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The
Home Study
Series

Sabbath School Publications
Presbyterian Church in Canada

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

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The Teachers Monthly

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

Vol. XI.

December 1905

No. 12

Ed. "WORDS AND WORKS OF JESUS," is the general title for the LESSONS of 1906: these as recorded in the first three Gospels.

Ed. Familiar ground; but on that account all the more charming, especially under such leadership as the Editors of THE TEACHERS MONTHLY are enabled to promise. Rev. Principal Falconer, of Halifax, who is recognized on both sides of the ocean as among the foremost New Testament scholars, will provide the Exposition of the Lessons during the entire year, and Rev. Dr. James Ross, of London, the Light from the East. The Application will be in the hands of Revs. J. W. Macmillan and Clarence Mackinnon, of Winnipeg. For Teachers of the Older Scholars, will be done by Rev. J. H. MacVicar, of Fergus, Ont., and For Teachers of the Little Ones by Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, of North Bay. Mr. Fraser and Mr. Duncan, the Editors, will contribute their share, as previously, and a new paragraph on the Question on Missions will be added for each Lesson.

Ed. You have found THE TEACHERS MONTHLY helpful. We shall hope to continue you on our lists and to add thousands more. The outline of writers and subjects given above shows that we have planned better things than ever for the new year. No mention is made in it of the editorial and contributed articles to which a number of pages in each issue are devoted. The scope of these has been greatly extended during the year now

closing, as our readers have recognized. Each month of the coming year will, we venture to say, bring its surprise in the way of fresh topics and bright and vigorous treatment of them. The field is a very wide one:—the cultivation of the spiritual life; the study of the Book and of the child; principles and methods of teaching; the problems of the scholar, the teacher, the superintendent, the librarian, etc.; Sabbath School work as others are doing it, and what we may learn from them; the great questions of teacher training and missions; these are some of the departments in which we have articles already on hand, or on the way. "The best year yet," is our motto for 1906.

"Dwelling in Tents"

By Rev. Prof. J. E. McFadyen, B.A. (Oxon.)

"Dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob," Abraham "looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God."

Both the city and the tent have their contribution to make to religion—the city with its suggestion of social activities and obligations, the tent with its suggestion of frailty and change. The one is a prophecy of the heavenly Jerusalem, where men dwell together as brethren in unity; the other is the fragile symbol of our earthly life, which oftentimes seems to have no foundation anywhere, but shifts its place with the changing days, and finally vanishes away. Here to-day and gone to-morrow: that is the message of the tent. Nothing to do but pull up the tent pins, and the home has vanished as at the touch of a

wizard's hand. But by faith Abraham looked for a city; and the city which will comfort the heart that is worn with the changes and disappointments of the tent, is no city made with hands, but rather the city whose Designer and Fashioner is God.

Dwelling in tents, and looking for the city—does not that describe the life of the profounder souls of every age? And into every life, however unreflecting, there come times when the awful uncertainties which beset us behind and before, and which on the smoother plans of life are so easily and conveniently forgotten, assume an almost ghastly reality. Death makes inroads, numerous and surprising and cruel, upon our friendships. Within a few weeks, friend after friend goes away to the silent land, till we feel that the very ground is trembling beneath our feet. We are so appalled by our impotence to keep with us those whom we love and by their impotence to remain with us, so vexed by the might of powers that we can neither control nor persuade, that we yearn in our anguish for a city with foundations. We need a sight of the city whose foundation is the Rock of Ages.

The city has foundations, the tent has none. The writers of the Bible were haunted by the insecurities of life; they knew themselves to be but pilgrims and strangers, and their life to be but as "a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." But they lifted up their heart in the thought of the security of the city of God. It was for foundations that they longed, and they found them in the city whose Builder and Maker is God. Every earthly friendship is sundered some day. Sooner or late: every fabric raised by earthly hands will totter. But

"They stand, those halls of Zion,
Conjubilant with song."

That is the vision which can make every man feel secure amid the insecurities. In that he can take refuge when the earth seems to reel and a sense of homelessness gathers about his heart. His citizenship is in heaven, and nothing can rob him of the portion that is laid up for him in the new Jerusalem, the city of the living God that standeth fast forever.

Knox College, Toronto

Teaching and Life

By Rev. J. W. McNamara, B.A.

One autumn night I was driving with a man who had called for me in haste. Out of the darkness ahead came another vehicle. As we were passing my friend hailed it: "Is that you?" "Yes, master," came the reply. Question and answer followed, and we parted. I could not see the face, but I was struck with the tone of the young man's voice and they set me thinking deeply. The man beside was a school teacher who had spent many years teaching in the district. What was the result of his labors? What had been his influence upon the community? I seemed to have my answer in the tones of the young man's reply. It seemed to express confidence, frankness and respect. No longer a scholar, up and away into the world of work, clearly he had not gone to school in vain, nor had the master's influence ceased with school days. From what I knew of the community, I feel sure that this man had a large share in moulding the character of the people, and his work must have been thorough and his influence helpful, to win the confidence and respect of young men, when school bounds were past.

What a privilege, I thought. Yet may not every Sunday School teacher share it? His time with the class is more limited, yet the conditions are more favorable than is the case with the day-school teacher, and the aim is the noblest—that for these scholars, life may mean life as it is made known in Christ. Surely this work is worth while; but it demands that we be worthy of the work. It is an important thing to be able to teach, to impart knowledge and truth; but it is even more important to inculcate right principles of life, and to mould and develop character. The test comes when the scholar is through the Sunday School curriculum. What will remain of teaching and work? Perhaps much, it may be but little, good seed to grow slowly through the years. But not least among the influences that will help to mould aright that life stepping out into a sterner and more trying school, ought to be the character and personality of the teacher, manifest in work and life.

Let me say, that to obtain this will cost honest, faithful work. It will require absolute sincerity, it will demand fairness and sympathy; but it is worth it all—if only we shall meet unshamed the pupils of to-day in the men and women of to-morrow. It will mean, above all, that Christ is our guide, and His Spirit our Teacher, and that for His sake the work is done. May we, who engage in this great work, keep ever in mind the solemn truth, that we are moulding human lives, and that the stamp of our personality and the impressions we create may remain as an abiding influence upon the character, for weal or woe!

Tansley, Ont.

The Tiny Bit

It is told of Brullof, a celebrated Russian painter who lived in the first half of the last century, that one day he corrected a pupil's study. When the pupil looked at the altered drawing he exclaimed, "Why you only touched it a tiny bit, but it is quite another thing!" "Art begins where the tiny bit begins," replied Brullof. This was Jesus' doctrine—faithfulness in that which is least.

The Child in the Midst

By Rev. R. J. Macpherson, B.D.

There is a great deal in our Saviour's life and in His teaching that makes the years of infancy, childhood and youth of very special interest to every Christian. In the very beginning is the beautiful scene of the manger of Bethlehem making hallowed forever the hours of earliest babyhood; and next, almost as wonderful, His presentation in the temple, when the little child of eight days was honored by his Father in heaven with the prophetic praises of the aged Anna and Simeon. Then comes His visit to Jerusalem at the age of twelve, when He surprised the learned doctors and lawyers, the scholars of Israel, with His marvelous questions and answers. Besides all this there is His untiring love for children, the happy days in His public ministry when He took them up in His arms and blessed them; the demand which He made upon all His disciples, and

repeated again and again, that they should be like little children; His teaching that His kingdom was a kingdom of such as these.

There is, then, so much in common between our Saviour and those whom we meet in the Sabbath School—the children—that meeting with them is all but meeting with Christ Himself. "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me." This one hour on Sabbath afternoon brings before our memories many of the scenes which most endear Him to us, and carries us into the spirit of others which must have been among the pleasantest in the life of Him who had so much of sorrow and heart-pain to darken His days.

Nor is this all. The spirit of the child is the spirit of His true disciple; the spirit of the child is the spirit of the kingdom; the spirit of humility as exemplified in the child is the spirit which elevates to greatness in that kingdom. And it is here in the Sabbath School, above all places else, that we feel the contagion of the spirit; it is here especially that we see its beauties; it is here that we earnestly desire it. And here, too, it is imparted to us. It is difficult to say whether the child in receiving the tuition of the teacher, or the teacher in beholding and learning and imbibing the spirit of the child, receives the greater blessing. Here, away from the world with its pride, its falseness and its selfish competitions, there is not only one little one in the midst, but many all around him, from whom he may learn the spirit of simplicity and candor, of humility, of dependence and innocence. Thus he grows like the Saviour Himself, and fulfils the condition of an abundant entrance into His kingdom.

Cartwright, Man.

Praise in the Sabbath School

By Rev. John Stenhouse, M.D.

No school has so much to do in so short a time as the Sabbath School. Every minute of the quickly passing hour must, therefore, be used, either to arouse or sustain an interest in the great verities of the Lesson. Such being the case, both psalms and hymns should be made the medium of teaching, and they lend themselves to this purpose in many ways.

As we can have only four or five hymns a week, we ought to have the cream and not the skim milk of the hymn book. With careful search—and I admit it takes time and labor—noble tunes, fine diction, uplifting thought, may be found among those hymns that are appropriate to any given Lesson. Thus the taste for good music and great thoughts may be developed and fostered.

By the time a hymn has been sung through by the school, the necessary repetition imprints the tune on the memory. It occurs and recurs through the week at the most unlikely times, and in the most unusual situations. By the subtle law of association, the tune suggests the words, and so in the work-a-day cares of the week, maybe in moments of temptation, the sweetness and helpfulness of the Sabbath hymn comes apparently unbidden to help us over life's rough places. In this respect the hymn book is probably one of the most powerful of all elements that make the Sabbath School a blessing to both scholar and teacher.

Without detracting from their true usefulness, hymns may be chosen for their immediate mental effect. Thus in our school we always open with two hymns. The first is sung standing and may be called the "rouser." It gives full play to lung and voice. Of these, Hymns 61 and 262 are types. It is followed by a hymn more solemnizing (for example, Hymns 147 and 157); yet the impetus gained in the first is not lost in the second. When the latter, which is sung sitting, is finished, the school is hushed, and prayer follows without the slightest rustle. Reverence is thus taught.

The Psalms have not merely their local coloring, but their special historical setting. They have played an important part in Christian history in all ages. And the same may be said of many of our noblest hymns. It is always interesting, and frequently helpful, in giving out a psalm or a hymn to imprint its lesson by telling the school of its origin or special helpfulness to God's people. This can be done in less than two minutes. Dr. John Kerr's, "The Psalms in History and Biography," Julian's, "Dictionary of Hymnology," Duffield's, "English Hymns," will be found useful in this regard.

While youth is not devoid of serious reflection, it is the time when care and disappointment sit lightly, and when hope, aspiration and imagination have full play. Hence hymns of this type are always favorites, including those relating to the heavenly home and the life beyond, with all their mystical imagery, in which childhood delights. They should therefore have preference. Youth is also the time when the Christian life should be chosen, and hence hymns of appeal and decision should have a place.

Our hymns contain bits of doctrine which a child may unconsciously absorb in the course of his Sabbath School days. This may occasionally be made explicit. On the Sabbath previous to a Review day, I have twice asked the school to take a verse of "Jesus, Lover of my soul," and find Scripture passages to prove the various lines. This causes the scholars to search the Scriptures, and connects the best hymns with their foundation in the Word of God. I also asked the older scholars to state the doctrines involved; but this is more difficult and requires further development. Yet the benefit obtained is well worth the effort.

Toronto

The I.B.R.A.

Eight hundred and fifty thousand is the latest reported enrolment of the International Bible Reading Association. It is now in its twenty-fourth year, and its cards of Daily Readings appear in well-nigh forty languages. The Daily Readings are on the International Sunday School Lessons. Through the courtesy of the Association, we have the privilege of using these daily readings in our Lesson Helps. Three cents is the membership fee of the Association in Canada (six cents for individual members, where there is no local branch), and each member is supplied monthly with a Leaflet containing brief hints on each day's readings, besides a Circular Letter once a quarter, containing interesting incidents of the value of the Bible, and its power to help and save. The members contributed last year about \$3,000 to the Indian S.S. Mission Fund. The central address of the I.B.R.A. is, 56 Old Bailey, London, (E.C.), England.

The "Question on Missions"

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, M.A.

What is it? It is the method proposed by the General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee, and approved by the General Assembly, of giving instruction on Missions in our Sabbath Schools.

In what does it consist? It consists of a Question, with its Answer, each Sabbath.

Where are these to be found? They are printed in ALL our own Teachers' and Scholars' Lesson Helps. Every teacher and scholar has them thus in his hand, as part of the Lesson for the day.

What is the object aimed at? To impart a thorough and systematic knowledge of missionary principles, and especially of the work in the mission fields of our own church.

What is the character of the Questions? They are brief and in simple words, so that even the very young children may readily understand them; whilst, at the same time, they are capable of expansion by teacher, superintendent, or minister.

When did they begin? They began with January of the present year.

What is the general plan? The plan is to take a particular subject or field continuously each Sabbath for a Quarter, leaving the last Sabbath of the Quarter free for review.

What ground has been covered during the year? For the first Quarter, the beginnings of missions, from the giving of our Lord's great commission onward to our own time and country; Second Quarter, the Home Missions of our church; Third Quarter, our missionary work in the New Hebrides; Fourth Quarter, our work in India.

What is proposed for 1906? For the First Quarter, Home Missions in the Maritime Provinces and in Quebec and Ontario; for the Second Quarter, French Evangelization; for the Third Quarter, Trinidad and Demarara; for the Fourth Quarter, Formosa; and so on, from year to year, till the whole range of our work has been covered.

How are the Questions to be taken up? (1) The scholar should be encouraged to learn them, as he does his Catechism. (2) The

teacher should "ask" them in the class. (3) The superintendent or minister should call for them in the Review. (4) As there may be time, both in class work and the Review, interesting additional information may be given: the scholars should be encouraged to search out the facts for themselves.

How much time should all this take? Try what three minutes per Sabbath in the class, and three minutes from the desk, will do.

Where may "additional information" be found? In THE TEACHERS MONTHLY, beginning with January, 1906, a paragraph containing such information will be furnished for each Sabbath's Question.

What success has attended the plan? It has taken hold; and has been followed in many schools with much interest and profit. Will you not try it in the coming year?

What should be its outcome? A generation growing up that will have been won already in childhood for the missionary cause.

Toronto

A Home Department in the West

By Rev. Thurlow Fraser, B.D.

In 1898 a Home Department was organized in connection with a mission school under the care of Knox Church, Portage la Prairie, and continued to work with success until it was merged into and became one of the districts of the Home Department of the main Sabbath School.

Between two and three years ago the existing organization came into being, with sixteen districts, later increased to seventeen, by the union with the Home Department already in operation in the mission school.

The visitors call on all the members of the Home Study classes in their respective districts, at the end of each quarter, collect the Quarterly Reports, and give out the Lesson Helps for the coming quarter; and encourage by personal contact, conversation and sympathy, those who are endeavoring to carry on this systematic Bible study at home.

The questions will be asked: "Who are the visitors? Are they Christian workers who are already teaching in the Sabbath Schools? If so, are you not over-loading them with work, or causing them to give up their classes in the Sabbath School?" No. Of the seventeen visitors, only two are engaged as teachers in the regular Sabbath School classes. So far is the Home Department from over-loading any one, or taking any one away from other work, that some, when asked to become visitors, have expressed their pleasure at finding a kind of Christian work which appealed to them and which they were able to attend to along with their other duties. All the visitors are women; all but three, married women. And none are better fitted to enter sympathetically the many homes and understand the circumstances in each.

The largest number enrolled at one time in the Home Department has been 160. At present the number is about 140. Nearly all of these live in the town, as the portion of the congregation resident in the country has not been so fully canvassed. The majority of the class members are elderly people, some of the most deeply interested have been far advanced in years. Many are mothers who are kept at home by family cares, and would in very few cases do any systematic Bible study, were it not for the Home Department. Thus the Home classes do not in any way draw from the constituency of the ordinary Sabbath School classes. They have the opposite effect, for the visitors are sometimes able to induce some to attend the Sunday School classes who would not otherwise do so, and others who first become interested in the Home classes, have later identified themselves with various activities of the church.

There can not be absolute uniformity in the methods. Some may not care to pledge themselves to even half an hour's study each week, and yet may do much more. Some may do their work faithfully, but be careless about making a record. Some may think that their work is not acceptable unless they are able to put the offering into the envelopes regularly. These details must be left to the sanctified common-sense of the superintendent and visitors. No hard and fast rules can be laid down which will apply to every case.

But the visitors in this Home Department have endeavored not to lay too great stress on the offering, lest any should think that they were being made to pay for the privilege of studying God's Word.

Portage la Prairie, Man.

Organized Sunday School Work in New Brunswick

By Rev. J. B. Ganong

Secretary, New Brunswick S.S. Association

[Articles on the most marked or promising features of work in the Provincial Associations of P.E. Island and Nova Scotia appeared in the October and November issues respectively of THE TEACHERS MONTHLY. This month it is New Brunswick's turn.—EDITORS.]

Perhaps one of the most hopeful features of the movement at present is the growing number of pastors who are giving attention to the Sunday School problem. The Sunday School is beginning to be recognized as one of the most potent agencies for saving the boys and girls, instructing them in the Word of God, and training them for Christian service.

The facts of child conversion and culture—that it is easier to prevent wrong courses of action than to correct them—that it is easier to form character than to re-form character, are being so fully recognized and accepted, that we may expect the future policy of our churches to be more sane, and correspondingly more successful.

