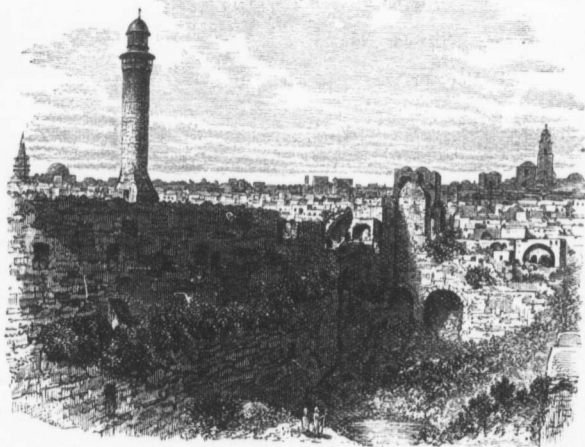


Sunday School Banner

FOR TEACHERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE



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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. 39

FEBRUARY, 1905

No. 2

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God's Questionings.

("What doest thou here, Elijah?"—1 Kings 19, 9.)

BY R. WALTER WRIGHT.

An echo of a recent Sunday School Lesson.

What doest thou here? 'Tis the challenge eternal,
Leaping out from the lips of the Infinite Lord;
Unveiling before thee Ideals supernal,
He measures thy life by the line of his word.

What doest thou here? In thy heart's highest heaven,
What star shone as motive to beckon afar?

In the deeps of thy bosom what purpose hath driven,
As forces electric thy swift-speeding car?

What doest thou here? 'Tis thy word and thy actions,
That color all life with indelible hues,
Illumine thy conscience with great satisfactions,
Or o'er it the horror of darkness bestrewns.

What doest thou here? 'Tis to thee he is speaking—
The Lord and thy soul on the mountain alone;
With still small imperative voice he is seeking
The goddess of self in thy heart to dethrone.

What doest thou here? In some cavern abiding,
When Duty's clear bugle thy pulses should thrill?
Or charmed by the temper with evil art hiding,
Unheeding the eye that beholdest thee still?

What doest thou here? Up! give God a true answer—
Throw open thy life to the glare of the sun;
Let sin be destroyed as a curse and a cancer,
And vast are the triumphs which yet shall be won.

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Sunday School Banner

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

TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1905.

The Sunday School Library.

BY THE REV. HOWARD HENDERSON, D.D.

As a suggestion that others may adopt with profit to the Sunday School library, I give a plan I have executed successfully. First, on Rally Day have every person attending the service bring a book or books of some kind, or contribute the price of one or more. Second, if the books are unsuitable for the library, they can be sold at a second-hand book-store, and use the proceeds as well as the money contributed for buying books suitable for a Sunday School library.

Almost every person has books they do not especially value who are willing to contribute them if solicited. Do not refuse magazines and pamphlets, as they can be utilized in furnishing the "shut-

in" with excellent, edifying reading matter, and properly stamped and numbered can be employed in the circulating library. Make every one feel, even the littlest child, that he has contributed something, and this will interest in the library, and it will be an element of education in the matter of benevolent giving. The "Little Sisters of the Poor" (Roman Catholic) trained to become solicitors of alms, are taught never to refuse a pin, a match, a penny—to get something from every one solicited. Train your children up in the way they should go in the respect of supporting church institutions, and when they become mature and have independent resources they will not depart from it. "Despise not the day of little things," and in due time you will reap larger things if you faint not. Have persons appointed to receive the contributions and take the name for credit of the donors. Label them, or their equivalent, as contributed by the persons giving.

Third, secure a sufficient number of auditors' reports, Congressional documents, etc., bound in muslin, to be used as scrap-books. Distribute these to teachers and pupils, each to make a scrapbook, within a designated time, for the library. Let some be miscellaneous and others special. Assign subjects such as short tales, poetry, wit and humor, animals, natural history, child sayings, household recipes, sermons, scriptural illustrations, etc. Provide papers, magazines, etc., from which selections may be made. Parents will become interested, and will read for the purpose of assisting their children, and thus will be induced to scan the church papers and other literary sources, cultivating the habit of reading, and discrimination for the purpose of selection and classification. In a short time you will have a considerable number of scrap-books that will be read with avidity. Instruct the children how to cut the clips, how to make the paste, and how to place the selections. Carefully remove every other page, that the volume may not be too bulky and unsymmetrical. Very small children will be interested in making picture-books of animals, distinguished characters, churches, public institutions, etc. Special gifts may be utilized in making free-hand sketches, photographs, etc. Students of the natural sciences may be utilized in getting up selections in botany, physiology, birds, fishes, insects, etc.

Fourth, if possible, secure a bright librarian who will familiarize himself with the subjects treated in the books,

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and their adaptations to the age and acquirements of the pupils. A well-furnished library should contain reference books, such as Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," Thomson's "The Land and the Book," McClintock and Strong's "Cyclopaedia," Strong's or Cruden's "Concordance," etc.

Fifth, let some one be employed to file the Sunday School papers, the lesson leaves, the charts and pictures for future reference when special information is desired. An edifying panorama may be made of the large colored prints and utilized, now and then, for varying the exercises, and on public occasions when children are to be entertained. In a few years enough can be preserved to paper the infant class room with illuminated Bible pictures.

Sixth, keep track of the books and see that they are returned within a specified time.

Seventh, the pastor should familiarize himself with the material of the library and lecture the school on the proper use of the books, commending certain ones as of special interest. In this way he will whet the young appetite and excite curiosity. The pure local literature should be placed within the reach of the school.

Eighth, the most reliable library books are those issued by our own denominational publishing house, for they have had a supervision that irresponsible publishers do not give. In selecting books the denominational publications should have the preference.

The library, while it should be scrupulously clean, should not be exclusively and specifically religious, and, particularly pietistic. Outlaw such goodish books whose heroes certain writers have palmed off as human children—stories of ministering angels with their wings clipped—the sight of whom, could we see them on the paths of life, would make this wretched world sadder than it is. "Ministering children" prematurely taught the gravity of a calling, who invariably die young, are not real models for imitation, and happily, out of fiction, never materialize to actual observation. I quake when I hear parents of a certain type tell of those precocious sayings and good actions, lest the plants grown up in their youth prematurely, should grow lean and sickly, bearing only leaves, when they should be blossoming and fruitful. Such untimely buds generally fall off, and when we look for bloom and beauty or rosy and luscious fruit, we behold only

leaves, and these "sere and yellow" in the springtime of existence, giving no promise of a lusty youth and maturing summer, and not the remotest prophecy of a golden autumn with a prolonged Indian summer. A child's piety is one thing. A child's mimicry of an adult's piety is another. Had Paul lived in a printing age he probably would have added to his childish experience, "When I was a child I read as a child." Let the school library be adapted to the various grades of curiosity and of capacity—from the infant's primer to the adult's folio. The Bible—which is a library of books—contains the tale of Joseph, a child story which children ever read with a rapacious appetite; the pastoral of Ruth, a charming idyl for romantic youth; and very much other literature which read as narrative fascinates as other ancient tales of brilliant and fascinating life. The child loves flowers, but hates botany; it loves religion, but hates theology. The Bible is God's book to the child exactly in the degree in which its sympathy is drawn forth to it as mirroring some outward image of its inner life. But other books than the Bible must be read to expand the child's capacity to take in more truth.

The surest way to blind ourselves to the light is to stare at the sun; and the surest plan to eclipse the light which shines in the divine word is to gaze at naught else. To peruse nothing but the Bible and books about it is the most certain method of scanting its blessing.—S. S. Journal.

The Montreal Conference recommends that Normal Classes be established in connection with all our schools, wherever practicable, and also suggested that the Constitution of the Sunday School, as recently published in leaflet form, be placed in the hands of all teachers and officers.—Epworth Era.

Rev. F. B. Meyer strikes the nail on the head when he says: "Unless we bring up the standard of our Sunday School teaching very materially, we shall find that those who have derived the benefit of the best appliances in the world during the week will not subject themselves to old-world methods which may have done very well fifty years ago, but are practically obsolete in these more strenuous times."

Arrangement of Seats for the Class.

BY KENDALL FERRY.

IN my experience as a Sabbath School teacher I have found that heart-to-heart and face-to-face methods bring about the best possible results; therefore I am in favor of movable chairs or benches, so arranged as to form a circle or hollow square around the teacher. Often our busy western towns have no Sunday School room, and Sabbath School convenes immediately at the close of the morning session in the church. The same pews that served the congregation being used for the classes that file into them, and the teacher must needs take his place in the aisle or an empty corner sometimes four pews removed from some of his class. Happy indeed are these beleaguered scholars and teachers whose churches are furnished with movable chairs or benches, and still more fortunate that class who can speed away into the unused vestry or annex.

If the seats are fastened together, as they usually are, in sections of four or five, allow three of these sections for a class, giving seating room for a class of twelve or fifteen; remove the central row of seats, widen the distance between the other two, allowing both to face each other, by turning one row; place the middle one across the end and you have formed a hollow square, three sides facing inward, the fourth side to be occupied by the teacher.

Every teacher ought to have Christian personal magnetism to hold the class if she or he has them fairly under the control of eye, heart, and lips consecrated to God's service. Keep the attention of the class confined to the limits of that "hollow square" and the lesson subject.

By all means have your own blackboard, if only a yard square and a flexible one at that. If you are fortunate enough to have a side wall, hang the map on that; if not, mount it on an easel and have it brought to you by some member of your class or the janitor, when needed. Every Sabbath School scholar ought to be able to draw a map of Palestine, or at least sketch an outline, giving mountains,

lakes, rivers, brooks, valleys, and locating various cities. Yet how few could do it now if asked. Then when not given to map work, use it for impressing principal thoughts brought out by the lesson, and one searching question to sum up the whole. Let some member of the class do the blackboard work, taking it in turns, and the teacher suggesting an idea or thought as a guide.

Again, if the chairs are single they can be formed into a circle, the teacher taking one chair, keeping the one object in view, gaining the eye, ear, and heart of your class and holding them.

Do you remember that the first attack upon the town of Mansoul by brave Captain Boanerges, in the name of King Shaddai, was made at Ear Gate? Ah, dear Sabbath School teacher, we can learn much from the dreamer in Bedford jail, and much more from his beloved Master, the Great Teacher.—S. S. Journal.

The Sign of the Fragments.

(John 6: 12.)

BY W. BOWMAN TUCKER.

He walked upon the hillside
Close followed by the throng,
And saw them wearied, hungry,
And felt compassion strong.
The Galleean waters
Lay full in view and calm,
But His great heart was heaving
Love's agonizing psalm.

And oh, what demonstrations
Of love divine He gave!
The hungry bodies feeding,
He sought their souls to save.
Indelible impressions,
God-graven, deep, they live,
And bear united witness
That Christ doth save, forgive.

The fragments still are with us,
True prophets in our need,
Declaring Christ is able
And will the needy feed.
Then fear no evil action,
This sign thy watchword make,
The Christ who gives the fragments
Will never thee forsake.

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Training the Teacher.

Professor H. M. Hamill, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, declares that teacher-training is the next great problem of the Sunday School. The Pennsylvania Herald reports an address with this helpful thought in it:

"The Sunday School has solved every problem that successively has confronted it, but the last and hardest of all. We have learned how to plant, to equip, to superintend, to extend the school, and are now to learn better how to teach it. The age demands this, the Bible deserves it, and the Sunday School teachers generally desire it. The churches have made it, or are making it, their leading issue. Dr. J. H. Vincent began to wrestle with the problem thirty-five years ago. The Chautauquas blocked out a way, but have ceased to make it their primary purpose. The churches, per se, are now taking it in hand. Every great religious convention is giving it special emphasis. What has been done, in chaotic ways, is evidence of what may be done. The Denver convention of 1902 and the Chicago convention of 1903 made it the crux of their discussions and decisions. The growth and success of the church of the future is to come largely from the efficient work of the Sunday School teacher. The way to make the church grow is by making the Sunday School to go, and the school will not 'go' without trained teachers."—S. S. Journal.

The Bible in Japan.

The Bible with its glad tidings of salvation still finds an eager welcome in the hearts and homes of men in every part of the world. Witness its circulation in Japan in 1902:

"The total circulation of Scriptures and portions of Scriptures of the Bible societies in 1892 was 199,602 copies, many of them in the army and navy. A great change has passed over the land. Twenty years ago the agent of the American Bible Society went, in the harbor of Uraga, to one of the Japanese men-of-war lying at anchor there, and in response to his request was denied permission either to go on board himself, or to send on board a single leaf of the Christian Scriptures. Yet, in 1900, the Bible

Society sold more Scriptures in Japan than in any previous year, and two of the largest battleships in the Japanese navy were under command of Christian officers, one of whom was an admiral; while the late Admiral Serata, trusted and respected by all, was president of the Young Men's Christian Association in Tokio, an elder in one of the Presbyterian churches, and a zealous worker for Christ until the day of his death."—Sunday School Times.

Denominational Lesson Helps.

The best and safest lesson helps are published by church houses. The Rev. C. R. Blackall, D.D., editor of the Sunday School literature of the American Baptist Publication Society, has this to say in regard to certain efforts to displace denominational literature:

In a flaming advertisement of an undenominational lesson help appears the following statement, the capitalized word evidently intended to designate the particular work advertised:

"The day of strict denominationalism is past. Happily the thinking class of Sunday School Workers are looking for the BEST in the way of lesson helps, regardless of by whom they are published."

Here is an instance of Sunday School commercialism that is perpetually standing in the way of true progress. It starts with a false promise and ends with a false conclusion. The day of "denominationalism" is not past, nor will it ever be past. Denominationalism is right. It is the family principle applied to church life. In it lies the hope of the world. Destroy it and you will have a jelly-fish Christianity instead, without aggressiveness of effort or definiteness of principle. Each of the several denominations emphasizes some particular truth or truths, yet all stand for great truths held in common.

Sectarianism is entirely different, and is to be condemned. There is a vast difference between church fellowship and Christian fellowship. Differences may well be minimized and agreements magnified among Christians, and brotherhood recognized under every name. But to break down the distinctiveness of the churches is to break down the whole organized Christian fabric. "The thinking class of Sunday School workers" are

not, thank God, so lost to a sense of responsibility for the intrinsic value of teaching material in their schools as to be "regardless of by whom they (the lesson helps) are published," or what they contain. To such "the BEST in the way of lesson helps" for a given school are such as foster and develop the strength of the church to which the school belongs. No others should ever have place, no matter what inducements to change are offered. Besides all this, the denominational helps are, as a rule, better than the best produced by private publishers whose sole aim seems to be personal aggrandizement.

Methodist Magazine and Review for January.

This veteran magazine begins its sixty-first volume and thirty-first year in an improved and somewhat enlarged form. Illustrated articles are a striking feature. Among these are one on "The Lessons of the World's Fair," with twenty-two engravings; "The Social Work of the Salvation Army," with thirteen; "The Tale of the Nibelungen," with six; and a number on current topics and events. "The Present Emergency in Missions," by Dr. Sutherland; "War, Its Substitutes and Cure," by Dr. Courtice; "Irish Poets and Poetry," by Dr. Williamson; "Earl Grey," by W. T. Stead; a strong Canadian serial, a dramatic tale of the Red Cross at Liao Yang, and New Year's poems and stories make up a very attractive number. November and December numbers given free to new subscribers. Now is the time to subscribe.

A FREE PREMIUM.

Any subscriber to The Magazine, who will send us, with his renewal, a new subscription, either at the full \$2.00 rate or in connection with The Guardian or Wesleyan at the club rate, \$1.75, will receive postpaid a free copy of either of the following interesting stories by Dr. Withrow: "Barbara Heck," "Valeria," "Neville Trueman."

Schools may get two copies of The Magazine and two copies of the above books for only \$3.20.

Many schools are accepting this truly liberal offer.

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

My Neighbor's Boy.

He seems to be several boys in one,
So much is he constantly everywhere!
And the mischievous things that boy has done

No mind can remember nor mouth declare.

He fills the whole of his share of space
With his strong straight form and his merry face.

He is very cowardly, very brave.

