, good, brave men, who will go out to win the battles. Ask God to help the Red Cross tents and the Red Triangle tents to carry on their good work. (Simple prayer repeated after the teacher.)

*What the Lesson Teaches Me*—STRONG DRINK WOULD DO ME HARM.

### FROM THE PLATFORM



Call for the repetition by the School of the Golden Text. Be sure that the scholars understand that "harness" means "armor." Ask who it was in the lesson that was boasting and have the scholars tell you what came of his boast. With a little questioning you will get the word DEFEAT (Print). Next, question out what it really was that caused the defeat of Benhadad and his army. It will not be difficult to bring out the answer, DRINK (Print). Now make the application to the present day. Use illustrations to show how drink causes defeat by weakening the body which ought to be strong, by clouding the mind which ought to be clear, by weakening the will which ought to be able to make and keep good resolutions. Print BRINGS, and impress on the scholars the importance of avoiding the drink that brings defeat in life's battles.

#### Lesson VI.

### NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER

November 11, 1917

Nehemiah 1 : 1-11. Scripture Memory Verses.

**GOLDEN TEXT**—Whatever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.—1 John 3 : 22 (Rev. Ver.)

1 The words of Nehemiah the son of <sup>1</sup> Hachali'ah.

<sup>2</sup> And it came to pass in the month <sup>3</sup> Chis'leu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shu'shan the palace,

<sup>4</sup> That Hana'ni, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men <sup>5</sup> of Ju'dah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jeru'salem.

<sup>6</sup> And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jeru'salem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

<sup>7</sup> And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned *certain* days, and <sup>8</sup> fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,

<sup>9</sup> And said, I beseech thee, O Lord <sup>10</sup> God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy <sup>11</sup> for them that love him and <sup>12</sup> observe his commandments:

<sup>13</sup> Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest <sup>14</sup> hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee <sup>15</sup> now, day and night, for the children of Is'rael thy servants, <sup>16</sup> and confess the sins of the children of Is'rael, which we have sinned

**Revised Version**—<sup>1</sup> Hachalish; <sup>2</sup> Now it; <sup>3</sup> Chislew; <sup>4</sup> out of; <sup>5</sup> I fasted; <sup>6</sup> th; <sup>7</sup> with; <sup>8</sup> keep; <sup>9</sup> hearken unto; <sup>10</sup> at this time, day and night; <sup>11</sup> while I confess; <sup>12</sup> yea, I; <sup>13</sup> judgements; <sup>14</sup> trespass; <sup>15</sup> peoples; <sup>16</sup> return; <sup>17</sup> your outcasts were in the uttermost; <sup>18</sup> cause my name to dwell there; <sup>19</sup> delight; <sup>20</sup> (Now I was cup-bearer to the king.)

against thee: <sup>12</sup> both I and my father's house have sinned.

<sup>7</sup> We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the <sup>12</sup> judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Mo'ses.

<sup>8</sup> Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Mo'ses, saying, *If ye* <sup>14</sup> transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the <sup>15</sup> nations:

<sup>9</sup> But *if ye* <sup>16</sup> turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though <sup>17</sup> there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, *yet* will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to <sup>18</sup> set my name there.

<sup>10</sup> Now these *are* thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.

<sup>11</sup> O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who <sup>19</sup> desire to fear thy name and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and <sup>20</sup> grant him mercy in the sight of this man. <sup>20</sup> For I was the king's cupbearer.



## LESSON PLAN

- I. The Report from Judah, 1-3.  
 II. Nehemiah's Deep Sorrow and Prayer, 4-11.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)

M.—Nehemiah's prayer, Neh. 1: 1-11. T.—Solomon's prayer, 1 Kgs. 8: 44-53. W.—The model prayer, Matt. 6: 5-15. Th.—"Ask in faith," James 1: 1-7. F.—"Ask and ye shall receive," John 16: 23-30. S.—"Trust. Delight. Commit. Rest. Wait," Ps. 37: 1-9. S.—"We receive of him," 1 John 3: 18-24.

**Primary Catechism**—*Ques. 55. How may we get the Holy Spirit?* Jesus says that God will give his Holy Spirit to us if we ask him.

**Shorter Catechism**—*Ques. 105. What do we pray for in the fifth petition?* A. In the fifth petition (which is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*) we

pray, That God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others. *Ques. 106. What do we pray for in the sixth petition?* A. In the sixth petition (which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*), we pray, That God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

**Lesson Hymns**—Book of Praise: Memory Hymn—Primary, 174 Junior, 19, 394, 398, 404, 402.

**Special Scripture Reading**—Psalm 125; given also in Departmental Graded Teacher's Quarterlies. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

**Hymn for Opening Worship**—Hymn 293, Book of Praise; given also in Departmental Graded Quarterlies.

**Lantern Slides**—For Lesson, B. 1383, Nehemiah's Prayer. For Question ( ) Missions, C. 30, Dr. Leslie and Assistants. (Slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto.)

## THE LESSON EXPLAINED

**Time and Place**—B.C. 445; Susa.

**Connecting Links**—(See Lesson IV., October 28)—The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah make up one book. Ezra narrates two events: (1) the return of the exiles, according to the decree of Cyrus, in B.C. 537 (see chs. 1-6); (2) a second return under Cyrus and his activity in Jerusalem in B.C. 458 (see chs. 7-10). The second part of this narrative is partly extracted from Ezra's personal memoirs. The Book of Nehemiah is largely made up of Nehemiah's own records, and relates the important events of his time, between B.C. 445 and B.C. 432.

## I. The Report from Judah, 1-3.

V. 1. *The words*; the story of Nehemiah written by himself. Chs. 1: 1 to 7: 5 contain a long quotation from Nehemiah's autobiography. *Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah*; so designated to distinguish him from the Nehemiah of Ezra 2: 2 and Neh. 3: 16. This first phrase is the heading or title of the book. The name Nehemiah means "comfort of Jehovah." *Chisleu*; the ninth month in the Jewish calendar, corresponding to our November-December. *Twentieth year*; of Artaxerxes, called Longimanus—"long handed." He came to the Persian throne in B.C. 464. *Shushan*; or Susa; the winter residence of the Persian kings, Ecbatana, in the mountains east of Assyria, being the summer residence. There were many Jews in the city. It was 1,000 miles from Jerusalem. *The palace*; Rev. Ver. Margin, "castle." It was a fortress or stronghold.

V. 2. *Hanani, etc.*; possibly an actual

brother, though the word may mean "cousin" or "relative." *Certain men of Judah*; Rev. Ver., "out of Judah," fresh arrivals bringing the latest news. *I asked*; with eager interest. *Concerning the Jews*. Nehemiah's first concern was about the people. *That had escaped*; who were free from the thralldom of the Exile, both the descendants of those who had not been carried into captivity and those who had previously returned to Jerusalem. *Which were left*; a technical term,—the "remnant"—those exempt from the hardships of the captivity. *Concerning Jerusalem*. Nehemiah's second inquiry was about the holy city.

V. 3. *The remnant*. See on v. 2. *In the province*. Judah, with its capital Jerusalem, was now a district in the Persian province of Transpotamia, "beyond the River." *In great affliction and reproach*. "Affliction" describes the evil plight within the walls and "reproach" the scornful attitude of enemies without. The people of Judah were crushed and broken-spirited. Their taxes were heavy, they were cruelly oppressed by Persian officials, and were forced to serve in Persian armies. *The wall . . . broken down . . . the gates . . . burned with fire*. The reference is likely to some recent disaster. Probably some attempt to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem had been thwarted by the machinations of the Samaritan chiefs (see Ezra 4: 6-23).

## II. Nehemiah's Deep Sorrow and Prayer, 4-11.

Vs. 4, 5. *Sat down and wept, and mourned*. Nehemiah's sudden grief shows that the bad



news was unexpected. Nehemiah's grief over the ruins of the walls of Jerusalem showed that he was the man to rebuild them. *Fasted, and prayed*; prayed long, and so earnestly that he often abstained from food. *Before*; "in the presence of," as of a mighty king. This went on for some time. It was four months before Nehemiah set out for the West (compare v. 1 with ch. 2:1; "Nisan" was the first month of the Jewish year). *God of heaven*; a title very common in Persian inscriptions of this period, indicating that the Almighty dwelt in the "heaven of heavens," beyond the visible sky and ruled over the whole universe. *Great and terrible*. Nehemiah recognizes the might and majesty of God, as well as his mercy and longsuffering. *That keepeth covenant*. Jehovah had bound himself to Israel by certain promises, and Israel's security depended upon his faithfulness.

Vs. 6, 7. *Ear . . . attentive*; to Nehemiah's prayer. *Eyes open*; to the misery of the people and the grief of their intercessor. Nehemiah attributes to God the form of a man. *Confess the sins*. Nehemiah recognized the truth that sin lay at the root of his people's troubles. Ever since the exile the Jews have been very sensitive to sin; the sufferings of the sixth century made a deep impression upon them. *We*. Nehemiah counts himself a sharer in the great wickedness which has brought such misfortunes on his people. *Dealt very corruptly*. They must have wronged God very greatly to be chastened so severely. *Commandments*; the laws which God, a ruler and judge, had enacted. *Statutes*; literally, "what is engraved," a law carved on stone or metal, God's written requirements. *Judgments*; divine decisions as to right and wrong.

Vs. 8, 9. *Remember . . . the word*. God had given his promise; he could not break it. The quotation which follows corresponds in thought to Deut. 30:1-5. *If ye return unto me* (Rev. Ver.); the beautiful concrete Old Testament word for repentance: (1) it is a turning back; (2) it is a turning back to Jehovah. Here it practically means to keep his commandments. *Outcasts . . . in the uttermost part of the heaven . . . I . . . will bring them* (Rev. Ver.). In the captivity of God's people

was to be seen the fulfilment of his word of threatening; as surely the fulfilment of his word of promise would be seen in their restoration.

Vs. 10, 11. *Thy servants . . . thy people*; with whom God had made his covenant. *Redeemed*; delivered. *By thy great power*; shown, for example, in the rescue from Egypt, the victories of Joshua, the overthrow of Sennacherib's army, etc. *Delight to fear thy name* (Rev. Ver.); to reverence God for all that he is,—wise, loving, tender and faithful. *Mercy in the sight of this man*; the despotic and capricious Artaxerxes; Nehemiah depends upon God to move the king's heart to grant his request. *The king's cupbearer*; an office of great trust and influence in an Eastern court. Nehemiah was resolved to use it for the good of his people.

