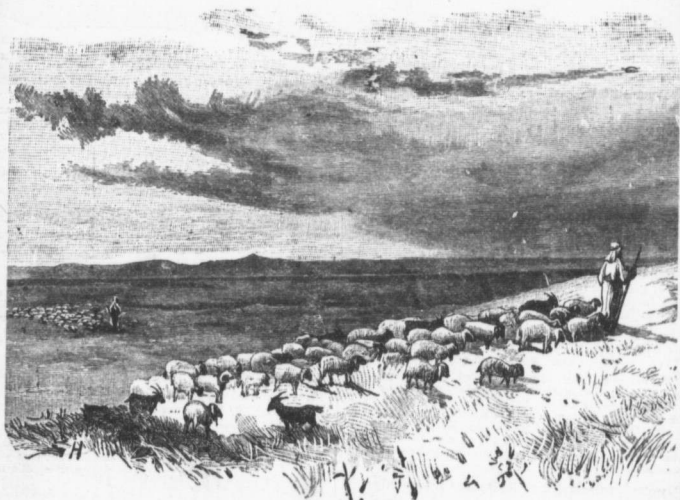


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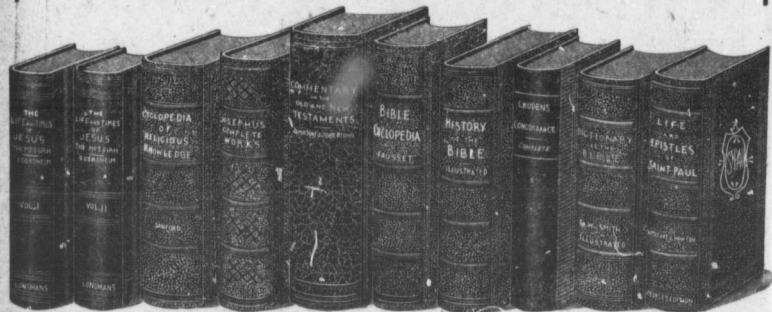
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- Report . . .
- Sunday School Librarian . . .
- Teacher Training . . .
- Surprising Figures . . .
- Magazine and Review . . .
- What We License . . .
- His One Talent Improv . . .
- A Bait to Catch Fools . . .
- Spirit Vision . . .
- "Seven Sayings of Je . . .
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- New Use for Refined I . . .
- Lessons and Golden T . . .
- International Bible Le . . .
- Primary Teachers' Dep . . .

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for
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YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 36

NOVEMBER, 1902

No. 11

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Torchbearers	i
The Sunday School Work at the General Conference	ii
Epworth League and Sunday School Committee's Report	iii
Sunday School Libraries	iv
Teacher Training	v
Surprising Figures	viii
Magazine and Review for October	viii
What We License	ix
His One Talent Improved	ix
A Bait to Catch Fools	ix
Spirit Vision	x
"Seven Sayings of Jesus"	x
Book Review	x
A High-Class Magazine	x
New Use for Refined Paraffine Wax	xi
Lessons and Golden Texts.—Order of Services	xi
International Bible Lessons	- 768
Primary Teachers' Department	- 811

Torchbearers.

'How fares it, Torchbearer ?'
 "Nay, do not stay me;
 Swift by my course as the flight of an
 arrow !
 Eager, exultant, I spring o'er the stubble,
 Thread through the briar, and leap o'er
 the hollows;
 Firm nerve, tense muscle, heart beating;
 Onward !
 How should I pause e'en to fling thee an
 answer ?"
 "How fares it, Torchbearer ?"
 "Nay, do not stay me;
 Parched is my mouth and my throat may
 scarce murmur;

Eyes are half blinded with sunshines' hot
 glitter;
 Brands from the torch, half-consumed,
 drop upon me,
 Quenching their fire in my blood-heated
 boiling,
 Scarcely less hot than the fierce-falling
 embers.
 Breath would scarce serve me to answer
 thy question."

"How fares it, Torchbearer ?"
 "Reeling, I falter.
 Stumbling o'er hillocks that once I
 leaped over;
 Flung by a tangle that once I had
 broken;
 Careless, unheeding, the torch half ex-
 tinguished;
 Fierce, darting pains through the hand
 that upholds it;
 Careless of all, if at last I may yield it
 into the hands of another good runner."

"How fares it, Torchbearer ?"
 "Well, now I fling me
 Flat on the turf by the side of the high-
 way,
 So in one word be thy questionings an-
 swered.
 Praise for my striving ? Peace ! I am
 weary.
 Thou art unwinded; stand, then, and,
 shading
 Eyes with the hand, peer forward, and
 tell me
 How fares the torch in the hands of yon
 runner ?
 Naught do I reckon of my strength gladly
 yielded,
 So it be only the torch goeth onward."
 —Arthur Chamberlain.

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Sunday School Banner

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

TORONTO, NOVEMBER, 1902

The Sunday School Work at the General Conference.

The General Conference devoted much and earnest attention to this important subject. We present the substance of its legislation in the following report. The suggestions of the memorial of the Editor of the Sunday School periodicals were in part adopted and in part answered in a more comprehensive and effective manner. It is true the Sunday School and Epworth League Boards were not separated, but Sunday School topics are to have a whole day for their consideration, and both Epworth Leagues and Sunday Schools will have the benefit of a large and undivided board.

No separate Sunday School Secretary was appointed, but something far better was provided. The four mission super-

intendents and the missionary secretary of the North-West will necessarily give a large amount of their time and care to Sunday School work, which is almost always the pioneer of circuit work. The natural and almost inevitable order is first organize a Sunday School, then gather around that nucleus the membership of a church. This is especially true in the pioneer work of New Ontario and the North-West.

Then the General Conference provided that instead of one special Sunday School Secretary, each Conference employ field help for Sunday School purposes, a travelling secretary or travelling agency of its own, if it wish, or any other means of planting Sunday Schools. There may indeed, be several of these agents, some may be of local character, some may be devout women who have been so successful in organizing Sunday Schools elsewhere. This is the method which has been successfully adopted, as set forth in our memorial, by other churches. The Congregational Church of the United States, for instance, has employed at one time for the last five years from thirty-five to forty-eight Sunday School organizers. The Presbyterian Church of the United States employs ninety-seven missionaries, who organized last year 773 new schools. Such work is far beyond what any Sunday School Secretary or half a dozen of them, could accomplish. Let us learn from those zealous and successful Sunday School workers.

If the appointment of a special Sunday School Secretary were to relieve in the slightest degree the 2,000 pastors and 3,400 superintendents in our schools of their responsibility for Sunday School extension, it would be a disaster and not a benefit. The importance of local initiative to which we referred cannot be too greatly emphasized. The principal thing is to raise funds for the development of this work. Instead of having an income of \$2,644 per year, this sum ought to be raised to \$10,000 a year. This would give a grant of \$25 in books and papers to start four hundred new schools every year, or sixteen hundred in the quadrennium. And this will not overdo the work, for there are 1,169 preaching appointments where there are no schools at all.

The church is undertaking such aggressive missionary operations that it will tax its resources, and it looks especially to the Sunday School Aid and Extension

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Fund for assistance in this great forward movement. Let our schools devise more large and liberal things than they have ever done before, and by God's blessing the quadrennium which has been entered shall be one of unprecedented growth and success.

Epworth League and Sunday School Committee's Report.

Rev. S. J. Elliott presented the report of this committee.

A memorial was received from the Toronto Conference Epworth League Convention, forwarded by the Toronto Conference, asking for the complete separation of the Sunday School and Epworth League Board.

The committee recommended that the board be not separated, but that separate sittings of the board be given to each section of the work.

A memorial, which received the support of the committee, and carried the Conference, urged the importance of Decision Day in Sunday Schools, and more attention to the preparation for it and the following it up systematically.

A memorial from London Conference recommended that a uniform series of catechism questions be published regularly in all our Sunday School publications, and studied in all schools.

This was adopted.

A memorial came up requesting (1) that the Sunday School Committees of Annual Conferences be constituted Standing Committees; (2) that Annual Conferences be permitted to employ field secretaries for Sunday School purposes, who shall be under the control of, and receive their salary from, the Standing Committees of the Conferences they serve.

The first item of the memorial carried, and the second item was also laid on the table for future consideration.

The next clause recommended the preparation and use in all schools of some plan of supplemental Bible study and normal classes. This carried.

The committee proposed the name of Mr. E. S. Caswell as treasurer of Sunday School Aid Fund, vice Warring Kennedy, Esq., resigned. Also, that the hearty

thanks of the Conference be tendered Mr. Kennedy for his faithful services in this connection during the last quarter of a century.

Mr. F. W. Winter moved an amendment to the clause recommending non-concurrence to both separation of boards and of secretarial work. He moved "That a secretary be appointed for Sunday School work alone." The hope of the Methodist Church depended upon the work done among the children to-day. A large and influential gathering of ministers and laymen in Toronto had requested the appointment of such a secretary. For several quadrenniums there had been a steady decrease in the proportion of increase of Sunday School scholars, in spite of the fact that a new department—the Home Department—had been created. Normal classes and good literature for the schools were two important phases of the work that would be greatly benefited by the proposal. The objection was the old bugbear of expense. But the Conference had appointed a secretary for temperance work, and the work of the Sunday Schools was as much more important than this as the heavens were higher than the earth.

Rev. R. N. Burns, B.A., seconded the amendment. The proposal would create two boards and two secretaries. As an illustration of the crowded state of the department at present, the committee bringing in this report had spent all their time so far upon Sunday School work alone. He supported the proposition because it would be likely to produce two boards composed of specialists. It was impossible for Mr. Crews or any other man to do the work of both sections as it should be done. The Sunday School was the greatest work in the church. Nearly every new church commenced with either a class or a small Sunday School. He did not want a man elected to be an ornament, but to get down to the training of teachers and pastors in methods of work. The training of children in temperance was more important than running after the elusive will-o'-the-wisp of temperance legislation.

Rev. S. T. Bartlett represented the majority in the committee who were opposed to the division. They were all equally interested in Sunday School work, and equally seized of the importance of work among the children, but could not see that the change proposed would be

for the best interests of the work. The Sunday School and the Epworth League were interdependent, inseparable, and constantly overlapping each other. What was needed was not more secretaries, but 5,000 pastors and superintendents of schools who were fired with zeal for the salvation of the children. The weakness lay in the Primary Department. The pastors on the circuits, where 1,100 appointments had no Sunday School, needed shaking up.

Wm. Johnston, Esq., superintendent of Bridge Street school, Belleville, supported the report of the committee of which he was chairman. He had come to Conference favoring a separate secretary, but after listening to the arguments in the committee, was convinced that the best plan was to allow each Annual Conference to employ field help for Sunday School purposes. The Book Room should have a field agent of its own, circulating its publications. There should be more sermons re Sunday School work.

J. A. M. Alkins, K.C., was in favor of a separate secretary, who was just as much needed for Sunday Schools as for missions or education. We needed generalship, enthusiasm, and thorough organization. The requisite funds could be raised from the schools themselves, and efficient Sunday School work built up every department of the church's activities.

The vote was taken, resulting in the amendment being defeated by a vote of 120 to 89.

The clauses of the report permitting Conferences to employ field agents, control them through their standing Sunday School Committees, and provide for their salaries, were passed.

Sunday School Libraries.*

BY E. COATSWORTH, JUN.

What is the Sabbath School library for? What do you want to gain for the child? Recreation and instruction are two things we desire to gain. When Sabbath School libraries were established, there were no public libraries, books were comparatively few in number. There have been changes. As I

talked with those who lived in the early part of the past century, they told me that the class of books in the Sabbath School library then was biography, the lives of Christian persons, books calculated to improve and instruct the mind, but a class of books that is not popular with the children.

One thing introduced into the Sabbath School which did not exist years ago is the novel. Christian opinion has undergone very considerable change in regard to what we call the novel. When I was a boy I was not allowed to read novels. Now there are lots of novels in my house, and my children read them, because in the estimation of most people there is a class of novels which are character building and worthy of being read. We believe they make our children better, so that the good novel has been introduced into the Sabbath School library with salutary effect.

We cater in the Sabbath School library to a certain class; the public library caters to an entirely different class, and takes for its guide not merely Christian literature, but also secular literature. I am not prepared to let my boy loose in the public library, but I would do so in the Sabbath school library. When my boy says he is reading a Sabbath School library book I am willing to allow him to read it without investigation. If it is a public library book, I ask the name of the author, and want to see the book, and what is in it before I am content that he should go and read it.

I think the Sabbath School library needs reformation in a good many ways. What can be done to improve it? I will tell you one thing you can do: spend more money on it. I will tell you another thing you can do: spend more time on it. Get the best books. Do not look for bargains. Buy bargains in your bonnets and dresses, and coats and suits, if you like, but do not look for bargains in Sabbath School books. You should not buy more than one book at a time for any Sabbath School library, and that book should be made a matter of prayerful consideration, and should be read by more than one person before you put it into the library.

How about Sabbath reading and week-day reading? I find we have had to introduce into our libraries books that are not Sabbath reading. I see my boy reading a book, and ask what is that book? It is one of Henty's books,

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*Abridged from an address before the Ontario S. S. Association.

"With Buller in Natal." "What are you reading it to-day for?" "I got it out of the Sabbath School library." I think that is a pity. What can I say to him? I have said to him, "I don't think you ought to read those books on the Sabbath." "What will I read?" I think if we are going to preserve the sanctity of the Sabbath as we ought to; if we are going to supply good literature for our children in the Sabbath School, we have to supply literature that cannot properly be read on the Sabbath. I would suggest that on the books of the Sabbath School library there should be placed "Sabbath reading," "week-day reading," so that when the parent looks upon that book there is the certificate of the Sabbath School on the face of it as to whether it may safely be read on the Sabbath, or whether it ought to be read on week-days.

Are we to have magazines in the Sabbath School library? I think we should. Every church has its magazines, and if I had my way I would in our Sabbath School library have a section set apart for magazines. I would place all our church magazines in it; all the Sabbath School periodicals which are not actually given out to the scholars of the school, and I would have the first-class magazines of the day, Scribner's, and magazines of that class, which are of a high order, where you get the best and freshest thoughts and ideas of the present day. I tell you, and it is a surprise to me, that the scholars are beginning to demand them.

What books may be rejected from the library? Here is a point for the librarians. Books that are not inspiring, wishy-washy books. I am glad to know that our children desire to read books in which there is something; I am glad to note the evidence of literary taste. I would give them the best literature from a literary point of view.

What books may be safely taken in? Books such as Ian Maclaren's, "Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush"; many books of Crockett's that might be taken in; books that go to the heart, books that go to the soul, books that go to your life—these are the books that will interest our children. Ralph Connor's "The Sky Pilot," and some of Conan Doyle's books ought to be in our library.

I have always got up from reading Dickens' books feeling myself a better man and inspired to do better things. I

love Dickens' books—and I admire Scott's books, and with certain cautions, taking every individual book on its own merits. I put those books in the hands of my children. They are in my library at home, and they read them just as they choose; I do not think any harm on the whole is going to come from reading Dickens and Scott, although there are some things about Dickens and Scott that I do not like.

What points should be kept in mind in selecting? First, the moral tone of the book; second, the language in the book. If a writer uses profane language in a book, that book should not find its way into the Sabbath School library. The children will learn bad enough language other ways. The spirit and the object of the book should be considered. A book that is character building, that shows a man strong and stalwart; a woman womanly, upright and true and good, is the kind of book I like to see children reading. The Sabbath School library should contain books of history, biography, travel, science, art, philosophy, and stories. I put stories last, although they would stand first in the estimation of the children. There are some beautiful biographies that will interest them. I think the best and purest of Christian literature should be in our libraries even if they are not taken out every Sabbath. The teachers can have them and the scholars may be urged to take them out.

Teacher Training.*

BY REV. A. L. GEGGIE.

That church is wise, and calculated to be strong in every sense which spends its largest energy in (1) discovering the teaching talent and power within her membership, and (2) in training and developing that talent, so that the best use of it may be made.

I am not going to discuss the question of a paid teaching staff in our Sabbath School. I am afraid of that movement, and do not think the best work can thus be done. Since the church's first duty is her ministry to the young, that ministry should be as effective as possible. It is not an optional ministry; it is an

* Abridged from an address before the Ontario S. S. Association.

imperative one, for the future of the church is dependent on its proper performance.

Allow me to indicate a system whereby our teaching staff in the Sabbath School might be aided to do better work. Why should we not have, especially in our centres of population and higher education, properly conducted Sabbath School teachers' institutes? Even in our outlying sections, where the public school system prevails, the idea underlying this of a teachers' institute could be, to a more or less perfect degree, carried out. Why not secure the services of our Public School teachers to give the Sabbath School teachers in the district a few lessons on the elementary principles of pedagogy—the science of teaching. In our larger centres this could be accomplished with very little trouble and expense.

Our Sabbath School teacher is, generally speaking, in earnest; is interested in the work; is faithful in the performance of that work. If there were not holy desires in the heart of the Sabbath School teacher, and high purposes and strong resolve dominating the will, we fear the work would soon be given up, for modern Sabbath School work in itself is not the most encouraging. But the equipment of the teacher as to methods of instruction is defective. Few of our Sabbath School teachers have any knowledge of the science of education, and it is a shame that so little has been done to remedy this weakness. How few of our teachers have acquired the art of—let us say—putting questions? To ask a question properly is a most necessary qualification for a teacher. It is not born with us—it is acquired by us, and when it is acquired we have one of the great secrets of successful teaching. I do not know of any Sabbath School which has given this matter practical consideration. If there should be any such Sabbath School represented at this convention—a school which has tried thus to increase the efficiency of its teaching staff, it would be interesting for us to hear from that school as to the benefits resulting from such effort. I do not think I am outlining a plan which cannot easily be carried out. Surely nothing would be easier than to secure the services of a capable Public School teacher, who would do a little work along the line of teacher training by giving some simple lessons on pedagogy to the

Sabbath School teacher in her own church.

I say simple lessons—a statement of the simpler principles would be most beneficial, and would be all that the ordinary teacher could make use of, and to have these lessons illustrated from time to time by a thoroughly-equipped teacher teaching his or her class in the presence of the other teachers would be equally beneficial and most helpful. This is done regularly in the Public Schools of this city in the Teachers' Annual Conventions. It is practically the method adopted by the Primary Sabbath School teachers of the city.

Now, it is true that teachers are born, not made; but it is equally true that the faculty—the capability of the "born" teacher needs to be developed, educated, trained. Whatever may be said against a staff of paid teachers in our Sabbath Schools, not much can be urged against a paid teacher of teachers, paid if not otherwise available, and it is about time the church stopped securing them on the "cheap." I say, a paid teacher of teachers, whose duty it would be to spend some evenings with the teachers of each Sabbath School and give needed instruction on the principles of the science of education. Surely this work of training teachers to the highest service in the world of learning demands the very best professor of pedagogics we could secure. An expenditure of money for this purpose would be a wise expenditure in our judgment. So much for methods of teaching.

A SUCCESSFUL METHOD.

Will you permit me a few sentences on a method which I have adopted in an effort to solve the problem of teacher supply in our own Sabbath School. We have a school of about sixty teachers. In a school this size there is every Sunday a percentage of absentee teachers, which fact sometimes creates an awkward situation for the superintendent, and a hurtful situation for the school. The Bible class has always been the happy hunting-ground for the superintendent, and young people would be literally dragged out to supply the place of the absent teacher. I sat down to think out the problem, and wrought out a plan which some fortnight afterwards I found was not original, in that it was adopted elsewhere. Hitherto I had selected my own line of study for my Bible class. I

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now began to use the Sabbath School lessons in my class, but a week in advance. I then set to work to secure eighteen young people—members in my class—who would act as substitute teachers. They had no experience, but they were willing to try their hand. These would go, as required, but no teacher would be called upon to teach two Sundays in succession. Hence, whenever a demand was made for a teacher, these substitute teachers were called in turn, and went prepared, since the work of the Bible class on the previous Sabbath had been the work which the Sabbath School would have on the Sabbath on which they taught. Thus, we send out substitute teachers equipped as regards information, and that means a great deal.

Another advantage arises here. You are training teachers for the work of the Sabbath School. The superintendent has the opportunity of discovering among the substitute teachers those who have the faculty of teaching, and when your teacher is discovered your substitute teacher soon willingly—voluntarily, in fact—enters the ranks of the regular staff of the Sabbath School. To such an extent has this taken place with us, that to-day I have scarcely one of my last year's substitute teachers in my Bible class, and I am just now engaged in securing other substitute teachers until the number of eighteen is reached, when I will consider myself sufficiently equipped to meet any reasonable demand made on me by our superintendent.

THE TEACHERS' MEETING.

And then, of course, in this work of teacher training we can never neglect the weekly teachers' meeting, in which the matter to be taught is brought before the teachers. Now, if your Bible class teacher adopts the plan of teaching the lesson of the Sabbath School a week in advance, it is not a difficult task for him to meet with the teachers some evening during the week and go over the lesson with them. This is the plan I have adopted. I am in the habit of meeting with the teachers after prayer-meeting on Wednesday evening.

Now, I know you have your lesson helps and the meaning of the passages to be taught, and the lessons are far better elucidated and enforced by those lesson helps than by any Bible class teacher. But there is something in the meeting together of the teachers and orally ex-

amining the lesson a few evenings before you meet with your scholars. It puts the lesson into your heart and head, and you are in a position to get more during the interval from your own thinking suggested by the expositions at the teachers' meeting; you get something thus that is more useful to you than all the stores of information from leader or commentator—more useful, because it is your own gathered from experience and personal reflection.

Of course, I have gone on the assumption that your teacher is spiritually enlightened. Whatever our intellectual equipment may be and however perfect; however thorough digested our material, however well instructed as to method, there is one equipment without which we absolutely fail—cannot possibly succeed—that equipment of heart and soul through a living acquaintance with Jesus Christ and the illumination of the Holy Spirit. You cannot even understand your text-book, the story you are telling, unless thus it has been unsealed to you as to its meaning by the Holy Spirit, who is the interpreter of all truth.

No teacher can be truly successful in this work who has not an interest in children, amounting almost to a passion. The teacher in the Sabbath School class and the preacher in the pulpit must have a passion for the work in hand—a passion for souls. I know of those teachers and preachers who influenced me in my youth. They were the men and women of passion—those who put blood into their work.

This leads me to the further statement that no teacher can neglect the art of winning persuasion—of

EARNEST ENTREATY.

Questions in the way of imparting instructions are essential, and the art of questioning may well demand great effort to acquire, for this art is worth all our effort; but in the end it is entreaty—pleading—that wins the day. You have questioned your scholar, you have "improved" him. Have you ever "entreated" him? Do you know that art? Does your scholar know of it? Surely with all your training you are not forgetting the art of telling lovingly your scholar of Jesus Christ and all you know about him, and of pleading with your scholar to be true to him? It is the passion of soul, the effort streaked with blood that finishes—completes the whole.

Surprising Figures.*

VERY few people have any fair conception of the influence exerted by the modern Sunday School movement. Indeed, it is very difficult for any one to get such a conception. It is very much like an attempt to measure the strength exerted by nature in the springtime. One may stand and gaze upon the area within the range of his own vision and be much impressed, but an effort to multiply this minute section by a factor which will give the world-over result is bewildering and futile. Nevertheless, the process deepens our impressions and helps toward a deeper reverence for the Source of those immeasurable forces. And so it is when we attempt to measure the intellectual and spiritual forces which are acting with a divine certainty toward the one end of making the "wilderness to blossom as the rose."

We had occasion recently to look into certain questions of publication which resulted in some pleasantly startling figures as to the volume of sacred literature which is constantly finding acceptance and use among the most important persons in the world, considered from a religious standpoint.

Each Sunday School receives each Sabbath its little batch of literature, and it is distributed to the individual and goes into the homes. From the purely local standpoint each distribution seems to be small, but when taken in the aggregate it is a thing to be wondered at, but certainly not to be comprehended.

The number of pages published in The Sunday School Banner for a single year is 14,131,200; pages in Onward, 19,080,000; Pleasant Hours, 12,376,000; Sunbeam, 3,796,000; Happy Days, 3,588,000; Dew Drops, 5,564,000; Berean Senior Quarterly, 2,688,000; Berean Leaf, 3,936,000; Berean Intermediate Quarterly, 3,744,000; Quarterly Review Service, 80,000. The total number of pieces sent out is 10,107,800, and the total number of pages printed is 68,983,200.

There are two very important things to be considered in connection with the issue of this vast volume of religious literature. The first of these is that it is not cast forth as common books are,

* Adapted from The Sunday School Magazine.

to be read or not according to the whim of the book buyer, but it goes into the hands of parents, teachers, and pupils to be used in moderate and always fresh allotments—to be studied and taught, to be impressed by a vast volume of incident and illustration. The second point is that it is brought into contact with the minds and characters of our children and young people at a time when knowledge is most likely to strike in and have a permanent effect upon character.

The above exhibit is a merely denominational view, and thus serves to help one's conception of the vastness of the influence which is being exerted for good through the literature of the modern Bible school.

According to the latest world statistics, there are more than twenty-four millions of people in Sunday School, and we have within our church only about one-third of a million, or one seventy-second of the whole. If now we multiply the figures given above by seventy-two, the numbers are absolutely bewildering.

Magazine and Review for October.

Ten articles in this number are on Canadian subjects, or by Canadian writers. Seven of them are illustrated. "The Crowning of our King," by J. H. Yoxall, M.P.; "Pictures of Foreign Travel," with many fine half-tones, by Samuel H. Pye; "Mission Work on Queen Charlotte Islands," by B. C. Freeman; Dr. Hall, a Canadian Missionary Martyr in Korea, by the Editor; "Canada's Grand old Man," Lord Strathcona; "Victorian Nurses in Canada"; and the romantic story of Gipsy Smith, the last article written by the late Rev. J. C. Seymour. Other articles are: "Our Indian Problem," "Missionary Life in Muskoka," "The Value of Nature Study in Education," by Prof. Fletcher, LL.D., Dominion Entomologist; "John Ruskin on Holiness," "Phemie," a touching story by Pastor Felix, and Current Topics and Religious Intelligence copiously illustrated. A new serial story, by Frank T. Bullen, the famous writer of sea tales, is announced. New subscribers will receive the November and December numbers free.