Teacher training classes and teachers' meetings are being more generally conducted by pastors. As a result of this the Sunday School is receiving a higher rating. More of the officers and members of the congregations are taking an interest in the welfare of the school. In many cases adult Bible classes have been organized with the most gracious results. One of our leading pastors conducts a class with a registration of over 200 men. There are many other classes not so large, but doing equally good work. This closer identification of the pastors with the Sunday School movement is ushering in a new day, not simply for the schools, but for every department of church work.

With the pastors taking more interest in the Sunday Schools we find the Sunday School taking more interest in the pastors. This is

seen by the perceptible increase in the attendance of the members of the schools at the regular worship of the sanctuary. This I regard as a good omen. To have the children grow up with the conviction that the Sunday School is not a children's church, an end in itself, but that the public worship, where the whole congregation assembles to unite in prayer and praise to God and to listen to the proclamation of divine truth from the lips of

the pastor, is an indispensable instrumentality in the formation of the best type of character, will give us not many years hence a constituency more intelligently and devoutly attached to the churches, a greater reverence for the ordinances of God's house, and a no less worthy co-operation of the Sunday School as a necessary department for carrying on the work of the church of Christ.

Sussex, N.B.

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CONFEDERATION LIFE BUILDING, TORONTO

Lesson Calendar: Fourth Quarter

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT FROM ISAIAH TO MALACHI

1. October 1..... Daniel and Belshazzar. Dan. 5: 17-30.
2. October 8..... Daniel in the Lions' Den. Dan. 6: 10-23.
3. October 15..... Returning from Captivity. Ezra 1: 1-11.
4. October 22..... Rebuilding the Temple. Ezra 3: 10 to 4: 5.
5. October 29..... Power Through God's Spirit. Zech. 4: 1-10.
6. November 5..... Esther Pleading for Her People. Esther 4: 10 to 5: 3.
7. November 12..... Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem. Ezra 8: 21-32.
8. November 19..... Nehemiah's Prayer. Neh. 1: 1-11.
9. November 26..... Abstinence for the Sake of Others. 1 Cor. 10: 23-33.
10. December 3..... Nehemiah Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem. Neh. 4: 7-20.
11. December 10..... Reading and Obeying the Law. Neh. 8: 8-18.
12. December 17..... Preparation for the Messiah. Malachi 3: 1-12.
13. December 24..... The Character of the Messiah. Isa. 9: 1-7.
14. December 31..... REVIEW.

Assyria
BIBLE DICTIONARY FOR FOURTH QUARTER, 1905.

A-ha'-va. A place nine days' journey distant from Babylon (Ezra 7 : 9; 8 : 15, 31), giving its name to a river or canal on which Ezra assembled the people who proposed to go to Jerusalem with him, Ezra 7 : 28; 8 : 31.

Am'-mon-ites. A tribe dwelling east of the Jordan who opposed the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah.

A-ra'-bi-ans. Natives of Arabia, the most westerly of the three great peninsulas in southern Asia. Some of them joined the Ammonites in their opposition to Nehemiah.

Ash'-do-dites. Inhabitants of Ashdod, one of the chief cities of the Philistines.

As'-sur. The same as Assyria, a country on the river Tigris. For 700 years after 1300 B.C. it was the leading power in the East.

Bab'-y-lon. The capital of the Babylonian empire, a city on the river Euphrates, 500 miles east of Jerusalem.

Bel-shaz'-zar. The son of Nabonidus who usurped the throne of Babylon. Belshazzar was slain on the night that Babylon was captured by the Medes and Persians, Dan. 5 : 1-31.

Chal-do'-ans. A people dwelling originally on the shores of the Persian Gulf, who conquered Babylonia, and afterwards gave their name to the whole of that country.

Cy'-rus. King of the Persian Empire from B.C. 558 to 529. Having become ruler of Babylon by conquest, he allowed the captive Jews to return to their own land.

Dan'-iel. A Jewish youth carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. He rose to one of the highest positions in that kingdom.

Da-ri'-us. Called Hystaspes. He became king of the Persian empire in 522 B.C.

E'-sar-had'-don. Son of Sennacherib who became king of Assyria about 680 B.C. He was eminent as a general and a political ruler.

Es'-ther. A beautiful Jewish maiden brought up in Susa (Shushan) by her cousin Mordecai. She became the wife of Ahasuerus the Persian king and saved her people from a plot to destroy them (see Mordecai).

Ez'-ra. A Jewish priest, who in 458 B.C. led 1,500 of his countrymen back to Jerusalem from their captivity in Babylon.

Hash-a-bi'-ah. One of the twelve Levites who, along with twelve priests, acted as guardians of the treasure which was being conveyed to Jerusalem by Ezra (see Ezra 8 : 19, 24, etc.). Another of these Levites was Sherebiah.

Ha'-tach. An officer of King Ahasuerus who was appointed to attend Esther (see Esth. 4 : 5, 10).

Jer-e-mi'-ah. A great prophet, who prophesied for about forty-one years, in the reign

of Josiah, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, kings of Judah.

Jesh'-u-a. Or Joshua, the great military leader who succeeded Moses as the ruler of God's people.

Jor'-dan. The most important river in Palestine, flowing through the land from north to south.

Ju'-dah. The name of the southern kingdom of the two into which Solomon's kingdom was divided, and after the exile a part of a province of the Persian empire.

Medes. A nation belonging to Asia, south of the Caspian Sea, who took part with the Persians in the capture of Babylon.

Mid'-i-an. A region east of the Jordan, whose army was routed by Gideon, Judg., ch. 7.

Mith'-re-dath. Treasurer under Cyrus, king of Persia, through whom the sacred vessels were restored to the Jews, Ezra 1 : 8.

Mor-de-ca'-i. A Jew dwelling in Susa (Shushan), who discovered a plot devised by Haman, the king's favorite, against all the Jews in the Persian empire. He made his discovery known to Esther, the queen, by whom it was defeated. Haman was hanged on the gallows he had erected for Mordecai, and Mordecai became the second man in the kingdom.

Naph'-ta-li. The tribe descended from Jacob's sixth son. Their territory was in northern Palestine.

Neb-u-chad-nez'-zar. The king of Babylon who carried the people of Judah captive to Babylon in 587 B.C.

Ne-hem-i'-ah. A Jew of the captivity who was cupbearer to the king of Persia, and who was appointed governor of Judah. Under him the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt and a political and religious reform effected.

Nun. The father of Joshua.

Per'-sia. A country in western Asia whose king, Cyrus, conquered Babylon in 538 B.C.

Per'-sians. The inhabitants of Persia.
San-bal'-lat. One of the leaders in the opposition to the building of the walls of Jerusalem under Jeremiah. Associated with him was Tobiah.

Sher-e-bi'-ah. See Hashabiah.

Shesh-baz'-zar. The Babylonian name of Zerubbabel, a prince of Judah, who in 538 B.C. returned to Jerusalem and laid the foundations of the temple.

Shu'-shan. Or Susa, a city and royal residence in the Persian empire.

To-bi'-ah. See Sanballat.

Ze-bu'-lun. The tribe descended from the tenth son of Jacob. The territory assigned to them was in the northern part of Palestine.

Ze-rub'-ba-bel. See Sheshbazzar.

Lesson X.

NEHEMIAH REBUILDS THE WALLS
OF JERUSALEM

December 3, 1905

Nehemiah 1 : 7-20. Study the chapter. Commit to memory vs. 19, 20.

GOLDEN TEXT—Watch and pray.—Matthew 26 : 41.

7 But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth.

8 And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.

9 Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

10 And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.

11 And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come ¹¹ in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you.

13 Therefore set I in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which

Revised Version—repairing of the walls of Jerusalem went forward: ² they: ³ and fight: ⁴ cause confusion therein: ⁵ But we: ⁶ into the midst of them: ⁷ Ye must return: ⁸ Omit they will be upon you: ⁹ lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in the open places: ¹⁰ Omit the: ¹¹ Omit the other: ¹² Omit both: ¹³ coats of mail: ¹⁴ Omit on: ¹⁵ laded themselves, every one: ¹⁶ held his weapon: ¹⁷ and: ¹⁸ soever ye hear.

LESSON PLAN

I. The Foes, 7-12.

II. The Leader, 13, 14.

III. The Workers, 15-20.

DAILY READINGS

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

M.—Nehemiah rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem, Neh. 4 : 1-12. T.—Nehemiah rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem, Neh. 4 : 13-23. W.—Crafty enemies, Neh. 6 : 1-9. Th.—Nehemiah's courage, Neh. 6 : 10-16. F.—Dedication of the walls, Neh. 12 : 27-30, 43-47. S.—Our help and shield, Psalm 33 : 10-22. S.—Our armor, Eph. 6 : 10-20.

is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work.

16 And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons: and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah.

17 They which builded in the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

18 The builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.

19 And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and far from another.

20 In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.

21 In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.

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.

The Question on Missions—46. What is meant by bazaar preaching? It means preaching in the market or street to people who cannot be got into the churches. Our missionaries do much of this work.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 250; 262; 100 (Ps. Sel.); 260 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 251.

EXPOSITION

By Rev. James Wallace, B.D., Lindsay, Ont.

Time and Place—444 B.C.; Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—Nehemiah's prayer (Lesson VIII.) had been answered: he had secured permission to go and rebuild the broken walls of Jerusalem. With an escort of cavalry (ch. 2 : 9, 10), he arrived at Jerusalem, and having rested three days, went out by night to inspect the walls, ch. 2 : 12-15. Without delay he summons his people to begin the rebuilding, dividing up the work among families, guilds and individuals (chs. 2 : 16 to 3 : 32), and in fifty-two days the walls are completed, ch. 6 : 15. The Lesson tells of enemies who opposed the work.

I. The Foes, 7-12.

V. 7. A complete list of the foes of Jerusa-

lem. *Sanballat*; supposed by some scholars to have been a Moabite chief from east of the Jordan, evidently (v. 2) a leader among the Samaritans (see Lesson IV., Oct. 22). Possibly he was the Persian official at the head of the province of Samaria. He was probably moved by rage at being refused permission to assist in rebuilding the temple. *Tobiah*; a chief of the *Ammonites*, a small tribe east of the Jordan. *Arabians*; wandering tribes of the desert, who scented prey in the plan of a warlike expedition. *Ashdodites*; inhabitants of Ashdod, one of the principal cities of the Philistines, those old foes of Israel. Sanballat and Tobiah (vs. 1-3) had mocked the Jews, and laughed to scorn with stinging ridicule

their project of rebuilding the ruined walls of Jerusalem. But in spite of their taunts the work was pressed steadily on, so that the wall all round the city had now reached half its height, v. 6. *Were . . . wroth*; filled with fury at the brave builders, whom they could no longer despise.

Vs. 8, 9. *Conspired*. They planned to surprise the city by an unlooked-for attack, seize Nehemiah (ch. 6 : 2), capture and slay the workmen, and so stop the work. *But* (Rev. Ver.) . . . *prayer . . . and . . . watch*. Over against the secret plotting of the treacherous foes are set these two means of defence. A third, namely, careful preparations for meeting the attack, is described in vs. 13, 14. Prayer "was the first and in Nehemiah's mind the most essential defensive measure. We find him resorting to it in every important juncture of his life. It is his sheet-anchor."

Vs. 10-12. *Judah said*, etc.; that is, representatives of the Jewish community. Judah (Judæa) was now a province of the Persian empire. *Strength . . . decayed*. The removal of men to keep "watch" (v. 9) had so weakened the number of workers, that the people lost heart and were ready to give it all up; the work was so large, and there were so few to do it. *Much rubbish*; which had to be removed before the wall could be built. *We are not able*. Thus Nehemiah had to meet, not only opposition from without, but what was far more to be dreaded, disaffection and despondency within. *Our adversaries said*, etc. Nehemiah gives, as if in their own words, his enemies' secret project of a surprise attack upon Jerusalem. Like the wise and resourceful general he was, he had kept himself informed as to the plans and movements of his foe. He was not to be caught napping. *Jews* (in outlying towns) *which dwell by them* (the enemies) . . . *said*. Added to the discouragement of his own followers within, and the schemes of the foes without the city, Nehemiah was now met by a panic among the Jews living in other parts of the country. *Must return* (Rev. Ver.). The people in the frontier towns, fearing an attack from the surrounding enemies, demanded that their friends and relatives at work in Jerusalem should come home to protect them.

II. The Leader, 13, 14.

Vs. 13, 14. *Therefore set I in the lower places*, etc.; where the wall had reached the least height. Armed detachments were stationed at these points, as those most exposed to attack, and those from which the approaching enemies could best be seen. *After their families*. Nehemiah showed wisdom in his arrangement, for clan feeling is strong in Eastern races. *And I . . . said . . . Be not ye afraid*. The heroic leader rouses his followers to deeds of bravery, by reminding them that God is on their side, and that they are fighting for their loved ones. And he himself sets them a noble example of courage.

III. The Workers, 15-20.

Vs. 15, 16. *When our enemies heard*, etc. "When the enemy approached, and saw from a distance the whole people awaiting them in perfect equipment, order and spirit," they lost heart and "turned back." (Ewald.) *God . . . brought their counsel to nought*. Nehemiah had taken all precautions, yet he attributes the success of his efforts to God. *Half of my servants*; that is, his body-guard, who were trained men: of these, one-half worked on the walls, while the other half stood at different points holding the weapons in readiness against an attack. *Spears . . . shields . . . bows . . . habergeons*. See Light from the East. *The rulers were behind*, etc. The chiefs of the people stood behind the workers on the walls, directing and encouraging them, and ready to lead on the armed force, if an attack was made on the workmen.

Vs. 17, 18. *They that builded* (Rev. Ver.) . . . *they that bare burdens*. There were two classes of workmen: (1) the actual builders of the wall, skilled workmen; (2) the laborers, who "laded themselves" (Rev. Ver.), removing the rubbish and supplying new material. The laborers, who could steady their load with one hand, held a weapon in the other; the builders, requiring both hands for the laying of the wall, kept their swords girded by their sides, ready for use at a moment's warning. *He that sounded the trumpet was by me*; so that, in case of attack at any point, alarm might be given and help summoned from all parts of the wall.

Vs. 19, 20. Having carefully arranged his plans, Nehemiah explains them to the leaders among the people, bidding each to be ready for any danger and prepared to do his part, while at the same time, he declares that their safety and success depend on God's blessing and protection.

Light from the East

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

WEAPONS—The Egyptian sword was straight, two-edged, and tapered to a sharp point, and was about three feet in length. The Hebrew sword seems to have been somewhat shorter and lighter, for Joab disembowelled Amasa with a single stroke of it, 2 Sam. 20 : 10. It was carried in a sheath slung at the left side from a belt round the middle or over the right shoulder. The **SPEAR** was more depended on than the sword, as it was more easily made and was more effective in charges,

or when the army was drawn up expecting an attack. It consisted of a shaft from six to eight feet in length, which was at first pointed with the horn of some animal, and later with metal. The **Bow**—was commonly made of wood, or of two horns joined at the base. Metallic bows, perhaps of bronze, are mentioned as being especially strong. The strings were of gut, or hide, or deer sinews, and the foot was used in bending the bow. The arrows were carried in a quiver, and were sometimes poisoned. The **SHIELD**—was a wooden frame covered with hide and bordered with metal of various shapes, often like a Gothic window. It was studded with bosses to break the force of blows, and anointed with oil to make the weapons glance from it. The **HABERGEON**—was a coat of mail, composed of small plates of metal, about an inch wide, overlapping one another like the scales of a fish.

APPLICATION

By Rev. Clarence Mackinnon, B.D., Winnipeg

Sanballat . . . Tobiah . . . Arabians . . . Ammonites . . . Ashdodites . . . very wroth, v. 7. So the foes of a good cause line up against it when it threatens their selfish interests.

Bound to be Beaten "The whole world is against you," it was said to a certain reformer. "Very well," was the calm reply, "then I am against the whole world." The advocates, for example, of temperance and a quiet Sabbath go counter to the desire of many for pleasure or gain. Of course these people will be angry. But their anger is not argument. In their words there is much wrath, but little weight. They have neither reason nor right on their side, and they are bound to be beaten. The weapons of truth are invincible. Against them no forces of evil can prevail.

Set a watch, v. 9. The fabled Argus had a hundred eyes in his head, only two of which ever slept at once. It seemed impossible to take advantage of this ever watchful creature. But Mercury played so seductively on his pipe, and kept waving his sleep-producing wand so effectively, that for a moment the whole hundred eyes were closed. That moment was fatal. Advantage was taken of it,

and the head of Argus was cut off with a single stroke. So our great enemy seeks to lure us from our vigilance. Our safety depends upon our keeping ceaseless watch.

Much rubbish, v. 10. Sometimes it costs nearly as much labor to clear the foundation as to erect the building. In London they have to dig through the accumulated debris of generations of rubbish before reaching solid rock.

What rubbish, too, has not the Christian to rid himself of—false ideas of God, wrong standards of conduct, evil habits that have been permitted to grow and sinful associations that have been formed. But the foundation must be cleared, if the building is to stand solid.

Ten times, v. 12. "Hard pounding, gentlemen; but we will see who can pound the longest," said the Duke of Wellington at the battle of Waterloo, where Napoleon kept flinging again and again his choicest troops against the firm battalions of the British army. And in the moral struggle of life, it is the perseverance of the saint pitted against the persistence of the devil. Not once, but many times, does he whisper, "Desist. What's the use ?

Give in." But, like the brave British captains of yore, we must nail our colors to the mast and fight on to the end.

Remember the Lord, v. 14. The grapes that hang ripening on the wall must first be pressed before they give forth their nutritious juice.