He is kind and cruel, good and bad,
A brute and a hero! Who will save
The best from the worst of my neighbor's lad?

The mean and the noble strife to-day—
Which of the powers will have its way?"

The world is needing his strength and skill,

He will make hearts happy, or make them ache,

What power is in him for good or ill?

Which of life's paths will his swift feet take?

Will he rise, and draw others up with him?

Or the light that is in him burn low and dim?

But what is my neighbor's boy to me
More than a nuisance? My neighbor's boy,
Though I have some fear for what he may be,

Is a source of solicitude, hope, and joy.
And a constant pleasure. Because I pray
That the best that is in him will rule
some day.

He passes me by with a smile and a nod.
He knows I have hope of him; guesses,
too,

That I whisper his name when I ask of God

That men may be righteous, He wills to do.

And I think that many would have more joy

If they loved and prayed for a neighbor's boy.

—London Christian World.

Let us be careful so to act that if men do speak against us they will have to speak falsely, and if they do hate us they will have to hate us on account of our devotion to Christ.

Book Notices.

"Men of the Bible. Some Lesser-Known Characters." By Geo. Milligan, D.D., and Seven Others. Manchester: James Robinson. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. viii-273. Price, \$1.25.

The second series includes some lesser-known characters, as Barzillai, Hiram, Gehazi, Joseph of Arimathea, Demas, and others. It is wonderful how much inspiration to well-doing and admonition against ill-doing may be derived from studies of these minor characters.

"Women of the Bible." Rebekah to Priscilla. By H. E. Lewis and Five Others. Manchester: James Robinson. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. viii-264. Price, \$1.25.

Not less interesting, in many respects even more so, are the studies of the women of the Bible. The "eternal womanly" in the sacred page appeals vividly to our sensibilities. The sweet stories of Rebekah and Rachel, of Esther and Mary, of Dorcas and Lydia, and the more robust virtues of Miriam, Deborah and Jael, are here recounted. We wonder that the exquisite idyll of Ruth is omitted from this series. The darker figures of Jael and Jezebel bring into strong relief the milder virtues of these woman saints of the olden time. The literary treatment of these characters is both vigorous and vivacious.

Holding the Ropes: Missionary Methods for Workers at Home. By Belle M. Brain. Cloth, 12mo, 224 pages. Price, \$1.00 net. New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

Miss Belle M. Brain, of Springfield, Ohio, is known and beloved throughout the entire missionary world for her unremitting labors in rousing and sustaining interest among the "Christians at home" in the work of those who are advancing and upholding the standard of Christ among heathen and semi-barbarous people. From the titles of two of Miss Brain's former books, "Fuel for Missionary Fires" and "Fifty Missionary Programmes," the glowing spirit and practical character of her writings may be inferred. In the present volume she has

summed up and systematized all her original ideas, and her clever applications to mission work of the most approved methods in the pedagogical and evangelical fields. Says Dr. Pierson, "The study of missions is a science, and the management of a missionary meeting is an art. Therefore, when so great interests are at stake, Miss Brain must be commended for her earnestness and thoroughness in presenting to missionary workers at home the most advanced scientific methods of study and the most artful means of arousing the interest of indifferent church members and listless Sunday School scholars."

"Men of the Old Testament. Cain to David. Solomon to Jonah." By Geo. Milligan, D.D., and Eight Others. Manchester: James Robinson. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. viii-301. Price, \$1.25 each.

Few subjects for sermon or study are more interesting and instructive than the brief biographies given us in the Scripture of some of the great men of the early time. Some of these, as Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, are objects of emulation; others, like Cain, Esau, Pharaoh, Achan, Saul, of admonition; but all of instruction. The Non-conformist pulpit is well represented in these brief and vigorous papers. The studies of the minor prophets are very instructive. The evangelical publishing house of James Robinson, Manchester, is rendering distinct service to the cause of Christian literature by its admirable series of books on Bible characters.

From the Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, publisher of the Sunday School periodicals of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Confederation Life Building, Toronto, we have received two admirable handbooks on teacher-training. Price, ten cents each. The first of these is a series of studies in mind growth, from one to twenty-one, by Dr. Murray, of Dalhousie University, Halifax, an important contribution to the psychology of child and adolescent life. The other is on Sabbath School methods, studies in teaching and organization, by Dr. Tracey, of Toronto University, a thoughtful study of the teacher's work, his text-book, and proper methods of teaching.

LESSONS AND GOLDEN TEXTS—FIRST QUARTER.

Studies in the Writings of John.—Miracles (or Signs) and Witnesses.

LESSON 1. Jan. 1.—CHRIST THE LIFE AND LIGHT OF MEN. John 1. 1-18. *Commit vs. 1-4.* (Read John 8. 12-30.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** In him was life; and the life was the light of men.—John 1. 4.

2. Jan. 8.—THE WITNESS OF JOHN THE BAPTIST TO JESUS. John 1. 19-34. *Commit vs. 26, 27.* (Read John 3. 22-36; Mal. 3. 1-5; 4. 5, 6.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.—John 1. 29.

3. Jan. 15.—JESUS WINS HIS FIRST DISCIPLES. John 1. 35-51. *Commit vs. 40, 41.* **GOLDEN TEXT:** Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.—John 1. 49.

4. Jan. 22.—THE FIRST MIRACLE IN CANA. John 2. 1-11. *Commit vs. 11.* (Read John 10. 22-42.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Whosoever he saith unto you, do it.—John 2. 5.

5. Jan. 29.—JESUS AND NICODEMUS. John 3. 1-15. *Commit vs. 14, 15.* (Read John 2. 12 to 3. 21.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3. 16.

6. Feb. 5.—JESUS AT JACOB'S WELL. John 4. 5-14. *Commit vs. 13, 14.* (Study vs. 1-42.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.—Rev. 22. 17.

LESSON 7. Feb. 12.—THE SECOND MIRACLE IN CANA. John 4. 43-54. *Commit vs. 49-51.* **GOLDEN TEXT:** The same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.—John 5. 36.

8. Feb. 19.—JESUS AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA. John 6. 1-15. *Commit vs. 8, 9.* (Read John 6. 1-47.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles.—John 6. 2.

9. Feb. 26.—THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND FISHES. John 6. 1-14. *Commit vs. 11, 12.* (Read John 6. 1-71.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** I am the living bread which came down from heaven.—John 6. 51.

10. March 5.—JESUS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. John 7. 37-46. *Commit vs. 37.* (Read John 7. 1-52.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Never man spake like this man.—John 7. 46.

11. March 12.—THE SLAVERY OF SIN. (May be used as a Temperance Lesson.) John 8. 31-40. *Commit vs. 31-32.* (Read John 8. 12-59.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** Whosoever cometheth sin is the servant of sin. John 8. 34.

12. March 19.—HEALING OF THE MAN BORN BLIND. John 9. 1-11. *Commit vs. 10, 11.* (Study John 9. 1-41.) **GOLDEN TEXT:** I am the light of the world.—John 9. 5.

13. March 26.—REVIEW. **GOLDEN TEXT:** But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.—John 20. 31.

ORDER OF SERVICES—FIRST QUARTER

OPENING SERVICE.

I. Silence.

II. Responsive Sentences. (Psa. 119. 9-16.)

Supt. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?

School. By taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Supt. With my whole heart have I sought thee:

School. O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Supt. Thy word have I hid in mine heart

School. That I might not sin against thee.

Supt. Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes.

School. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth.

Supt. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.

School. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways.

Supt. I will delight myself in thy statutes: School. I will not forget thy word.

III. Singing.

IV. The Ten Commandments, or the Apostles' Creed.

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

VI. Singing.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. Class Study of the Lesson.

II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

III. Recitation of the Title and Golden Text by school in concert.

IV. Review and Application of the Lesson by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. Additional Lesson. (Special lesson in the Church Catechism may here be introduced.)

VI. Announcements (especially of the Church service and the Epworth League and week-evening prayer-meetings.)

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. Singing.

II. Responsive Sentences. (Eph. 3. 20, 21.)

Supt. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,

School. According to the power that worketh in us,

All. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.



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INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS

FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE WRITINGS OF JOHN

LESSON VI. Jesus at Jacob's Well

[Feb. 5

GOLDEN TEXT. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life free.y. Rev. 22. 17.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

[Study also verses 1-4, 15-42]

John 4. 5-14 [Commit to memory verses 13, 14]

5 Then cometh he to a city of Sa-ma'ri-a, which is called Sy'char, near to the parcel of ground that Ja'cob gave to his son Jo'seph.

6 Now Ja'cob's well was there. Je'sus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Sa-ma'ri-a to draw water: Je'sus saith unto her. Give me to drink.

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Sa-ma'ri-a unto him. How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Sa-ma'ri-a? for the Jews have no dealings with the Sa-ma'ri-tans.

10 Je'sus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Ja'cob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 And Je'sus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Time.—December, A. D. 27. **Place.**—Samaria, at Jacob's well.

Home Readings

M. Jesus at Jacob's Well. John 4. 5-14.
Tu. Christ revealed. John 4. 15-26.

REVISED VERSION*

5 So he cometh to a city of Samaria, called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph: 6 and Jacob's well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. 7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. 8 For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy food. 9 The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? (For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. 11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou that living water? 12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof, and his sons, and his cattle? 13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 14 but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.

W. The Samaritans. 2 Kings 17. 24-34.

Th. Invitation. Isa. 55. 1-7.

F. Wells of salvation. Isa. 12.

S. Water of life. Rev. 22. 1-7.

S. Whosoever will. Rev. 22. 16-21.

The Lesson Hymns

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 82.

"Whosoever heareth," shout, shout the sound!
Send the blessed tidings all the world around;
Spread the joyful news wherever man is found.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 81.

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 372.

Wonderful story of love;
Tell it to me again;
Wonderful story of love.

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Library References

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JACOB'S WELL.—Andrews, *Life of Our Lord*, p. 167. Geikie, *Life and Words of Christ*, vol. i, p. 520. Ellicott, *Life of Christ*, p. 129. Geikie, *New Testament Hours*, vol. i, p. 95. Sayce, *Patriarchal Palestine*, p. 195. Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 367-375.

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.—Farrar, *Life of Christ*, vol. i, pp. 205-216. Morris, *Sacred Biog-*

raphy, vol. ii, p. 371. Wharton, *Famous Women of the New Testament*, p. 187.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON

Verse 5.—Fish, *Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 83. Verse 8.—Pitkin, J. B., *Sermons*, p. 88. Verse 10.—Howe, J., *Works*, vol. iii, p. 453. George, *Consecration*, p. 169. Chapin, *Extemporaneous Discourse*, vol. i, p. 268. Cennick, *Village Discourses*, p. 215. Verse 13.—Liddon, H. P., *Sermons to the People*, p. 308. Verse 14.—Chapin, E. H., *Select Sermons*, p. 299. Banks, L. A., *Christ and His Friends*, p. 174.

The Lesson Outline

I. *The Scene.*

The valley between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim: 1. Hallowed by the residence of the patriarchs; 2. Notable in the days of Joshua; 3. The heart of the kingdom of Samaria; 4. The scene of awful cruelties at the time of the "Captivity"; 5. The seat of a colony of foreigners and pagans; 6. At the time of our lesson the stronghold of a tribe hostile to both Jews and Galileans.

II. *The Persons.*

1. A woman of Samaria who perhaps (*Trumbull*) drew water at midday for the accommodation of toilers in neighboring fields; a woman of ready tongue, loose morals, and eager but merely formal religious convictions; conscience-stricken but not yet penitent; 2. Jesus—recognized by the woman, first as a Jew, second as a rabbi, third as a prophet, finally as the Messiah; regarded by the people of Jerusalem, which he had just left, as a provincial (Galilean) mechanic (carpenter) turned rabbi (or, as we would say, professor). He had made a wide but not deep impression by his wonderful works; whether or not he had left any disciples behind him we do not know. What disciples came with him we do not know. The twelve had not yet been formally called.

III. *Stumbling-blocks Turned into Steppingsones.*

Samaria did not seem to be a promising field for Jesus as an evangelist. A weak woman was not a promising audience; a well-curb was not a good pulpit; dinner-hour (the speaker thirsty and the hearer hungry) was not a favorable condition; the recognized hostility between Jews and Samaritans was an added misfortune. But Jesus uses all these to facilitate his work.

IV. *Testimony of God's Grace.*

"We speak that we do know." Jesus did not hesitate to tell that uneducated, sinful, and theologically prejudiced woman the deep things of God.

V. *The Inability of the Carnal Mind to Comprehend Spiritual Truth.*

VI. *The Philosophy of the Religious Life.*
In studying religion we must take into account human nature and divine nature. Every human heart is a fountain, springing up and overflowing. It is impossible for anyone to live and not affect those about him or her. Often the outflow of the fountain is mixed, good and bad, winsome and nauseous. God makes a fountain which shall spring up into everlasting life: 1. This fountain is fed by a conduit—the living water is given by our Saviour. 2. The everlasting life is not merely a new life that begins with death. It is an endless life which we have now, so soon as we drink of the living water of God.

The Lesson Word Studies

Intervening Events.—The events of John 2, 13 to 4, 45 may have occupied several weeks, but probably not more than a month. About the time of the departure of Jesus from Judea, or soon after, John the Baptist was arrested by Herod Antipas. On his way to Galilee Jesus paused at Jacob's well to rest at midday, at which point our lesson narrative begins.

Verse 5. Then ["So"]—The Greek here has *ōv*, a conjunction indicating that something follows from another necessarily. "Therefore"

(since he must needs go through Samaria, verse 4) "he cometh of necessity"—the chosen route so leading him—"to a city," etc.

Samaria—This province of central Palestine took its name from the city most noted as the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. The city in turn was called Samaria, from the ancient hill or mountain (Heb. שֶׁמֶרֶן, *shō-mer-ōn*, *watch mountain*, Gr. Σαμάρεια, *samarīah*) on which it was built. The name is also closely related with that of Shemer, from whom Omri is said to have purchased the hill (comp. 1 Kings 16, 24).

Sychar—Now generally identified with *Askar*, at the extreme eastern point of the Ebal ridge and northeast of Nablus (Shechem).

Parcel of ground—Not elsewhere specifically mentioned as a gift of Jacob to his son Joseph; but in all probability the same field mentioned in Gen. 33, 19 and again Josh. 24, 32: the place of Joseph's tomb and the inheritance of his children.

6. Jacob's well—Located at the entrance of the valley between Ebal and Gerizim in the province of Samaria, between twenty-five and thirty miles north of Jerusalem and fifteen miles west of the Jordan, and one of the few undisputed sacred sites of Palestine still to be seen. The old well still exists, and was some years ago partially cleaned out.

On the well—A large flat stone through which a circular opening was cut formed the top of the well. On this low "well-curb" Jesus sat, possibly in the shade of an overhanging tree.

The sixth hour—Twelve o'clock at noon if John employs the Jewish mode of reckoning time, as is probably the case. According to the Roman method it would have been about sunset (our 6 P. M.).

8. His disciples—Not necessarily all of them.

Meat—Rather, *food* (Gr. τροφή, *nourishment, food*). Thus also the "meat offering" referred to in Lev. 2, 1 consisted of fine flour and oil without any flesh.

9. No dealings with the Samaritans—The clause of which these words are a part is a parenthetical explanation of the evangelist. After the Assyrians had conquered the kingdom of the ten tribes they led the inhabitants away captive to Assyria, and sent colonists from Babylon and from other parts of Assyria to take the place of the deported Jews (2 Kings 17). Later, during the reign of Esar-haddon, and again during that of Assur-bani-pal, more

colonists were sent. From the intermarriage of these colonists with the remnant of remaining Jews sprang a mixed race, from which descended the Samaritans of later history and of our Lord's time. Their form of religion seems to have combined the Jewish ritual with the worship of graven images (2 Kings 17, 25-41). The Jews of post-exilic times were more exclusive than ever, and never again adopted idolatry as a part of the worship. It was natural, therefore, that the strictly orthodox Jews should refuse to have anything to do with the semi-idolatrous Samaritans. This attitude of the Jews toward their northern neighbors dated back to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (Ezra 4, 7-24; Neh. 4, 7-13).