#### Light from the East

"SHUSHAN THE PALACE"—SUSA or Shushan was once the capital of Elam, and later the capital of Persia. It lay on one of the lower levels that rise step by step from the great plain of Babylonia to the high tableland that is Persia to-day. It lay near a group of streams that opened a way behind to the highlands and that led down to the Persian gulf. It was about 150 miles north of the head of the gulf and 150 miles east of what to-day is the town of Kut-el-Amara. After lying in ruins for more than a thousand years, the site was visited by an English explorer, Loftus, in 1850. But the main work of digging out the ruins has been done by two Frenchmen, first by Dieulafoy, beginning in 1884, and later by de Morgan. "To the traveler crossing the level plains, the mounds of Susa appear to rise to a great height and it is not difficult to imagine how imposing they must have been, crowned with splendid edifices and probably set in palm groves amid a sea of waving corn, the whole picture being backed by range after range of grim mountains rising in sombre majesty to snow-capped peaks" (Sykes). Particularly splendid was the great throne room of the palace of the great kings. It was at Susa that de Morgan discovered the laws of Hammurabi engraved on stone, the oldest code of laws the world has revealed to us.

## THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Shushan, meaning "a lily," the Susa of the Greeks, now Sus or Shush in southwestern Persia, was one of the three capitals of the Persian empire, situated about 250 miles east of Babylon on one of the branches of the Tigris (see Light from the East). Long before it became the Persian capital it was the capital of Elam. "About B.C. 647, after a long and desperate struggle, the Elamite forces were annihilated by the Assyrian army of Assurbanipal, and Susa was captured and razed to the ground. The images of its gods and kings were taken



to Assyria, and the monuments of its former princes were destroyed, the bones of their occupants being scattered to the winds. When Susa rose again from its ashes we do not know. Cyrus made it his capital." In Dan. 8: 2 the prophet

is said to have had a vision at "Shushan the palace" in "the third year of Belshazzar." An account of the palace in the time of Xerxes is given in Esth. 1: 2-7. When Susa was entered by Alexander the Great he found in it twelve millions sterling and the Persian regalia.

## THE LESSON APPLIED

*Talk it over, v. 2.* There is such a thing as the religious use of conversation. Some people say sneeringly, "It's only talk," forgetful of the fact that without talk the world would make but little progress. James Chalmers, the great missionary, tells us of how he came to the great decision of his life. It was at Sunday School, and the superintendent announced that he was going to read an interesting letter from a missionary in Fiji. The letter was read, telling of cannibalism and the power of the gospel, and then the superintendent, with wet eyes, looking over his spectacles, said: "I wonder if there is a boy here this afternoon who will yet become a missionary and by and by bring the gospel to the cannibals." And the response of James Chalmers was, "Yes, God helping me, I will."

*There are serious breaches in God's church to-day, v. 3.* The walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the gates thereof were burned with fire. God's church and kingdom have not come down the years unscathed. Our unhappy divisions and compromise with the world and want of zeal in God's service and all the other things that raise the question, "What's the matter with the church?" are the devastations of the enemy.

*"Is it nothing to you . . . ?" v. 4.* We have heard of "the sorrows of Satan." How dif-

ferent the sorrows of Nehemiah, weeping over the fallen condition of Jerusalem. To all the apathy and indifference of to-day he would seem to say, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me."

*Let us now adore him, v. 5.* Nehemiah's prayer is a model to all time and begins with adoration. Dr. A. J. Gordon describes the impression made upon his mind by intercourse with Joseph Rabinowitz, whom Dr. Delitzsch regarded as the most remarkable convert since Saul of Tarsus. "We shall not soon forget the radiance that would come into his face as he expounded the Messianic Psalms and how, as here and there he caught a glimpse of the suffering or glorified Christ, he would suddenly lift his eyes and hands to heaven in a burst of adoration, saying, 'My Lord and my God.'"

*We should pray for our country, v. 6.* Nehemiah pleaded with God for Israel and so should we lose ourselves in intercession for the British empire at this strange and solemn time. Let us pray for our fighting men on field or flood and for victory, and that God may make us fit to wear the garland of victory when it comes.

Let us plead his promises, vs. 8, 9. God hath spoken good concerning the old Israel and the new. When David Livingstone was in a very tight place surrounded by treacherous savages, he wrote in his journal, "Felt much turmoil of spirit in view of having all my plans knocked on the head by savages tomorrow. But Jesus came and said: 'All power is given unto me . . . Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' It is the word of a gentleman of the most sacred honor and there is an end on't. I will not cross furtively by night as I intended. It would appear as flight, and should such a man as I flee?"

Pray definitely, v. 11. Some years ago there was a wonderful work of grace in connection with the China Inland Mission. This rich harvest of souls remained a mystery until Hudson Taylor on a visit to England discovered the secret. At the close of one of his addresses, a gentleman came forward to make his acquaintance. Mr. Taylor was surprised at the accuracy and fulness of his knowledge concerning the China Inland Mission. "But how is it," Mr. Taylor asked him, "that you are so conversant with the conditions of the

work?" "Oh," he replied, "the missionary there and I are old college mates; for years we have regularly corresponded; he has sent me names of enquirers and converts and these I have daily taken to God in prayer." That is the right kind of intercession,—a praying man at home praying definitely for specific cases.

Ask in faith, nothing doubting. God would have us honor him by making large drafts upon his almighty power. "Ask, and it shall be given you." "When, Sir Walter," said Queen Elizabeth to that gallant knight, Raleigh, who was persistently interceding for offenders, "when will you cease to be a beggar?" "When your majesty will cease to be a benefactor," was the reply. Not until God changes his nature do we need to ask doubtingly. True, our own hearts condemn us and tell us that we do not deserve good things of God. Nor do we, but then God is greater than our hearts. Once when Cæsar gave a certain man a great reward, the recipient said, "This is too great a gift for me to receive." "But," said Cæsar, "it is not too great a gift for me to give." So then whatever it is good to wish, ask that of heaven.

### THE LESSON GRADED

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

#### For Teachers of Bible Classes

Accepting the view that Nehemiah was the successor of Ezra, how many years elapsed after Ezra's return to Jerusalem before Nehemiah came to his assistance? What were the conditions which Ezra found in the country? (Read Ezra, chs. 9, 10.) In what state did Nehemiah find the country? (Read Neh. 2: 11-15; 5: 1-19; 13: 15.) What conclusions shall we draw from these facts? Why do the Jews in Babylon seem to be superior to those in Judah, religiously? What can account for the moral and spiritual retrogression in Judah? Evidently, it is not enough to enter upon a work with great enthusiasm and high ideals.

1. *Noblesse oblige*, vs. 1-4. Though Nehemiah had attained high position and wealth in the service of the Persian king, yet his

heart was set not so much upon honors as upon the welfare of his people and particularly Jerusalem. The snob looks upon position and wealth as means for lifting him above his fellows, or as means for exploiting them. But God's nobleman regards every gift as a means for aiding his fellows. Nehemiah belongs to that aristocracy which has taken for its motto, "noblesse oblige,"—high rank brings heavy responsibilities. The lives of men like Sir Robert Hart, Lord Shaftesbury, Wendell Phillips immediately suggest themselves:

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp  
A man's a man for a' that."

2. *Nehemiah's prayer*, vs. 5-11. This prayer sheds light upon the character of Nehemiah. Clearly his sympathy for his fellows was quickened by his deep religious feelings. Love of God and love of man go together. His religious life was not perfunctory. His fasting reveals its intensity. Ought we to discipline ourselves for religious ends? A certain



Roman Catholic has declared Protestantism to be "the abolition of all effort, of all struggle, of all self-sacrifice." Is there a danger that Protestants may grow lax in the practice of religion?

The prayer of Nehemiah ought to be carefully studied. (1) He begins with *worship*. He strengthens his faith by recalling the character of him whom he worshiped. What attributes does he ascribe to God in these verses? (2) He makes *confession* of sin. He identifies himself with his fellows. (3) He is *persistent* (compare Luke 18 : 1-5)—"day and night," v. 6. (4) He prays in accordance with God's spirit, for his petitions are based on God's words, vs. 8, 9. (5) His petitions are not for himself but for opportunity to serve his fellows. How does this prayer compare with those in the New Testament? What should govern the form of our prayers?

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Uttered or unexpressed,  
The motion of a hidden fire  
That trembles in the breast."

### For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Question the class about the most distinguished Hebrews of the captivity,—Daniel and his three companions, and Ezekiel, and Ezra, and Nehemiah. How was it that these members of a slave race attained to such distinction in the land of their captivity? The secret is to be found in the fact that God's good hand was upon them. Their religious principles had everything to do with their success. Bring out that true success in life is always the result of working out the life in God's way. What office did Nehemiah hold in the Persian empire? Nehemiah was a friend of the king, but above everything else he was a friend of God, a man who wore the white flower of a blameless life. Max Muller says that the most interesting part of a man's life is his faults. Ask the scholars what they think of a saying like this. Is it not true that the most interesting part of a man's life is what is Christlike? Nehemiah's life was good all through. Note that we have an important incident in his life told by himself in the passage before us.

1. *A Distressful Report*, vs. 1-3. What

was this report and who brought it? Why were the Jews in Palestine in such straits? Note that Hanani and the other men of Judah who had returned from a visit to Palestine had bad news for Nehemiah. Bring out that they had to be questioned before they would tell the bad news. Sometimes evil news rides post. Some people like to be the bearers, but right-minded people love to carry good news.

2. *A Passionate Prayer*, vs. 4-11. What effect did the distressful report have upon Nehemiah? Bring out what a great heart-break it was to him. He was well fixed himself and might have said: "I am very sorry for my friends and relatives in Palestine, but what can I do about it?" That was not the kind of patriot Nehemiah was. We have heard men at home talk in this way about the poor Belgians, men who ought to have been at the front. How did Nehemiah interpret the trouble which had come to the Jews? Note that he does not rail in a patriotic way against the treatment they were receiving from the Persians, but finds the fault in themselves. The first thing for any one to do is to make sure that his own life is right in God's sight. Is there any hope? (Vs. 8, 9.) He prays himself into the light of God's promises. It is a great thing to be able under all circumstances to pray ourselves into the light of God's countenance.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

To-day's lesson is a lesson on prayer. In preparation for it have one of the boys or girls look up Tennyson's reference in the *Idylls of the King*, the *Passing of Arthur*: "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Others of the scholars might memorize some of the great promises of the Bible. The teacher will find *The Meaning of Prayer*, by Fosdick, very helpful and suggestive in studying this whole question.

1. Bring out, by means of a short travel talk, the route Hanani would take to go to Shushan to confer with Nehemiah. How would the scholars go from their homes to the same place to-day?

2. Who was Nehemiah? Note that he lived 140 years after the destruction of Jeru-



salem ; and that possibly he was of the royal house of David. He was highly educated, deeply religious even amidst the luxuries of a heathen court, courageous, and, above all, a true patriot with a great yearning for Jerusalem.