So is it with God's Word. It **Pressed Grapes** is not sufficient to have a Bible in the home. We must constantly recall its truth and meditate upon it. Such meditation on the Lord keeps us from foolish fear, vain thoughts, feverish impatience; it develops character, it enriches the understanding, it nourishes the soul, it comforts the heart, and more than anything else it keeps hope active.

Half . . . wrought . . . work . . . half . . . held . . . spears . . . and the rulers . . . behind, v. 16. What a suggestive object lesson on the division of

A Niche for Each labor is a watch! The activity of the little second hand is very marked. It hurries over sixty spaces while the minute hand is traveling only one space. The hour hand on the contrary is so slow that you could hardly believe it was moving at all, and it takes half a day to make one circuit of the watch. All the same, one could never tell the time from the ever restless second hand alone. He would not know at what second it might happen to be. It takes the combined movement of the three hands together to give us the correct time. Equally necessary are the varied occupations of men. The laboring man, the scholar, the soldier, the ruler are all indispens-

able to the well-being of society. One class should never be arrayed against another, but each should feel its duty to be supplement the rest. Equally needful, too, are the various types of men, the enthusiastic, the phlegmatic, the thoughtful, the active, for each has his appointed niche in the great workshop of the world.

With one of his hands . . . work, . . . with the other . . . weapon, v. 17. The sword and the trowel are alike needful for the Christian.

Sword and Trowel Before him lies the great task of building into his character, faith and virtue and knowledge and temperance and patience and godliness and brotherly kindness and love. But as he builds he must be ever ready to repel the attacking foe. Like his Lord in the temptation of the wilderness, he requires skill in using the "sword of the spirit," for only with this can he conquer.

In what place soever ye hear the sound of the trumpet (Rev. Ver.), v. 20. The call of duty is always imperative. It may be attended

The Great Imperative by hardship or danger, but go we must; and in obedience to this call is our highest reward. "Thank God! I have done my duty," said the dying Nelson. "Stand steady, lads," said the Iron Duke to his soldiers in a moment of peril. "Never fear, sir, we know our duty," was their brave response; and the gratitude of their country is their unending reward.

"I slept and dreamed that life was Beauty, I woke and found that life was duty."

TEACHING HINTS

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

For Teachers of the Older Scholars

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

Connect this Lesson with the mission of Ezra to Jerusalem thirteen years before (see Lesson VI.). The walls had been repaired to some extent, but the enemy had broken them down again. Trace the effect of the Jews' policy toward the Samaritans in connection with the rebuilding of the temple, and also the effect of Ezra's policy regarding mixed marriages (compare Ezra 4 : 1-7; ch. 10). Nehemiah had been informed of the deplor-

able conditions, ch. 1 : 3. His prayer was answered; he received a commission from the king, and started for Jerusalem (ch. 2 : 8) to rebuild the walls.

1. Study his method. He secretly surveyed the whole situation (ch. 2 : 11, 12), made a night examination (ch. 2 : 13-16), and decided to build, ch. 2 : 17, 18. Note the rally of the leaders and how his courage animated the people, v. 6. Note also the extent of the repairs needed, chs. 1 : 3; 2 : 13. The names and order of the builders, each over against his own home are given, ch. 3. Nehemiah united all parties, even those dissatisfied under Ezra. The serious situation is seen in

the attempt of the enemy to raise an army, ch. 4 : 2. The Lesson deals with the opposition, and how Nehemiah overcame it.

2. Notice the method of the enemy. (a) They tried to organize a party to surprise the city and stop the work by force. (b) They tried to discourage the workers, vs. 10-12. (c) The rich and selfish among the Jews oppressed the poor, ch. 5. (d) They tried to get the person of Nehemiah, ch. 6 : 2. (e) They tried to induce Nehemiah to retire into the temple for safety, ch. 6 : 10-12. All that malice, force, cunning and duplicity could do was done.

3. Consider Nehemiah's defence. The enemies' method aroused his suspicion and in a measure prepared him to meet them. (a) He sought the help of God, v. 9. (b) He set a watch, v. 9. (c) He armed the people, v. 13. (d) He inspired them by his own heroic spirit, v. 14. (e) He detailed special officers for defence, v. 16. (f) He instituted a special signal service, v. 20. Nehemiah is the picture of courage, wisdom and faith in his cause. The work was finished in fifty-two days, ch. 6 : 15.

The Lesson is a graphic illustration of spiritual warfare. The principles are the same. Let the application be made to the upbuilding of individual character. The teacher will require great wisdom and tact in bringing this truth home to the class. It is well to deal frankly with the dangers of life, and then to unfold the means of grace whereby life can be successful and progressive. Let the application be made also to the upbuilding of the kingdom of God. The enemy is well known. Try to bring out what is considered most deadly to the kingdom. Then study the defence. Note historical illustrations, and the resources within the power of the kingdom. The spirit of faith should ever be prominent. Hebrews ch. 11 will afford much encouragement to those who are battling with difficulties in the spiritual life.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. E. Douglas Fraser, M.A.

The last half of a task is often the hardest half. This task had prospered. What task? Hark back to the Lesson of a fortnight ago—the grief of Nehemiah (Who was he ?) over

the wall-less, gateless city of his fathers and of his fathers' God (What city ? Where ? Where was Nehemiah ? How far away ? Why there ? and such like questions); and how he got leave to go and rebuild.

So far, the previous Lesson. The gap between, the teacher must have well in hand. The keen scholars will have read up the story thoroughly. Have the points brought out in quick succession (chs. 2, 3, and 4 : 1-6):—the king's permission (ch. 2 : 6), his letters (vs. 7, 8), the guard (v. 9); the vexation of the enemy (v. 10); the arrival and secret survey (vs. 11-16); the summons to build (vs. 17, 18); the scorn of the adversaries, and Nehemiah's answer (vs. 19, 20); the well ordered, steady start, ch. 3 (a chapter worth going through in detail, if there were time, emphasizing, as it does, the value of method in the doing of God's work); and back of it all the mocking foe, and the quiet, unshaken faith in God, of the builders, ch. 4 : 1-6. Thus far, well. But the crisis comes. Mocking is to turn into fighting. This is where our Lesson,—the hardness of the second half,—begins.

It opens with *a conspiracy*, vs. 7, 8. What led to this determined, concerted opposition ? What but the fact that something was being really done ? Satan contents himself with mocking, so long as we merely plan, or talk; but when we begin in earnest to *do*, he starts the fight. The opposition of the wicked is proof that God's work is being done. How are the hindrances met ? By a look up—"we made our prayer", and by a look out—"and set a watch". What newer way, what better way, has ever been discovered, of meeting our spiritual foes ? It is the way Christ practised (Luke 3 : 21 ; 22 : 39-42), and enjoined, Mark 13 : 33.

The crisis, begun with a conspiracy on the part of the foe, is aggravated by the faint-heartedness of friends. The builders are weary (v. 10), and hence the more easily frightened by the threats of v. 11, and the fears of the non-workers, v. 12. The hardest place has been reached: the excitement of the first efforts worn away, the work becomes monotonous, the "Didn't—I—tell—you—so?" people getting in their wail. Many a school, many a mission, many a battle of the soul

against sin, is just at this stage. What is the remedy?

Nehemiah had it. "At it again," is the only way of safety. So he believes; and the remainder of the Lesson shows how true a way it is. First, the guard re-set and the appeal to the Almighty re-made, vs. 13, 14 (compare v. 9, also ch. 2 : 20). And God did not fail them (v. 15); He never did, and never does, fail those who trust Him, and do their part, Mark 16 : 20; 1 Cor. 3 : 6.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Lesson Points

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

The vigor of a good work may be measured by the virulence of its opponents. v. 7.

Treachery can never finally prevail against truth. v. 8.

By the work of our hands we give wings to the prayers of our lips. v. 9.

Discouragement within is more to be dreaded than difficulties without. v. 10.

We can best prepare for the fight only when we know the strength of the foe. v. 11.

The true patriot puts the public good before his private advantage. v. 12.

Success in any enterprise depends largely upon system. v. 13.

The battle is half won which is entered upon with the assurance of victory. v. 14.

God's servants have varied duties, but a single purpose. v. 15-18.

Our best—this is all that God requires of us, and when we bring it His blessing is certain. vs. 19, 20.

From the Library

Over the great post roads built by Darius the journey was probably accomplished within a month.—Kent.

Ridicule is wonderfully stinging to those who are not hardened to it.—Charles Reade.

The great body of these peoples, who were in the time of Nehemiah subject to Persia and could not make war upon other Persian subjects, can scarcely be neut. The allusion is probably to a band composed largely of Arabians, Ammonites and Ashdodites, which

The class will readily follow out the details of vs. 16-20—those that wrought and the equally necessary and faithful ones who held the weapons; those who held a weapon in one hand and wrought with the other; and those who wrought with both hands, but with sword on thigh ready to be drawn; the rulers, who were "behind" the workers, the trumpeter who was beside Nehemiah, and that great leader himself; and the final touch in v. 23. No wonder the work went on.

Sanballat maintained as a guard to his person.—Cook.

All the natural means, whether of mind or matter, form channels through which God conveys His grace in answer to prayer. To stop these channels is to cancel prayer.—Crosby.

The work was all the more discouraging if the bearers had not better implements than are at present used. If dirt is to be taken up or small stones, it is scraped, with a broad-edged, short-handled, heavy hoe, into a flexible shallow basket, and carried off in the hands, or rarely shouldered or on the head. Yet it is next to impossible to induce the Orientals to use wheel-barrow.—Professor Isaac H. Hall.

No wages were paid for this work, so that many were thus reduced to the direst straits to support themselves and their families and pay the taxes exacted by the Persian government. There were rich men in Jerusalem, and in any Western nation a fund would have been raised by these for the maintenance of their brethren. But instead of this, the wealthy seized the opportunity of driving shameful bargains with the starving workers, taking away their homes and their farms, and even selling their children into slavery.—Geikie.

The very act of working was reassuring. Idleness is a prey to fears which industry has no time to entertain. Every man who tries to do his duty as a servant of God is unconsciously building a wall about himself, that will be his shelter in the hour of peril.—Expositor's Bible.

Under this experience the Jews improved immensely in nerve and tone. The discom-

future of Sanballat meant to some extent the resurrection of the national spirit of independence, which had been slumbering during their long vassalage. For the first time since the Exile, they tasted the sweets and felt the strength of victory.—Fairweather, From the Exile to the Advent.

Prove from Scripture

That our trust should be in God.

Lesson Questions

[From the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—Whither did Nehemiah go? Wherefore? Who gave him permission?

7-9 Who were the leaders of Nehemiah's foes? What plan did they make? What two things did Nehemiah do?

10-12 Why had the workers become weak? What was the enemies' plan? What people were afraid? What did they ask?

13, 14 Where did Nehemiah place his soldiers? Who did he say was on their side?

15-20 What part of the people now worked on the walls? What did the others do? What is said of the work? Who would protect the workers?

Seniors and the Home Department—When did Nehemiah obtain permission to go to Jerusalem? When were the walls completed?

7-12 Name Nehemiah's enemies. What

causes of discouragement in vs. 10-12? What prophet was greatly discouraged? (1 Kgs. 19:4.) What Helper is greater than our foes? (Rom. 8:31.)

13, 14 Who is our great Leader? (Heb. 2:10.) How do we gain the victory? (1 John 5:4.)

15-18 What great work lies before the church to-day? Our duty in view of this work? (Matt. 9:37, 38.)

The Catechism

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

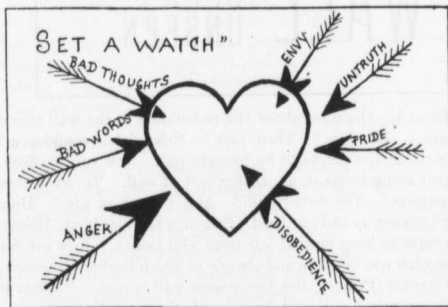
Ques. 105. *The Lord's Prayer*—its fifth petition. There are two points in the Question: (1) God's forgiveness of us; (2) Our forgiveness of others. We all need God's forgiveness, for we have all sinned, Ps. 14:4; Isa. 53:6; Rom. 3:23. It is "for Christ's sake" we are forgiven. He has endured the penalty due by us, and thus set us free, 1 Pet. 2:23. We can do nothing to merit forgiveness, but must receive it as a free gift, Rom. 3:24. God's forgiveness is complete. It covers "all our sins," Isa. 1:18. There is constant occasion for our forgiving one another, because we are constantly giving and receiving offense. And we are bound to forgive others their smaller offences against us, because God has forgiven our greater offence against Him, Matt. 18:27-35.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

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

Lesson Subject—God redeeming His people by making them brave.

Introduction—Use building blocks or blackboard outlines while you again describe Jerusalem as Nehemiah found it (ch. 2), with its broken down walls and rubbish filled gateways. Let the children tell you how the stone masons and bricklayers build.



Teasers—But the builders had some troublesome, quarrelsome neighbors, who did not want to see the walls rebuilt. They "made fun" of the builders. "If a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall," they said. Nehemiah did not heed their taunts. He just prayed, and kept on with the work. (If

you are teased when doing right, keep on and God will stop the teasers.) So the wall was built up to half its height.

Enemies—Those teasing neighbors made a plot to come to Jerusalem to fight and hinder the work. Some of the builders became afraid, and would have liked to run away to some place of safety. They said, "The men who carry the burdens of stone and mortar, etc., are tired out and cannot carry more. There is yet much rubbish to be cleared away. We cannot go on building the wall."

Setting a Watch—Nehemiah prayed and set a watch. Did you ever see a fort? Do you know how the soldiers keep watch for the enemy? (Explain.) Nehemiah made half his own body-guard, workmen, while the other half, with swords and spears and shields and bows, kept watch for the enemy. The builders on the wall, too, kept their swords girded by their sides, ready for use, while their helpers carried their loads with one hand and held a sword in the other.

Warning of Danger—The builders were not to be afraid, even if working alone on the wall. They were to remember, "Our God shall fight for us," and at the warning of danger (the trumpet call), they were to seek safety beside their leader.

Golden Text—Repeat the Golden Text. The builders PRAYED WATCHED WORKED

Our Enemies—We will draw this stroke, and call it a boy, and this one is a girl. We will make a number of arrows pointing at these young people. These arrows are enemies that will hurt boys and girls if they stick in. This one we'll name ANGER, this one UNTRUTH, etc. How can we keep these enemies out? PRAY and SET A WATCH. Two little boys were playing. One knocked the other down. The enemy ANGER at once flew to John's heart, but he had learned to "set a watch," to keep this enemy out, for it often troubled him. In place of getting angry and quarreling, he quietly walked aside till the anger enemy got far away.

Safety Beside Our Leader—When these sin enemies are coming at us, let us seek safety beside our leader—Jesus.

THOUGHTS—Think good thoughts.
WATCH **T**EMPER—Keep sweet tempered.
WATCH **T**ONGUE—Speak kind words.
WATCH **T**IME—Spend well your time.
WATCH **T**EACHERS—Seek good playmates.

Something to Draw at Home—Draw an arrow. Print SET A WATCH AGAINST SIN ENEMIES.

Something to Remember—I should fight against sin.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

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

THE WALL SEEN
UNSEEN

Print, THE WALL, on the blackboard. Question about the re-building of the wall round Jerusalem. The leader in this work? The foes? Their plot? Nehemiah's confidence? His plans? Success? These are some of the points to be brought out. Now turn to Zech. 2:9, telling the scholars that you are going to speak of another sort of wall. To what does the Lord compare himself in this passage? Yes, to a "wall." And, "a wall of fire." How safe we should be with a wall of fire between us and our foes! Picture a traveler in an African jungle building his circle of fires at night to keep himself safe from wild beasts. Now ask for the difference between the wall Nehemiah was building and the one of which Zechariah speaks. One was SEEN (Print); the other UNSEEN (Print). But the unseen wall is real. Nehemiah believed in it. He trusted in God's protection. It will do as much for us as for him.

Lesson XI.

READING AND OBEYING THE LAW December 10, 1905

Nehemiah 8 : 8-18. Study the chapter. Commit to memory vs. 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT—Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it—Luke 11 : 28.

8 ¹ So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and ² gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

9 And Nehemiah, which ⁴ is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God ; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto ³ them for whom nothing is prepared ; for this day is holy unto our Lord : neither be ye sorry ; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

11 So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy ; neither be ye grieved.

12 And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.

13 And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to ⁸ understand the words of the law.

Revised Version—¹ And they ; ² they ; ³ so that they understood ; ⁴ was ; ⁵ him ; ⁶ grieved ; ⁷ heads of fathers' houses ; ⁸ give attention to ; ⁹ how that the Lord ; ¹⁰ branches of wild olive ; ¹¹ broad place ; ¹² dwelt in ; ¹³ ordinance.

LESSON PLAN

I. Repenting, 8, 9.

II. Rejoicing, 10-12.

III. Feasting, 13-18.

DAILY READINGS

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

M.—Reading and obeying the law, Neh. 8 : 1-8.

T.—Reading and obeying the law, Neh. 8 : 9-18.

W.—Importance of God's law, Deut. 11 : 13-21.

Th.—The law to be read, Deut. 31 : 7-13. F.—

Observe and do ! Josh. 1 : 1-9. S.—Hear, and remember ! Psalm 78 : 1-11. S.—Making wise,

2 Tim. 3 : 10-17.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 106. What do we pray

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—October, 444 B.C.; Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—Measures having been taken for the defence of Jerusalem (see Lesson X.), Nehemiah (called "Tirshatha" or "Governor" in v. 9) felt that the time had come for realizing Ezra's original purpose (see Connecting Links, Lesson VII.) of re-establishing the authority of God's written law over His people.