10. The gift of God—To the world in sending his Son to redeem mankind.

And who it is that saith to thee—If thou knewest that I am the Messiah for whose coming Jews and Samaritans alike are anxiously waiting.

Living water—The figure is adopted from an object at hand: so always in the teaching of Jesus. That which sustains the higher or spiritual life is here meant.

11. Sir—Greek κύριε, *Master*.

Nothing to draw with—The well was an open one, each person wishing to draw water bringing his own vessel and probably also his own rope.

12. Our father Jacob—The common ancestor of both Jews and Samaritans, and as such revered by both.

Drank thereof—Great as was Jacob, he found it necessary to drink of water such as this in the well to sustain life.

13. Whosoever ["Every one that"] **drinketh**—Without answering the woman's question Jesus continues speaking figuratively. By so doing he no doubt intensifies the interest of his listener as well as her longing to know who he is that thus speaks.

14. Shall never thirst—Literally, *will certainly not thirst forever*. The longing will not cease, but with the longing will ever be present a perpetually available supply. The thirst shall not be a famishing, for the craving will be satisfied continually as it occurs.

In him a well—An abiding source of refreshing.

Everlasting ["eternal"]—Eternal in the sense of having endless duration (αἰώνιον).

The Lesson Exposition

WHY JESUS LEFT JUDEA

At least eight months of the first year of Jesus's ministry were spent in Judea. The return to Galilee referred to in chapter 2 was very brief, Jesus returning to Jerusalem (2, 13) and

continuing his ministry in Judea (3, 22). But now he changes the field of his principal activities to Galilee, thereafter only returning on short excursions to Jerusalem and its immediate neighborhood. Why did he make the change?

Three reasons may be assigned: (1) First, and the least weighty but none the less real, he was governed by a sense of high courtesy toward John. He had come to be recognized by the disciples of John as a rival of their master. John himself had no spirit of jealousy. But the popular feeling nevertheless put him in an embarrassed position. The withdrawal of Jesus to Galilee relieved the embarrassment. (2) The hostility of the Pharisees on account of the increasing fame of Jesus might easily have issued in violence. The hour had not come for the final conflict with those who sought his life. (3) Jesus's withdrawal from Judea marks the end of the official opportunity of the Jewish nation to accept him as the Messiah. His mission during that first year was chiefly to offer himself to the nation, and the rulers had definitely and finally rejected him. Henceforth his mission and offer of himself were to individuals. The case was closed with the nation as represented by its ruling classes.

DISREGARDING PREJUDICE

This whole account of Jesus's journey through Samaria, and particularly the incident at Jacob's well, illustrates the way he was in the habit of disregarding mere prejudice. Jesus was not in the habit of proclaiming his hostility to unreasonable and hurtful customs and traditions. When they came in his way he simply ignored them. And he did it with such ease and naturalness that we are likely to overlook the significance of his course. He did not say in advance that he would not conform to certain demands of custom and established teaching. But when the time came he did not conform. This trip through Samaria was in violation of the deep-rooted sentiments of the Jews. Jesus did not call attention to that unreasoned feeling that held the very soil of Samaria to be polluting; he merely went through Samaria as if he did not know of the existence of that intense race prejudice. His conversation with a woman in that public way was a rank offense to the prevailing notions of the Jewish teachers. But Jesus talked with her as freely and without apology or protest as if it were the usual thing. And the fact that the woman was a "sinner"—that is, a woman who had lost her reputation for virtue—made his conversation a peculiar offense against the prevailing public opinion. But Jesus dealt with her as if he were unaware that there could be any criticism of his course on the ground of impropriety. Jesus was not a noisy nonconformist, but his nonconformity was unhesitating and complete in everything which involved a moral principle. He did not hesitate to dine with a publican; he did not observe the custom of washing his hands before eating, because it had in it a false meaning; he permitted his dis-

ciples to pluck and eat wheat on the Sabbath as they passed through the field, because a false notion of the Sabbath was involved. But he never confounded nonessential things with the essential in his nonconformity. In customs morally indifferent he did as those of his time. That gave force and value to his refusal to conform in things morally objectionable; and this is an important suggestion for nonconformity of every time and place.

CHRIST'S METHOD OF EVANGELISM

Great interest attaches to this interview of Jesus with the woman of Samaria because, being described with so much detail, it illustrates his method of evangelism. The characteristic feature of that method was that it was personal. This not simply that Jesus was addressing himself to one person, but that he adapted his method to the individual peculiarities and qualities of that one person. One unvarying method applied to every person, though taken separately and singly, is not the personal method, any more than a common method applied to a multitude. Jesus dealt with the woman in view of her own personality and history, and he did this always. His method with Nicodemus, and the young ruler, and Zacchæus, was in each case strictly personal. What he said to one would not have been adapted to another. They were different, and therefore he dealt with them differently. The wise hunter adapts his methods to the game he is hunting. All of which should show us the necessity for the successful winning of people to Christ, of a thorough knowledge of human nature in general, and in addition of a specific knowledge of the individuals whom we seek to influence.

CHRIST'S INTEREST IN THE DISREPUTABLE

This Samaritan woman was disreputable. She was in the disgrace and contempt which have always attached to women who have sacrificed their virtue. The world despised such women then, and still despises them. And the disposition on the part of religious people was to cast them out and utterly avoid them, entertaining for them no hope. And that is still the practical attitude of Christian people toward them. In the time of Jesus the Jews put publicans, the detested tax collectors for the Roman government, upon a level of contempt and shame with the harlots. These two classes stood outside the sympathy and hope of all self-respecting people. Now, it was characteristic of Jesus that he made himself the friend of the disreputable and disgraced. He knew, in the first place, that their sin was not greater than that of others not so despised. Pride and avarice and hypocrisy were in his eyes quite as shameful as the sin of the social outcasts. Then, too, he had hope for all sinners. His ability to

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save was not limited to a certain class of sins. So, as in the case of this woman, in the case of the woman of Magdala, and in the case of the publicans Matthew and Zachæus, he took the part of the disgraced. It is clear that we have but very imperfectly followed his example. And the gospel never displays its full saving powers among the respectable classes until it has been carried effectively to the most disreputable. The gospel is shorn of its power when any are excluded from its benefits and grace.

THE CHOKED SPRINGS OF THE SOUL

The old well at Sychar, which until recently was half filled with rocks and rubbish, its springs choked and its waters rarely ever within reach, was, in its neglected state, a very perfect type of the woman's heart who talked with Jesus, and of the hearts of multitudes of people now living. The springs of good in her were choked and buried under much moral rubbish and ruin. But the springs were there. It only needed some one to reach them and open them. Jesus did that, though it required much and patient digging. And this is the encouragement we may always have, that the human heart has in it, however deeply buried, the fountain of good desire. It is the mission of Christian people to find and open these springs. When once they are set flowing the salvation of the soul is accomplished. For salvation is not something wrought on the soul, but in the soul; not something brought into the life, but the opening up of the sources of life in the heart itself. That was what happened with this woman. She was awakened. The buried and seemingly dead

hope in her was quickened. Long-silenced voices in the central chambers of her soul began to speak. She began to desire, to crave, to cry out. She began to feel that a better life was possible, that the old life of shame might be put away. The very thing that Jesus was saying to her she began to experience—the springs of new thoughts and new feelings and new hopes were opened in her heart, "a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." No man is saved until those springs are opened within him. And it is the unique peculiarity of the gospel, and one of the great proofs of its divinity, that it has just the needed power to awaken and open and draw out the smothered and buried elements of good in the soul.

THE LOCAL VERSUS THE UNIVERSAL IN RELIGION

There has always been a tendency to obscure and lose sight of the universal in religion under the local and temporary. So the Jews did, so did the Samaritans. Each declared true worship must be in one place—Jerusalem, or on Mount Gerizim. One way, one place, one organization, by one authority—this has been the misconception of the ages. And we are not yet entirely free from it. We think we have broken from it sometimes, but directly we find that in some way we are still localizing God and cribbing his worship within narrow confines. The full realization of this great statement concerning true worship which Jesus made to the woman of Samaria is apparently reserved for a future age. But it is well to remind ourselves that it is we and not religion that is local.

The Lesson Prayer

© thou who camest, weary from thy journey, to Jacob's well in distant Samaria so long ago, and didst open the springs of everlasting life in the heart of the woman who came thither to draw water, to us also hast thou come when we expected thee not and knew thee not—thou hast come to us when the world has filled all our thoughts, and sin's pollution was upon us, and the good in us deeply buried under the base. And coming thou hast found us out in all the secret places of our lives, in our sins, which we would fain have hidden from the eyes of God, and also in our capacities and longings for holiness, of which we ourselves had almost ceased to be aware. And we thank thee that, when thou hadst searched us and awakened us, thou didst reveal thyself to us, and we knew thee as the Messiah, the Son of God, because the deepest and best in us found in thee its inspiration and ideal. And we await and crave thy future comings, for thou art not yet done with revealing us to ourselves, nor thyself to us. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

Jesus at Jacob's well shows us how to find great opportunities on small occasions.

A true teacher's opportunity is whenever and wherever ignorance is willing to be taught. The opportunity of comfort is when sorrow is

willing to be solaced. The opportunity of strength is when weakness is willing to be empowered.

A common place may afford one an opportunity to do work which is not commonplace.

He who has not the spirit to render a small service is not qualified to render a service that is great.

II

Wayside opportunities stand thick on each side of life's pathway.

Jesus watched the wayside opportunities for work.

A woman at a well may afford a better opportunity for doing good than a king in a cathedral. Jesus preached to the one woman at the well the very gospel the whole world wants.

Watch your wayside opportunities in the home. Watch your wayside opportunities in the church. Watch your wayside opportunities in the community.

Every opportunity you have for doing good is a door that God's hand opens.

The one Saviour is for all souls.

III

Jesus begins with us down where we are to bring us up to where he is.

The Master asked for something in order that he might give something better to the one of whom he asked.

The sun must shine on the flower before the flower will open its heart to the sun. The cloud gives back the rain which the sea gave to the cloud. The moon would never shine on the world did not the sun first shine on the moon.

Many a sweet shower of rain is kissed by the sun from stagnant seas. The promise and potency of purity is not in the sinner, but in the Saviour.

IV

God is as willing to bless the worst as to bless the best. He is as willing to give strength to the weakest as he is to the strongest. His eye of pity is most on him who fails at the fag end of the race.

The mission of the Great Physician is not to the healthy, but to the diseased. Christ came not to call saints, but sinners, to repentance.

He does not come to mend the heart, but to renew it.

The hardest case is easy for him, if he be trusted with the case.

V

Christ could see diamonds under debris.

The prejudiced eye of the scribe saw nothing but sin in the Samaritan. Jesus has often seen in the mightiest sinners the making of the mightiest saints.

Christ pierced the crust of conventionality to find the candle of conscience.

VI

The worst man never looks for the best in us. The best man is most ready to forgive the worst in us. Bees hunt flowers amid carcasses. Buzzards hunt carcasses among flowers.

It is more to discover a soul and save it than to discover a world and win it.

The life of a rosebush can distill the sweetest scent from the filth of a sewer. Christ is the heavenly chemist who touches corruption to cleanse it.

Sunshine is never sullied by falling on filth. Saints are most saintly when saving sinners.

VII

The spirit of Christ and the spirit of caste are as far apart as heaven and hell.

Christ came to throw a bridge of mercy across the stream of man's misery. The Pharisee was like a dummy with nice clothes on for show. Samaritans to him were as vile as swine.

The Pharisees are dead but Pharisaism still lives. A shell that holds no egg is as useless to a starving man as a stone.

Pharisaism was a fine organ with the reeds all ruined. Jesus came to put music into men by attuning their hearts to truth.

The life of Christ is God's river of love that flows through deserts of death and makes them break into living bloom.

VIII

Christ would rather talk to a sinner who wants to be a saint than to hear the angels sing.

He was never too weary to point out to others the way of rest.

We always increase our own happiness when we lessen the sorrows of others.

IX

The wells of the world can never satisfy the thirst of the soul. Many a cup of pleasure leaves only a burning thirst for more. Man's body is material and must be nourished with matter. Man's soul is a spirit and must be nourished by the spiritual.

There is many a sinful soul that longs to be a saint. So many good people would not neglect so many bad people if the good people knew how many bad people would like to be good.

Some desire to be better is never long absent from the man that is bad.

The basis of hope for the man that is lost lies in the fact that Christ came to save him.

Some good people forget that there is never anything bad in trying to be good, no matter how bad the man has been who tries.

X

How many good people are really trying to answer the cry of the wayward woman, "Give me the water of life"?

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He will soon degenerate who does nothing to regenerate others.

No matter how bad a man feels or how bad

he is, if he only *wills* he may have the water of life. A man's character counts only in the direction of his choices.

The Lesson Heart Talk

It was noontide. The sun was hot, the road was heavy; it was time for the midday meal, but none had been prepared. Hungry, thirsty, weary, Jesus sat upon the well. It brings him very near to us thus to see him sharing our conditions, knowing by experience how a tired, hungry man feels. Yet there was a hunger within him that overcame all desire for physical food, a hunger to feed a human soul starved by sin. We love to think Jesus is like us in our human nature. He loves to see us like him in his divine nature of loving sacrifice for others. He quite forgot pressing needs in his desire to help this woman; we often are not willing to set aside, not our needs, but our convenience and pleasure, to do good to some one else. He was never so occupied or so weary as to be selfish. We cannot be altogether such as he was, but we can grow into his likeness day by day through little deeds of kindness and little words of love. One who has long been a teacher of men in high thinking and doing said to a boy who asked how he should learn not to be selfish, "You might begin by passing the butter courteously at the table." Does this seem a small matter? Watch yourself and see how selfishness grows or disappears by apparently insignificant acts and words.

The way Jesus won this woman to goodness and truth is instructive for us who wish to be soul-winners. If he had begun by telling her what a sinner she was, she would have gone back to the city with a different report of her interview with him. I heard Mr. Hadley, of the Water Street Mission, say, "If you want to bring a man to the Saviour never begin by telling him of his sins. He will get on the defensive at once and tell you he is not so bad as you think he is." Jesus understood human nature. He put himself in touch with this one whom he sought to save. He let her know that he could sympathize with one who had needs unsupplied. She was at once interested; she listened; and at last she asked drink of him, not he of her. He led her to see her own

need by showing her he had something to give far better than anything she had ever known. Up to that hour she had imagined herself satisfied. Now she discovered her emptiness and cried, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst no more, neither come hither to draw." Blessed discovery! for then the heart seeks its true satisfaction. Though he had not said she was a sinner, in the presence of his purity she was her own accuser; she said, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did."

For months and years over the same road this woman had gone, back and forth with her waterpot, a monotonous round. But what a jeweled day in the crown of her years was this when she met the Lord Jesus! Out of that well which represented to her only hard work for daily necessities he drew for her the truth which transfigured her life. So will he bring to us all, in the monotony of daily toil, sweet spiritual refreshment. If thou knevest the gift of God, and who it is that speaks to thee in the unrest and thirst of thy heart, thou wouldst ask of him and he would give living water that satisfies. There is no natural thirst of the soul which he cannot and will not fully meet. The longing for pleasure, possession, companionship, love, high ambitions, everything worth having, are all included in the gift of eternal life. We find earthly wells deep and hard to draw. The wellsprings within flow without effort. There was no change in the daily routine for this woman, but there was a blessed change in herself. Water had to be provided for the household, and she had to draw it. But the pitcher never seemed heavy any more, because the heart had lost its burden. The pitcher and the well were necessities of physical existence, but she had discovered that she possessed a life within far higher than any material thing. A pitcher and a well should never enslave a woman. And ever after, as she drew the bucket from the depths, I fancy I hear her cheerily singing of the living water springing up to everlasting life.

The Lesson in Literature and Art

1. "Those who would win souls should make the best of them and work upon their good nature; for if they make the worst of them, they certainly exasperate their ill nature."

2. Verse 6. Jesus found in this chance hour of physical thirst and weariness the high noon

of opportunity. He was more alert to give than to receive; and in this obscure place and apparently inopportune moment he saw an opening into which he could safely slip the most priceless pearl that was ever committed to human knowledge.