3. How was this yearning shown when news came of the desperate state of affairs in Jerusalem? Bring out clearly the following elements in Nehemiah's prayer :

(a) Knowledge of the sorrows and needs of Jerusalem aroused Nehemiah's intense sympathy. That is natural in a patriot. (See Ps. 137 : 5, 6.)

(b) Sympathy filled him with a desire to help, to place his life alongside those who were in distress, v. 11. Such sympathy should always be the parent of a self-sacrificing life.

(c) That desire drove him back on God, in whom alone he could find divine help, wis-

dom, guidance, v. 5. All true service is service *with* God. (See Matt. 7 : 21-23.)

(d) Approach to God brought a willingness to put away sin, the greatest barrier to a full and free communion with him, vs. 6, 7. We can do this through Jesus.

(e) Nehemiah believed absolutely that God would answer his prayer. He did not ask once or twice and forget ; he did not grow discouraged although the months passed ; he did not insist on the answer coming in any way but as God himself willed.

4. What can the boys and girls do for their friends, their country, for children in non-Christian lands? What does Tennyson say? What does Jesus say? Emphasize that one of the greatest forces helping the missionaries to-day is the intelligent, persistent, earnest prayers of those who already love God.

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

#### Something to Look Up

1. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," said John. Give the book, chapter and verse.

2. Where does Peter say we should cast all our care upon God?

ANSWERS, Lesson V.—(1) Prov. 15 : 33.

(2) Prov. 22 : 32.

#### For Discussion

1. Does religion make people truer patriots?

2. Is faith a help or a hindrance to active effort?

#### Prove from Scripture

That prayer should be constant.

### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*A Look Forward*—Our lesson shows God teaching his people that they may ask him for things which they need.

**NEHEMIAH**  
 THE KING'S CUPBEARER  
 PRAYED TO GOD TO  
 HELP HIM TO HELP HIS  
 COUNTRY—

**O, GOD HELP ME TO DO  
 SOMETHING TO HELP  
 MY COUNTRY!**

*Lesson Thought*—Teach the children that they may bring all their wants to God in prayer.

*Approach to the Lesson*—We are going to hear about a man who lived in a palace. "Oh," you say, "that must be a king, for only kings live in palaces." Yes, but the king's family and friends and officers and servants live in the palace too.

The man in our story was a high officer of the king of Persia. He lived many hundred years ago in the palace of the heathen king

in Shushan (map). (Outline a palace or show picture.) His name was Nehemiah (print). He was cupbearer to the king. That means that it was his duty to taste all the wine that was given to the king to be sure that it was good wine. (See Lesson Explained.) The cupbearer had to carry the wine cup on a tray and hand it himself to the king. It had to be a very trustworthy man who was chosen to be the king's cupbearer. Nehemiah belonged to God's people who had been carried away captive from Jerusalem. Many of them had gone back to their old home, but Nehemiah stayed in the place of the king of Persia.

*Nehemiah's Visitors*—Let us make a "mind visit" to Nehemiah's room (outline or picture; point out a window). This is his room. We go in at the big door and along marble halls till we come to the door of Nehemiah's room. We open the door and look in. The floor and walls are of marble. There is a couch near the window and two or three heavy arm chairs around the room. Some visitors have come to see him (picture), vs. 1-3. Near the window sits Nehemiah. His hands are covering his face. He is weeping. What is the matter? The visitors have been telling Nehemiah some sad news. "How are our friends who went back to Jerusalem getting on?" Nehemiah had asked, and then he

heard a very sad story (v. 3), and Nehemiah sat and wept. His visitors went away.

*Nehemiah's Prayer*—For many days after that Nehemiah fasted (explain) and prayed to God to help his people in Jerusalem, vs. 4-11.

*Prayer and Work*—Nehemiah prayed and also worked. He made up his mind that he would ask the king of Persia to allow him to go to Jerusalem to help his people. (Let us all clasp our hands as Nehemiah did when he prayed and all repeat v. 11.)

*Copying Nehemiah's Love for Country*—Nehemiah loved his country. We should love our own Canada and our motherland, Great Britain, over the sea. There are so many things we may ask God to do for our people now, and so many ways in which even little people may help. Teachers will speak of some things which appeal most to those in their class. All repeat a simple prayer.

*Golden Text*—Repeat and explain.

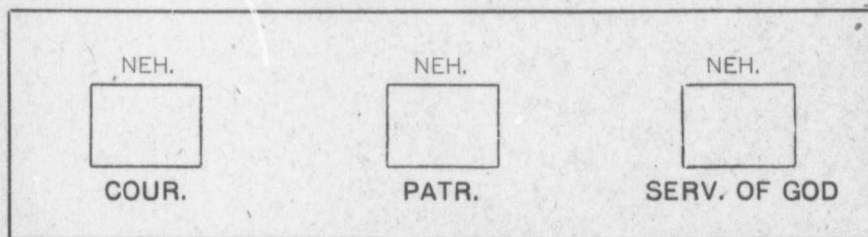
*Sing*—Hymn 404, Book of Praise.

*My Verse*—

"Not all can go; not all can give,  
To arm our country for the fray,  
But young or old, or rich or poor,  
Or strong or weak—we all can pray."

*What the Lesson Teaches Me*—I MAY ASK GOD FOR ALL THAT I NEED.

### FROM THE PLATFORM



Draw on the blackboard three squares to stand for the three pictures, which, you may tell the scholars, are to be found in the lesson. Get from them the name of the one man who appears in all the pictures, namely, Nehemiah, and print at the top of each frame, NEH. Ask the scholars where Nehemiah, in v. 1, tells us he was, and, by further questions, elicit the title given to the men who are about the king in his palace, that is, "courtiers," and print COUR. below the first frame. The first picture then may be entitled NEHEMIAH THE COURTIER. In like manner question on vs. 2-4, bringing out the fact that Nehemiah here shows himself to be a "patriot." Print PATR. below the second frame. Next, ask what title Nehemiah gives to himself in v. 6,—"servant" of God, and print SERV. OF GOD below the third frame. The

application is that all should be servants of God and patriots, that is, lovers of country, and show their patriotism by praying and working for their country.

## Lesson VII.

## NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER ANSWERED November 18, 1917

Nehemiah 2 : 1-11. Scripture Memory Verses.

GOLDEN TEXT—Ask, and it shall be given you.—Matthew 7 : 7.

1 And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, <sup>1</sup>that wine was before <sup>2</sup>him; and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been *beforetime sad* in his presence.

2 <sup>3</sup>Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid.

3 And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

5 And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when

Revised Version—when; <sup>2</sup>him, that I; <sup>3</sup>And the; <sup>4</sup>let me pass through till; <sup>5</sup>unto; <sup>6</sup>castle; <sup>7</sup>appertaineth; <sup>8</sup>with me; <sup>9</sup>Omit with me; <sup>10</sup>And when; <sup>11</sup>for that.

## LESSON PLAN

I. Nehemiah's Sadness, 1, 2.

II. Nehemiah's Confession and Request, 3-8.

III. Nehemiah's Success and Difficulties, 9-11.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 55 Old Bailey, London, England.)

M.—Nehemiah's prayer answered, Neh. 2 : 1-11. T.—Elijah's prayer answered, 1 Kgs. 18 : 30-39. W.—Effectual prayer, James 5 : 11-18. Th.—A covenant-keeping God, Lev. 26 : 39-46. F.—The Lord heareth. Ps. 34 : 8-17. S.—A joyous return, Isa. 51 : 9-16. S.—Returning to the Lord, Hosea 6 : 1-7.

Primary Catechism—*Ques. 56. What will the Holy Spirit do for us? The Holy Spirit will dwell in our hearts, cleansing them from sin and helping us to be good.*

wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 And a letter unto A'saph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertaineth to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

9 Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.

10 When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

11 So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

11 So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

Shorter Catechism—*Ques. 107. What doth the conclusion of the Lord's prayer teach us? A. The conclusion of the Lord's prayer (which is, For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen) teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him. And, in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, Amen.*

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise: Memory Hymn—Primery, 17; Junior, 19, 403, 397, 580, 404.

Special Scripture Reading—Ps. 105 : 1-8; given also in Departmental Graded Teacher's Quarterlies. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Hymn for Opening Worship—Hymn 17, Book of Praise; given also in Departmental Graded Quarterlies.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 830, Nehemiah's Prayer Answered. For Question on Missions, C. 665, Men's Hospital. (Slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto.)

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## THE LESSON EXPLAINED

**Time and Place**—B.C. 445; four months after Nehemiah learned about the distress of the Jews and the desolation of Jerusalem (see last lesson); Susa.

**Connecting Links**—To-day's lesson follows directly upon that for last Sunday.

**I. Nehemiah's Sadness, 1, 2.**

V. 1. *In the month Nisan*; the first month of the Jewish year, our March-April. *Artaxerxes*; the same king as in our last lesson. He was the son of the famous Xerxes, the invader of Greece, the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther. *When wine was before him* (Rev. Ver.); when the king was at a repast. According to Rawlinson, the Persian king himself rarely dined with his guest, but, for the

most part, dined alone. Sometimes the queen and two or three of his children were admitted to the table. Occasionally at a "banquet of wine" (Esth. 7 : 2), a certain number of boon companions were received. *I took up the wine*; as cupbearer (see ch. 1 : 11), whose duties were to pour out the wine for the king, and, before presenting it, to taste it in order to prevent any scheme of poisoning. *Had not been beforetime sad*. Nehemiah had controlled his grief so as to appear cheerful in the king's presence until a favorable time came for making the request which was in his heart. Sadness was forbidden in the presence of the king.

V. 2. *Thy countenance sad*. It was Arta-



xerxes' business, as a king, to understand men, and he saw through Nehemiah's pretence of cheerfulness. *Not sick*; or one so well disposed towards him as the king would have known it. *Very sore afraid*. The great opportunity of pleading his people's cause was suddenly thrust upon him, and their destiny, perhaps his own life, depended upon his success. He was filled with fear for he well knew the capricious temper of Persian kings.

## II. Nehemiah's Confession and Request, 3-8.

Vs. 3, 4. *Let the king live for ever*; the usual words of formal address to a king. *Why should not my countenance be sad?* That is, how could it be otherwise than sad? *The place of my fathers' sepulchres*. Rich families amongst the Jews had their own places of burial,—rock-hewn tombs, caves, and the like. It has been supposed, from this verse, that Nehemiah belonged to the royal line of Judah, since Jerusalem was particularly the burying place of kings. *Gates . . . consumed with fire*. In those days a city without locked gates and lofty walls was no city at all. *For what dost thou make request?* The critical moment had arrived. *I prayed*. His fear drove him to prayer. It was a time of great emergency and, in a flash of thought, he turned from the Persian king to the King of kings for help.