I. Repenting, 8, 9.

V. 8. *They read* (probably Ezra was aided in the reading by those standing with him, or by the "Levites"). *in the law of God.* "When Ezra, mounted on a wooden pulpit, and having (v. 4) six priests on his right and seven on his left, hand, opened the book, all the people stood up (v. 5); and when, before reading, he prayed and blessed the Lord, the

Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month :

15 And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.

16 So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the ¹¹ street of the water gate, and in the ¹² street of the gate of Ephraim.

17 And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and ¹³ sat under the booths : for since the days of Jehu's son the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.

18 Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days ; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the ¹⁵ manner

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.

The Question on Missions—47. What is meant by "itinerating" in missions ? Most of the people of India live in villages of about 400 inhabitants each. The missionary takes an ox-cart loaded with his tent, medicines, books to sell, etc., and with one or more native helpers visits as many of the villages as possible.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 559; 357; 91 (Ps. Sel.); 577 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 588.

great God, they responded with loud Amens, lifting up their hands and throwing themselves on the ground in obeisance, v. 6." (A. B. Davidson.) *Gave the sense*, etc. This likely refers to a running comment made by the scribes and Levites, so that the people might understand clearly the meaning.

V. 9. *Nehemiah, . . Tirshatha.* See Light from the East. *Mourn not*, etc. Instead of lamenting they ought to rejoice, for it was the New Year's Day of Israel, and the first day of the glad seventh month¹ (see v. 2), when the Feast of the Tabernacles, the joyful harvest-home festival, was held, Lev. 23 : 39-43. On this day itself the Feast of Trumpets fell, Lev. 23 : 23-25. It is a mistake to think of Old Testament religion as full of gloom. Its chief days were holidays, sunny and mirthful. *All the people wept.* Listening to the words of the law, they were overwhelmed

with sorrow when they remembered in how many ways they had broken it.

II. Rejoicing, 10-12.

Vs. 10-12. *He*; probably Ezra, whose place it was to give religious directions. *Eat the fat, and drink the sweet.* The meaning is, "Go and enjoy yourselves, eat and drink of the best—let there be no fasting on such a day as this." *Send portions,* etc. The rejoicing was not to be selfish, it was to stimulate practical kindness. Gifts were to be sent to the poor, as at our Christmas Day. Among the Arabians, whatever remained from an offering was divided among the poor. *This day is holy* (see v. 9 and v. 11). "A day sacred to the Lord is a day in which His presence is specially felt." In the nearness of a loving and forgiving God there is true and satisfying joy. *For the joy of the Lord*; Israel's joy, springing from confidence in her protecting Lord. In this glad assurance they had, and we may have, a strong fortress from which to repel every foe. *Great mirth, because they had understood.* They saw now in God's words, not merely terrifying threats and curses, but His great love towards them, expressed in precious promises and cheering assurances.

III. Feasting, 13-18.

Vs. 13, 14. *On the second day*; "of the seventh month" (v. 2), the month Tisri, our October. *Heads of fathers' houses* (Rev. Ver.); that is, the leading men of the nation, rulers in civil affairs. *The priests, and the Levites,* etc. It was a hopeful sign for the nation's future, when its leaders sought a fuller knowledge of the divine law. *They found written in the law.* Reading such passages as Lev. 23 : 39-43 and Deut. 16 : 13, 15 (compare Ex. 23 : 16; Num. 29 : 12-38), they learned that one of the great feasts which the Lord had commanded by Moses, had fallen into neglect. This was the Feast of Tabernacles (see v. 9). While the Jews were in Babylon, so far from the temple, it had been impossible for them to observe all that the law required. Thus the national feasts came to these earnest students as a new discovery. *Dwell in booths*; temporary huts of branches, intended to remind the Jews of how their ancestors had

lived in tents in the wilderness. In these the people dwelt during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Vs. 15, 16. *Go forth unto the mount*; the mount of Olives and the hill country of Judah in general, where boughs were plentiful. *Olive branches,* etc. All these were trees of thick foliage, and hence well suited for the construction of temporary booths. *Booths . . . upon the roof.* The roofs were flat. For the use made of them see Josh. 2 : 6; 1 Sam. 9 : 25 (compare Deut. 22 : 8). *In their courts.* Eastern houses were generally built in the form of a quadrangle, enclosing a courtyard. The booths on the roofs and in the courtyards of their houses would be occupied by the citizens of Jerusalem. Those coming into the city from the country for the feast would find accommodation in the booths built in the *courts* of the temple and the streets ("broad places," public squares) of the *water gate* and the *gate of Ephraim.*

Vs. 17, 18. *Since the days of Joshua* (Joshua). The writer cannot mean that the feast had never been observed since the days of Joshua, but only that there had been no such joyous and general celebration of the festival. *Also day by day . . . he read,* etc. Ezra seems to be meant. In the midst of their rejoicing the people were reminded that all their blessings came from God's hand. *The eighth day . . . a solemn assembly*; marking the close of the Feast. Then, after one day's interval for clearing away the booths, the people were assembled again, ch. 9 : 1. At this gathering they promised to keep the law of Moses, to pay their tithes for the support of the temple service, and to keep the Sabbath holy (see ch. 9 : 38 and ch. 10).

Light from the East

TIRSHATHA—Is a Persian word signifying literally "His Reverence" or "His Excellency." It is not merely equivalent to governor, which is elsewhere applied to Nehemiah. That was the proper title of the prefect, or viceroy, who had the civil and military oversight of a province under Persian rule. It is thought that Nehemiah saw that his civil power could never work the reformation which was needed, and that, on his visit to the Persian court, he obtained appointment as a special royal com-

missioner, or plenipotentiary, to set right all religious abuses. The place where this new title occurs, as well as the drastic measures of reform that he instituted after his return, support this view.

BOOTHs—The agricultural people of Palestine have always lived in villages for security and effective defence. This meant that the land of a few would be some distance away. In the autumn, partly for convenience in

gathering their various harvests, and partly to watch their ripening grain and fruit, they lived in booths on their ground. It was natural that the great harvest feast should at first have incorporated this custom; but when the worship of the nation was centralized in Jerusalem, where the booths were inconvenient and had little meaning, it is easy to see how they dropped out of the festival.

APPLICATION

They read . . . the law of God distinctly, v. 8. Christians have been called "the world's Bible." There are many people who never

The World's Bible"

read the printed Word of God, or go to hear it preached. These will never know its blessed truths unless they see them reflected in the lives of God's children. This places a great responsibility upon each of us. How sad it would be if any one were to miss the way of life because we wrongly represented the heavenly teaching! And how sweet will be our joy if some one is led to the Saviour through seeing His words mirrored in our speech and actions! It will amply repay any effort we may have made.

They gave the sense (Rev. Ver.) v. 8. The Bible is food. But there is no sustenance in food while it is kept in a tin can and laid on the larder shelf. The can must

The Soul's Food

be opened and its contents prepared for the table. There is no virtue in a Bible in the best room, with a tidy cover it. It must be read and understood. Even the mere memorizing of its words will be of comparatively little value, if the sense be not given and believed. A man with a phenomenal memory in the north of Scotland could give chapter and verse for any text in the Bible, but when questioned on the very simplest doctrine was found destitute of comprehension, and so his vast memory was of little practical service. It is the sense that is needed, and so Paul says, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

The people wept, when they heard the words of the law, v. 9. An eminent but unbelieving

lawyer, stricken with an incurable disease that must carry him off in

The "Two-Edged Sword"

eighteen months, turned seriously to religion. He asked for some book to prove the truth of Christianity. He was wisely recommended to read the Bible and to begin at the beginning. The first parts he read with an affected air of incredulity. But when he reached the law he became suddenly melancholy. He could not fling it from him. Before its searching demands he stood self-condemned. Labored arguments often only further antagonize, but the clear statement of God's law carries conviction, and melts the heart into tears of penitence and sorrow.

And send portions, v. 10. The remembrance of the poor is one of the unique characteristics of the true religion. London alone

A Unique Feature

gives to charities yearly through public institutions \$15,000,000, and through private benevolence \$35,000,000; while one million of its population receive medical advice gratuitously. Whatever there may be in common between the religion of the Bible and other religions, "the charity which seeks the lost, loves the poor and consoles the sufferer, is exclusively its own."

The feast of the seventh month, v. 14. Thanksgiving Day, which is the modern equivalent of the old Feast of Tabernacles,

A Feast Instead of a Fast

began unofficially in one part of the New England States in this fashion. There had been dull times. A meeting was convened to arrange a fast. One wise farmer remarked that they had always been provoking heaven with their complaints, and advised now that they remember God's mercies with a day of

thanksgiving instead. The suggestion was acted upon, and was found so helpful that it was never abandoned afterwards. God wants our seasons of grateful rejoicing as well as our times of contrition for sin.

Very great gladness, v. 17. We are not surprised to find these Jews happy, because they went the right way about it. And what

**The Road to
Happiness**

is that? To achieve happiness one must do three things: First, do what God bids you. Secondly, go where God sends you. And thirdly, take what God gives you. To trust God thus for everything, is to lay aside care and worry, and so find peace. It is to live like the lily of the field which opens its fragrant petals every morning to the sunlight, with no thought of either toiling or spinning,

assured that it has but to look upward to the sun to live and grow.

Day by day, v. 18. M. de Rentz used to read three chapters of the Bible every day with his head uncovered and on his bended knees. Lady Frances Hobart Bible Students read the Psalms twelve times a year, the New Testament thrice, and the Old Testament once. Dr. Gouge read fifteen chapters every day, five in the morning, five after dinner and five in the evening, before going to bed. Joshua Barnes carried with him a small pocket Bible which he read one hundred and twenty times. History and experience show how the daily reading of God's Word produces a strong and noble type of character and lives that are pure and true.

TEACHING HINTS

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

For Teachers of the Older Scholars

Keep clearly before the class the historical connection. Study the remainder of the book to get a view of Nehemiah's work as a whole. When the walls were built, which secured comparative safety, Nehemiah next called the attention of the people to religious duties. They had grown careless and he was anxious to see a new life and spirit fill the new temple and city. The Lesson describes his method. Ezra co-operated heartily with him.

Observe the special preparation, the assembly, the high pulpit, the worship, Ezra's prayer, response by the people, reverence and devotion.

1. The reading of the law, v. 8. Note the plan. What part did the priests take? Remember that copies of the law were very scarce, and had been neglected. This accounts for the ignorance of the people and their eagerness to understand the reading.

2. The effect of knowing the law, vs. 9-18. Study this in detail. (a) It led to a conviction of, and sorrow for, sin, (compare the effect upon Josiah, 2 Kings 22:11). Study the function of God's Word in awaking the soul to a knowledge of sin and responsibility. (b) It further led to joy, vs. 9-12. What was the basis of this change? Note the social element

and unselfish devotion. Compare the experience of the early church after Pentecost, Acts 2:44-46. (c) The Feast of Tabernacles was kept, vs. 13-18 (compare Lev. 23:39-43; Deut. 16:13, 15; Ex. 23:16). Grasp the original idea in this feast, and why it was especially prominent at this time. What is the truth contained therein for the Christian? (d) The solemn covenant made, ch. 8:18 to 9:10. This was based on the new experience. Especially observe the ethical consequences of this covenant, as the purification of the temple, restoration of tithing; crime was checked, heathen wives put away, and Sabbath breaking stopped.

This was a great revival, and the covenant made the law the permanent rule of Israel. It was the beginning of Judaism. This Lesson is an illustration of the blessing which comes by knowing and doing the will of God. It emphasizes the duty of making it the rule of life. Three principles are unfolded in this study: (1) Successful Bible study must be in a devotional spirit. (2) It must permeate the whole life of the people to be fully enjoyed. (3) It is capable of transforming the whole life of the people. See England in the time of Elizabeth.

It is important to seek results from this teaching. Emphasize the value of personal systematic Bible study. This should be a

"Bible Study Sunday," and a strong effort should be made to deepen the interest in Bible study. It might be wise to assist in the formation of classes for this purpose, or to suggest courses of Bible study, or in some other way turn personal conviction to practical ends.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Britain's "wooden walls," is a saying from the old days, when battleships were built of oak. The battleship, no longer of oak, but of stoutest steel, is still her defence. But the defence, without the defender, is nothing—the wall without the soldier, the ships without gallant men to man and manage them.

The people of Jerusalem understood this. The walls completed, they asked, "How shall we ourselves be made stronger men?" What was their answer? "We shall become stronger men by being linked closer to God, the Almighty." Read Isa. 40:31. Hence (v. 1), they were on the right track. Show from history that a Bible reading people is a stalwart people.

But the Lesson is about one memorable Bible lesson, and what followed it. The class will readily be interested in the picturesque details of vs. 2-6. V. 8, the first verse of the Lesson, sums it up: it might stand for a modern church or Sunday School service.

What was the effect? This is the key to the Lesson.

1. It made the people *sad*, v. 9 (last sentence). Why sad? Ask another question—"What was 'the law,' which they had heard read?" The commandments which God had given to Moses, and which they had so long and so grievously transgressed. It is a good

place to ask for Ques. 87, Shorter Catechism. Sadness, as the Question just recited hints, is only the first half of religion.

2. The second half is to be *glad*. And so Nehemiah bids them be; for "this day is holy unto the Lord your God," v. 9. What day? v. 2. Their New Year's Day, and so observed by the Jews—still. And wherefore the joy? It was the harvest-home joy and gratitude for God's gracious care and goodness. The best half of religion is joy and thanksgiving. Have the scholars read Ps. 107:1; 2 Cor. 9:15; Eph. 5:20. Make vivid to the scholars how the weeping was turned into "great mirth" (v. 12); and the reason for it: because they understood God's way of love and mercy.

But there was more joy to come. The Bible reading went on (v. 13), and a discovery was made, v. 14. Two questions here: How was it that the people were in ignorance of the great Feast? The Captivity explains this. What was the Feast called? Lev. 23:34 answers. (Explain that "tabernacle", "booth", "tent", mean the same thing.) Go over with the scholars the details of vs. 15, 16; and refer to Lev. 23:43 for the meaning of it all: delivered from bondage, therefore rejoice. V. 17 of the Lesson shows how their recent new deliverance gave fresh zest to their joy. What still greater deliverance have we experienced? What should be the measure of our joy?

3. There is one thing more. God's law made them sad, and made them glad. And the sadness and gladness bore fruit in better living. V. 18 tells of the "solemn assembly;" and chs. 9:38; 10 of vows of obedience made afresh. Give the Lesson a practical turn by talking over with the scholars in what ways their religion is leading them to serve God.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Lesson Points

The best proof that we understand God's law is obeying it. v. 8.

Happiness goes hand in hand with holiness. v. 9.

Since the source of true joy is not in himself, but in God, the most sorrowful Christian may possess it. v. 10.

The Sabbath is a day, not for sitting in gloom, but for serving with gladness. v. 11.

An open Bible is a sure foundation for national and individual character. v. 12.

Happy the people whose rulers fear God and hate covetousness. v. 13.

Those who have found "the pearl of great price" possess the secret of content. v. 14.

In God's past dealings we have the pledge of future mercies. vs. 15, 16.

There are greater blessings in store for God's people than any they have yet enjoyed. v. 17.

The soul as well as the body, requires its daily food. v. 18.

Prove from Scripture

That we should study God's word.

Lesson Questions

[From the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—Whose law did Nehemiah wish his people to obey? Who helped him to bring this about?

8, 9 What did Ezra read to the people? Who stood beside him as he read? How did the reading affect the people?

10-12 How does God feel towards sin? What good thing is He always ready to do for us? How should this make us feel? What does joy do for us?

13-15 To whom did the rulers of the people come? Wherefore? What feast did they find commanded?

16-18 When did the Feast of Tabernacles begin? Where did the people build booths? What was read each day of the Feast? What pledge did the people take?

Seniors and the Home Department—What did Nehemiah do after the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt? With what did his religious reformation begin?

8, 9 What produced repentance among the people? Define "repentance unto life." (Shorter Catechism, Ques. 87.) What does godly sorrow work? (2 Cor. 7:10.)

10-12 Should Christians be joyful? (John 15:11.) What command does Paul give concerning joy? (Phil. 4:4.)

13-18 What will God's word do for us? (2 Tim. 3:15.) What feeling should we have towards it? (Ps. 119:97.)

The Catechism

Ques. 106. *The Lord's Prayer*—its sixth petition. The Question has to do with temptation. Temptation in Scripture has two meanings. It signifies, first, a test. In this sense God tempts us, as He tempted Abraham (Gen. 22:1), to reveal our character and make us stronger to resist. If we are to overcome we must have strength higher than our own. This we may receive in answer to prayer (see 2 Cor. 12:9). Again temptation is used in the sense of enticement to sin. In this sense God tempts no man. The three sources of temptation are the world (Eph. 2:2), the flesh (James 1:14), and the devil, 1 Pet. 5:8. Against these we cannot stand by ourselves. What we need, and should pray for, is either to be kept from being tempted, or strengthened to resist successfully when we are tempted.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—God redeeming His people by sending them His Word.

Introduction—We are all gathered here in our Sunday School to-day looking bright and happy and eager. Why are we here? What book are we going to study? (Show your Bible: draw outline.) How thankful we should be that we have our nice Sunday Schools where we may come to hear God's Word, to hear about Jesus and how we may please Him, to hear about the beautiful home in heaven.