3. A thousand years a poor man watched

Before the gate of paradise;
But while one little nap he snatched,
It oped and shut. Ah! was he wise?

—*Oriental translation.*

4. We have seen but one pictured representation which answered to our ideal of the face and figure of Jesus. It was the work of an Italian master, whose name we have forgotten, and represented Christ talking to the woman of Samaria. It was a picture which might have converted a soul. There sat the wearied Saviour by the well-side, his eye full of a far look of love and sorrow, as if he saw the whole degraded species in the one sinner before him, and his hand half open, as if it held in it "the living water"; the woman listening with downcast looks, and tears trickling down her cheeks; her pitcher resting on the mouth of the well; and behind her, seen in the distance, the sunny sky and glowing mountains of Palestine. But in the noble figure and the ethereal grandeur of his countenance you saw that the gentleness was not that of woman, nor even that of man; it was the gentleness of Him whose "dwelling is with the humble and the contrite in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and the heart of the contrite ones."—*Gilfillan.*

5. Verse 10. A crew of distressed seamen once signalled a passing vessel that they were famishing for want of water. The answer at once came back: "Let down your buckets; you are at the mouth of the Amazon, and there is fresh water all around you." Many of us are like these thirsty sailors. We are consumed by *cnnui*, restlessness, and desire, all unconscious of the fact that the very waters over which we sail are fresh and cool and sweet, and that we need only draw and drink. Opportunities for happy living blossom about us like wild flowers; murmur like mountain streams dashing down from their snowy sources; warble in our ears like forest birds at dawn from their dewy coverts. Access to nature, human hearts to love and cherish and suffer for, communion with God, commerce with the great minds of the past, and a sense of inner worth and sufficiency—these are withheld from few, yet they are enough to render harmonious the most obscure life, and to gild with splendor the humblest environment.

6. Verse 10. "If thou knewest the gift of God." Says Dr. James Stalker: "I have heard that one of the diamond fields of South Africa was discovered on this wise: A traveler one day entered the valley and drew near to a settler's door, at which a boy was amusing himself by throwing stones. One of the stones fell at the stranger's feet, who picked it up and was in the act of laughingly returning it, when something flashed from it which stopped his hand and made his heart beat fast. It was a diamond.

The child was playing with it as a common stone; the peasant's foot had spurned it; the cart wheel had crushed it; till the man who knew saw it and recognized its value." It is just so with many of us. The priceless experience that God has hidden away for us in some rough bit of life we stumble over, and count trivial or common; but this same experience flashes upon the eye of the poet, or the man with spiritual senses alert, as a moment big with glory—fraught with heavenly riches.

7. Verse 11. The ordinances of religion are compared to wells of water; but then they are like Jacob's well. The water lies far below the surface; and to the man of the world, the mere professor of religion who has the name but not the faith of a Christian, we may say, as the woman said to our Lord, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." Faith is, as it were, the rope, and our souls the vessel, which we let down into this well to fill them with living water. But that they do no good to some, forms no reason why we should despise or neglect ordinances. It is no fault in the bread that, thrust between a dead man's teeth, it does not nourish him. The truth is that we must have spiritual life to get the benefit of religious ordinances. Water will revive a withering, but not a withered, plant; wine will revive a dying, but not a dead, man; the breath of your mouth or the breeze of heaven will rekindle the smoldering coal, but not the cold, gray ashes of the hearth. And it is only spiritual life that can derive benefit from such ordinances as are intended to revive the faint and give strength to the weary.—*Guthrie.*

8. Verse 13. In our quest for happiness we should fix upon some end in life or some standard of excellence that is adequate to satisfy our deepest cravings. Men are slow to learn that the sources of pure enjoyment lie far deeper than the gratification of the physical senses. "We depend more upon the red glow of the blood than upon the white gleam of the spirit;" we quaff with feverish expectancy every cup that pleasure presses to our lips; and passionately assail the world of beauty *from without*, with the imperious demand that it yield up to our *sensuous nature* its utmost delights. It is a delusion to suppose that mere pleasure, outward comfort, or animal contentment can ever bring satisfaction to an immortal spirit.

9. Lament over lust for the things that do not satisfy.

O Friend! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, oppressed,
To think that now our life is only dressed
For show; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
Or groom! We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest:

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The wealthiest man among us is the best:
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry; and these we adore:
Plain living and high thinking are no more:
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws,
—Wordsworth.

10. Verse 14. He that has joined himself to the mountain spring has its voice continually

in his dwelling, night and day, summer and winter, without work or stroke of laboring pump, clear, sweet, and cheerful; running of its own accord, and singing at its work; more musical than any lute, and bringing in its song suggestions of its home—the dark recess, the rock which was its father, the cloud which was its mother, and the teeming heaven bright and broad above both rock and cloud.—Beecher.

The Lesson Illustrated

Verse 6. "Being wearied." According to an old story King Henry VIII of England in frolic one night walked the streets of London in disguise. He was arrested as a loafer and shut up in prison overnight without fire or food or candle. The next day he granted coal and bread and lights to the prisoners in that prison. His personal experience gave him sympathy. And reverently we may fortify our faith in the sympathy of the Lord Jesus by remembering his fatigue and pains while on earth. Read and memorize Dr. Watts's beautiful hymn in the Methodist Hymnal (No. 136), "With joy we meditate the grace," etc.

Verse 7. "There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water." Jesus met this woman as she was attending to her daily duties. "It is only the devil that meets us when we are idle," said William Jay, and Dr. Watts sings,

"Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do."

But God reveals himself to busy people. The angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds while they were keeping watch over their flocks by night; Matthew was called to be a disciple while he was counting his customs receipts; Peter and Andrew were fishing, and James and John were mending their nets, when they heard the voice of Jesus.

Verses 10-14. Man needs Christ as a necessity and not as a luxury. You may be pleased to have flowers; you *must* have bread. Jesus has often been presented as a "phenomenon," an ornament to the race. He preached himself as bread and water. Tell the story of the man who was found dead in the desert with diamonds in his girdle enough to purchase all luxuries, but there was no water there to purchase.

Verse 10. "If thou knewest the gift of God." We deprive ourselves of much happiness by not knowing, or recognizing, the gift of God. Isaiah called the Messiah the gift of God. N. P. Willis writes:

And yet what Godlike gifts neglected lie
Wasting and marred in the forgotten soul!
The finest workmanship of God is there."
If you ask he will give.—S. G. A.

Verse 11. "Thou hast nothing to draw

with, and the well is deep." Some people are like Jacob's well in this. They have much in them that is useful to their fellow beings, but it can only be gotten at with a long rope. Some are like generous springs with water trickling quietly over their green borders; some are like copious fountains flinging the sparkling flood high into the air; but some are as dry as an abandoned well in Texas down into which I once dropped a bucket with a rope one hundred feet long only to dip up mud. Don't be a dry well.—*Sunday School Times*.

Verse 12. "Greater than our father Jacob." Jesus was thinking of the heavenly supply and of the eternal river. The woman thought only of the well of Jacob. Two men were looking at a bronze statue of the poet Burns. One admired the fineness of the work on the clothing, the other the fineness of the face. Men are always divided into these two classes. Some see only briars and trees where others see the glory of God.—S. G. A.

Verse 13. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." Many of our desires are artificial, and their gratification fails to bring satisfaction. Lord Bacon observes how often princes set their hearts on toys; the erection of a building, the creation of an order, or the effort to excel in some art, diverts them from the supreme duty and privilege of governing justly. So Nero took most pride in playing the harp, Domitian in marksmanship with the arrow, Commodus in fencing with the sword, and Caracalla in chariot racing. And there are many now who seek not to satisfy their heart's thirst for God, but are driven toward unsatisfying goals by foolish desires which they have made for themselves.

Verse 14. "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." "Many a time on the Western frontier I have seen people put an old barrel or two on a wagon and drive eight or ten miles to a river to get a little water. This is dull and dispiriting business compared with having a big fountain bubbling up in your back yard. If a man has love and hope and faith in his own heart he will not have to run around asking other people for theirs. The way to get such a perennial fountain is to ask Jesus for it."—Dr. C. F. Goss.

Verse 14. "A well of water springing up into everlasting life." In northern Iowa is a lake which has no stream flowing into it but a large stream flowing out, and yet its water is always abundant and fresh. The middle of that lake is constantly bubbling and boiling, and the cause is to be found in subterranean streams which, having their source in distant mountains and flowing for miles underground, here break through the floor of the lake. So the Christian's joy is always full and his beneficence always active because they are constantly replenished from unseen sources.

Verse 14. "Springing up." Water, by a well known law of hydrostatics, never rises above its own level, and so the best of earthly choice can rise no higher than the earth, but the living water with which Christ fills the soul springs from heaven and rises to heaven.

Verse 23. "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Worship is a spiritual activity, not a form.

As feel the flowers the sun in heaven,

But sun and sunlight never see;

So feel I thee, O God, my God,

Thy dateless noontide hid from me.

As touch the buds the blessed rain,

But rain and rainbow never see;

So touch I thee, in bliss or pain,

Thy far, vast rainbow hid from me.

—Joseph Cook.

Before men we stand as opaque beehives,
They can see the thoughts that go in and out

of us, but what work they do inside of the man we cannot tell. Before God we are like glass beehives. All that our thoughts are doing within us he perfectly sees and understands.—*Reccher.*

The theological questions with which this woman sought to divert Jesus from her soul's needs were untimely. Shall a man who is drowning stop to ask whether the plank thrown to him is hemlock or spruce before he lays hold of it? There is an Arabian legend of a magical fountain from which a few drops cast anywhere on the ground, even in the driest desert, would cause a fountain to leap up.

Bishop Thoburn was greatly cheered when he was pastor of a church in Calcutta. One evening an outcast woman who was present and penitent said, "That is the truest church I ever saw. All the bad people in Calcutta are there." Jesus was the friend of sinners, and so should all his followers be.

A minister in Philadelphia on a stormy evening went to church and found only one person—a little barefoot boy. The minister was disappointed, but, being a good man, he said to the boy in familiar fashion what he had intended to say to a larger congregation. The boy's heart was touched, and from that evening he dated his Christian life. He became Dr. Abel Stevens, one of the most able editors of the Methodist Church. John Newton had a similar experience when of three hearers one was Thomas Scott, the writer of a most useful commentary on the Bible.

The School of Practice

1. In this lesson I see Jesus showing a deep interest in and a hope for a person in social disrepute and disgrace. This week I will, if I can find opportunity, do or say something to give courage and hope to some one who is shunned and despised.

2. Christ's meeting the woman at Jacob's well looks like an accident. But whether it was an accident or a providential arrangement, it was an opportunity, and Jesus improved it. This week I will look for opportunities in meeting people to do something, however simple, for their spiritual help, and will try not to let any opportunity go by unimproved.

3. I see that the interest which Jesus had in the woman of Samaria was not for what she was, but for what she was capable of becoming. I believe that is the way I should think of myself and of others. This week I will try to draw out the best things in myself, and I will think of and deal with others not simply with reference to what they are, but what they ought to be and are capable of becoming.

The Lesson Digest and Teachers' Guide

Suggestions for the conduct of the lesson for one grade are often found to be of exceptional value in the other grades. All teachers may therefore, with profit, study the DIGEST AND GUIDE in all its parts.

The Junior Grade

[Pupils between nine and thirteen. The Intermediate Quarterly is prepared for this grade.]

Read with thoughtfulness the notes for the Primary Department printed on pages 164 to 168 of this number of the BANNER. They are carefully prepared for children of the junior grade.

First, *prepare*, then *construct* the lesson; then *teach* it.

1. Master the text of the lesson, John 4. 5-14, and the context, John 2. 23-25; 4. 1-4, 15-43. There is no parallel passage. 2. Get what light you can from other parts of the Bible: for example, on verse 5, Gen. 35. 19; Josh. 24. 32; on verse 6, Heb. 4. 15; on verse 9, 2 Kings 17. 24-41; Acts 10. 28; on verse 10, Jer. 2. 13;

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Zech. 13. 1; Rev. 21. 6; 22. 17; on verse 14, Prov. 4. 23; John 6. 35; 7. 37, 38. 3. Locate Sychar on the map. Jacob's well was very near to Sychar. 4. Be sure you understand all "orientalisms," and such unusual words and phrases as "parcel," "sixth hour," "the gift of God," "living water," "everlasting [eternal] life." Observe that the "no dealings" of verse 8 did not preclude trading.

Prayerfully, thoughtfully, repeatedly read this lesson. 1. Determine for yourself, then phrase in a brief sentence, the truth your class should learn from it; for example, *Christ in the heart is the source of practical Christianity.* (But it is best for each teacher to decide for himself what the essential teaching of the lesson text is, and how much of it he can teach.) 2. Begin on the plane of life on which the children dwell; and so insure interest and understanding. 3. Tell the lesson story. 4. How can we—teacher and pupils—practice what we have learned?

PLANS FOR JUNIOR TEACHING

1. The Truth to be taught (framed in simpler language than we have given it above) is: If we come to the Lord Jesus for goodness and happiness he will not only make us good and happy, but he will help us to make other people good and happy.

2. Whatever is in one person's life overflows into others' lives. Begin with a concrete example. A giggling girl makes other girls giggle; a cross boy makes other boys cross. The principal of the day school is present on time; that brings the rest on time; if he came late others would come late. If you have punctuality in your heart, or good temper in your heart, any sort of goodness in your heart, it will be a fountain which will pour punctuality and good temper and love into other people's hearts.

3. The Lesson Story. This is one of the lessons which even the young pupils may profitably study from the Scripture text. Do not dwell on the facts that are not pertinent to the truth you are endeavoring to teach; emphasize the facts that are; be sure to explain all that the children do not already understand. 1. Jesus traveling with his disciples; 2. Their arrival at the well at noon on a hot day; 3. Jesus sits down on its curbstone while the disciples go to buy lunch; 4. What Jesus asked the woman, what she asked Jesus; 5. What Jesus offered to give the woman.

4. Explain how to *live out* this lesson. Let us ask the Lord Jesus to give us that goodness which he calls living water. Let us try, with whatever goodness we already have, to help and gladden all about us. (Compare THE SCHOOL OF PRACTICE, page 122).

The SYMBOL PICTURE represents a glass of water. When the drawings are brought in make clear the connection between them and

the lesson story. We can do without coffee or tea—might even do without milk, though that would not be so easy; but we cannot do without water. Where there is no water vegetables cannot grow and men cannot live. Our picture is of a glass of water. Jesus spoke not of a glass, but of a fountain. The love of God in our hearts springs up like a fountain and overflows, so that everyone near us is made better and happier because of the love of God in our hearts.

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (JUNIOR)

Nothing so touches our sympathies as the story of sickness, especially the sickness of young children. The story of a sick child will form a suitable and easily understood introduction to the next lesson. The simple picture of a medicine bottle and spoon may be used to illustrate it. The drawing should be neatly made. Always commend neatness in such reproductions.



The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils between the ages of thirteen and sixteen or seventeen. The Intermediate Quarterly, the Illustrated Quarterly, and the Lesson Leaves are prepared for this grade.]

We have arrived at a point in the story where familiarity with the geographical features of our Lord's life becomes necessary. The map of Palestine should be ineffaceably drawn in every pupil's mind. This end is much easier attained than most teachers suppose. Five minutes of each class session given to map drawing are enough. This Sunday and its lesson furnish an excellent opportunity to begin. The purchase by the teacher of a paper-pad, "letter" size, unruled, will secure uniformity, and the timely provision of pieces of pasteboard or large flat books to serve as desks will facilitate



the work. The marks necessary are so few and so simple that it will be well to make fresh maps every Sunday of this month and next month, including in each map, of course, every mark made in previous maps. 1. Draw lightly with a pencil an upright line to represent the indefinite and changing eastern limits of the Holy Land. This line, of whatever length you draw it, represents 180 miles. 2. From the lower, or southern, end of this line draw toward the west a line exactly one half the length of the upright, to represent the southern boundary, 90 miles long. 3. From the upper, or northern end, draw a line westward for 40 miles, to represent the northern limits, which were as changeable as the others. It should be exactly four ninths of the length of the southern line. 4. Then complete the quadrilateral by a slanted mark, and draw the coast line, the river Jordan, with its seas, and the boundary of Galilee. As the map is gradually perfected the four outlines may be effaced. 5. The letters J, S, G, and P, to stand for Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Perea, and an indication of the location of Jerusalem and Jacob's well, will be enough for this lesson.

