

Vol. XIV.]

[New Series.

SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. 17.]

MAY, 1883.

[No. 5.

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THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL BANNER

IS designed to afford aid to Sunday-school Teachers and Heads of Families in the religious training of the young, and to excite throughout the country a deeper interest in Sunday-school work.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOLUME XVII.]

MAY, 1883.

[No. 5.

Oh, Weary Not.

MRS. E. N. STEWARD.

"Be not weary in well doing, for in due season
ye shall reap if ye faint not."

Oh, weary not—'tis morning yet,
And sower, scatter wide your seed,
The coming harvest ne'er forget
Which brings to thee its golden meed.

Oh, scatter far while morning dew
Is weeping gently from the vine,
If thou art only faithful, true.
Oh, what a glorious harvest thine.

What though upon the barren sand
A portion of your seed should fall?
Oh, do not, then, withhold your hand,
But scatter broad, and scatter all.

What though the stony land receive
A fragment of your scattered grain?
Oh, lose no time to mourn and grieve,
Assured your labour's not in vain.

Be loyal to your honest toil—
Ye morning sowers, busy keep—
Be faithful tillers of the soil,
And in the autumn ye shall reap.

Life's early harvest's ripe e'en now,
And in her fields with busy hand,
With sunburnt cheek and swarthy brow,
The faithful reapers ready stand.

Oh, Zion's watchman, weary not,
But on her walls her truth proclaim;
Oh, be her conquest ne'er forgot,
And battle bravely for the same.

Oh, weary not, ye suffering ones,
Ye struggling ones, do not despair,
When doing good below is done,
Ye shall the garb of angels wear.

A Worker's Prayer.

LORD, speak to me, that I may speak,
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children, lost and lone.

O lead me, Lord, that I may lead
The wandering and the wavering feet!
O feed me, Lord, that I may feed
Thy hungering ones with manna sweet!

O strengthen me, that while I stand
Firm on the rock and strong in Thee,
I may stretch out a loving hand
To wrestlers with the troubled sea!

O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart!

O give Thine own sweet rest to me,
That I may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour!

O fill me with Thy fulness, Lord,
Until my very heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Thy love to tell, Thy praise to show.

O use me Lord—use even me.
Just as Thou wilt, and when and where.
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share!

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The Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, MAY, 1883.

Coming out of Winter Quarters.

As the sunny warmth of spring approaches, the bears and other hibernating animals which have been sleeping through the months of winter crawl forth from their caves, gaunt and hungry and emaciated. So the hibernating schools, which have suspended animation during the winter, are awakening again to life with the long days of the spring, and are at first equally starved-looking and emaciated.

Now, we are free to admit that there may be circumstances under which it is difficult or even impossible to have the school open all winter long. There have been times and places during this last winter when storms, snow-drifts, and severe weather made it necessary to close for a time even the public day-schools. But we have not heard of any place where the day-schools were closed from November till April, as was the case with too many Sunday-schools. Now we think that where a day-school can be kept open—when the children can trudge through snow-drifts five days in the week, and remain five or six hours a day—they can walk once a week on Sunday, to remain a couple of hours.

Let the aim be that at every place throughout our Church where there is preaching, there may also be a Sunday-school. We ask the cordial co-operation of every minister and every earnest-hearted layman to accomplish this desired result. Wherever a dozen children can be gathered in a farm kitchen or a country school-house, will not some friend of the little ones get them together to teach them the word of God and the way of Life? Will not the ministers at every appointment where there is no school, ask some one to do this? The schools will be in the future the best nursery of the Church. From these, as the result of regular religious instruction, the Church will be more largely recruited than from any other source. Let us gather in the children of our own households and train them up for God. It is well to seek out the adults and to preach to them; but don't neglect the children. They are more hopeful subjects for conversion, and will make, if properly trained, better and more intelligent Christians than those converted later in life. Let us remember especially the Saviour's last command to feed the lambs of the flock.

In starting new schools and helping poor ones, the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund will to the utmost extent of its ability co-operate and help. All that is necessary is to write to the Editor of the BANNER, and forms of application will be forwarded, on filling up which with a statement of the necessities of the case, assistance in the way of Lesson Helps, Books and Papers will be furnished so far as the resources of the Aid and Extension Fund will permit; and these resources can be indefinitely increased through the liberality of the larger and stronger schools. We covet for the Sunday-school wing of the army of our Church that cordial support which will enable us to win greater victories for the cause of God than any other department of our Church work.

Book Notices.

The Sunday-School, and its Methods. A Practical Treatise for Earnest Workers. By the Rev. J. A. LYONS. Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Methodist Publishing House. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. Price \$1.25.

Here is, at last, in a volume of over 500 pages, an adequate treatment of one of the most important departments of Christian work. It is somewhat remarkable that such a book has not before appeared. But we are thankful to have it at last. Mr. Lyons is the Sunday-school Secretary of his Conference, and an enthusiast in Sunday-school work. He gives first a brief historic account of the Sunday-school movement, then a couple of chapters on the relations of Home and School, and Church and School. He discusses intelligently the internal economy of Schools—the Superintendent, officers and leaders, their training, etc.; the week-day and Sabbath work of the School—the preparation and teaching of the lesson. There follows a closing chapter on the

Records: Finance, Library and its management, Song Service, the Black-board—Use of Printers' Ink—Conventions, etc. On all these points our author offers very valuable suggestions. On one of these subjects, Frozen-out Schools, we make some remarks in another column. The remarks on teaching, securing attention, questioning, etc.; and on the great end of Sunday-school work—discipleship in the Church of Christ—are of great value. One subject we should like to have seen more fully treated—viz.: Sunday-school periodicals and Lesson Helps; but the work on the whole is the most complete we know on Sunday-school topics.

Conversation in the Home.

AMONG home amusements the best is the good old habit of conversation, the talking over the events of the day in bright and quick play of wit and fancy, the story which brings the laugh, and the speaking of the good and kind things which all have in their hearts. It is not so much by dwelling upon what the members of the family have in common, as bringing each to the other something interesting and amusing, that home-life is to be made cheerful and joyous. Each one must do his part to make conversation genial and happy. We are too ready to converse with newspapers and books, to seek some companion at the store, hotel, club-room, and to forget that home is anything more than a place to sleep and eat in. The revival of conversation, the entertainment of one another, as a roomful of people will entertain themselves, is one secret of a happy home. Wherever it is wanting, disease has struck into the root of the tree; there is a want which is felt with increasing force as time goes on. Conversation in many cases is just what prevents many people from relapsing into utter selfishness at their firesides. This conversation should not simply occupy husband and wife, and other older members of the family, but extend itself to the children. Parents should be careful to talk with them, to enter into their life, to share their trifles, to assist in their studies, to meet them in the thoughts and feelings of their childhood. It is a great step in education when around the evening lamp are gathered the different members of a large family, sharing their occupations with one another, the older assisting the younger, each one contributing to the entertainment of the other, and all feeling that the evening is passed only too rapidly away. This is the truest and best amusement. It is the health education of great and noble characters. There is the freedom, the breadth, the joyousness of natural life. The time spent thus by parents in the higher entertainment of their children, bears a harvest of eternal blessings, and the evenings furnish just the time.

Few subjects will furnish more interesting themes for conversation than the Sunday-school Lesson. Let parents and young people try it. But to make it intelligent they must inform themselves upon it. Anything that thus strengthens the bonds of sympathy will make family life brighter, more beautiful and more happy. Let

parents take an interest in the studies of their children, and converse with them on them. We rejoice at the spread of the C. S. L. C. on this account. It supplies subjects in which the whole household can become interested.

Earnestness.

EARNESTNESS of purpose is the secret of success. Without it man never achieved anything great or good. With it wonders in art, science, and literature have been accomplished.

Earnestness implies concentration of thought and energy, and that always strengthens for action.

The sun's rays burn when brought to a focus. It is the water turned into a narrow channel, not left to spread itself "at its own sweet will" in a wide morass, that drives the mill. So it is the motive power of individuals directed into one channel that does the real work of the world.

It may be pleasant to flit like the butterfly from one pursuit to another and enjoy a little of each, but the end will show a butterfly's success. Better the busy little bee that, starting with one flower in the morning, refuses every other kind during the day, and carries home a plentiful store. Granted that it does contract the field of vision, that it does narrow down to one path, still something will be done, some goal reached.

A man of one idea, holding it firmly, knowing it and all its connections and bearings, accomplishes more than those who have a thousand, but all floating in dim uncertainty, constantly eluding the grasp. If, like the many-sided Goethe, we had gigantic powers of mind, unlimited leisure in a quiet German town, a king our devoted friend, ready to supply our every want, then we might do as he did, and succeed in many directions; but the most of us are plain men and women of ordinary talents, little or no leisure, bread-and-butter wants pressing, and the busy, restless life of the nineteenth century around us. What is the great need? Not energy—we have it. Not industry—that, too may be ours. Not resources—they are at our command. But a purpose, an object, well, wisely, thoughtfully chosen; then earnestness in the pursuit. We must do this, or the waves of the great sea of life will roll over us, and we sink into its depths "unknelled, unconfined, and unknown."

Do NOT expect ever to get something for nothing. It is not the way in this world. And do not be deceived by the alluring offer of Ten Dollars' worth of books for One Dollar; for you will be certain to find that your purchase will be found worth much less than you pay for it. The time will never come when really desirable articles can be bought regularly and steadily at prices below their cost of manufacture.

The *Sunday School Times* gives this definition of an agnostic: "One who doesn't know anything, and is proud of the fact."

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER—STUDIES IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

MAY, 1883.

NOTE—The Scripture verses to be committed to memory are indicated by an index [§] at the side.

A. D. 40.

LESSON VI.—PETER PREACHING TO THE GENTILES.

May 6.

Acts 10. 30-44.



30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, a Chap. 1. 10.—5 Luke 24. 4.

31 And said, Cornelius thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

§ Dan. 10. 12.—d Prov. 14. 31; Matt. 6. 4; 10. 42; 25. 40; Heb. 6. 10.

32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the seaside; who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

§ 5 Deut. 14. 17; 2 Chron. 10. 7; Job 34. 19; Rom. 2. 11; Gal. 2. 6; Eph. 6. 9; Col. 3. 11, 25; 1 Pet. 1. 17.

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

§ Chap. 15. 9; Rom. 2. 13; 3. 22; 10. 12; 1 Cor. 12. 13; Gal. 3. 28; Eph. 2. 12; 3. 6.

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (As he is Lord of all:)

§ 1. a. 57, 19; Eph. 2. 17; Col. 1. 20.—A Dan. 7. 14; Matt. 28. 18; chap. 2. 22; 4. 27; Rom. 10. 12; 1 Cor. 15. 27; Eph. 1. 20; 1 Pet. 3. 22; Rev. 17. 14; 19. 16.

37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached:

38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

§ Luke 4. 18; Heb. 1. 9.—j John 1. 3; 2; Col. 2. 9.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who had eaten and drunk with him after he rose from the dead.

§ John 14. 17.—l John 21. 13.

42 And as he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which

was ordained of God to be the Judge of a quick and dead.

§ Matt. 28. 19.—n John 5. 22.—o Rom. 14. 9; 2 Cor. 6. 10; 2 Tim. 4. 1; 1 Pet. 4. 5.

43 To p him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

§ Isa. 53. 11; Jer. 31. 34; Dan. 9. 24; Mic. 7. 18; Zech. 13. 1; Mal. 4. 2.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The Gospel is now ready to burst the narrow bands of Judaism, and stands upon the threshold of the larger world, eager for its mission of salvation for all mankind. Here and there are already a few individual believers, outside the pale of Israel according to the flesh: a nobleman from Africa, a handful of liberal-minded men of Antioch; but there is need of an apostolic authority and a divine testimony to assure the Church of its privilege to preach Christ as the Saviour of all the world. The hour has now come when the glorious heritage of universal salvation is to be made known. By the Mediterranean shore a praying centurion is seeking after light upon the question of his duty toward God's ancient people and the new Gospel. By that same shore, thirty miles to the south, the leader of the apostles, already liberated from narrow scruples, is in communion with the Lord. The one hears an angel's voice directing him to the other; and the other beholds a strange vision—a vast sheet held by its corners, let down from heaven, containing various forms of animal life—and by the voice of God is led into a readiness to follow the openings of the Divine Will. What must have been the fisherman's thoughts as for a day he walked along in the sound of the Mediterranean surf, to preach his first sermon before a Gentile company! They arrive at Caesarea, they pass under the frowning walls of the prison where another apostle shall yet dwell, and of the palace where he shall yet preach to Felix and to Festus; they enter the Gentile dwelling-place, forbidden to Jewish feet, and now the chief of the apostles stands face to face with a Gentile congregation. He sets forth the same Gospel which in other days he has proclaimed to Jews, without the requirement of circumcision or membership in the Jewish body. And ere his address is over, the descending Spirit, as at the Pentecost, accredits his message as from God, and falls alike upon Jews

and Gentiles, henceforth one in the brotherhood of Christ.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 30. Cornelius. He was a Roman centurion, an officer commanding a company of one hundred men, at Cesarea on the sea-coast. Like many of the intelligent men of his time, he had ceased to believe in the mythology of the ancient world, and had accepted the Jewish doctrine of the one God. He was a humble and reverent inquirer after the true religion; probably had heard of Jesus and the Gospel, (vers. 36, 37,) and was perplexed with the question whether it was necessary to become a Jew in order to be a Christian. **Four days ago.** See the account in vers. 1-6. **Fasting.** He had united fasting with his prayer from the earnestness of his feeling. 1. When the soul is with God, the body must be forgotten. **Until this hour.** "Until this hour of the day." **The ninth hour.** Three o'clock. The fact of his fasting is not given in the Revised Version, which has, "I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house." This was the third of the daily times for worship among the Jews. **In my house.** 2. God rewards secret and family prayer as well as the public worship. **A man.** Here described according to his appearance, but in verse 3, according to the reality, as an angel.

31. Thy prayer is heard. He had doubtless been praying for light upon the Gospel and his duty toward it. 3. All true prayer on earth is heard in heaven. **Thine alms.** Gifts to the needy, offered not in ostentation, but from love. **Had in remembrance.** The deeds of mercy had been seen, and the heart of the doer of them had been recognized by the Lord; and now they were to receive their reward. 4. God sees our works while he hears our words of prayer.

32. Send therefore. Though the angel came to answer the centurion's prayer, he sent him to a saved man to learn the way to salvation. 5. God honours disciples by making them the necessary instrumentalities of the salvation of others. **To Joppa.** An ancient city on the sea-coast, where Peter was staying after the restoration of Dorcas. See notes Lesson V. **Simon.** This had been the apostle's earlier name during his fisherman-days. **Surname is Peter.** "The Rock," a name given him by Jesus. See John 1. 42, and Matt. 16. 18. The element of leadership in his character made him "the chief of the apostles." **Lodged...** **Simon a tanner.** The house is still shown, perhaps on the true location since it is outside the town, and has a spring of water in its courtyard; both of which would be found at a tannery in the East. 6. The places unnoticed by man may be the ones best known to the angels. **Who when he cometh.** This clause is omitted from Rev. Ver. **Speak unto thee.** Or, as in Peter's report, "Shall tell the words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved."

33. Immediately. 7. One who is in earnest will not delay finding the way of salvation. **I sent to thee.** By three trusty messengers, who arrived just after Peter's vision. See General Statement. **Thou art come.** It was a journey of thirty-five miles southward. **Are we all here.** There was present a company of Gentile friends with Cornelius. **To hear all things.** Not to hear in the spirit of curiosity or criticism, but of willing acceptance. **Commanded thee of God.** He listens, not to the man, but to the messenger of God.

34. Peter. Whose mind had been prepared by the vision of the great sheet for the reception of the truth which he was now about to announce. **Opened his mouth.** An expression used at the beginning of a discourse, and not an ordinary conversation. **Of a truth I perceive.** He had always believed this in a general way, but the fulness and grandeur of the truth he now for the first time realized. **No respecter of persons.** That is, he now saw what had always been true, that men were not to be saved because they were Jews, but that all men, Gentiles as well as Jews, were held in the same regard by the heavenly Father.