A Bible School—Let us look at a very different Bible School. Outline again roughly Jerusalem with its walls. The wall is now finished, the gates are placed, and porters at the



gates. Do you remember who was the leader in this work? N ----- (Some of you little ones may print the other letters). At a street leading to the water gate of Jerusalem a crowd is gathered! In the midst is a rough board pulpit. On this stands Ezra, the scribe, with the great roll, the Book of the Law (Bible) in his hands, reading and teaching the people God's laws. In the crowd are men and women and children, all that could hear with understanding. It was a long Bible lesson, from morning till noon (v. 3), but the people were all attentive. (This is a good point to impress). Although their strong wall was built, the people did not trust alone in their wall for safety. God is their refuge and strength.

Joy in God's Word—God wants us to be joyous while we are reading and studying His Word, not noisy nor gloomy, but happy in hearing about Him and what He wants us to do, and thankful to our teachers.

A Missionary Thought—Not only are we to enjoy God's Word ourselves, but we should send it to those who have it not (v. 10), to those "for whom nothing is prepared." We should share our blessings with others.

A Thanksgiving Feast—Have ready a little booth made of evergreens to place before the children, while you describe the joy and glad-

ness of Thanksgiving time, their Feast of Tabernacles, when the people came from all parts of the country to Jerusalem and lived in tents of evergreens, olive and pine and myrtle branches. They would then remember very clearly that life in tents in that long wilderness journey, when God brought the children of Israel to the Promised Land. Here are booths on the street, booths on the housetops, booths in the courts of the temple! All the week long Ezra read and taught God's law to the people who lived in these booths. Day by day they became more joyous. What a happy Thanksgiving time these Jews had in the days of old!

Our Thanksgiving—Do we have a thanksgiving time? Every day should be a thanksgiving to God for giving us so many good things. Let us think of some of the things for which we should be very thankful—for fruit, and flowers, and grain, and vegetables, for life, and health, and home, and friends,

For { God's WORD
 { God's SON.

Let the keynote of the Lesson be thanksgiving.

Something to Draw at Home—Draw an open Bible.

Something to Remember—I should study God's Word.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

THE JOY — — — — —
GREAT MIRTH — — — — —
— — GLADNESS

The Lesson is full of rejoicing. There are in it three phrases which ring out sweetly and clearly their glad, exultant notes. Print these one by one. First we have THE JOY — — — — — (ask the scholars to repeat the words represented by the six dashes. Show that this joy comes from being sure that God is near us, watching over us, guiding us and helping us. What strength and courage this gives us for our work and our temptations! GREAT MIRTH — — — — —. This is the second phrase to print and have completed as before. Bring out the reason of the people's "mirth." They "understood the words," that is, they knew now, better than ever before, God's great love to them and desire to bless them. Print the third phrase — — GLADNESS, and have the omitted words supplied. Speak of the Feast of Tabernacles, the glad harvest-home festival. Impress the truth that God wants every day of our lives to be happy and joyful.

Lesson XII.

PREPARATION FOR THE MESSIAH

December 17, 1905

Malachi 3 : 1-12. Study chs. 3, 4. Commit to memory vs. 8-10. Read the Book of Malachi.

GOLDEN TEXT—*I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me.*—Malachi 3 : 1.

1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me : and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in : behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

2 But who may abide the day of his coming ? and who shall stand when he appeareth ? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap ;

3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver : and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

5 And I will come near to you to judgment ; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts.

6 For I am the Lord, I change not ; therefore

Revised Version—*Omit will ; 2 and the ; 3 cometh ; 4 soap ; 5 and they shall ; 6 offerings ; 7 ancient ; 8 the Lord change not ; 9 Omit Even ; 10 have turned aside ; 11 say ; 12 rob ; 13 the ; 14 the whole tithe ; 15 happy.*

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Lord's Coming, 1-5.
- II. The Lord's Rebuke, 6-9.
- III. The Lord's Promise, 10-12.

DAILY READINGS

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

M.—Preparation for the Messiah, Mal. 3 : 1-12.
 T.—The Sun of Righteousness, Mal. 3 : 13 to 4 : 6.
 W.—Good tidings, Isa. 40 : 1-10. Th.—Turn ye 1 Zech. 1 : 1-8. F.—The messenger, Luke 3 : 1-9. S.—The purifier, Matt. 3 : 7-12. S.—A pure offering, Mal. 1 : 6-11.

Shorter Catechism—*Ques. 107. What doth the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us ? A. The*

Time and Place—About 425 B.C.; Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—In 433 B.C., Nehemiah returned to the court of Persia, Neh. 13 : 6. In his absence many evil practices sprang up among the people (see Neh. 13 : 7-31). Nehemiah, on his return, set about stopping these evils. Even before his return the prophet Malachi had been speaking against the wrong-doers. The Lesson is from his prophecies.

I. The Lord's Coming, 1-5.

V. 1. *Behold I* (that is, God) *will send my messenger.* Who is the "messenger"? There may be a reference to Nehemiah. "He came suddenly to the temple" and cleansed it (Neh. 13 : 8); he was a 'swift witness' (Neh. 13 : 25) against all wrong-doers (v. 5); he appeared in the spirit of Elijah (ch. 4 : 5) enforcing the law of Moses." (Dods.) But the prophecy

ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

7 *Even from the days of your fathers ye* are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you; saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

8 Will a man rob God ? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee ? In tithes and offerings.

9 *Ye are cursed with a curse :* for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground ; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

12 And all nations shall call you *15 blessed :* for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of hosts.

13 *And they shall ; 6 offerings ; 7 ancient ; 8 say ; 12 rob ; 13 the ; 14 the whole tithe ; 15 happy.*

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.*

The Question on Missions—48. Is medical work important in missions ? Yes, through it, in many cases, the missionary is enabled to gain access to the people with the gospel. Medical work is done at all our stations in either dispensary or hospital, or both.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 125; 122; 23 (Ps. Sel.); 35 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 151.

EXPOSITION

points also to John the Baptist, who prepared the way for the coming of Christ, the Old Testament Messiah. *Prepare the way.* Compare Isa. 40 : 3-5. In the East when rulers traveled, men were sent ahead to prepare the road for them, hence the idea is, that the great Ruler is coming and men must prepare a way for Him. *Before me.* God speaks of the Messiah as One with Himself. *The Lord . . . even the messenger* (or angel) *of the covenant* (to be distinguished from "My messenger," the forerunner); the angel who brought God's promises to men, mentioned in Ex. 14 : 19; 23 : 20; Zech. 1 : 11. "He represents God to man so directly and fully, that when he speaks or acts God Himself is felt to speak and act." In the highest sense Christ is the Messenger of God to man. *Whom ye* (the Jews) *delight in;* because they thought that, by the mere fact of His coming,

all their affairs would prosper. *Shall come.* He is sure to come, but in an unlooked-for manner.

Vs. 2, 3. *Who may abide . . . coming?* Only those could endure God's presence in whose character there was no dross. *Like . . . refiner's fire . . . fullers' soap* (Rev. Ver.); "soap of the washers." (See *Light from the East.*) *Shall sit as a refiner*, etc. The refiner sits watching the metal in the process of refining. When he sees his own image reflected in it he knows that the dross is purged away. *Purify the sons of Levi*; who had charge of the temple, representing the holy God. They must first be cleansed if the nation is to be purified. (Compare John 2 : 14-16.)

Vs. 4, 5. *Offering . . . pleasant unto the Lord.* The life, character and motives of the offerer must first be pure, if the offering is to be acceptable (see Mark 12 : 43; 2 Cor. 8 : 12). *As in the days of old*; when the Lord was pleased with the offering of Abel (Gen. 4 : 4) and the faith of Abraham, Gen. 15 : 6. *I will come near.* Instead of "he" it is now "I", so completely one are the Lord who speaks and He of whom He speaks (compare John 10 : 30). *A swift witness*, etc. This is the answer to the question of the people, "Where is the God of judgment?" (see ch. 2 : 17). God will come and show His hatred of all that is evil and His determination to punish it.

II. The Lord's Rebuke, 6-9.

Vs. 6, 7. *I . . . the Lord . . . change not.* The delay in God's coming to the help of His people was due, not to any change in His love to them, but to their forsaking Him. *Therefore*, etc. The sufferings which had been permitted to come upon them were intended to purify, not to destroy them. *Ye are gone away.* Compare the departure of the prodigal from his father's house to the far country, Luke 15 : 11-24. *From mine ordinances*; the requirements of God's law for the daily life, and the worship represented by the temple and its services. *Return unto me.* This is the gospel call, the eager invitation of a loving Father, that rings through the Bible from beginning to end. *I will return unto you.* For those who listen to the gospel "come" there is always a joyful "welcome."

Vs. 8, 9. The way to return is by rendering

to God the *tithes* (the tenth of their possessions) for keeping up His service in the temple, which they had been holding back (see Lev. 27 : 30-33; Deut. 14 : 28, 29). Instead of gaining they had sadly lost by withholding from God His due.

III. The Lord's Promise, 10-12.

V. 10. *Bring ye all the tithes.* If men will be generous toward God and his cause, He will pour out rich blessings on them. *Into the storehouse.* This may have been the "great chamber" (Neh. 13 : 5), or "lean-to," which surrounded the temple on three sides, and was used as a receptacle for tithes and offerings. *Meat* (food) *in mine house*; for those who had charge of the temple services. *Prove me.* The people had tried their way of withholding their gifts, and it had resulted in failure. Now they are asked to try God's way of bringing their offerings to the temple. *Open . . . windows of heaven . . . pour . . . out . . . blessing* It is as if God would empty out His vast reservoir of blessings on those who were faithful to Him.

Vs. 11, 12. *I will rebuke*; cause to cease. *The devourer*; "any insect, especially the locust, that would devour the fruits of the earth." (Plumptre.) *All nations shall call you blessed*; an ideal condition, much desired by the Jew, when he would be regarded by all people as holding the highest place in point of happiness and prosperity. Compare the fame of Solomon's kingdom which reached to distant Sheba, 1 Kgs. 10 : 7.

'Light from the East

FULLERS' SOAP—Two processes in the preparation of woollen cloth are called fulling: the one is intended to thoroughly cleanse and bleach it, and the other to so mill or felt the wool together as to lessen the possibility of subsequent shrinking. This was accomplished in the East by washing the material in a preparation of lye and then tramping it with the feet in a vessel of hot water. The making of soap is one of the chief industries of modern Palestine, although there is no sign that the people use it themselves. The poorer grades of olive oil are used in it, and the potash necessary is obtained by burning glasswort

Preparation for the Messiah

and certain other desert plants. The potash, after being repeatedly purified, is boiled with the oil and the mass allowed to cool, and then the soap settles into a solid mass.

REFINER—The process of refining silver by melting it with lead is very ancient. The crude silver and the lead are put into cru-

cibles in a furnace, whose arched roof reflects the heat back upon the surface of the metals. As the oxide of lead forms on the top, it is blown off by bellows until it becomes thinner and thinner and entirely disappears and the bright surface of the silver reflects the face of the refiner.

APPLICATION

My messenger, v. 1. At the great Edinburgh review this year flags flashed signals, guns thundered military salutes, aides-de-

The Coming King

camp spurred their horses across the parks, all heralds of the king's approach. Our Heavenly King, too, is coming, but on clouds of glory and with accompanying angels, to judge the world. The minister, the teacher, the Christian scholar are all messengers sent out to announce His divine approach. Let us be faithful to our mission.

Fullers' sope, v. 2. The ancient fuller would take a piece of cloth, wash it with a strong lye, beat and rub it very hard, and finally expose it to the sun's rays, until it was so thoroughly bleached that it became white and glistening. God cleanses our sin stained souls in the precious blood of His own Son; through the trials and sacrifices of life He rubs out of our nature its old habits and its sordid inclinations; and, through the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit whitens them, until at last they shall shine resplendent as His own Son. "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." His glorious image shall be reflected in us.

As a refiner, v. 3. God's fires are not like the lightning, which blasts the scathed tree. Rather are they a furnace. At Shields, what impressed Whitefield was that the glass was put into three successive furnaces. He asked, "Why do you put it into so many fires?" He was told the first was not hot enough, nor the second, but the third was needed to make it transparent. Thus God puts His children into one furnace of affliction after another, until they, too, shall become transparent in the beauty of holiness.

A swift witness, v. 5. Belshazzar quaffed his wine in proud scorn of the Almighty; loud,

unbelieving laughter filled his halls, when suddenly the fingers of a hand wrote his doom upon the wall, and that night his soul was summoned to judgment before his Maker. Not infrequently since then has God proved Himself a swift Witness against evil-doing, and changed the shouts of revelry into shrieks of despair. Let us never be found where we would be ashamed for death to overtake us and catch us in any sinful act.

Return unto me, v. 7. This command is for all ages. Polycarp, the disciple of John and the martyr at the age of ninety-five, was converted when he was nine years old; Matthew Henry at eleven; President Edwards at seven; Dr. Watts at nine; and Richard Baxter could not remember when he did not love God. Any child old enough to know that God asks his obedience is old enough to be converted.

Rob God? v. 8. The very audacity of the thought staggers us. Men will pick locks, scale walls, force windows, break open tills, cheat, tell lies in private or on the exchange, to rob one another, but surely they will not dare to steal from Him who knows all things and whose watchful eye never slumbers. Yes, this they even dare, not by breaking into churches and committing sacrilege, but by withholding from Him what is His due. Everyone who, for selfish reasons, diminishes his contribution to God's work, robs his Maker.

Cursed with the curse (Rev. Ver.), v. 9. Men who keep their gold are miserable compared with those who expend it for the good of men and the glory of God. Abderman, the Moorish caliph of Cordova, left behind him a paper, in which he declared that for fifty years he had been caliph, possessed riches,

A Sudden Summons

Old Enough

Stealing from God

The Curse of Selfishness

honors, pleasures, friends, but could only reckon up fourteen days in which he was really happy. Selfishness, however gilded and honored, has attached to it the curse of discontent, envy and insatiable greed.

The whole tithe (Rev. Ver.), v. 10. A tenth seems a great deal to give to God. There are so many things on which we could expend it with advantage to ourselves.

Our Sacrifice and Christ's It does not look as if we could afford it very easily. "I cannot afford to give it, but I can afford to sacrifice it," were the noble words of Sarah Martin, the poor needlewoman, when asked how she could give so much of her time to visiting the sick and needy; and a tenth is at least not too much to sacrifice for Him who sacrificed His life for us.

Prove me, v. 10. "Try" and "trust" are two little words, but they take us to the very

heart of our religion. God makes on us no more exacting demands than we should make on our friends.

The Best Security He asks us simply to put Him to the test. Dean Swift, in making an appeal for charities, quoted the text, "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord." "Now," he said, "if you are satisfied with the security, down with the money." It is the experience of all liberal givers, that God does not fail to redeem His promises.

A delightful land, v. 12. There is little promise to the eye, of the splendid cathedral in the confused pile of stones laying in the quarry. But we trust the genius of the architect to bring order and beauty out of the confusion.

The New Paradise And there is power with God to transform this world so full now of sin and strife into a paradise of purity and peace.

TEACHING HINTS

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

For Teachers of the Older Scholars

Nothing is known about Malachi; but the social and religious life of the people is faithfully reflected in his writings and in Nehemiah. The land was suffering, ch. 3:11. Their new home had not fulfilled their expectations. Morally their condition was very unsatisfactory. Religion had become a show and farce. The priests had become careless (ch. 1:13), the people were stinting the sacrifices (ch. 1:14), offering poor things—lame and sick animals, refusing to pay tithes and demanding money for any service given to the temple. There were many foreign marriages, ch. 2:10-16. Malachi faces these facts. The cause is sin, the remedy a return to God, who will come and restore His kingdom.

1. Consider the promise of a forerunner before Messiah comes, v. 1. (Compare Isa. 40:3-5; ch. 4:5, 6 for light on this, and note Matt. 11:13, 14; 17:12, 13, Mark 9:13; Luke 1:76-79 for the New Testament view of its fulfilment.)

2. The mission of Messiah is judgment and purification, vs. 2-5. This begins at the priesthood. Note the graphic figures used, and study their meaning. It also extends to the

people. What light this casts upon the life of the people! Note the strong moral force which runs through this visit to Zion. What is its bearing?

3. The invitation to prepare for His coming, vs. 7-10. They must abandon the old for the new. Especially consider the emphasis on moral dealing with God in tithing (compare Lev. 27:30-33; Deut. 14:28, 29).

4. The blessing Messiah brings, vs. 10, 11. This is expressed in many forms. (a) Abundance of spiritual blessing (see Gen. 7:11; 2 Kgs. 7:2 for imagery). (b) Abundance of material success. (c) Abundance of happiness and peace. Thus throughout this Lesson there run two ideas: (1) There must be righteousness, and with righteousness comes happiness and success. (2) The announcement of His coming is an invitation to prepare to meet Him.

In advanced classes it will be well to note the historical fulfilment of this promise and its power in the whole Christian world. The practical application is found in its bearing on character. What can the individual members of the class do to prepare for Christ's coming? The forerunner has come, the Messiah has come. What is the relation to Him now? If not yet Christian, what can be done to fulfil the conditions of life? (a)

Turn from sin. The moral side of life is always under the control of the individual, and hence the gospel calls to repentance, a turning from the evil ways. Judgment and purification are necessary. (b) Follow the conditions of salvation. The soul can surrender to Christ, can use the means of grace, can believe. This is the human side to salvation, and the teacher should seek to have all feel this responsibility. This may well be a decision day with many of our young people. The teacher should prepare for it, teach for it and work for it.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

"Have you ever watched for the morning?" There is a long, dark period (400 years, it turns out to be) before the Jewish nation. Malachi, the last of the prophets, has a final word from God: it is a bridge over the dark chasm; it is a star of hope over the far horizon. This Lesson holds that word. Have the scholars pick it out of v. 1. Very likely their first try will be wrong. Here it is: "The Lord . . . shall . . . come." That is the good news. That is the star of hope.