Vs. 5, 6. *I said unto the king*; having sought wisdom from on high and asked God to move the king's heart to give a favorable reply. *Send me unto Judah*; a petition containing more than lies on the surface of the word. The subsequent narrative shows that the granting of it meant Nehemiah's appointment as governor of Jerusalem. *That I may build it*; that is, build the walls of Jerusalem,—a difficult and dangerous undertaking, for which, nevertheless, Nehemiah was willing to sacrifice his position of influence and ease at the court of Persia. *The king said*. Nehemiah's request was granted. *The queen also*; who may have been favorable to Nehemiah. *How long . . . when . . . return?* The king did not mean to permit Nehemiah to be absent indefinitely. *Set him a time*. Nehemiah seems to have remained in Jerusalem twelve years in all.

Vs. 7, 8. *Letters*; securing for Nehemiah a safe passage. *Governors*; rulers over provinces. *Beyond the river*; on the west bank of the Euphrates. *Let me pass through* (Rev. Ver.). The governors would not be asked to assist the journey, but to secure that Nehemiah should not be hindered or molested on the way. *Keeper of the king's forest*; perhaps one in the neighborhood, which had formerly belonged to the kings of Judah. This would supply timber for the city gates and houses and for the *castle* (Rev. Ver.) on the north side of the temple. For the temple itself costly cedar would have to be brought from the distant mountains of Lebanon in Phenician territory.

## III. Nehemiah's Success and Difficulties, 9-11.

Vs. 9-11. *Beyond the river*. Nehemiah's route would take him to Babylon, and thence to Hamath and Damascus. From Damascus he would travel either along the east of the Jordan, crossing it at Jericho or would cross the river by fords south of the Lake of Galilee. *Captains . . . and horsemen*; a military guard such as Ezra was ashamed to ask for, Ezra 8:22. *Sanballat the Horonite*; a dweller in Beth-horon, a town about 18 miles northwest of Jerusalem on the main road leading to the coast plain. Beth-horon commanded the pass into the mountains and hence was a place of great strategic importance. *Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite*. Sanballat and Tobiah appear throughout the Book of Nehemiah as his bitterest enemies. *Came to Jerusalem . . . there three days*; resting and exchanging Eastern courtesies with the principal people of the city.

### Light from the East

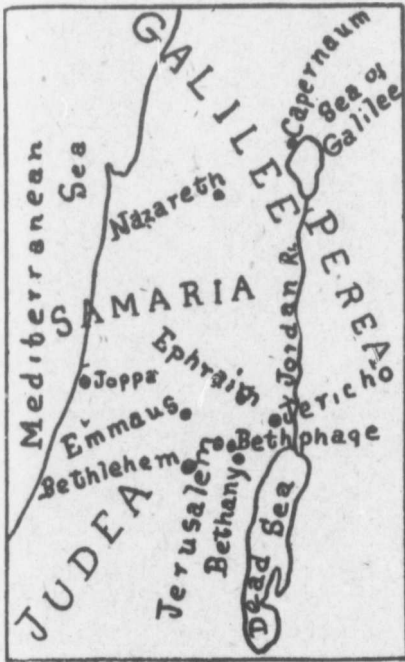
ARTAXERXES (B.C. 464-424)—Artaxerxes was a good-hearted but weak monarch who was ruled by his wives and favorites. He came to the throne as a mere boy when his father Xerxes was murdered by ambitious courtiers. The boy was induced to accuse his elder brother Darius of the crime, and to give an order for his execution, an order that was instantly carried out. Under such sinister auspices Artaxerxes became king. For some time Artabanus, one of the conspirators



against Xerxes, was the real king, but his ambition overreached itself and he disappeared to make way for another aspirant to power, one Megabyzus. For nearly 40 years Megabyzus was the chief advisor of the irresolute king at home and in his long struggle with Athenian soldiers in Egypt and Athenian ships on the Mediterranean. More than once he was disgraced and banished but the incompetent king could not get on without him.

With such a king, the Persian empire was only prevented from falling to pieces by the excellent organization which Darius had established about B.C. 520 and that held the empire together for more than a century and a half. All national spirit had been ground out of the people of the empire by the repeated conquests of Assyrian armies, and they were glad to live quietly under the lenient, if somewhat capricious, rule of Persian satraps.

### THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



The Persian province of Judea corresponded practically in extent to the kingdom of Judah before the captivity. Roughly speaking, its size would be about forty miles square. It comprises the southern part of Palestine with its centre in Jerusalem. Judah in the time of our lesson was much more fertile than at present, for it still had its forests, but at its best was a rocky province, broken here and there by fertile stretches. The great events of the Old Testament time occurred here, and here Christ was born, was crucified and rose again from the dead.

"Judah was far more inaccessible than the Northern tribes. Protected on the east by the wilderness, on the south by the Negeb, itself more or less of a wilderness, on the west by the low hills of the Shephelah, by the valley that divides it from the Central Range and the slopes of the Central Range itself, on the north by Benjamin with its fortresses, it lay far less open to invasion. When it was held by real defenders, it was necessary that the invaders should first master the surrounding country, and then deliver their attack across three of its borders."

### THE LESSON APPLIED

*This is no time for frivolity, v. 1.* Nehemiah was unable to indulge himself while his people were in dire straits. Think of the awful struggle going on to-day on the fields of Europe. Think of the troubles of little boys and girls in Belgium, Poland and Armenia. This is a day for living soberly and for walking humbly before God. Dr. Joseph Parker tells about a man who in the time of the Punic Wars had put a chaplet on his empty head

and put his head out of the window to look at the difficulties and hazards of the people and of how the Romans compelled him to remove his chaplet because it was unseemly that any one should flaunt his individual joys in the face of such public sorrows.

*Opportunity sometimes makes us fearful, v. 2.* This was just the chance that Nehemiah was looking for, but when it came he was sore afraid. We, too, dream of life and

of opportunities to do and be great things. When these opportunities rise up before us face to face with all the challenge to heroism and painstaking that they contain, it is not quite so easy to face the music. In such an hour may God help us all to "strive and hold cheap the strain."

*Every individual should become a public soul*, v. 3. Nehemiah tells the mighty monarch that he is sad because the place of his fathers' sepulchres was lying waste. Mr. Deakin, ex-premier of Australia, said some time ago: "The thing that touched me most in London when I came over to the coronation of King Edward was this: One night I had been to a great function and was wending my way home at midnight when I turned aside into a dark, narrow alley. On a doorstep there I saw a lad about twelve years of age, without any coat on. In his arms was a little girl of about three. This lad had taken off his coat and wrapped it round her and he had taken the cap off his head and put it on her bare feet." This one little scene gives us a peep into the woes of the world.

*Then we have to pray*, v. 4. The apostle bids us pray without ceasing. But then, when sudden dangers and opportunities cross our track, we do well to lift up our hearts to God for special aid with renewed importunity. This has been called ejaculatory prayers. It consumes no time and hinders no business and imparts to the user a central calm. It has been said that the great Gladstone habitually lifted up his heart to God in prayer as he was about to rise and deliver one of his famous speeches in the House of Commons.

*Do your bit*, v. 5. Nehemiah had a soft snap where he was; nevertheless he asked that he might be sent into Judah, into the city of his fathers' sepulchres to build it. He was the dead opposite of the man who says, "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." Like that incomparably greater one who was to come after, he conse-

crated himself for the sake of others. Rev. Thomas Law, when chairman of the Free Church Council of England, made a tour of this country and upon his return gave his impressions, one of which was this: "A new day would dawn for America if every member of the church were to become a public soul."

*Work and pray*, vs. 7, 8. Nehemiah prayed at the first as if work were no good and then he worked as if prayer were no good. He worked and prayed. It will not do for us to work or pray. We must work and pray. Work and prayer are the two oars of the little boat on the ocean great. Pull one oar only and we circle round to the right. Pull the other oar and we circle round to the left; but pull for the shore with both oars and we shall leave behind us a white wake pointing straight like an arrowhead to the goal of progress.

*Watch Sanballat*, v. 10. Men should rejoice in each other's prosperity but they are often envious. It is a terrible thing to be glad because others are sad and sad because others are glad. There is in every heart a budding Sanballat who must be taught his proper place, which of course is without the camp.

*We shall arrive by God's grace*, v. 11. When General Gordon went out upon his desperate mission to Khartoum against the insurgent Sudanese, he was said to have leaned heavily upon Browning's great saying:

"I go to prove my soul,

I see my way as birds their trackless way.

I shall arrive! What time, what circuit first,

I ask not; . . . . . I shall arrive

He guides me and the bird. In his good time."

"Ask, and it shall be given you" (Golden Text). He who spoke these words prayed constantly himself. His habit in this regard is an argument. Surely we may safely trust our instincts and pray. Phillips Brooks speaks somewhere of "the gracious mercy that binds omnipotence a willing servant to every humble human prayer."

### THE LESSON GRADED

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

#### For Teachers of Bible Classes

Review the main features of the previous

lesson. Nehemiah had been trained as a statesman, Ezra as a religious leader. Each was able to make his own contribution to the life of the Jews at Jerusalem. What special

work could Nehemiah do for them? In realizing God's kingdom upon the earth, men of very different gifts are required; not only the minister of religion, but the statesman, the business organizer, the editor, the teacher, and men of every walk in life can help. What service can you consecrate to the building of the new Jerusalem?

1. *A sad countenance*, vs. 1-3. This unaccustomed sadness drew the attention of the king to Nehemiah and prepared a way for the answer of his prayer. It indicates two or three features of Nehemiah's character: (1) His religion was of the sunny sort. He was not the kind of person "whose religion makes you glad that you are not religious." What elements in his religious belief contributed to happiness? (See last lesson.) (2) His service to the king was performed cheerfully. Perhaps his promotion was, in part, due to his cheerfulness. He was like the boy who tried to do twenty dollars' worth of work for the eight dollars which he received. (3) His sadness was not a bit of stage play; it came from a heart truly grieved for his fellows. He could not be happy when his people were unhappy.

2. *"I prayed . . . the God of heaven,"* vs. 4-8. (Read Prov. 3:1-4.) The character of Nehemiah was such that it was not hard for him to elicit the sympathy and interest of the king. Nehemiah was not a Warren Hastings. The king was certain that no requests of his would be selfish or vainglorious and that there would be no abuse of privileges. Before making any request of the king, Nehemiah appealed to the King of kings. (See Prov. 21:1.) He desired God to give him wisdom and guidance at that critical moment. The prayers of a man are the measure of him. "What it takes to meet his need is the gauge of his size." And the desires of a man are his most clamant prayers,—far louder than his spoken prayers. It is these desires, devilish or heavenly, which tend to bring their own answer. Nehemiah desired his people's welfare above everything and his desire found its fulfilment.