The subject of tithing is more and more commanding the attention of earnest Christians. It is one which young people should study—tithing not merely their income which may not be very much, but their time, which is more at their disposal than that of their elders.

Close study of the entire chapter is a necessity for good teaching. Master every phrase: *Samaria*—its location; its government (part of the province of Judea under Pontius Pilate); its people (semipagan); its historic memories (the home of the patriarchs, the seat of the kingdom of Israel); *Sychar*; *Jacob and Joseph*; *wells*, especially *Jacob's well*; the *sixth hour*; intercourse of rabbis with women—of Jews with Samaritans.

Seed Thoughts. We should follow our Saviour's example in doing good in hours of relaxation. How did the woman with whom neither priest nor Pharisee would speak meet our Lord's condescension? How did he receive her incivility? How was she affected by his condescension at the last? When only is the soul satisfied? (Psa. 17. 15.) The words of Jesus in verse 13 apply to all wells of enjoyment or benefit dug by men. Consider each human heart as a fountain. Compare The Choked Springs of the Soul (THE LESSON EXPOSITION). An edifying survey of the likeness of Jesus in his human nature to ours is given in HEART TALKS.

PLANS FOR INTERMEDIATE TEACHING

As an introduction, call attention to our Lord's fatigue. When he felt exhausted he knew what to do. First, he sat down to rest; secondly, he sent for food; and, thirdly, he tried

to make those about him happy. Most people when they are tired are at their meanest; they think everyone else is cross. Let us learn from our Lord's example.

Meanings Made Easy (Borean Intermed at Quarterly, page 13) has seven items. See that they have been studied. Ask. What was Samaria? What was an older name of Shechem? Who was Joseph? What was the sixth hour? etc.

OUTLINE: 1. The Well; 2. The Man; 3. The Woman; 4. The Water—material and spiritual. Be sure that each division is thoroughly mastered before passing to the next.

Or the teacher may prefer the simple TRUTHS to LEARN of the Quarterly, page 14: 1. "Give me to drink," verses 5-9. Christ is human as well as divine; he knew what it was to be weary, hungry, and thirsty; he had social cravings as well as spiritual cravings. 2. "The water that I shall give," verses 10-14. Christ is divine as well as human; his Spirit in our hearts gives comfort and strength which last forever—"a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (INTERMEDIATE)

The verses which follow our lesson of to-day describe how the Samaritans of Sychar believed on Jesus. Ask each pupil to be ready to tell you next Sunday what led the Samaritans to believe.

Jesus refers in next Sunday's lesson to his "own country." What place did he mean, and why did he call it so?

Write, and bring to the class, in what particulars, if any, the nobleman's conduct is worthy our imitation.

The Senior Grade

[For this grade, including pupils older than seventeen, the Senior Quarterly is provided.]

Brief notes on Samaria, Sychar, the parcel of ground Jacob gave to his son Joseph, and Jacob's well, are given in our WOMB STUDIES. Explanations of "the sixth hour," "no dealings with the Samaritans," and other unusual phrases may be found there. That on the Samaritans is especially valuable. Reasons why Jesus left Judea are given on page 115.

A study of the texts referred to in the paragraph on Preparation in the JUNIOR GRADE will be of value.

The conclusion of the conversation (verses 15-28) should be carefully studied by the teacher. The omnipresence of God which Jesus so forcibly declares is beautifully illustrated by Mr. Benjamin F. Leggett's poem IN HIS WORLD.

Scriptural mention of Wells and Water furnishes profitable themes for Bible reading. Well-side conversations: Gen. 24. 10-27; Exod. 2. 15-20; Gen. 21. 25-30; 26. 19-22. Weariness and

thirst; Wells of John 6. John 7.

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4. The Explana The s Lesson

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The a before t be well pursue— Isa. 44.

thirst: Heb. 12. 3; Gal. 6. 9; Psa. 6. 6; 42. Wells of living water: Matt. 5. 6; Isa. 12. 3; John 6. 54-56. Words of invitation: Isa. 55. 1; John 7. 37, 38; Isa. 1. 18; Rev. 21. 6; 22. 17.

Material for Word Pictures. The beautiful valley between Elai and Gerizim; the well with a limestone curb; the woman bringing her line and bucket (leather or crockery), for Oriental wells are not provided with these.

Jesus was, like ourselves, susceptible to heat and cold, hunger, thirst, and weariness. "A wayfaring man," Psa. 110. 7; "touched with a feeling of our infirmities," Heb. 4. 15; "able to succor," Heb. 2. 18. Tired teachers should get comfort from such texts.

How did the woman of Samaria know that Jesus was a Jew? By his dress and by his dialect. She doubtless knew he was a Galilean also, but uses the term Jew in a broad sense. The Samaritan woman's desire, "that I come not hither to draw," is the desire of thousands who want the results of right living without the trouble of living aright (*Beccher*).

This conversation has been called the first foreign missionary effort. Teachers can easily draw a parallel between our Lord's endeavor to bless this woman and the endeavors of our modern missionaries. The subject of missions in the Sunday School gives an admirable opportunity for inculcating the duty of giving, which is as important as the duty of prayer.

The teacher will find comforting truths for personal application in COIN THOUGHT No. I. If you have a troublesome youth in your class study COIN THOUGHT No. V.

PLANS FOR TEACHING (SENIOR)

The facts and truths of our lesson may be arranged according to the simple outline presented in the Senior Lesson Quarterly: 1. The Weary Worker, verses 5-8; 2. The Puzzled Samaritan, verses 9-12; 3. The Living Water, verses 13, 14. Or, more in detail: 1. The Waiting Saviour, verses 5, 6; 2. The Needy Woman, verses 7-9; 3. The Mysterious Gift, verse 10; 4. The Wondering Questions, verses 11, 12; 5. Explanations, verses 13, 14.

The six brief but comprehensive essays, THE LESSON EXPOSITION, are freighted with helpful thought, and, like those of former lessons, have such relation to each other as to present an excellent analysis as well as survey of the lesson: 1. The three reasons why Jesus left Judea; 2. The characteristics of his "nonconformity"; 3. The method of his evangelism; 4. His interest in the disreputable; 5. The springs of the soul; 6. The universal in religion.

The students of the Senior Quarterly have before them two Bible readings which it will be well for the teacher to encourage them to pursue—one on False Worship: Its hollowness, Isa. 44. 9; 41. 29; Acts 14. 15; Its uselessness,

Jer. 10. 5; 11. 12; Hab. 2. 18; Its baselessness, Psa. 115. 4-8; Gal. 4. 8; 1 Cor. 8. 4; Its wickedness, Luke 11. 43; 1 Kings 14. 9; Jer. 11. 17; and one on True Worship: Whom to worship, Matt. 4. 10; Deut. 5. 7; How to worship, John 4. 24; 1 Chron. 16. 29; Exhortations to worship, Psa. 95. 6; 99. 5; 2 Kings 17. 36; The blessedness of true worship, Isa. 49. 31; Psa. 84. 4; 92. 13.

Advanced Classes

The paragraph on the withdrawal of Jesus into Galilee, page 115, should be examined in the light of the following texts: Matt. 14. 3-5; 4. 12-17; Mark 6. 17-20; 1. 14, 15; Luke 3. 19, 20; 4. 14, 15; John 4. 1-15. Most modern scholars believe that this early Judean ministry of Jesus lasted very nearly nine months. Two facts hastened his departure, one of which is given in John 4. 1-3, and the other in Matt. 4. 12. Jesus must have been in more than usual haste to reach Galilee or he would hardly have taken this direct route through Samaria. That he turned an incidental conversation casually begun into a theme for the profoundest spiritual thought should be taken as an example by us. The effect of his words on the woman led to his appeal to the disciples to reap the harvest at once, and in spite of his apparent haste he delayed two days in the vicinity.

Henry Clay Trumbull's Studies in Oriental Social Life, pages 355-386, throw much light on this subject.

How long, probably, was our Lord's stay in Jerusalem? Why may we suppose he had gone there? Why may we suppose he determined to return to Galilee? Why may we suppose that he shrank from collision with the Pharisees now when he opposed them so actively a few months later? Why, probably, did he go straight through Samaria? How did he turn his weariness into means of helping another? How did he turn the hostility of the woman's people and his own people into a means for heart-searching conversation? Tabulate the contrasting facts concerning the well water and the living or spiritual water.

Study as closely as possible the entire conversation—the plain speaking of Jesus and other reasons why the woman came to regard him as a prophet. The woman's effort to quiet an uneasy conscience by theological disputation. Why did Jesus hold his peace before Herod the king, and tell the despised woman of Samaria, "I that speak unto thee am he"? A study of Jesus at the well in the light of the LESSON EXPOSITION will help to answer this.

The consecutive groups of brilliant sentences called COIN THOUGHTS may be used as an outline, or almost any one of them may be separated from the rest and used illustratively to "point a moral or adorn a tale."

The Responsive Review

1. Near what famous spring did the weary Lord sit down? *Near Jacob's well.* 2. What did he ask the Samaritan woman who came down to draw water? *For a drink.* 3. Why did she object? *Because he was a Jew.* 4. What did Jesus say she would ask for if she knew him? *For living water.* 5. What did Jesus say he would give to the believer? *"A well of water springing up into everlasting life."* 6. What is our GOLDEN TEXT? *"Whosoever will,"* etc.

The Church Catechism

25. What is the Atonement? The atonement which Christ hath made for sin is that offering of himself as the gift of the Father's love in which he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and for the sake of which God doth forgive sin.

1 John 4. 10.

LESSON VII. The Second Miracle in Cana

[Feb. 12]

GOLDEN TEXT. The same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. John 5. 36.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

John 4. 43-54. [*Commit to memory verses 49-51.*]

43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Gal'i-lee.

44 For Je'sus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country.

45 Then when he was come into Gal'i-lee, the Gal'i-leans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Je-ru'-sa-lem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

46 So Je'sus came again into Ca'na of Gal'i-lee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Ca-per'-na-um.

47 When he heard that Je'sus was come out of Ju-de'a into Gal'i-lee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

48 Then said Je'sus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

50 Je'sus saith unto him, Go thy way: thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Je'sus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

52 Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

53 So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Je'sus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

54 This is again the second miracle that Je'sus did, when he was come out of Ju-de'a into Gal'i-lee.

REVISED VERSION*

43 And after the two days he went forth from thence into Galilee. 44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country. 45 So when he came into Galilee the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

46 He came therefore again unto Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. 47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son; for he was at the point of death. 48 Jesus therefore said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe. 49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. 50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way: thy son liveth. The man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him, and he went his way. 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying, that his son lived. 52 So he inquired of them the hour when he began to amend. They said therefore unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. 53 So the father knew that *it was* at that hour in which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. 54 This is again the second sign that Jesus did, having come out of Judea into Galilee.

Time.—December. A. D. 27, or January, A. D. 28. Place.—Cana of Galilee.

Home Readings

M. The Second Miracle in Cana. John 4. 43-54.

Tu. No honor. Mark 6. 1-6.

W. At the feast. John 2. 13-25.

Th. Requiring a sign. Matt. 12. 38-45.

F. "The word only." Matt. 8. 5-13.

S. Faith necessary. Heb. 11. 1-6.

S. "As Thou wilt." Matt. 15. 21-28.

*The Revised Version, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.

The Lesson Hymns

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 107.

Lord, I hear of showers of blessing
Thou art scattering, full and free—
Showers, the thirsty land refreshing;
Let some drops now fall on me.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 217.

What a friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 351.

When times of temptation bring sadness and gloom,
I will tell it to Jesus, my Lord;
The last of earth's treasures borne out to the tomb,
I will tell it to Jesus, my Lord.

Library References

THE MIRACLE.—Bruce, *Miraculous Elements of the Gospels*, pp. 129, 150. Dover, Ministry of Mercy, pp. 15-21. Taylor, *Miracles of Our Saviour*, pp. 46-60.

CANA OF GALILEE.—Andrews, *Life of Our Lord*, pp. 148-151. The Bible Dictionaries.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verse 46.—Pitman, J. R., *Sermons*, vol. ii, p. 328. The Preachers' Magazine, 1898, p. 27.
Verse 48.—Kingsley, C., *Westminster Sermons*, p. 221. Verse 49.—Banks, L. A., *Christ and His Friends*, p. 190.

The Lesson Outline

THE PROPHET OF NAZARETH

I. *One who Knew Men's Hearts* (verses 43-45).

As the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee Jesus had not been warmly welcomed in Jerusalem. But he had done wonders there, and the report had gone back to Galilee; so that now the Galileans were ready to welcome their prophet, provided he would work signs and wonders. They had no comprehension of the spiritual nature of our Lord's mission.

II. *One who Had All Power* (verses 46, 47).

When Jesus reached Cana a nobleman hastened from Capernaum, fifteen or twenty miles away, to beg healing for his sick son. He believed Jesus was a miracle worker, and he asked for a miracle.

III. *One who Knew Men's Needs and How to Meet Them* (verses 48-50).

Jesus was not a "professional healer." All his miracles were "signs" or "wonders"—calls to attention, like church bells, or manifestations of divine power. The words of verse 48 were probably spoken partly for the sake of those who stood by, as well as for the sake of the nobleman. The nobleman had but one desire.

It is not "signs and wonders" he looks for, but cure for his sick boy. But he has a need greater even than this, which he little suspects—the salvation of his own soul. Jesus will lead him on step by step. His first words are a severe test for the man's faith. Can he go back alone when he had come on purpose to fetch the healer? Can he turn his back on the one quarter whence he looked for help? Yet the command is, "Go back," and the assurance is, "Thy son liveth." He must try to believe that at that moment at that distance the power has gone forth. He believes and goes "his way." He meets messengers of joy and clasps in his arms his restored child. He has learned that the Lord answers prayer. He has learned more: that the Lord answers in his own way and not in ours.

IV. *The Result of the Miracle* (verses 53, 54).

The story ends, not merely with the cure of the boy, nor with the father's rejoicing over him, but with the whole household believing in Jesus. This prophet has given not according to men's expectations, but according to the greatness of his power and his love.

The Lesson Word Studies

Two Separate Events.—This healing of the nobleman's son is not to be identified, as some have been inclined to think, with the similar miracle recorded in Matt. 8:5 and Luke 7:2, but must be held to be an earlier separate event from that recorded by Matthew and Luke. We note the following differences: 1. The relation of the sick person to the nobleman: here a son, there a servant. 2. Time: here before Jesus removes to Capernaum, there long afterward. 3. Place from which Christ performed the miracle: here Cana, there the vicinity of Capernaum. 4. Here the insistent request that Christ come in person, there Christ's offer to come in person modestly refused.

Verse 43. Now after two days—Better, *But after the two days*, the same two days, namely, which are mentioned in verse 40, during which he had remained among the Samaritans at their special request after the incident at Jacob's well.

Thence—From Sychar.

Into Galilee—As he had originally intended when he left Judea (verse 3).

44. Jesus himself testified—As the evangelist would not have presumed to do in this connection.

Prophet—The Greek *προφήτης* comes from *πρό-φημι*, to announce forth, to announce before. Hence the word means an interpreter and herald of divine truth as well as one who foretells. In the former sense more especially we are to understand the word here.

His own country—Authorities of high rank differ in their views as to whether Galilee or Judea is here meant. We are inclined to think Judea is referred to, and that this verse gives us the Master's reason for departing into Galilee. Judea was the place of his birth, and with Jerusalem, the capital, in a special sense every Hebrew prophet's "own country," the place where his message must be proclaimed before it could very widely influence the nation. Verses 1-3 of this chapter seem to indicate that in general the authorities at Jerusalem were already strongly opposed to Jesus and much exercised over his success among the common people.