But His "messenger" (herald) first, v. 1. Who? Matt. 3:1-3. What preparation did he command? See Matt. 3:2; for the obstacle is sin. Sin must go out, before God will come in.

Then the coming Lord? How shall He come? Whither? V. 1. Who is He? "The Lord." For His character and relation to His people see such passages as Gen. 17:1; Ex. 3:6, 14; Ps. 95:3-7; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 4:8. Who is He? "The messenger of the covenant." Who is this? See Ex. 14:19; 23:20; Zech. 1:11. (Explain "the covenant"—God's promise and pledge to save and keep His people.)

Were they looking for Him? "Whom ye delight in" shows that their one hope was the promised Deliverer. (See Isa. 40:3-5; 42:1 Mic. 5:2.)

In what character were they expecting Him to come? As a triumphant earthly King, who would lead their nation to highest honor and fame.

But read v. 2. Explain "refiner's fire," "fullers' sope." V. 5 is the best comment. "A fierce, relentless King," they cry: go over the items one by one, the awful sins of the people. Yes, the coming King is fierce against them, will burn them up, will bleach them out. Is this unmerciful? The beautiful outcome is given in v. 4.

Oh, how God longs to bring sinners back to Himself! Have you ever seen a strong man weep? There is a great sob in vs. 6, 7. Have you ever thought of how the father of the "prodigal son" must have felt? V. 7 (first sentence) shows the anguish God feels; the second sentence the length and breadth and depth of His love. Surely no one can resist it.

But they did:—"Wherein shall we return?" they cried. See how God brings their sin home to them and its awful desert (vs. 8, 9); and then follow up with the wonderful promises of vs. 10-12. (Explain "tithes," "windows of heaven," "the devourer.") Conclude by showing on what the blessing turns—giving God His due: serving God in the way He appoints; in one word, taking God's way, instead of our own way—just what the "messenger" commanded. "Repent" (Matt. 3:2): just what Jesus Himself commanded. "Repent" (Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3). Can there be a fairer offer than that of v. 7 of our Lesson—"Return unto Me, and I will return unto you?"

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Lesson Points

Before God can come into our hearts they must be cleansed from sin. v. 1.

Heaven must get into us before we can get into heaven. v. 2.

Purity is well worth the price of pain. v. 3. Our gifts please God only when they are

prompted by a loving and grateful heart. v. 4.

Human excuses shrivel up before the divine testimony. v. 5.

None but those who are holy can dwell with a God of holiness. v. 6.

The door of pardon opens wide at the touch of the penitent. v. 7.

No calculation can be correct that leaves God out of account. vs. 8, 9.

The promises of heaven will never fail if their conditions are fulfilled. v. 10.

National prosperity depends upon national piety. vs. 11, 12.

Prove from Scripture

That the Lord requires purity.

Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—Who was governor of Judah at this time? From whose words is the Lesson taken?

1 Whom did the people wish to come? Would He come? Whom would He send before Him? What messenger came before Christ?

2-5 What would Christ's coming bring to the wicked? To the good? To what two things is He likened? How does the Lord feel toward evil?

6-8 Does God ever cease to love us? Why then do we sometimes suffer? What had the Jews kept back from God?

10-12 What were the people required to do? What does God promise that He will do?

Seniors and the Home Department—What evils prevailed among the Jews? What prophet spoke against them? Who sought to set things right?

1-5 What question had the Jews been asking? Why? How were they to prepare

for the Lord's coming? (Matt. 3:2.) Describe the twofold result of the Lord's coming. What great separation will be made at the last judgment? (Matt. 25:32, 33.)

6-8 What is God's invitation to sinners? Mention a psalm that describes the blessedness of forgiveness. (Psalm 32.)

10-12 What were the Jews required to give for God's service? What sort of giving pleases God? (2 Cor. 9:7.) Should our giving be methodical? (1 Cor. 16:2.)

The Catechism

Ques. 107. *The Lord's Prayer*—its conclusion. In the conclusion of the Lord's prayer we have: 1. A ground of encouragement in prayer. It points us to one who is able to fulfil all our petitions. He is the Ruler of all things, 1 Chron. 29:11. All the power in the universe belongs to Him, Matt. 28:18. 2. The duty of giving praise a place in our prayers. Bible prayers are full of praise. See, for example, the Psalms, especially such a Psalm as the One Hundred and Third; the recorded prayers of Jesus (Matt. 11:25; John, ch. 17); and the prayers of Paul (see Eph. 3:20, 21). 3. The confidence that prayer will be heard. This confidence finds expression in the word "Amen", which means, "So be it." In using it we call upon God solemnly and with assurance, to grant the requests presented.

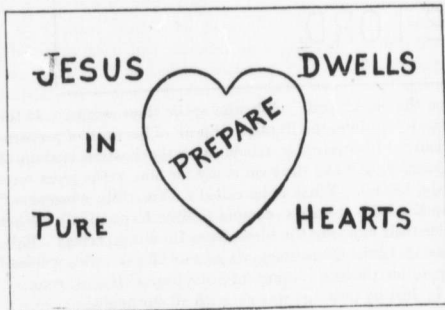
FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—God redeeming His people by promising them a Saviour.

Introduction—Show an article made of silver, or a piece of silver money. Where do we get silver? Does it look

just like this when it is found in the ground? What has to be done to prepare it for use? Explain the refining process by means of fire or chemicals.

Lesson—Malachi, the last of God's prophets, tells the children of Israel about the Messiah coming to the world. They had begun to think that God did not mind if their ways were sinful. They thought He would not punish sin. God sent Malachi to tell them about the Saviour who would take away their sin.



Golden Text—Repeat. The messenger, John the Baptist, shall come first, preparing the way, teaching about Jesus. Then the Lord Himself shall come suddenly and find them just as they are. Some will be ready for Him and some will not. He will "sit" very patiently while He "examines" them, as the refiners used to examine the silver, to see if He can behold Himself reflected in them.

Review—Do you remember Nehemiah? What did he do for the people of Jerusalem? Built and taught. He went away back to Persia, and after a while came again to Jerusalem.

Wrong Doing—The people had forgotten God's law, and had again fallen into **WRONG** WAYS.

They had promised to give one sheep out of every ten, and one bag of grain out of every ten they got, and one out of every ten of everything they owned, to be used for keeping up the services of God's house. And they did not do so. Malachi told them that they were robbing God. If we keep back what belongs to any one, we are robbing him as much as if we took something from him. If we get on a wrong road, what should we do? "Return," says God, "unto me, and I will return to you." These people must get back to the right way of serving God, and God promised that more blessings will come to them than they are

able to receive. This promise is also for us.

Robbing God—Do we ever rob God? Let us see! Do we give God

OUR	{	TIME	These		
		MONEY		are	
		LOVE			God's.
		TALENTS			
		THOUGHTS?			

Or are we only giving God a very small share of these, and using the rest for our own selfish pleasure? (Explain how little people keep back these sometimes.)

Preparation—If we were to go to meet a king or some other great person, we should prepare our clothing, our words, our manners. Here is what God wants us to prepare. Outline a heart. Ask Jesus to help you to make right all your rough ways and to cast out all **SIN** and fill up all the ruts full of love for Him. Then we shall be ready for His coming.

Sing (Hymn 529, Book of Praise, v. 2)—

"Christ is kind and gentle,
Christ is pure and true,
And His little children
"Must be holy too."

Something to Draw at Home—Draw a heart. In it print **PREPARE FOR JESUS**.

Something to Remember—Jesus dwells in pure hearts.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD.

Point to the sentence printed on the blackboard. Ask who spoke these words. If the answer cannot be got, tell the scholars it was John the Baptist. Speak of his work of preparation for the coming of the Saviour. Illustrate by reference to the Eastern custom of having men go before a king on a journey, to make the road ready for him. The great forerunner of Christ is referred to in the Lesson. What is he called? Yes, "My messenger." Why were the Jews longing for the Messiah's (Christ's) coming? (See Exposition.) What was there in them that would hinder their enjoying the blessedness He was to bring? Make it clear that we cannot have the blessings Christ offers unless we give up all sin. This will lead to the question, How can we prepare for Christ's coming into our hearts, homes, country with all His rich and precious gifts? Just by putting away sin with all our might.

Lesson XIII.

THE CHARACTER OF THE MESSIAH December 24, 1905

Isaiah 9 : 1-7. Commit to memory v. 6. Read Isaiah 11 : 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT—Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.—Matthew 1 : 21.

1 ¹ Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

Revised Version—But there shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land: ² but in the latter time hath he made it glorious by the way of the sea: ³ Omit in; ⁴ dwell; ⁵ thou hast increased their joy; ⁶ Omit and; ⁷ Put "thou hast broken" after "oppressor"; ⁸ all the armour of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments; ⁹ Omit but this; ¹⁰ even be for burning, for; ¹¹ Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace; ¹² of; ¹³ establish; ¹⁴ uphold; ¹⁵ righteousness; ¹⁶ shall.

LESSON PLAN

- I. A Vision of Joy, 1-3.
- II. A Vision of Peace, 4, 5.
- III. A Vision of Christ, 6, 7.

DAILY READINGS

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

- M.—The character of the Messiah, Isa. 9 : 1-7.
- T.—The Branch, Isa. 11 : 1-10. W.—The Deliverer, Isa. 42 : 1-8. Th.—The Comforter, Isa. 61 : 1-6.

5 For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; ⁶ but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire.

6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and ¹² peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to ¹³ order it, and to ¹⁴ establish it with judgment and with ¹⁵ justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts ¹⁶ will perform this.

P.—The King, Psalm 72 : 1-17. S.—The Redeemer, Isa. 59 : 19-21. 8.—The Saviour, John 3 : 5-16.

Shorter Catechism—Review Questions 96-102.

The Question on Missions—49. What is a zenana? A zenana is a private portion of the home, in which the women and children live. Our lady missionaries, both doctors and teachers, visit the zenanas, ministering to the sick and teaching gospel truth.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 520; 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 26; 30; 32 (Ps. Sel.); 34 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY).

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—734 to 732 B.C.; Jerusalem, the home of Isaiah.

Connecting Links—For our Christmas Lesson we go back about three hundred years in the history of Israel, to the time when Isaiah saw clearly that the Assyrian was to be God's instrument in bringing desolation on his country. But a great Deliverer shall arise, bringing hope and joy to an oppressed people.

I. A Vision of Joy, 1-3.

V. 1. *There shall be no gloom* (Rev. Ver.). The trials that had already been suffered (ch. 8 : 21, 22), and the continuous fear of further attacks, are represented under the figure of gloom and darkness of the night (compare Ps. 30 : 5). But the prophet sees a bright dawn approaching. *To her that was in anguish* (Rev. Ver.); that is, Israel. The horrors of war are terrible under any circumstances, but doubly so when our own country is the battle-ground. *In the former time he* (God) *brought into contempt the land* (Rev. Ver.). From earliest time Jehovah had allowed this district to be exposed to, and

suffer indignity at the hands of, heathen invaders. *Zebulun and . . . Naphtali*; "Lower and Upper Galilee." A short time previously Tiglath-pileser, King of Assyria, had carried away captive the people of this territory, 2 Kgs. 15 : 29. *In the latter time hath he made it glorious* (Rev. Ver.); that is, brought honor to it, since a new and glorious day is to be ushered in. Because they had suffered even more grievously than the rest of Israel, their rejoicing in their deliverance would be correspondingly greater. Three portions of these same regions are now named : (1) *The way of the sea*; "either in the direction of the Mediterranean Sea, or the region along the west side of the Sea of Galilee." (Cambridge Bible.) (2) *Beyond Jordan*; the land east of the upper Jordan. (3) *Galilee of the nations*; so called because of its mixed population of Israelites and other peoples. It was situated in the northernmost corner of Upper Galilee. These districts had suffered most in the frequent wars with Syria (1 Kgs. 15 : 20), and afterwards with Assyria, 2 Kgs. 15 : 29. The sufferings of the past are to be outweighed by the glory of the future. Matt. 4 : 12-16

sees this prophecy fulfilled in Jesus' dwelling in Galilee.

V. 2. *The people . . . in darkness*; a description true of all the world when Christ came, but especially true of those dwelling in these Northern regions, who were despised among the Jews, John 1:46; 7:52. *The land of the shadow of death*. The sad condition of Israel under the yoke of a foreign bondage is likened to the darkness of the lower world. *Have seen a great light*. These words point to Jesus, who was to be, not only the "Glory of . . . Israel," but also "a Light to lighten the Gentiles," Luke 2:32. It was fitting, therefore, that He should begin His work on the borders of the Gentile world.

V. 3. *Thou hast multiplied the nation*. Israel would increase (compare, ch. 26:15; 66:8; Zech. 14:10). Christ's kingdom would grow in like manner until it should no longer be limited to the Jews, but should spread over the whole world. *Thou hast increased their joy* (Rev. Ver.), The Hebrew equivalents for "not" and "their" (or "his") are alike in sound and differ very little in spelling, and one may have been substituted for the other in transcribing. There is always joy where the Saviour is received into the heart and home (see Acts 8:8). Three points are to be noted about this joy: (1) *Joy before thee*; that is, joy which depends upon God as its source. (2) *Joy in harvest*; as at the Feast of Tabernacles, Ex. 23:16. (3) *Divide the spoil*. It is the joy of victors after the battle.

II. A Vision of Peace, 4, 5.

Vs. 4, 5. *Thou hast broken*; that is, the power of the Assyrians. This pictures the deliverance from the great oppressor, sin (compare Mark 2:10, 11). *Yoke of his burden*; the yoke which burdened him. The yoke is an emblem of slavery, Gen. 27:40. The foreigner has had Israel yoked like an animal. Jehovah now will sever the yoke from off their neck (compare Gal. 5:1, etc.). *Staff of his shoulder*; the staff used to beat him. *Rod of his oppressor* (driver). Compare Ex. 5:6, 14. Every instrument of slavery is to be destroyed. *As in the day*; that is, day of battle. *Of Midian*; when Gideon overthrew the Midianites (see Judg., chs. 6 to 8).

Read v. 5 as in the Rev. Ver. The military boots and cloaks and other warlike accoutrements shall be destroyed. "War has rolled away forever over that northern horizon and all the relics of war are swept together into the fire." (Dr. G. A. Smith.) (Compare ch. 11:1-10; also ch. 2:4.)

III. A Vision of Christ, 6, 7.

Vs. 6, 7. *Unto us a child is born*. "This is the greatest (blessing) that the writer can hope for, and, in his joy over its fulfilment, he includes himself ('unto us')." (Mart.) He has given us a picture that none save Jesus has ever completely fulfilled. *A son is given*. Jesus was Son of God and Son of man. *Government . . . upon his shoulder*. The reference may be to the royal mantle, the emblem of authority. *Wonderful, Counsellor*; or "Wonder-Counsellor," "a wonder, or the most wonderful, among counsellors is He" — a necessary quality in a grand Ruler (see Col. 2:3). *The mighty God*; or "Hero-God," that is, a God among heroes, a God endowed with a power not found in human heroes (compare Ps. 45:6; Heb. 1:8). *The everlasting Father*; or "Father of Eternity," that is, One who continually acts as a tender and pitiful Father to His people (compare Ps. 103:13). *The Prince of Peace*. He is the Bringer of peace (compare ch. 2:2-4; 11:4; Mic. 5:5; Zech. 9:10; John 14:27, and see the song of the angels, Luke 2:14). *Increase . . . no end*. The Messiah's kingdom is to increase until it includes the whole world (compare Matt. 28:19, 20; Eph. 1:20-23). *Zeal of the Lord of hosts*. God's own honor is bound up with this matter. He must therefore help His people and establish His kingdom (compare Zech. 1:14; 8:2; also Hymn 262, v. 4, Book of Praise).

Light from the East

HIS NAME—In primitive times men got their names from some bodily peculiarity, and when the name was once coined it was used indiscriminately. This custom is still common in places where there are many persons of the same name. Later, men began to be called by some trait of their character, either good or bad. The Simple, The Silent, The Cruel, The Terrible, The Good, have been added to historic names, and have

preserved the men's characters far more accurately than any description could have done. So the Hebrews used a name to indicate the man's character, his personality, himself. When at her marriage the wife's personality was legally merged in that of her husband, she was called by his name, and this custom continues. Whenever the Hebrew

wished to express forcibly the nature or office of a person, he said his name should be so and so. As the name was an expression of the personality, the use of it beforehand was a prediction of the fortunes of the person so named. The Child mentioned in the Lesson shall actually be all that is implied in these names.

APPLICATION

There shall be no gloom to her that was in anguish (Rev. Ver.), v. 1. Sometimes the sorrows and trials of life come upon us thick and fast, like the drops of a pelting rain storm from which there is no shelter. But we know how the sun shines upon the rain drops and forms the beautiful many-colored bow that spans the heavens. In watching the exquisite rainbow, we forget the discomfort of the storm. And so in the brightness of God's presence, with His love shining full upon us, all the darkness flees away from our souls, and they are illuminated with a sweet and heavenly radiance.

In the former time . . . contempt . . . in the latter time . . . glorious (Rev. Ver.), v. 1. In these words may be written the history of Christ's kingdom. Pilate despised it,

A Story in a Sentence and thought he had stamped it out when he sent its Founder to the Cross. The proud Romans looked with infinite scorn upon the few poor fishermen who went out to bring the world under the sway of the gospel. In the eyes of Festus, Paul seemed to be a madman when he spoke of the power of the risen and living Christ. But every Christian century has seen that kingdom grow in extent and influence over men. It never was so glorious as to-day, and its glory and greatness will increase until the whole world is brought under the rule of its mighty King.