3. *"It grieved them . . . that there was come a man."* Nehemiah believed that God had some high destiny for his people. Through Jerusalem he was certain that God was to

bless the world. It is such a belief that makes a man a patriot. Before such a man the enemies of his land tremble. Burns had caught the spirit of this patriotism as he wrote:

"E'en then a wish (I mind its pow'r),  
A wish that to my latest hour,  
Shall strongly heave my breast,  
That I for poor auld Scotland's sake  
Some useful plan or book could make  
Or sing a song at least."

Canada needs men who are glad to do some unselfish service for Canada's sake.

The spirit of this lesson may be summed up in the words of John Burroughs, "If you have a thing in mind, it is not long before you have it in hand."

### For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Call for the title of the lesson and ask how long it took to get an answer. Why did it take four months for the answer to come? Note that when an answer to prayer is delayed it is not God's unwillingness to give but some unpreparedness on the part of ourselves or others to receive the blessing prayed for. Perhaps it took four months of praying to make Nehemiah himself strong enough to measure up to the situation. Note that Nehemiah found at last that he must do something himself to answer his own prayers. God is answering our prayers when he makes us capable of doing something to answer them ourselves. The lesson tells how the answer came.

1. *A Sad Countenance Challenged*, vs. 1-3. Dwell upon what an effort it must have been for Nehemiah always to wear a happy face in the king's presence during the four months that he had been brokenhearted over the condition of his people in Palestine, and bring out what a beautiful spirit is manifested in hiding sorrow from the world which always has more than enough of its own to bear. Some one has called this hypocrisy. Is it not rather Christian unselfishness? (See Matt. 6:16-18.) Note that the time came when Nehemiah's mourning face gave out. This shows how human he was. What happened then? He realized that this was his opportunity, and that he must make the most of it. Impress upon the class that our success

in life depends to a large extent on recognizing and improving opportunities when they come.

2. *A Patriotic Request Granted*, vs. 4-6. What was the request? Note how dependent Nehemiah was upon divine guidance, and how in the critical times of life the soul turns instinctively to God for help. Bring out that the beautiful way in which the king granted Nehemiah's request is evidence that God had been at work in the soul of Artaxerxes.

3. *A Troublesome Journey Completed*, vs. 7-11. What wise precaution did Nehemiah take before starting on the journey? (Vs. 7, 8.) Note that in life we must attend to everything as if everything depended upon ourselves, and at the same time trust God supremely to make our work a success. While trusting God we must not forget to keep our powder dry. Who were Sanballat and Tobiah, and why were their unrighteous souls vexed at Nehemiah's undertaking?

Bring out that a person who is grieved because some good has come to another is a poor sort, is a soul that has lost out of itself almost everything divine.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The key to to-day's lesson is found in the fourth verse. Nehemiah, after his four months of prayer, had come to Artaxerxes. The king commanded him to make his request for it was apparent he had something to ask. Nehemiah was brought to a "show down;" he had to choose quickly whether to let the matter drop or to do God's will. Because of his continued communion with God, because of his consciousness of God's presence with

him, he chose rightly. The entire lesson is the story of answer to prayer. But the answer came, the record was possible, because Nehemiah who was to be God's instrument, his workman, actually chose to do God's will.

1. It would help to visualize the story if the class represented the meeting between Artaxerxes and Nehemiah. Help the scholars to realize the business of an ancient court, with its discussions of all matters from petty law cases to important military arrangements. All business stops when Nehemiah makes his request. Suggest the military reasons which would induce Artaxerxes to follow the policy of Cyrus in rebuilding Jerusalem. Make clear the arrangements made for Nehemiah's position in Judah. The latter part of the lesson might be represented by a messenger coming to the king bearing messages from Nehemiah, relating the progress of the expedition and its arrival at Jerusalem.

2. Why did Nehemiah run the risk of offending the king? Bring out three leading reasons: (a) his knowledge of the condition of his people; (b) his long and persistent prayer to God, during which he had entered into God's thoughts and had been prepared to be his workman; (c) his complete dependence upon God for strength and courage, voiced in his short prayer at the crisis.

3. Will the boys and girls not only pray to God, but will they be ready to do his will if God wishes to answer their prayers by making them his workmen or his messengers? Will they make right choices,—choosing with God's help; choosing unselfishly; choosing for eternity?

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

#### Something to Look Up

1. Where does Solomon say that the "king's heart is in the hand of the Lord" as a river which he can turn whither he will?

2. "The . . . fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Find the saying.

ANSWERS, Lesson VI.—(1) 1 John 1:9.  
(2) 1 Peter 5:7.

#### For Discussion

1. Is a high position to be sought for?  
2. Does faith remove difficulties or enable us to surmount them?

#### Prove from Scripture

That the needy's prayer is heard.

### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*A Look Forward*—We are going to see God teaching his people that he answers prayer.

*Lesson Thought*—God answers our prayers.

*Approach to the Lesson*—Recall last lesson.



(Outline palace or show picture.) To-day we are going to make a "mind visit" to another room in the palace of the king of Persia. It is the great hall or banquet room. (Some one may point out the room.) All sorts of gold and silver dishes are on the table and all sorts of good things to eat.

*Lesson*—The king and queen are seated at the table. See! the cupbearer is bringing in the wine. We know who he is. Can you tell me his name? How very sad he looks! We

know why. One of you may tell me why his face is so sorrowful. But the king does not know this. Nehemiah had always been pleasant and happy, for it was a rule in the king's court that nobody should be sad in the presence of the king.

"Why are you looking sad, seeing you are not sick? It is sorrow of the heart that makes you sad," the king said as he took the wine cup, which Nehemiah handed him.

Nehemiah was afraid the king would be angry at him for looking sad in his presence. (Tell v. 3.)

Then the king said, "What do you want to ask me to do?" (Oh how Nehemiah prayed in his heart then that God would make the king kind to him and willing to help him!) He tells the king what he wants, v. 5. The queen liked good Nehemiah and perhaps whispered, "Please let him go," for after asking some questions (v. 6), the king told Nehemiah he might go to help his people in Jerusalem. How glad and thankful Nehemiah felt!

Then Nehemiah asked the king to give him letters to the governors of the countries through which he would have to pass, telling them to help him to get through safely. Also a letter to the keeper of the king's forest,

telling him to give Nehemiah timber, etc. (tell v. 8). (Show letters or outlines.) God put it into the heart of the king to do all that Nehemiah wished him to do. The king even sent a bodyguard of horsemen and soldiers with Nehemiah (marks),

and at last they reached Jerusalem in safety.

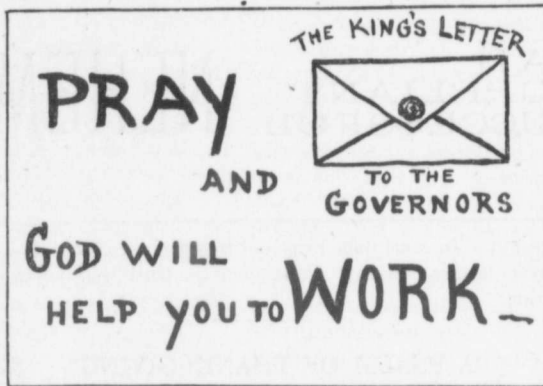
*Golden Text*—Repeat.

*Answered Prayer*—Jack found the parcels he was carrying from the grocer's very heavy indeed. He put them down and sat down beside them and began to think what he could do. "I'll ask God to help me," he said, and after he had just whispered in his heart, "Please, God, help me," he jumped up and gathered up the parcels and started towards home. He had only gone a few steps when some one behind him called out, "Wait, Jack, I'll give you a hand with those parcels."

God always sends help to those who pray and then "get up and go at" the things they have to do. Nehemiah prayed and then worked. Some one print PRAY and another print WORK. All repeat these words.

*A Message for All*—Andrew Murray's last message to God's children: "Tell them to pray. There is nothing too small for his love—nothing too great for his power."

*What the Lesson Teaches Me*—GOD ANSWERS PRAYER.



### FROM THE PLATFORM

Ask the class who the chief person in the lesson is. (Print NEHEMIAH.) Get the class to tell you how Nehemiah is represented as feeling in the opening verses of the lesson (Print THE SAD). Bring out the reasons for the sadness of Nehemiah,—the distressing news which had come to him from Jerusalem. Get the scholars to tell you how the sadness of Nehemiah was noticed by King Artaxerxes. Question about the king's inquiries of his courtier and cup-

bearer. Turn attention next to the request which Nehemiah made of the king, and ask what we call one who makes a petition before a king. A little questioning will bring out the word SUPPLIANT (Print). Now ask about the result of Nehemiah's request, bringing out the fact

# THE SAD SUPPLIANT SUCCESSFUL NEHEMIAH

that he was SUCCESSFUL. In conclusion, bring out the teaching that the success of Nehemiah was due to his prayers (see last lesson). Press home the truth that our true success depends on the same condition.

## Lesson VIII.

## A PSALM OF THANKSGIVING

November 25, 1917

Psalm 103. Scripture Memory Verses.

GOLDEN TEXT—Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.—Psalm 103 : 2.

1 Bless the LORD, O my soul : and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits :

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ;

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies ;

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things ; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He made known his ways unto Mo'ses, his angels unto the children of Is'rael.

8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

9 He will not always chide : neither will he keep his anger for ever.

10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins ; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth our frame ; he remembereth that we are dust.

15 As for man, his days are as grass : as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children ;

18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens ; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts ; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion : bless the LORD, O my soul.

23 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

24 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

25 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

26 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

27 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

28 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

29 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

30 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

31 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

32 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

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13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

14 For he knoweth our frame ; he remembereth that we are dust.

15 As for man, his days are as grass : as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children ;

18 To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens ; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

20 Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

21 Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts ; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion : bless the LORD, O my soul.

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25 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

26 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

27 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

28 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

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30 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

31 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

32 Bless ye the LORD, O ye his angels, that excel in strength, that fulfil his word ; Omit ye ; ye his.

Revised Version—1 eagle ; 2 righteous acts, and judgements ; 3 doings ; 4 full of compassion ; 5 after our ; 6 precepts ; 7 established ; 8 angels of his : Ye mighty in strength, that fulfil his word ; 9 Omit ye ; 10 ye his.

## LESSON PLAN

I. The Psalmist's Call to his Soul, 1-5.

II. The Psalmist's Picture of God, 6-18.

III. The Psalmist's Call to the Whole Universe, 19-22.

## DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)

M.—A psalm of thanksgiving, Ps. 103 : 1-12. T.—A psalm of thanksgiving, Ps. 103 : 13-22. W.—God's tenderness praised, Deut. 32 : 1-12. Th.—The unwearied God, Isa. 40 : 25-31. F.—Man's life, Ps. 90 : 1-12. S.—God, our refuge, Ps. 46. S.—God rules over all, Ps. 47.