35. Feareth him and worketh righteousness. The two universal requirements are a reverence for God as far as he is known, and a life which is the outgrowth of that reverence. Among those who have heard of Jesus this will be shown by faith in him; among those ignorant of Christ, by righteousness as a principle of life. **Accepted with him.** That is, stands in the enjoyment of the divine favour, and with the privilege of eternal life. But all this is conditioned upon an obedience to God, so far as God is known.

36. The word. The Gospel of Christ. **Sent unto the children of Israel.** It was sent to Israelites first, that they might in turn give it to all the world. **Preaching peace.** The Rev. Ver. has "preaching good tidings of peace," that is, the good news of salvation, which had heretofore been proclaimed as a privilege of Jews only. **He is Lord of all.** Peter wished to guard against the impression that Jesus was no more than a religious teacher or a prophet, by announcing his supreme authority.

37, 38. That word...ye know. This shows that Cornelius and his Gentile friends were not ignorant of Christianity, which had been introduced into Cesarea by Philip the evangelist. Lesson II., ver. 40. They had doubtless attended the synagogue of the Jews, and heard the discussions on the subject; were ready to believe, and were perplexed by the apparent prerequisite of circumcision as proselytes to Judaism. **Published throughout all Judea.** This refers to the apostolic preaching after the ascension. **Began from Galilee.** In the Saviour's personal ministry. **How God anointed.** Rev. Ver., "Even Jesus of Nazareth, how

God anointed him." The same word means Christ, Messiah, Anointed, and the expression might read, "How God Christ-ed, Messiah-ed Jesus, that is, made him the Christ. **Went about doing good.** An epitome of the Saviour's life on earth. 8. What a noble record to leave on the earth! And that record may be ours! **God was with him.** As an indwelling presence.

39, 40, 41. We are witnesses. It was the special mission of the apostles to bear testimony from personal knowledge to the facts of Christ's life, resurrection, and ascension. **Whom they slew.** He was not ashamed to tell a Roman officer of the shameful death of the Saviour. 9. Ever let us glory in the cross of Christ! **On a tree.** A favourite expression of Peter, both in his discourses and epistles, in mentioning the cross. **Shewed him openly.** Rev. Ver., "Gave him to be made manifest." **Unto witnesses chosen.** A sufficient number for evidence, but not to gratify curiosity. Over five hundred saw him at one time. 1. Cor. 15. 6. **Eat and drink with him.** This would clearly show that the appearances were not imaginary.

42. He commanded us. Rev. Ver., "Charged us," a weighty and authoritative commission. **To preach... and to testify.** True preaching is to bear witness to Jesus as Saviour. Peter here announces Jesus as present Saviour and as coming Judge. **Quick.** The living. 10. The faithful preacher fails not to proclaim Christ's judgment as well as his mercy.

43. All the prophets. That is, the general current of prophetic teaching was toward Christ. **Through his name.** Through the divine power represented by his name. **Whoever believeth.** Faith is the sole requirement; not circumcision into Judaism, but personal trust in Christ as Saviour. **Remission of sins.** Forgiveness, acceptance with God, and every privilege of the Jewish believer was thus promised to these Gentiles.

44. While Peter yet spake. Before his discourse was ended. **The Holy Ghost fell.** A divine spiritual illumination, manifesting itself on these Gentiles in the same way as on the Jewish believers at Pentecost, and thus attesting the same origin, and the equality of all in privilege. **On all them which heard.** On the Jewish believers who had come with Peter from Joppa, and on Cornelius and his fellow Gentiles. This was the divine seal on the new development of the Gospel, henceforth indicated to be for all people.

GOLDEN TEXT.

On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 10. 45.

OUTLINE.

1. The Story. v. 30-33.
2. The Sermon. v. 34-43.
3. The Spirit. v. 44.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Peter preaching to the Gentiles. Acts 10.
Tu. Peter's vision. Acts 10. 1-16. [30-44.
W. The vision explained. Acts 10. 17-29.
Th. Peter's defence. Acts 11. 1-18.
F. The covenant with Abraham. Gen. 15. 1-18.
S. The covenant of grace. Rom. 11. 12-25.
S. Salvation for Gentiles. Col. 3. 1-13.

Time.—A. D. 40.

Place.—Caesarea Stratonis, on the coast of Palestine.

Connecting Links.—1. The angel appearing to Cornelius. Acts 10. 1-6. 2. The vision of Peter. Acts 10. 7-16. 3. Peter's journey to Caesarea. Acts 10. 17-29.

Explanations.—*Fasting until this hour*—Until the same hour on that day. *Ninth hour*—About three o'clock. *A man stood before me*—An angel, in the form of a man. *Thy prayer is heard*—His prayer to know the truth about God and his duty. *Thine alms*—Gifts to the poor. *Call hither*—About thirty-five miles. *Speak unto thee*—To show the way of salvation. *We are all here*—Cornelius and his friends. *Commanded thee*—Cornelius looked upon Peter as the messenger of God. *God is no respecter*—Peter had always supposed that the Gospel was meant for Jews only. He now saw that God desired to give the Gospel to all men. *Feareth him*—Looking up to God with love and reverence, and obeying him. *Worketh righteousness*—Does right as far as he knows how to do it. *Accepted*—Looked upon with favour by God. *Peace by Jesus Christ*—Peace with God and in the heart. *Lord of all*—Peter wished all to know that Jesus is the son of God, and over all. *Began from Galilee*—Where Jesus commenced preaching. *God anointed Jesus*—God made Jesus the Christ and Saviour of men. *Went about doing good*—Setting his followers an example in so doing. *We are witnesses*—Peter and the rest of the apostles. *Hanged on a tree*—The cross. *Shewed him openly*—As living after death. *Unto witnesses*—Those who could speak from knowledge. *Eat and drink*—Thus showing that he was surely living. *Quick and dead*—The living and dead. *Remission*—Forgiveness. *The Holy Ghost fell*—The same spirit as at Pentecost. *All them which heard*—The Gentiles as well as the Jews.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 740, *New Hymn Book.*

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Earth, rejoice, our Lord is King!
 Sons of men, his praises sing!
 Sing ye in triumphant strains,
 Jesus the Messiah reigns!

Power is all to Jesus given,
 Lord of hell, and earth, and heaven,
 Every knee to him shall bow;
 Satan, hear, and tremble now!

Angels and archangels join,
 All triumphantly combine,
 All in Jesus' praise agree,
 Carrying on his victory.

No. 746, *New Hymn Book*.

11s.

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
Looking unto Jesus, who is gone before!
Christ, the Royal Master, leads against the foe;
Forward into battle see his banners go.

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
Looking unto Jesus, who is gone before!

Like a mighty army, moves the Church of God;
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod;

We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

Onward, Christian soldiers, etc.

Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise
and wane,

But the Church of Jesus constant will remain;
Gates of hell can never 'gainst that Church pre-
vail;

We have Christ's own promise, which can never
fail.

Onward, Christian soldiers, etc.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **The Story**, v. 30-33. Who told the story? Who was this man? Acts 10. 1, 2. Who appeared to him? See ver. 3. What comfort did he bring him? What did the angel tell him to do? For what was he to send for Peter? How was Cornelius an example to us?

2. **The Sermon**, v. 34-43. Who preached it, where, and to whom? With what words did it open? How had God shown that he was no respecter of persons? Who is accepted before God? About whom did Peter tell? What four facts did he tell about Jesus? How did Peter show that Jesus rose from the dead? What was commanded, and what promised through Jesus? How may we have our sins forgiven?

3. **The Spirit**, v. 44. What came while Peter was preaching? Upon whom did he come? What did his coming prove? [GOLDEN TEXT.] How may we have his presence? Acts 2. 38.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson may we find—

1. That God's mercies are for all men?
2. That Christ brings forgiveness to all men?
3. That the Spirit may be given to all men?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school). 1. Who was the first Christian among the Gentiles? Cornelius, a Roman centurion. 2. Who preached the Gospel to him? Peter the apostle. 3. How did Peter say that all men could receive remission of sins? By believing in Jesus. 4. What came upon those who heard while Peter was speaking? The Holy Ghost.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The conditions of salvation.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Story**, v. 30-33. Whom was Cornelius addressing? What evidence of his religious life did he give? What evidence of his acceptance did he receive? What direction was given him by the angel? What indication is there

of his prompt obedience? What was his great desire?

2. **The Sermon**, v. 34-43. What new lesson had Peter learned? Who find favor with God? To whom was the Gospel first offered? What did it proclaim? Of what were the apostles the especial witnesses? What hope is here offered to the Gentiles? What is said in Rom. 10. 11, 12?

3. **The Spirit**, v. 44. What occurred at the close of the sermon? What alone hinders the reception of the Holy Spirit by Jew or Gentile?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Wherein do we learn—

That God hears the prayers of the sincere in heart?

That earnest prayer for divine guidance will be divinely answered?

That spiritual gifts are within the reach of all men?

That salvation is through faith in Jesus?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was Cornelius? A Roman soldier, who believed in God. Who appeared in a dream to him? An angel in bright raiment. What did the angel tell him? That God had heard his prayer. What command did he give Cornelius? To send for Peter. What had God told Peter? To go to Cornelius. After greeting Peter, where did Cornelius lead him? Into a room filled with his friends. What were Cornelius and his friends called by the Jews? Gentiles. What did they ask of Peter? To speak God's word to them. What new light came to Peter? That Christ died to save both Jews and Gentiles. How did the Jews think of the Gentiles? As unclean. What did God mean to teach Peter by the vision he had given him? That all men who love and obey him are clean in his sight. Whom did Peter then preach to them? Jesus crucified. What promise did Peter give them? God's promise of salvation to all who believe in him. How was this promise kept? The Holy Ghost came while Peter was speaking. **GOLDEN TEXT.** What is the teaching of this lesson? That God is no respecter of persons.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

It makes no difference to God—Whether you are Jew or Gentile. Whether you are black or white. Whether you are rich or poor. He will take you for his child if you only love and obey him.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Spirit of the Successful Seeker after God.

I. A SELF-DENYING SPIRIT.

I was fasting until this hour. v. 30.

"Turn ye even to me...with fasting."
Joel 2. 12.

II. A PRAYING SPIRIT.

Thy prayer is heard. v. 31.

"Draw nigh to God...he will...to you."
James 4. 8.

III. A HELPFUL SPIRIT.

Thine alms are had in remembrance. v. 31.
"Blessed is he that considereth the poor."
Psa. 41. 1.

IV. AN OBEDIENT SPIRIT.

Immediately . . . I sent to thee. v. 33.
"Made haste . . . to keep thy command-
ments." Psa. 119. 60.

V. A TEACHABLE SPIRIT.

We are here . . . to hear all things. v. 33.
"Ye received it . . . as the word of God."
1 Thess. 2. 13.

VI. A REVERENT SPIRIT.

He that feareth . . . is accepted. v. 35.
"Feareth the Lord . . . him shall he teach."
Psa. 25. 12.

VII. A RIGHTEOUS SPIRIT.

Worketh righteousness . . . is accepted. v. 35.
"I will walk . . . with a perfect heart."
Psa. 101. 2.

VIII. A BELIEVING SPIRIT.

Whosoever believeth in him . . . remission.
v. 43.
"Thy faith hath saved thee." Luke 7. 50.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.**God's Answer to the Seeker's Prayer.**

1. God hears the prayer of every earnest soul which approaches Him. v. 31.
2. God honours the good works done in the spirit of love to man. v. 31.
3. God sends His angels to give direction to those who are sincerely seeking for light. v. 30-32.
4. God provides instruction for those who sincerely desire it. v. 32.
5. God opens the way for the proclamation of Christ and salvation to those who are ready to receive it. v. 36-42.
6. God extends the forgiveness of sins to those who sincerely seek mercy. v. 43.
7. God bestows the influence of the Holy Spirit upon those who seek after it. v. 44.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

1. You have learned that man was made to know, love, and serve God: have all men done so? Although man was made to know, love, and serve God, yet he has not done so; for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Rom. 3. 23.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

I REMEMBER a church, around the gate of which might be seen, Sunday after Sunday, a large crowd assembled long before the hour of service. The gates were kept shut until a certain time, but every now and then the doorkeeper opened one of them a little to allow of certain persons who had joined the

crowd passing through. These, I believe, were regular attendants who were unable to procure sittings of their own, and to whom therefore the privilege was accorded of being first in the free seats. A stranger might have imagined that these only were to be allowed to enter. But by-and-by, when the proper time came, the gates were thrown wide open, and every one might go in who chose.

The passage for to-day gives us the story of an opened door. And further on in the historian's narrative we get the name of this door. It is the "door of faith." Chap. 14. 27. Let us ask:

What was there inside this door?

If any one had asked, when the gates of that church were opened and the crowd eagerly flocked in, "What does this mean? What is there inside?" he might have been told that there was a preacher who attracted numbers by the interest and excellence of what he said, and that it was worth waiting for some time to get in and hear him. How was it with "the door of faith." We are told of two things inside it:

1. Peace—just the very thing that was lacking outside. Men had invented for themselves many pleasures, but they had not found a rest for their hearts. When death drew near, there was no glad future for them beyond. The story of Damocles, over whose head, as he sat in the seat of kingly luxury, hung the sword suspended by a single thread, is a true picture of the human race without God.

2. Forgiveness of sins. Sin is the true secret of lack of peace. The man whose conscience is awake knows that he is unfit, with his guilt upon him, to enter the unseen world, and stand in the presence of the Ruler and Judge of all.

But peace, and the forgiveness of sins, are God's own gifts. So we see that the "door of faith" opened right into His treasure-house, giving access to all it contained. Now ask—

Who stood outside the door?

A great crowd—the Gentile world as a whole. To the Jews it was open—had long been open. And now and then a Gentile here and there had obtained admittance. Matt. 15. 21-31; Acts 2. 10; 8. 27-39. But hardly any one dreamed of its being set open to the Gentiles generally. The command to "go into all the world" was barely understood. But at length the time came for the door to be opened. Now ask—

Who opened the door?

I remember some extensive and beautiful grounds upon which outsiders might in vain cast a longing eye. For entrance was forbidden, and the way barred up. No one could

complain. The owner had a right to do as he liked with his property. Had I one day found the gates wide open, I should have said, "Then Mr. — has opened his grounds." For only he himself could give permission to enter, though he employed his servants to carry out his design. If the door into God's treasure-house was to be opened he himself must do it—that is, must design and order it. And in due time the order came. One of those who stood outside was bidden to call for admittance, and one of God's servants received instructions to respond to the call. To Peter it was given to be the first to open the door. Ask—

How did Peter open it ?

Vers. 34-43 tell us this. He spoke to the waiting assembly of Jesus. He told them of Jesus treading this earth as a man, as the Friend of man, as the crucified Saviour, as the risen Lord, as the Judge of quick and dead. Something of this the listeners had already heard. But they had never been told the real meaning of it—that it was for them. Now they had heard this, the door was open to them. They had but to believe it, and then the door was entered. And, as the succeeding verses tell us, they did enter at once into the treasure-house, and became partakers of the same blessings enjoyed by the Jewish believers.

Now ask four more questions :

1. Have we entered in at that door ? We are the successors of those Gentiles. We have heard the story of the Cross and the Resurrection. We have been told that Christ died and rose for us. God's treasure-house of good things stands open to us. The opened door is of no good if we pass it by. But if we believe in Jesus as our Saviour, forgiveness of sins, peace, and all other blessings are ours. We are inside.

2. Is the door open to all men ? As far as the Master is concerned, Yes. He has given the order that all may enter, "whosoever will." But look at Rom. 10. 14, "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard ? and how shall they hear without a preacher ?" And millions have not heard. The door is, practically, shut to them. The servants have not yet carried out the Master's order to open it.

3. Who is to open it ? Those already inside. You and I. "Let him that heareth say, Come."

4. How shall we open it ? Speak of Jesus. Help others to tell of Him. Help to send out the Gospel news. And so we shall see many more "enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise."

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Draw the map, showing the relative position of Jerusalem, Joppa, and Cesarea. . . . The character of Cornelius as here exhibited. . . . Circumstances which made the faith and zeal of Cornelius remarkable : 1. His heathen origin ; 2. His godless surroundings ; 3. His rank and station, etc. . . . The two visions and their significance. . . . Steps in God's plan leading up to this work of Gentile salvation : 1. Samaritans converted ; 2. Ethiopian ; 3. Antioch, chap. 11. 19, 20. . . . How to seek after God. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline). . . . How God rewards those who seek after him. . . . How Christ is preached to the seeker : 1. His anointing ; 2. His power ; 3. His character ; 4. His works ; 5. His death and resurrection ; 6. His office as Judge ; 7. His office as Saviour. . . . What does this lesson call upon us to do : 1. As sinners ? 2. As seekers ? 3. As Christians ?