Walked in darkness, v. 2. Travelers tell of the strange conduct of Arab guides in Eastern tombs and temples. When, by some mischance, their lights go out, they begin to clap their hands and make all sorts of strange noises. They are afraid in the dark, believing the air around them to be full of demons, whom they thus try to scare away.

Deeper and more dreadful is the darkness of those who are away from Christ. Their pathway is full of fears. They are afraid of life's perils and trials, for they have not His strength in which to meet them; of death, for they are not united with Him who vanquished the grave; of judgment, for they have not made Him who sits on the throne their friend; of the future, for it promises them nothing but woe. How foolish to walk amid these terrors, when in a moment they may be scattered through simple trust in the Saviour!

Upon them hath the light shined, v. 2. Upon whom? Upon those who were in the shadow, and looked toward the light. Those outside the cathedral cannot see the richness of the colors or the beauty of the figures in the pictured window; neither can those within who will not look. But he who in the gloom of the great building looks toward the painted glass, will see nothing else worth gazing at. So with us. Only when we stand in the shadow of our sins do we fully realize the beauty and radiance of the Saviour, who died for our sins and became thereby the Light of the world.

Joy in harvest, v. 3. Ninety million bushels of wheat and more of golden grain were garnered in last autumn from the fertile prairies of the West. Plenty and prosperity are the pleasant results, bring gladness of heart to the people of the land. There is another harvest. It belongs to God. It is made up of precious human souls. We may have a share in the blessed work of gathering it in. And no joy of earthly reaping time can compare with theirs who, at the last, shall have sheaves to bear into the presence of the Lord of the harvest.

All the armour of the armed man . . . for fuel of fire (Rev. Ver.), v. 5. War is doomed. Its weapons shall be consumed. It has drained the nations of the earth **War Doomed** more than any curse. The four wars from 1702 to 1814 cost the British people \$9,100,000,000. The wars of Julius Caesar destroyed about 2,000,000 men; those of Napoleon nearly 4,000,000. The number killed or who died of wounds and disease in war from 1853 to 1877 was: in the Crimea 750,000; American civil war 800,000; Franco-German war 225,000; smaller wars and massacres 175,000. The mind cannot estimate the loss and suffering that have been entailed. But all this energy that has been used to destroy men will be directed

to the work of saving them. Then what glorious results may we not look for? Before the great army that fights under the Captain of our salvation every foe will be vanquished, every evil will be overcome.

His name, v. 6. The name of Jesus has ever been potent for good. Uttered by the lips of the apostles, it healed disease, opened the eyes of the blind, mastered devils, and even breathed warm life into the cold form of death. **An All-Powerful Name** Nor have the centuries robbed it of its power. Never has it been more effective than to-day, not indeed to startle the world with physical wonders, but to work moral miracles in the lives of thousands and to win ever increasing homage from the lips of mankind.

TEACHING HINTS

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

For Teachers of the Older Scholars

This Lesson naturally follows the last. The word Messiah or Anointed One is used in the Old Testament of many of God's agents, as the high priests (Lev. 4 : 3), ministers (servants) of God (Ps. 105 : 15), of Cyrus (Isa. 45 : 1), of God's actual king (1 Sam. 24 : 6) and of God's expected King, Dan. 9 : 25. In Isaiah's time the land was in great distress. Palestine was assailed by the Assyrian. The land was cursed with the reign of idolatry. The world was in the darkness of night. There was also the expectation of a glorious king (compare 2 Sam. 7 : 16; 23 : 3-5). Isaiah's vision passes from the ideal of a helpless infant to a Deliverer, Hero, Immanuel.

1. Consider the word of hope, vs. 1-5. The future is painted in brilliant colors. Note the promise of light, the great deliverance, the joy, the freedom from the oppressor and the method of victory. This is sketched with the historical conditions as a background. For the tyranny of the Assyrians see 2 Kgs. 15 : 19, 20, 28, 29. A careful study of these historical references will make the situations real and suggestive.

2. Study the character of Messiah, vs. 6, 7. This also had a partial fulfilment in the history of deliverers, but only fully in Jesus.

It falls into two main divisions: (1) The personal character of Messiah. Note the terms used and examine their meaning carefully, "Wonderful," "Counsellor," "The Mighty God," "The Everlasting Father," "The Prince of Peace." What did these terms convey to the people? What do they convey to us? Advanced classes would do well to examine the Old Testament view of the character of the Messiah, and whether there is any clear revelation of His divinity, as that term is now understood. How far is the New Testament conception of Jesus an expression of the Old Testament view and in what respects is the New Testament view original? (2) The principles of His empire. Note its universality and permanence, its peace and righteousness, and its development of God's plan in the world. Again it is profitable to contrast the Old Testament and the New Testament conceptions of the kingdom of God and the development of thought. It is helpful also to trace the historical fulfilment of this vision, and to compare the principles of the kingdom with the revelation of the Lesson. The teacher should seek to trace the progress of doctrine and have the Messiah of the world stand out clearly before the class. Every light should be utilized to shew him in his real nature, and especially his relation to the world's redemption.

Having considered the person and work

of Jesus, it remains to make a personal appeal to the class. By careful, earnest teaching, the truth can touch the heart, and the teacher will do well to prepare for this personal dealing. In whatever way may be considered best, seek to have the scholars give themselves to the Saviour and regard themselves as subject, of the King and sharers in His glorious work of redemption.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

A Christmas Lesson; and the imagination immediately takes flight to the far away land where the angels sang the birth of the Babe of Bethlehem. Begin, therefore, with—

A lesson in geography. The least skilled teacher can sketch an outline of the Holy Land, with its sea-coast, its Jordan, and its three great divisions, Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. This was the land when our Lord came. Now plant the old names of Isaiah's prophecy—Zebulun and Naphtali (names of tribes): these are Upper and Lower Galilee; "beyond Jordan," the country to the east; "Galilee of the nations," the northernmost corner of Upper Galilee, where other peoples were mingled with the Jews. Now—

A lesson in history. These lands were "afflicted" (v. 1): for instance, by the Assyrian king, Tiglath-pileser (2 Kgs. 15: 29); and a frightful scourge those fierce warriors from the far East were. Isaiah, from whose prophecies the Lesson comes, proclaims a great Deliverer. It might be well to have the very best reader in the class, or the class in unison, read aloud the whole passage:—mark the joy bells that ring all through its verses!

A lesson in figures of speech. Clear up v. 1 by means of the Revised Version—no more

gloom nor contempt, but the land made glorious: in one word, deliverance to the distressed nation. The prophet's tongue fairly struggles with the similes that burst forth in description of how marvellous the deliverance is to be. Marshal them: sunrise into the deepest, darkest valleys (v. 2); the joy of harvesters, and of a conquering host (v. 3); the "yoke" broken, which carried the heavy burden, and the "staff" by which the burden-bearer was beaten, and the "rod" by which he was forced forward in his task—the measure of the victory, that of Gideon's rout of the Midianites (Judg. 7: 1-25); also v. 5 as in Rev. Ver. (all the armor of the foe and the blood stained garments burnt with fire). What does it all mean? That God will deliver, oh, so gloriously, His own people. When shall it be? Whence shall it come? Who will be the Deliverer? These are questions that spring to the tongue. Here is the answer:—

A portrait, a promise and a pledge. "A child is born." Have the class read or recite Luke 2: 10, 11. A child, grown to manhood and kingship—"the government shall be upon his shoulders" (compare John 18: 37). His titles, every one of them truly belonging to Him—have the list (v. 6) recited, and have the class prove that each one of them belongs to the Lord Christ. (Be sure to have the proofs ready, should the class fail at any point. Rev. 1: 13-16; 19: 16 gives His portrait as drawn by the one who knew Him best on earth, and had the closest sight of Him in His glory in heaven. This glorious One was Israel's Deliverer; and is ours. As to the "promise" and the "pledge" of v. 7, it is good Christmas employment to count how far these have been made good.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Lesson Points

For the believer, grief is sure to give place to glory. v. 1.

The church must grow because she is nourished by divine grace. v. 2.

The darker the doom, the greater the delight of deliverance. v. 2.

Christ can make radiant the life that is fullest of gloom. v. 2.

Like flowers in the springtime, joy springs up under the influence of the gospel. v. 3.

True freedom grows only in Christian soil. v. 4.

The mercies of the past are the pledge of provision for the present. v. 5.

A world-wide peace is the product of a world-wide evangelization. v. 5.

The character of Christ guarantees the permanence and prosperity of His kingdom.
v. 6.

Before the flaming passion of God for saving men, every hindrance must be consumed.
v. 7.

Prove from Scripture

That Christ's kingdom will endure.

Lesson Questions

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—Who were Israel's great enemies? What part of Palestine suffered most from them?

1 To whom was joy promised? What king had afflicted God's people? In what part of the land would the gladness be greatest? Who was to dwell here?

2, 3 What was the world like when Christ came? To whom was He to be the Light? How can we have true joy? What feast is here referred to?

4, 5 From whom was Israel to be freed? From whom do we need deliverance? Who can give it?

6, 7 Repeat the names here given to the Saviour.

Seniors and the Home Department—By what foreign foe had Israel been invaded? What promise does Isaiah bring?

1-3 Where are the places mentioned in v. 1? Why had they suffered most? How

is their future condition described? Where is this passage quoted in the New Testament? (Matt. 4 : 15, 16.)

4, 5 How is the Assyrian bondage described? What former bondage of Israel is referred to? From what bondage does Christ free us? (Rom. 6 : 17, 18.) Show that peace is a mark of Christ's kingdom. (Ps. 72 : 7.)

6, 7 Explain each name here given to Christ. How great is to be His kingdom? (Ps. 72 : 8.)

The Catechism

Ques. 96-102—*Gospel blessings and how to get them.* The Questions to be reviewed deal with The Lord's Supper and with Prayer. We may look upon the former as a picture of gospel blessings and upon the latter as the way we may get them. The bread and wine in the sacrament speak to us of Christ's love, of His atoning death on the cross, of the pardon that comes to us through Him. Let the teacher make these things very clear and vivid. Then take prayer. We have in Ques. 98 its definition, and in the following Questions prayer is illustrated. Call attention to the main points in the definition, and then ask for the petitions in the Lord's Prayer which refer to God's glory, and those that ask blessings for ourselves. Refer to Matt. 6 : 33.

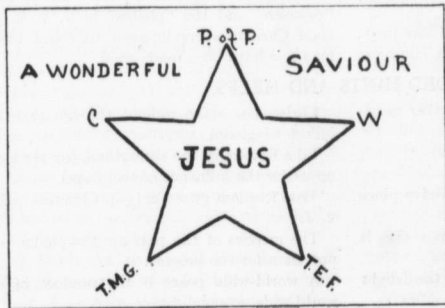
FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—God redeeming His people by saving them from sin.

Introduction—When God sends a baby brother or sister to our homes, one of the first things you little people think of is, "What shall we call it? We must give it a name." Tomorrow, Christmas Day, is the birthday of the baby Boy who came to the world 1905 years ago. (Recall the story of His birth.)

Golden Text—Our Golden Text tells us what we are to call Him—JESUS—and also what God sent Him into the world to do—

SAVE from Last Sunday we were **SIN.** told about getting ready for Him



(recall). Draw a heart. Are our hearts all ready for Him? To-morrow we are all expecting gifts and planning to give gifts to others.

A Gift for Jesus—Let us prepare this gift for Jesus for His birthday. He wants our hearts full of love for Him, and He will give us the great gift of His love. He will be our Saviour. No other gift is so great as this.

Jesus' Names—Our Lesson also tells us of some other names for Jesus. Get the little ones to repeat these.

WONDERFUL—Can you tell something wonderful that Jesus said or did? Does he do anything wonderful for you? **COUNSELLOR**—Can you tell some good counsel Jesus gave? What does He say to you? **THE MIGHTY GOD**—Can you tell how Jesus showed Himself a mighty God? Is Jesus mighty to help you? **THE EVERLASTING FATHER**—Can you tell how Jesus acted like a loving Father? (He took little ones in His arms.) **THE PRINCE OF PEACE**—Can you tell how Jesus showed that He loved peace? Does He want you to be a loving, gentle peacemaker?

Pilgrim Songs—Some teachers may prefer to teach the Lesson, Psalms 121, 122. Describe the pilgrims going up to Jerusalem from all parts of the land, to worship God in the

temple during the great feasts. Describe some of the difficulties of traveling. The pilgrims would have to go on foot and have many hardships, but they went on their way praising God. They kept in mind the end of the journey, and as they climbed higher and higher towards the temple, their songs became more joyous. Read the two songs of the Lesson. How trustful the pilgrims were! How they loved God's house! It made them feel how near He was.

Golden Text—Repeat, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." As the star guided the wise men to the Saviour on that first Christmas Day, so Jesus is the Star that will guide us to God in heaven. We are all like pilgrims journeying to another life. Turn to Jesus and ask Him to show you the right way.

BE **H**OPEFUL }
 HAPPY } PILGRIMS.
 HELPFUL }

Hymn—Sing Hymn 581, Book of Praise, or Hymn 583. (Boys sing the first two lines of each verse; girls sing the rest of each verse.)

Something to Draw at Home—Draw a star, and at each point print one of the names of our Saviour, JESUS, in the centre.

Something to Remember—Jesus is a wonderful Saviour.

SUPERINTENDENT'S BLACKBOARD REVIEW

JOY TO THE WORLD! THE LORD IS COME!
 LET EARTH RECEIVE HER KING;
 LET EVERY HEART PREPARE HIM ROOM,
 AND HEAVEN AND NATURE SING.

Call attention to the note of joy that rings out in the Lesson. Twice in v. 2, "light," the emblem of joy, is mentioned, and in v. 3 we have "joy," "joy," "rejoice," like a peal of sweet Christmas bells. And what is to be the cause of all this joy? Why, it is the birth of a Child. Remind the scholars of Jesus' birth at Bethlehem, and the joy of the angels and of the shepherds. V. 6 tells us about this marvellous Child. He is a Prince, and He is the Prince of Peace. Refer again to the song of the angels at the birth of the Saviour, and show how the gospel makes peace wherever it goes. Is He able to cause peace to prevail all the world over? Yes, for He is "mighty." Give some examples of Christ's might. How Isaiah rejoiced as he looked forward to the coming of the Saviour! How much more should we be glad, since He has actually come! Sing the verse on the blackboard.

Lesson XIV.

REVIEW

December 31, 1905

Read the Lessons for the Quarter. Commit to memory the Golden Texts for the Quarter.

GOLDEN TEXT—Psalm 65: 11. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness.

DAILY READINGS

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

- M.—The character of the Messiah, Isa. 9: 1-7.
 T.—Daniel and Belshazzar, Dan. 5: 17-30.
 W.—Daniel in the lions' den, Dan. 6: 10-23.
 Th.—Returning from captivity, Ezra 1: 1-11.
 F.—Power through God's spirit, Zech. 4: 1-10.
 S.—Nehemiah's prayer, Neh. 1: 1-11.
 S.—Reading and obeying the law, Neh. 8: 8-18.

Prove from Scripture—That God is good.

Catechism—Review Questions 103-107.

The Question on Missions—Review Questions 37-49.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 438 (Supplemental Lesson); 197; 313; 76 (Ps. Sel.); 17 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 474.

REVIEW CHART—Fourth Quarter

FROM ISAIAH TO MALACHI	LESSON TITLE	GOLDEN TEXT	LESSON PLAN
I.—Dan. 5: 17-30.	Daniel and Belshazzar.	The face of the Lord is against them.—Ps. 34: 16.	1. Warnings. 2. Doom.
II.—Dan. 6: 10-23.	Daniel in the Lions' Den.	The angel of the Lord encampeth round about.—Ps. 34: 7.	1. Accused. 2. Sentenced. 3. Delivered.
III.—Ezra 1: 1-11.	Returning from Captivity.	The Lord hath done great things.—Ps. 126: 3.	1. A divine purpose. 2. A royal command. 3. A willing response. 4. A just restitution.
IV.—Ezra 3: 10 to 4: 5.	Rebuilding the Temple.	The temple of God is holy.—1 Cor. 3: 17.	1. The work commenced. 2. The work hindered.
V.—Zech. 4: 1-10.	Power Through God's Spirit.	Not by might, nor by power.—Zech. 4: 6.	1. The vision. 2. The explanation. 3. The promise.
VI.—Esther 4: 10 to 5: 3.	Esther Pleading for Her People.	The Lord preserveth.—Ps. 145: 20.	1. The queen's responsibility. 2. The queen's resolve.
VII.—Ezra 8: 21-32.	Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem.	The hand of our God is upon all them.—Ezra 8: 22.	1. Seeking protection. 2. Providing offerings. 3. Making the journey.
VIII.—Neh. 1: 1-11.	Nehemiah's Prayer.	The effectual fervent prayer.—James 5: 16.	1. God's people in distress. 2. The prayer of God's servant.
IX.—1 Cor. 10: 23-33.	Abstinence for the Sake of Others. (World's Temperance Sunday)	Let him that thinketh he standeth.—1 Cor. 10: 12.	1. A great principle. 2. A practical problem. 3. A noble practice.
X.—Neh. 4: 7-20	Nehemiah Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem.	Watch and pray.—Matt. 26: 41.	1. The foes. 2. The leader. 3. The workers.
XI.—Neh. 8: 8-18.	Reading and Obeying the Law.	Blessed are they that hear.—Luke 11: 28.	1. Repenting. 2. Rejoicing. 3. Feasting.
XII.—Mal. 3: 1-12.	Preparation for the Messiah.	I will send my messenger.—Mal. 3: 1.	1. The Lord's coming. 2. The Lord's rebuke. 3. The Lord's promise.
XIII.—Isa. 9: 1-7.	The Character of the Messiah.	Thou shalt call his name Jesus.—Matt. 1: 21.	1. A vision of joy. 2. A vision of peace. 3. A vision of Christ.