Primary Catechism—Ques. 57. Where do all our good thoughts and desires come from ? The Holy Spirit

puts good thoughts and desires into our hearts. Ques. 58. In what other ways is the Holy Spirit our helper ? The Holy Spirit helps us in our study of the Bible and in prayer.

Shorter Catechism—Review Questions 104-107.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise : Memory Hymn—Primary, 17 ; Junior, 19, 195, 197, 536, 24.

Special Scripture Reading—Matt. 21 : 12-16 ; given also in Departmental Graded Teacher's Quarterlies. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Hymn for Opening Worship—Hymn 539, Book of Praise ; given also in Departmental Graded Quarterlies.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, S. P. 105, A Psalm of Thanksgiving (Ps. 103). For Question on Missions, C. 686, Hospital Compound. (Slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto.)

## THE LESSON EXPLAINED

It is fitting that Ps. 103 should be studied from the exile. For there is a great probability that it was written during the early

in connection with the return of the Jews

ability that it was written during the early

years of the return, "while the sense of the nation's forgiveness, of which that deliverance was the proof, was still fresh and vivid." The psalm is one of singular beauty. Its tenderness, its trustfulness, its hopefulness, anticipate the spirit of the New Testament. It does not contain one jarring note, and it furnishes fit language of thanksgiving for the greater blessings of a more marvelous redemption than that of Israel from Babylon.

### I. The Psalmist's Call to His Soul, 1-5.

Vs. 1, 2. *Bless the Lord.* We "bless" God when we praise, extol, or glorify him as the giver of benefits, with thankful acknowledgment of benefits received. *O my soul*; the psalmist's entire self or personality. *All . . . within me*; the various organs of the body regarded by the Hebrews as the seat of thought and will and emotion. *His holy name.* God's "name" includes the outward expression of all that he is,—his goodness, his character, his attributes. Just as when a man signs a note, all that he is and has stands back of the signature, so behind God's "name" he himself stands in all his fulness and glory. *Forget not.* The psalmist realizes that memory is apt to keep short-lived records of mercies, especially when these are continually being received. *All his benefits.* "God's gifts are all 'benefits,' whether they are bright or dark." (Maclaren.)

Vs. 3-5. *Who forgiveth.* The first benefit is forgiveness, which clears the way for all other blessings to come from heaven. *Iniquities*; crookedness, perversity. *Who healeth*; not only bodily ailments, but the deeper sickness of sin. *Who redeemeth*; brings back, as a slave is brought back from bondage. *From destruction*; literally "from the pit," that is, "the grave." The restoration from Babylon was a bringing back of the nation from death to life, in which each member of it had a personal share. *Who crowneth thee*, etc.; makes his children kings, and weaves their crown out of his own glorious attributes of *loving kindness and tender mercies.* *Who satisfieth thy mouth*, etc. It is through the mouth that things are given which satisfy hunger; so God satisfies the soul. *Youth . . . renewed*; by receiving continual supplies of strength and vigor. *Like the eagle*; the bird of highest flight and keenest vision.

### II. The Psalmist's Picture of God, 6-18.

Vs. 6-10. *Executeth righteous acts* (Rev. Ver.). The Hebrew word is plural to denote the many acts in which God had shown his righteousness. *Judgments for all . . . oppressed* (Rev. Ver.); as in the deliverance of his people from Babylon. This is regarded as a judgment upon the oppressors. *His ways unto Moses . . . acts unto the children of Israel.* From the story of Moses and the Israelites of whom he was the leader, we learn the principles on which God deals with mankind. *Merciful*; eager to pardon the guiltiest sinner. *Gracious*; full of kindness to the most unworthy. *Slow to anger*; literally, "long of anger;" that is, slow to let it flash out in judgment. *Plenteous in mercy*; as lavish of lovingkindness as he is sparing of wrath. *Will not always chide.* The Lord will rebuke people for their sins, and punish them, if need be, but he will not be always chastising and condemning like a hard taskmaster. *Neither . . . keep his anger*, etc. His anger is like the lightning, transient; his kindness like the sunshine, constant. *Not . . . after our sins, nor . . . according to our iniquities.* God's heaviest punishment is light compared with the weight of our sins.

Vs. 11-14. *Heaven is high above the earth*; the greatest height conceivable (compare Isa. 55 : 8, 9). *So great* (mighty in its reach from heaven to earth) *is his mercy.* *Toward them that fear him*; the true Israelites. *East . . . from the west*; sunrise from sunset, the utmost conceivable distance in breadth. *Removed our transgressions*; to the very bounds of the universe. *Like as a father*; who loves his children. *The Lord pitieth.* "A pitying God! Nothing can be added to that." (Maclaren.) *Them that fear him*; and only those. God's blessings are universal; but it is possible to shut oneself out from them. *Knoweth our frame*; because he formed it, Gen. 2 : 7. *Remembereth that we are dust*; frail and doomed to perish.

Vs. 15-18. *As for man.* What follows is true of all mankind. *His days*; his life. *As grass*; quickly withering under the hot Eastern sun. *As a flower*; beautiful for a time, but doomed soon to perish. *The wind passeth over it*; the scorching, withering south wind. *The mercy of the Lord*; and that is

the great thing about God. *Is from everlasting to everlasting*; stretching back into a past eternity and forward into an eternity yet to come. *Upon them that fear him*. All people share in the divine goodness, but only those who yield themselves to him in submission of heart and obedience of life, enter into its fulness. *Unto children's children*; from one generation to another. *Keep his covenant* (are faithful to him), and . . . *remember his commandments*. No one can have the blessings of heaven without fulfilling the conditions in which they are offered.

### III. The Psalmist's Call to the Whole Universe, 19-22.

Vs. 19-22. *Established his throne*; made it firm and permanent. *Kingdom ruleth over all*; beneath the heavens and within the heavens. It is not Germany or any other earthly kingdom over all, but God's kingdom over all. *Angels, that excel in strength*; literally, "are heroes of strength." *Do . . . hearkening*; the two aspects of service, —activity and humble teachableness. *Hosts*; the angels, pictured as an organized army. *Ministers*; the angels, regarded as faithful servants, prompt to do their sovereign's will. *All his works*; the whole creation, pictured as a person. *Bless the Lord, O my soul*. Only sinful men saved by grace can adequately praise God's lovingkindness which has redeemed them by the blood of Christ.

### Light from the East

GOD'S FATHERLY CARE—God's fatherly care of his own is an idea that runs through all Eastern religion. You will find it in the Moslem Bible, the Koran, as you do in the Christian Bible. Here are two extracts (Gabriel is bringing the revelation to Mohammed): "By the morning bright, And the softly falling night, Thy Lord hath not forsaken thee, Nor art thou hateful in his sight, Verily the beginning is hard unto thee, but the end shall be light. Thou shalt be satisfied, the Lord shall thee requite. Did not he shelter thee when he found thee in orphan's plight? Did not he find thee astray and lead thee aright? Did he not find thee poor and make thee rich by his might? Wherefore, the orphan betray not, and the beggar turn away not, and tell of the bounty of the Lord" (ch. 93). "What! thinketh man that no one regardeth him? What! have I not made him eyes, and tongue, and lips, And guided him to the two ways (of good and evil)? Yet he attempted not the steep (way). And who shall teach thee what the steep (way) is? It is to ransom the captive, Or to feed in the day of famine, The orphan who is near of kin, or the poor that liveth in the dust; Beside this, to be of those who believe, and enjoin steadfastness on each other, and enjoin confession on each other. These shall be the people of the right hand" (ch. 90).

### THE LESSON APPLIED

*God forgives all our iniquities*, v. 3. There are no halfway measures with the all and ever merciful. A lad in his teens left home and by persistent waywardness caused his parents considerable anxiety and pain. One night a young sister found him loitering in the neighborhood; but her best effort could only bring him a little nearer the old home. A mother's glad welcome induced him to "come in." Taking off his coat he shamefacedly proceeded to a chair near the door. When his father cried out, "Nay, lad, don't sit there; tha's coom back; cum reight up to the fier."

*God heals all our diseases*, v. 3. The author of the Life of Florence Nightingale says that the nineteenth century produced three famous persons who did great things for the relief of

human suffering: Simpson, the introducer of chloroform; Lister, the inventor of antiseptic surgery; and Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing. But the best that these could do was to clear the way for nature or for God to do the work. Indeed their very ability to clear the way was a gift of God. In the last analysis it is God that is the great physician.

*God redeems our soul from death*, v. 4. How often he has preserved our lives from dangers seen and unseen and we have the persuasion that when death destroys this body he will preserve our souls alive and receive us into the sabbath of the everlasting. "Because I live," says the master, "ye shall live also."

*God satisfies our deepest desires*, v. 5. This does not mean the death of desire. Chris-



tianity has nothing to do with Nirvana. Indeed desire is quickened and re-directed. To use the words of J. H. Jowett: "There is fervor, but no fever." If I may quote Calvin, "believers know desire but they do not know drought."

*God befriends the oppressed*, vs. 6, 7. He delivered the children of Israel in their distress and he will not forget the Belgians, Armenians, and downtrodden poor of our own time. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Tyrants who misgovern their peoples and turn the world upside down to further their own ambitions should lay close to heart the great saying of another age, "God does not pay at the end of every week, but at the last he pays." The Lord God will pay in full.

*God is merciful*, vs. 8-12. In a House of Refuge in this Canada there is an aged couple well on in their nineties. To this place they were brought from a nearby village where they had lived for long a simple, plain, but entirely respectable and godly life. Infirmary of age compelled them to give up the struggle of existence. Here they sit on a hard wooden bench day after day whiling away life's long summer evening. They have a son in a distant country who has taken no interest in their unfortunate circumstances and yet they love him. That mother so loved her boy, that when he went away, making tracks in the snow across the field, she went out afterwards when she saw that the sun was likely to melt them, and stooped down and

with her lips kissed the cold footprints. So does God love men.

*Man comes and goes, but God abides forever*, vs. 13-18. God's mercy endureth forever. As the trembling tenderness of the blue sky continues to bend forever over the grass which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, so the unchanging love of God, like a covert of patience, broods over the changes of this changing world. His loving kindness, O how great!

*All things praise God*, vs. 19-22. There is a Jewish legend to the effect that when God completed his creation he called together his hosts of angels and asked them what they thought of it. One of the white-robed throng, more discerning than the others, said, "One thing is lacking,—the sound of praise." Then God created music and put it everywhere and the deep toned seas and the morning stars and the new born tongue of man began to sing their great creator's praise.

*Let us praise God too*. The praise of God should never be neglected. We should count and recount our blessings one by one. Billy Bray was one time sitting by the bedside of a Christian brother who had habitually repressed himself but now his heart was filled with gladness. Turning to Billy he said, "Oh, I am so happy that if I had the power I'd shout 'Glory.'" "Ah, mon," said Billy. "what a pity it was thee didn't shout 'Glory' when thee hadst the power." We are able to praise God by word of mouth and deed of life and surrender of heart. Are we willing?