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

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the following:
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What We License.

Here is a Scene which shows the Heart of the Gin Mill once more. It has no mild way for the Fair Sex, as you might think, but acts the Brute to all, when its Will is set at naught. Here



you see the Gin Mill Man, and how he deals with the Wife of the Man who drinks at his Bar. The poor Wife calls to plead with him not to sell Drink to the Man, for he is a Slave to the Cup, and spends all he earns, so that his House is a mean, poor place, bare of all that makes a Home. This Plea would touch the Heart of a Stone, one would think. But it does not move the Heart of the Rum Trade. With a Scowl the Gin Mill Man bids her be gone. He points to the Wall, on which hangs a large card in a Frame, with a seal to it. "That," says he, "is my Shield. It is the Stamp of the Law which gives me the right to sell Rum, and I will sell to whom I please. Get out of here, or I will throw you out!"—From the "Gin Mill Primer," by J. W. Bengough. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, 25 cents.

His One Talent Improved.

In his exposition of a recent Sunday School lesson in the London Methodist Times, the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse relates the following:

"The power is of the heart more than of the head. Away down in Kent some time ago I spoke to a man standing at the door. 'I am very glad you shook

hands with that man,' said my friend; 'he hasn't sense enough to get his living, he is just able to turn the mangle for his mother, but he does a lot of good. The other day I was preaching in his village, and he came to tell me he was sorry that he couldn't hear me that evening. I asked him why he could not come, and he said, "You see, there are lots of mothers here who cannot get out to any place because they have no one to look after the children. And I have been round and asked them to send the children all up to me and I would sing to them and take care of them for an hour so that they could be at the service."'"

A Bait to Catch Fools.

Is this the Gin Mill Man with a Fish Pole. Yes. Do you see the kind Smile he wears? He looks like that 'cause his Heart is so full of Love to the Fish he wants to catch. This is the Gin Mill Man's Free Lunch Scheme that fools lots of Folks. It looks so kind and good of him to have Free Food in his Bar, and some say the Trade can not be so ill when it is so kind to the Poor. Ah, my Child, it is all a trick. The Lunch is Free, but if a poor Man goes Day by Day to take a bite, who does not call for a Drink once in a while, you will find out



how sweet the Gin Mill Man is. The Lunch is his Bait to catch the Fish, that is all. He is full of Guile, and I tell you once more the Trade is a hard, vile Fiend, that just wears a Mask.—From the "Gin Mill Primer," by J. W. Bengough. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, 25 cents.

Spirit Vision.

BY LLEWELLYN A. MORRISON.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

The spirit hath windows, and out of these
My spirit, within, doth her seeing;
The measure and tone of the vision she
sees

Depend on this sequence of being.

The Ego of me, like the seed in the core—
The breath of the Lord did begin it—

Hath life, the pure essence immortals
adore,

Abiding, Creator, within it.

God knoweth, I know—He loveth, I love,—
He doeth, and I do,—in measure;

My kinship to him by these powers I
prove;

Through them I see him, by his plea-
sure.

The highest I know is the highest to God;
Thence viewing, my spirit discerneth
The light impeari'd lands but by Seraphim
trod;

For broader inspection she yearneth.

I see what God doeth by that which I do;
Sin seareth conception to dim it,
And fettered the finite conditions below
I comprehend but to my limit,—

But O! When I love him the windows
come clear,—

The visions enlarge and extend;
His Son is my Brother, his heaven is
near,

And God is my Father and Friend.

Toronto, 1902.

"Seven Sayings of Jesus."

The "Sayings of Our Lord," discovered and translated by Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt for the Egypt Exploration Fund, was published in 1897 by the Fund, and are as follows:

" . . . and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye."

"Jesus saith, Except ye fast to the world, ye shall in no wise find the kingdom of God; and except ye keep the Sabbath, ye shall not see the Father."

"Jesus saith, I stood in the midst of the world, and in the flesh was I seen of them, and I found all men drunken, and none found I athirst among them, and my soul grieveth over the sons of

men, because they are blind in their heart"

The fourth "saying" cannot be deciphered.

"Jesus saith, Wherever there are . . . and there is one . . . alone, I am with him. Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me, cleave the wood and there am I."

"Jesus saith, A prophet is not acceptable in his own country, neither doth a physician works cures upon them that know him."

"Jesus saith, A city built upon the top of a high hill, and established, can neither fall nor be hid."

The eighth "saying" cannot be deciphered.

Professor John H. Bernard contributes an able article on the "Logia" in The Sunday School Times for August 7, 1897, and discussed the authenticity of the sayings, and stated that the collection "is strikingly like and strikingly unlike the Gospels."—S. S. Times.

Book Review.

"The Illustrative Lesson Notes." A Guide to the Study of the International Sunday School Lessons, with Original and Selected Comments, Methods for Teachers and Plans for Teaching, Lesson Homilies with Analyses, Salient Points and Practical Applications, Studies of the Golden Texts, Illustrative Incidents and Observations, Notes on Eastern Life, References to Helpful Books, Maps, Tables, Pictures, and Diagrams, for 1903. By the Rev. T. B. Neely, D.D., LL.D., and R. R. Doherty, Ph.D. New York: Eaton & Mains. Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye. Toronto: Williams Briggs. Price, \$1.25.

The Illustrative Lesson Notes for 1903 is already in hand, a goodly octavo of 400 pages. It is better than ever, more and superior illustrations and lesson notes, everything that could be desired. We have used this series of notes for many years, and can find nothing better on the Sunday School lessons.

A High-Class Magazine.

The September number of The Methodist Magazine and Review is an exceptionally strong number of that old and popular periodical. The continued suc-

cess of this possible in a been due to worth. A have made is denomina articles on Lord Salisbury State at Cairo of the Emp others will by Dr. W. H. Wm. Briggs, vocate.

New Use for

A new and Paraffin Wax covered by a

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Lesson 1. Oct. 1-11. Commit vs. 1. 2. Oct. 12.—Cru Study Josh. 3: 1 to 6: 12.) G passed through t through the rivers, 3. Oct. 19.—Th Study Josh. 6: 3-13 to 11: 23.) G of Jericho fel 4. Oct. 26.—Jos Commit vs. 12-14. 1-24.) GOLDEN T the Lord. 5. Nov. 2.—CIVIL vs. 1-4. (Read Pa is our refuge and trouble. 6. Nov. 9.—Josh Commit vs. 14, 15. TEXT: Josh. 24: 15 serve. 7. Nov. 16.—T Study Judg. 2: 7-11.) GOLDEN the Lord in their their distresses.

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cess of this periodical shows what is possible in Canada; but its success has been due to intrinsic literary and pictorial worth. A careful examination which we have made of many issues shows that it is denominational in name only. The articles on Hatfield House (the home of Lord Salisbury), Mr. Balfour, "Lying in State at Cairo," Sydney Lanier, the Future of the Empire, Current Questions and others will attract attention. It is edited by Dr. W. H. Withrow, and published by Wm. Briggs, Toronto, Ont.—Farmer's Advocate.

New Use for Refined Paraffine Wax.

A new and important use for Refined Paraffin Wax seems to have been discovered by a prominent resident of Ohio,

living near Lancaster, who had two trees badly damaged by storm, one being a maple and the other an apple. In each case a large limb was broken down from the trunk, but still attached to it. The limbs were propped up and fastened securely with straps, very much as a broken leg might be fastened with splints, and then melted refined wax poured into and over all the cracks. The "surgical operation" was entirely successful. The paraffine prevented the escape of the sap, kept out the rain and moisture which would have rotted the trees, prevented the depredations of insects, and the limbs seem thus far to be perfectly re-attached to the trees.

A spider never finds any honey in a flower.

LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS—FOURTH QUARTER.

Studies in the Old Testament from Moses to Samuel.

Lesson 1. Oct. 5.—**JOSHUA ENCOURAGED.** Josh. 1: 1-11. **Commit vs.** 8, 9. (Read Josh, chs. 1, 2.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Josh. 1: 9. Be strong and of a good courage.

2. Oct. 12.—**CROSSING THE JORDAN.** Josh. 3: 9-17. Study Josh. 3: 9 to 4: 7. **Commit vs.** 15-17. (Read Josh. 3: 1 to 5: 13.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Isa. 43: 2. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.

3. Oct. 19.—**THE FALL OF JERICHO.** Josh. 6: 12-20. Study Josh. 6: 8-20. **Commit v.** 20. (Read Josh. 5: 13 to 11: 23.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Heb. 11: 30. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down.

4. Oct. 26.—**JOSHUA AND CALER.** Josh. 14: 5-15. **Commit vs.** 12-14. (Read Josh. chs. 14 and Num. 14: 1-24.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Josh. 14: 14. He wholly followed the Lord.

5. Nov. 2.—**CITIES OF REFUGE.** Josh. 20: 1-9. **Commit vs.** 1-4. (Read Psa. 46.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Psa. 46: 1. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

6. Nov. 9.—**JOSHUA'S PARTING ADVICE.** Josh. 24: 14-25. **Commit vs.** 14, 15. (Read Josh. 21: 43 to 24: 33.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Josh. 24: 15. Choose you this day whom ye will serve.

7. Nov. 16.—**THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.** Judg. 2: 7-16. Study Judg. 2: 7-19. **Commit vs.** 18, 19. (Read Judg. chs. 2-5.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Psa. 107: 19. They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses.

Lesson 8. Nov. 23.—**WORLD'S TEMPERANCE LESSON.** Isa. 28: 1-7. Study Isa. 28: 1-13. **Commit v.** 7. (Read Isa. 28.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Isa. 28: 7. They also have erred through wine.

9. Nov. 30.—**GIBSON AND THE THREE HUNDRED.** Judges 7: 1-8. Study Judg. 7: 1-8, 16-21. **Commit vs.** 19-21. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Ps. 118: 8. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.

10. Dec. 7.—**RUTH AND NAOMI.** Ruth 1: 16-22. **Commit vs.** 16, 17. (Read Ruth chs. 1-4.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** ROUL. 12: 10. Be kindly affectioned one to another.

11. Dec. 14.—**THE BOY SAMUEL.** 1 Sam. 3: 6-14. Study 1 Sam. 3: 1-14. **Commit vs.** 7-10. (Read 1 Sam. chs. 1-3.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Sam. 3: 9. Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.

12. Dec. 21.—**SAMUEL THE JUDGE.** 1 Sam. 7: 2-13. **Commit vs.** 8-10. (Read 1 Sam. chs. 4, 7.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** 1 Sam. 7: 3. Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only.

Or, CHRISTMAS LESSON. Luke 2: 8-20. **Commit vs.** 10, 11. (Read Isa. 9: 1-7; Heb. 1.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Luke 2: 11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

13. Dec. 28.—**REVIEW.** Commit the Golden Texts for the Quarter. Read Lessons for the Quarter. **GOLDEN TEXT:** Psa. 90: 1. Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

ORDER OF SERVICES—FOURTH QUARTER.

OPENING SERVICE.

I. SILENCE.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psa. 145, 8: 10, 17-21.)

SUPT. The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

SCHOOL. The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

SUPT. All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.

SCHOOL. The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

SUPT. The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

SCHOOL. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

SUPT. The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.

SCHOOL. My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

III. SINGING.

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

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

VI. SINGING.

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. SINGING.

II. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (Psa. 34, 8, 19.)

SUPT. O taste and see that the LORD is good.

SCHOOL. Blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

SUPT. Many are the afflictions of the righteous:

SCHOOL. But the LORD delivereth him out of them all.

International Bible Lessons.

FOURTH QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

LESSON V. Cities of Refuge.

Nov. 2.

GOLDEN TEXT. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psa. 46. 1.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Psa. 46.]

Lev. 20. 1-9.

[Commit to memory verses 1-4.]

1 The LORD also spake unto Josh'u-a, saying,

2 Speak to the children of Is'ra-el, saying, Appoint out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Mo'ses:

3 That the slayer that killeth any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

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

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbor unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7 And they appointed Ke'desh in Gal'i-lee in mount Nap'h'ta-li, and She'chem in mount E'phra-im, and Kir'jath-ar'ba, which is He'bron, in the mountain of Ju'dah.

8 And on the other side of Jor'dan by Jer'i-cho eastward, they appointed Be'zer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reu-ben, and Ra'moth in Gil'e-ad out of the tribe of Gad, and Go'lan in Ba'shan out of the tribe of Ma-nas'seh.

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

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

1 And Jehovah spake unto Joshua, saying, 2 Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Assign you the cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by Moses; 3 that the manslayer that killeth any person unwittingly and unawares may flee thither: and they shall be unto you for a refuge from the avenger of blood. 4 And he shall flee unto one of those cities, and shall stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city; and they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. 5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver up the manslayer into his hand; because he smote his neighbor unawares, and hated him not beforetime. 6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the manslayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7 And they set apart Kedesh in Galilee in the hill-country of Naphtali, and Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba (the same is Hebron) in the hill-country of Judah. 8 And beyond the Jordan at Jericho eastward they assigned Bezer in the wilderness in the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead one of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh. 9 These were the appointed cities for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person unwittingly might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

* The American Revision, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

Nov. 2.]

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Time.—B. C. 1444. **Place.**—Shiloh, the place of the tabernacle.

Home Readings.

- M.* Cities of Refuge. Josh. 20. 1-9.
Tu. Cities of the Levites. Num. 35. 1-15.
W. The command by Moses. Deut. 19. 1-13.
Th. A safe refuge. 2 Sam. 22. 1-20.
F. Christ a Refuge. Matt. 11. 25-30.
S. Strong and sure. Heb. 6. 13-20.
S. A refuge for me. Psa. 91.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 50.

Oh, safe to the Rock that is higher than I,
 My soul in its conflicts and sorrows would fly;
 So sinful, so weary, thine, thine would I be;
 Thou blest "Rock of Ages," I'm hiding in thee.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 45.

Jesus, Lover of my soul,
 Let me to thy bosom fly,
 While the nearer waters roll,
 While the tempest still is high;
 Hide me, oh, my Saviour, hide,
 Till the storm of life be past;
 Safe into the haven guide,
 Oh, receive my soul at last!

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 44.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in thee;
 Let the water and the blood,
 From thy wounded side which flowed,
 Be of sin the double cure,
 Save from wrath and make me pure.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

- Cities of Refuge Ordered.*
 Of whom did Joshua receive the command to select cities of refuge?
 Who were to select them?
 Had any been appointed before this time?
 On which side of the Jordan were those which Moses named?
 What two kinds of murder were to be punished with death?
 For whose benefit was this provision of refuge made?
 Under what condition was the slayer admitted to a city of refuge?
 Under whose care were these cities placed?
 How long could the slayer of another remain in the city of refuge?

2. Cities of Refuge Selected.

- How many cities did the Israelites set apart?
 How were they located?
 Were the gates ever closed?
 Who tried the cases which came up to the cities of refuge?
 For what ideas did the whole sacrificial system stand?
 Who shared with the Israelites the refuge of these cities?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

- How to Enter the City of Refuge* (verses 1-5).
 Who first ordered the appointment of cities of refuge?
 What had been the custom of dealing with one who slew another?
 Would all murderers escape punishment by running into a city of refuge?
 Upon what condition would anyone be protected?
 Who tried the accused murderer there?
 Who would execute him if guilty?
- How Long He Might Remain* (verse 6).
 Was a home provided for the man who accidentally killed another?
 How long could he remain there?
 What suggestion in the death of the high priest for us?
 Why was he detained at all if innocent?
 Does our law in America punish in any way an accidental killing of another?
 What distinction does our law make between first degree, second degree, and other grades of killing?
- Which are the Cities?* (verses 7-9).
 Why were so many cities appointed?
 How were they distributed in the land?
 What helps to the fleeing man were provided?
 What helps are provided to reach our Refuge?
 What kinds of guilt may we be saved from?
 Is the distinction of motive still binding?
 What difference does intention make?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

- Who told Joshua to appoint cities of refuge?
The Lord.
 Whom had he told before? *Moses.*
 Where do we read about this? *Deut. 19. 4-6.*
 What is a city of refuge? *A city to run to in time of trouble.*
 Who was the "avenger of blood"? *One who was brother or friend of a man who had been killed.*

What did he do? *He ran after the murderer to kill him.*

What often happened? *That a man had been killed by accident.*

What could the man who had killed him then do? *Run to a city of refuge.*

How long could he live there? *Until his case could be tried.*

How many cities of refuge were appointed? *Six.*

Can you name any of them?

Have we a city of refuge? *Yes.*

Where? *In the Lord Jesus Christ.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. For whom were the cities of refuge appointed? *For the innocent slayer of man.*

2. From whom was the innocent manslayer to find refuge? *From the avenger of blood.*

3. How long was he to remain in the city? *Until the death of the high priest.*

4. How many cities of refuge were chosen? *Six; three each side of the Jordan.*

5. Who is our Refuge? *Christ.*

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"God is our refuge," etc.*

The Courca Catechism.

82. What shall be the end of the wicked? *The end of the wicked shall be eternal separation from God, in an estate of eternal sin, which is eternal death and misery.*

Matthew 25. 41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

Mark 3. 29.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

"Other Refuge Have I None."

I. GOD'S JUSTICE IS A TERROR TO THE EVIL-DOER.

He that doth flee. v. 4.

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

Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom. 7. 24.

II. THE SOUL'S SAFETY IS IN GOD.

God is our refuge. (GOLDEN TEXT.)

I, even I, am he that comforteth you; who art thou that thou art afraid? Isa. 51. 12.

In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. Psa. 56. 4.

III. GOD IS MERCIFUL AND CONSIDERATE.

They shall give him a place. v. 4.

The Lord is gracious and full of compassion. . . . and of great mercy. Psa. 145. 8.

Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy. Psa. 86. 5.

IV. GOD'S MERCY REACHES ALL MANKIND.

For all Israel and for the stranger. v. 9.

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

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Psa. 98. 3.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The division of Canaan among the Twelve Tribes is described in Joshua, chapters 13 to 19 inclusive. An interesting parenthesis telling of Caleb's claim to Hebron was studied last Sunday. An appendix of even greater interest records the appointment of six cities of refuge. This we study to-day. The teacher should master the chapters between the last lesson and this. To a careless glance they present little more than a list of towns, mounts, and fountains, with difficult names, to be looked up in a biblical dictionary; but when read aright lines of interest run out from them to almost every part of divine revelation. A study of the cities of refuge, though not so promising a lesson as some, will bring forward topics of fresh and peculiar interest. In the institution of these asylums the student of human life and civilization will see the precursor of many modern judicial methods, including trial by jury; the student of geography notes how impartially distributed these six cities were; while the student of religious typology finds in them a singularly attractive symbol of our soul's refuge, the Lord Jesus Christ. It would require few omissions from our familiar hymn, "Jesus, Lover of my soul," to make it a perfect expression of the mingled apprehension and hope with which the manslayer approached the city of refuge. There are other points of view, and varied treatments might be suggested, but for the average Sunday school class the best method is to give whatever historic and geographic facts are necessary for an intelligent understanding of the text, and then

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to present the spiritual dangers of sin and the abundant provisions made by God for salvation. Thus treated there is abundant opportunity for picturesque description, while every part of the lesson will be found to lead to Christ.

Verses 1-3. The enactment here repeated is given in full in Num. 35, 6, 9-34. (See also Deut. 4, 43.) Like most of the laws of the Hebrews, it is attributed directly to the Lord ["Jehovah"]. Before this time the vendetta or "blood feud," the maintenance of murderous vengeance through generations, had almost universally prevailed; and even in this nineteenth century of our Lord's grace, sad to say, it is not quite extinct. God here, while maintaining the principle of "life for life," substitutes justice for revenge, and, so far as Israel is concerned, does away with the blood feud and modifies the institution of blood ransom. The traditional law of the Semitic race (which included the Hebrews) gave each nearest relative the right to assume that a killing was a murder, and to take prompt vengeance. *Cities of refuge* were really "cities of admission" or "reception"—cities where the alleged criminals were to be protected until fairly tried. For the simple phrase *manslayer* a modern writer would use "homicide," and for *unawares*, "unintentionally." Instead of *uncittingly* the margin of the Revision reads, "through error."

4, 5. We should be careful to contrast the methods of justice which we are now to study not with methods now prevailing (though these are far from ideal), but with the barbaric vengeance which the cities of refuge superseded. *When he that doth flee* is changed by the Revision into "He shall flee." So well distributed were these cities within the narrow boundaries of the Holy Land that from no scene of murder or accident would the "manslayer" have many miles to run. So opportunities for spiritual salvation are always present: "What saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart." (Compare Deut. 30, 11-14 with Rom. 10, 6-10.) Bright pupils will object that the man near the city and the fastest runner had unfair advantage. This is true; and such inequality of opportunity is never wholly avoidable in this world's affairs. Even in modern jurisprudence reputation, wealth, political influence, and able legal support not infrequently cause justice to miscarry. Three thousand years have shifted a little the advantage from the physical realm to the intellectual, but there are still, and inevitably must be, unfairnesses in the best-regulated legal system. But in repentance and in faith the "moral soul" has no advantage over

the hereditary sinner. It is by divine help only that this race can be run, and divine help is offered equally to all. Once safe within the walls the Hebrew refugee was to *stand at the entering* ["entrance"] of the gate of the city, in the plaza where judges usually sat. To *declare his cause* was to make his statement, to give his account of the calamity. Having heard this story, and doubtless having put it upon record, the *elders*, or judges, assigned him a home in the city, and in the simple civic conditions of that time it would not be difficult to "secure employment," and to settle into an appropriate place in the city's life. Before this law was enacted if the *avenger of blood* should overtake the refugee, even after he had found a temporary home, men would have believed it to be their religious duty to deliver him up for revenge; but now all this is prohibited *because* (according to the story of the culprit, which is to be accepted until disproved) *he smote his brother uncittingly* ["unawares"], and *hated him not beforetime*. But this refuge did not benefit the intentional murderer. When the case was tried "before the congregation" (verse 9) if the accused was found guilty he was capitally punished, "blood for blood." In this way the great principle was established that it was not the murdered man chiefly who had been injured, not even his family, but his God, in whose image this man had been created (Gen. 9, 5, 6). The real avenger of blood, therefore, is God (Psa. 9, 13; 2 Chron. 24, 22). No ransom could make amends for murder (Num. 35, 31); not even the altar of God was an asylum for the man who intentionally slew another (Exod. 21, 14); and until his crime was properly avenged the land itself was defiled (Num. 35, 33). The city of refuge existed, therefore, to distinguish between premeditated and unintentional homicide; for it was a refuge not for the guilty, but for the innocent. With this God's plan of salvation is in direct and most merciful contrast.

All the souls by sin oppressed,
The restless wanderers after rest,

are welcomed to the Refuge of souls. It is not the righteous, but sinners that Jesus came to save.

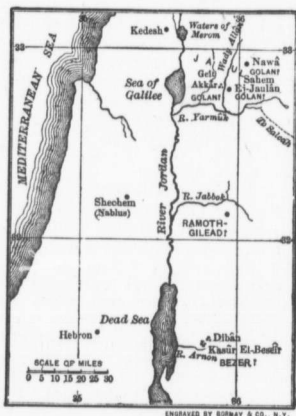
6. Decision is delayed until the refugee stand before the congregation for judgment,

that is, until his accusers have time to array all their evidence against him. Once freed from the stigma of murder we might expect that he would be permitted to return home. But not so. He must even then remain within the suburbs of the city until the death of the high priest. This requirement bound his life up with the intricate system of divine worship, so that thenceforth that life became in a sense holy; God himself became responsible for it, and later vengeance was out of the question.

7, 8. Next comes the list of the six cities, and the best comment on them is made by our outline map. Appointed reads "set apart" in the American Revision, and "sanctified" in the margin. The first three cities mentioned are west of the Jordan. *Kedesh* is in the extreme northern part, in what was afterward known as *Galilee*, *Shechem*, in the middle, and *Kirjath-arba*, or *Hebron*, in the south. The descriptions of them in the text have to do with their tribal relations, *Naphtali*, *Ephraim*, and *Judah*. The Jordan, unfordable in so many places, would have been an unsurmountable obstacle in the way of the pursued, and therefore three cities were also selected on the eastern side of the river. Beginning with the south, almost directly across the Dead Sea from Hebron is *Bezer* on the "table-land of the tribe of Reuben." Its site is not certain, but is approximately indicated on the map. *Ramoth in Gilead* (*Gad*) is almost directly east from Shechem, while *Golan in Bashan* (*Manasseh*)

served for the people in the northeastern extremity of the land.

9. The liberality of the Hebrew law is



shown by the extension of the privilege of cities of refuge to the stranger that sojourneth among Israel, so that no one who killed another person without intention should die by the hand of the avenger of blood until he stood before the congregation.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The city of refuge was part of a tragedy. This we must not forget. Behind the refugee lay a man stained with blood, eyes wide open, staring, sightless, hands limp, purposeless, incompetent, heart with never a throb of love or hate, and (if the dead man had lovers, as we may pray he had, seeing any life which is loverless is worse than dead) a woman and a child calling him by sweet, endearing names again and again and yet again, and weeping kisses down upon his face, frequent as the rain, and caressing his limp hands, stiffening now, moaning some ineffectual story of tender remembrance—that is the tragedy behind the refugee. We must not forget the dead man in our sympathy for the living man. That fleet-footed refugee is running wild with haste from a man who is sunk in the languorous sleep of death, and at his hands. Life is no light thing to take. It is the supreme mystery of

this world; and next to life is death the mystery of mysteries. God will do nothing to diminish man's regard, man's holy regard, for the sacredness of life. Rest sure of that. If God cares for the living man he no less cares for the dead man. God will not let his legislation cheapen life. He is too good, too fair, too true to all involved for such a breach of faith. Every man's treasure of treasures is his life. With that he is rich; without that he is beggared. God is not sentimental but fair. That is a wise suggestion he makes to us. Many of us are sentimental and not fair. We favor the murderer and forget the murdered. Not so with our God. His legislation is no plea for sentimentality, no protective union for murder, but is a provision of safety for him who with only good intent by some mistake of the dead man or the living has become the unintentional slayer. God grounds everything,

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For willful r code the punishr ably needs no r maintain the sal the law-abiding diligent man. interests, and sh fended. Laxity murderer leads to the communi every law-abidin death penalty is est protective t murderer. God, refuge is not a derer, or restrai deserving death sentimentalist is word must be v every scholar. be an aider of la fulness.