45. Received (δέξατο)—Implying a cordial welcome. His welcome in Galilee is contrasted with his rejection in Judea.

The feast—The passover feast referred to in 2. 13, which every orthodox male Jew attended. Women also often accompanied their husbands or other male relatives on their annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

46. Jesus—The name is omitted by the best texts.

Again into ["unto"] Cana—The Greek retains the article before Cana (*τῆν Κανά*), indicating that the place is the Cana already familiar because of previous mention (comp. note in Lesson IV, January 22).

Nobleman (βασιλεύς)—Literally, a royal person, from *βασιλεύς*, king, hence one holding an official position in the king's employ, a king's officer.

Capernaum—Always called a city (*πόλις*), an important center in which a body of Roman soldiers were stationed whose commander built for the Jews a synagogue (Luke 7. 5). It was also a customs station (Matt. 9. 9), and was

located on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, on the site of the present *Khán Minyeh*, rather than at *Tell Hâm*, as some authorities still hold.

47. He went—Literally, *went away (ἀπῆλθεν)*, that is, from his home, leaving his sick son for the time being.

48. Except ye see—The "ye" refers to the Galilean population, of which larger class the nobleman addressed is to Jesus a representative.

Ye will not—The force of the double negative (*οὐ μή*) is better indicated by the Revised Version, "Ye will in no wise."

49. Child (παῖδον)—Diminutive, *my little one*; a touch of tenderness.

50. Believed—"Believe" is the great word in the fourth gospel. "It embodies the great aim of the writer, and condenses and crystalizes his message." Yet we should note its slightly different shades of meaning in different places. Here simple faith in the power and word of Jesus is indicated.

Went his way—The Greek verb here is in the imperfect tense, corresponding with the English progressive. Hence rather "was proceeding," as in the next verse "was going down."

51. Servants (δούλοι)—Rather, *bond servants*, or slaves.

Thy son liveth—The best manuscripts read as in the Revision, "that his son lived," a few, however, read as in the Authorized Version.

52. Then—A particle of sequence rather than of time; as in verse 5 of the preceding lesson.

Began to amend—Literally, *had himself better*, a peculiar phrase occurring nowhere else in the New Testament. The Greek adjective is *κομψότερον*, which is the comparative form of *κομψός*, *well dressed, well cared for*, from the verb *κομῶ*, *to take care of*. Perhaps the English, "He is doing nicely," or "well," would be our nearest equivalent of the phrase.

At the seventh hour—The word "hour" in the original is in the accusative case, signifying duration of time rather than point of time; hence, better, "during the seventh hour," between *twelve* and *one o'clock noon*.

Fever (συρρός)—From *σῦρ*, *fire*.

53. Believed—The nobleman's faith advances a step higher to that of full acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah (comp. verse 50 above).

54. This is again the second miracle ["sign"]—The second wrought in Cana of Galilee (comp. Lesson IV, January 22); other miracles wrought elsewhere, especially in Judea, had, of course, intervened.

The Lesson Exposition

JESUS'S RETURN TO GALILEE

Tarrying for two days in Samaria because of the interest awakened by the witness of the

woman with whom he had talked at Jacob's well, Jesus passed on into Galilee. Galilee was his natural home, for he had been brought up

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there from his early childhood. But there was sadness in his coming back. His return was a confession of his disappointment and failure. Judea, not Galilee, stood for "his own country," for it was the head of the nation, and there was his "Father's house." And in Judea he had been dishonored and rejected. He had left there to avoid being prematurely put to death by the official representatives of the nation. The seriousness of his rejection lay in the fact that it was really a national rejection. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." He had demonstrated that "a prophet hath no honor in his own country."

BEGINNING OF POPULARITY

There was striking contrast between the treatment Jesus had received in Judea and the spirit shown him when he returned to Galilee. The Galileans received him apparently with enthusiasm. The fame of the miracles which he had performed while at Jerusalem had been carried back to Galilee by those who had gone down to the feast. The Galileans were not disturbed by political or official jealousies and fears as were the rulers at Jerusalem. They were therefore open to the impression of Christ's works. Something of local pride no doubt was awakened over the fact that the young teacher and wonderful miracle worker was a Galilean. So Jesus entered upon a period of popularity which lasted for a full year and grew steadily until it reached its culmination in connection with the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes and the feeding of the five thousand, when the people sought to take him by force and make him their King. This popular enthusiasm never deceived Christ, however, for he knew that it had no moral depth. And in the end the Galileans fell away from him almost as completely as the Judeans had done.

THE SECOND MIRACLE IN GALILEE

Jesus on his return to Galilee went at once to Cana, where, on his former visit, he had attended the wedding feast and performed his first miracle in that country, the turning of the water into wine. The immediate reason for his going there was doubtless the fact that his mother had removed from Nazareth and then had her home at Cana. That first miracle had apparently attracted but little attention, probably being known to but few people. Being a nature-miracle it did not touch upon sympathetic human interest as a miracle of healing would, and did not have the currency given to it by the witness of one delivered from some physical malady. But now Jesus was to begin the working of miracles which stirred the community deeply, for they were wrought on human subjects and for the relief of suffering, and deliverance from death. These first two miracles

illustrate the comprehensive range of Christ's sympathy with human life. His first miracle was in response to the joy of life; the second was in response to its sorrow. The first was at the glad some wedding feast; the second on behalf of a home shadowed by threatened bereavement.

CHRIST'S ESTIMATE OF HIS OWN MIRACLES

Christ's words, when he was appealed to go down to Capernaum and heal the nobleman's son, suggest the inquiry, "What view did Jesus take of his own miracles?" There is a tone of reproof in his words, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." It indicates that he was sorry for the necessity for working them at all. We know he was impatient with the repeated demands of the Jewish rulers that he would "show them a sign," and refused to work any miracles in response to such demands. We are given to understand from his parable of the rich man and Lazarus that a miracle is not necessary to belief, for it is there declared that if men would not believe, having Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe though one should rise from the dead. After his resurrection he rebuked Thomas because he had refused to believe without the testimony of his senses to the fact of the resurrection; and he called those blessed who believe having not seen. Clearly Jesus did not regard physical miracles as of the highest importance, and he did not intend that they should be permanent. And yet the fact that he performed miracles shows that he recognized them as having legitimate place and use. They were never in his conception mere "wonders," to amaze beholders; they were always "signs" or proofs of his own divine authority and power. As in the healing of the impotent man let down through the roof, his ability to heal physical diseases was evidence of his authority to forgive sins. But the physical miracle was needed only for those incapable of feeling the force of moral evidence. And now that the moral evidences of Christ's claims have so accumulated, the physical miracle is no longer required.

HEALING AT A DISTANCE

The healing of the nobleman's son was distinguished from the most of Christ's miracles in that it was performed at a long distance from its subject. Capernaum was about twenty-five miles from Cana. The father evidently had confidence that Jesus could heal his son if he would only go down to Capernaum and see him and put his hands upon him. But when Jesus, without going, declared, "Thy son liveth," the father believed his word, confident that he would find his son at least in process of recovery when he reached home. That was an enlargement of his faith in Jesus. But, after all, distance does not really make such a healing any more miraculous,

The physical presence and touch only satisfy the imagination. Unaided human power can no more by word of command heal a disease at a foot's distance than at the range of a thousand miles. Even touch is of no avail in the absence of divine power. Space lays no limitation upon God's power, because to omnipresence there is in fact no distance, and to omnipotence there are no difficulties.

HAS DIVINE HEALING CEASED?

We have indicated above why miracles of any kind are no longer needed as evidence of the truth of Christ's claims. Moral evidence has grown so strong that physical evidence would be superfluous. It is evidently the nature of the highest spiritual faith to be independent of things which appeal to the senses. But it does not follow because miracles of healing are no longer needed as "signs" or evidences that they are no longer wrought. They may sometimes be justified by other reasons. What if the de-

mands of God's purpose required the sparing of a life for service? What if in compassion for some child of his, entreating to be spared from heart-breaking bereavement, God should heal and raise up the one for whom entreaty is made? What if one nigh unto death prays and receives his life back as a gift of God? Nothing but such a view of the relation of God to the physical order as would exclude the possibility of his interference with the course of nature, can regard as incredible or improbable the direct exercise of divine power in healing the sick. God may and probably does so heal in many cases where we never think of the intervention of his power. But we must not attach undue importance to such healings. And they err fundamentally and invert the true spiritual order, who lay primary emphasis upon bodily healing as if that were the chief mission of Christ in the world. Christ came not that whosoever believeth on him should not be sick, but that he should have everlasting life.

The Lesson Prayer

Great and beloved Friend, ever with us in our seasons of feasting and in our days of fear and grief, we have come to thee, and we shall have occasion again and yet again to come, with prayers for our sick. It may be that to some of us thou hast given back our loved ones from the very gates of death, for which, if thou hast been thus merciful, we should have unfailling gratitude. But we are grateful also that thou hast made us to know that suffering and sorrow may be appointed unto us in love, and that for the righteous to die is gain. We are comforted with the knowledge that thou art present with us, if not always to keep back affliction, yet to heal our wounded hearts and give us satisfying comfort. Forbid that through any unfaithfulness of ours we should ever come to some day when we shall sorely need thy presence and help, and find that thou hast withdrawn thyself from us. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

This second miracle of Jesus in Cana was called forth by sorrow; the nobleman's son was "at the point of death." The first miracle in Cana was on the occasion of wedding festivities. The scope of Christ's ministry covered the whole sphere of human nature. Neither the sectarian nor the sectional spirit is modeled after the spirit of the Master.

It was the "Man of sorrows" who said, "Be of good cheer."

The completeness of Christ affords a striking contrast to the incompleteness of man. No man has ever been perfect at every point.

The character of Christ is like a sphere or a circle every point of which is equally distant from the center.

II

He who aspires to be the greatest comforter of sorrow must himself run the grim gauntlet of grief.

Jesus projected his personal power through his words and his works. That which is not involved in a man's life cannot be evolved by his labor.

The output of a man's spirit is the extension of his strength.

Like the sun, Jesus shed his splendor in the darkest places. Goodness shines not because it is its policy, but because it is its principle.

The summer wind that touches the rose carries away something of its fragrance: it is so with every man who touches the Master.

III

He who turned water into wine can turn woe into weal.

The power that transforms mind is of a higher order than that which transforms matter. The machinist is greater than the machine. The speaker is superior to his speech. The artist is greater than his art. The surgeon is greater than his surgery. The power that restores an invalid to health is greater than that which rebuilds a house.

A ghoul can disinter a buried body, but it takes God to resurrect the sleeping dust. He who masters life must be a living master.

IV

A rich nobleman and a noble rich man are not always one and the same.

Money is no safeguard against misery. Sickness, like the night, shadows the palace as well as the hut.

The wretchedness of royalty is often greater than the wretchedness of rags. The angel of sorrow finds the door of the prince as easy to open as the door of the pauper.

The storm-wind tears the leaves from the top-most branch of the tree as well as those which grow on the lowest bough.

The bird that perches on the highest pinnacle may be farther from the flood, but he is nearer to the lightning.

However unequal man's interpretations of them, God's ways are always equal.

Our sympathies would be broader if our seeing were not so narrow.

V

The nobleman thought that Jesus must go to his house to heal his son. Faith in power is one thing; faith in place is another.

Power employed in helping humanity is never misplaced.

Do we not sometimes believe more in our faith than we do in our Father?

VI

"The point of death" and the point of life are never far apart on earth.

How often do you talk to Christ about your child?

Have you invited the Healer to come to your house?

It is very unsafe to wait till "the point of death" to begin looking after the interests of life. The man who makes the Lord "the last resort" can never be first in the ranks of honor.

Sometimes our earthly helps are all cut off to bring us in touch with the heavenly Helper.

No man can make his path through life curve far enough to miss "the point of death."

VII

He is a wondrous workman who can weave death into his plans without defeat. But every living harvest springs from the death of golden grains.

When the day dies stellar beauty is born.

The spiritual life of mankind springs from the death of Christ on the cross. The day of redemption dawned when the night of Calvary fell on the world.

The tomb of Christ was the theater of his resurrection triumph. Only the living Son can say, "Thy son liveth."

VIII

The nobleman was more concerned about the work of mercy than he was about the wonder of miracles.

Curiosity stops to quibble about mystery; sorrow sues for sympathy.

Anguish does not argue; it pleads.

Love is not always logical, but it is always lovely.

"Come down ere my child die" was the arrow of prayer that went straight to the Master's heart of mercy.

Controversy is clumsy, but an awakened conscience is as swift and sure as the lightning.

Parental solicitude ought to begin before "the point of death." Preparation is easier than reparation.

IX

What is true of God's mercy as far as we can see is true farther than we can see. The sun is as bright after it sets as it was before, only I do not see it. The music I do not hear is sweet to some one. The part of the planet which hides in the shadow is as real as the part I see.

Mathematically I know the sphere by the hemisphere. I know the circle by the segment. I know God by the revelation of his Son.

The law of love is true as far as I can trace it, and that truth does not depend upon my tracing, but upon the nature of love; God is love.

X

Christ who healed the invalid's body can heal the invalid soul.

The proof of the Healer was in the healing.

We may know Christ's help if we will give up our hindrances.

The Lesson Heart Talk

Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. Hardest of all life's lessons, yet sweetest when once fully learned.

This story of the nobleman illustrates a rich

possibility for you and for me. Faith may grow, by obedience, from a tiny bud to full bloom and perfected fruit. It may rise from an earnest effort to find the truth, to heights of rest

and trust where we say, "O God, my heart is fixed," and where we get a somewhat clear idea of what Jesus meant when he said, "All things are possible to him that believeth."

The Bible is full of exhortations to trust God. It would seem this is all he asks of us, for love and obedience grow out of truth. It was through unbelief in God's word that sin destroyed the harmony of his creation. Eve would not have lost her Eden if she had believed what God said.

This nobleman at first had just enough faith to try what Jesus could do for him. He had heard of him, and he made up his mind to see him. Presenting his case to the Lord and pouring out his heart's desire increased his faith, until his cry was importunate, "Come, ere my child die!" Jesus said, "Must you see signs and wonders before you will believe me fully? Go your way; your son will not die." At that moment the man's faith rose to the point that honors God. He believed the word that Jesus had spoken, and he went his way without waiting for further evidence, or insisting that Jesus should do exactly as he had asked. All the way back to his home he had the blessedness of believing without seeing. The visible confirmation of his trust was given when his servants met him and he was told that the boy had begun to recover at the very hour Jesus had said it should be so.

All the discipline and training of life seems to be for the one purpose of establishing within us this regal quality of soul—true faith in God. Paradise was lost for want of it; only by it will paradise be restored. How can there be harmony in the universe unless all created beings have unquestioning faith in the Ruler of all things? How can there be rest in the heart that fears or refuses to trust Him who controls and disposes the destiny of his creatures, the God who teaches us to say, "Our Father which art in heaven"? His providences are to us perplexing. Sometimes he gives what we ask;

often he seems to deny. Circumstances seem to get the better of his will and purpose; sin and sorrow seem to be beyond his control. We say, "If God can do anything he wills to do, why does he not make the world better and easier to live in?" We distrust him because we do not see signs and wonders. The anchorage ground of what God has done and can do for us is better than no ground at all, but it may shift under the strong tides of life. Nothing absolutely holds but *God himself*. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? *Hope thou in God.*" Anchored in him, the soul never drifts under any stress of storm.

When Livingstone was in the midst of hostile natives in Africa he went to his tent and opening his Bible read these words: "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee." Turning to his companions, he said, "I can trust the honor of Him who pledges me his word." Luther says, "A true believer will crucify the question, 'Why?' He will obey without questioning."

Is it true of us that except we see signs and wonders we will not believe? Because the answer to our prayer is not what we expected? Because our circumstances are so trying when it seems as if God could change than if he would? He can do signs and wonders; he sometimes does. But often he says, "Go thy way, it is all coming out right by and by; obey and trust. For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest ye shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." We must learn to trust God on many a dark day. Happy it is for those who come to this without walking long through pain and sorrow! But by whatever way we reach it, it is blessed to say from a patient, quiet heart,

"I would rather walk with God in the dark

Than walk alone in the light;

I would rather walk with him by faith

Than walk alone by sight."