### THE LESSON GRADED

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

#### For Teachers of Bible Classes

This psalm is one of the splendid confessions of faith which form so marked a feature of the Psalter. Let the teacher point out some of those Psalms which give expression to rich spiritual experience. This psalm begins and closes with a Doxology, vs. 1, 2, 20, 21. The body of the Psalm (vs. 3-19) consists of a series of quotations, strung together like pearls, to illustrate God's ways towards man. Like many of our hymns, it lays no claim to originality in form or in thought, but seeks only to recall the old, old story of God's love.

As the best things in nature, such as sunlight and water, are the most commonly known, so the best things of God are those most commonly experienced,—so commonly that we are in danger of overlooking them.

1. *A meditation*. The writer of the psalm must have faced himself with the question: "What does God mean to me?" He had time to meditate, and to find an answer to that question. The psalmists are men of this type. Each, like Marcus Aurelius, "has a little territory of his own into which, whenever he chooses, he can retire." (See Ps. 143: 5; 119: 62, 164.) This is an important lesson for us to learn in these days "when the

world is too much unto us ;" and we are in danger of never once possessing our soul before we die. Do we have any moment for meditation in our day? How do we conduct it? Does it bring us a vision of God? Let us be honest with ourselves: either we must cease from our meditations because they are useless or we must discover in them some usefulness.

2. *A religion of experience.* The body of the psalm may be divided into two parts: (a) vs. 3-5, *the things which God is always doing*; (b) vs. 6-19, *the character of God* which explains his acts. What does the psalmist state under each of these heads? Which verses seem to reflect the psalmist's personal experience of God? Which verses summarize a more universal experience of God? Is there any difference between the writer's view of God and the Christian's view of God? Is the writer's view of God based upon a vital relation to God or a philosophy of religion? What kind of a creed could we frame out of our own experience? How many of us have only what may be termed a second-hand experience of God? Would a vital relation to God banish most of our doubts about God?

3. *Salted and salt.* The psalmist calls upon all creation to join him in praising God. Joy in God begets always a desire to have others share our joy. Let us examine ourselves. Is it possible that our indifference to the religious life of others may be due to the fact that, in spite of our professions, we have nothing to invite them to share? Have we not discovered God? Is he only an article in a book-creed?

### For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Call attention to the fact that the psalms are poems full of great thoughts expressed in beautiful language which clings to the memory and to the heart. There is thought enough in this psalm, which we are studying, to set up a goodly number of popular poets of to-day. Ask the scholars to name their favorite psalms, and question as to why they like these best. The psalm which we are studying will be in most of the lists. What does this psalm contain?

1. *A Man Talking to his Soul*, vs. 1-5. Note that the psalmist is talking to himself,

is exhorting his soul to live up into the realm where spiritual things are very real, where God's goodness is the sunshine of life, where love prompts memory to recall many things. Question the class about some of the memories which love awakens in the heart, vs. 3-5. Young, in his *Night Thoughts*, says that it is greatly wise to talk with our past hours. Show that it is greatly wise to talk to ourselves occasionally, lest we forget whose we are and whom we serve. What are the choicest memories which we cherish in our hearts? Are they in any way related to those which inspired the sweetest notes of the psalmist's song? Some one has said that you can find out more about a man by listening to him talk to himself than in any other way. These words are a marvelous revelation of the kind of man the psalmist was.

2. *A Record of God's Goodness*, vs. 6-18. Question the class about what this record contains,—God's care for the oppressed (vs. 6, 7), his loving compassion (vs. 8-12), his pity for the weak, vs. 13-18. Note that we have in this passage one of the brightest Old Testament revelations of the New Testament teaching that God is love. We cannot read these words without hearing a voice, diviner than that of Edward Irving as he bent compassionately over the dying boy, saying to us, "Remember that God loves you."

3. *A Revelation of God's Universal Sway*, vs. 19-22. Note how beautiful these closing words are which represent the whole creation as uniting in one great anthem of praise. Quote the closing stanza of Hymn 22, Book of Praise:

"O measureless Might! ineffable Love!  
While angels delight to hymn Thee above,  
The humble creation, though feeble their  
lays,  
With true adoration shall lisp to Thy  
praise."

Let us make sure that our life is no discord in this great anthem of praise.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Dr. Alexander Whyte finds in this beautiful song a succession of scenes. It might make the psalm more vivid to the boys and girls if the teacher would prepare beforehand a slip of paper for each scholar, with the

names of the scenes written upon it. Then during the first part of the class the scholars should write in under the name of the scene the words of the psalm referring to it. The scenes, as given by Dr. Whyte, are: (1) the law court; (2) the hospital ward; (3) the slave market; (4) the throne room; (5) the banquet hall; (6) the heavenward flight. The answers from the scholars should be: (1) "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;" (2) "who healeth all thy diseases;" (3) "who redeemeth thy life;" (4) "who crowneth thee;" (5) "who satisfieth thy mouth;" (6) "thy youth . . . renewed." The scholars will readily see that from God come the blessings we receive in all phases of our lives; that no part of our lives is uninteresting to him.

Because of this we should not forget his mercies. It has been said that a serious

defect in the education of to-day is the elimination of the element of wonder,—the wonderfulness of the heavens, of the forces of nature operating in the electric light, the telegraph, etc. Help the scholars to remember in wonder God's mercies in their everyday lives. Only thus will they enter at all into the spirit of the psalmists to whom all nature, all history, all of life spoke of the wonderful benefits of God.

The greatest of wonders for us is that "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." The boys and girls could not do better than to memorize the precious words of vs. 8-18.

Most wonderful of all is the kingdom of God itself (v. 19) because: (a) it rules over all the greatest things in the universe; (b) it rules over all the smallest things; (c) it rules at all-times and all places.

### ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

#### Something to Look Up

1. Paul says that nothing can separate us from the love of God. Find the saying.
2. Where does Jesus say that we should be merciful because our Father is merciful?

ANSWERS, Lesson VII.—(1) Prov. 21 : 1.

(2) James 5 : 6.

#### For Discussion

1. Does the frailty and brevity of life make it a vain thing?
2. Have we always reasons for thanksgiving?

#### Prove from Scripture

That all good gifts are from God.

### FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

*A Look Forward*—To-day we have a thanksgiving lesson. We hear God teaching his people that they should give thanks to him for his goodness to them.

*Lesson Thought*—"Thankfulness." Teach the children that they should say "thank you" to God for his lovingkindness to them.

*Approach to the Lesson*—If possible have your room or "corner" or even "pew" decorated appropriately for thanksgiving. It will at least be possible to have some fruit and vegetables (and bunches of grain, if possible). These may be brought by the children and disposed of afterwards in some helpful way. Let us see how many kinds of



fruit you can name (print), and vegetables (print), and grain (print).

*Our Heavenly Father's Care*—A child's table laid as for breakfast may be uncovered (or outline). (Print names of things we usually have for breakfast.) A tiny bowl of porridge, a tiny glass of milk, some tiny slices of bread and butter, an orange, banana or other fruit—this is a breakfast such as many of us enjoyed this morning.

"Last summer, or maybe longer ago than that, God saw that we would need breakfast this morning and dinner when we would come home from church, so God had the fruit grown on trees by the soil. He sent the showers and the sunshine and coaxed the trees to bear and ripen their fruit and week after week when you were coming to Sunday School and learning about him, the fields were green with corn and wheat and oats. When they were ripe the sun colored them yellow and at last we had them on the table this morning. (The children may explain how.) All the time God was preparing our breakfast for us he was also getting our clothes ready. The pretty ribbons on your hair, the silk worm wove. Your pretty clothing grew on cotton plants in great fields in the warm, sunny south. Now the days are getting colder and the snow and ice will soon be here and God has been preparing nice, woolen clothes to

keep us warm. Sheep would freeze if they did not have wool on their backs, so God gives them a coat of warm wool in winter. But just think how hot it would be in summer if they had to wear their warm clothes all summer!" So when spring comes God tells the farmer to shear off the thick wool and send it to the factory and there it is made into nice, warm cloth to make into warm coats and dresses for us." (Other "benefits" may be mentioned as the teacher sees fit.)

*Golden Text*—Our Golden Text says (print), "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." (How many remembered to thank God for the nice breakfast he provided for you this morning?)

*A Lesson in Food Economy*—Speak of the necessity of being very careful of every bit of food. "Gather up the fragments . . . that nothing be lost." (When did Jesus say this?)

*Prayer of Thanks*—Let us bow our heads and thank God for his great kindness to us day by day.

*Lesson*—God has given us a beautiful Psalm of Thanksgiving. Listen! (Read lesson, simplifying where necessary.)

*Hymn of Thanksgiving*—Sing Hymn 518, Book of Praise (with gestures).

*What the Lesson Teaches Me*—I SHOULD BE THANKFUL.

#### FROM THE PLATFORM

## GOD'S GIFTS OUR GRATITUDE

After the study of the Psalm of Thanksgiving which forms the lesson of the day, the conversation guided from the platform may begin by the discussion of some of GOD'S GIFTS (Print) to us. Ask the scholars to mention some of these. They will naturally speak of such things as life, health, comfortable homes, kind friends, education, our country, the bountiful harvest, etc., etc. Next, ask what feeling we should cherish toward God in view of all his good gifts to us. The scholars will readily answer "Thankfulness" or "Gratitude" (PRINT OUR GRATITUDE). Speak of some ways in which we may show our gratitude to God, such as praising him for his gifts, using these gifts as he would have us use them, sharing them with others. Close by urging the scholars to find some way of showing how grateful they are for God's goodness to them.



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**The North American Idea** (McClelland, Goodchild and Stewart, Toronto, 240 pages, \$1.25) is the title of The Cole Lectures for 1917 delivered before Vanderbilt University by James A. Macdonald, LL.D., the distinguished Canadian writer and orator. The "Idea" developed in these lectures is defined as: "The Right of a Free People to Govern Themselves." It was, of course, inevitable that lectures on such a subject from a Canadian should be tinged by the spirit of the War, and this was the more natural because at the time of their delivery, the United States had entered the War, and Mr. Balfour with Marshall Joffre were in conference with President Wilson at Washington. The lectures are marked by the eloquence and beauty of diction of which Dr. Macdonald is so completely the master. The opening lecture, especially, entitled *The Land of the World's Good Will*, both in style and matter, would be hard to surpass.