The city of re mob violence. T anyone nearest inflict death on was a primitive f It recognized the life and that his value than the li then in vogue, justice (which, tice) is a necessi men. They kne session and murt But all the ques blood was that man's hands. H man was killed. He was a mob p ointed executio The city of refu pose not of shielo tecting an innoc guaranteed a tri on trial at the g found he was a v was no refuge fo tice, but again

then and now, in intent. Not, Did a man do a given thing? but Did a man mean to do a given thing? is always God's question; and that notion has gradually crept into the codes of the world, but was not native to them. Here is an item well worth the study of lovers of God and human law. The intent is what is now of supreme importance.

For willful murder God had placed in his code the punishment of death. That code probably needs no revision to this hour. We must maintain the safety of the life of the good man, the law-abiding man, the useful, temperate, diligent man. His interests are the sacred interests, and should be so conceived and so defended. Laxity in meting out justice to the murderer leads to mob violence or to damage to the community safety and to the safety of every law-abiding, quiet, upright citizen. The death penalty is probably still the wisest, fairest protective to society against the willful murderer. God, therefore, in creating cities of refuge is not attempting to shield the murderer, or restrain the death penalty from one deserving death. In our times, when the sentimentalist is so rampant and senseless, this word must be underscored in the thought of every scholar. The city of refuge was not to be an aider of lawlessness, but an aider of lawfulness.

The city of refuge was to be a hinderer of mob violence. The old avenger of blood was anyone nearest of kin whose office it was to inflict death on the inflicter of death. This was a primitive form of justice, just in its way. It recognized that the dead man had right to life and that his life, on the face, was of more value than the life of his slayer. Law was not then in vogue. Where there is no law a rude justice (which, of course, is frequently injustice) is a necessity. The sense of right was in men. They knew life was the precious possession and must not be dealt with lightly. But all the question raised by the avenger of blood was that his relative was dead at this man's hands. He did not inquire whether the man was killed in self-defense or by mistake. He was a mob of one man. He was self-appointed executioner, judge, jury, law code. The city of refuge God appointed for the purpose not of shielding a guilty man, but of protecting an innocent man. The city of refuge guaranteed a trial. It guaranteed justice. If on trial at the gate and within the gate it was found he was a willful murderer, then the city was no refuge for him. God is for law and justice, but against mob violence and blind

slaughter. This lesson, coming to this present out of this dim past, is a needful and helpful contribution to the conduct of our day.

There were enough cities of refuge and they were accessible. God is *thoughtful*. I love that consideration. He is considerate. These cities were convenient, three on one side of Jordan, three on the other, and as nearly as could be conceived equidistant north and south. A good runner could have reached one or another of these cities before his breath was spent. They were good runners in those days. When everybody walked a goodly number could run, like Asahel. Probably it was not more than twenty-five miles from anybody to a refuge city. God is thoughtful and God is practical. How good that is! Some people are thoughtful but not practical, like those who make tides and put them on chairs. Some are practical and not thoughtful. They have a metallic way of doing things. God is thoughtful *and* practical, which offers a hint to us of how we may be like. There is this happy medium; and it is attainable.

Christ is our city of refuge. He is the *door*. In those dead days the death of the high priest was sign of the man's leave of absence from the city of refuge, but in our days the *life* of our High Priest is our freedom. In Christ we "go in and out and find pasture."

The city of refuge gave deliverance for the unfortunate man, but not for the wicked man. Our City of Refuge, whose name is Christ, gives refuge for both the unfortunate and the wicked. This is a wide door surely. The mistaken man or woman comes to find Christ the Refuge, and the wicked man or woman comes to find he is a propitiation for his sins. Christ gives refuge to us wicked not by demolishing or overlooking law, not by denying that we have sinned, as the foolish do, but by asserting our sin, and himself tasting death for every man, so that God may be justifier of the wicked and himself be justified. For this unspeakable gift (high beyond word and thought) bless thou, my soul, the living God!

O Refuge City of the weary, wounded, disconsolate, mistaken, and sinning soul with sins as scarlet, so that no fuller on earth can white them, keep thy wide, blessed door open for us all the day and all the night, lest our mistakes and wickednesses overtake us and we die!

Thoughts for Young People.

THE SACREDNESS OF HUMAN LIFE.

1. *God has fixed deep in the heart of normal man respect for human life. The savage cus-*

tom of blood vengeance, atrociously unfair and harmful as it was, shows the deep reverence that the moral sense of humanity has always held for life. He who strikes at the life of the individual strikes at the life of the whole community.

2. *God has revealed in his word a clearer understanding of the sacredness of human life by his command in Genesis, "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed,"* and by the repeated legal enactments in Exodus and Numbers.

3. *God has revealed the deeper truth that murder is a thing of the heart.* Not the killing, but the intent to kill, is the real crime; and Gospel teaching goes farther yet in the startling declaration that "He that hateth his brother is a murderer."

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

PRELIMINARY.

The study and teaching outline adopted for the quarter will be continued during this month, namely:

HISTORY.
ENVIRONMENT.
RECORD.
OBJECT ILLUSTRATION.
EMPHASIZED TRUTH.
STUDY IN ADVANCE.

HISTORY.

The teacher should read the chapters omitted between to-day's lesson and that for last week, and should give briefly the links connecting the two narratives.

Time. Date, uncertain, about the same as for the last lesson.

Place. Shiloh, seventeen miles northwest of Jerusalem, the religious capital of Israel.

ENVIRONMENT.

RECORD.

Instead of questioning on the lesson text the teacher should get it well in mind, and may then teach the truths that it brings to our attention by a series of three pictures:

1. *An unintentional murder.* Picture a man who kills another by accident. For example: Last year two friends were in the Adirondack mountains hunting. They became separated. One of them seeing something moving in the distance, and supposing it to be the deer which they were after, fired. Imagine his horror on

discovering that he had killed his friend! It is not difficult to conceive of something similar happening in the time of Joshua.

2. *A man fleeing.* Picture a man running for his life with a crowd following in the distance. This man has accidentally killed another, and his pursuers are those who, according to the rude custom of the times, think that they must avenge the death of their kinsman by slaying his murderer.

3. *A city of refuge.* Picture the man entering the city, and describe how he is safe as soon as he is behind the walls.

Ask the pupils to show their maps, and see that they have located properly the six cities of refuge. Then get two or three pupils to tell just why the cities were established.

OBJECT ILLUSTRATION.

As it will be difficult to get an object suitable for illustration, the following ingenious arrangement of the meaning of the names of the cities of refuge is presented. In it the cities are made to prefigure Christ. It was called to the attention of the writer several years ago:

HEBRON — COMMUNION.
KEDESH — HOLINESS.
RAMOTH — REST.
BEZER — INVINCIBILITY.
SHECHEM — STRENGTH.
GOLAN — TRUE JOY.

EMPHASIZED TRUTH.

Ask for the Golden Text. After it has been repeated by several endeavor to ascertain whether the pupils understand its meaning. From his personal experience the teacher should be prepared to show how the Lord is the Refuge, Strength, and Help of all those who trust in him. Have selections read from Psa. 46. After the available time has been spent on this have the pupils print:

I WILL GO TO GOD AS

MY CITY OF REFUGE.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

As next Sunday is the last one in which we have to do with Joshua as the principal character, ask the pupils to prepare a wooden or pasteboard monument to Joshua, on which they shall print his name and the chief traits of his character. (See HINTS on Lesson XII of the last quarter.)

Review word "Refuge."

The right stood Israel. Its sacred earliest mar shall not ki ratio with t Aristotle an death the y Seneca advi den—a co themism sho suicide.—D.

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By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM. •

The right to life. Alone among the nations stood Israel in the value set upon human life. Its sacred book enjoined its worth. From the earliest martyr the precept was given, "Thou shalt not kill." The value of life increases in ratio with the belief in God and immortality. Aristotle and Plato both advised putting to death the young and sickly among children. Seneca advised the drowning of disabled children—a course that Cicero commended. Heathenism shows a dark picture of murder and suicide.—*D. O. Mears.*

The manslayer had not far to go. Some city was always near to him. So the sinner has not far to go to get pardon. In India they teach that you must go to distant shrines to be absolved from your sins, and on this account men and women journey hundreds of miles to get that for which their souls long. But the sinner who wants the pardon of God need not "go" anywhere. He can have it just where he is. In a meeting recently where I took the topic, "How I found the Saviour," an old gentleman said that he found his Lord one night in Washington Square, New York city, as he was going home from business. He made up his mind as he was crossing the square that he would flee to him and find rest, and he did. So, many men could bear witness that it is never far from where they are to Jesus.—*A. F. Schaeffler.*

The motive is of supreme importance in determining the nature of an act. In God's sight, a deed is done when it is determined on, and it is not done, though done, when it was not meant by the doer. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer," and he that killeth his brother unawares is not. What, then, of our thoughts and desires which never come to light in acts? Do we recognize our criminality in regard to these as vividly as we should? A man may break all the commandments sitting in an easy chair and doing nothing.

Von Moltke fought the Austro-Prussian War in his cabinet in Berlin, bending over maps. The soldiers on the field were but pawns in the dreadful game. So our battles are waged, and we are beaten or conquerors on the field of our inner desires and purposes. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."—*A. McLaren.*

The refuge is only for those who seek it. It was not enough that the cities of refuge were appointed and made known; that the roads to them were well laid, and were kept in constant

repair; that at every turn the guideposts pointed the way with the cheering word "Refuge!" "Refuge!" Unless he who fled from the avenger of blood set his face toward one of these cities and sought it as for his life; unless he reached its very gate and supplicated admission there because his life was imperiled, there was no safety for him in those cities. His peril was the same as if no city of refuge had ever been designated for the hunted fugitive. And so it is with every imperiled soul to-day. God's refuge is only for those who seek it. It is not enough for you to know that there is such a refuge. It is not enough to know that you need it. It is not enough to sit in the shadow of the churches which are but the guideposts pointing to the place of refuge. You must be up and off, as for your life. You must stand before Him who is the "Door" of the place of refuge, and when there "knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

Recently I saw a photograph of the rock on the coast of England behind which Toplady, author of "Rock of Ages, cleft for me," took refuge in a heavy storm, and where the beautiful hymn was suggested to his mind. This hymn, with Charles Wesley's

"Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,"

are most dear to hearts the world over because they breathe the universal longing for deliverance from sin, and protection, shelter, relief in suffering and sorrow. You may walk through a woodland path and see nothing but dry leaves and roots without beauty that you should desire them, but if you were looking for the hidden treasures of the forest, and should turn up the leaves, to search, what marvels of interest you would find! You may read this chapter in Joshua and see nothing but the bare fact that six cities were set apart to which men in danger of vengeance for unintentional wrong might flee for safety. But if this is all you see, you have missed the secret sweetness of the lesson. May the blessed Spirit show it to you, and to me.

This is Old Testament Gospel, a strain of the song of salvation in Jesus.

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee."

"A man [Jesus] shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; . . . as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." These were "cities of reception," and no sweeter word was ever spoken of Jesus than that which his enemies said of him, "This man receiveth sinners." "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." There was no price to pay for safety in these cities; the offender had a right to protection because it was provided by God, a proof of his love and care. "In my hand no price I bring," for whosoever will may come, and him that cometh he will in no wise cast out.

"What more can he say than to you he hath said,
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?"

Strong consolation indeed have all who flee from sin or sorrow to this dear hiding place.

It is not good to make fanciful interpretations of Scripture words, and I would not press too far the significance of the names of these six cities; nor yet would I lose one breath of fragrance from anything however faintly suggestive of that Name which is above every name, the "hope of earth and joy of heaven."

Kedesh, meaning holy. We flee for refuge from sin to Him who was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. This is the name by which he shall be called "The Lord our Righteousness."

Shechem, shoulder. We fly from defeat in self-government to his strong and safe control. The government shall be upon his shoulder. All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth.

Hebron, company, or fellowship. We fly from loneliness and disappointing friendships to companionship with Jesus. Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son. "If any man will open unto me I will come in and sup with him, and he with me."

Bezer, strength, or fortress. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. My strength is made perfect in weakness.

Ramoth, height. We flee from low, unholy desires to the heights of purity in Christ; to joint-heirship with him in all things.

Golan, a circle, or joy. These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. In thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. Through the endless circle of the ages the soul is satisfied and safe in God.

"Jesus, the sinner's Friend, to thee,
Lost and undone, for aid I flee,
Weary of earth, myself, and sin:
Open thine arms, and take me in."

The Teachers' Meeting.

Explain the text—its legal enactment; its geography; the scenes to which it must have given rise. . . . Christ and the Cities of Refuge: "Both are, 1. Established to promote the ends of both justice and mercy; 2. Appointed by God himself; 3. Within the reach of all—'stranger' and 'children' alike; 4. Good only for those who continue in the refuge; 5. Ample—large enough and provisions enough; 6. Easily accessible." But the refuge city was for the guiltless only, and Christ welcomes all.

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BY REV. S. G. AYRES.

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BLOOD REVENGE.—Ewald, *History of Israel*, vol. iii, pages 117, 118, 173. Kittell, *History of the Hebrews*, vol. ii, page 301. Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon*, pages 305-307. Livingstone, *Travels in South Africa*, pages 368-370, 390, 482.

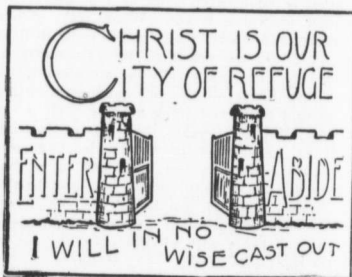
SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 6.—*The Pulpit*, London, vol. xxxi, page 201.

Verse 9.—*The Pulpit*, London, vol. xxxv, page 49.

Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.



All have sinned and come under condemnation, and have no escape from the wrath to come, save through the atonement offered by

Jesus Christ, His precious blood, that we might be saved from all unrighteousness. . . . death, that we might be saved from his blood. . . . T cannot claim the name of Jesus

Josh. 24. 14-15

14 Now the Lord said to Joshua, and to all the people that were standing before him in sincerity, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

15 And if ye will, ye shall choose the Lord, whether ye will serve him, or whether ye will serve the gods of the Amorites, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

16 And the Lord said to Joshua, and to all the people that were standing before him, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

17 For ye have brought us up out of Egypt, and ye have brought us into this land which ye have promised us, and among a people that we cannot serve.

18 And the Lord said to Joshua, and to all the people that were standing before him, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

19 And Joshua said to all the people, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

20 If ye will, ye shall choose the Lord, whether ye will serve him, or whether ye will serve the gods of the Amorites, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

21 And the Lord said to Joshua, and to all the people that were standing before him, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

22 And Joshua said to all the people, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

23 Now the Lord said to Joshua, and to all the people that were standing before him, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

24 And the Lord said to Joshua, and to all the people that were standing before him, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

25 So Joshua said to all the people, saying, The Lord says, The gods which ye have served, I know that ye have served, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Jesus Christ. He was delivered for our offenses, and suffered in our stead a malefactor's death, that we might have redemption through his blood. The avenger pursues each one who cannot claim exemption from his sin in the name of Jesus, and sooner or later he will be

overtaken and must suffer the penalty of death. Shall we not seek our Saviour while there is time and opportunity, that we may be saved and abide eternally in him?

Coloring.—Gateway, cream; words, red; phrases, yellow and purple.

LESSON VI. Joshua's Parting Advice.

[Nov. 9.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Choose you this day whom ye will serve. Josh. 24. 15.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Josh. 21. 43 to 24. 33.]

Josh. 24. 14-25. [*Commit to memory verses 14, 15.*]

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

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

16 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

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

18 And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, *even* the Am'or-ites which dwell in the land: *therefore* will we also serve the LORD; for he *is* our God.

19 And Josh'u-a said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he *is* a holy God; he *is* a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

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

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

23 Now therefore put away, *said he*, the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Is'ra-el.

24 And the people said unto Josh'u-a, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

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

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

14 Now therefore fear Jehovah, and serve him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt; and serve ye Jehovah. 15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.

16 And the people answered and said, Far be it from us that we should forsake Jehovah, to serve other gods: 17 for Jehovah our God, he it is that brought us and our fathers up out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and that did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the peoples through the midst of whom we passed: 18 and Jehovah drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites that dwelt in the land: therefore we also will serve Jehovah; for he is our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Jehovah; for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgression nor your sins. 20 If ye forsake Jehovah, and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you evil, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. 21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve Jehovah. 22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jehovah, to serve him. And they said, We are witnesses. 23 Now therefore put away, *said he*, the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto Jehovah, the God of Israel. 24 And the people said unto Joshua, Jehovah our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken. 25 So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

* The American Revision, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

Time.—B. C. 1426 (Usher). **Place.**—Shechem, between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim.

Home Readings.

- M.* An old man's warning. Josh. 23. 1-13.
Tu. Reminder of mercies. Josh. 24. 1-13.
W. Joshua's Parting Advice. Josh. 24. 14-25.
Th. Death of Joshua. Josh. 24. 26-33.
F. Call for decision. 1 Kings 18. 17-24.
S. Living for Christ. Phil. 1. 8-21.
S. The first claim. Matt. 6. 24-34.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 89.

The door of God's mercy is open
 To all who are weary of sin.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 295.

Father of mercies, in thy word
 What endless glory shines!

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 79.

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish;
 Come to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

- Joshua's Exhortation to Fidelity.*
 Whose address is given in this lesson?
 What was the great sin to which Israel was constantly exposed?
 What is the service of sincerity and truth?
 What were the gods which they were to put away?
 What gods had their fathers worshipped?
 What did Joshua declare his purpose to be?
 Could it seem evil to Israel to serve the Lord?
 Between whom were they to choose?
 What was involved in their choice?
- The Israelites' Covenant.*
 How did they reply to Joshua?
 What reason did they give for remaining faithful to the Lord?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

- Joshua's Grand Appeal* (verses 14. 15).
 To what place did Joshua call Israel?
 How old was he then?
 What was his purpose in the meeting?
 What appeal does he make to them?
 What does he say he himself will do?
 What gods seem to have influenced them as he thought?

- The People's Earnest Response* (verses 16-18).
 How do the people answer?
 What do they say God did for them?
 What particularly wonderful deliverances were there in Egypt?
 How did God preserve them in the way?
 What nations had God driven out of Palestine before them?

- Joshua's Deeper Exhortation* (verses 19, 20).
 Was Joshua satisfied with their answer?
 Why did he say they could not serve God?
 How is God a "jealous" God?
 Can there be more than one object of worship safely?

- The Full Response and Covenant* (verses 21-25).
 What do the people now answer?
 Was this a great public pledge?
 How does Joshua fasten it upon them?
 What is a covenant?
 Is it right to call the Old Testament a covenant?

- What does this lesson show of Joshua's personal influence?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

Who called the Israelites to Shechem?
Joshua.

What did he wish to do? *To say last words to the people.*

Why? *He was old and ready to die.*

What did he first tell them? *About the goodness of the Lord to them.*

What did he tell them to put away? *Idols.*
 Did some Israelites still worship idols? *Yes.*
 Where did they learn to do so? *Their fathers learned to do so in Egypt.*

What did he say they must choose that day?
Whom they would serve.

Whom did Joshua choose to serve? *God.*
 What did the people answer? *"The Lord our God will we serve."*

What did Joshua make with them? *A covenant.*

What is a covenant? *A promise made by two.*

Have we any idols?

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

- What did Joshua call upon the people to do? *To fear and serve the Lord.*
- What did the people say of the Lord? *"He is our God."*

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3. What did Joshua command them to do? *To put away the strange gods.*

4. What did Joshua and the people make in Shechem? *A covenant to serve the Lord.*

5. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? "*Choose you,*" etc.

The Church Catechism.

83. What shall be the end of the righteous? The end of the righteous shall be to enter into the kingdom and presence of the father, in an

estate of immutable holiness, which is eternal life and blessedness.

Revelation 22. 3-5. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Our Duty to Jehovah.

I. WE SHOULD FEAR THE LORD.

Fear the Lord, v. 14.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Psa. 111. 10.

Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. Eccles. 12. 13.

II. WE SHOULD SERVE THE LORD.

Serve him in sincerity and in truth, v. 14.

Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us. Dan. 3. 17.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matt. 6. 24.

III. WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL TO THE LORD.

He it is that brought us up and our fathers, v. 17.

O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness. Psa. 107. 8.

Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory. 1 Cor. 15. 57.

IV. WE SHOULD CONFIDE IN THE LORD.

Incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel, v. 23.

I trust in the mercy of God forever. Psa. 52. 8.

If God be for us, who can be against us? Rom. 8. 31.

V. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN THE LORD.

Which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way, v. 17.

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Phil. 4. 4.

This word was unto me the rejoicing of mine heart. Jer. 15. 16.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The nine and a half tribes of Israel which crossed the Jordan to take possession of the cities and plantations of Palestine proper were now settled in their new homes; the cities of refuge had been located; and the simple machinery of Hebrew law had been set in motion. Two and a half tribes had preferred to establish their homes east of the Jordan, and their warriors, having crossed with the others and done their full share of fighting had now been dismissed by Joshua with an honorable recognition of their fidelity and bravery. "Nine and a half" and "two and a half" make twelve, and it may be well before going further to recall the origin of these "twelve tribes of Israel." When Jacob, about to die, called his twelve sons about him to receive his parting blessing he had already shown his love to Joseph (whom he reckoned as his firstborn) by giving to Ephraim and Manasseh, Joseph's sons, blessings like those given to their uncles, and thenceforth they were reckoned as heads of tribes, their names taking the place of the name of their father Joseph. Consequently, when Moses led Israel out of Egypt the tribes were *thirteen* in number. In the partition of Palestine, however, only twelve were reckoned; the tribe of Levi, having been set apart to sacred duties, had no tribal inheritance, being given instead "cities with their suburbs" in various parts of the land. To return to our story: Soon after the departure of the warriors of Reuben, Gad, and Eastern Manasseh, a rumor floated back across the Jordan that they had erected an altar on their eastern table-land, and were about to leave the worship of Jehovah; a committee from the nine and a half tribes was hastened over to ascertain the facts. To them satisfactory explanation and apology were made. But this incident, which is related at length in Josh. 22, shows the thorough unity of the nation notwithstanding its tribal divisions, and its early zeal for the true God. Years had passed, and now "Israel had rest from their enemies round about." Joshua, "old and stricken in age," called together the representative men of the nation, and made to them a formal parting address (Josh. 23. 1-11). A little later he gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and made another and more lengthy address, from which our lesson of to-day is taken. At the close of this address the covenant between Jehovah and his people was renewed. The death of

Joshua is next recorded, at the age of one hundred and ten; soon afterward Eleazar, the son of Aaron, died; and with the account of the burial of the bones of Joseph the unique book from which our lesson has been taken is brought to its close.

Verse 14. The scene is at Shechem, in the heart of the land. By Joshua's direction "the elders of Israel, their heads, their judges, and their overseers" had there presented themselves before God. Joshua reminds them that it was Jehovah who had called Abram from heathenism, and who had made Isaac and Jacob to prosper, and who, in the lifetime of their own parents and grandparents, had guided Moses and his followers through the wilderness, punishing the unfaithful and rewarding the loyal. It was Jehovah who had given his hearers all they now enjoyed. *Therefore* he exhorts them to *fear the Lord* ["Jehovah"], for reverence is the beginning of true knowledge and wisdom (Prov. 1. 7; Job 28, 28), and to *serve him in sincerity and in truth*. Life without service of some god was in those days unthinkable, but the temptation was strong to serve false gods, and, worse still, to falsely serve the true God, with a worship that was superstitious or merely formal. Some ancestral images of worship were still in their possession; Joshua urges that these be destroyed. *The flood* ["River"] means the Euphrates, from the crossing of which Abraham and his family received their earliest tribal name—"the Hebrews."

15. The people are, however, not to serve Jehovah because Joshua says so, but to "decide with the utmost freedom." If their own hereditary idols, or the strange objects of worship they had found among the spoil of the conquered nations, are really worthier objects of adoration and loyalty, it is their duty to leave Jehovah for them. (Joshua mentions the *Amorites* as representative of all the dislodged inhabitants of Canaan.) *But as for me and my house*, he says, *we will serve the Lord* ["Jehovah."]

16-18. This appeal profoundly moved the people. Their reply is prompt and unanimous. In their present mood they cannot even for a moment think of forsaking Jehovah, or of even partially serving other gods. They acknowledge Jehovah's hand in all the wonderful deliverances of the exodus and the conquest, and proclaim with equal humility and pride, *He is our God*. *We also* means "We, as well as you and your house."

19. *Ye cannot*. The oriental way of saying, "Seriously consider the difficulties." *The Lord* ["Jehovah"] is *holy*—his purity cannot be min-

gled with the impurity of false religions; and he is *jealous*—he demands the love of hearts. *He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins*. The spirit of these words does not contradict the frequent declarations that God is ready to forgive all sin when it has been heartily repented of. What is here emphasized is that God will not overlook or connive at partial faithfulness, which is, always and everywhere, *unfaithfulness*. It is in the nature of things impossible to serve God partially—less possible than for a wife to be faithful partially to her husband or for a parent partially to love his child.