ILLUSTRATIONS. A Chinaman picked up in his native village a tract dropped by a missionary. It awakened his interest, and, in order to obtain instruction, he journeyed on foot three hundred miles, carrying all his possessions in a wheelbarrow. When he reached the mission at Peking his feet were blistered, and he was faint from want of food. He received the Gospel, and became an earnest worker for the salvation of his own people. . . . When Dr. Butler went to India to establish Methodist Episcopal missions, he first called upon the Wesleyan missionaries at Madras, and inquired, "Are these natives really converted ? Do they show the evidences of a true Christian experience, and religion of the heart ?" In reply the missionary called into the room some of the native Christians, converts of the mission, and said, "This gentleman from America wishes to hear your religious experience." Each in turn gave the story of his salvation, which was just the same with that of any converted soul in America, meeting every test, and showing the tokens of the Spirit's power. In every race the grace of God and the power of the Spirit bring forth the same results.

References. FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA OF ILLUSTRATIONS : Prose, 9555. Ver. 30 : Prose, 4447. Ver. 31 : Poetical, 346 ; Prose, 1608, 3350, 9124. Ver. 34 : Poetical, 1109 ; Prose, 2545, 3664, 8943. Ver. 35 : Prose, 8130, 6289, 11657, 12270, 12282. Ver. 36 : Prose, 4360, 10923, 10929. Ver. 38 : Prose, 615, 1603, 9554. Ver. 41 : Prose, 5032. Ver. 42 : Prose, 1563, 3991, 9132. Ver. 43 : Prose, 1088, 7229. Ver. 44 : Prose, 9558, 9653.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Hush ! It is a man praying. A little

while ago, bristling with helmet of iron, breastplate, sword, greaves, he was tramping at the head of the sandal-spiked soldiers. Now, armourless, prostrate on the ground, he is only a needy, penitent suppliant. Lo, a brightness! It is an angel. Lo, a voice! The message is, "Send therefore to Joppa." Four days go by. Who is this coming into the house—a man that we have seen before, with broad, open forehead, features coarse, his complexion sallow, his hair and beard short and thick and curly? That is Peter, the Jew. And this centurion is a Gentile. Those friends packing the room, curious to hear, to see—are Gentiles. But it defiles the Jew to stop and talk with the Gentile, to travel with the Gentile, to enter the home of the Gentile! This, though, is less Peter the Jew than Peter the follower of Jesus, and he gives his plain, direct testimony concerning Jesus. But what is this murmur of ecstatic tongues breaking out in the midst of Peter's words? O wonder of the Holy Ghost, now descending and binding Jew and Gentile together in the brotherhood of the same blessing!

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *One in Christ.*

INTRODUCTORY. Print on the board "Jew," "Gentile;" print "Peter" over one, and "Cornelius" over the other. The children hear so much of the Jews' hatred for Jesus and the apostles, that they may think they are all bad men. Teach that Jesus was a Jew, and Peter, and James, and John. Tell why the Jews did not love the Gentiles—they thought they were not God's people. Jesus came to teach that God loves everybody alike, and now he wanted to open Peter's eyes to see this great truth. Tell how God spoke to Cornelius, and also to Peter, and brought about a meeting between them. Teach that God speaks to people on earth now.

1. Make a small map on the board. Make a little square for Joppa, another for Caesarea. Tell Peter's strange dream on the house-top, and how he wondered what it meant. Trace the journey of the three men sent by Cornelius to Joppa, and tell that when Peter heard these Gentiles asking to be taught about Jesus, he knew what the vision of the great sheet meant. Show a common, ugly vase, or box, holding a beautiful flower, and another, very beautiful and perfect, holding the same kind of a flower. Teach that the soul is like the flower—beautiful in God's eyes, and that he cares very little about the case that holds it.

2. Let children name different parts of a house. Show that a door, a window frame, a big beam, no matter how big it may be, is

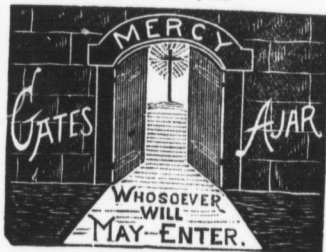
not a house. It takes all the different parts. So in God's great house. One cannot say, "I am the house," no matter how great and good he may be. Teach that as in a house there is room for big timbers and tiny bits of wood, so in God's house there is room for big, wise folks, and for little, ignorant ones and that God loves all alike. This was the lesson Peter taught the Gentiles in the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses.



3. Teach that the arch shows the way into God's kingdom. Print "Jesus" upon it, and tell that the bar which keeps many out is Self-love. When we truly love Jesus, we no longer love self, and then we have room in our hearts for every body, because God has room in His heart for every body. Show how this truth may enter into children's daily lives, making them feel that every child is a little brother or sister, making them yield to one another, etc. Teach that we can only love each other as we learn to love Jesus Christ.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, B.S.G.



This lesson is to teach that the gates of mercy are open to all men, whether Jew or Gentile, black or white, rich or poor, *whosoever will* may find pardon.

THE GATES AJAR.

WHO MAY BE SAVED?

ALL MEN	MAY CAN MUST	ENTER TO BE SAVED.
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A WORD-CANCELLING EXERCISE.

Write the sentence and erase one word at a time.

How can I have Salvation? Acts 16. 31.

Can I have salvation? John 10. 9.

I have salvation. Luke 8. 39.

Have salvation. Isa. 55. 6.

Salvation. Rev. 1. 5, 6.

A. D. 42.

LESSON VII.—THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.

May 13.

Acts 11. 19-30.



19 Now *a* they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

a Chap. 8. 1.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake *b* unto the Grecians, preaching *c* the Lord Jesus.

b Chap. 6. 1.—*c* Eph. 3. 8.

21 And *d* the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned *e* unto the Lord.

d Luke 1. 66.—*e* Chap. 9. 35.

22 Then tidings of those things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth *f* Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.

f Chap. 9. 27.

23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and *g* exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto *h* the Lord.

g Chap. 13. 43; 14. 22.—*h* Deut. 10. 20; 1 Cor. 15. 58; Gal. 2. 20; Col. 2. 6.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: *i* and much people was added unto the Lord.

i Chap. 5. 14.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, *j* for to seek Saul:

j Chap. 9. 30.

26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves *k* with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

k Or, in the church.

27 And in these days *l* came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

l Chap. 2. 17; 13. 1; 1 Cor. 12. 28; Eph. 4. 11.

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, *m* and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great dearth throughout all the world; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cesar.

m Chap. 21. 10.

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send *n* relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea:

n Rom. 15. 26; 1 Cor. 16. 1; 2 Cor. 9. 1; Gal. 2. 10; 1 Pet. 4. 11.

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the *o* elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

o 1 Pet. 5. 1.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The city of Antioch, metropolis of Roman Syria, stands at the Mediterranean verge, a queen in her beauty. But its enchanting groves of Daphne are the abodes of lust, and its half million of inhabitants are abandoned to sin. Hither come a little company of fugitives from the bloody sword which one Saul of Tarsus has of late swept over the Church in Jerusalem. Yet

they come not as the flying, in fear, but as the conquerors, with a triumphant faith which wins a way to many hearts. At first they disclose their treasure of salvation to the Jews in the synagogue, but they have breathed the broad spirit of the ascended Stephen, and soon they are telling the story of the cross to Gentiles. The word enters many hearts, for the Spirit goes with it, and it is aided by the lives of those who utter it. Around these unnamed preachers, the unconscious founders of a world-wide Christianity, grows up a church where the distinctions of Jew and Gentile are forgotten in the stronger bond of discipleship. The news of the innovation comes to the mother Church at Jerusalem, bringing to most members alarm, perhaps to a few, who remember Stephen's teaching, a secret joy. The Church determined to send forth a representative who should be armed with power to repress, to direct, or to encourage the new movement as the Spirit gives him wisdom. Fortunately for the destiny of the Gospel, the choice fell upon the warm-hearted, liberal-minded Barnabas. He journeyed the three hundred miles from Jerusalem to Antioch, saw in the Gentile disciples all the tokens of the Spirit's presence, and rejoiced at the new world opened before the Gospel. The field was so well adapted to his broad sympathies that he tarried long at Antioch, and the work so grew upon his hand that ere long he realized the need of another reaper by his side. He sailed across to Tarsus, and there drew forth Saul from his seclusion. Soon the hands of those whom Saul's persecution once drove to Antioch clasp in joyful brotherhood the hand of the persecutor, now turned to a disciple. Together the band of worthies labour, until the little meeting-place in Singon-street is thronged with believers, gathered out of the world around the altar of Christ. Here the growing faith is baptized with a new name; here a new centre of Christian activity is established: hence are sent liberal gifts to saints in need, and hence starts forth the first stream of missionary effort to convert the world.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 19. Now. The narrative here turns back about three years for a brief review. **Scattered abroad.** The persecution which drove them from home did not rob them of their faith, nor quell their testimony. **The persecution.** This was the first organized persecution of the Church, and its only result was to scatter the knowledge of the truth more widely. **About Stephen.** See Lesson XI., First Quarter. Acts 7. **Travelled.** In their journeys they took with them their best treasure, the Gospel. **Phenice.** Called in Rev. Ver. Phœnicia, a narrow strip of country between Mount Lebanon and the sea, having for its two principal cities Tyre and Sidon. **Cyprus.** A large island in the north-eastern quarter of the Mediterranean, the home of Barnabas and other leaders in early Christianity. **Antioch.** The chief city of northern Syria, on the Orontes, near its mouth.

It was the third city of the Roman world, and renowned for the culture and also for the vices of its half million people. Its cosmopolitan character and wide-reaching influence made it a natural centre for the Church, and from it went forth the first pair of Christian missionaries. **Preaching the word.** They preached it by a patient, cheerful character, in the endurance of persecution, not less than by their words. 1. Every hearer of the word should be a preacher of it. **None but unto the Jews.** At this time the Church was entirely Jewish in its membership, and the thought of the Gospel for Gentiles without requiring the intermediate step of becoming Jews, was held by but a few broad minds who had been imbued with Stephen's spirit.

20. Men of Cyprus and Cyrene. These were Grecian or Hellenistic Jews, with broader views than the Hebrews of Palestine, better acquainted with the Gentiles, and more willing to give them the Gospel. **Cyrene** was in northern Africa, west of Egypt. From this place were some of those present at the day of Pentecost. Acts 2. 10. **Come to Antioch.** Not from Cyprus, but from Jerusalem, three hundred miles away. **Spake unto the Grecians.** The Rev. Ver. has "unto the Greeks also," which is more correct, as these to whom they preached were not Grecian Jews, but heathen Greeks. This was a great step in advance, to preach the Gospel directly to the Gentile people of Antioch. 2. Thus by degrees does God ever lead his cause to higher and wider triumphs.

21. The hand of the Lord. Here placed for "the power of the Lord," of which the hand is a symbol. **Was with them.** 3. Those who labour for God can be sure of his presence and aid. **A great number believed.** The Rev. Ver. has "a great number that believed turned unto the Lord." Thus their belief in the message induced them to obey its command, and turn from their idol-worship to the service of Christ. 4. Belief leads to repentance, and repentance is followed by faith.

22. Tidings of these things. Word was doubtless sent by the stricter Jews in the Church at Antioch of these proceedings, which must have seemed to them unauthorized. We can scarcely appreciate the mighty barrier which stood between Jews and Gentiles, and the alarm with which honest Jews must have seen it melting away under the Gospel. **The church...** in Jerusalem. Still recognized as the mother Church, with a moral authority in the person of the apostles. But it was entirely Jewish in its membership, and with an unavoidable Jewish conservatism. **They sent forth Barnabas.** He was chosen because of his trustworthy character and also because, his home being in Cyprus, he was well acquainted with the region and its people. Fortunate was it for the destiny of the Gospel that the choice fell upon one whose broad, intelligent views would enable him to appreciate the new movement, and whose influ-

ence would give weight to support it. **As far as Antioch.** He was sent to inquire into the character of the work, to suppress it if it were evil, and to direct it if good. Probably the events attending the conversion of Cornelius had influenced the Jerusalem disciples to some largeness of view concerning Gentile salvation.

23. Seen the grace of God. Here meaning that he saw a gracious work evidently from the Lord. "He came, he saw, he was conquered." **Was glad.** A narrow nature would have yielded with unwillingness to the manifest destiny of the Church. But Barnabas was glad as he recognized the new and vast field opened before the Gospel. 5. Let us rejoice, as we see opportunities for a wider preaching of the word. **Exhorted them all.** He had been called "the son of exhortation," and now he showed the appropriateness of his name. **With purpose of heart.** Not only with will-purpose, but also with heart-purpose, with steady affection. **Cleave unto the Lord.** He had professed, and to maintain the closest relation to his Saviour.

24. For. The reason is now given why he so sincerely rejoiced in the work at Antioch, a work in which the Jewish disciples at Jerusalem had but little sympathy. **A good man.** Of generous and kind disposition, willing to recognize the good in others. **Full of the Holy Ghost.** Endowed with the power of the indwelling Spirit. **And of faith.** Faith, in the New Testament always means, not only trust in God, but a believing insight into spiritual things. 6. Let us aim for the complete, well-rounded Christian character of Barnabas. **Much people was added.** As a result of the encouragement of Barnabas and his energetic labours the number of Gentile disciples largely increased.

25. Departed Barnabas. He sailed across the narrow arm of the Mediterranean, from Seleucia, the sea-port of Antioch. **To Tarsus.** A large city in Cilicia, on the Mediterranean, where Saul had found refuge after leaving Jerusalem. Lesson IV. **To seek Saul.** He knew that Saul's sympathies were with this new movement, and he discerned, earlier than others, the powers that dwelt in him. 7. The worker for Christ should be generous to recognize the merits of fellow-workers.

26. When he had found him. Perhaps Saul was in the obscurity of a tent-making shop, perhaps away on a gospel-tour in Cilicia, where there were already churches. **He brought him unto Antioch.** The city was henceforth to possess its greatest fame from the presence of this man, whose greatness was then all unrecognized. **A whole year with the church.** Ancient tradition states that the meetings were held in Singon-street, near the Pantheon temple. **Taught much**

people. Both in evangelizing those outside and instructing those within the fold. **First called Christians.** The name was first assumed by the disciples, nor given by the Jews, but by the Gentiles, and thus shows that the Gospel was attracting notice in the city. It contains the Hebrew conception of a Redeemer, expressed by a Greek word with a Latin termination, thus uniting all the great races. It was not employed by believers themselves during the first century, and is found only three times in the New Testament.

27, 28. Came prophets. Men who expressed truth by a divine insight, but not often foretelling future events. They were abundant in the apostolic age. **From Jerusalem unto Antioch.** Showing that there was a real unity in the churches, and constant fellowship between them. **Stood up.** In the assembly of the Church at Antioch. **Agabus.** At that time comparatively young, since we find him again, twenty years later, coming from Jerusalem with a warning to Paul. Acts 21. 10. **Great dearth.** Famines were frequent in those ages, when no telegraphs could inform of need, no railroads could carry swift aid, and lands lived apart from each other. **All the world.** Probably meaning the Roman Empire, as in Luke 2. 1. **Claudius Cæsar.** The fourth Roman emperor, reigning from A.D. 41-54. In A.D. 43-45 thousands perished in Judea by famine.

29, 30. The disciples. It was a voluntary offering from the Gentile Church in Antioch to the Jewish believers in Christ. **In Judea.** Where the Church was oppressed, and composed almost wholly of poor people. **To the elders.** Elders are here referred to for the first time, showing that more systematic organization had grown up in the Church. **Hands of Barnabas and Saul.** This was Saul's second visit to Jerusalem after his conversion.

GOLDEN TEXT.

And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Acts 11. 21.

OUTLINE.