"EMPIRE, TRUTH, LOVE, UNITY AND NO PARTY GAMES,"—this is declared to be the theme of **Donald and Helen: A Romance of the Old Army**, by R. W. Campbell (The Musson Book Company, Toronto, 352 pages, \$1.35). Donald Looms was the grandson of a plain Scottish weaver, who was an uncompromising Radical. His father had made a million sterling out of woven goods, and was a great Liberal. Donald, after a course at Sandhurst, became an officer in the Northern Highlanders in the days before the great War. He carried the Radicalism of his grandfather into the duties of his profession, and worked with passionate earnestness to make the army more efficient. Helen Glenshee was the daughter of an ancient Highland family, with all the pride and courage of her race. The story tells how Donald labored to train his company into smart and effective soldiers and to awaken the military authorities and the people of Britain to a sense of the necessity for preparedness in view of the German menace. His justification came when the War broke out, and he went with General French's gallant army to the aid of France and Belgium. Mr. Campbell's book, with its love stories of the aristocratic Helen and the radical Donald and of Bobby Glenshee with the truehearted American actress, is a plea for the uniting of all classes in Britain for the defence and upbuilding of the empire. There is plenty of humor in this, as in the author's earlier tales. Jock McGhee and Privates Muldoon and Docherty hold a place of their own in the creation of fiction.

One would imagine that there could now be nothing new to be told about the early stages of the War, but Alice Cholmondeley's **Christine** (The Macmillan Co. of Canada, Toronto, 250 pages, \$1.25) will dissipate this notion. Christine is a most intimate view of Germany in the months and weeks before the War broke out and of the weird and tumultuous days after War had been declared and hostilities begun. The book, which consists of letters from a charming young violinist, who reached Berlin in May, 1914, to study

under one of the great masters, to her little widowed mother in England. "Chris," the daughter, had her eyes wide open. She writes with all the abandon of a daughter writing home. Her pictures of German life and character and opinion—and the young student had rare opportunities of seeing and hearing amongst high and low—are photographic in their vividness. There is a pretty love story, which comes out charmingly bit by bit in the letters, and the final getting away from the hating Germany, by a door, of which love found the key. Christine has all the vivacity and charm of which Alice Cholmondeley is master. It is well worth reading for this alone.

**A Green Tent in Flanders**, by Maud Mortimer (William Briggs, Toronto, 242 pages, \$1.25) an American woman in the V.A.D. service gives an account of her hospital experiences five miles back of the firing line in Belgium. The feature of the book is the vivid sketches,—sometimes pathetic and not unfrequently humorous—of the wounded "poilus." These humble heroes of the great War are presented to the reader in such a way as to awaken in his heart a real personal interest in them.

"After all, it's the mothers, I think, who do the biggest giving when their sons go to war. I suspect it's what they put into their sons that stands for the real stuff in the crisis." This is part of the closing paragraph in **The Whistling Mother**, by Grace S. Richmond (McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, Toronto, 31 pages, 50c. net), a short story about one mother of a college boy who came home to say goodbye before he went to the front, and how she sent him forth to fight in the sacred cause of justice and freedom, "with a kiss and a smile and not a single tear." The picture of this little book might have been drawn from the life in the case of multitudes of mothers, whose splendid patriotism and heroic courage have been proved in the giving of their best to the great cause.

In **Green Fanny**, by George Barr McCutcheon (William Briggs, Toronto, 355 pages, \$1.35) a New York engineer and clubman, on a six weeks' walking tour through New England, while sojourning at a country inn, finds himself involved in a conspiracy, which has for its prize the crown jewels of a royal house in Europe, and wins out against the crafty schemes of the cleverest crook in the world. The hero's adventures with the company of stranded play actors whom he finds in his hotel, and the matching of his wits with the Irish adventurer, O'Dowd, furnish many amusing episodes. But the chief interest of the story centres in his rescue of the countess by whom, through a cunning trick, the jewels have been brought to America and in whom at last he finds a bride. The rapidity of movement in this story almost takes the reader's breath away, and holds his interest to the very close. Another story from the same publishers is **Martie the Unconquered**, by Kathleen Norris (376 pages, same price), in which a California girl breaks through the repression of a home life ruled by the whims and fancies of a tyrannical father, to seek freedom and happiness in marriage with an actor who happens to visit her native place. The scenes of the story shift rapidly from San Francisco to New York and back again to

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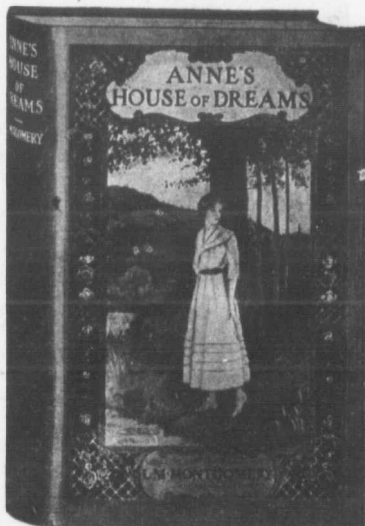
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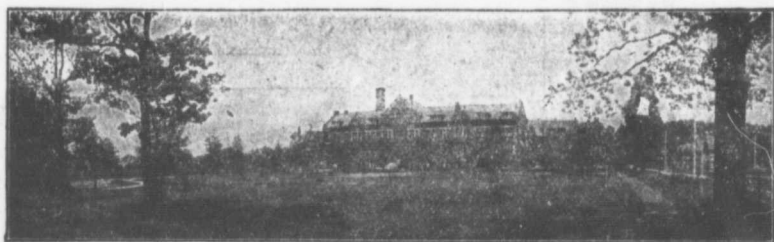
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**The Gold Cache**, by James Willard Schultz (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, Thomas Allen, Toronto, 190 pages, \$1.25) is a fresh, wholesome story about a young American trader, his Spanish and Indian comrades, who set out to find, in the early days of the American West, a buried treasure of gold. While the treasure is gone when they get to the place, they get something almost as good. There are stirring accounts of meetings with hostile Indians and with inhospitable whites. The book makes a healthy story, which any boy will be glad to read.

**The Long Lane's Turning**, by Hallie Erminie Rives (Mrs. Post Wheeler), is a Southern tale which thrills and throbs with interest on every page. Harry Sevier, a brilliant young criminal lawyer, loses a case through his intemperance. The only one in the crowded courtroom who perceives the cause of the failure, is Cameron Craig, the head of a liquor trust. Craig has set his heart on two things,—the winning of Echo, daughter of Judge Allen, as his wife, and the obtaining of a decision from her father in favor of the trust. To accomplish his ends Craig threatens to make public an old scandal in which the Judge had

been involved. Echo, rather than have her father's honor smirched, promises, at a midnight rendezvous, to marry Craig, who, however, is shot by a house-breaker, while Echo is rushed from the house by a masked man whom she believes to have fired the shot. How Sevier is imprisoned for attempted murder but, escapes to become the leader of a triumphant opposition to the trust and the governor of his state, and how he wins his way back into the love of Echo Allan is told in a style so dramatic and full of action that it grips and holds the reader from start to finish. The publishers are McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, Toronto (391 pages, \$1.50 net.)

**In Imperial Projects and the Republic of Canada** (McClelland, Goodchild & Stewart, Toronto), the author, John S. Ewart, K.C., LL.D., resumes the issue of the Kingdom Papers, the present paper-covered volume being No. 21 in the series. As the title indicates, Mr. Ewart has abandoned his hope of having Canada recognized as a "Kingdom," and now looks forward to the proclamation of "The Republic of Canada."

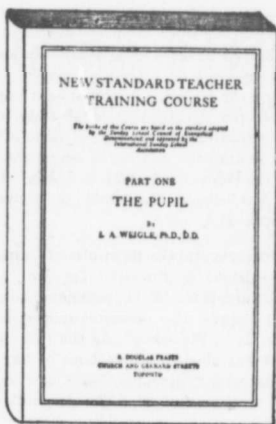
**The Story of St. Paul's Life and Letters**, by J. Patterson Smyth, B.D., Litt.D., D.C.L. (The Mission Book Co., Toronto, 223 pages, \$1.10). The outstanding charm of this book is its vivid portraiture of Paul as a living, toiling, suffering human being. For example, we read: "Tarsus was a town rather like Montreal in its earlier days, a university town and a great central mart of trade, especially the lumber trade. . . ."

There I see the boy Saul watching the ships with his companions; shouting to the lumbermen floating past; climbing on the bales of goods piled along the quay; listening to the traders, in their varied costumes and varied dialects, from all parts of the empire. And the lad evidently took notice, for long afterwards in his letters we find the illustrations of the sealing, and the earnest money, and the branding of bales, and the hucksterings, and the adulteration of goods." It is this sort of description that makes the book a story, not an essay.

There are two most commendable features about **Social Plans for Young People**, by Christian F. Reisner (The Abingdon Press, New York, 254 pages, 75c.). The first of its attractions is the author's sane conception of the place of socials in church life. The second worthy quality of the book is that it really does give definite methods and many suggestions for the conduct of such effort. It contains 254 practical, wide-awake, tested plans. There are outlines of socials of a happy, rollicking nature; outlines of others in which intelligence is recognized and that are specially prepared for stimulating educational development. Again, many of the methods of entertainment have been drawn up with an eye to planting religious information, to promoting various forms of church aid work, to associating the young people with everyday practical problems. There are various guessing tests and suggestions for refreshments. The book represents years of experience of a pastor who has been specially successful in this work. He gives methods which he has had a chance of applying and which he knows are interesting and workable.

The girls and boys of a village school and their teacher set out to repair, furnish and decorate an old cottage near their schoolhouse. When finished, it was to be the home of their teacher, and the school centre for the community. **The Home and the Family**, by Helen Kline and Anna M. Cooley, B.S. (The Macmillan Company of New York, U. S., and Toronto, Canada, 286 pages, 80c.), describes some of the useful lessons these young people learned as to how comfort and beauty may be had at very small cost. Colors for paper and paint and floor-coverings, and strength and beauty in furniture, were among the points carefully considered. The cottage completed, the girls learned how to keep it clean, to care for the garbage, to do laundry work, and other necessary housework. There are chapters, too, on health, and on the care of the baby of the family. The whole book is both interesting and practical.

In **Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Lessons**, for 1918 (The W. A. Wilde Co., Boston, 383 pages, \$1.25 net, delivered, \$1.35), all the well-known features of the publication, now in its forty-fourth annual volume, are maintained at a high degree of excellence. The name of Dr. F. N. Peloubet still appears on the title page as the author, while, associated with him, as for some years past, is Professor Amos R. Wells. "Peloubet" is a vast treasure house of information for teachers of all grades in the Sunday School, arranged in such a way as to be convenient for study and reference. The pictorial illustrations are all that could be desired, both from the artistic and the pedagogical point of view.



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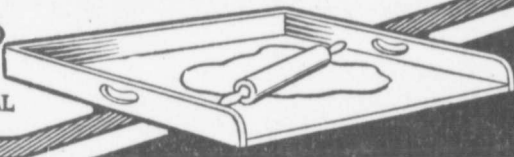
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