20. This "holiness" and "jealousy" will be shown in God's providential dealings with the nation. For, whether or not they profoundly choose Jehovah, Jehovah has already chosen them; and if they now forsake him he will "do them hurt" just as he has heretofore "done them good"—not vengefully, however, but for discipline, to bring them back to their allegiance. Joshua is arguing with people of slow spiritual perceptions, and seeks to make his meaning plain by using the language of their households, and talking of God's purposes "after the manner of men."

21. But consideration of the difficulties only made the people more determined to serve Jehovah.

22. Joshua takes advantage of their zeal to bind them solemnly to their God. *Ye are witnesses against yourselves*, he says, and they respond, *Witnesses!* "They will, if they ever fall away, be obliged to admit that they once chose Jehovah, and that he now has a right to punish them for their unfaithfulness."

23. But if they would serve Jehovah heartily they must *put away their strange gods* (that is, foreign gods, gods of other nations) and *incline their heart to the God of Israel*.

24. This the people vociferously promise to do, but we hear nothing of the removal and destruction of the condemned images, and there are sad indications in the later history that they were not all "put away."

25. *Joshua made a covenant with the people that day*. Renewed in Shechem the covenant with God already made on Mount Sinai and in the field of Moab. The words *a statute and an ordinance* refer to the entire sacred law of the Israelites, which was here again formally adopted and ordained.

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HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The twenty-third and twenty-fourth chapters of Joshua are phenomenal chapters, not in this book only, nor in the Bible only, but in literature. They constitute a code of behavior for one who wants to be brave, manly, God-fearing, useful. They do not impress the reader as the croonings of an old man, but the wide reasonings of a man in whose heart ran the blood of a tireless youth. Joshua was always sane. He was never foolhardy, foolish, nor tempestuous, but sane, deliberate, courageous, soldierlike after a wise order of generalship. This episode I would name Joshua's closing campaign. And, keeping in thought the various perilous and epochal campaigns of his career, this may be set down as his greatest. The others had been specially campaigns for Israel; this was a campaign for God. True, all campaigns for Israel were campaigns of God and for him, but this was specifically for God. Israel was an army, summoned by Joshua now to face not Amorite nor Ai nor Og king of Bashan, but to face God, and was challenged to fight for him or against him. The sight is sublime. Where have we in history seen its equal? It thrills the soul and body through and through.

Joshua is a preacher. God ordained him. Not many sermons can compare with this. Curiously, the sermons of Stephen and Paul are modeled after this sermon of soldier Joshua, though he little dreamed he was teaching remote generations the art of preaching. He thought he was teaching Israel forever the art of war. How wide is a good man's life! Joshua recapitulates, in his firstly, God's achievements for Israel in the possessing Canaan; in his secondly (for I choose to think the twenty-fourth chapter to be the continuation of the twenty-third and not another event) he recapitulates in a brilliant summary the dealings of God with Israel from the days of the call of Abraham till the day of this gathering together of the people in the heart of Canaan at Shechem; and in his thirdly he brings this series of efforts of divine providence, pregnant with great doings in their behalf, to bear on the personal decision to belong to God and to serve him with such heart as this long history of God's fealty to them abundantly justified. What a sermon from what a soldier! Sometimes great warriors were great preachers. Gustavus Adolphus was and Cromwell was. They were brief but pungent and mighty. And soldier Joshua pours his cadences into the air yet, and into the ears of God's Is-

rael yet. Great words are not set to requiem music.

The soldier is talking. "For or against!"—that is the marrow of this appeal. It is the marrow of all appeal in God's big business. This is no halfway house. Soldier Joshua is no temporizer, but a fighter. He was not a statesman; Moses was that. He was a warrior. His life was given over to that vocation; and a great, invigorating life he had lived. His battle cry is "For or against!" and he adds, as if it were an afterthought (as it is not), "I am for. As for my house and me, we are for." I like that warnote in his voice. How his voice rings! Would you think him old? How could you? Martial music clamors from his heart. "For or against!" His sermon means battle. He has not quit being soldier because he is become preacher. He is not talking for plaudits, but for conquest. He wants not huzzas, but hurricane fury of allegiance for Israel's God. He is a soldier of singleness of heart. He loves God, wears the star of his order on his heart, and wants all Israel to belong to this holy legion of honor. True, great, loyal soldier Joshua, we all applaud you. Can you hear our huzzas? But we will serve your God. You would care more for that than all plaudits. We will serve your God, him only.

Serving God is hard work. That Joshua says. He is saying words he has heard Israel say, framing their objection for their own ears to hear; yet is he stating a bold truth. Serving God is hard work. Anyone who denies that is not holding close to truth as certified in experience. Jesus said, "Take up your cross and follow me." And we must; but the cross is worth the trouble! There is the gain. To serve God is indeed hard, but honorable and glorious. We miss the mark of the Gospel if we think that we are to preach an easy Gospel, a flower-bed sort. "Show him how great things he must suffer for me" was how Saul was to be inducted into the service of the Christ. To keep unspotted from the world is not easy. To live at peace, to speak no evil, to covet the best gifts, to rejoice not in iniquity, but in the truth—these things are not easy things to do, but they are possible things to do, which is much more to the point, and immeasurably better. We can serve God. That is the great truth, and the valorous question is never, Is a given duty easy? but Is it duty? That ends the matter in a good life. Virtue is easier in the long run than vice. The fruits

of vice are poisonous, and rot the very bones. The fruits of Christlikeness are love, joy, peace, goodness, and such like; and against such there is no law. The length of the road is in favor of virtue and of God. God is a difficult God to serve, but he is a God worth ten thousand difficulties to serve. Thanks be to God for a Gospel which strengthens the thews till they are like steel bars.

And Israel voted for God! Joshua's sermon had good effect. The sermon which makes men and women want God is a good sermon full of unction and manly right. To make God attractive, comely, fairer to the will and heart and understanding than the morning star—that is preaching. And the campaign is to be for God, and not against him. So Israel has voted. Men must select God. God selects all men, and all men must select God, one by one, or they never will possess him. Not to select him is to reject him. You cannot colonize the kingdom of God. There is no making people good by bulk. They are to be made good by units. "All who will belong to God say Aye." And Israel was one voice. Joshua did not put the negative.

Thoughts for Young People.

CONSEQUENCES OF CHOOSING JEHOVAH.

1. *Every soul chooses its God.* What we are accustomed to call conversion is simply the soul's choice of Jehovah. Sometimes the choice is made imperceptibly, one knows not precisely where or when, but really and profoundly made. Often it is made in an emergency, amid tumultuous experiences. Then, too, we are compelled mournfully to recognize that many souls choose *not* to serve Jehovah. The god of such souls is whatever they serve. Baal and Moloch and Astarte have gone out of fashion. Money, Power, Social Standing are popular gods nowadays. And some idols are meaner than even these. Spite, Wine, Gossip, Sensuality, a House, a Dress, even a Friend may be put upon that throne in the heart's palace which belongs to Jehovah alone.

2. *No soul can make a half-choice.* A man who is only half well is ill. A boy who is only half clean is dirty. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." One of the Seven Churches of Asia tried to make a half choice; let us "hear what the Spirit said to" it. "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." And "remember the words of the Lord Jesus how he said," "He that is not for me is against me." If we

choose Jehovah at all we must choose him altogether, and put away all false gods.

3. *Jehovah claims those who choose him.* "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you." He loves his own, and if they are ever unfaithful to him after having sincerely chosen him, by all means, affectionate wooings and judicial discipline, he seeks to bring them back. If they are faithful all good things are theirs; for "godliness has promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come;" and "My God is able to supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

A brief review of the preceding lessons of this quarter will be helpful to the pupils' understanding of to-day's text. The teacher should be prepared by reading the omitted portions of Scripture to supply the links so that the pupils may grasp the thought of the narrative as a whole. Too much attention to details will be bewildering.

ENVIRONMENT.

Time. Eighteen years after our last lesson and twenty-five years after the crossing of the Jordan into the promised land."

Place. Shechem, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. Point these out on the map.

RECORD.

We may study our lesson text as the record of a dialogue between Joshua and the Israelites, dividing for the sake of clearness as follows:

Joshua's Exhortation (verses 14, 15). How were the people to feel toward God? How were they to serve him? What were they to put away? Explain what "the other side of the flood" means (see Revised Version), and speak of the gods of Egypt. What choice were the people to make? What choice had Joshua made?

The People's Answer (verses 16-18). What did the people answer concerning serving other gods? Have the pupils read verses 17 and 18, and from the text name the four reasons which the people gave for serving God.

Joshua's Warning (verses 19, 20). The teacher should be prepared to state concisely the meaning of these two verses (see NOTES).

The People's Second Answer (verse 21). Have some one read aloud verse 21 and impress it on the minds of the pupils as being a good resolution.

Joshua's Appeal (27). To whom comes? What things did Joshua do they answer? From a study of prepared to explain. What memorial For what purpose

OBJECTIVE.

Ask: Who has Joshua? If any scriptures read, copy any omissions, a copy of one like of Old Testament

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EMPHASIS.

Our lesson is Golden Text repeated be no more important attention of the of at times making ample, as to serve as Saviour, to follow Spirit. Then should be called upon to continue choosing all print:

EXERCISES.

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Joshua's Appeal to Witnesses (verses 22-27). To whom did Joshua appeal as witnesses? What did they answer? What two things did Joshua tell the people to do? What did they answer? What did Joshua then do? From a study of the NOTES let the teacher be prepared to explain the meaning of verse 25. What memorial did Joshua erect? (verse 26.) For what purpose? (verse 27.)

OBJECT ILLUSTRATION

Ask: Who has brought in a monument to Joshua? If any are brought in have the inscriptions read, commend what is correct, supply any omissions, and ask the pupils to make a copy of one like the following in their Book of Old Testament Heroes:



EMPHASIZED TRUTH.

Our lesson is on choosing. Have the Golden Text repeated several times. There can be no more important subject brought to the attention of the young. Urge the importance of at times making great choices, such, for example, as to serve the Lord, to accept Christ as Saviour, to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Then show by illustrations that we are called upon to make the great choice and to continue choosing for the right. Then have all print:

**EVERY DAY
I WILL CHOOSE
TO SERVE THE LORD.**

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to write in their books during the week an answer to the question, Who were the Judges?

Review word "Choice."

By Way of Illustration.

The last message from an old hero. This scene reminds us of Turner's great picture "The Old Temeraire." It is a picture of a majestic old warship being towed to its last moorings. The name of this ship means "One who dares," and in the great battle of Trafalgar she fought tremendously. As the setting sun leaves a long trailing line of glory behind it, so the famous memories attached to the stanch old warship will leave a never-dying remembrance of its faithful service. It is being taken to its last home in the beauty of the departing day, its stately form so full of dignity and grandeur that all else in the picture sinks into insignificance beside it. With like accompaniments the old warrior Joshua gives his valedictory.

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua's choice was irrespective of the choice of others. He made up his mind and then asked no questions as to what others might do. One of our temptations is just here. We want to be with the majority. "When you are in Rome do as the Romans do" is an evil proverb which has led many a weak person into sin. Whether you are to do as the Romans do or not depends on whether the Romans do right. What we need is more moral backbone to stand alone, knowing that one with God is a majority.

"Choose." It is a shameful thing to drift into irreligion as so many do. We are not meant to be like weeds in a stream, impotently obeying the current. A manly exercise of will is required of us. In verses 19 and 20 Joshua receives the enthusiastic shout of devotion coldly. The best way to attract is sometimes to repel. So Christ faced round to the eager crowd of would-be followers with "Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Moody says: "To some easily-impressed converts one must say, 'The service of God is not a summer play or a pastime. It is a difficult task. God is a jealous God; he will not share your heart with another. He is a holy God; he will not enter an impure heart.'"

Verse 24, Christ shows that the vital connection between man and God is in that one mighty word, *obedience*. This great word has

grown base and hard and servile. Let us glorify obedience. It is not slavery, but mastery. He who obeys is *master* of the master whom he serves. He has his hands in the very depths of his Lord's treasures. When God says, Do this and live, he is not making a bargain, he is pronouncing a necessity. He who does my will possesses me. For my will is the broad avenue to the deepest chambers of my life. "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." So speaks the infinite God to the obedient child. Obedience means mastery and wealth.—Phillips Brooks.

"A covenant . . . a statute and an ordinance in Shechem." The following verse shows that a great monumental stone was set up. The custom of setting up memorial stones is common in all nations. In our own land, where Wolfe fell, is a memorial of his death. Another commemorates both Wolfe and Montcalm, the only instance of a common monument to generals who died fighting against each other. On Queenston Heights is one of the world's grandest memorials, to Canada's "darling hero," Sir Isaac Brock.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

It was "Decision Day" at Shechem. We have had such days in our own Sunday school. The blessed Spirit whispered in your heart, "Choose this day whom you will serve." Did you choose? Did you say, like Joshua, "As for me, whatever others do, I will serve the Lord?" O happy day for you if this is so! And happy days are to come if you abide by that choice with all your heart.

It may be your decision day has been apart from others. It was that lonely hour when, under the dark wings of sorrow, it seemed as though you must die if you did not find the God of all comfort; or, when the storm broke over you, you helplessly cried, "Save, Master, or I perish." It may have been when you saw with unusual clearness the goodness and love of God, standing out like grand mountain peaks against the sky, and your heart was drawn up to him as waters to the sun; or some day when a new joy entered your life, or a new work was given you to do, you put your hand in his for partnership, fellowship, and good faith forever. Wherever, whenever, however, that decision day has come to you, if you have made the wise choice you will be glad your life long on earth, and more glad as you learn its true measure through eternity. Remember that Jesus said of Mary, "She hath chosen the better part, which shall

not be taken away from her." I know of one who said, "I will give my heart to God sometime, but I will get rich first." His pastor said, "You never will get rich unless you yield yourself to God first." He gave his time and best endeavors to making money, but never found the success he hoped for. Only the day before he became ill with what proved to be a fatal sickness he finally made the decision to serve the Lord, whether in earthly success or failure, as he might will. Happy was it for him the choice was not delayed until too late; but what a loss were all those years which might have been rich in spiritual treasure!

Every soul that works out with the help of God a life worth living has its decision day, when the higher is chosen for the lower, the true for the false, the greater for the lesser good. It is not a matter of the emotions; it is the choice of a free will. They did not say at Shechem, "We feel moved to serve the Lord because Joshua is so eloquent." They said, "Because he has done so much for us, therefore we will serve him." "Therefore" is a weighty word. The goodness of God, his care, his love, his mercies, surrounding us like protecting hills, bending over us like the soft sky, spreading before us like fruitful fields and blossoming gardens, shining for us like stars at night—*therefore*, by the mercies of God I beseech you that you present to him yourself, your time, your love, your all, which is your reasonable service. The most unreasonable of all delusions is the fear that in choosing God everything beautiful and desirable in life must be given up. We must not misunderstand like the little girl who went home heartbroken because, she said, they taught in Sunday school that we cannot serve God and mamma! As Joshua said, we must choose God first in sincerity and in truth, and loving him with all the heart we can the better love every beautiful thing he has made and every dear and precious human friend that he has given us.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Study Joshua's last discourse: 1. His earlier farewell (Josh. 23. 1-15); 2. The last congress at Shechem, its constituents, its environments; 3. His discourse (Josh. 24. 1-15); 4. The people's answer (Josh. 24. 16-18); 5. The final decision and renewal of the covenant (Josh. 24. 19-25) . . . *Making* promises to God; *keeping* them. . . . Difficulties in the way of serving Jehovah: 1. "Gods which your fathers served"—inherited evil tendencies; 2. Gods in Egypt (where the people were trained)—inbred sin; 3. "Gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye

dwell"—world; Jehovah"—"Le



The responsibility choice is here neglect the call and ruin; to a holy obligation urged by Joshua understanding repeated declaration and heart must reason and des

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[Study also v

Judges 2. 7-16.

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8 And Josh'u of the Lord, 6 years old.

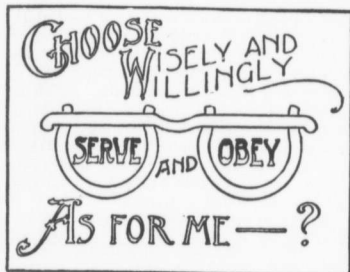
9 And they inheritance in E'phra-im, on t

10 And also ered unto their other generatio the LORD, nor y for Is'ra-el.

11 And the c sight of the L

dwell"—worldly association; 4. "If ye forsake Jehovah"—"Lest we forget."

Blackboard.



The responsibility of personal and immediate choice is here laid strikingly before us. To neglect the call of God is to incur punishment and ruin; to accept it is to assume high and holy obligations. Both considerations were urged by Joshua, and the people evinced a clear understanding of the matter by their thrice-repeated declaration to serve the Lord. Mind and heart must coincide in the decision, that reason and desire may not be at variance after

the step is taken. Thus will service be accompanied by obedience, without which it can be of but little worth. Standing in the place of Israel, with the precept and example of Joshua before us, for whom shall our choice be made?

Coloring.—Yoke, white; words, red; phrases, yellow filled in deep blue.

Library References.

JOSHUA'S LAST WORDS.—Deane, *Joshua*, pages 196-203. Stanley, *History of the Jewish Church*, vol. i, page 311.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

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Verse 19.—Ker, *Day Dawn and the Rain*, page 90.

Verse 20.—Howe, *Works*, vol. ii, page 328.

Verse 22.—Davies, *Sermons*, vol. iii, page 438.

Verse 25.—*The Homiletic Monthly*, vol. v, page 625.

LESSON VII. The Time of the Judges.

[Nov. 16.

GOLDEN TEXT. They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses. Psa. 107. 19.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 17-19. Read Judg. chapters 2-5.]

Judges 2. 7-16. [Commit to memory verses 18, 19.]

7 And the people served the LORD all the days of Josh'u-a, and all the days of the elders that outlived Josh'u-a, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Is'ra-el.

8 And Josh'u-a the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Tim'nath-he'eres, in the mount of E'phra-im, on the north side of the hill Ga'ash.

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Is'ra-el.

11 And the children of Is'ra-el did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Ba'al-im:

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

7 And the people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of Jehovah, that he had wrought for Israel. 8 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died, being a hundred and ten years old. 9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill-country of Ephraim, on the north of the mountain of Gaash. 10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel.

11 And the children of Israel did that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and served the Baalim; 12 and they forsook Jehovah, the

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12 And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

13 And they forsook the LORD, and served Ba'al and Ash'ta-roth.

14 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Is'ra-el, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

16 Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the peoples that were round about them, and bowed themselves down unto them; and they provoked Jehovah to anger. 13 And they forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and the Ashtaroth. 14 And the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that despoiled them; and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. 15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of Jehovah was against them for evil, as Jehovah had spoken, and as Jehovah had sworn unto them: and they were sore distressed.

16 And Jehovah raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those that despoiled them.

What great famous contest

3. *Bondage by*
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What sort of Did nations

4. *Wonderful*
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Therefore s

Time.—B. C. 1427 (Usher). **Place.**—Palestine.

Home Readings.

M. The Time of the Judges. Judg. 2. 7-19.

Tu. Sinning and Repenting. Judg. 3. 1-11.

W. Warning. Deut. 31. 14-21.

Th. Surprising folly. Jer. 2. 1-13.

F. Depravity of heart. Isa. 1. 1-9.

S. Willful disobedience. Psa. 81.

S. The merciful Deliverer. Psa. 106. 34-48.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 23.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Gratefully adoring our song shall rise to thee:
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 214.

Oh, hear my cry, be gracious now to me!
Come, Great Deliverer, come!
My soul, bowed down, is longing now for thee,
Come, Great Deliverer, come!

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 26.

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us,
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but thee.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *Joshua's Death and Israel's Idolatry.*

How long were the people faithful to the covenant which was made at Shechem?

What had the people of that generation seen of the works of the Lord?

How old was Joshua when he died?

Where was he buried?

Of what was the succeeding generation ignorant?

What gods did they serve?

In worshipping idols, what did they forsake?

How did the Lord look upon their sin?

2. *The Judgments of the Lord.*

What was the consequence of their idolatry?

Into what kind of captivity were they taken?

Could they prosper as long as God was against them?

How did the Lord relieve their distress?

What were the duties of a judge?

Did they obey their judges?

How was the judge qualified for his work?

What is meant by "it repenteth the Lord"?

What was the reason for such repenting?

Did the people profit by these severe but valuable lessons?

What way did they go?

Why is it called a stubborn way?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Joshua's Long-continued Influence* (verses 7-9).

How long did the people continue to obey God?

Whose influence was long powerful?

Who continued Joshua's good work?

Why did it ever cease?

Where was the chief failure?

2. *The New Generation Forgetting God* (verses 10-13).

What did they not learn about God?

How then would it be easy to leave him?

What vile idols did they worship?

What made this attractive to wicked people?

What nations worshipped Baal?

What great prophet long after this had a famous contest with Baal's priests?

3. *Bondage by Sin* (verses 14, 15).

How did God deal with them then?

How did he even seem to give up his ownership in Israel?

What sort of rulers did they fall under?

Did nations treat enemies very cruelly then?

4. *Wonderful Deliverances* (verse 16).

Who were some of these judges who delivered Israel?

Were they selected by the people or by the Lord?

Which of them was famous for personal strength?

What woman was one of them?

From what nations were they set free?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

Where did the people of Israel first learn idolatry? *In Egypt.*

Where did they still learn it? *Of the people of Canaan.*

What did God want Israel to do to idolaters? *To drive them out of the land.*

How long did they keep their promise to serve God? *Until Joshua died.*

What did they then do? *They went after the idols of Canaan.*

What were the names of the idols? *Baal and Ashtaroth.*

What came to them then? *Great trouble from their enemies.*

What did they do? *They begged the Lord to help them.*

What did he do for them? *He sent them judges.*

How did these men help them? *They helped them to serve God, and to conquer their enemies.*

Did they serve God after this? *No, they went back to idol worship.*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. How long did the Israelites serve God? *While Joshua lived.*

2. What did they do after Joshua and the elders died? *They forgot God.*

3. What other sin did they commit? *They followed idols.*

4. How did they suffer for this? *They were oppressed by their enemies.*

5. How did God still show them mercy? *By raising up judges.*

6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"They cried unto the Lord," etc.*

The Church Catechism.

1. Who made you? *God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.*

Acts 14. 15. And saying, *Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.*

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Sin and Salvation.

I. EVIL COMPANIONSHIP.

They followed the people that were round about them. v. 12.

Mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. *Psa. 106. 35.*

Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord. *2 Cor. 6. 17.*

II. THE SIN OF IDOLATRY.

They forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth. v. 13.

We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone. *Acts 17. 29.*

Keep yourselves from idols. *1 John 5. 21.*

III. "THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH."

The hand of the Lord was against them. v. 15.

I will punish you according to the fruit of your doings, saith the Lord. *Jer. 21. 14.*

Therefore shall the land mourn, and every-

one that dwelleth therein shall languish. *Hos. 4. 3.*

IV. PENITENCE.

They cry unto the Lord in their trouble.

GOLDEN TEXT.

When he slew them, then they sought him.

Psa. 78. 34.

Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us. *Hos. 6. 1.*

V. SALVATION.

Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them. v. 16.

He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not. *Psa. 78. 38.*

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us. *Titus 3. 5.*

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The book of Judges takes its name, like the other historical books, from its contents. It is the history of events in Israel under the "Judges"—those special civil and military rulers who, as vicegerents of God, governed Israel, or portions of Israel, between the death of Joshua and the anointing of Saul. It is a series of narratives not closely connected with each other, and there is little chronology in it. So far as it is a history of Israel it is "not that of a united people but of several separate tribes." After the death of Joshua the leaders of Israel asked of Jehovah special directions to complete the conquest of the land. The first chapter of the book of Judges tells how these directions were followed by the taking of certain Canaanite strongholds, while others left unvanquished became "thorns in the sides" of Israel. The friendliness of the people of God with the pagan communities around them was severely censured by "an angel of the Lord," and the public repentance which followed was memorable.

Verse 7. *The people served the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua.* Until the generation which had been rebuked by "the angel" had passed away. "All the days" include perhaps fifty years from the entrance into Canaan, perhaps twenty years after Joshua's death. These faithful ones had seen all the great works ["work"] of the Lord ["Jehovah"], that he did ["had wrought"] for Israel. These "elders" were born in the wilderness, and some of them must have been little past childhood when Israel crossed the Jordan, but they had seen repeatedly Jehovah's miraculous interposition.

8, 9. These verses are identical with Josh. 24. 29-31, though the order is not the same. Joshua's age was the same as that of Joseph. (Read Gen. 50. 26.) He was buried at *Timnath-heres* or *Timnath-serah*. His tomb has been sought by some among the sepulchers of *Tibneh*; but Captain Conder believes that it has been found at *Kefr Hâris*, near *Nablus*.

10. *Also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers.* We are making a rapid survey of history here. The men who died about the time that Joshua died, his contemporaries, who had borne arms with him, though belonging properly to a younger generation than his, were loyal to his ideals; but their children had grown up amid new conditions; born in houses which neither they nor their fathers had built; familiar from infancy with the carved and painted symbols of idolatry which their fathers had failed to destroy; making friends in their youth with the amiable idolaters who had been left in the land, the name of Jehovah came to mean but little to them; they knew not the Lord ["Jehovah"], nor yet the works ["work"] which he had done ["wrought"] for Israel. Of course they must have known how Israel came into the land, but it is one thing to learn such facts historically and another thing to feel the presence of Jehovah. Their fathers had "felt their God."

11. *They served* ["the"] *Baalim*, that is, the Baals or "lords," the gods of the land. The plural indicates either many images, or, more probably, various modifications or impersonations of Baal.

12. This verse is an amplification of what has already been said. One's conception of God is a sure test of one's worship and life. The degraded character of the heathen peoples supplanted by Israel had been molded on the supposed character of Baal and Ashtaroth, and each Israelite who bowed down to these supposed gods did his personal best to become as morally loathsome as they.