The Lesson in Literature and Art

1. If Christ be not Divine, every impulse of the Christian world falls to a lower octave, and light and love and hope alike decline.—*David Swing*.

2. To seek Jesus under special distress is indeed good and needful, but it is better that one should not wait so long, but knowing his sin and misery should in spirit be near to Jesus.—*Lange*.

3. **Verse 45.** They had not discovered the greatness of this Galilean, although he had lived among them for thirty years; but no sooner do they hear that he has created a sensation in Jerusalem than they begin to be proud of him. Everyone has seen the same thing a

hundred times. A lad who has been despised as almost half-witted in his native place goes up to London and makes a name for himself as poet, artist, or inventor, and when he returns to his village everybody claims him as cousin. Such a change of sentiment was not likely to escape the observation of Jesus nor to deceive him. It is with an accent of disappointment, not unmingled with reproach, that he utters his first recorded words in Galilee: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe."—*Dr. Marcus Dods*.

4. **Verse 47.** *The Nobleman's Trouble Becomes His Salvation.* There is a story told that, in the olden times, Artaxerxes and another great

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king were engaged in a furious fight. In the middle of the battle a sudden eclipse happened; and such was the horror of the warriors that they made peace there and then. O, if an eclipse of trouble should induce you to ground arms, and seek to be reconciled unto God! Sinner, you are fighting against God, lifting the arm of your rebellion against him. Happy shall you be if that trouble which is now fallen upon you should lead you to throw down the weapons of your rebellion, and fly to the arms of God.—*Spurgeon.*

5. Verse 48. How totally unlike the Samaritans, from whom our Lord had so firmly come; who embraced the divinity of his teachings without demanding *wonders*. This nobleman came, purely absorbed in his dying son, anxious for the bodily miracle but thoughtless of the divine claims of the Saviour of sinners. It is this selfishness of spirit that Jesus now rebukes. The words of this verse are, as it were, an ejaculation; a thinking aloud of Jesus. He sees that to awaken this man he must more than heal his son; he must to that *sign* add an additional *wonder*. He must so heal him as to arouse the man to reflection, and then may come a true faith.—*Dr. Whedon.*

6. And not for signs in heaven above
Or earth below thee look,
Who know with John his smile of love,
With Peter his rebuke.

In joy of inward peace, or sense
Of sorrow over sin,
He is his own best evidence,
His witness is within.

No fable old, nor mythic lore,
Nor dream of bards and seers,
No dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years;—

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He;
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of his seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.—*Whittier.*

7. Verse 49. The agony of the father can make nothing of general principles, but can only reiterate the one petition, "Come down ere my child die." And Jesus, with his perfect knowledge of human nature, sees that it is vain trying to teach a man in this absorbed condition of mind, and that probably the very best way to clarify his faith and lead him to higher and worthier thoughts is to grant his request—a hint not to be overlooked or despised by those who seek to do good, and who are, possibly, sometimes a little prone to obtrude their teaching at most inopportune seasons—at seasons when it is impossible for the mind to admit anything but the one absorbing topic. Circumstances are, in general, much better educators of men than any verbal teaching; and that verbal teaching can only do harm which interposes between the moving events that are occurring and the person who is passing through them.—*Dr. Mercus Dods.*

8. Verses 50-53. I envy not quality of the mind or intellect in others; nor genius, power, wit, or fancy; but if I could choose what would be most delightful, and, I believe, most useful to me, I should prefer a firm religious belief to every other blessing; for it makes life a discipline of goodness; creates new hopes when all hopes vanish; and throws over the decay, the destruction of existence, the most gorgeous of all lights; awakens life even in death, and from corruption and decay calls up beauty and divinity.—*Sir Humphry Davy.*

9. But in belief we've joy and peace,
Of faith and power a sweet increase;
From burning skies a cool retreat,
A shelter safe when trumpets beat—
Fresh balm of Gilead for our grief—
For every wound a healing leaf.

Belief smooths down our thorny cares,
With shooting grain uproots the tares,
Our harp from off the willow takes
And every chord to music wakes,
Till hope, laid icy in the tomb,
Springs up with life and beauty's bloom.
—*Hannah F. Gould.*

The Lesson Illustrated.

Verse 44. "A prophet hath no honor in his own country." Not only is the prophet without honor in his own country, but the thinker like Gordiano Bruno who was condemned in his own age is crowned in ours. Galileo, the scientific man, was persecuted in his age and lauded in ours. Columbus, the discoverer, despised and rejected in the Old World, is honored and remembered in the New World. "Can any good come out of Nazareth?" was said in Christ's day. To-day, next to Bethlehem, the minds of Christians turn thitherward. Have we

any despised prophets and rejected thinkers among us?—*S. G. A.*

One of the most recent illustrations of this fact is just observed. The great French admiral, Coligny, was one of those who lost his life in the massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day. He had done much for France, but this was all forgotten. The Emperor William is now having a great monument built to Coligny in Berlin. A daughter of Coligny married one of the Oranges and thus became an ancestor of the emperor.—*S. G. A.*

Verse 45. We have seen races redeemed, nations emancipated, savage islands made the abodes of peace. And, as we experience his power in the renewing of our own hearts, and witness the gradual redemption of human society by his transforming influence, shall we not, like the Galileans, receive him, having seen all the things that he did?—*E. M. Noyes.*

Verse 46. "There was a certain nobleman." The poor are sometimes envious of the rich, not knowing their burdens and sorrows. In this connection we think of the pile of crosses. All were too heavy to bear save the one belonging to the owner.—*S. G. A.*

Verse 47. "Besought him that he would come down." If the Lord's prayer is to be the great model of prayer, as it surely is, how much intercession ought not our prayers to contain! This extraordinary prayer is so constructed, that it is impossible to use it without praying for all other Christians as well as ourselves. Intercession, instead of being a clause added on to it, is woven into its very texture. Break off the minutest fragment you please, and you will find intercession in it. Oil and water will not coalesce; pour them together, and the one will remain on the surface of the other. But wine and water interpenetrate one another; in every drop of the mixed liquid there are both elements. When we pray for others we usually add some paragraphs at the close of our ordinary prayers, distinct from them, as oil, though placed upon water, remains distinct. But in the Lord's own model prayer the intercession and the petitions for self interpenetrate one another; the petitioner who uses it *verbatim et liberatim* never employs the singular number.—*E. M. Goulburn.*

Verse 48. "Signs and wonders." If an earthquake swallowed up half London this very day, how many would be ready to cry, "Here is a visitation of God. Here is the immediate hand of God. Perhaps Christ is coming and the end of the world is at hand." And yet they will not see the true visitation, the immediate hand of God, in every drop of rain which comes down from heaven; and returneth not again void, but gives seed to the sower, and bread to the eater. But so it always has been. Men used to see

God and his power and glory almost exclusively in comets, auroras, earthquakes. It was not so very long ago that the birth of monstrous or misshapen animals, and all other prodigies, as they were called, were carefully noted down and talked of far and wide, as signs of God's anger, presages of some coming calamity. Atheists while they are in safety, superstitious when they are in danger; requiring signs and wonders to make them believe; interested only in what is uncommon and seems to break God's laws; careless about what is common, and far more wonderful, because it fulfills God's laws—such have most men been for ages, and will, perhaps to the end; showing themselves, in that respect, carnal and no wiser than dumb animals.—*C. Kingsley.*

Verse 50. *A delayed answer.* A woman prays for the conversion of her husband under the impression that God will answer her prayer outright. She prays all the week, with the general impression that all she has to do is to persevere in prayer. But, as she is true, honest, and sincere, going before God and praying retroacts upon her disposition, and affects her, and makes her more heavenly, and deepens her affection for her husband, whom she is thinking of in the very highest relations, and makes her family life more exemplary. And, although God does not convert the man directly, by praying, and praying, and praying she is made better, and better, and better. And meanwhile the man says, "Well, my Mary is a saint if there is one. She wants I should go to those meetings. I do not care for the meetings; but I will go to please her. She feels that somebody ought to pray for the children. I do not have that feeling myself; but for her sake I will treat it with respect." And such thoughts as these run through his mind. So her patience and gentleness and goodness, augmented by prayer, acting upon him, at last produce a state of mind in him which is favorable to his conversion, and he is converted. Thus her prayer was answered not at all as she expected it would be, but indirectly, her own life being made an instrument of her husband's conversion.—*H. W. Beecher.*

The School of Practice

1. Jesus was the friend of the sick and a comforter to those who were in sorrow. I may not heal as he did, but I can do something to cheer the sick and console those who have been bereaved. This week I will seek for some opportunity to minister, by a visit or letter or token of sympathy, to some sick person or to some afflicted one.

2. It has not been granted me, for the strengthening of my faith, to see a miracle of any kind. But this is because there are higher evidences of the truth of Christianity than miracles. This week I will seek for some of the strongest proofs of the truth of Christ's gospel which appear in the life of the world of to-day, and I will tell the class next Sunday what I think they are.

3. While I am not able by any miraculous power to heal the sick, and while I do not know that God any longer so heals anyone, yet under the influence of Christianity medical skill has been developed and hospitals have been founded by which thousands have been healed. I will give something this week for some Christian hospital and thus help Christ's work for the sick.

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The Lesson Digest and Teachers' Guide

The Junior Grade.

[For pupils from nine to twelve inclusive. They should be provided with either the Intermediate Quarterly or the primary paper Dew Drops.]

First read, over and over again, the lesson text, John 4. 43-54, and the passage which connects it with Lesson VI, John 4. 15-42. The first three verses of our lesson are paralleled in Matt. 4. 17; Mark 1. 14, 15; Luke 4. 14, 15. Get what light you can from other Scripture texts—on verse 44, Matt. 13. 57; Mark 6. 4; Luke 4. 24; on verse 45, John 2. 23 and 3. 2; also Deut. 16. 16 and John 4. 20; on verse 46, John 2 (Lesson IV); on verse 48, 1 Cor. 1. 22; John 2. 18; 6. 30; 20. 29; on verse 49, John 21. 32; Mark 5. 35; Luke 8. 49; on verse 53, Acts 16. 34; 18. 8; 11. 14. Compare verses 3 and 47 with verse 54. Next study the *phrases* of the lesson. Comparison with the Revised Version will help much. For example, in verse 43 the article "the" is inserted before "two days," and thus reference is made to verse 40. "Nobleman" in verse 46 is changed to "king's officer," and the statement in verse 51 is put in the third person. Note especially the change of "miracle" to "sign" in verse 54. Our WORD STUDIES give invaluable suggestions.

What truth should your class learn from this lesson? The GOLDEN TEXT suggests one which should appeal convincingly to older scholars. But perhaps a truth more suitable for pupils of the Primary Grade is *The power and kindness of the Lord Jesus*. (Compare THE LESSON EXPOSITION and HEART TALKS.)

Having determined the particular truth to be taught, find something in the children's daily life with which this truth may easily be interwoven.

Next construct the lesson for teaching. Make very plain ways in which the lesson truth may be put into practice in the children's lives.

PLANS FOR JUNIOR TEACHING

The doctors we know are powerful, but they cannot make anyone better without giving medicine, and sometimes the medicine they give is not able to cure sickness. So that, though they know more than we do and have more power to cure people than we have, after all they have no such power as Jesus, who cured people by speaking a word. Then the doctors we know are kind, but they will not cure anyone without being paid for it, because they have to earn their money that way. Jesus cured everybody who needed him without money and without price.

Tell the lesson story. Spend little time on the first three verses. The curing of the sick boy will be more easily understood.

The story of the sick child to which we referred in our last lesson and the drawing of the bottle, page 123, if prepared beforehand, furnish a suitable introduction to the lesson story.

Tell the story—that after two days' teaching the friends of the Samaritan woman Jesus went back to Galilee, his boyhood's home; that the people of Galilee thought much more of him now than they had done a few months before, when he left for Jerusalem; that the reason of this was the wonderful things that they saw him do in Jerusalem (one of these wonderful doings is described in the Little Reading for Tuesday, February 7, Mark 6. 1-6, and Nicodemus referred to others, John 3. 2); that Jesus returned to the town where he had turned the water into wine (what disciple had his home in that town? John 21. 2); that a nobleman came to that town from Capernaum to ask Jesus to heal his sick son; that Jesus healed this sick child without touching him or going near him. He became well immediately when Jesus said to his father, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." A careful description of the surroundings will add much to the interest of the story; the disciples following Jesus; the Oriental costumes; the splendor of the nobleman's dress; the agony in his face; the long distance between the two towns; the warmth of the atmosphere; the palms and other subtropical vegetation; the wonder of the servants, and the great thankfulness which the father felt to Jesus, who did so much for him.

No better preparation can be made by the teacher for the lesson hour than a continued effort to have A LITTLE READING FOR EACH DAY read by each scholar on that day.

In the February number of the Methodist Magazine and Review is a copy of the world famous picture by Gabriel Max, representing the still more striking miracle of our Lord on raising the daughter of Jairus to life. Thousands of young people saw this great picture at the Toronto Exposition last fall, and thousands more may see it in this beautiful reproduction. The Rev. Mr. Bond, editor of the Guardian, was so profoundly impressed by this picture that he made it the subject of a special article under the title "Gabriel Max, Preacher." This article, with the picture, we shall try and reprint in the pages of Onward.

The Intermediate Grade

Study the lesson carefully. Read it from the Bible in connection with the last lesson. Study it verse by verse in the light of other Scripture passages as suggested in THE JUNIOR GRADE. Read it, comparing each phrase with the Re-

vised Version. Study especially the phrases that are made plain by our WORD STUDIES, page 128. Study it in the light of the LESSON EXPOSITION and the HEART TALKS; and then, having mastered its meaning, see what freshness of view and distinctness of outline and skill of expression can be secured from THE LESSON ILLUSTRATED, THE LESSON IN LITERATURE AND ART, and the COIN THOUGHTS. The following lesson plan has been suggested to each of your pupils by the Quarterlies:

I. Jesus again in Galilee, verses 43-46. Made famous by the miracles he wrought in Judea.

II. The Roman Nobleman, verses 47-50. God sometimes seems to refuse us when he is only testing us.

III. "Thy son liveth," verses 52-54. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

Encourage the pupils to refer to a Bible dictionary.

PLANS FOR INTERMEDIATE TEACHING

This lesson teaches that God rewards feeble faith. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench." This "nobleman" had faith enough to believe that Jesus could heal his son if his son did not become worse before the healing began. He evidently did not believe that Jesus was able to restore him from death. According to his faith it was done unto him, and his son was healed. That his faith was faulty in quality as well as in degree is shown by our Lord's words in verse 48. But the nobleman was not looking at his faith, he was looking at Jesus. He put into immediate activity what faith he had. In this he is a good model for us. If penitent sinners have enough faith to come to Jesus they have enough to secure salvation.

Study our Lord's treatment of this feeble faith. In the first place he corrected its faultiness, in the second place he rewarded it. The man's faith was greatly strengthened by the words of the servants who met him, and gradually he came into the fullness of faith and brought his household with him.

There are four steps in faith which are here shown: 1. Go to God; 2. Ask of God; 3. Take from God; 4. Live for God. Each of these is illustrated by the conduct of this "nobleman," and is illustrated by every truly converted sinner:

1. We can have no blessing without turning to God. "He came unto him" (verse 47). This turning is what theologians call repentance. It is the endeavor to find Him who can only give relief.

2. We should pray. "Come down ere my child die" (verse 49). "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

3. We must believe and receive. "The man believed and went his way" (verse 50).

4. We must thereafter take our place among the ranks of God's believers, and not among those who disregard him. "Himself believed, and his whole house."

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (INTERMEDIATE)

Many religious truths are indicated by next Sunday's lesson. Two are taught clearly, and it will be well to phrase them as concisely as possible and have them committed to memory during the week so that the lesson next Sunday can be used as an illustration of them. 1. Christ always supplies the things we really need. 2. No one need wait to receive his blessing.

For the writing tablet:

1. What attracted Jesus to the pool of Bethesda?

2. What did the afflicted man expect?

3. How did the man show that he was thankful?

If typewritten copies of these questions, or copies in plain penmanship, can be handed to each scholar it will make more probable the return of helpful answers. Kindly but untiringly insist on the DAILY READING. It is the best means of stirring the intelligence and conscience of our pupils.