1. The Gift of Judea to Antioch, v. 19-21.
2. The Good Work in Antioch, v. 22-30.
3. The Gift of Antioch to Judea, v. 27-30.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Spread of the Gospel. Acts 11. 19-30.
- Tu. A scattered Church. Acts 8. 1-8.
- W. A working Church. 1 Thess. 1. 1-10.
- Th. An endowed Church. Eph. 4. 1-16.
- F. A complete Church. Col. 2. 1-15.
- S. A generous Church. 2 Cor. 9. 6-15.
- S. A rejoicing Church. Phil. 4. 1-19.

Time.—A.D. 42 to 43.

Place.—Antioch in Syria.

Connecting Links.—The events of this lesson began about the same time with those of the last, or very soon after.

Explanations.—*They which were scattered*—See Lesson XI., First Quarter, Acts 8. 4.

Upon the persecution—The persecution only spread the Gospel more widely. *Travelled as far*—Some of these places were three hundred miles from Jerusalem. *Preaching*—Though persecuted, they kept on preaching. *Unto the Jews only*—They did not at first suppose that the Gospel was meant for the Gentiles. *Spoke to the Grecians*—Here meaning "the Greeks," Gentiles, people not Jews, who spoke the Greek language. *The hand of the Lord*—The power and help of the Lord. *Believed*—In Jesus as their Saviour. *Turned to the Lord*—Giving up their idols and becoming followers of Christ. *Tidings*—News that at Antioch there was a Church of Gentiles. *Ears of the Church*—The mother-church at Jerusalem. *They sent forth Barnabas*—To visit the Church at Antioch, and see what was its condition. They were not sure that a Gentile Church was right. *Seen the grace of God*—In giving salvation to the Gentiles. *Was glad*—To have the doors of the Gospel open to all men. *Cleave unto the Lord*—Stand fast and faithful. *Much people was added*—By the preaching of Barnabas. *To seek Saul*—Barnabas needed Saul to help him in the work of preaching. *Assembled themselves*—Met with the Church. *Called Christians*—The name means "followers of Christ," and was given by the heathen around them. *Prophets*—Men who spoke God's word with inspiration. *Agabus*—He met Paul twenty years afterward. Acts 21. 10. *Signified by the Spirit*—Propheesied or foretold. *Great dearth*—A famine. *Days of Claudius*—He was the emperor of Rome. *The disciples*—The Church at Antioch. *Every man*—All the members gave. *The brethren... in Judea*—The followers of Jesus in Judea seem to have been mostly poor people. *To the elders*—The leaders in the Church.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 728, *New Hymn Book.* C. M.

Jesus, immortal King, arise;
Assert thy rightful sway,
Till earth, subdued, its tribute brings,
And distant lands obey.

Ride forth, victorious Conqueror, ride,
Till all thy foes submit,
And all the powers of hell resign
Their trophies at thy feet,

Send forth thy word, and let it fly
The spacious earth around,
Till every soul beneath the sun
Shall hear the joyful sound.

No. 723, *New Hymn Book.* 7s.

Hasten, Lord, the glorious time,
When, beneath Messiah's sway,
Every nation, every clime,
Shall the gospel call obey.

Mightiest kings his power shall own;
Heathen tribes his name adore;
Satan and his host, o'erthrown,
Bound in chains, shall hurt no more.

Bless we, then, our gracious Lord;
Ever praise his glorious name;
All his mighty acts record,
All his wondrous love proclaim.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **The Gift of Judea to Antioch, v. 19-21.** What was this gift? Who brought it? What sent them out of Judea? How did good thus come out of evil? To whom did they at first preach? Why? To whom did they at them afterward preach? What were the results of their labours? What is said in Rom. 10, 12, 13?

2. **The Good Work in Antioch, v. 21-26.** Who came to Antioch, and how was he sent? For what purpose did he come? How did he feel? What made him glad? How did he urge them to do? What three things are said of the character of Barnabas? For whom did he go, and where? Had he known Saul before? Acts 9, 27. What did he and Saul do at Antioch? What name was there first used?

3. **The Gift of Antioch to Judea, v. 27-30.** Who came to Antioch? What did one foretell? When and how was it fulfilled? What was done by the Christians at Antioch? How did this show their love? What words of Christ are given in Acts 20, 35?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. How Christ makes his enemies help his Church?
2. How we should feel at seeing souls converted?
3. How Christians should help each other?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school.) 1. What was done by the believers who were scattered abroad in the persecutions after Stephen's death? They went everywhere preaching. 2. To whom did they at first preach? To the Jews only. 3. Where was the first Church planted among the Gentiles? At Antioch in Syria. 4. What name was first given to believers in Christ at Antioch? The name Christians. 5. What did this Church do in time of a famine in Judea? They sent relief to the Churches.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The universality of the Gospel.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Gift of Judea to Antioch, v. 19-21.** Where did the persecuted believers go? What limitation did they make in preaching the Gospel? What exceptions were there to this rule? How did the Gentiles receive the word?
2. **The Good Work in Antioch, v. 22-26.** Why was Barnabas sent to Antioch? What encouragement did he give the disciples? What gave his words the greater weight? What journey did he take, and why? What was the result of the two apostles' labour? What name was given to the disciples here?
3. **The Gift of Antioch to Judea, v. 27-30.** What was foretold by a messenger from the mother Church? When did it come to pass? Of what was this prophecy itself a fulfilment? Acts 2, 16-18. What relief did the

Church at Antioch provide? What is the rule by which all our gifts should be measured?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Wherein are we taught—

- That a full heart makes a free gift?
- That God brings good to his Church out of the trials of his saints?
- That the prejudices of men break down before the influence of the Holy Spirit?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

In what city did the disciples first preach to the Gentiles? The city of Antioch, in Syria. How did God bless their work? Many believed in Jesus. Whom did the Church at Jerusalem send to Antioch? Good and faithful Barnabas. For what reason? To see if all was right concerning the Gentiles. What did Barnabas find? That God was working there. What did he urge them to do? To hold fast to Jesus. Why did Barnabas send for Saul? To help teach the people. How long did they stay in Antioch? A whole year, teaching and preaching. What name was first given to believers in Antioch? The name of Christians. Who came to Antioch in those days? Prophets from Jerusalem. What prophecy was fulfilled through Agabus? A great famine spread want in the land. How did the Christians help their friends in Judea? They sent Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem with money and food. How were they able to do this? Each one gave all he could. Of what was this a proof? Their love for Christ. How can we prove our love for Christ? By showing love to his people.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

Do you want to work for Jesus? Then love and obey your parents. Be a good brother or sister. Be a kind, true friend. Try to bring others to Jesus.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.**The Spirit of the Gospel.**

- I. PATIENT ENDURANCE.
Scattered abroad upon the persecution, v. 19.
"In the world . . . have tribulation."
John 16, 33.
- II. FAITHFUL TESTIMONY.
Travelled . . . preaching the word, v. 20.
"Preach the word . . . in season, out of season." 2 Tim. 4, 2.
- III. BROAD VIEWS.
Speak unto the Grecians, ("Greeks," Rev. Ver.) v. 20.
"There is neither Jew nor Greek."
Gal. 3, 28.
- IV. DIVINE POWER.
The hand of the Lord was with them, v. 21.
"Not I, but the grace of God." 1 Cor. 15, 10.

V. ORGANIZED SUPERVISION.

Church . . . sent forth Barnabas. v. 22.
 "Let us walk by the same rule." Phil.
 3. 16.

VI. DETERMINED PURPOSE.

With purpose of heart . . . cleave. v. 23.
 "Abide with me, and I in you." John
 15. 4.

VII. INTELLIGENT INSTRUCTION.

Assembled . . . taught much people. v. 26.
 "He gave . . . some pastors and teachers."
 Eph. 4. 11.

VIII. SPIRITUAL INSIGHT.

Prophets . . . signified by the Spirit. v. 28.
 "Holy men of God . . . by Holy Ghost."
 2 Pet. 1. 21.

IX. SELF-DENYING LIBERALITY.

Every man according to his ability. v. 29.
 "Do good . . . household of faith." Gal.
 6. 10.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

The Model Christian Church.

1. It was a Church established by men who had not only held the truth, and preached it, but had suffered for it. v. 19.
2. It was a Church of composite elements, rich and poor, Jews and Gentiles, all made one in Christ Jesus. v. 20, 29.
3. It was a Church of broad views, not limiting the Gospel to one race, but ready to extend it to all. v. 20, 21.
4. It was a Church of rapid growth, through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. v. 21, 26.
5. It was a Church which showed the manifest token of the Spirit's presence and a living Christian experience, v. 23.
6. It was a Church of power in the community, attracting notice and gaining a name. v. 26.
7. It was a Church recognizing the unity of the Gospel and the fellowship of all Christ's people. v. 27, 28.
8. It was a Church of generous giving, aiding the needy, even though far distant. v. 28, 29.
9. It was a Church which first established a mission for the salvation of men. Chap. 13. 1, 2.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

2. Did our first parents continue in the state in which God created them?
 Our first parents did not continue in the state in which God created them; for they fell from that state by sinning against him.
3. What is sin?
 Sin is any want of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God.
 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.—1 John 3. 4.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

THERE are few boys, and perhaps few girls, either, who have not at some time or other made use of a "nickname" for some companion or acquaintance. Older people themselves are not free from the habit. Any peculiarity about a man's appearance or habit, or any special hobby of his, may mark him out for a "nickname," in some cases an absurd one, in others one that, though hardly given with that intention, is in reality highly honourable. And not merely individuals, but whole classes of persons have been thus specified, some of the names lasting but for a short time, and others, as for example "epicurean," and "stoic," surviving to the present day. Our lesson to-day is about the bestowal of such a nickname.

The names just cited, "epicurean" and "stoic," came down to us from classical times. They originally designated the disciples of certain philosophers. In those times there were many such sects; and the names distinguished between the disciples of different teachers. They were found in most of the great cities of the Gentile world.

One of these great cities is brought before us in the passage for to-day—Antioch, the capital of the Seleucidae, and after them of the Roman governors of Syria. To this rich and beautiful city a band of strangers came who had fled from Jerusalem to escape the hands of their enemies. Some of them were Jews by birth; others had been Gentile proselytes; but all came with with one message to the people of Antioch. That message was about the Lord Jesus—that he was the Messiah, the Christ, who should come—that he, the Christ, had been crucified, and had risen again, and that remission of sins was offered to all in his name. The message was first given to the Jews, but the proselytes of Cyprus and Cyrene were eager to open the "door of faith" to those who were by birth Gentiles like themselves. They spake "to the Greeks" also. And with what result? That

Many turned to the Lord. A radical change took place in their lives. It was not that they had adopted a new opinion, but that they had chosen a new Master. "Other lords" formerly had "had dominion" over them, but henceforth they would "make mention only" of the name of One, even Christ. Isa. 26. 13. Him they determined to worship, to serve, to obey. And so important was this accession to the company of believers that

A special messenger was sent to them from the Church at Jerusalem. Barnabas, whose

home and birthplace were the same with those who had planted this first Gentile Church (chap. 4. 36), was the one chosen to visit it. He saw that "the hand of the Lord" had been working; he perceived "the grace of God" in these converts; and while his heart went up in praise to God, it was poured out to them in words of loving exhortation. But this was not all. He saw that there was a God-given sphere of work, and went to seek a "chosen vessel," Saul of Tarsus, as his companion in it: And so,

The Church at Antioch grew and was built up. This vigorous young community, whose members were bound to one another by no ordinary tie, and who lived as men who had an earnest, joyful purpose in life, attracted the attention even of those who did not care to learn their secret. There was yet another noticeable thing about them which could hardly fail to be remarked:

The Church at Antioch was ready to succour others. It was enough for them to hear that a time of need was at hand by their brethren in Jerusalem. They at once took stock of their power to help, and not merely out of their superfluity, but according as each was able, they sent assistance to the Church which was poorer than their own in this world's goods.

The inhabitants of Antioch were famed for their ready wit in bestowing appropriate names, and it would have been strange if they had not found one for the new community. As the disciples of various teachers had been named after them, it was a simple and natural thing to call those who acknowledged Christ as teacher and Lord by the name of "Christians." But the bestowers of that name little thought of all that was contained in it. The disciples of human teachers continued for a time, and then their name and their doctrine became obsolete. But the name "Christian" is expressive of a living power, for Christ is the Living One. A true Christian is the follower of a living Saviour, a living Lord. True Christianity must display four traits corresponding to those which we have seen in the Church at Antioch:

These four are turning, cleaving, learning, relieving.

Turning. This comes first. To become a Christian is not to assent to a doctrine, but to turn to a living Lord.

Cleaving. This is what Barnabas desired for the young converts in whom he saw the grace of God. They must go on as they began. The Christian life is only to be maintained by continual contact with the living Lord.

Learning. It was by this that the Church

was built up. Life must have something to feed on. The knowledge of the Living One is that which causes growth.

Relieving. It was thus the Church manifested outwardly the life that was within. They who are joined to a living Lord must walk in his footsteps, as they have opportunity, doing "good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. 6. 10.

Have we a right to the name, bestowed half thoughtlessly, and often contemptuously, (see Acts 26, 28; 1 Pet. 4. 16.) but full of glorious and joyful meaning—a Christian?

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Draw a rough map of the eastern end of the Mediterranean, including Palestine, Syria, Cyprus, Jerusalem, Damascus, Antioch, Tarsus, etc., and show the extent of the Christianity of the period. Show the difference between "Grecians" and "Greeks."

... The facts of the lesson.... The persons of the lesson, and traits displayed by each: 1. "They which were scattered;" 2. Barnabas; 3. Saul; 4. Agabus..... The spirit of early Christianity. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline).... The Church at Antioch, its traits, and lessons from it. (See Additional and Practical Lessons).... The name "Christian" 1. Its history; 2. Its meaning.... What kind of people does this lesson suggest that we should be?....

ILLUSTRATIONS. The names of the workers have perished, but their work remains. So with many of the remarkable things in this world: the pyramids, the great cathedrals. We enjoy the shade of trees which others have planted.... Alexander the Great once said to a soldier who bore his name, yet was known as a worthless coward, "Either change your name or mend your manners." So we should be worthy of the name "Christian" which we bear.... Arnot compares the Church in Antioch to a coral island, flowery and fertile, rising out of the barren, angry ocean, by the work of unknown builders.

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS. Ver. 19: Prose, 414. Ver. 20: Prose, 3088. Ver. 21: Prose, 2101. Ver. 22: Poetical, 3151. Ver. 23: Prose, 1400, 5001. Ver. 24: Prose, 2107, 11492. Ver. 26: Prose, 769. Ver. 29: Poetical, 1271; Prose, 313, 7049, 7055.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT: *Love Shows Itself in Deeds.* To be taught: That living seeds had

been planted in the hearts of the disciples ; that living plants grow from living seeds ; that the works of the disciples showed that God was the life in them.

1. Recall the persecution that followed the death of Stephen. Tell some of the ways in which people were persecuted in those days for believing in Jesus, leading children to see that if the disciples had been trying to please themselves they would have stopped talking about Jesus. Show a little plant in a pot, and let children tell what it came from, how it came to be growing there, etc. Bring out the fact that the seed must have had life in it to produce a live plant, and teach that the truth about God which Jesus taught to his disciples was the live seed, which must grow because it was alive. Show that men could not see the seed, as we cannot see the seed from which this plant has grown, but we know there must have been a seed, and a live one, or there would have been no plant.

2. Tell that sometimes plants are pulled up, and that this is what the wicked Jews wanted to do to God's living plants, the disciples. But God took care of them, and sent them out to preach in many different places. Show a few small seeds in your hand and blow them. They will fly to different parts of the room. Teach that the wind of persecution scattered the seeds of the Gospel, and tell how the disciples preached Jesus wherever they went. Recall the teaching of the last lesson about Jews and Gentiles and tell that many of the Gentiles also believed.



3. Talk about Barnabas, and read verse 24, letting children tell what they would expect from his work. Let children also tell what they know about Saul, and print "Antioch," "Christians," on

the board, impressing the name of the city as the place where people were first called Christians. Talk about the life in different kinds of flowers and fruits. The life in an apple-tree results in apples, etc. So the life in a Christian heart produces good works—love, good-will, helpful deeds, etc. Try to make this practical to the children, showing that real goodness only comes from God, and that he only is to be praised when any good is done.