13. *They forsook the Lord* ["Jehovah"], and served Baal and ["the"] *Ashtaroth*. "Forsook" might be translated "ignored," or "refused to notice." *Ashtaroth* is the plural of the feminine goddess *Ashtoreth*, *Astarte*, "The Star." The god and goddess were each, in a sense, the deification of sexuality, and their worship led directly to licentiousness.

14. *The anger of the Lord* ["Jehovah"] *was hot* ["kindled"] *against Israel.* In verse 11 we read that they "did that which was evil in his sight," and in verse 12 that they "provoked him to anger." Here, for their good, his forbearance ceases, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled ["despoiled"] them. While the true God was their God, and his law their law, they had his support, but when they ran after other gods they (logically) became the property of the nations to whom those gods belonged. God's revelation of himself had changed the Israelites from a crowd of slaves into a noble nation; but now, in spite of divine emancipation, they had shown themselves to be still in character slaves; God sold them into the hands of their enemies. But their servitude he brought about as a means of drawing them back to him. The prosperity which his love had sent they had misused; and now, "humanly speaking," he had to resort to severe discipline.

15. *They were greatly* ["sore"] *distressed*

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because of marauding tyrants who appropriated their cattle and their harvests, their sons and their daughters.

16. *The Lord* ["Jehovah"] raised up judges ["Shophetim"]. Deliverers: men specially endowed to free the nation from tyranny, to re-

inforce God's law, and to exercise judicial functions. They were kings without crowns and without hereditary rights. So long as the nation maintained the law and resisted idolatrous temptation it was free from the calamities that made such deliverers necessary.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The former lesson was victorious. This lesson is pathetic. No pathos is like that of forsaking God. Compared with that all other pathos becomes melodramatic. In the last lesson a people elected God as their master; in this a whole people forsook God. One thing ought to hearten us, and that is that the same people who elected him did not reject him. Those were faithful. I have often been glad for that. Those folks Joshua mustered did not say they would serve God and then refuse to keep their promise. They did not backslide. All Joshua's life and the lifetime of the elders and the lifetime of the generation which contracted to serve God there was covenant keeping with God. They promised and performed. Among them was moral stamina. The breath of the moral heroic was in their nostrils. How God must have prized them! and how glad we might well be that this story of their determination, holding fast, has not eluded us! how glad that it is fresh in our memory this hour and will be all the days of the world's life! Such fidelity is heartening to the generations.

And there arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord. And how could that be? Can good parents have godless children? So it appears. Virtue is not, in the largest bearings, transmittable. People do not inherit personal virtue. Every man must stand on his own moral feet. How strange that seems, and yet how congruous with all God's doings with the sons of men! On the one side this is disheartening; on the other side it is heartening. For a good man to have a good son or daughter would appeal to us as ideal; but what if every bad father or mother had a bad daughter or son? Why, that would break the heart. Where would there be any hope? That would be slavery of a devilish type. The truth as seen in experience is that sometimes good fathers have bad sons and bad fathers have good sons. Everybody's son, therefore, has his own chance. God will not tie sons up to vice or virtue. You cannot entail goodness nor badness. Each chooses his own way. But what a shame it is for a man to be bad if his father and mother were good! How will a man be able to bear the condemnation of that

sin? To sin against great light, sweet parentage, a household where God was king, a life where there was family altar and devout and churchgoing spirit—to sin against all this is to be a sinner beyond Tyre and Zidon. Who can bear such reproach? Yet this is often the case. I have known those whose parents were as wholesome as spring weather to be as alien to God as if they were heathen. A lifelong member of Christ's church becomes the follower of some maudlin heresy, some silly delusion which ought not to snare a child. "Knew not the Lord." That word is very pitiful; for not to know God is to be ignorant indeed. Paul's wildest, highest hope and prayer were that he might know him!

Can it be that the parents were neglectful in instructing the children in the things of God and the good doings of their great Deliverer? Let us not say they were. Let us not think they were; but let us recall that this is possible. Christian parents are so now, often, often. They are busy. The father is so hard-worked, the mother has so many outside things she thinks essential; and her own flesh and blood lose God while she is holding meetings for some attainable or unattainable thing. Parents, have a care. Your own children, God holds you to strict account for them. Do you take them to God's house with regularity? Do you foster in them the mood and method of prayer? Do you study God's book with them? Or do you leave all the religious training of your own child to a Sunday school teacher? How can you meet God and look him in the face if you do? You *will* be speechless. The parent cannot shift the burden of holy instruction for his own child to anybody else.

Let every soul bear his own burden. Have you had your child baptized? Do you know, if he is, that he is a probationer in our Church? Do you recall that you promised—what did you promise? Reread the baptismal covenant to which you subscribed, and keep it. It is possible for good parents to be totally responsible for the loss of their children's faith and the loss of their children's souls. Woe is me if I remember not this solemn and appalling truth.

And the children of Israel did evil. Why did

ye so, children? Had you no honorable name to protect and to wear? Dare you slander your father's memory and your mother's dear reputation? Were they godlike and you godless? Ye have your reward. What poor business doing evil is! Can't you find a better job? Doing evil is tearing down the best hopes of the world. What the best of earth have lived and died to do, the evildoer lives to undo. That is, to say the very least, deplorably little business, and, to say the full fact, is damnably bad business. They forsook the Lord God of their fathers. That is admissible if your fathers had a false god. Then the sooner you forsake him the better. We are not to hold to our father's god because he is his god, but if he is the true God and your father's God, then your turpitude becomes midnight black if you forsake him.

It is a pity when children have less sense than their parents, though this often happens. To serve God is good sense; to forsake God is, in a wide sense, nonsense. To serve God has every promise, of this life and the long stretch of the eternal life, of usefulness and holiness, of doing no ill and doing all good. Forget not this, son, daughter of a good father, a good mother. Be not wise in your own conceit, but keep the family reputation of sound sense and sound piety. But they forsook the Lord. Is that the end? No.

The anger of the Lord. What a phrase that is! The hot, sulphur breath of Martinique is not baleful as the anger of the Lord. The phrase is not cruel, but just. Men make God an enemy. He loves to be a lover. Why turn the morning into the shadow of death when God would turn your shadow of death into the morning? The anger of the Lord is something real and terrible. How can he grow angry? That is a superficial question. The wise question is how can he do other than be angry with the wicked every day? He is holy. He stands for the good order of the universe. If he lose moral pulse and heart, then is the big world wrecked—aye, and all the worlds; for they are "wrecked by gold chains about the feet of God." Have a wholesome regard for the anger of the Lord. It is a thing to be reckoned with, and to be reckoned with forever.

Nevertheless. Thank God for that word. I was looking for it. God keeps working for us though we keep working against him. God is always at work. His hand slackens not. He is working to-day and to-morrow and the day following—and for us. *Nevertheless,* God's anger does not imply God has lost interest in us, nor that he hates us. He loves us. He

would deliver us and will raise up dictators to bring us help. He has raised up Christ. What more needs be said? He came to save his people from their sins. May they be willing in the day of their visitation!

Thoughts for Young People.

DIVIDED HEARTS.

1. *God demands our entire hearts,* our entire affectional natures. No command of the Holy Scriptures has more emphasis than this. It is the gist of the whole book. We must love the Lord "with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength." Divided allegiance is no allegiance at all. Half loyalty is treason.

2. *But our hearts have idols in them.* Paul says we are temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, but most people who try to love and serve God frequently find in their hours of self-examination other objects of worship, either lodged in their hearts or pushing to get in. How shall we get rid of these "gods that our forefathers worshiped," hereditary evil tendencies, and "gods of the people round about," the outcome of evil associations?

3. *Our hearts have strong earthly affections in them* which we cannot sanely regard as idols; but what are we to do with them if God demands our *entire* hearts? To many a youth who knows he loves God, but who knows quite as clearly that he greatly loves some fellow-beings, this question presents a real problem. How can he be sure that he keeps himself free from idolatry?

4. *The true test.* He may be sure. The human affections are as intricately and elaborately organized as the human body itself. One love does not always necessarily expel another, but one love must always have dominance. An illustration may be found in an elaborate musical composition. Every note on the keyboard may be used provided it is brought into harmony with the keynote. Any note will destroy the harmony and beauty of the piece if it is not properly keyed. So God's love is not so much exclusive as all-inclusive. He does not wish us so to love him that we can love nobody else, but he wishes us so to love him that all our other affections shall range themselves in harmony with this ruling affection.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

Ask two or three of the pupils to read what they have written in answer to the questions assigned on last Sunday, and make their an-

swers the basis for discussion. Try to be semibarbarous (from the con- and how God's righteousness. To raised up from were invested were the defe people.

Time. The Joshua until 8 Place. Ther this period. T sided where he of his people. *The Book.* of the book fro

A series of fi ically drawn to There is danger overmuch time

1. *The land* the pupils to as- concerning the con- sion thereof an- What does verse

2. *The people* Ask: How long Explain who are

3. *The death* call the monumen for Israel, and a died? Where w the map the mou

4. *The new ge* What became of Who arose? W What to the work serve? (verse 11. "and served Ba do? (verses 12, 1

5. *God punishin* How did God feel did he do to pu When they stopp up? (verse 16.)

OBJEC

Bring to the cl present the memor erected at Shechem

swers the basis of a short talk concerning the judges. Try to have the pupils understand the semibarbarous condition of Israel at this time (from the conquest to the time of the kings), and how God was trying to lead the people into righteousness as well as into political independence. To accomplish both purposes he raised up from time to time fifteen judges who were invested with extraordinary power and were the defenders and the deliverers of the people.

ENVIRONMENT.

Time. The judges ruled in Israel from Joshua until Samuel the prophet.

Place. There was no national capital during this period. The judge for the time being resided where he could best serve the interests of his people.

The Book. Explain the meaning of the title of the book from which our lesson is taken.

RECORD.

A series of five word pictures may be graphically drawn to give the facts of our text. There is danger that the teacher will spend overmuch time on some of the pictures.

1. *The land possessed* (verse 6). Question the pupils to ascertain what they remember concerning the conquest of the land and the division thereof among the twelve tribes. Ask: What does verse 6 tell us the people did?

2. *The people serving the Lord* (verse 7). Ask: How long did the people serve the Lord. Explain who are meant by the elders.

3. *The death of Joshua* (verses 8, 9). Recall the monument to Joshua, speak of his work for Israel, and ask: How old was he when he died? Where was he buried? Point out on the map the mountain of Gaash.

4. *The new generation* (verses 10-13). Ask: What became of the people of Joshua's time? Who arose? What was their relation to God? To the works which he had done for Israel? What did the people do? Whom did they serve? (verse 11.) (Describe what is meant by "and served Baalim.") What else did they do? (verses 12, 13.)

5. *God punishing the people* (verses 14, 15). How did God feel toward the Israelites? What did he do to punish them? (verses 14, 15.) When they stopped sinning whom did he raise up? (verse 16.)

OBJECT ILLUSTRATION.

Bring to the class a block of wood to represent the memorial stone which Joshua had erected at Shechem as a witness to the covenant

made by the people with God. (See Josh. 24, 26.) Recall the fact that the people had neglected and forgotten this memorial, and that they suffered in consequence. Refer to memorials that the Lord has given to us to keep in mind his covenant with us; for example, the cross, the Lord's Supper, and the Bible.

EMPHASIZED TRUTH.

Have the Golden Text repeated. Teach that men are prone to forget God and to do what is wrong, that God frequently allows them to suffer in consequence of this forgetfulness and wrongdoing, but that when they repent and cry to him for deliverance he always hears and answers. Illustrate this from historical and present-day facts that can be understood by the pupils. Finally, have all print the following for the purpose of reproducing it in their Book of Heroes:

WHEN I DO WRONG

I WILL CRY UNTO THE LORD,

AND HE WILL SAVE ME.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Tell the pupils that on next Sunday we are to have a temperance lesson, and that we are to pay particular attention to verse 7 of our lesson text. Ask all who have never done so to very seriously and prayerfully consider the question: Ought I and shall I sign the pledge? Ask all who have already signed to bring their pledges with them.

Review word, "Judges."

By Way of Illustration.

Verse 7. How much a man of God has been to his generation those rarely know who stand beside his grave. Through faith in him, faith in the Eternal has been sustained. A glow went from him which insensibly raised to something like religious warmth souls that apart from such an influence would have been of the world worldly. It was said of Phillips Brooks, "His faith was proof to doubters. We can walk blindly where he walked seeing, till we see."

Joshua, a man of stout convictions and "great works." Skepticism never accomplishes. We may think that to question everything which others believe to be true shows originality and independence; but no! it is in strong conviction that independence and originality really lie. Not skepticism, but conviction, lay

behind the success of Paul, Luther, Cromwell, and the American colonies.

"The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord." A great many things that are evil in the sight of the Lord are not evil in the sight of man. The commonest standard of well-doing is the standard which the community counts the correct one. So long as a man does as well as his neighbors think he ought to do he is likely to think that he does pretty well. The next higher standard is for a man to do that which he himself thinks is right—to "do as well as he knows how." If a man gets to that point he is tolerably well satisfied himself. But the only correct standard of right is that which is right in God's sight. Even though a man's neighbors commend his course, and his conscience approves it, unless it is right in God's sight it is still a wrong course.

Verses 12, 13. We have all unconquered Canaanites in our hearts, and friendship with them is supreme folly. Many times have the conquered overcome their conquerors, as in Rome's conquest of Greece, the Goths' conquest of Rome, the Normans' conquest of England. Israel was in some respects conquered by Canaanites and other conquered tribes. Let us take care that we are not overcome by our inward foes, whom we fancy we have subdued and can afford to treat leniently.

Verses 16. This lesson teaches us wonderful thoughts of God's persistent long-suffering. Sin is old, but God's love is older. Sin is continued, but God's love is eternal. The black mass of sin towers high, but the white immensity of God's love soars high above it. We sin often, but God forgives always. "Seventy times seven"—the two perfect numbers multiplied together, and the product multiplied again by the number which is the token of divinity—is the appointed measure of man's forgiveness. It is equal to infinity. Let us recognize our own sad perseverance in sinning, and yet not be cast down, but fall back hopefully on God's miraculous perseverance in pardoning. The psalmist wailed that his sins were more than the hairs of his head; but in the same psalm he caught sight of another innumerable quantity, even God's thoughts of mercy to him, and these emboldened his falling heart.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

The history of Israel under the judges is human heart history—disobedience, unbelief, compromise with sin, captivity to it, sorrow, loss, defeat. It is, too, a history and a prophecy of God's dealings with redeemed mankind

and with each individual soul—displeasure, righteous judgment, pity, untiring effort to save.

Those of whom our lesson speaks were not the same who were called by Joshua to choose whom they would serve, and who called God to witness that they would indeed obey his voice. These were their children, the young men and women upon whom the choices and responsibilities now rested. They were not ignorant of the faith of their fathers. The book of the law was kept at Shechem, and the great stone under the oak witnessed to the covenant. But these were young people of "advanced thought." Very possibly they said: "Our fathers were too strict; their religious views were narrow. Our neighbors are not so bad as they believed them to be. We worship the true God, of course, but we respect the opinions of others; let them worship their gods. We believe in freedom of thought, and universal friendliness; it doesn't commend our religion to be too exclusive." I suppose they reasoned so, for so they acted, and so people reason and act now, for the heart is the same ever since Adam put specious human reasoning in place of the command of God. But what was the outcome? They fell into the hands of spoilers; they could not stand before their enemies; they were greatly distressed. There is no safe, easy, or reasonable way except to hear what God says and close our eyes and ears to everything contrary to it.

But, you ask, does not God command us to love everybody, and to be charitable toward all? Yes, he does. He is himself kind to the unjust, to the unthankful, and to the evil; but he never compromises with their spirit. To use an old-fashioned phrase, he loves the sinner while he hates the sin. And so must we. The temple of God has no agreement with idols; Christ has no concord with Belial; the love of the world, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life cannot dwell in the same heart with the love of the Father. One who gives time, thought, and money to worldliness and self-gratification which interferes with love and service for him will fall into the hands of spoilers, be overcome by the soul's enemies, and be greatly distressed. I have seen both men and women turn from their fathers' and mothers' faith to the gayety, extravagance, and empty pleasure of the world, and I have seen them spoiled of their power to do good, of their own peace of mind, captive to every enemy of the soul, and turning at last for comfort in sorrow to others who have kept the sweet, simple faith of the Bible. But, so good and loving is the Lord, he was sorry for these

erring people. S deliverance. S and never give covery is gone naan unsubdue wardness he ov is possible. F the Canaanites—a great arr ances to prove way of the Lor And all the willful, rebellio love, "How of as a bird her would not?"

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The names of memorized. . . roth, "spoilers," Treat this lesso weakness; (2) God's moral f mercy. . . The shiped were th sins we cherisr . . . One can ("covetousness filed. . . (1) Se God. (3) Suffe God. . . "The w continual repeti of human life, s Mr. Eugene Ste sions express th in the book of J

CHAPTERS.	SIN
Third.	{ 7
Fourth.	{ 12
Sixth.	1
Tenth.	6
Thirteenth.	1
Our Present Lesson.	{ 11-

To bring out the best poss The biographies Hezekiah, Mana So do Psa. 78. 3 by showing that tion between Si Penitence and P necessary connec Penitence. If y (Gal. 6. 7). If

erring people long ago, and planned for their deliverance. So is he sorry when we go astray, and never gives us up until the last hope of recovery is gone. Like the nations left in Canaan unsubdued, our trials and even our waywardness he overlooks for our good as far as it is possible. Five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites—a great array of trials, temptations, grievances to prove us, whether we will keep the way of the Lord as our fathers kept it, or not. And all the while he is bending over every willful, rebellious soul, saying, with unutterable love, "How often would I have gathered you as a bird her brood under her wings, but ye would not!"

The Teachers' Meeting.

The names of the judges should be thoroughly memorized. . . . Explain Baal, Baalim, Ashtaroth, "spoilors," and other unusual phrases. . . . Treat this lesson as showing, (1) Man's moral weakness; (2) Man's perverse sinfulness; (3) God's moral faithfulness; (4) God's tender mercy. . . . The nations whose gods Israel worshiped were their worst oppressors. So the sins we cherish become our severest punishers. . . . One cannot touch the pitch of idolatry ("covetousness is idolatry") without being defiled. . . . (1) Serving God. (2) Sinning against God. (3) Suffering from God. (4) Saved by God. . . . "The whole history of this period is a continual repetition of four successive phases of human life, sin, suffering, penitence, pardon." *Mr. Eugene Stock* shows how these four divisions express the moral course of Israel traced in the book of Judges, as follows:

CHAPTERS.	Sin.	Suffering.	Supplication.	Succor.
Third.....	7	8	9	9
Fourth.....	12	12-14	15	15
Sixth.....	1	2	3	4, etc.
Tenth.....	1	1, 2	6	7, etc.
Thirteenth.....	6	7	10, 15	Chap. 11.
Our Present Lesson....	1	1	(Implied.) (Implied in ver. 18.)	5
	11-13	14, 15		16

To bring out this fourfold experience would be the best possible treatment of this lesson. The biographies of Scripture—of Jacob, David, Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Peter—illustrate it. So do Psa. 78. 32-34, 38; 106. 34, 45. Apply by showing that there is an inseparable connection between Sin and Suffering and between Penitence and Pardon, but that there is no necessary connection between Suffering and Penitence. If you sin you surely will suffer (Gal. 6. 7). If you repent you surely will be

restored (Isa. 55. 7). But if you sin and suffer is it certain you will repent and be restored? No. Trace the four experiences in the story of the Prodigal Son. Have we, like him, had the experiences of Penitence and Pardon?

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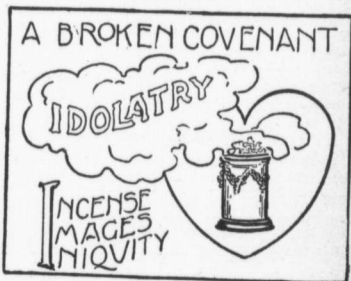
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SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

The Homilist, vol. vi, page 118. *The Treasury*, vol. vii, page 118.

Blackboard.



The loyalty of Joshua and his generation had no influence to restrain the faithless generation that succeeded them. Lacking leadership, they became indifferent to God, and, forgetting his dealings with their fathers, quickly

abandoned his service for hateful idolatries that made them enemies instead of servants. Punishment is the inevitable sequence of sin, and to backsliding Israel it came in the form of national defeat. From this dishonor they were freed by divinely appointed men; but when iniquity lies at the heart mercy alone does not

suffice, and they descended to yet baser deeds. There is but one way to escape sin and its results, and that is by conversion and regeneration of the heart.

Coloring.—Heart, red; altar, cream; cloud, bluish white; word, red; other words, white and purple.

LESSON VIII. World's Temperance Lesson.

[Nov. 23.]

GOLDEN TEXT. They also have erred through wine. Isa. 28. 7.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 8-13. Read Isa. 28.]

Isa. 28. 1-7.

[Commit to memory verse 7.]

1 Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which *are* on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

2 Behold, the LORD hath a mighty and strong one, *which* as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

3 The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under feet:

4 And the glorious beauty, which *is* on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; and *which* when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.

5 In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,

6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

7 But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

Time.—About B. C. 725. **Place.**—This prophecy was probably delivered in Jerusalem.

Home Readings.

- M. World's Temperance Lesson. Isa. 28. 1-13.
 Tu. The mocker. Prov. 20. 1-13.
 W. Good counsel. Prov. 23. 15-25.
 Th. Woe to the drunkard. Isa. 5. 11-24.
 F. Danger of drink. Amos 6. 1-11.
 S. God's punishment. Nah. 1. 1-10.
 S. Drunkards shut out. 1 Cor. 6. 1-11.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 333.

The army of temperance is gathering its men,
 From hill-top and mountain, from valley and
 from glen.

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

1 Woe to the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim, and to the fading flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley of them that are overcome with wine!

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one; as a tempest of hail, a destroying storm, as a tempest of mighty waters overflowing, will he cast down to the earth with the hand.

3 The crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden under foot: 4 and the fading flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be as the first-ripe fig before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.

5 In that day will Jehovah of hosts become a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people; 6 and a spirit of justice to him that sitteth in judgment, and strength to them that turn back the battle at the gate. 7 And even these reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink; the priest and the prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they stagger with strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 338.

See, the Church of Christ arises,
 Smile or frown of man despises,
 Forward is the cry it raises,
 For a great crusade.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 337.

Friends of temperance, onward go,
 Fear not ye to face the foe;
 God and truth are on our side,
 Needful strength will be supplied.

Questions for Senior Scholars.

1. *The Drunkards of Ephraim and Judah.*

What city is meant by the crown of pride? Who are included in the term "drunkards of Ephraim"?

* The American Revision, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

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Question

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What will the Lord be to his faithful ones in the day of his judgment?

2. *Instruction Despised.*

How did the Lord instruct Israel?

Why did the people weary of the Lord's teaching?

What had the Lord promised if they would hear and heed his word?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

1. *Ravages of Strong Drink* (verse 1).

What harm does strong drink do the home?

What injury to the individual?

What ravages in the nation?

How does it affect the body?

How does it blight life's prospects?

What is its harmfulness to mind and character?

2. *Retribution from God for Strong Drink* (verses 2-4).

What has God said in Prov. 20. 1?

What in Prov. 23. 29-35?

Can any drunkard enter heaven? (1 Cor. 6. 10.)

How must God cease to care for men when they become drunkards?

How will his laws destroy them?

3. *Riches of God Impossible to It* (verses 5, 6).

Can a drinking man praise or worship God?

Can God really bless him?

What spiritual blessings are impossible for him to attain?

How does he mar God's image in himself?

How does he bring confusion into his God-given nature?

What joy and power of Christian life is the drunkard sure to forfeit?

4. *Right Thinking and Doing Confused by Strong Drink* (verse 7).

How are good people deceived by strong drink?

Is it easy to unite good people on any plan for overthrowing it?

How are many good people thoughtlessly supporting strong drink?

If a man drinks ever so little, is he likely to think clearly on any remedy for drunkenness?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

What was our world when God made it? *It was a good world.*

What did he give the first people? *All good things for food and drink.*

What fruit was good for both? *The grape.*
What is the juice of the grape? *A pleasant and healthful drink.*

What happens when it decays? *A poison is formed in it.*

What is it called? *Alcohol.*

When did people find out about it? *After sin came into the world.*

Who wrote about the drunkards? *Isaiah.*

What does he mean by saying "Woe" to them? *That they would have sorrow.*

What did he say was coming? *A storm from the Lord.*

What did he think might cure this sin? *The word of the Lord.*

How should it be given? *"Line upon line . . . here a little and there a little."*

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. To what does God liken the drunken pleasures of those who "are overcome with wine"? *To a fading flower.*

2. To what does God liken the wisdom, rectitude, and strength which he offers his people? *To a diadem of beauty.*

3. What does the prophet hold forth as the chief cause of crime and error? *Wine and strong drink.*

4. In what way does he say children should be taught the principles of holiness and temperance? *By line upon line, precept upon precept.*

5. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"They also,"* etc.

The Church Catechism.

2. For what purpose did God create man? God created man to glorify Him by serving Him in love, and to enjoy Him in holiness and happiness for ever.

Revelation 4. 11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

1 Corinthians 10. 31. Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Woe and Blessedness.

I. WOE—TO WHOM?

To the crown of pride, to the drunkards. v. 1.

Who hath woe? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Prov. 23. 29, 30.

Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink. Hab. 2. 15.

II. WHAT WOE?

Through strong drink they err in vision, they stumble in judgment. v. 7.

Wine and new wine take away the [understanding]. Hos. 4. 11.

Every soul which shall not hearken shall be destroyed. Acts 3. 23.

III. BLESSEDNESS—TO WHOM?

Unto the residue of [the Lord's] people. v. 5.

Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust. Psa. 40. 4.

Blessed are all they that wait for him. Isa. 30. 18.

IV. WHAT BLESSEDNESS?

Judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and strength to them that turn the battle. v. 6.

A man's judgment cometh from the Lord. Prov. 29. 26.

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. Isa. 40. 31.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

We now pass down the centuries to the time of the decay of Israel and Judah, when the most eloquent of all the prophets, Isaiah, witnessed for the Lord in Jerusalem. His words are here directed to both the Hebrew nations, in rebuke against Ephraim (the kingdom of the Ten Tribes of Israel), and in encouragement of Judah. Of the two Ephraim was the stronger in secular advantages. It had the largest and most fertile territory, it had the most progressive people, and in commerce and military prowess it seems to have been usually in advance of the southern kingdom. Probably the modern mind would have regarded Ephraim as the more advanced in civilization. But it had begun wrong by debasing the worship of Jehovah; and its easy communication with foreign nations had brought many sorts of heathenism into popularity. The intermarriage of its royal family with the Phoenicians had led to the royal support of the vilest of ancient idolatries. Riches had increased, and with riches had come luxury, and with luxury had come disregard of the rights of the poor; a downward course which often has been repeated in history: Increase of commercial opportunities; increase of wealth; increase of luxury; decrease of trust in God; decrease of human sympathy; self-indulgence and increasing use of intoxicants: national overthrow. While Israel thus prospered and sinned, Judah, which had held fast to the true God and to the true methods of worship, had been temporarily discouraged. It, too, had some bad men as rulers, but just now a noble young king, Hezekiah, had come to the throne. Very timid he was, but not at all irresolute. Thoroughly loyal to Jehovah, he greatly emphasized the pure worship of the temple in Jerusalem, and by example and enactment brought the people into a higher moral condition than they had reached for many years. But his was a little morsel of a kingdom, only "the residue" of God's people at best, and he greatly needed encouragement. Isaiah here by command of God gives it to him and to his faithful followers.

Verse 1. Woe. Misery. To the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim. Samaria, the capital city of Israel, was built on a beautifully rounded hill, which suggested to the poetic mind the majestic dome of the human head. All about the city were hills, which encircled it like a crown; its people represented the Ten Tribes as Paris represents France; it was the center of the sinful national vainglory; consequently they are classed all together as drunkards. Not that indulgence in intoxicants was their only sin, but that it was one of their most noticeable and characteristic sins. They were men living entirely for this world and without regard to spiritual life. Its glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with

wine. Whose floral crown, a wreath of beauty, worn proudly on the head of Ephraim, is withering and decaying; Ephraim is a nation of fertile valleys, rich plantations, but they are owned by drunkards.

2. The Lord hath a mighty and strong one. God has a human agent thoroughly capable of carrying out his purposes. His coming is compared to a tempest of hail, a destroying storm, and a flood of mighty waters, overflowing. These are the three great natural devastating forces with which Israel was familiar. Israel was a land without large rivers, but its gulleys were turned in winter into channels for great rushing waters.

3. The crown of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under foot. The

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repetition here from verse 1 gives poetic emphasis to the statement. As a withering and decaying wreath of flowers would be thrown aside, and, in an Eastern city, left in the narrow street to be trodden by passers-by, so shall the nation be set aside as useless and dead. "Its fat valleys were soon turned into wastes of sand and stone."

4. *The glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, is another repetition from verse 1, and has already been explained. This wreath shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer.* That is, the early fruit so welcome to the consumer. *When he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he catcheth it up.* One who has not tasted strawberries for a year is glad when early berries are placed upon his table and hastens to consume them; so this mighty and strong one (the Assyrian with his army) shall regard Samaria and Ephraim as pleasant things to be devoured.

5. Now the prophet turns from Israel to Judah. *In that day, when destruction shall come upon the unfaithful, the Lord ["Jehovah"] of hosts (armies) shall be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty.* The glory of Samaria and the nation of Ephraim or Israel has been compared to a withering wreath. Now the glory of Jerusalem and the smaller

nation of Judah is compared to a crown of gold and precious stones, brilliant and unfading. This promise is for *the residue* of God's people, the small remainder of faithful ones in Jerusalem.

6. How shall this glory and beauty of Jehovah be manifested to the faithful people of Judah? Isaiah poetically describes it as a crown and a diadem, but in everyday life how shall Jerusalem experience the Lord's support? As a nation Judah needed two things—good internal rule, "judgment and justice," and good external rule, ability to hold its own among the nations. And God's strength will come to support these two things, for always "according to our needs" it is "done unto us." He will give a *spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and a spirit of strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.* These are the fruits of godly temperance.

7. Here comes the melancholy statement that even in Jerusalem the crowds, unlike their pure-minded ruler, have given way to self-indulgence. *Even the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, and consequently they are swallowed up; they are out of the way; they err in vision; they stumble in judgment.*

The entire picture presented by the lesson is full of "temperance" warning and hope.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Drunkards? And are there drunkards yet? Have we lived so long and have not learned enough to avoid drunkenness? Are we not sensible people, and does not experience teach sensible people? So we are told; but we are told a goodly number of things which are not true. The popular proverbs are frequently half truths, or less than half truths. The fact is we do not learn by experience. Neither advice nor experience teaches those who do not wish to be taught. It is not true that a burned child avoids the fire. Burning may not burn the foolishness out of him. Does the experience of the fool one makes of himself when drunk deter him from another folly of the same sort? Certainly not. The folly of this is unaccountable. We think and say we are people of sense; and anyone could prove by watching us a single day that we were imbeciles. Drunkenness, did it ever do anybody any good? No. Did it ever stimulate for any consecutive number of times the fancy or the higher imagination or the desire to be good and do good? No. Does it drive men and women (for the pity, the wide pity is that there are women drunkards and drinkers, and

that not among the slums so called, altogether) to good deeds or bad deeds? Bad deeds, and never good deeds. Can any good word be said for intemperance? Not one. Even poets in our time are out of the poor business of writing madrigals to wine. That is a lost art. Well lost. The greatest poets were not winebibbers—Milton, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Longfellow, Lowell, Dante. Aflatus does not come from drink. It stimulates to dry up. It gives nightmare but not daydream. And poets have learned not to write in its favor. Note this in the poetry of our time. Read in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* Holmes's witty revision of a drinking song by a total abstainer, and see the cutting irony included in the witticism.

Will men practice a thing for which not one good word can be said? They will not, most certainly, is our reply. But wait a minute. Consult the facts. Do they? Yes. Are those who drink ignorant of the results? No. Why do they drink? Why does a pig wallow in the mire? The pig wants to. Why does a young drinker drink? Because he wants to. Why

does an old drinker drink? Because he must. There is a tyranny in sin. A man drinks in a spirit of joviality and dies in a delirium. Pity the end, but shame for the beginning. The way to avoid drunkenness—is there one? Surely. And what is it? Don't begin. "Touch not, taste not, handle not." There is safety, safety absolute.

Drinking is serving one's stomach; and that is not a high grade of business for thinking people to indulge in. Why not serve one's brain? Why not serve one's muscle? Why not serve one's nobler influence? Why not serve one's family and community? Are not such services regal accomplishments? But to be servant, body servant to your stomach? How low are we fallen!

A drinking man is a poor insurance risk. Does this mean a drunkard? No. It means a moderate drinker. A drinking man is not wanted in the best business enterprises. The other day the Burlington railroad issued an order forbidding its employes drinking when off duty even. Is the railroad in the business of reform? No. In the business of running a railroad, and knows that a man who drinks when off duty is unreliable when on duty. Business and drink are not good friends, and in the last word are foes to the death. In my city is a painted bunting over a saloon having this written on it: "Say U, — says [giving the name of the keeper of that saloon], if drinking hurts your business, quit your business." There was one saloon keeper who told the truth. That is what all saloon keepers act on. Quit your business but patronize mine. What irony was in that saloonist's sign! But he did not know it. And that is what his customers do, many of them. They quit their business and keep on drinking. I saw some of them. They sat in a dull stupor at the doors or lounged in, beasts meant of God to have been men. And some woman loved those men, and some little children. Think of it! How shall a man keep clear of such sorry destination? Answer, by keeping away from drink—all drink—wine, beer, all intoxicants. You can do more work, stand more cold, stand more heat, think with greater perspicuity, live more healthily while you live, and never be ashamed of yourself because you have been a beast when built to be a man.

Let us keep two things in mind: One is, the saloon keeper is a wicked man. The second is, the drinker is a wicked man plus a fool. The wine seller is money maker in a wicked business. He is driving a shrewd and bad bargain.

He is making a habit on a man which will insure his business. He is ruining the man, to be sure, but cares nothing for that. He is selling his own soul for gain. He is paying extravagantly high for the money he makes. But we must not blame him to the excusing the wine drinker. He is a wicked fool. He enriches the wine seller and impoverishes himself. He beggars all the hopes society has in him, and bankrupts all loves placed in his keeping. He is a fool to be a prey to hard-hearted wickedness that seeks his ruin. He is, in short, compound of villain and fool. Let every man who drinks face these truths. He plays the fool; he plays the villain; and the two make a sorry compound. I fear sometimes we appear to exonerate the drinker in our blame for the drinker maker. But we must not. Each is blamable. But of the two the drinker is the more blameworthy, because he commits suicide, social and moral. He walks wide-awake into the death the saloonist plans for him. Prohibition of liquor selling is what in law we from our hearts wish. But prohibition of one's self becoming party to drunkenness is what in life each must practice. That is total abstinence. No drunkards grow on the tree of total abstinence. Man, be not knave and fool combined. Flee far from danger. Take no risks. Where the swirls are above the rapids do not trust your boat.

Drunkards of Ephraim. But what of that? There is no geography for drunkards. They do not know the points of the compass. They are of no nationality. They are of all. Drunkards of Paris, London, Berlin, New York, they have all the same deplorable characteristics. Isaiah has hit them all off in his characterization. They shall all be trodden under foot. We have heard much of wine-drinking France not being drunken. That silly falsehood has been told frequently; and now even secularity in France cries aloud that France is a race of drunkards. Beer-drinking Germany has been referred to as proof of the comparative harmlessness of beer as a beverage; and now the emperor of Germany is alarmed at the havoc it works. There are no provinces in the empire of drunkenness. They are all strewn with dead men's bones. They are all valleys of loss and heartbreak and shame and blasphemy. Erring through wine is a universal, melancholy experience. Everybody who uses strong drink errs in so doing: the priest, that is deplorable, unforgivable; the moderate drinker, that is a community peril. All such do err in vision and stumble in judgment.

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Thoughts for Young People.

CROWNS.

1. *The crown of folly.* It is on the head of him who lives for momentary gratification. It indicates self-indulgence—the misuse of one's intellectual and moral powers as ministers to self-love. It indicates "pride," and its wearer usually sits in the seat of the scorners. Only those liquor drinkers who have already begun to feel the fangs of the serpent are humble; others deride wholesome temperance advice. It soon fades, and he who wears it is on the edge of utter destruction.

2. *The crown of wisdom.* It is worn by him who follows the counsels of the Most High, for "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Consequently it indicates purity, temperance, prayerfulness, self-denial, humility. "Against such there is no law." When questions difficult of decision arise, when the great struggles of life try us severely, the Lord of hosts will give "a spirit of judgment" and "strength" to "the residue of his people," who, turning away from the wine-cup and all other evil, have been crowned by Wisdom.

3. *The crown of eternal life* is on the head of him who cherishes spiritual hope. The day of the death of such a man will be the day of his higher coronation as a prince in the heavenly kingdom.

4. *Those who wear the crowns of wisdom and eternal life* call many to righteousness. They teach unweariedly in season and out of season. They bear witness of divine things to the incorrigibly wicked as well as to the good. However others may refuse to listen, it is our duty to give precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORICAL.

There is no historical connection between today's lesson and the other lessons of this quarter. The teacher should be prepared to tell the pupils a few facts about Isaiah and his wonderful book.

ENVIRONMENT.

Time. Isaiah prophesied from B. C. 759 to B. C. 698 (?). The date usually assigned to our lesson is 725 B. C.

Place. Jerusalem, where Isaiah is condemning the rulers of Israel for their sin and warning them of their dangers.

RECORD.

It will be impossible in classes of Intermediates to handle the whole of the lesson text

or to teach all of the truths suggested therein. We will therefore take verse 7 as the one which shall form the basis of our teaching. We will consider this verse by looking at four pictures:

1. *Erring priests.* The picture presented to us is that of erring priests (see margin of Revised Version), erring in vision and judgment. Picture strongly the effect of drink on both the physical and moral nature of the priest.

2. *Erring prophets.* This picture is the same as the preceding one, with the substitution of prophets for priests.

3. *Erring people.* Explain that Ephraim (verse 1) is put for the whole people, and that they are called drunkards. While there were some who did not drink, this word describes the nation as a whole.

4. *A smitten nation.* Because of their sins, one of which is the drunkenness referred to above, the Lord will smite his people. This was accomplished by the Lord giving Israel over into the hands of her enemies. (Samaria was captured by the Assyrians about four years after this prophecy, and the northern kingdom was destroyed.)

OBJECT ILLUSTRATION.

My classmate at college was a bright young man from a good home, enjoying many advantages that some of the other students lacked. Some years after graduation I saw him intoxicated leaning against a lamp-post, looking more like a beast than a man. Such objects may be found in every community to illustrate to-day's lesson.

EMPHASIZED TRUTH.

All Christians are agreed as to the evil of strong drink. All thinkers declare that youth is the time in which habits are formed. The conclusion is, therefore, that the teacher of Intermediates has a golden opportunity to impress the value of total abstinence and should endeavor to get the pupils to pledge to abstain from drinking intoxicants.

Coleridge says: "Evil habit first draws, then drags, then drives." This is especially true of intoxicants. Impress, therefore, the truth that safety is found only in absolute refusal to be drawn by the cup however pleasantly or seductively it may be offered. Illustrate this truth in various ways, and then have all the pupils print:

STRONG DRINK

DRAWS FROM GOD.
DRAWS INTO EVIL.
DRIVES TO RUIN.

Note: After the class study the teacher may

have the pupils tarry for a few minutes. Ask all who have already signed the pledge to show their cards, and impress upon them the necessity of increasing vigilance against the temptation to take the first drink. Have any who have made up their minds to do so sign the pledge, and conclude the exercises with an earnest prayer, while all the pupils on bended knees lift their hearts to God for help.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

Ask the pupils to write in their Book of Heroes the names of as many of the judges as they can learn during the week, and also a short account of Gideon. Ask them to read especially the sixth chapter of Judges.

Review word, "Temperance."

By Way of Illustration.

Warnings. The French Anti-Alcohol Society in pursuance of its campaign against strong drink is displaying on walls and other suitable places in Paris bills on which are printed sentences like these: "Alcohol nowadays is responsible for more ravages than pestilence, famine, or war.—*Gladstone.*" "Do you know what that man is drinking from the glass which shakes in his trembling hand? He is drinking the tears and the blood and the life of his wife and children.—*Lamounais.*" "Alcohol gives neither health nor strength nor warmth nor happiness. It does nothing but harm.—*Tolstoi.*"

"Overcome with wine." Among the most emphatic lessons taught by history are those which show how nations have gone out in darkness because of intemperance. Temperance is power, says history. Israel, God's own nation, while "stunned with wine," was conquered by a heathen people, Assyria. Assyria, becoming indulgent and drunken, is soon captured by Babylon. And Babylon, in an hour of drunken feasting, is conquered by Persia. Rome, rich and powerful, skilled in military tactics, is snared and taken by a barbarian people, because Rome was intemperate and the barbarians were temperate. As long as the saloon power increases in Canada, patriots may well fear for the perpetuity of this commonwealth.

"Crown of glory," "diadem of beauty." They were the "residue of his people," the remnant, the minority, but they were on God's side and he gave them glory and beauty, wisdom and "strength to turn the battle to the gate." This is the position which Christians hold in the world. They may seem like a "residue" alone and forsaken, but God will make them a power

of attraction—"glory and beauty." George Eliot says: "When God makes his presence felt through us we are like the burning bush: Moses did not take any sort of heed to what kind of a bush it was. He saw only the glory of the Lord."

While the majority were defeated the "residue" were to turn the battle to the gate—they were to have victory. "Victory" is the key word of Revelation. It is an important part of the Gospel message. Victory for the "residue" is illustrated most forcibly and beautifully in the earliest Christian art. Christians were persecuted, burned at the stake, thrown to wild beasts, yet this is the symbol which perhaps more often than any other appears—the palm which meant victory. It is carved on their tombs and lines their catacombs. In their pictures it is put into the hands of martyrs and is waved by angel hands over all the dark and dreadful scenes of martyrdom. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Verses 7. A schoolboy in Australia recently put the matter tersely thus: "I abstain from liquor because if I wish to excel as a cricketer, Grace says 'Abstain;' as a walker, Weston says, 'Abstain;' as an oarsman, Hanlon says, 'Abstain;' as a swimmer, Webb says, 'Abstain;' as a missionary, Livingstone says, 'Abstain;' as a doctor, Clark says, 'Abstain;' as a preacher, Farrar says, 'Abstain.'"—*Youth's Companion.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

What more can be said than has been said with burning words from hearts afire on this subject of our lesson? No picture of the evil and the woe in the world through drunkenness can be exaggerated. Experience presses expression. The records are written in tears and in blood. If any words of mine could make you fear and hate so that you would never touch the accursed thing I would spend my last breath to say it. But you have only to read the open book of lives around you to know the havoc wrought by intoxicating liquor. Very few families escape its blighting touch. Somewhere among those we love most of us have seen the "glorious beauty as a fading flower and as the hasty fruit before the summer," the hope and promise of life trodden under foot.

But the evil will not be stopped by breaking our hearts over it nor by haunting our brain with its horrors. If broken hearts could arrest it there have been enough since the days of Ephraim, and are enough in the world now, to turn back the stream of crime and anguish at

its fullest tide. It is a high and noble rush on like

What can you do like the leaven to leaven pure nature, sale, and purposes. Leaven is a mixture of nature and the use of liquor on each individual effect of alcohol will and impure course is that can see clearly. Many a one will be a destroyer, but will be gone, a wretched being from this body tasted it would. So our part must be based upon the edge of the evil mind, and more live consistent, instruct others temperance sense influence, and "make a covenant with hell, are, by any course and then Many a one has his manhood a snare of "good found that she when she smiles a drinking friend. Do not strong drink there is not v it is used social to conviction. you; never yield of anyone.

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its fullest tide. But broken hearts piled mountain high avail nothing, the deadly torrent rushes on like the fiery lava of Mount Pelee.

What can we do? Each one of us may be, like the leaven in the measure of meal, a force to leaven public sentiment against the manufacture, sale, and use of intoxicants for drinking purposes. Legislation may regulate the manufacture and the sale, but nothing will prevent the use of liquor except the will and choice of each individual. And because the physiological effect of alcohol upon the brain is to weaken the will and impair the judgment the only safe course is that of total abstinence, so that we can see clearly and have power to choose wisely. Many a one would gladly break away from the destroyer, but they find too late the power to will is gone, and they can only cry out, "O wretched being that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" If they had never tasted it it would never have taken them captive. So our part must be, first, to have conviction based upon intelligent observation, and knowledge of the effect of alcohol upon the body, mind, and moral nature of the drinker; then to live consistently with such conviction; then to instruct others in the facts and so create a true temperance sentiment in all whom we may influence, and in the community. Never "make a covenant with death, nor be at agreement with hell," as the prophet's strong words are, by any compromise, taking a social glass now and then or smiling upon those who do. Many a one has found the glorious beauty of his manhood a fading flower because of this snare of "good fellowship." Many a girl has found that she hid herself "under falsehood" when she smiled rather than frowned upon social drinking for herself, her brother, or her friend. Do not be deceived; wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. If you find yourself where it is used socially be brave, be honest, be true to conviction. Say "No" when it is offered you; never yield to the example or persuasion of anyone.

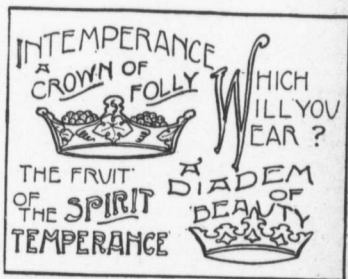
Read this chapter of our lesson and see the end of the scorner and the horror of this overflowing scourge. And may the Lord of hosts be for you a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, and for a spirit of judgment and for strength for you to turn the battle to the gate.

The Teachers' Meeting.

This is a strong temperance lesson. Its apparent difficulties lie in its rhetorical figures. Call for all unusual phrases, make a list of

them, and thoroughly explain them. For example, "crown of pride," "head of the fat valleys," "hasty fruit," "whose glorious beauty is a fading flower," the "mighty and strong one." The explanation of such phrases will furnish all necessary geographical and historical information and be a serviceable introduction to the lesson; but do not spend too much time upon it. . . . Three pictures are presented: Verses 1-4; Verses 5, 6; and Verse 7—The Fading Crown, the Enduring Crown, and the Discrowned Ones. When these three scenes have been fixed in memory a most effective temperance lesson has been taught, without much need of appended moralizing. Illustrative matter in great plenty is to be found in Kings and Chronicles, and in almost any Bible dictionary. *First*, we are shown the iniquitous self-indulgence of the wealthy classes of Ephraim, the Israelite monarchy. Their luxury and their awful overthrow are well symbolized by the "fading flower" and the "hasty fruit." *Secondly*, the success of the godly Hezekiah, King of Judah, who was divinely guided through great political dangers. Jehovah gave to him not a Withering Wreath but a Crown of Glory. *Thirdly*, the causes of the misery of the Discrowned Ones—"wine" and "strong drink." *The additional study verses* suggest the great remedy. Children must be taught principles of good conduct from the word of God. "All lasting reform must begin at the cradle and the school desk."

Blackboard.



As the crown is a symbol of earthly rank it is employed to signify the moral status of a man. The crown of luxury and pride that means life of selfish indulgence is a reproach and a dishonor. For a brief experience of questionable pleasure, men will forfeit their own and the happiness of many related or associated

with them. But there is a fruit of the Holy Spirit which yields to those who cultivate it a diadem of beauty, honor, and happiness. That fruit is temperance, which means abstinence from harmful things, and moderation in all other things.

Coloring.—Crowns: first, purple and white; second, bright yellow; wording: cream, varied with light and dark blue.

Library References.

THE TEMPERANCE QUESTION.—The lesson on the subject in March is followed by a list of the recent books on the subject. The following are some of the more recent articles in the periodicals: *The Quarterly Journal of Inebriety*, edited by T. D. Crothers, M.D., contains many

articles of permanent and scientific value on the subject. "Temperance and the Bible," *The Biblical World*, vol. xviii, page 361. "Various Views, *The Outlook*, vol. lxvii, page 369. "True Temperance Reform, *The Outlook*, vol. lxvii, page 480. "Temperance—What Blocks the Way?" *The Economic Review*, vol. xi, page 153. "The Drink Question as a Financial Problem," *The Preacher's Magazine*, 1898, page 435. "The Progress of Temperance in Great Britain," *The Homiletic Monthly*, vol. xxxix, page 99.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 5.—*Metropolitan Pulpit*, vol. ii, page 204. *Leighton, Works*, vol. ii, page 170.

Verse 7.—*The Homiletic Review*, vol. xxxiii, page 183.

LESSON IX. Gideon and the Three Hundred.

[Nov. 30.]

GOLDEN TEXT. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. Psa. 118. 8.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Study also verses 16-21. Read Judg. chapters 6-8.]

Judg. 7. 1-8.

[Commit to memory verses 19-21.]

1 Then Je-rub'ba-al, who is Gid'e-on, and all the people that *scare* with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Ha'rod: so that the host of the Mid'i-an-ites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Mo'reh, in the valley.

2 And the LORD said unto Gid'e-on. The people that *are* with thee *are* too many for me to give the Mid'i-an-ites into their hands, lest Is-ra-el vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gil'e-ad. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the LORD said unto Gid'e-on. The people *are* yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, *that* of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gid'e-on. Every one that lapped of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And the LORD said unto Gid'e-on, By the

AMERICAN REVISED VERSION.*

1 Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and encamped beside the spring of Harod: and the camp of Midian was on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. 3 Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and trembling, let him return and depart from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. 5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and Jehovah said unto Gideon, Every one that lapped of the water with his tongue, as a dog lapped, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. 6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. 7 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, By

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three hundred and deliver it and let all the place.

8 So the people and their trumpets raised every voice those three hundred men were bene-

Time.—B. valley of Jezre-

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three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Mid'ian-ites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Is'ra-el every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Mid'ian was beneath him in the valley.

Time.—B. C. 1249 (Usher). **Place.**—The valley of Jezreel.

Home Readings.

- M.* Call of Gideon. Judg. 6. 7-24.
Tu. Gideon assured. Judg. 6. 33-40.
W. Gideon and the Three Hundred. Judg. 7. 1-8.
Th. Gideon and the Three Hundred. Judg. 7. 9-18.
F. Gideon and the Three Hundred. Judg. 7. 19-25.
S. Power in weakness. Zech. 4. 1-10.
S. Strength from God. Isa. 40. 21-31.

Lesson Hymns.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 143.

Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
 Though pressed by every foe!
 That will not tremble on the brink
 Of any earthly woe.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 94.

Thy faithfulness, Lord, each moment we find,
 So true to thy word, so loving and kind;
 Thy mercy so tender to all the lost race,
 The vilest offender may turn and find grace.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. *98.

Depth of mercy, can there be
 Mercy still reserved for me?
 Can my God his wrath forebear?
 Me, the chief of sinners, spare?

Questions for Senior Scholars.