The Goodness of God

The very last day of another year! From its beginning to its end we have been under God's loving care, and He has been showering down upon us countless blessings. The Golden Text for the Quarter will surely go singing through our hearts to-day as we look back on the year just closing. Each of this Quarter's Lessons, too, shows in its own way THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

Take Lessons I. and II., which we may link with the name of DANIEL. Here we see God showing His goodness, first by setting on the throne of Babylon King Cyrus, who was to set His people free, and then by protecting His servant in the den of lions.

Lessons III., IV. and V. are connected with the name of ZERUBBABEL, the Jewish prince who led God's people back to their own land from Babylon. Protection during the journey, the commencement of the temple building, the encouraging words of Zechariah—how God's goodness shines out in them all!

In Lesson VI. the chief figure is ESTHER. Her bold intercession, through the goodness of God to her and her people, was crowned with complete success.

Next, Lessons VIII., X. and XI. have to do with NEHEMIAH. With the good hand of God upon him, he journeyed from Shushan to Jerusalem, rebuilt the walls of the holy city, and established the authority of God's law.

Lesson IX., from the writings of PAUL, shows how we may imitate the goodness of God in our dealings with others.

Lessons XII. and XIII. point to the future. They speak of the coming MESSIAH. He is God's best and greatest gift to us. No better proof of His goodness could God show us than He has shown in sending His Son to save us.

Review Ed.

THE QUARTERLY REVIEW

NOTE: Let the points be touched in rapid succession, not dwell upon at length, so that the whole ground may be covered. There should be as many suitable hymns as possible in the programme. A verse or two at a time will be sufficient.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD

A brief reference to the closing year will be fitting on this its very last day. Speak of our many reasons for thankfulness, such as health, peaceful homes, a goodly land, gospel privileges, etc. Have the scholars repeat in concert the Golden Text for the Quarter. The Lessons of the Quarter may be linked with the names of outstanding persons mentioned in them. (THE GOODNESS OF GOD, as shown in the Lessons, should be kept steadily before the scholars' minds; see preceding page, also HOME STUDY QUARTERLY, October—December, page 126.)

I. DANIEL—Lessons I and II. In Lesson I. recall the splendid feast, the strange handwriting on the wall, the king's amazement, the sending for Daniel, his interpretation of the writing on the wall, and the issue of it all, the setting on the throne of Babylon, Cyrus, who was to free God's people. The points in Lesson II. are the malice of Daniel's foes, their crafty plot, Daniel's courage and fidelity, the king's yielding, the casting of Daniel into the lions' den, the king's night of anxiety, his early visit to the den, Daniel's perfect safety. The goodness of God clearly appears in both these Lessons, in the first, opening up the way for His people's return to their own land, and in the second, delivering His servant from a dreadful death.

II. ZERUBBABEL—Lessons III., IV. and V. The decree of Cyrus giving the Jews permission to go back to their own land and rebuild the temple, the preparations for the journey, an account of the treasures given to the returning captives—these are the points in Lesson III. In Lesson IV. we have the laying of the temple foundations amid the mingled tears and shoutings of the people, and opposition from the enemies of the Jews; in Lesson V., Zechariah's great word of encouragement. Surely God was good to his people on their journey and after they had reached their own country.

III. ESTHER—Lesson VI. Here, too, God's goodness shines out in the wisdom given to Mordecai, the courage inspired in Queen Esther, and the complete success with which her plan for the saving of her people was crowned.

IV. EZRA—Lesson VII. The temple commenced by Zerubbabel had been completed for fifty-eight years. And now Ezra, the great teacher of the law, comes from Babylon to instruct the people. He journeyed under the protection of God, who in His great goodness brought him and his company, with their treasure, to the holy city.

V. NEHEMIAH—Lessons VIII., X. and XI. This brave soldier and wise ruler was never tired of praising the goodness of God to him. He saw the divine hand moving the king of Persia to give him permission to go from Shushan to Jerusalem and rebuild the ruined walls of Jerusalem; protecting him and the workmen at their task; and when the work was completed, he acknowledged the divine care by gathering his people together to hear God's Word read and to observe the glad Feast of Tabernacles.

VI. PAUL—Lesson IX. Our Old Testament Lessons were interrupted to make room for one from Paul's Epistles, showing us how we may imitate the goodness of God in making love our guide in all our dealings with those about us.

VII. THE MESSIAH—Lessons XII. and XIII. These two closing Lessons point to the crowning proof of God's goodness, His best and greatest gift to men. Emphasize in connection with Lesson XII. the truth that, if we are to enjoy the Saviour's blessing, we must put away from us everything that is evil. The last Lesson will be fresh in the minds of the scholars. Take a moment or two to press home very earnestly and affectionately our debt of gratitude to Christ for all He has done for us. We can best repay this debt by giving ourselves to Him, that He may rule in our hearts and lives.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Review Subject—God redeeming His people by showing kindness to them.

Golden Text for the Quarter—"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness;" Ps. 65 : 11.

The Old Year—An artist painted a picture of an old man, bent and feeble, walking slowly towards a door. From a doorway behind him came a dancing baby boy, all joy and smiles. The old man is like this old year, which is now passing away, and the dancing boy is like the New Year that begins to-morrow. Draw marks to suggest these figures. On the old man's head we'll place a crown. In place of jewels, the crown is filled with God's goodness.

Review—Let us recall the kindness that God showed to His own people long ago. In each Lesson we shall see God showing kindness to those who loved and served Him.

1. How did God show kindness to Daniel at Belshazzar's feast ?
2. How did God show kindness to Daniel in the lions' den ?
3. How did God show kindness to the captives in Babylon ?
4. How did God show kindness to the builders of the temple ?
5. How did God show kindness to Zerubbabel and Joshua ?
6. How did God show kindness to Queen Esther and Mordecai ?
7. How did God show kindness to Ezra and his company ?
8. How did God show kindness to Nehemiah ?
10. How did God show kindness to Nehemiah and the builders of the wall ?
11. How did God show kindness to His people through Ezra ?
12. How did God show kindness to His people through Malachi ?
13. How did God show kindness to His people through Isaiah ?

GOD'S KINDNESS TO HIS PEOPLE

OF OLD

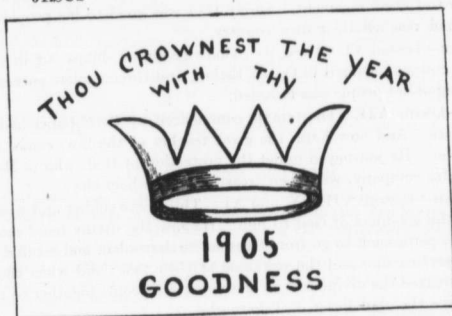
(List)

THE CROWNING BLESSING—
JESUS

GOD'S KINDNESS TO ME.

(List)

THE CROWNING BLESSING—
JESUS



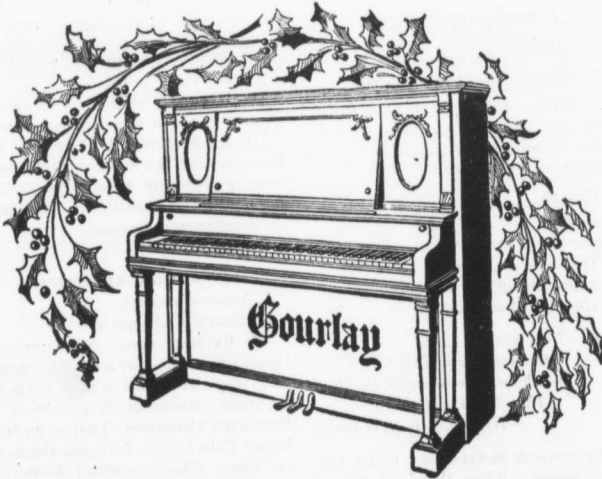
The New Year—A Happy New Year to all! This is the greeting of the joyous young boy tripping in after the "old man" disappears. We are sure that God will be kind to us this coming year. How can we thank and serve Him ?

"All the little children
Sleeping through the night
Wake on New Year's morning
Fresh and sweet and bright,

Thanking God, their Father,
For His loving care,
With their songs and service
Make this year more fair."

Something to Draw at Home—Draw a crown. Print Golden Text.

Something to Remember—God is good to me.



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AN ORDER OF SERVICE: Fourth Quarter

OPENING EXERCISES

- I. SILENCE.
- II. THE LORD'S PRAYER (in concert).
- III. SINGING. Hymn 438, Book of Praise
(It is expected that this hymn from the Supplemental Lessons will be memorized during the Quarter.)

IV. PRAYER.

V. SINGING.

I hear Thy welcome voice
That calls me, Lord, to Thee,
For cleansing in Thy precious blood
That flowed on Calvary.

*I am coming, Lord!
Coming now to Thee!
Wash me, cleanse me, in the blood
That flowed on Calvary.*

—Hymn 152, Book of Praise

VI. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Psalm 126.
Superintendent. When the Lord turned
again the captivity of Zion, we were like them
that dream.

School. Then was our mouth filled with
laughter, and our tongue with singing;

Superintendent. Then said they among
the heathen, The Lord hath done great things
for them.

School. The Lord hath done great things
for us; whereof we are glad.

Superintendent. Turn again our captivity,
O Lord, as the streams in the south.

School. They that sow in tears shall reap
in joy.

Superintendent. He that goeth forth and
weepeth, bearing precious seed,

School. Shall doubtless come again with
rejoicing,

Superintendent and School. Bringing his
sheaves with him.

VII. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.

VIII. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.

IX. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.
(This Hymn may usually be that marked
"FROM THE PRIMARY QUARTERLY.")

CLASS WORK

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

I. ROLL CALL by teacher.

II. OFFERING, which may be taken in a class envelope, or class and report envelope.

III. RECITATION. 1. Scripture Memory Passages from the Supplemental Lessons, or Memory Verses in Lesson Helps. 2. Catechism. 3. The Question on Missions from the Supplemental Lessons.

IV. LESSON STUDY.

CLOSING EXERCISES

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

II. SINGING. Hymn selected.

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

IV. SINGING.

Simply trusting every day,
Trusting through a stormy way,
Even when my faith is small
Trusting Jesus—that is all.

*Trusting as the moments fly,
Trusting as the days go by;
Trusting Him whate'er befall:
Trusting Jesus—that is all.*

—Hymn 293, Book of Praise

V. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Isaiah 55: 6, 7.

Superintendent. Seek ye the Lord while
He may be found,

School. Call ye upon Him while He is near:
Superintendent. Let the wicked forsake

his way,
School. And the unrighteous man his
thoughts:

Superintendent. And let him return unto
the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him;
School. And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

VI. BENEDICTION OR CLOSING PRAYER.

Books Worth Reading

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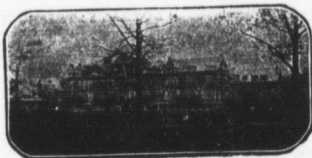
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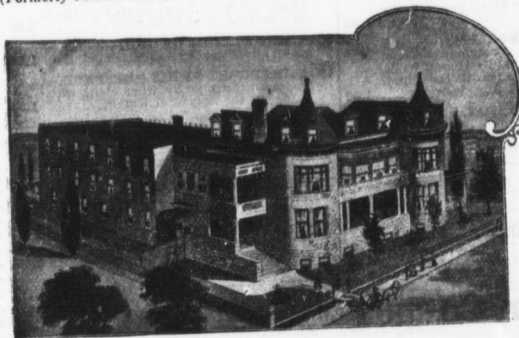
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THE BOOK PAGE

St. Cuthbert's, by **Robert E. Knowles** (Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto and New York, 339 pages, cloth \$1.50), will have a wide sale. The field is new, a Canadian parish romance; the writer has a strong personality: it is his own book, and nobody else's; and the sort of parish in which the story is laid—indeed, of which the story, one would say, is largely a picture—is notable, a bit of Scotland transplanted, and a busy, bustling, keen, quick-witted part, at that. The study of such a parish by one who describes himself—for the story is told in the first person—as one whose "every vein was full to overflowing with Irish blood," promises piquant situations and descriptions; and the expectation is not disappointed. There are some exquisitely done cameos, as of the beadle, the Kirk Session, Georgie Lorimer, the "pious profligate," the old precentor, who comes to sing the new song; but, as a story, the main interest is in the strangely intertwined 'love stories' of young Angus, and of Michael Blake, in both of which great love wins out through floods of remorse and sorrow. The book throbs with tenderness; but laughter sits close to tears. Mr. Knowles, who is the minister of Knox Church, Galt, will add to his already wide reputation with this "first novel."

In **A Specimen Spinster**, by **Kate Westlake Yeigh** (The Copp Clark Company, Toronto, 314 pages, \$1.25), we have a skillfully drawn picture of Canadian village life. Miss Mary Wogg is a shrewd, clever and kindly maiden lady, who proves herself a good friend

to all her neighbors, old and young. There is real pathos in the story of her care for the baby she adopts when the mother dies, and plenty of humor in the account of her experience with the boy Teddy, who afterwards finds a home with her. The various characters among whom Miss Wogg lives—why, as we read, we are constantly coming across people we have known, so close has the author kept to reality. The love story of Dick Gray, the farmer lad, who fights his way to an honorable place in the profession of medicine, and Maud McGregor, a girl full of life and fun, but with good sense beneath it all, adds its share of interest to this bright and well-told tale.

The question of Christmas gifts is often a perplexing one. A help towards the solution is furnished by two new books about animals, by two Canadian authors whose names are a guarantee of their excellence. One is **Animal Heroes**, by Ernest Thompson Seton (Morning and Company, Toronto, 316 pages, with over 200 drawings, and 19 full-page half-tones, \$2.00). The heroes—and by a hero Mr. Seton means an individual of unusual gifts and achievements—are a slum cat, a dog, a homing pigeon, a lynx, two wolves, and a white reindeer. Each is the subject of a story that thrills with interest from start to finish, and the author assures us that every incident is founded on the life of some actual animal. The other book is **Red Fox**, by Charles G. D. Roberts (The Copp Clark Company, Toronto, 340 pages, with nearly half a hundred full-page drawings by Charles Livingston Bull, \$2.00). It is a wonderful tale that Mr. Roberts tells of the career of a red fox. But we are assured that, like Mr. Seton's

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stories, it is founded upon facts attested by careful observers. In these two books, artistic skill of a high order, combined with the enterprise and good taste of the publishers, have given a setting of rare beauty to the work of authors who never fail to charm as well as instruct their readers.

It is a rare gift to be able to tell a story in print in the free and easy style of the camp-fire. Egerton Young possesses the gift, as his previous books abundantly testify. He also understands and loves dogs; and in this new story, **Hector, My Dog** (W. A. Wilde Company, Boston, 332 pages, freely illustrated, \$1.50) wins the heart of every dog lover, which means a very wide circle. "Hector" tells his own tale, from the days of puppyhood, to the serene old age of rheumatism and petting. It is a Northland heroic. Of too good stuff to be broken in by harshness, Hector passes into kind hands, and a child's love conquers. His varied adventures in the camp and on the trail, and in battles with bears and wolves; the wise ways of dogs in their "councils"; and the pathetic yearning of the dog spirit for wider knowledge; are all told in such a vivid and natural style, that readers, old and young alike, will be led on, without abatement of interest, to the end. Hector will brighten the long winter evenings at many a fireside.

"I imagined myself standing in a gallery looking at a collection of portraits, and setting myself to analyze these as they are delineated." So Dr. George Matheson describes his purpose in two former volumes, *The Representative Men of the Old Testament*. In **The Representative Men of the New**

Testament, by the same author (*Hodder and Stoughton, London, The Upper Canada Tract Society, Toronto*, 367 pages, \$1.75), a similar method is followed. It is sufficient to say that this new book is marked by Dr. Matheson's wonderful keenness of insight and felicity of expression. Such chapter headings as *Nathanael the Invigorated*, *Peter the Emboldened*, *Mark the Steadied*, *Cornelius the Transplanted*, kindle expectations that are never disappointed.

Is it its age or its newness that gives Peloubet's **Select Notes on the International Lessons** (Vol. for 1906, W. A. Wilde Company, Boston, Mass., 384 pages, \$1.25) its unique flavor and value? Probably both the one and the other. Thirty-one years' experience—this is the thirty-second volume—of one editor, and he a master, makes for copiousness, and discernment, and finish; whilst, so far as freshness is concerned, each succeeding year seems to find Dr. Peloubet more alert than ever. He is in closest touch with all that is best in new knowledge and new methods; and, these two years now, Professor Amos R. Wells has joined him, a man of infinite suggestiveness, as every one knows. The *Inductive Studies* on each Lesson are of peculiar value; and no teacher or minister who is in search of fact or illustration on the Life of Christ, with which the course of 1906 deals, will make a mistake by having this volume. Teachers who wish to add to what **THE TEACHERS MONTHLY** provides, or to get a second treatment of the Lessons from a slightly different standpoint, will find Peloubet useful.

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Further information regarding scholarships, medals, etc., may be obtained from the Calendar, or on application to the Secretary.

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