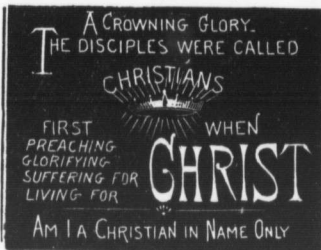
Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, Bsq.

The crowning glory of any one's life is to be known as a true Christian.

BLACKBOARD QUESTIONS. What does a crown symbolize? [Kingship.] Who is

King of kings? [Christ.] If we serve him? [He will give to each one a crown of life.] What were the disciples doing when they



were called Christians first? [Answer from Blackboard.] How can I preach Christ? Am I a true Christian?

TRAITS OF A TRUE

- C**HRIST'S OWN.
- H**ELPING.
- R**ESCUEING.
- I**NVITING.
- S**UFFERING.
- T**EACHING.
- I**NDWELLING LOVE.
- A**CTIONS RIGHT.
- N**ON DOUBTING.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Travellers, travellers, travellers on the roads leading out of Jerusalem! They go in haste. They hurry while glancing anxiously backward, as if pursued. The gospel-tree at Jerusalem has been shaken by a tempest of persecution, and these travellers are the seed-vessels wrenched off and whirled afar to become new centres of growth. Travellers that are exiles: they are also ambassadors. As they go they preach. I see them stopping, as they reach the farmer in his field. I watch them accosting the traders at the city gates, pilgrims in mountain-passes, shepherds with their flocks amid the stretching pastures. As they find a soul, they drop a seed there. Some of them reach Antioch, brilliant, wealthy, corrupt Antioch, nestling at the foot of the hills, roofed by a bright Syrian sky, gemmed by the crystal Orontes, boasting its magnificent avenue that was one long colonnade for four miles. Among these columns walk one day the exiles from Jerusalem, dusty, travel-worn, and they so plant the seed in gay, sensual Antioch that a wonderful story goes back to Jerusalem. "Have you heard it?" the Lord's people say one to another. "God is pouring out

his spirit on the Gentiles at Antioch. Send somebody to Antioch." There is another traveller to the banks of the Orontes, one generous in giving, the fire of the Holy Ghost flashing from his face and burning through his words, Barnabas. "A wonderful harvest at Antioch!" cries Barnabas. "I must have another reaper to help gather it in." Still another traveller is on the road to Antioch. We have seen him elsewhere, that man of inferior presence, long face, high forehead, bald and bearded, eyes sharply peering out under the bushy eyebrows, a

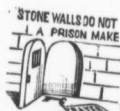
man whose body seemed to have parted with its strength that it might go into his soul. A whole year, Saul of Tarsus is gathering in the Lord's grain while putting in more seed. "And now," cry the brethren, "we must send a harvest-sheaf to Judea poor and famishing." They load with it—all golden—the shoulders of Saul and Barnabas, who go like harvest-burdened reapers back to Judea. "We did not know about Antioch," say the brethren, "but this is a harvesting that shows how the seed scattered by persecution has sprung up and borne fruit."

A. D. 44.

LESSON VIII.—HEROD AND PETER.

May 20.

Acts 12. 1-17.



1 Now about that time Herod the king *a* stretched forth his hands *a* to vex certain of the church.

a Or, began.—*a* Matt. 10. 17.

2 And he killed James *b* the brother of John with the sword.

b Matt. 4. 21; 20. 23.

3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were *c* the days of unleavened bread).

c Exod. 12. 14.

4 And *d* when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison; but *b* prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

b Or, instant and earnest prayer was made; 2 Cor. 1. 11; Eph. 6. 18.

6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7 And, behold, *e* the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

e Chap. 5. 19; Heb. 1. 14.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him; and *f* wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he *g* saw a vision.

f Psa. 136. 1.—*g* Chap. 10. 3.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which *h* opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

h Chap. 16. 26.

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that *i* the Lord hath sent his angel, and *j* hath delivered me out

of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

i Psa. 34. 7; Dan. 6. 22.—*j* Job 5. 19; Psa. 33. 18; 97. 10; 2 Pet. 2. 9.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he *k* came to the house of Mary the mother of *l* John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying.

k Chap. 4. 23.—*l* Chap. 15. 37.

13 And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came *c* to hearken, named Rhoda.

c Or, to ask who was there.

14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It *m* is his angel.

m Gen. 48. 16; Matt. 18. 10.

16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

17 But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go show these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

While Barnabas and Saul were on their way to Jerusalem bearing the gifts of the Church at Antioch, a strange event took place. The house of Herod was once more on the throne, and again the sword was unsheathed against the disciples of the Lord. The apostle James was the first to suffer, and meekly drank his Saviour's cup of death. Soon the hand of the king is laid upon Simon Peter, and he, too, enters the prison, expecting after the feast of passover to follow his brother apostle up the steps of martyrdom to his throne. On the night before the day appointed for his death, the apostle slept in the peace of a trusting heart, mindless of the chain on either side fastening him to his guardsmen. Suddenly he is aroused from his slumber; a light beams above, and an angel stands in his presence. Quietly, and without haste, he is bidden wrap his garments about him, not even leaving his

sandals on the floor, while the soldiers lie on either side in deep sleep, and his chains have fallen from his wrists. As in a dream he follows the angel, between sleeping wardens and through open doors, until he breathes the cool air of the early morning a square's distance from his prison. As suddenly as he came the angel vanishes, and Peter stands alone, even yet bewildered at his strange deliverance. Through the deserted streets he walks across the Tyropean valley, up the heights of Zion, and pauses at a door, within which may be heard the low murmur of prayer. He knocks, and a light footstep in answer trips along the hall, and a hand draws back the bolts. He calls his name, and the maiden in joyful surprise forgets to open the door, but runs into the midst of the praying assembly with the news that Peter stands without! They wonder, but cannot believe, until he stands before them, beckoning them to silence, while he tells the story of God's deliverance. Then, with a word of farewell, quietly he leaves for a place of refuge until the storm be overpast. Ere long Herod himself is smitten with death, the Jewish rulers have to face greater perils to their nation from the tyrannies of Rome, and the Church is again at peace and in safety.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. About that time. While Barnabas and Saul were on their way to Jerusalem with the gifts of the Christians of Antioch. **Herod the king.** Not Herod the tetrarch, the slayer of John the Baptist; but his nephew, Herod Agrippa. He was an intimate friend of the Roman Emperor Caligula, who gave him the dominions and title of his grandfather, Herod the Great. He was a strict Jew, and yet, from his Roman education, fond of luxury and pleasure. Luke here shows his accuracy by giving him the correct title, for there had been no king in Judea during thirty years, and there never was another. **To vex.** "To afflict." [Rev. Ver.] The word vex, at the time of the translation, meant more than petty annoyances, as now. **Certain of the Church.** Probably other of the leaders suffered besides the two here named.

2. He killed. Every one of the Herods sullied his hands with the blood of God's saints. **James the brother of John.** The son of Zebedee and Salome; one of the earliest called of the apostles, a witness of the Transfiguration and the Agony; the first to die, as his brother was the last. He had desired a place "on the right hand" in Christ's kingdom, and he now obtained it. He is the only apostle whose death is recorded in Scripture. **With the sword.** Showing that his execution was by the order of the king, and without trial before the Sanhedrin, where death was by stoning. (1) A lesson for us in the silent end of this first apostolic martyr.

3. Because he saw. Not because convinced he was doing right, but because he desired popularity. How different the motive of Herod's

persecution from Saul's. **Pleased the Jews.** All sects and parties of the Jews were now united against the Gospel, since it admitted the Gentiles to equal privileges. (2) See here the moving principle of much public wrong-doing, a desire for popularity. **Take Peter.** On account of his prominence, and the boldness with which he preached the Gospel. **Unleavened bread.** The passover week, in the spring, when for eight days no leaven was allowed in the houses.

4. Put him in prison. Probably in the tower of Antonia, on the north of the temple. **Four quaternions.** Four squads or sections each of four men; each serving four hours. Two were chained to the apostle, and two were on guard outside his cell. **Keep him.** "Guard him." [Rev. Ver.] **After Easter.** "After the passover" is the better rendering of the Rev. Ver. No executions were allowed by the Jewish custom during the passover week; and the infraction of this in the crucifixion of Christ showed the extreme hatred of the Jews. (3) How particular are religionists about forms, while utterly disregarding righteousness. **Bring him forth.** For a public execution. Little did Herod know that his victim was to live, while himself was to die! Ver. 23.

5. But prayer was made. (4) "No soldiers can keep the passage shut that is toward heaven."—*Pool.* **Without ceasing.** Not only unceasing, but earnest. [Rev. Ver.] **Of the church.** A weak and helpless company calling upon God seem of little avail against all the powers of the realm; but the mightiest powers are unseen. **For him.** (5) We should pray, not only for ourselves, but for others in trouble.

6. Would have brought. Rev. Ver., "Was about to bring him forth." **The same night.** The night before his expected execution. **Peter was sleeping.** He had slept in Gethsemane through weakness of the flesh; now he sleeps in prison by the strength of his faith.—*Arnot.* (6) See what trust in the Saviour can do to give perfect peace. **Bound with two chains.** By the wrist chained to the wrist of a soldier on each side. **Keepers.** Rev. Ver., "Guards." The other two soldiers outside the door leading into the court of the prison.

7. And behold. It was between three and six o'clock, as Peter was not missed until morning. **The angel.** Rev. Ver., "An angel;" some divinely sent and supernatural manifestation, not an unknown friend who had secured entrance. **Came upon him.** Suddenly and from above. The same expression is used in Luke 2. 9. **Light shined.** The natural effluence of the angelic presence. **In the prison.** Rev. Ver., "Cell." Not in all the prison, but only in Peter's dungeon. **Smote Peter.** To arouse him from sleep and fix his attention. **Raised him.** "Awoke him." [Rev. Ver.] **Chains fell off.** (7) Divine power can easily overcome earthly difficulties.

8, 9. Gird thyself. Orientals do not take off their garments, but loosen them while lying down to sleep. Peter is directed to dress himself deliberately and calmly. **Sandals.** Loose shoes, covering only the sole, and fastened with thongs. **Cast thy garment.** His outer mantle, laid over him while sleeping; and needed now that he was about to go out into the cold air of early morning in the spring time. **Followed him.** In a dazed and dreamy way. **Thought he saw a vision.** It seemed like the revelation he had received upon the house-top in Joppa. Chap. 10. 10-17.

10. First and second ward. Not different parts of the prison, but the two sections of the guard; one at his door, the other at the court-yard. **Iron gate.** Leading from the prison court-yard into the street of the city. **Opened to them.** (8) So often dreaded obstacles are seen to melt away in the path of providence. **Through one street.** A distance of one block or square. Notice the characteristic accuracy of Luke's description. **The angel departed.** Vanished out of sight, as no longer needed. (9) Extraordinary dealings of providence cease when the ordinary are sufficient.

11. Come to himself. The absence of his heavenly guide, and the sight of familiar objects, enabled him to realize that he was really awake and free. **Now I know.** By the best assurance, that of experience. **Hath delivered.** He perceived that the rescue was divine and miraculous. **From all the expectation.** The Jews, now united against the Church, were eager with expectant desire for the chief apostle's blood.

12. Considered. Thought over the event, his present surroundings, and his wisest course. **The house of Mary.** A Christian matron, the aunt (not sister) of Barnabas. Col. 4. 10. Tradition declared that her house on Mount Zion was spared in the destruction of Jerusalem twenty-five years after this, and was standing in the fourth century. **Mother of John.** John Mark, the courier of Paul and Barnabas, (next lesson), and writer of the second gospel. He may have given Luke the facts of this narration. **Many were gathered.** They had continued all night in prayer, as the morrow was expected to witness Peter's execution. **Praying.** They could pray for Peter when there was nothing else to be done. (10) Let us work while we can, but pray always.

13, 14. The door of the gate. The outer or street door. Another door inside the porch led directly into the house. **A damsel.** The servant of Mary, who was also a disciple. **Named Rhoda.** The same name as Rose. **Came to hearken.** "To answer." [Rev. Ver.] In the East a person always gives his name before the door is opened. **Knew Peter's voice.** Showing that he had been a frequent visitor at the house. **For gladness.** So eager to let the others share her joy that she forgot to open the gate.

15, 16. Thou art mad. So slow were they to believe that their prayers had been answered. **Constantly affirmed.** With the quick ear of youth she had recognized his voice, and knew she was not mistaken. **It is his angel.** The ancient world universally believed in guardian angels, and Christ asserts the fact in Matt. 18. 10, though he does not explain its precise meaning. **Continued knocking.** Perhaps uncertain whether his first call had been heard. **Astonished.** The Rev. Ver. has "amazed," an expression made with reference to the impression made by supernatural events.

17. Beckoned. Perhaps unable to make himself heard, perhaps as there was danger of attracting attention from the neighbourhood. **Declared.** Told the story. **Show... unto James.** "The Lord's brother," son of Joseph and Mary, and a leader in the early Church. Though not precisely an apostle, he is so called in a few places. He was the author of the Epistle of James, and is said to have been martyred not long before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. **The brethren.** The Church. **He departed.** As he would be sought for in the city, he left it for a season, but soon afterward returned. See Chap. 15. 7.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him. Psa. 34. 7.

OUTLINE.

1. Herod's Prison, v. 1-6.
2. God's Angel, v. 7-11.
3. Mary's House, v. 12-17.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Herod and Peter. Acts 12. 1-17.
 Tu. Paul's escape. 2 Cor. 11. 18-33.
 W. The spies' escape. Josh. 2. 1-24.
 Th. David's escape. Psa. 34. 1-22.
 F. Elisha's deliverance. 2 Kings 6. 8-23.
 S. Jeremiah's deliverance. Jer. 38. 1-13.
 S. Daniel's deliverance. Dan. 6. 16-23.

Time.—A. D. 44.

Place.—Jerusalem.

Explanations.—*Herod the king*—This was Herod Agrippa I., not the one who killed John the Baptist, but related to him. *Stretched forth his hands*—Undertook, began. *To vex*—To do harm to. *Killed James*—The apostle who had been one of the three most intimate with Jesus. *Pleased the Jews*—They were always pleased to have Christians slain. *To take Peter*—Who was the leader among the apostles. *Unlovened bread*—The time of the Passover. *Four quarters*—Sixteen soldiers in all. *After Easter*—This should be "after the Passover." *To bring him forth*—To be put to death. *Prayer was made*—Prayer is mightier than a wicked king. *Would have brought him forth*—Intended to do so on the next day. *Peter was sleeping*—Showing that he was at peace. *Bound with two chains*—A chain fastening him to each soldier. *Keepers*—Guards watching. *The angel*—"An angel" is more correct. *Smote Peter*—To awaken him. *Chains fell off*—Showing divine power. *Gird*

thyself—Wrap your clothes around. *Wist not*—Did not understand. *Saw a vision*—As he had seen in chap. 10. *Second ward*—The two guards are meant. *Iron gate*—The outer gate of the prison. *Through one street*—One block. *Come to himself*—Found himself really awake. *Surety*—For a certainty, truly. *All the expectation*—The Jews expected him to be slain. *Considered*—Thought. *The house of Mary*—Not the mother of Jesus, but another Mary. *Together praying*—Praying for Peter, as they thought, in prison. *Door of the gate*—The door to the porch, outside the house. *A damsel*—A young girl. *Knew Peter's voice*—As he had often been there before. *Opened not*—Forgot to open it in her joy. *Affirmed*—Declared. *It is his angel*—The Jews believed that each person was attended by his own guardian angel. *To hold their peace*—Not to make a noise, which would attract notice. *Unto James*—Not the apostle, but "the Lord's brother." *Another place*—Hiding from the enemy.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 834, *New Hymn Book*. 8, 7, 8, 7, 4, 7.

Saviour, like a Shepherd lead us,
 Much we need thy tenderest care;
 In thy pleasant pastures feed us,
 For our use thy fields prepare:
 Blessèd Jesus,
 Thou hast bought us, thine we are.

We are thine, do thou befriend us,
 Be the guardian of our way;
 Keep thy flock, from sin defend us,
 Seek us when we go astray:
 Blessèd Jesus,
 Hear, O hear us, when we pray!

No. 829, *New Hymn Book*. 7s & 6s.