- Gideon, the Man of Valor.*
 - Who had given Gideon the name of Jerubbaal?
 - On what occasion was it given to him?
 - What was the size of Gideon's army?
 - Against whom did he lead this force?
 - What reason did the Lord give to Gideon for reducing the size of his army?
 - Who first were dismissed from the army?
 - How many were afraid?
 - How many remained who were ready for battle?
 - What further tests were made in order to make the force of Gideon smaller?
 - How many were finally selected?
 - Why did they take victuals with them?
- The Rout of the Midianites.*
 - In what divisions did Gideon marshal his little band?
 - With what was each soldier furnished?

the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thy hand; and let all the people go every man unto his place. 8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets; and he sent all the men of Israel every man unto his tent, but retained the three hundred men: and the camp of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

How were they to approach the camp of the enemy?

What time was selected for the attack?

How was their presence made known to the Midianites?

What was their cry?

In whose might were they going against their foes?

Questions for Intermediate Scholars.

The growth of real heroes:

1. *Obedient* (verses 1, 2).

How many men responded to Gideon's call for soldiers against Midian?

How many men had Midian?

Where was Israel encamped?

Who had called Gideon to this work?

What do we call the office he filled?

How many judges were there?

2. *Obedient and Courageous* (verse 3).

Why did God want Gideon's army reduced?

What permission did he give to all soldiers?

Why was it not very disgraceful to accept this offer?

Would any general not sure of God's help engage in a battle against such odds?

What do you call these twenty-two thousand instead of real cowards?

Can God do his work with people who are always measuring their own strength and the strength of the foe?

3. *Obedient, Courageous, and Full of Faith* (verses 4-8).

What did God say about Gideon's army of ten thousand?

What new test did he propose?

What does such a little thing as the way we drink water show of character?

Do little acts indicate our spirit and character?

What particular qualities would lapping the water show?

What does overgreedy eating show of a boy's or a girl's spirit?

Questions for Younger Scholars.

Why was Israel so often in trouble? *Be-cause of idolatry.*

What heathen people now distressed them?
The Midianites.

What did Israel do? *Cried to the Lord.*
Whom did he send them? *Gideon.*
Did Gideon think himself strong? *No.*
Whose commands did he follow? *The Lord's sword.*

What did he first do? *He destroyed the altar of Baal and built an altar to the Lord.*
How large an army did he gather? *Thirty-two thousand men.*

How many did he finally use? *Three hundred.*
How were they chosen? *By the way they drank water.*

What did each soldier carry to battle? *A trumpet, and a lamp in a pitcher.*
What happened when the trumpets sounded? *Each man broke his pitcher.*

What did he cry? *"The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"*

What frightened the enemy away? *The sudden light and noise.*

Who really fought for Israel? *The Lord.*

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Multiplication by Division.

I. THIRTY-TWO THOUSAND.

Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return. v. 3.

Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die? *Isa. 51. 12.*

No man looking back is fit for the kingdom. *Luke 9. 62.*

II. TEN THOUSAND.

Of whom I say unto thee, This shall go, the same shall go. v. 4.

I the Lord search the heart. *Jer. 17. 10.*
Many are called, but few are chosen. *Matt. 22. 14.*

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

To teach this lesson effectively the whole story of Gideon must be told. It is hardly possible to retell it with greater vividness than in the words of the Bible. The spiritual lessons are inseparable from the story; so the best efforts of the teacher may well be given to the story. The despicable idolatry of Israel; the "seven years of sore distress" when Midianites, Amalekites, and "children of the East" settled down on the fat lands, bringing their families, tents, and cattle, and driving the Israelites into dens and caves; the anguished cry for help, and God's first answer given by a stern prophet, and then an encouraging "angel of the Lord"—these are the introductory facts. The angel was sent to Gideon, whose name, "The hewer," reminds us of the popular nickname of President Lincoln, "The railsplitter." Gideon was a Manassite, and lived with his father west of the Jordan. By putting together Judg. 6. 15-19; 8. 1-3, 18, we learn that he was humble, brave-hearted, of large faith, sagacious and adroit, and princely looking—"a born leader." When the angel came he was threshing wheat in a hidden place. Gideon's conversation with the angel furnishes the key to the entire story; dwell on it. His self-distrust and request for a sign, Jehovah's patient dealing with him, and his prompt advocacy of Jehovah's cause so soon as he felt sure of the divine call by

The Lesson Catechism.

(For the entire school.)

1. Whom did God call to deliver Israel from the Midianites? *Gideon.*
2. How many people came at his call to fight the Midianites? *Thirty-two thousand.*
3. What did God say of this army? *"The people are too many."*
4. How many did God choose out of them? *Three hundred men.*
5. What did God do by the three hundred? *He delivered Israel.*
6. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"It is better," etc.*

The Church Catechism.

3. What is religion? Religion is faith, love, and filial fear towards God, and the service of God in all the relations of life.

Micah 6. 8. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

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the destruction of Baal's altar—these facts bring us to a second stage in the advancing story. Then we read of the concentration of the enemy, of the summoning of the army of the Lord, made up from four tribes, Manasseh, Asher, Naphtali, and Zebulun, and of the sign of the fleece graciously granted by the Lord, which last miracle introduces our lesson proper.

Verse 1. *Jerubbaal*, meaning "Let-Baal-defend-himself," was a name given to *Gideon* when he destroyed the idol's altar. He and all the people that were with him, numbering thirty-two thousand, rose up early, marched at daybreak, and pitched beside the well of *Harod*. This place is not mentioned elsewhere, but is usually identified with "the fount which is in *Jezeel*" (1 Sam. 29, 1), now called *Ain Jahlood*. *Harod* means "Trembling." The host of the *Midianites* (probably bearing more resemblance to an immense gathering of Bedouin, with families and cattle, than to an organized and disciplined army, but very terrible to Israel because of their numbers and savagery) were on the north side of them, by the hill of *Morch*, a place commonly called Little Hermon, north of *Gilboa*, and separated from it by the valley of *Jezeel*, a little more than two and a half miles wide.

2. *The Lord said.* "It must be remembered that this whole movement was essentially a religious one. It began with prayer (Judg. 6, 6, 7), it was followed up by repentance (Judg. 6, 27, 28), and the great purpose of it was to turn the hearts of the nation back to the God of their fathers. The Lord himself, therefore, graciously forwarded this end by making it plain that the deliverance from their oppression was his work, and his only."—*Bishop Hervey.*

3. *Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early.* Leave just as soon as possible. From *Mount Gilead* are three very puzzling words. The only *Gilead* that we know of *Gideon's* army was far from, but they were near to, *Gilboa*, which only differs by one letter in the Hebrew. Perhaps the best explanatory conjecture is that there was a *Mount Gilead* in the neighborhood of this battlefield, and only mentioned here. Twenty and two thousand confessed themselves "fearful and afraid," and sneaked back to their dens and caves. As a piece of military strategy this divinely suggested defection was masterly. The *Midianites* would lightly esteem an army from which more than two thirds had deserted, and neglect aggressive plans which might otherwise have been adopted.

4-6. *Jehovah* declares that timidity is not the only disqualification for service. The vic-

tory must be manifestly the Lord's. *Gideon* was told to march his troops down to the water (of *Harod*, probably), and apparently himself did not know the criterion until the people came there. It is generally explained that the "lapping" as a dog lappeth showed a more soldierly and self-controlled spirit than the "kneeling down and drinking without stint of the spring itself." Another explanation is that this symbolic act was rather a test of faith in *Jehovah* than of military characteristics. Worshipers of *Baal* are elsewhere described as those who "bowed the knee," and this drinking may have brought about a public manifestation of religious inclinations. Whatever symbolism it had was doubtless clearly understood after those who knelt had been set aside. This test reduced the force to three hundred men.

7. *The Lord* ["*Jehovah*"] said unto *Gideon*, *By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you.* So small a force could not possibly vanquish the great host of the *Midianites*, and the triumph would evidently be the Lord's. Nevertheless these three hundred men must have had iron nerves, and tremendous heroism, as well as faith in God, quietly to watch twenty-two thousand scared fellow-soldiers run away and nine thousand seven hundred others be set aside.

8. After this second reduction the little army of divinely chosen men was prepared for the advance. First of all, they took victuals, provided food for themselves; then they took trumpets, for each man represented a division of an unseen army; besides which they had empty pitchers and lamps within their pitchers.

The most interesting part of the story to the average boy and girl is yet to come. *Gideon* divided his three hundred men into companies, and revealed to them his simple tactics. A night visit by *Gideon* to the camp of the *Midianites*, the soldier's dream, and its interpretation, the successful carrying out of *Gideon's* stratagem, and the glorious victory, complete the story. *Gideon* was one of the nobility of faith who out of weakness was made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to fight the armies of the aliens. His entire history is full of interest and spiritual instruction.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

How good it is to get away from drunken Ephraim to sober Gideon! It is as if we crossed the broad Pacific. From a drunken man to a sober man is always a pilgrimage. We seem to have passed into another world. And Gideon was more than sober. He was sane and good and led of the Spirit. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Consider Gideon. He was a farmer. So was Elisha. Farming is a business in which there is leisure above most occupations for godly thought and meditation. Many vocations are public, and the time is filled with people and matters. Life is crowded. There lacks of being leisure. The clerk, the conductor, and a score of occupations which might be specified give scant leisure for a deepening life of holy thought. The farmer is alone. He works by himself. He is out of doors. The sky and the spaces are following him. He has no dingy office to cut off his landscape. Farming ought to facilitate commerce with heaven; and in many cases it does. It was so with Gideon. While he was threshing an angel came. All places are subject to angel visits if so be he who occupies them is worthy such a guest. Not to Joash the father, but to Gideon the son, the angel came. It is not the farm brings the angel visitor, but one of the farmers. Gideon, be sure, was thinking about God, loving him, grieving for the multitudinous oppressions of Israel; for God's special visits are not haphazard. He comes to those who look for him. Those who are in good readiness get the angel's visits. Gideon's talk was the converse of one acquainted with God and abashed by angel visits. And to this farmer at his work came Gideon, a poor man. "My family is poor in Manasseh, and I least in my father's house." That was a manly putting of the family condition. Poverty is not a thing to be apologized for nor lamented. Poverty is a helpful trouble. Gideon had neither family distinction nor riches. Little did God care for either. He wants the right man, namely, the capable man. Gideon is poor, but has what God wants. He had an angel visit him and was thereafter rich. Mary was poor and became the mother of the Christ. A poet is rich though his house is in a garret. Wesley died poor as a bankrupt (and poorer than many), but he was rich in heavenly belongings. Lincoln was poor as poverty could well impoverish, but who thinks of that? Milton was poor and forsaken; but the angel of poetry met him and lent him his harp. And Gideon

had not controversy but conversation with the angel, and made an offering out of his poverty (times were hard in Israel, and always hard with Gideon, but not so hard but that there was at his hand and heart a gift for God), and the angel touched it with his staff and it became a divine oblation. And the angel went in the smoke and flame that rose; but he had promised two things to Gideon. One was he should undertake to deliver Israel, and the other was that God would help him. What more could he or any other want than to have a great work to do and God for a helper?

And Gideon cut down Baal's grove and Baal's altar. He became religious reformer. Whatever Gideon knew or knew not, this was altogether wise. Israel was in trouble because Israel had sinned. The way back to self-rulership lay through life reform and religious reform. Is it ever other than this? And there came from this iconoclasm a new name, Jerubbaal. That was knighthood of a worthy order. Who gave the name is not material. He had it from a wise and religious deed, and wore it like a prince. A name gotten as Jacob got Israel and Simon got Peter and Saul got Paul is a crowning glory of life. Gideon was ready now. He was harnessed to God's task.

Then "the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east"—well, what of them? They are going out for a triumphal march to come back burdened with spoils. There is a harvest home of a vicious order. They are going out for a festival, a jaunt, and an enrichment. But they have not counted on Gideon. Why should they? They have luxuriated in the harvests of Israel at their will these many years, and what hinders that they do the same again? Nothing. Nothing? Gideon will be there; and Gideon is helped of God. Big armies do not always count. Hugo says of the battle of Waterloo, "Not Wellington, but God." That is the verdict of history. God is to be reckoned with; and happy that man who is God's chosen helper in such a fight. Great Britain was such in saving Europe from the tyranny of the arch-despot, Napoleon. The United Empire Loyalists were so in settling British Canada. Howard was so in prison reform. When God is working, wicked men and nations cannot count on victory.

And rose up early. Nothing can make up for lack of energy. God can use the energetic. Gideon missed nothing of what should in reason be his work. God does his part, but insists that man do his. That is fair. God will not

overload man. God will use self. God will make persona

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Too many suitable is th The well-int with us yet. May it not b was done Gide and three hun force looked s the "Revenge" how force is mightily few at And God was gem; but they into the fight take hand in t The charge of compared with He was brav obedient, brain so they did; a A handful sle sword among t that was not lamps and me was the host, r And forty year man. They w would not take ties were his. Saul, whom Is king to rule ov

So Gideon s it well. For s as Gideon w turned again. their God." O a nation from them with virtu

overload man; man must not overload God. God will use Gideon, but Gideon must use himself. God respects personality, and seeks to make personality respect itself.

Too many. Too many helpers? No, not that. Too many half-helpers. The conscript is not liable to be the best fighter; and some are always of the nature of a conscript. Twenty-two thousand afraid! Two thirds of the army gone home! These were a breed of men, forsooth! So low had manliness fallen that more than twenty thousand men were not ashamed to say they were cowards. Slavery breaks the back of valor. Off they go, these cowards; and the army is strengthened by the exodus. "They went from us but were not of us" is the way the later writer spoke of such folk. They are here to-day. Some leave us, but their going is benefit.

Too many yet. Not all willing folks are suitable is the meaning of this second trial. The well-intentioned and yet disqualified are with us yet. Mayhap we are of that company. May it not be so. Anyway, when the sifting was done Gideon was not alone. He and God and three hundred, so stood the count. The force looked small, and was not. The story of the "Revenge" as Tennyson has written it tells how force is not in flotilla, but in men. A mighty few are mightier than a flaccid many. And God was there! They fought by stratagem; but they fought with God. They went into the fight not knowing where God would take hand in the fight. It was a bold exploit. The charge of the six hundred lacked daring compared with this. Gideon was no coward. He was brave, adventurous, modest, manly, obedient, brainy, conquering. As God bid them, so they did; and the victory was bewildering. A handful slew an army, and with never a sword among them. Pitchers and lamps? No, that was not the inventory. Pitchers and lamps and men—and Gideon and God. This was the host, and an invincible host it became. And forty years Gideon was a power. He was man. They would have made him king, but he would not take their crown. Some high nobilities were his. He stands a head taller than Saul, whom Israel in less wise a mood made king to rule over them.

So Gideon served his generation and served it well. For, reading further, see how "as soon as Gideon was dead the children of Israel turned again, and remembered not the Lord their God." One man such as Gideon can keep a nation from iniquity, but cannot inoculate them with virtue.

Thoughts for Young People.

SOME FORCES THAT ENDURE.

1. Sinful tendencies endure. During the time of the "judges" the worship of the Hebrews swayed frequently from Jehovah to idols. Even the good generations had some idolaters among them. "Gods of the fathers" were hidden in dark rooms to be covertly worshiped; and even if older idolatry had been obliterated evil forces were born with every newborn child ready to link themselves with idolatrous surroundings. Joshua and his godly companions passed away, weaker and wicked generations followed, then came periods of reform, but through all changes idol worship stubbornly endured. An angel rebuked the people, and they wept; God permitted foreigners to oppress, then they prayed; but after prayers and tears back they went to idolatry. Modern spiritual experience has many counterparts.

2. Godliness endures. All ages have had recurring periods of general viciousness, but always God has had a "remnant"—those who have not bowed their knees to Baal. Let not the lonely champion of righteousness falter; he has thousands of holy sympathizers on earth, though he may not know them.

3. Conscience endures. The Midianites, after all, were cowardly. They knew that they were on the wrong side. They knew that some day Jehovah would fight against them and defeat them, and their conscience made them cowards. And "Conscience doth make cowards of us all"—if we are wrongdoers. The forces of sin, no matter how stout their opposition, or how well organized their forces, quake with apprehension.

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

And so do Satan's followers. And if so many of God's servants were not unreasonably as great cowards as their moral opponents logically are we would see our modern Midianites—political corruption, the liquor business, unscrupulous wealth, and other evils—scamper like the Midianites of old.

4. God endures. There is no day so cloudy, no night so dark, no wickedness so prevalent, but God is ready to support his lovers.

"For behind the dim unknown
Standeth God amid the shadows,
Keeping watch above his own."

This truth should never be forgotten, never be doubted.

"It is not so, but so it looks;
And we lose courage then;
And doubts will come if God hath kept
His promises to men.

"But right is right, since God is God;
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin!"

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

HISTORY.

To-day's lesson is, as it were, an illustration of the general theme which we studied two weeks ago. A brief résumé of the connecting history should be given. Ask the pupils for their list of the judges, put Gideon in his proper historical position, and have the pupils tell what they know about this courageous servant of the Lord.

ENVIRONMENT.

Time. About two hundred years after the conquest of Palestine.

Place. Gideon lived in Ophrah, near Shechem. (See Lesson VI and recall the Memorial Stone.) His army was gathered at the foot of Mount Gilboa.

Israel's decline. Judg. 6, 1, 2 very tersely depicts the religious condition of Israel and the results thereof.

RECORD.

We have here an exceptional opportunity of dealing with our lesson text in a series of pictures. By a little concentrated study the teacher may see these pictures. Afterward his endeavor should be to get his pupils to see them for the sake of the lessons which they inculcate. The names of the pictures may be remembered by the following outline:

Gideon's Army

IN BATTLE ARRAY.
REDUCED.
REDUCED AGAIN.
VICTORIOUS.

1. *Gideon's army in battle array.* After picturing the army ready for battle beside the well Harod, with the Midianites on the north by Moreh, ask: What was Gideon's other name? What does this mean? What is the meaning of Gideon? Who were the Midianites? How many of them were there opposed to Israel? (Judg. 8, 10.) Point out on the map Harod and Moreh.

2. *Gideon's army reduced.* What did God say unto Gideon? What reason did he give? What did he tell Gideon to say to the people? What was the result?

3. *Gideon's army reduced again.* What did God then say to Gideon? Where did he tell Gideon to bring the people? For what purpose? When Gideon brought the people to the water what did the Lord tell him to do? (Have some one read verse 5.) How many of the people lapped like a dog? What did the Lord say concerning these three hundred? What was done with the rest of the army?

From a study of the NOTES let the teacher decide the probable reason for the selection of these particular three hundred men.

4. *Gideon's army victorious.* The teacher should be able to picture concisely the preparations of Gideon for the midnight attack, the surprise of the Midianite host, and the victory of the Israelites.

OBJECT ILLUSTRATION.

If the teacher can procure an oriental lamp (torch), pitcher (fruit jar), and trumpet interest will be added to the last lesson picture by showing how these were used to the discomfiture of the enemy.

EMPHASIZED TRUTH.

Have the Golden Text repeated. Try to make the pupils understand that God's arithmetic is not always the same as man's.

GOD'S ARITHMETIC.

10,000 > 32,000
300 > 10,000

Explain the sign > means *exceeds*, and show that 300 men really trusting in God are greater than 32,000 men who trust in something material. Ask for other illustrations of God's arithmetic. For example, 6 > 7; 9 > 10. Six days are more than seven days when a person uses the Sabbath day in God's service. Nine dollars are more than ten dollars when one dollar is given for the Lord's work. When this is understood ask the pupils to print at home the above in their Book of Heroes.

STUDY IN ADVANCE.

The book of Ruth contains but four chapters. Let the pupils what a beautiful story it records, and ask them to read it through at one sitting sometime during the week.

Review words, "God's arithmetic."

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By Way of Illustration.

Gideon the general. God fills his vacancies with surprising strangeness; the incumbents of his offices have quite usually traveled long distances. His poets, singing life's sweetest songs and interpreting life's most subtle meaning, have dwelt as herders of cattle on the bleak mountain side. His statesmen, shaping the affairs of government and the destiny of nations, have been apprenticed to the tannery and have trudged for bread along the towpath. His scientists have been trained where laboratories were unknown. His scholars have been independent of libraries. His generals have been discovered, like Gideon, swinging the rude flail upon the threshing floor.—*N. Boynton.*

Gideon's preparation. Gideon's previous faithfulness fitted him for this supreme hour. Phillips Brooks at the dedication of the Latin school in Boston said: "When the Duke of Wellington came back to Eton after his glorious career, as he was walking through the yard he looked around and said, 'Here is where I learned the lessons that made it possible for me to conquer at Waterloo.'" As a schoolboy he had learned to be faithful to present duty, to be strong, to be diligent and patient, and these brought victory in the supreme hour."

Verses 2, 3. I saw and heard a great audience of Christian young people singing, "Onward, Christian soldiers." I wonder how many of them have made any real progress. I wonder how many know much about the hardships and self-denials of a Christian soldier's life; how many realize that the Christian life is a strenuous life. Browning ends his poem, "Easter Day," rejoicing that "it is hard to be a Christian." A young woman who was a professing Christian was a guest in a home of earnest Christians. In writing home she said: "These people make the religious life the main thing; they actually make real sacrifices for Christ. I am so far imbibing the atmosphere that I wonder that all Christians don't do the same. It seems to me the only genuine Christian life."

Verses 6, 7. Many are the commonplace incidents that test the quality of men. Every day we are led to the stream side to show what we are, whether eager in the divine enterprises of faith or slack and self-considering. Are we so engaged with God's plan that we have no time to dawdle? If God's work is first in our hearts we shall always be true to its interests, like the needle to the pole, even when drinking of pleasure. We shall not then be off our guard, nor forgetful of our enemies.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

It was a day of trouble. Sorrows overwhelmed the people because they had gone far from their Refuge and Deliverer. Foes more than could be counted ate up their substance; they were poor, desolate, despairing. Sad hearts of Israel, how like you were to us to-day who have left the fountain of living waters and hewed out broken cisterns that can hold no water. Strength, hope, comfort, prosperity, leaking away with no prospect of refilling! But

"There is an eye that never sleeps
Beneath the wing of night;"

and the "Love that will not let us go" rested not to bring his redeemed people back to himself. The Father never forgets even though we go into a far country. He loved Israel even when they ceased not from their own doings nor from their stubborn ways.

Gideon was suffering the results of the folly of the people around him, though he may not himself have participated in it. We all so suffer in a world of sin. But he had a humble heart, open to God so that God could speak to him. In great distress he made the best of what he had, trying to save what he could from the rapacious Midianites. It is to such God speaks. He cannot get access to a despairing soul that gives up hopelessly to the enemy. To Gideon the Lord appeared with words of hope and cheer. It was Jehovah, Jesus, speaking; the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; who says to you and to me, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." His sympathy is shown in the way he suffered this troubled man to pour out the honest thoughts of his burdened soul. He did not upbraid him when in response to the assurance that the Lord was with him Gideon said, "If the Lord is with us why are we so afflicted? He once did great things for his people, but surely he has forsaken us now!" "The Lord looked upon him"—O that look of love and pity!—and said, "Surely I will be with thee."

It is not easy for one long and sorely tried to rise at once to perfect faith even when Jesus speaks. But he knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust, and bears with human weakness. He gave Gideon a sign to strengthen his faith. He waited for his offering, and when it was brought before him touched it with fire from heaven to prove to his hesitating servant that it was indeed the Lord who had spoken. He grants him yet another sign, one of his own choosing, to assure him that he would

be victor over the great host of Midian; and still further, when Gideon's faith and courage were put to such a tremendous test by having only three hundred men against many thousands, yet another token was given that he might have no question about the result. A man, unconscious that God was using him to strengthen his servant's faith, told a dream to a comrade. Many times he strengthens our faith by some occurrence trivial as the telling of a dream. We may ask a "sign" when we are in doubt. The slightest circumstance may be used to confirm our trust, and to show us where the Lord would have us go, and what he would have us do, if we sincerely seek to know his will. Is it a dark day? Is your heart open to God so that he can speak to you? Do you question why things are so wrong if God really cares? It is a human question, and the divine and human Jesus understands and bears with it. He takes whatever gift we bring to him in sincerity, touching it with the fire of the Holy Spirit in token of acceptance. He takes away every possibility of deliverance by our own plan or ability, and as we follow him in simple faith and trust he brings us to victory where, like Midian, our foes lift up their heads no more, and there is peace. It was the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. The Lord planned the deliverance, and brought it to pass, but it would never have been accomplished without Gideon's faith and obedience.

The Teachers' Meeting.

A fresh way to treat this lesson is that proposed in the Lesson Outline. The first test God applied, that of Courage, reduced the host to less than one third. The second test, that of God's Personal Choice, reduced the remainder to less than one thirtieth. This one thirtieth, only three hundred men, depended so utterly on God for victory that, in the last analysis, one might almost say that the force was reduced to ONE—one three hundredth of "Gideon's band" and one thirty-second-thousandth of his original army. . . . The first test is now applied to all young people starting in life. The second test; consider its religious character, its military character. . . . God's choice of a leader; God's choice of warriors. . . . God often thinks, "Too many," when man thinks, "Too few." . . . 1. Gideon. 2. Gideon's Call. 3. Gideon's Offering. 4. Gideon's Altar. 5. Gideon's Sign. 6. Gideon's Army. 7. Jehovah's Victory. . . . 1. Israel's danger—not the smallness of their army, but their self-confidence. 2. Israel's safety. Psa. 20. 7. . . . God's agencies are chosen by quality,

not by quantity. . . . "God chooses his agencies for saving work by qualities that lie most in affections and determine the actions. . . . "Anyone may qualify for a place in the ranks of Gideon's band." . . . God and one are always a majority. . . . The first test blew the froth off. The second test distilled the army, and left none but the pure elements.

Library References.

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Blackboard.



Faith cannot compass the power of God, but it can and should grasp that which his will declares, and trust him for ultimate success. In his sight three hundred warriors were preferable to a whole army, when those few were faithful and earnest and prepared to act with unquestioning obedience. It was because the battle was his own that God made the victory certain, and we may be assured that when we are allied with him to fight in his cause defeat is impossible, however great our enemy and scant our earthly resources.

Coloring.—Sword, yellow; belt, white; words, red; "few," blue and orange; lower text, white.

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Primary Teachers' Department.

Primary Notes.

We do not want more plans, but enough power to carry out what we have.

A Sunday School should walk on all fours—Parent, Superintendent, Teacher and Scholar.

A postage stamp sticks till it gets there. Have this said of you.

A mirror does not call attention to itself, except when there is a flaw in it. We are to mirror Christ.

Preparation of the head makes an interesting lesson. Preparation of the heart makes an effective lesson.

Is there a Primary Union within your reach, teacher? If not, have you done your utmost toward forming one? Even though there may be but two or three primary teachers in your neighborhood you should not despair. Where but two or three are gathered together in such a holy interest as this, there will the Lord and Lover of little children be in the midst. "As iron sharpeneth iron," so will the union of heart, and purpose, and thought, serve to stimulate and help in this beautiful and blessed work.

It has been said that one of the important things for a Sunday school teacher to do is to train the members of the class to handle their Bibles. Is the primary teacher exempt from this duty? The more advanced members of the class can easily be taught to turn to any book in either the Old or New Testament. A brief Bible drill twice a month will work wonders, and the older ones will enjoy the advanced work, while the younger ones will be stimulated to press on and share a like privilege.

"THE abstract must be made concrete," says Mrs. Barnes. Here is the opportunity, offered by the coming of the annual feast of Thanksgiving. It is not a difficult matter to enlist the sympathy and interest of little children through a concrete example. Tell them about the reasons for thankfulness, and bring one case before them—preferably that of a child, where there is want and sadness. Show

how, in the spirit of thankfulness for their own good things they may make some little sacrifice which will cheer another and at the same time show the kind Father of all their own grateful love. How joyfully they will respond! The child needs no urging to do a generous act. Link the little offering to some concrete case, if possible, and in some way let the children know how it was received.

No child lover can fail to rejoice in the excellent work being done by the primary teachers of our land. From the Infant Classes of 1832, when the Church first began to see the importance of work for and with the little children, to the Primary Department of to-day, with its Beginners', its Primary, and its Junior Sections, with its admirably organized Summer Schools and Training Classes—each year showing marked advance upon the last, may seem a far cry, but it is because the early gleaners in these fruitful fields were faithful over a few things that their successors have been able to produce so abundant a harvest. The small opportunity, the humble little corner in the great Child-Garden, may yet bud and blossom as the rose, and all the Lord of the harvest asks of his tillers is that they be faithful.

What Shall the Children Read?

WHAT books can you give them—not your little three and five-year-olds, but your seven and eight-year-olds, who are getting ready to pass into the Intermediate School? I take it for granted that few children are taught to read before they are six or seven years old. It was once the fashion to teach a child to read at three, or even earlier, and set him at Latin lessons at six or seven; but our wise men have changed all that, and the children are much happier. They now learn through objects and plays all they need to know before the reason begins to develop. These very objects and plays, however, create a hunger that only books can satisfy. For a while the child is content to take his reading at second hand, and will sit enthralled while you read or tell stories in the twilight; but before he is seven the normal Canadian child will wish to read for himself. Ginn & Co. have prepared a set of First

Readings for little children (with supplementaries), which bring the best reading into the vocabulary and comprehension of a child. Kingsley's *Water Babies* and *Madam How and Lady Why* are among these; also *Robinson Crusoe*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The King of the Golden River*, Anderson's *Fairy Tales*, and, I think, *Swiss Family Robinson*. Two invaluable books on which many children have learned to read are *Susie's Six Teachers* and *The Seven Little Sisters*. There is a charming sequel to the latter, called *Each and All*, and they both describe the little children of the different races of the earth, and not only picture their homes and customs, but create a feeling of family love for children of distant lands and different color.

For pure delight *Alice in Wonderland* holds a first place, and when imagination is deficient helps to develop it. Hawthorne's *Wonder-Book* and Howard Pyle's *Wonder-Clock* are also aids. George MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind* and *The Golden Key* are of this order, and are little classics. Miss Morley's *A Song of Life* is a beautiful nature book, showing how life is reproduced continually on its lower planes. There are many nature books published by the makers of schoolbooks which illustrate in color and black and white the world of animal and vegetable life. Mrs. Gatty's *Parables from Nature* cannot be too highly valued, for they are nature with a beautiful lesson folded up within them. The story of the water grub that became a dragon fly ("Not lost, but gone before") makes the water world and the world of air teach the lesson of life out of death—the natural and beautiful passing from one world to another—in a way that children of a larger growth are glad to receive. For boys Kingsley's *The Heroes*, like Hawthorne's *Wonder-Book*, are inspiring to courage and hero-worship. They also plant in the child the love of the old Greek ideals, which may be of great value to him in later life. Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* will in the same way create a love for the great poet of humanity.

Among the human, heart-warming books are Mrs. Wiggins's *The Birds' Christmas Carol*, *Jackanapes* (Mrs. Ewing), *The Story of a Short Life*, and Kipling's *Jungle Books* should not be left out. But for a year-long book while the children are young there is nothing like *The Carpenter of Nazareth*. It is so full of the color, the bird-songs, the flowers, the blue skies, the harvests, and, more than all, the life of the people in the Holy Land, that the story of Jesus is a reality, and a beautiful reality, on every page.

MARY A. LATHBURY.

A Plea for Translation.

BY ALICE M. GUERNSEY.

"I GOT off a good thing coming out last night! Held my trip ticket so the conductor punched between two of the numbers. He never knew it. So much in for me! See?"

Yes, I did see. And I knew that the young man who was so glibly boasting of petty dishonesty had been a Sunday school scholar all his life.

As if in accompaniment to the careless speech, there came the clicking of croquet balls in an adjoining field. Turning my steps thither, I was soon talking with a company of children. Imagine my dismay when I learned that all of the young players had attended Sunday school that morning—and in my own church! Why should they not play croquet on Sunday? Home influences to deter them from it were lacking, and they had received no Sunday school teaching that, to their minds, had any bearing on the question—or even suggested that there was any question. In other words, the Sunday school lessons had not been translated into the vernacular of everyday life.

The lesson for us who are teachers is obvious. We cannot afford to spend the few precious minutes in the Sunday school on Bible geography, or history, nay, even—I say it with all reverence—on critical study of the words of the Master, at the expense of making it plain to the children that those words have a practical bearing on the lives they are living at home and school, on the playground, in the shop, store, or factory—that the Bible, in brief, is for everyday use as a chart and guide.

Take, for illustration, the temperance teaching in Sunday school. "Wine is a mocker"—yes, but to the children who learn this text in your class is it wine that comes as a temptation and a danger? Is it not, rather, the beer that their fathers drink, or the sweet cider—falsely so called—offered as a social treat, or the candies filled with alcoholic poison?

"Look not upon the wine when it is red." Translated into the language of their environment, this means for most of our Sunday school scholars, "Have nothing to do with the frothing beer, the sparkling cider, the treacherous brandy drops. 'At the last' they will kindle the alcoholic fever in your veins and bring death to your soul."

The dangers are many that beset the little feet so soon to step forth into real life. The time is short in which we may help them. May it never be true that we failed to use the opportunities given us to show the safe way!

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Five-Minute Additional Lessons.

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

"Thou shalt have no gods but me;
Before no idol bow the knee;
Take not the name of God in vain."

Lesson I.

"Dare not the Sabbath day profane."

There was another thing besides the Holy Name that the Jews were commanded to keep holy; it was the Holy Day. God knew that everybody ought to have one day in seven in which to rest, else life would be one long, hard working day. He knew that if he left us to choose a day and keep it we would not do it, for we would do what we chose to do with our own; but if he should set it apart and call it *his* day, and command us to keep it holy, we would be more sure to do so. When our Saviour rose from the dead on the first day of the week Christians began keeping the first instead of the seventh day as we rest it. It is the Sabbath of the Lord, and we call it the Lord's Day. It should be the brightest, happiest day of all the week to us.

"Thou shalt have no gods but me;
Before no idol bow the knee;
Take not the name of God in vain;
Dare not the Sabbath day profane."

Lesson II.

"Give both thy parents honor due."

What is it to "honor" your father and your mother? First of all, to obey them. If we begin our life by obeying our parents we shall be quite sure to obey God when we are grown. But there is something more than obedience meant in the word "honor." It means that we should be courteous, respectful, loving, and true toward them in our hearts as well as in our manners. Have you sometimes seen a child who would show an unpleasant face or speak an unkind word to her mother, yet smile and say very pretty things when a strange lady spoke to her? Have you seen a boy who was very slow to obey his father, yet quick to do a favor for the gentleman across the street? They had not learned that "honor" must first be given to father and mother, and then to all men and women. It is right to honor our country, our Sovereign, our minister, our teacher, but first of all father and mother.

"Thou shalt have no gods but me;
Before no idol bow the knee;
Take not the name of God in vain;

Dare not the Sabbath day profane;
Give both thy parents honor due."

Lesson III.

"Hate not, that thou no murder do."

Somebody once planted a seed under a window, and when it came up and wanted to climb made a trellis for it to climb upon. He was told that it bore a poisonous fruit, and though he knew it was the deadly nightshade he would not cut it down. When it had reached the top of the window and had some beautiful berries upon it a child saw them through the window and ate them, and the child died. Then the man was in deep trouble, but he could not bring the child back to life. There is a little seed that you cannot see which falls into everybody's heart at some time, and which will grow and climb like the deadly nightshade if it is not pulled up by the roots. It is called hate. Even a sweet little girl has been heard to say, "I hate you!" Hate grows so strong if it is not rooted out of the heart that it wishes to kill the person it hates, and often does so. Love is the great cure for hate.

"Thou shalt have no gods but me;
Before no idol bow the knee;
Take not the name of God in vain;
Dare not the Sabbath day profane;
Give both thy parents honor due;
Hate not, that thou no murder do."

Lesson IV.

"Abstain from words and deeds unclean."

There was a beautiful white kitten, named Snowball, that her mother, Tabby-cat, was very proud of. Snowball was full of fun, and as they lay before the fire she would have played with the pretty red coals that snapped out upon the hearth, but her mother forbade it. "It will burn you," she said. Snowball tried it once, and it gave her a sharp pain. But one day in May, when the fire had not been kindled, she touched the black coals and they did not burn. Then she went nearer and played with the coals and the ashes, and had a fine time. When her mother came in she saw a very queer little cat with a black nose and grimy paws and coal dust and ashes all over her. She tried to lick her clean; but, after all, her mistress said she must go in the bathtub and be scrubbed, which she did not like. "Do remember," said Tabby-cat, "that coals blacken even when they do not burn." This is a little parable about impure words and acts. You are the Good Shepherd's little white lamb, and you must keep from all things unclean.

International Bible Lessons.

FOURTH QUARTER.

LESSON V. (November 2.)

CITIES OF REFUGE. Josh. 20. 1-9.

GOLDEN TEXT: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Psa. 46. 1.

Primary Notes.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.



this true story of long ago:

Once upon a time there were many Indians in this land, and some were very fierce and cruel. They often came suddenly upon the homes of the people and drove them away or killed them. People were much afraid of the Indians. Forts were built as places of safety where soldiers lived and fought or frightened away the Indians, and where people could come in danger. There was a soldier whose wife and little boy and girl had to stay in the little home while he was away. He said, "If you ever hear that the Indians are coming, hurry to the fort." One day a man came running by, saying, "The Indians are coming. Run for your life." The mother hurried to the stable, saddled the black horse, put little Reuben and Rachel in the big bags hanging from the saddle called saddle-bags, and rode off to the fort. There she was safe. It was a refuge for her. But she had to go, and she had to stay there a long time, to be safe indeed.

Thought journey. Now let our thoughts be like wings to carry us far back to the land of Israel and to the river Jordan. Some miles from the river is a place called Shiloh. Here we see the tabernacle set up. Here we see Joshua, and very busy he is. He has to divide the land, so that each family may have some. Now listen. We hear God speaking to Joshua and telling him something very important about

some cities. God says that three cities on each side of Jordan must be set apart as hiding places for the murderer in danger of their lives because of killing another accidentally. In those days the nearest relation of a murdered man tried to kill the murderer himself, without waiting to see whether he was to blame or not. Now God says that if one kills another by accident, through his ax slipping or anything like that, he may run to one of the cities of refuge and be safe.

Give further particulars, and picture a man in danger, running to the nearest refuge, starting instantly, never stopping, hurrying in through the city gate thrown open by the watchers. To be safe, he must go to the city and he must stay inside the walls, where he may have a home and live and work.

Our refuge. Question Golden Text into and out of the children's minds, thus: Who is the Refuge? Whose refuge? Refuge and what else? In what time? Far off? How near? A present what? Make clear the children's dangers from sin, temptation, sorrow, fear. Impress helplessness in ourselves, and certainty of safety with God.

Guideboard thought: Run to the Refuge. This means trust Jesus at once without waiting, as one would run to shelter. Ask him to help, and be sure that he will. Then don't be afraid one moment. But you must go and you must stay. Then you are safe.

Thought for teachers. Perhaps we make too little of childish fears. Sensitive little souls suffer from imaginary terrors. Be careful to suggest nothing of these, but fill the heart with sure confidence in the immediate presence of God. This will expel fears. Make the thought of God's nearness one of joy. A child



can understand taking refuge in father's arms, and can thus comprehend God's power and loving help.

LESSON

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LESSON VI. (November 9.)

JOSHUA'S PARTING ADVICE. Josh. 24.
14-25.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Josh. 24. 15.

Primary Notes.



Introductory. Begin with thought of weighing things. Some will just balance. Draw scales, to illustrate, or make some of paper and string that can be balanced over the finger. Impress the idea of values, as

one thing outweighs another. Press home thought of choice between trifles that weigh little and precious things that weigh more. Who would choose a pretty feather instead of a gold piece?

Thought journey. Let us think that we are now in a place called Shechem. [Show map.] God's people are here gathered together. He has a message for them. He gives it to Joshua, who speaks while all listen. We belong to this great company now. We must listen too, for the Lord God, our Father in heaven, wishes us to hear and understand the very same word today. [Picture the great multitude listening, and make children feel that they are indeed among them, waiting for God's word.] It is all about

Choosing. The people must now stop and think and make up their minds about something. So must we. We must all stop and weigh something very important, and take what is worth most to us.

Joshua tells about the idol gods and about the true God. He makes the people remember what the great God has done for them. Is not all this worth far more than anything to be had from idols or from pleasing themselves? Well, then, all who hear must make up their minds what to choose—God's way or their own, the true God or the heathen idols.

[Write on blackboard two large W's. After one write, or finish words, What? When? and after the other, Whom? Why? Make the large letter, and finish words in turn as they are spoken of.]

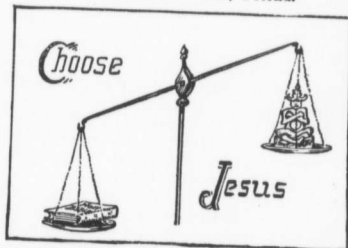
We are to choose a master whom we will serve. We are sure to have a master. We are always working for somebody, trying to please somebody. Self may be master, or Jesus may be. Which one do we choose? Hear the people say they choose the Lord. They have made

up their minds. Each must do this for himself—no one else can. Explain this.

Choose to-day, because it is the time and God tells us to. Why waste time in taking something very good? Even if we have another chance, we lose much by waiting. Choose a Person, not a thing. We wish and need some one as Guide, Helper, Friend. Why should we choose such a Friend? Induce children to give reasons. We will find out the choice we ought to make from our

Guideboard: Choose Jesus. Why choose him? Put his wonderful love, forgiveness, power, care, and help in one scale, and see if there is anything to be found in our own way, our own pleasures, or anything that others can give us, that will weigh against what Jesus gives.

Thought for teachers. Few lessons can compare with this one in solemnity. Will-power in little ones is comparatively weak and undeveloped, but it exists. They recognize the power of choice, and we must. A child who can say "I won't" can say "I will," and mean it. Let us present Jesus so tenderly that each will choose him a Person, Saviour, Friend.



LESSON VII. (November 16.)

THE TIME OF THE JUDGES. Judg. 2. 7-16.

GOLDEN TEXT: "They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses." Psa. 107. 19.

Primary Notes.



Introductory. The review of the previous lesson is invariably understood. It is especially easy to connect this lesson with the last. Recall choice made and promise given to walk in the right way. Talk about broken promises, and give practical illustrations from

child-life. Tell story of a boy who promised to obey his kind father, but when sent on an important errand, and told not to stop by the way or turn from the right path, he did both and went into a dangerous place, being lost at last. Did the father forget or give him up? O no. He loved him. He was his boy still, a disobedient boy, but still his. It did not change his name nor take him out of the family. The father sent men with lanterns in all directions, and one found and saved the boy, bringing him home. And yet this boy did the same thing again. Was it not worse to treat a loving father so than one who was unkind? A second time the boy was lost, and the father found him, coming to him when he heard his cry of distress. When the boy was in trouble he remembered his father.

Thought journey. Go back in thought to the land of Israel. Are the people keeping their promise to obey the Master they chose? No. Joshua is dead, and those who were his helpers are gone too. The people seem to forget the right way and love the wrong. They go away from God. They leave the right way and get into trouble. Draw a path leading straight upward, to stand for the right way, the path of obedience. Make little bypaths leading downward from the right way, representing wanderings of the people away from God. Sinning is getting off the line of right, off the true track; so they left their Master again for idol gods.

God's love. The Lord did not forget the people when they forgot him. He sent men to help them. They were called judges—men wise and strong and ready to help. Again and again God sent them and helped them to save the people from the enemies who tried to destroy them. Because God loved them he punished them, to make them do better. If sin did not hurt people would go on sinning without ever thinking to stop, as a child might cut his fingers off if it did not pain him.

Trouble made the people think of their Father in heaven. In their distress they prayed to him. Teach Golden Text. In the storm we run home. In the dark we want mother's hand. So the people prayed in their trouble, and God heard and saved again and again.

Guideboard: Jesus saves. The Saviour never forgets us. Though we forget and go away from him he sends friends, teachers, pastors to call us back and help us to do better. He helps us whenever we pray to him in our trouble. Sin brings distress. What shall we do? Turn right back and ask the Lord to save us. On the guideboard is written the wonderful truth,

"Jesus saves." But would it not be better never to run away than to get into trouble and be brought back?

Thought for teachers. Guard against the childish mistake that it makes no difference how often one does wrong if only Jesus forgives and takes one back into the right path; but, on the other hand, impress early and deeply the truth that if one does get into trouble through sin again and again one may cry to God in trouble and he will save.



LESSON VIII. (November 23.)

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE LESSON. Isa. 28. 1-7.

GOLDEN TEXT: "They also have erred through wine." Isa. 28. 7.

Primary Notes.



Introductory. A little talk about size. Measure a child. Talk about growing large and strong. Ask what a giant is. Lead on to thought of great strength used to hurt people. This lesson tells

of those who are overcome, which means broken or beaten. There is a giant in our land that overcomes some people. The name is Alcohol. To be beaten and broken by this giant is a dreadful thing. We wish to learn how to keep out of the way of this giant. Where is he to be found? Where does he find people and overcome them? To find out, let us take a

Thought journey. In our minds we may see a wide path. It leads down, down, down. At the head of this path stands the giant, to turn people out of the right way, that leads upward, into this downward path. [Draw two paths on board.]

Along this do with wine on brandy drops, beer balls, and

Golden Text. er means to go path. All who and take this erred, they have mistake, the wor

Show children breaks down an heart. Tell how the brain, takes makes the heart who drinks is so when mad with

Dwell upon the young to drink bcohol cannot gro poor little baby not grow as other back the growth. will not use it. ance means to be or using anything and heart.

Speak of the drink and smoke with this money helping instead of

Guideboard: To



The way to be su the giant is not to

Thought for te dren will receive a struction that wil and may turn other The primary teach fields for this work

We cannot over opportunity. Let us wise, prayerful, an

Along this downward path we find the table with wine on it, the candy shop that sells brandy drops, the saloon and wine rooms, the beer halls, and such dreadful places.

Golden Text. Teach this, and show that to err means to get out of the way, into the wrong path. All who leave the upward way of Right and take this downward path of Drink have erred, they have made a dreadful and dangerous mistake, the worst they can make.

Show children clearly how the giant Alcohol breaks down and overcomes body, mind, and heart. Tell how it burns the stomach, hardens the brain, takes away strength, hurts the eyes, makes the heart hard and unkind, because one who drinks is selfish and treats others cruelly when mad with liquor.

Dwell upon the fact that those who begin young to drink beer or anything containing alcohol cannot grow as they should. Tell of a poor little baby that was fed on beer, and did not grow as other children. Tobacco, too, keeps back the growth. Those who wish to be strong will not use it. It is a slow poison. Temperance means to be careful about eating, drinking, or using anything that will hurt body, mind, and heart.

Speak of the enormous waste of money in drink and smoke, and of what might be done with this money if spent in doing good and helping instead of hurting people.

Guideboard: Touch not, taste not.



The way to be sure of not being overcome by the giant is not to start on the downward path.

Thought for teachers. Impressionable children will receive and take home temperance instruction that will tell upon their own lives, and may turn others that are beyond our reach. The primary teacher has the most hopeful of all fields for this work.

We cannot overestimate the value of our opportunity. Let us take courage, be faithful, wise, prayerful, and persistent.

LESSON IX. (November 30.)

GIDEON AND THE THREE HUNDRED. Judg. 7. 1-8.

GOLDEN TEXT: "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Psa. 118. 8.

Primary Notes.



Introductory. Tell story of man in a far-off Eastern land who wanted to find a faithful servant. To try those who came to ask for the place he set them to emptying some water out in a basket. It seemed so useless

and foolish that all but one refused to do it. One man said, "If he wants it done, and tells me to do it, I will do the best I can," and he went to work. He did not know that his master was trying him, to see what sort of a servant he would make. He only knew that the master knew best, and it was his business to trust him.

Thought journey. Again we will go back in thought to the land of the Israelites. The people are still suffering from their enemies. They have been saved by their judges many times, but have sinned and have been punished again. Now God, in his love and pity, intends to help them and save them out of the power of the Midianites, some heathen people who have sent great armies against them. Under an oak is a man named Gideon. God is speaking to him and telling him that he is to gather an army of his people and be the captain, leading them against the Midianites to win the battle, driving away and destroying the enemies. But it is all to be by the power of God. He tells Gideon just what to do. Gideon trusts and obeys.

The plan. Tell about the gathering of the army, the sending home of all the fearful and afraid, the trial of the rest by the brook, the choosing of the three hundred who lapped as a dog laps the water, showing, perhaps, how ready they were to fight, as they did not get down and drink all they wished, but caught up the water in their hands for a hasty drink and ran on. Make clear the choice of small number, that the glory might all belong to God.

The victory. The story is thrilling, however simply told. Every man "stood in his place," every man did as he was told, every man followed his captain and obeyed at the right minute, every man believed that God would give victory. It was not Gideon, but God, who had

power to do this. But it was their part to stand in the night, each in his place around the army of enemies, to blow the trumpets, to break the pitchers, to shout when they were told. God had chosen the three hundred that could be trusted to do his work, and they trusted him.

Guideboard: *Trust in the Lord.* Teach Golden Text, and impress the need of trust in God, because our enemies are stronger than we, though they cannot be seen.

Thought for teachers. Gideon was not chosen for his great service because "his family was great in Manasseh." He said it was "poor." We may lead little ones to victory with Gideon's faith and faithfulness.



Whisper Songs for November.

FIFTH LESSON.

Dear Shepherd of thy flock,
When storms and foes are nigh,
Into the shelter of thy fold
Thy little ones would fly.

SIXTH LESSON.

Help us, thy children, Lord,
To give this day to thee,
To keep thy word, to do thy will,
To love thee loyally.

SEVENTH LESSON.

No strength have we to live,
Unless thou give it, Lord,
Come thou and live within our hearts,
According to thy word.

EIGHTH LESSON.

No evil can befall,
For we belong to thee;
And thou dost give thine angels charge
To guard us tenderly.

NINTH LESSON.

Thou art our strength, dear Lord,
A child may trust in thee,
And stronger than a giant's hand
Each little one may be.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT. Fourth Quarter.

Teacher. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.

Class. Be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

All. For this God is our God forever and ever. He will be our guide even unto death.

SINGING. WHISPER PRAYER.

"Gentle Saviour, God of love,
Hear us from thy throne above,
While we meet to praise thee here
In our Sunday school so dear.
"May the lesson taught to-day,
Find us ready to obey.
Make us what we ought to be,
Draw thy little lambs to thee."

Teacher. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.

PRAYER. (Closing with the Lord's Prayer.)

GIVING SONG. (Followed by offering.)

RECITATION.

"There's not a child so small and weak,
But has his little cross to take;
His little work of love and praise,
That he may do for Jesus' sake."
T. God loveth a cheerful giver.

C. Freely ye have received; freely give.

All. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

ADDITIONAL LESSON.

QUIETING EXERCISE.

"We will raise our hands together,
We will all sit down together,
We will mind the rule of the Sunday school,

And all rise up together.

"We will raise our hands together,
We will fold our arms together,
We will mind the rule of the Sunday school,

And all sit down together.

"We will sit up straight together,
We will place our feet together,
We will mind the rule of the Sunday school,

And—all—keep—still—together."

LESSON TEACHING.

ECHO PRAYER.

CLOSING EXERCISE.

PRAYER. "Now the time has come to part.

Father, come to every heart;
Go thou with us as we go,
And be near in all we do."



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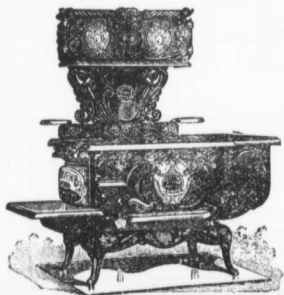
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