Safe in the arms of Jesus,
 Safe on his gentle breast,
 There by his love o'ershaded,
 Sweetly my soul shall rest.
 Hark! 'tis the voice of angels,
 Borne in a song to me,
 Over the fields of glory,
 Over the jasper sea.
 Safe in the arms of Jesus,
 Safe on his gentle breast,
 There by his love o'ershaded,
 Sweetly my soul shall rest.

Jesus, my heart's dear refuge,
 Jesus has died for me;
 Firm on the Rock of Ages,
 Ever my trust shall be.
 Here let me wait with patience,
 Wait till the night is o'er;
 Wait till I see the morning
 Break on the golden shore.—Safe, etc.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **Herod's Prison**, v. 1-6. What did Herod do, and why? Whom did he seize next? What was his purpose? How did he make his prisoner safe? What was done in behalf of Peter? What is the promise of Matt. 18. 19? What in verse 6 showed Peter's condition?
 2. **God's Angel**, v. 7-11. What took place in the prison? What did the angel tell Peter to

do? Where did they go? How did they pass the guards? What did Peter think at the time? Where did the angel leave Peter? How did all this illustrate the GOLDEN TEXT?

3. **Mary's House**, v. 12-17. What Mary was this? Who were there? What did Peter do at the house? Who came to the door, and what did she do? What did the disciples say? What did Peter tell them? What did Peter then do? How does this lesson illustrate Isa. 65. 24?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where does this lesson show—

1. The safety of God's people?
2. The weakness of God's enemies?
3. The power of prayer?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school). 1. What did King Herod do in opposing the Gospel? He killed the Apostle James. 2. Whom did he next seize intending to slay? The Apostle Peter. 3. What did the Church do for Peter in prison? They prayed without ceasing? 4. How did God answer their prayers? By sending an angel. 5. What did the angel do for Peter? He set him free from prison.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Answer for prayer.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **Herod's prison**, v. 1-6. What further danger threatened the Church? Who was the first victim? Whereby did Herod seek to please the Jews? Why was Peter to be detained until after the passover? What did friends do for his relief? What is said of the power of prayer in James 5. 16? What measures were taken to secure the prisoner?

2. **God's angel**, v. 7-11. How was the prayer of the Church answered? What was the manner of Peter's delivery? What was Peter's thought during his deliverance? What was his afterthought?

3. **Mary's house**, v. 12-17. What was being done at the house of Mary? What was the effect of Peter's appearance there? Why were they surprised at the answer to their own prayers? What news did Peter bring them, and what message did he leave?

PRACTICAL TEACHING.

Wherein are we shown—

- That duty and danger are often inseparable?
- That there is one effectual aid the believer can always employ?
- That God has his servants in constant remembrance?
- That the true believer will see the hand of the Lord in his providences?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What troubles came upon the believers in Jerusalem? Herod the king began to persecute them. Whom did Herod kill? James, the brother of John. Whom did he put in prison? Peter. What was his object? To please the Jews. Who was watching over Peter all the time? The God who never slumbers. Whom did he send to save him? An angel, while Peter slept. What did the angel do? He awakened

Peter, and said, "Follow me." What did Peter think? That he saw a vision. When did the angel leave him? After leading him to a place of safety. What did Peter see in this? The hand of God. Where did he then go? To the house of Mary. Who were gathered there? Many of the disciples. What were they doing? Praying for Peter. What did they think when they saw Peter? That God does answer prayer. Where was Peter obliged to go? To a place unknown to Herod. Does God still hear the prayer of his people? Just as surely as he heard prayer for Peter. [Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.]

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

We may take all our troubles to Jesus. Remember—That he loves to help us. That he will help us if we trust him. That he has power to deliver us from our enemies. That prison walls cannot shut him out.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Troubles of Saints.

I. SOURCES OF TROUBLE.

1. Worldly Power. "Herod the king."

v. 1.

"Kings of the earth... against his Anointed." Psa. 2. 2.

2. Religious Bigotry. "Pleased the Jews." v. 3.

"Command fire to come... from heaven." Luke 9. 54.

3. Desire for Popularity. "Saw it pleased." v. 3.

"Not as pleasing men... but God." I Thess. 2. 4.

II. VICTORY OVER TROUBLE.

He killed James... with the sword." v. 2.

"Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Cor. 15. 57.

III. HELP IN TROUBLE.

1. Prayer. "Prayer... without ceasing." v. 5.

"Call upon me in the day of trouble." Psa. 50. 15.

2. Peace. "Peter was sleeping." v. 6.

"Keep him in perfect peace... on thee." Isa. 26. 3.

3. Angels. "The angel... came." v. 7.

"Angel... encampeth round about." Psa. 34. 7.

4. Deliverance. "God hath... delivered." v. 11.

"Shall deliver thee in six troubles." Job 5. 19.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

God's People in Trial.

1. God suffers trials to come upon his people for their good and his glory. v. 1, 2.

2. God delivers some from trial by a speedy call home to heaven. v. 2.

3. God allows others to pass through trial

in order to show the support of his grace. v. 4.

4. God's people are led by trial to more earnest and unceasing prayer to him. v. 5.

5. God's people have victory over trial in the peace of soul which they enjoy. v. 6.

6. God watches over his people in trial, and sends angels to minister to them. v. 7.

7. God opens a path for his people through trial by his almighty power. v. 7-11.

8. God answers prayer in trial sometimes to the surprise of those who have offered it. v. 15.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

4. *What was the sin by which our first parents fell from that holy and happy state into which they were created?*

The sin by which our first parents fell from that holy and happy state in which they were created was the eating the forbidden fruit.

The Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.—Genesis 2. 16, 17.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

There are few of us, I suppose, who are not familiar with the old Roman legend which tells

"How brave Horatius kept the bridge"

which spanned the Tiber, when the army of Porsenna strove to force it and capture the city of Rome. With two valiant helpers he guarded the entrance, and held the whole hostile force at bay. Having at length dismissed his comrades, he kept his post a short time longer, and then in a moment he had plunged into the river below, to swim to shore. Had he failed in his undertaking? No. Then why did he leave the post which he had so long and so effectually guarded? Why did he abandon the entrance of that bridge to the foe? Because it was no longer necessary to keep it. It was not for the sake of the bridge, but of the city, that he had fought, and after the bridge had been broken down behind him, the safety of the city no longer depended upon it. It might be left to the will of the enemy, for Rome was now safe.

Our lesson to-day is about guarding. It is not a bridge, not a city, but a man, that is the object of it. And the guarding is two-

fold. Let us see how it was performed and how it was answered. We see Peter

1. *Guarded as a prisoner.*

He lies in the prison, chained by each arm to a soldier. The door of his cell is guarded by another soldier; the door of the prison by another. And, lest these should relax their vigilance, there are others to relieve them at intervals. And besides the chains on Peter's hands, there were the strong bolts and bars of the prison doors, and the great iron gate which shut in the whole. Was he not well guarded? But might not the guards be persuaded, or bribed, to let him pass out? No, for he is the prisoner of King Herod, and they will have to answer for their prisoner with their own lives. Peter seems far more securely guarded than the bridge held by three men against an army. And Herod has no doubt but that on the morrow his victim will be brought forth to die at his command, like James, the brother of John. But he has made a mistake.

2. *Guarded as a free man.*

Take away a man's freedom, and he becomes restless. He chafes and struggles, or he grows dull and moody, and pines away. But Peter sleeps sweetly, though he is expecting death on the morrow. Evidently he is not at war with his lot. He does not feel like a man in fetters. He is satisfied. His spirit is free. Is it natural for a man to be calm and content under such circumstances? A man may be naturally self-controlled, dignified, and patient, but not satisfied and free. "The iron" will enter "into his soul," even if he does not show it. Peter's soul is guarded, or he would not be free. The Lord is guarding him.

But what of his body, or, rather, of his earthly life? Is not that in the hands of Herod? See. There is a light in the dark prison; an angel is there; and Peter is bidden to rise. Can he, when chained to the sleeping soldiers? Yet he does rise, and the chains fall off. He is bidden to follow the angel. He is not borne out, but he passes out after his guide: the doors, the bolts, the bars, the iron gate, all give way, and the free man passes forth. When morning comes the prisoner is not to be found. How is this? He had seemed to be Herod's prisoner, but was in reality the Lord's free man. The Lord had guarded him, and his enemies were disappointed.

But how was it with Peter's friend and companion, James the brother of John? Was not he, too, the Lord's free man? Yet a short time before he had been put to death by his enemies. No angel had appeared for him. No prison doors had opened for him. Had the Lord's guardianship failed? No

doubt the spirit of James was kept in peace and in freedom, like that of Peter. But what of his body, what of his earthly life? Was it not left to the will of his foes?

So they thought. Herod had won favor with the people by giving up James to the sword of the executioner. He intended to please them still further by the sacrifice of Peter. He had had his will once, why not again? But he forgot the Lord. The Lord had not left his servant James to the will of his enemies. He had guarded his earthly life just as long as it was needful—needful for his own profit and for the good of the Church. That bridge over the Tiber was kept as long as it was needful. When at length abandoned, the city of Rome was beyond the reach of the invaders. And when James the servant of God drew his last breath, he was forever safe from the touch of adversity. No enemy could aim a dart at him any more forever.

This is the Lord's guardianship, which never fails. We must not lead young people to suppose that if they yield themselves to him he will protect them from all that the world calls harm. They may meet with accidents, pain, loss, as well as other people, but only so far as he sees good for them. Nothing shall touch them except he wills it. In the utmost peril they are safe from all real harm. Christ answers for them with his own life, for their life is "hid with Christ in God." Their earthly life is safe until it is better it should go. As Frances Ridley Havergal wrote:

"Our yet unfinished story
Is tending all to this—
To God the greatest glory,
To us the greatest bliss!"

BEREAN METHODS.

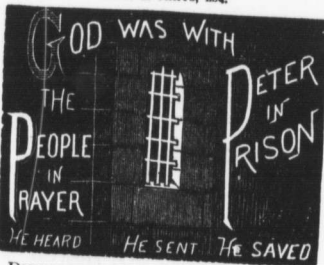
Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Distinguish between, I. Herod the Great; 2. Herod the tetrarch; 3. Herod the king, (this Herod) . . . Distinguish between, 1. James, the brother of John, v. 2; 2. James, "the Lord's brother." v. 17. . . Contrast in this lesson—I. The spirit of Herod: 1. Hatting the Gospel; 2. Seeking for popularity; 3. Without principle; 4. Cruel; 5. Self-confident. . . II. The spirit of Peter: 1. Submissive; 2. Peaceful; 3. Trustful; 4. Following divine direction; 5. Recognizing the divine hand. . . III. The spirit of the Church: 1. Helpless before worldly power; 2. Mighty in prayer; 3. Sympathizing, united, v. 12; 4. Surprised at the success of its own prayers. . . IV. The aspects of God in this lesson: 1. He notices the wrath of men; 2. He knows where his disciples are;

3. He hears prayer; 4. He has almighty agencies in behalf of his cause; 5. He can protect his people. . . . ILLUSTRATIONS. An angel legend relates that the accuser of James, struck by his confession, became a Christian, and was led away with him to martyrdom. As they went to execution, he asked the apostle's forgiveness. After a moment's thought, he replied, "Peace be to thee," and kissed him, and so both were beheaded together. . . . The iron gate is an emblem of obstacles which are invisibly removed from the path of God's servant's. . . . Herod's persecution reminds of the answer which Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, gave to another ruler, who inquired how to be secure upon his throne. He led the messenger into a field of wheat, and began striking down right and left the tallest heads, thus suggesting the destruction of the leaders in the popular party. . . . An electric wire is very slight, yet it will bear a current to turn an engine wheel, to carry a message, to give light as bright as day, or to strike death into the one who places his body in its path. Such are the prayers of God's people.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, Bsq.



DIRECTIONS. Draw the walls of the prison with white chalk, and the letters in bright colours, so as to make a contrast.

BLACKBOARD QUESTIONS. Where was Peter? Why was he there? Was he in great danger? Who are the people referred to? Where were they? What were they doing? For whom? Who heard the prayer? What did He do? How did He save Peter?

The Power of Prayer

IS

Prayer in Faith,

NOT

Faith in Prayer.

—
"Ask, and it shall be given."

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *God our Great Keeper.* To be taught: That God is the Father of a great family; that every little child belongs to his family; that God keeps watch over each of his children.



1. Ask what a lion is, and let the children tell what they know about lions, what their nature is, what they will do if let loose, etc. Print "Herod" on the board, and tell that he was a kind of man-lion, because he was fierce and cruel, and would kill people to please himself. See what the children remember about this Herod's grandfather, and also about his uncle, who beheaded John the Baptist. Tell whom this Herod had just killed, and why, and also what he had done to Peter. Tell where Peter was, how bound, fastened, etc., and see what children think his fate is likely to be. Teach that Peter is one of a great family, and that his Father is very rich and powerful, and that he loves Peter very much. Ask if children think his Father will let him be killed to please Herod and the wicked Jews.

2. Talk about families, sometimes large, sometimes small. Let some of the children tell how large the family is to which they belong. Question as to who has care of them, etc. Then ask who takes care of father and mother. Show that all the people on earth, big and little, belong to one great family, asking the name of this family. Read Eph. 3-14, 15, and tell children that their friends who have gone to heaven still belong to their family. Let children tell who is Father of this family, and ask why he can take care of so many, and if they think it troubles this kind Father to have some of his children naughty and unloving.

3. Tell how Peter's Father sent to take Peter out of prison. He did not need to send an army, or even a strong man with a sword, though there were sixteen men keeping guard over Peter. He just sent an angel, and that was enough. Tell briefly some of the visits of angels described in the Bible, and teach that angels come to us on errands from God, bringing good thoughts, good desires, etc. Perhaps some will wonder why Peter was delivered from prison and death, while John the Baptist was beheaded. Teach that the great Father of the family, to which we all belong, knows just the best thing for each one. He wanted Peter to live longer, and so took him out of prison. If he had wanted him to die, then

his angel would have come to take Peter's spirit away to God. Teach the lesson of love for our Father who keeps us in safety.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

A night attack is to be made on the old prison. A man is to be liberated. How? When? I hear no tramp of an attacking force. The streets are deserted. No house-lights are visible. Ah, there is one in that house where the prisoner's friends are gathered. Do they make the attack? They are not putting on any armour. They have only fallen on their knees, their hands clasped, their faces turned upward, their souls in prayer for the man in prison. And he? He is the helpless centre of multiplied prison-walls. Outside of all is the dreaded power of the king forbidding any approach. There are the keepers on guard about the prison. There are the stone walls, the iron gates, the soldiers on either hand of the prisoner, and finally his chains, all to secure one weak, defenseless man. Why do not his friends arm and make the attack? They only keep on praying. The moon, soon to round into its passover-glory, is looking in at the prison-window. It sees the three men sleeping on the floor, the prisoner between his two guards. As he stirs his chains clank harshly on the stone floor. Can he be liberated? The wind without moans as if in pity. And the voices of the friends at their supplications sound as empty and vain. Still they keep on praying. See! The light of the moon has touched the prisoner's face. He is smiling. What is he thinking of? Dreaming of a greater glory, a light above that of moon or sun that he once saw on a mountain in a transfiguration-hour? A light above that of moon or sun? What is this in the old prison now? Out of this glory, like a king out of his golden palace, steps the angel of the Lord! Ho! ho! Wake the guards! Rouse the keepers! The prison has been entered! The liberator has come! He shakes the prisoner, "Arise up quickly!" What is the matter?

Does the dazzle blind the man? He rises confusedly, the chains dropping off as if the light had melted them. Why don't the guards get up? No, they are asleep, and the prisoner is half asleep, fancying it is a dream, and he slips on his sandals, binds his girdle, and puts on his outer coat only as the angel bids. They pass out. Finally, they come to an iron gate. It falls back as if it were a living thing, abashed, awed, and retreating before that glorious form of flame. Ho, keepers! The prisoner is going! Unhindered, the angel and his follower pass out into the cool night air, and at a street-corner the dazed prisoner is left alone. He rubs his eyes, reflects, and exclaims, "The Lord hath sent his angel!" And all this while God's people have been praying. It is at the door of their gate that a knock is heard! Run, Rhoda, and see who it is! She steals along, puts her ear close up to the gate—she may have asked the knocker's name—and wonders who it may be. Soldiers sent to arrest the disciples? It is the prisoner! It cannot be! But it is! There is his voice! She runs back to that praying circle. Ho, every one! Stop your prayers! The prisoner is at the gate! They stop their praying, look around, but do they get up from their knees? They cannot, will not, believe the news. They have no faith in their own praying, something not to be answered so easily. The damsel is "mad!" That night attack could not have been a success. But there is Rhoda insisting that Peter is at the door. Nonsense! "It is his angel," they cry. Hark! There is his knock again, louder now! Poor fellow, he has harder work to get among his friends than to get away from his enemies! But they are now crowding to the gate. Rhoda carries the little lamp, while Mark follows, Mary too, James looking over Rhoda's shoulder, others pressing forward while holding back, all on tip-toe, their eyes staring, their mouths full of exclamations, all peering into the night, and there is—Peter!

A. D. 45.

LESSON IX.—PAUL AND BARNABAS IN CYPRUS.

May 27.

Acts 13. 1-12.



1 Now there were *a* in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as *b* Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius *c* of Cyrene, and Manaen, *a* which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

a Chap. 14. 26. — *b* Chap. 11. 22. — *c* Rom. 16. 21.
— *a* Or. Herod's foster brother.

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate *d* me Bar-

nabas and Saul for the work *e* whereunto I have called them.

d Num. 8. 14; Gal. 1. 15; 2. 9. — *e* Matt. 9. 38; Rom. 10. 15; Eph. 3. 7, 8; 1 Tim. 2. 7; Heb. 5. 4.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to *f* Cyprus.

f Chap. 4. 36.

5 And when they were at Salamis, they

preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews : and they had also *g* John to their minister.

g Chap. 12. 25.

6 And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus :

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man ; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

8 But *h* Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

h Exod. 7. 11 ; 2 Tim. 3. 8.

9 Then *b* Saul (who also is called *c* Paul), filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, *b* That is, Destroyer.— *c* That is, Worker.

10 And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *i* thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord ?

i Matt. 13. 38 ; John 8. 44 ; 1 John 3. 8.

11 And now, behold, *j* the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness ; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

j Exod. 9. 3 ; 2 Kings 6. 18.

12 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

From Jerusalem, as the centre of Gospel effort, the capital of Christianity is now transferred to Antioch, where an earnest company of disciples are assembled, seeking for light from above on the way of duty for the Church. The answer comes, and Barnabas, the generous and the intelligent, with Saul, the ardent and the bold, are set apart for a special work in the cause of the world's salvation. We see the hands of the Church laid on them in solemn consecration ; a little company of believers standing on the wharf and waving farewell to the two missionaries on the deck of the vessel ; the shores of Syria fading away in the distance, and the coasts of Cyprus looming nearer. Little dream the princes and statesmen of Rome that those two undistinguished Jews are carrying the world's destiny as they step ashore in the harbour of Salamis ! They preach in the synagogues, they visit the villages, they travel the length of the island, bringing gladness to many hearts, and satisfying many yearnings after God. At the capital of the isle, Truth and Error meet face to face before the proconsul's chair of state. Elymas the wizard and Paul the apostle, stand confronting each other, one with the dark shadow of a pit, the other uplifting the banner of the cross. The conflict is brief, for falsehood sinks cowering to earth under the inspired rebuke and the divine judgment. The Roman ruler receives the truth, and adds the influence of his social position to the cause of the Gospel, and Paul, no longer Saul, stands forth as the recognized leader in the work of Christ.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. At Antioch. See Notes, Lesson VII., verse 19. Antioch was a natural centre for missionary operations, since it stood at the point of union between Syria and Asia Minor, with the Oriental world back of it, and all the Mediterranean lands in close commercial relations. Its Church was composed of Jews and Gentiles in harmonious relations, and represented an intelligent, aggressive, and broad church-life.

Prophets and teachers. The former spoke by direct inspiration, the latter gave more systematic instruction in the Gospel. See Eph. 4. 11.

Barnabas. The generous, liberal-minded, and eloquent Levite, whose name means "son of exhortation." See his previous history in Acts 4. 36, 37 ; 9. 27 ; and 11. 22-25.

Simeon . . . Niger. Or "the black ;" perhaps indicating an African origin, and showing that the colour-line was not drawn in that Church.

Lucius of Cyrene. Also from Africa, west of Egypt, but otherwise unknown.

Manaen . . . brought up with Herod. Rev. Ver., "foster-brother."

Strange that the companion in childhood of John the Baptist's murderer should grow up to become a Christian teacher ! Brought up in the palace of Herod the Great, one of the wickedest places of earth, he came forth pure. 1. Character will assert itself in spite of circumstances. 2. Which has the greater honour to-day, the king or the disciple ? **Saul.** Named last, as perhaps the youngest in the noble fellowship, yet destined to outshine them all. He was at this time forty-one or forty-two years old.

2. As they ministered. The language would hint that this was a solemn service in which these five men were engaged, probably seeking divine light upon the question of their duty toward the heathen world, the first missionary prayer-meeting. **Fasting.** Showing their earnestness was so intense as to disregard the claims of the body. 4. The Christian should always keep the body under the domination of the spirit. **The Holy Ghost said.** Probably by a strong conviction upon the minds of all who were present, though perhaps by the mouth of one or more of the prophets. **Separate me.** Set apart to a special service, requiring all their powers and all their time. **Barnabas and Saul.** Both consecrated and earnest workers, old and tried friends, each having his own gifts, and each suited to the other. **For the work.** It was the work of preaching to the Gentiles salvation through Christ. **I have called them.** By virtue of this call they became apostles, invested with authority equal to that of the Twelve. 5. See in this sentence a proof of the personality, divinity, and authority of the Holy Ghost.

3, 4. Fasted and prayed. This service of ordination or consecration took place at another meeting. **Laid their hands.** The formal act by which they were indorsed by the Church as workers for God, and inducted, not to

an order, but an office. **Sent them away.** This Church gave to the cause of missions, not its money, but its two best men. **Sent forth by the Holy Ghost.** The Spirit and the Church united in the sending, and the world by its need appealed to them. **Seleucia.** The sea-port of Antioch, at the mouth of the Orontes. **They sailed.** A sail westward of less than a day, with a fair wind. **To Cyprus.** A large island of the Mediterranean, between Cilicia and Phoenicia. It was chosen, (1) Because near by; (2) The home of Barnabas; (3) Having many Jews, who would form a means of approach to the Gentiles; (4) There were already disciples of Christ from the island. Acts 11. 20.

5. Salamis. The principal town on the eastern side of the island, now a mass of ruins. **Preached the word.** Proclaimed the word; that is, made known the tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ. **In the synagogue.** These were to be found in every large town, and formed starting-points for the Gospel, since (1) The Gospel was to be preached to the Jews, and the worshipping element were more ready to receive it than others. (2) At the synagogue were found many Gentiles inquiring after the one God. **They had also John.** John Mark, the son of Mary in Jerusalem (last lesson, ver. 12), afterward author of the second gospel. He was the nephew of Barnabas, (Col. 4. 10), and younger than the two apostles. **To their minister.** Rev. Ver., "Attendant." To aid by making provision for their care, and perhaps to baptize those converted. Paul especially was in delicate health at all times, and sometimes in great suffering. 6. Those who fulfil the lowlier offices of God's work are honoured in the Gospel.

6. Gone through the isle. Preaching the Gospel in its towns. 7. The labours, unwritten in the earthly record, are laid up in heaven. **Unto Paphos.** Now Buffa, at the western end of the island; then the capital, and the seat of a famous sanctuary of Venus, where the most abominable licentiousness was practiced in the sacred rites. **A certain sorcerer.** Like Simon of Samaria, (Lesson I), one who professed to have dealings with spirits and to possess supernatural powers. Opinions are divided whether they were simply skilful performers, or did deal with evil spirits, as the warnings of the Old Testament seemed to indicate. **A false prophet.** Misleading men by his utterances, which seemed to be inspired. **Bar-jesus.** "Son of Jesus, or Joshua;" both names being the same, one Greek, the other Hebrew.

7. Which was with. Ancient history informs us that most of the rulers in Rome, such men as Marius, Caesar, Tiberius, consulted magicians, and often kept them in their retinue. **The deputy.** Rev. Ver., "the proconsul," the correct title, as shown by coins struck in the reign of Claudius, when Paul visited the island. Rulers appointed by the emperor were styled pro-pretors, those appointed by the Senate, proconsuls. **Sergius Paulus.** A Roman of whom

nothing more is known than is here related. **A prudent man.** "A man of understanding," (Rev. Ver.,) that is, an intelligent man, open to conviction, and possessing good judgment. **Called for.** The same eagerness for spiritual light which has prompted him to listen to Bar-jesus now led him to send for the apostles; showing that the Gospel had obtained some prominence.

8. Elymas. This was his self-assumed name, meaning "the wise one," just as "wizard" comes from wize-ard. **Withstood them.** Evidently the opposition was face to face, the magician and the apostles confronting each other. **Seeking to turn.** He endeavoured by arguments and arts to prevent the proconsul from accepting the faith of the Gospel. 8. There is an irrepressible conflict between Satan's emissaries and Christ's followers.

9. Saul . . . called Paul. From this hour the old Hebrew name ceases, and the new name Paul begins. A dozen reasons have been assigned, but it is most likely that, like many Jews, and especially those brought into relations with Gentiles, he had from the first two names, one Jewish, the other Roman, and now that his work begins distinctly among the Gentiles, the Hebrew name is laid aside for the other. **Filled with the Holy Ghost.** With a sudden inspiration from God, giving insight into character, and adding authority to his utterances. **Set his eyes upon him.** Looking upon the enemy with quick and penetrating glance.

10. And said. Notice that this invective was not the expression of Paul's personal indignation, but the utterance of the Spirit through him. 9. We must be careful not to attribute our own passionate words to the Spirit of God. **Full of all subtily** (Rev. Ver., "guile") **and mischief,** (Rev. Ver., "villainy.") One word refers to his falsity, the other to his unscrupulousness of character. **Child of the devil.** "Son of the devil," (Rev. Ver.,) as is every evildoer. **Pervert the right ways.** Not merely perverting men from the ways of God, but misrepresenting God's truth.

11. The hand of the Lord. Not Paul's wrath, but God's hand. **Blind . . . for a season.** Total blindness, not even able to see the light; but only for a season, not to make life bitter, but only to convince others of the divine power which he was opposing. Perhaps Paul hoped that the same results might follow the blindness of Elymas as his own three days' loss of sight. **Mist and a darkness.** First a mist, soon followed by a darkness. He who blinded others now becomes blind.

12. Deputy . . . believed. Accepted Christ and the Gospel; and may have gone on to the enjoyment of a living, personal experience of salvation. **Doctrine,** (Rev. Ver., "teaching,") **of the Lord.** The teaching of which the Lord Jesus was the subject.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Acts 13. 2.

OUTLINE.

1. The Foreign Missionaries, v. 1-5.
2. The False Prophet, v. 6-11.
3. The Famous Convert, v. 12.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus. Acts 13. 1-12.
 Tu. The charge to the apostles. Matt. 10. 16-33.
 W. The great commission. Matt. 28. 1-20.
 Th. Ambassadors for Christ. 2 Cor. 5. 12-21.
 F. An earnest ministry. 1 Thess. 2. 1-13.
 S. The faithful pastor. 1 Tim. 4. 1-16.
 S. The subject of preaching. 1 Cor. 1. 17-31.

LESSON HYMNS.

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Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
 Doth his successive journeys run;
 His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
 Till suns shall rise and set no more.

For him shall endless prayer be made,
 And praises throng to crown his head;
 His name like sweet perfume shall rise
 With every morning sacrifice.

Peoples and realms of every tongue
 Dwell on his love with sweetest song;
 And infant voices shall proclaim
 Their young hosannas to his name.

No. 725, *New Hymn Book*.

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Saviour, sprinkle many nations,
 Fruitful let thy sorrows be;
 By thy pains and consolations
 Draw the Gentiles unto thee;
 Of thy cross the wondrous story
 Be to all the nations told;
 Let them see thee in thy glory,
 And thy mercy manifold.

Saviour, lo! the isles are waiting,
 Stretched the hand, and strained the sight,
 For thy Spirit, new creating,
 Love's pure flame, and wisdom's light;
 Give the word, and of the preacher
 Speed the foot, and touch the tongue,
 Till on earth by every creature
 Glory to the Lamb be sung.

Time.—A. D. 45.

Places.—Antioch in Syria, and the island of Cyprus in the Mediterranean.

Connecting Links.—1. The death of Herod Agrippa. Acts 12. 18-23. 2. The return of Paul and Barnabas to Antioch. Acts 12. 24, 25.

Explanations.—*The church at Antioch*—See the account of this Church in Lesson VII. *Prophets*—Men who spoke by the inspiration of God. *Teachers*—Those who instructed others in the Gospel. *Brought up with*—One who had lived with him as a child. *Herod the tetrarch*—Not King Herod, in the last lesson, but the one who slew John the Baptist. *Saul*—Named last, as perhaps the youngest. *They ministered*—Were engaged in a service of worship. *The Holy Ghost said*—By an inward voice to all those pre-

sent. *Separate me*—"Set apart to my service." *The work*—The work of preaching the Gospel to the heathen world. *Laid their hands*—As an act of consecration to their mission. *In the synagogues*—They preached where the Jews met to worship, as through them they could reach the people. *John*—John Mark, who wrote the gospel. *Their minister*—Their attendant and helper. *Through the isle*—Preaching as they went. *A certain sorcerer*—One who pretended to have power to deal with spirits. *A false prophet*—Giving pretense of speaking God's word. *Bar-jesus*—Meaning "the son of Jesus." *The deputy*—The Roman ruler whose title was consul. *Prudent man*—A man of wisdom and judgment. *Withstood them*—Opposed the Gospel as taught by Barnabas and Saul. *Saul*... called Paul—As he was now among Gentiles, he used his Roman name, rather than his Jewish. *Filled with the Holy Ghost*—Speaking by divine power. *Subtily*—Low and wicked cunning. *Mischief*—This word here means "villainy." *Pervert the right ways*—Turn men from walking in the ways of God. *Blind*—As a punishment for leading others away from the light. *For a season*—Not forever, but perhaps until he should repent. *Mist and darkness*—A growing blindness. *Believed*—Believed in the Gospel which was proved by such miracles. *Doctrine of the Lord*—"The truth concerning the Lord," as taught by Paul.

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. A call to the work of the Gospel?
2. An example of interest in the Gospel?
3. A warning against opposing the Gospel?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school.) 1. From what Church were the missionaries sent out to preach the Gospel? From the Church at Antioch. 2. Whom did they send? Barnabas and Saul. 3. Where did they begin the work of preaching? In the island of Cyprus. 4. Who was among the people converted through their labours? Sergius Paulus, the Roman ruler. 5. By what name was Saul henceforth called? Paul.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. The Foreign Missionaries, v. 1-5. From what Church did they start? What is told about this Church in Lesson VII.? Who were called as missionaries? How, and by whom, were they called? To what work were they called? What was Christ's call to missionary work? Matt. 28, 19. Where did these two missionaries go? Who helped them in their work? See Acts 12, 12.
2. The False Prophet, v. 6-11. Who was he? Where did they meet him? With whom was he at the time? What is he called in verse 6? What did he try to do? What new name do we find in verse 9? What did Paul call the sorcerer? What is said of the sinner in 1 John 3, 8? What did Paul say to him, and what followed?
3. The Famous Convert, v. 12. Who was he? What good example did he show in

verse 7! What led him to believe? What is it to believe on Jesus? Have you so believed on Jesus Christ?

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The call to the ministry.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Foreign Missionaries, v. 1-5.** What divine direction did the disciples at Antioch receive? How were Paul and Barnabas ordained? On what journey did the Spirit send them? Where did they commence their missionary preaching? What assistance did they have?

2. **The False Prophet, v. 6-11.** What encouragement did they find at Paphos? With what opposition did they meet? Why was Elymas opposed to the Gospel? What new name is here given to Saul? How did he rebuke the sorcerer? What sentence did he pronounce upon him? How was it fulfilled?

3. **The Famous Convert, v. 12.** Who was witness of this event? What was its effect upon him?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Wherein are we shown—

That our obligations to duty may reach beyond our own homes?

That special work needs special consecration?

That it is dangerous to oppose the Holy Spirit?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What Church first sent out missionaries? The Church at Antioch. Whom did the Holy Spirit call to this work? Barnabas and Saul. How did the Church consecrate them to the work? By prayer and laying on of hands. To what island did Barnabas and Saul go? To the island of Cyprus. Who went with them as a helper? John Mark, a nephew of Barnabas. Where did they first preach? In the synagogues of Salamis. What city did they next visit? Paphos, where the governor lived. Why did the governor send for them? That he might hear about Jesus. Who was with the governor? A wicked sorcerer named Elymas. What did Elymas do? He spoke against Christ. What did Saul call him? "A child of the devil." What did he say should come upon him? Blindness. Of what was the blindness a type? Of his inner darkness. Why was Elymas thus punished? Because he tried to keep the governor in darkness of heart. How did this miracle affect the governor? He believed in the Lord. What name was Saul known by after this? Paul.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

An enemy of Christ—Turns away from the truth. Tries to keep others from believing it. Tries to make the wrong seem right. A friend of Christ—Asks to know God's will. Goes gladly to do his work. Rebukes sin in his name.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Missionary Spirit.

I. A SPIRIT OF MINISTRY.

As they ministered to the Lord, v. 2.

"The Spirit...dividing as he will."

1 Cor. 12. 11.

II. A SPIRIT OF CONSECRATION.

Separate me Barnabas and Saul, v. 2.

"Separated...called...that I might preach." Gal. 1. 15.

III. A SPIRIT OF AGGRESSION.

The work whereunto...called them, v. 3.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations."

Matt. 28. 19.

IV. A SPIRIT OF PREACHING.

They preached the word of God, v. 5.

"Preach the word; be instant in season."

2 Tim. 4. 2.

V. A SPIRIT OF INSPIRATION.

Saul...filled with the Holy Ghost, v. 9.

"I will put my Spirit within you."

Ezek. 36. 27.

VI. A SPIRIT OF INSIGHT.

The child of the devil, v. 10.

"He that is spiritual judgeth all things."

1 Cor. 2. 15.

VII. A SPIRIT OF FAITH.

The hand of the Lord is upon thee, v. 11.

"Signs shall follow them that believe."

Mark 16. 17.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

God's Call to Missionary Work.

1. God calls the Church endowed with spiritual gifts to work for the evangelization of the world without the Gospel, v. 1, 2.

2. The call to the work of missions comes to those who are in close fellowship with God, v. 2.

3. The call to the work of missions comes from the Holy Spirit, and not from earthly authority, v. 2.

4. The call to mission work is direct and personal, choosing its own workers, v. 2.

5. The call to mission work is for the best workers in the Church, those seemingly most needed at home, v. 2.

6. The call to mission work should meet with a prompt and willing response from the Church, v. 3.

7. The call to mission work involves hardships, self-denial, and earnest ministry of the word, v. 4-6.

8. The call to mission work leads the workers to face opposition of Satan, v. 6-11.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

5. Why were they commanded not to eat of this fruit?

They were commanded not to eat of the forbidden fruit, to try them whether they would obey God or not.

6. Wherein did the eating of the forbidden fruit consist?

The evil of eating the forbidden fruit consisted in their unbelief and disobedience to God; to whom, as their Creator, Benefactor and Governor, they ought to have implicitly submitted themselves.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

"SEPARATE" is a word which may have a good or a bad sense—which may describe an action or a condition of things to be approved or to be lamented. But either way, it is a word of no doubtful meaning. It is also emphatic and unmistakable. There may be difference, distinctness, division, without separation. Husband and wife, father and son, partners in business, allies in war may differ, may have distinct opinions or interests, may be seriously divided, and yet maintain outward union. But separation means actual parting asunder.

We find both the good and bad senses in Scripture, but either way the emphasis is decisive. Lot, at Abram's suggestion, "separated" from him. Gen. 13. 9. "Thou shalt separate the Levites from the children of Israel," said Jehovah to Moses, "and they shall be mine." Num. 8. 14. "A whisper," says Solomon, "separateth chief friends." Prov. 16. 28. "Your sins," says Isaiah, "have separated between you and your God." Isa. 59. 2. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory," he shall "separate the sheep from the goats." Matt. 25. 32. Nothing, says St. Paul, shall "separate us from the love of God." Rom. 8. 39. "Be ye separate," is God's command to his people; that is, separate from the world. 2 Cor. 6. 17. Christ was "separate from sinners." Heb. 7. 26.

And when, in the passage before us, God says to the Church at Antioch, "separate me Barnabas and Saul," he means something equally decisive and final. They were to go forth on no temporary mission, no mere visit of inspection, like that which first brought Barnabas to Antioch, or like that which had lately taken both to Jerusalem. Chap. 11. 22, 30; 12. 25. It was a life-work to which they were called, and a work which was to cut them off altogether from the quiet pastoral duties of shepherding the Antiochene Christians.

And I may remark that the peremptoriness of the message is much enhanced by a little word in the Greek (*de*) which is untranslatable into English, which rarely occurs in the New Testament, and which always adds very positive emphasis to the sentence. As if God would say, "This thing is to be done, done immediately, done thoroughly, done once for all."

Observe that the message came not to the two leaders themselves, but to the Church. It was not Barnabas and Saul who were likely to hesitate, but the Christian community. How could they spare such men from among them? Surely here, in the busy and popu-

lous and vicious capital of the East, they were needed, if anywhere. Would not less prominent brethren do for itinerant preaching in Cyprus or Phrygia? That is exactly what is said now-a-days about missionaries. I am not sure how it is in America; but in England, when the missionary societies appeal for more men, the tendency of the Churches is to look out for those who are inferior in learning and talent and social position, who are not likely to "get on" at home, and send them to convert the heathen! A Tait, or a Guthrie, or a Punshon—no, men like that are wanted for higher work!

And the same feeling shows itself in many other ways. When a man spends large sums of money on his own comfort and pleasure, and gives to God's service a few paltry coins now and then, the loss of which he does not feel; or when one of our Sunday scholars inwardly makes up his mind to enjoy his best days, and then when life and strength are ebbing away to repent and devote his closing hours to his Maker; these are similar cases, more glaring, indeed, in their ingratitude and sinfulness, and yet, alas! more common.

Now observe what the Church of Antioch was doing when the message came: "Ministering to the Lord and fasting." The word "ministering" is in the Greek quite different from that of either the apostles or the seven deacons in chap. 6, or that of Mark in the 5th verse of our passage. The word (*leitourgein*) is the original of the Greek word "liturgy," and refers to regular public worship; and it is frequently used of the Jewish rites and sacrifices. The Church, then, was engaged in solemn worship, and the "fasting" would indicate that it was a prolonged service. The Christians were professing to be entirely consecrated to the Lord. In a sense they were so, no doubt. They had "separated" from the ungodly heathen of the city. Some of them had had to "separate" from family and friends and property, to forsake all and follow Christ. And now God sends them a fresh test. Are they willing to "separate" unto his service his own best gifts to them? So came the test to the young ruler in the gospel history. Could he "separate" his goods for the poor at Christ's command, and "separate" himself to follow the despised Nazarene? He did not stand that test; but the Church at Antioch did, and by so doing conferred on the whole world a blessing that lasts to this day.

Let this question be pressed home. Are you worshippers? Do you attend the services of the sanctuary? Are you fond of the solemn assembly and the inspiring hymn? That is well; but it is not enough. Can you "separate" to God's service your very best

things, money and time and talents and influence? Are you "separate" yourself?

I shall perhaps be reminded that this lesson is on Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus, and that I have not touched on their work there. I would refer my readers to the English Teacher's Notes on the same passage in this BANNER six years ago, in which the journey of the two apostles was pictured as an invasion of the great enemy's territory by the soldiers of the rightful King, and the conflict between Paul and Elymas as a battle for a soul, the soul of Sergius Paulus. My suggestions in the present note may help toward a successful lesson on that memorable struggle. It was because Paul was "separated," wholly devoted to his Master's service, going just where he was sent and doing just what he was bid, that he was "a good soldier of Jesus Christ," that he had the strength to grapple with the sorcerer and the faith to call for God's miraculous power to defeat him, and that thus he won so signal a victory in bringing the Roman proconsul to the feet of Jesus.

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

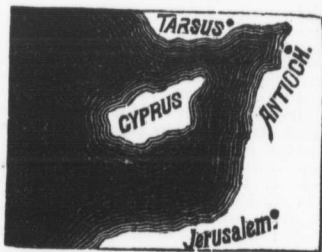
Draw, from the question-book or leaf, the map of the lands in Paul's first missionary journey, indicating Antioch, Seleucia, and Cyprus, and on the latter Salamis and Paphos.Trace on the map, before the class, the places, while eliciting by questions the facts of the lesson....Show the circumstances under which the first missionary work of the Church was undertaken: 1. By an earnest Church; 2. Under divine call; 3. By chosen workers....Show the traits of Barnabas and Saul fitting them for the work....Point out the difficulties here shown as in the way of the Gospel....Some lesson-pictures: 1. A picture of the Church at Antioch; the prophets and teachers; prayer; voice of the Spirit, etc. 2. A picture of the departing missionaries; shore; vessel; friends; fare-well; island in the distance; Paul and Barnabas. 3. A picture in the synagogue at Salamis; worshipping Jews; praying apostles. 4. A picture of the governor's palace at Paphos; Elymas; Paul; the rebuke; the blindness; the ruler's faith....Aspects of the true spirit of missionary work. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline.)...ILLUSTRATIONS. Manaen, (ver. 1.) growing up in Herod's court, was like a pure lily, which out of black and vile earth, draws forth life and beauty, and arises to bestow its fragrance on all around.....M. Di Cesnola found recently in Cyprus an ancient inscription, thus translated:

"Thou the One God,
The Greatest, the most Glorious Name,
Help us all, we beseech thee."

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS. Prose, 985, 986, 7447, 7448. Ver. 2: Prose, 6125. Ver. 3: Prose, 2230-2233, 8663. Ver. 7: Poetical, 3149, 3151. Ver. 9: Prose, 9554. Ver. 10: Prose, 9692, 9694, 9696, 9698. Ver. 11: Prose, 3713, 3120....FREEMAN. Ver. 5: The Synagogue, 636. Ver. 6: Conjurors, 630.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, RSG.



This is an outline map for the blackboard, showing the commencement of the first missionary journey. As the history is continued on following Sabbaths, the map can be extended, and the journeys kept distinct by using different coloured chalk.

On the reverse of the board this lesson may be written:

AN ENEMY | A FRIEND
OF CHRIST
WILL DO ALL HE CAN
TO OPPOSE | TO SPREAD
THE GOSPEL.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. Taking and Giving.

[We may profitably make this lesson the occasion of a simple talk about missions, who missionaries are, what they do, why they do it, etc. The little ones have, as a rule, very vague ideas about the whole matter, and some plain instruction, enforced by the example of Paul and Barnabas, will doubtless prove helpful.]

1. Pin up two pieces of paper, one black, one white. Print "Christian World" on the white, "Heathen World" on the black. Tell

that these are not two separate worlds, but this is only a picture. Teach that heathen do not all live together, but some Christians are among them, and vice-versa, making little squares with white crayon on the black paper, and with black crayon on the white paper. Get children's ideas as to what heathen are, and make it plain to them that they are people who do not love and pray to the one true God.



2. Tell about the sending of Paul and Barnabas to some of these dark places, and that they were the first missionaries. Teach that they went to carry something to the people—see if children can tell what—money, clothing, food? No, the truth about God. Show that they had first to take this truth before they could give it. Let the black spots on the white paper be small, to show that here in our country the heathen are individuals, rather than whole nations and towns, and that God calls for missionaries to go to individuals, as well as to go to distant countries. Ask children what they will need to take to fit them to be missionaries, now at home, and show that they need not wait to be big and wise, but may begin at once, if they will only take God's Holy Spirit into their hearts, and then do just as God says.

3. Tell the story of Elymas, and teach that there are wicked people everywhere who will try to hinder others from believing God, and that missionaries need God with them all the time to help. Teach that among the ways in which children can help is the saving and earning pennies to help send missionaries who go away as Paul and Barnabas did. Tell some missionary incidents, endeavouring to make the work seem real to the children, and lead them to feel that God looks upon all work of this kind, at home or abroad, with pleasure. Do not fail to impress the lesson, that to make God known we must first know him ourselves.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

"Strangers? Wonder-workers? Who can they be?" Is this the inquiry of "the false prophet," "sorcerer," when he hears of the coming of the apostles? "I will go to hear them. They may be of my craft," he says. He ceases the mumbling of his incantations, lays down his manuscripts of queer, cabalistic signs, and goes out. An unusual gathering it is at Paphos, that day, curious to hear the men that the Holy Ghost had separated at Antioch to this work. There is Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor, with grave, intelligent face, wearing his official robes.

Around him are officers and soldiers of the Roman army, men rough, weather-worn, their armour harshly clanking. There are citizens too, of Paphos. But who interrupts to-day? That man with prying, restless eyes, with unabashed, impudent face, who is it? He boldly thrusts himself forward, opposes the missionaries, argues with Sergius Paulus. Ho, Bar-jesus, Elymas, child of the devil, is it you? Are not these strangers of your craft? Is Sergius Paulus slipping out of your hands? There they stand confronting each other. On the one hand, in Elymas, is the spirit of the old, the world of darkness, of superstition, of sin, hugging to itself the Roman power. On the other, in the apostles, is the Spirit of the new, the world of light, of truth, of holiness resisted to-day. Which shall have the Roman eagle? But Paul has set his eyes on Elymas, the fire of the Holy Ghost flaming through them. Every one presses forward to see the sight—the circle narrowing about the cowed Elymas on this side, and the indignant, rebuking Paul on the other. But look! Did the apostle pronounce a visitation of darkness? Will the shadow fall? Look again! The eyes of the imposter are strangely working as if dazzled and blinded before that burning look of Paul. A mist is settling about him. He puts out his hands confusedly. He turns here and there, feeling, in his blindness, for a hand that may lead him! The world of darkness has been rebuked. The blindness Elymas loved to produce in others has come to him personally. And the awed proconsul, he turns to God that day. The Roman eagle comes down to the foot of the cross. Blessed prophecy of a grander triumph over the kingdom of the Caesars!

LESSONS FOR JUNE, 1883.

JUNE 3. At Antioch. Acts 13. 13-16 and 43-52.

JUNE 10. At Iconium and Lystra. Acts 14. 1-18.

JUNE 17. End of first Missionary journey. Acts 14. 19-28.

JUNE 24. Second Quarterly Review.

Take it in Good Part.

It may not have been meant in good part. Never mind, take it so, all the same. If a scholar makes an ill-natured remark to you, or asks you a teasing question, treat him with such unconsciousness of his bad spirit that he will be ashamed of it himself, and be glad that his teacher did not observe it.

There is often great wisdom, meekness and prudence, in taking things in good part.

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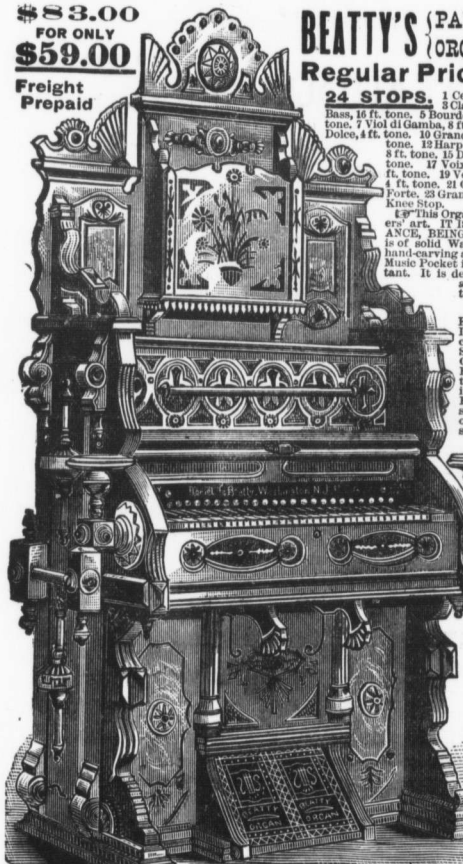
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