The Senior Grade

Why cannot this miracle be identified with that of Matt. 8, 5-13? Does "his own country" (verse 44) refer to Galilee or to Judea? (Comp. Luke 4, 24.) What conditions would make Jerusalem less ready to receive Jesus than was Galilee? To whose court did this "nobleman" belong?

A good illustration of verse 44 is given in ILLUSTRATION 1, page 133; of delayed answers to prayer, in ILLUSTRATION 5.

PLANS FOR SENIOR TEACHING

1. Jesus passes into Galilee (verses 43-45). The power of Christ when manifested draws men to him.

2. The healing of the nobleman's son (verses 46-54). Miles are no greater barrier to the working of a miracle than so many feet.

Encourage the pupils to master the Lesson Dictionary: Cana, Capernaum, Galilee, Judea; to look up the ILLUSTRATED BIBLE READING on *The Words of Jesus*, is a useful exercise; his words of instruction, comfort, power, authority, love, reproof, counsel, wisdom, and truth are spoken to us as really as to those who lived in his day. The search for these BIBLE READINGS should not be made in the hour of the class study to the disadvantage of the regular lesson, but too much emphasis cannot be given to such exercises.

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (SENIOR)

1. Require the reading of the HOME READINGS.

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2. The study of the LESSON APPLIED.
3. A mastery of the OUTLINE.

Advanced Classes

The reasons for holding that the event here recorded is quite different from that recorded in Matt. 8, 5 and Luke 7, 2 are given in the LESSON WORD STUDIES. Why are miraculous manifestations of God's power no longer necessary? What effect have limitations of time and space on the supernatural? The craving among so many modern Christians for our Lord's personal return to earth is a repetition in another form of this nobleman's prayer when he asked that Jesus come down from Cana to Capernaum to cure his son.

Our lesson closes a distinct section of John's gospel. From this gospel, which thus far recounts chapters of our Lord's life not given

by the other three, we might understand that at the very outset of his career our Lord presented himself to the people of Jerusalem, the Samaritans, and the Galileans as the Messiah. This is not taught by the other three gospels (comp. Matt. 16, 16). There is no disharmony, however, if we keep in mind that Matthew, Mark, and Luke attend mainly to his public career, while John has kept for us private and unreserved conversations.

Induce each student to analyze John's gospel so far as we have gone. From John 2, 13 to 4, 54 is a section complete in itself. How genuine and deep was the faith in Jesus which was now rapidly growing in Samaria and Galilee, if not in Jerusalem?

Observe (and study) the different methods of Jesus in approaching different people to help them.

The Responsive Review

1. To what place did Jesus go after leaving Samaria? *To Cana in Galilee.* 2. What did a nobleman ask of Jesus at Cana? *To come and heal his son.* 3. Where was his son at this time? *At Capernaum, fifteen miles away.* 4. What did Jesus say to him? *"Go thy way; thy son liveth."* 5. How did the father receive the words of Jesus? *He believed, and went home.* 6. What did he hear before he reached his home? *"Thy son liveth."* 7. At what hour had the fever left the son? *At the hour when Jesus spoke.*

The Church Catechism

25. What are the universal and unconditional benefits which flow from the Atonement? The universal and unconditional benefits which flow from the Atonement are the dispensation of God's grace for all mankind, the offer of eternal life in Jesus Christ to all, the probation of all, and the ability of every man to accept salvation through the grace of God.

LESSON VIII. Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda

[Feb. 19]

GOLDEN TEXT. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles. John 6. 2.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

[Read John 5, 1-47]

John 5, 1-15

[Commit to memory verses 8, 9]

1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Je-ru'-sa-lem.

2 Now there is at Je-ru'-sa-lem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Be-thes'-da, having five porches.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

REVISED VERSION*

1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a multitude of them that were sick, blind, halt, withered. 4 And a certain man was there, who had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity. 5 When Jesus saw him lying, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wouldest thou be made whole? 6 The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. 7 Jesus saith unto him, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. 8 And straightway the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked.

Now it was the sabbath on that day. 10 So the Jews said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath, and it is not lawful for thee to

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11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

Time.—Early summer, A. D. 28. **Place.**—Bethesda, Jerusalem.

Home Readings

M. Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda. Luke 5. 1-15.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 353.

At even, ere the sun was set,
The sick, O Lord, around thee lay;
Oh, in what divers pains they meet!

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 35.

I need thee, precious Jesus!
For I am full of sin;
My soul is dark and guilty.

Library References

POOL OF BETHESDA.—Ewald, History of Israel, vol. iii, p. 251; vol. vi, p. 282. Lewin, Life of Saint Paul, vol. ii, p. 129. Conybeare and Howson, Life of Saint Paul, vol. ii, p. 252. The Bible Dictionaries and Lives of Christ.

HEALING THE IMPOTENT MAN.—Bruce, Miraculous Elements in the Gospels, pp. 129, 150. Belcher, Our Lord's Miracles of Healing, p. 61. Taylor, Miracles of Our Saviour, p. 134. Trench, Miracles of Our Lord, p. 262. Willits, Miracles of Jesus, p. 255.

I. "Wouldest thou be made whole?"

1. Jesus conscientiously conformed to the religious requirements of his time without regard to his own personal needs; consequently he attended the feasts at Jerusalem. 2. The intermittent spring, Bethesda, probably had real curative properties, such as God has placed in many springs and herbs; but somebody with a pet superstition thought the Word of God required support just here, and so inserted the last part of verse 3 and all of verse 4—an impertinence not altogether unlike some modern "popularizations." 3. Jesus passed by the mansions of the rich and great, and went to where the

take up thy bed. 11 But he answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. 12 They asked him, Who is the man that said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? 13 But he that was healed knew not who it was; for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in the place. 14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee. 15 The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole.

Tu. Help for the helpless. Luke 5. 17-26.

W. Love and pity. Isa. 63. 7-14.

Th. "Went about doing good." Acts 10. 34-43.

P. A question unanswered. Mark 3. 1-8.

S. Enemies silenced. Luke 13. 10-17.

S. Duty of praise. Psa. 107. 10-22.

The Lesson Hymns

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 66.

The great Physician now is near,
The sympathizing Jesus;
He speaks the drooping heart to cheer.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON

Verse 1.—Banks, L. A., Christ and His Friends, p. 204. Verse 2.—Newman, J. H., Sermons, vol. i, p. 376. Verse 4.—Finney, C. G., Gospel Themes, p. 363. Verse 6.—Meyer, F. B., Saved and Kept, p. 19. Beecher, H. W., Sermons, vol. ii, p. 385. Verse 14.—Secker, T., Works, vol. iv, p. 382. Campbell, Joseph, Sermons, p. 91. Farrindon, J., Sermons, vol. ii, pp. 253, 279, 293. Harris, J. Rendall, Union with God, p. 113.

The Lesson Outline

impotent folk were gathered. He singled out one of the worst cases, and kindly asked him if he was waiting to be cured. Like Jesus, his followers should love most those who most need love. 4. The world of unsaved sinners is divided into four classes: those who ignore their own moral impotence, those who know how sinful they are but do not strive with their might to be made whole and pure, those who are waiting to be made whole without anyone to help them, and those who hear and heed the voice of Jesus.

1. "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk."

1. Impotent folk of any sort are apt to be apologetic. Those who lack success in life usu-

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ally can give reasons, and often they are valid reasons. Often sympathy and impulse are needed where criticism is given. 2. Jesus tells the man to do three things, each of which has been impossible; but once more he is to try, depending on divine power. All his muscles are not paralyzed; he must use what he has and *try* to rise; having been enabled to rise, he must *try* to lift his bed; having been enabled to lift it, he must *try* to walk. We must make our utmost effort, and trust in God for results. Faith removes mountains.

III. "Behold, thou art made whole."

1. Observe that Jesus did not speak these words when he performed the cure. There was no need of them then, for the cure, instantaneous as it was, was a "personal experience." But later, when the man was becoming accustomed to his new life, he needed to be reminded of the thirty-eight impotent years as a warning. 2. Who had built the five porches at Bethesda to shelter the "impotent"? Probably kind-hearted rich people. We should thank God for

such people, who are able and willing to do great things for the sad and sorry. There are too few of them. But there are fewer still who are *kind enough to do little things*. Here was a man—perhaps one of many—who had waited thirty-eight years without finding anybody thoughtful enough to give him the little push that would insure his cure. Benevolence by the wholesale is good; but the Christly spirit is careful also to help men one by one. 3. The cure had been performed on the Sabbath, and folk who had had no interest in the man so long as they might have helped him took great interest in him so soon as they could find fault with him. This is true to unsanctified human nature. (The rest of the chapter contains our Lord's defense of his doing good on the Sabbath.)

IV. "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."

Directly or indirectly suffering is the result of sin. Though success does not come in proportion to goodness, sin always brings sorrow, and more sin brings worse sorrow.

The Lesson Word Studies

Intervening Events.—Between the events recorded in last Sunday's lesson and this one must be placed others of importance not recorded by John, who in the main mentions only such as transpired in and about Jerusalem. Among the most important of these intervening events are those recorded in Matt. 4. 13-23 and 9. 2-17; Mark 1. 16 to 2. 23; Luke 4. 16-44 and 5. 1-39. These include the *Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth*, his *Removal to Capernaum*, the *Call of Four Disciples*, the *First Preaching Tour in Galilee* and other events.

Verse 1. A feast—Or, *festival*. A few manuscripts read "the feast," indicating a very early tradition that this feast also was a passover. But this is not likely, since John elsewhere in speaking of other passover feasts mentions them specifically as such (2. 13; 6. 4; 11. 55), and the preponderance of authority in this passage is in favor of the reading "a feast," which, if it be the correct reading, is conclusive against its being the (well known) *feast of all feasts*, the passover. Probably this was the feast of Purim, which came in March and commemorated the deliverance of the Jews from Haman in the days of Esther (Esth. 3. 7; 9. 24-28).

2. Sheep market. The Greek word (ἄγορα) is an adjective pertaining to sheep. The noun is left to be supplied, and should be *gate* rather than *market*. The "sheep gate" was on the east side of the city near the temple.

Pool—Literally, *pool for swimming*, from a Greek verb meaning "to dive."

Called—Better, *surnamed*; having probably another name also.

Bethesda—"House of Mercy," or as some render it, "House of the Portico." Two eminent authorities read Bethzatha. "House of the Olive." A pool at Jerusalem at the foot of the Ophel slope, southeast of the temple; the only

natural spring in the city, now known as the "Virgin's Pool." Here the water still overflows at regular intervals from a natural syphon under the cave, producing the phenomenon of an intermittent troubling of the water; and here Jews still bathe when the water overflows for the cure of various diseases. Here also the flocks are still gathered for watering.

Porches—Colonnades or porticoes (Gr. *στωα*, *stoai*); simply covered ways leading from the pool to the street.

3. In these—In these porticoes.

halt—Lame, maimed.

Waiting for the moving of the water—This phrase, together with all of the next verse (4), is not found in the best or earliest manuscripts of the gospel. In other extant manuscripts verse 4 only is omitted, while in still others verse 4, while inserted, is specially marked as of doubtful authenticity. The passage must therefore have almost certainly been added later by some one copying the text, and doubtless represents the popular belief concerning the mysterious intermittent bubbling of the healing mineral waters.

6. Saw . . . and knew—Better, *beholding . . . and perceiving*. The perceiving may have been supernatural, but was not necessarily so, since Jesus may have learned the facts concern-

ing the man's long illness from bystanders, or from the man himself.

In that case—Words which, as the italics of the text indicates, have no equivalent in the Greek, but which are necessary for completing the sense in English. Probably "condition" would be better than *case*.

Wilt thou (θέλεις)—Implying not mere inclination or desire, but *determination and energy of will*; hence, "Are you in earnest?" would be better. The long period of the man's illness and his failure in the past to reach the pool may have made him apathetic and indifferent.

Whole—Sound, well.

7. Put—Literally, *throw* (βάλλη), implying necessary haste.

Another steppeth down—The use of the singular (ἄλλος) seems to indicate that the bubbling was confined to a small area of the pool; one person stepping down blocks the way of approach or exhausts the healing power of the moving water.

8. Bed (κράββατον)—Any slight pallet or bed, in this case possibly a mat or rug.

9. The same day was the sabbath—A fact specifically mentioned by the evangelist as explanatory of what immediately follows.

10. The Jews—The party hostile to Jesus, a usage of the phrase peculiar to John.

Not lawful—Compare Exod. 23. 12; Jer. 17. 21. The rabbinical law based on these passages as quoted by Lightfoot reads: "Whosoever on the Sabbath bringeth anything in or taketh anything out from a public place to a private one, if he hath done this inadvertently, he shall

sacrifice for his sin; but if wilfully he shall be cut off and shall be stoned."

11. He that made . . . the same—The demonstrative pronoun (κεῖνος) points with emphasis to the subject of the preceding clause.

12. What man is that which said—Better, as in the Revision, *Who is the man*, etc. Note the malice in the question which asks not concerning the miracle wrought but concerning the breaking of a petty rabbinical law.

13. Wist—An interesting verb-form now obsolete and poetic, past tense of "wis," *to know, to be aware* (A.-S. [Ger.] wissen, gewiss, etc.), now also obsolete. Hence the Revision substitutes "knew," the present equivalent of *wist*.

Conveyed himself away—Better, *retired, withdrawn himself* (Gr. ἔκβησεν, from ἐκβένω, *to turn, or bend, the head in order to avoid something*). A word not elsewhere used in the New Testament.

14. Findeth him in the temple—Perhaps in the act of sacrificing for his transgression of the rabbinical Sabbath law referred to above (verse 10).

15. Departed—Immediately upon learning the identity of his benefactor, since Jesus was, at least in the eyes of the common people, a highly revered Rabbi, whose verdict on points of right and wrong was not less authoritative than that of other revered rabbis. Armed with rabbinical authority for his action, he returns from the temple to those who had first accused him of Sabbath desecration, "and told the Jews that it was Jesus which [who] had made him whole."

The Lesson Exposition

THE ANGEL AND THE POOL

We are very reluctant to give up the beautiful piece of poetry contained in the latter part of the third and the whole of the fourth verse of this chapter, relating to the angel that at certain seasons went down into the pool and troubled its waters, giving to them a healing power for the first one who should enter thereafter. But the best authorities are agreed that it is not a part of the original text, but was an early interpolation for the purpose of explaining the intermittent bubbling of the water due to some natural cause. It is not probable that the water had even any medicinal quality. And yet, as in the case of certain Roman Catholic shrines and fountains, there were very likely genuine recoveries effected in some who had faith in its supernatural power, where their sickness sustained close relations to their mental state. Occasional cures of that kind would serve to maintain the popular faith in the superstition, just as faith in similar superstitions is kept up now. So, while as a beautiful bit of rhetoric we may

still speak of the "angel troubling the water," it is best that we should understand that this is not a proper part of our Scriptures. And we should also understand that our faith in the supernatural does not depend upon the genuineness of this story of the angel. The healing of the impotent man by Jesus is the chief thing, and the account of that is genuine, and that was a supernatural act of the highest sort.

UNASKED DIVINE HELP

The healing of this impotent man is one of several examples of the way Christ helped people without their having asked his help. A similar case was that of the man born blind (chap. 9) to whom Jesus gave sight. Jesus took the initiative—"As Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth." The man himself knew nothing of Jesus and would have asked nothing of him. So also this impotent man. Jesus saw him lying in his helplessness, not only in bodily impotence, but mentally unnerved and without expectation. As Jesus's

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question, "Dost thou will to be made whole?" (for so the original is,) implies, he had through long and repeated disappointment lost the will for any effort toward healing. He really never expected to get into the pool in time, was sure some one would always get ahead of him, and he had never dreamed of healing in any other way. He did not ask Jesus to heal him, and yet Jesus healed him. It is a law of prayer, to be sure, that "he that asketh receiveth." But it will not do to conclude from this that God will give nothing except that for which we ask. God's love, like the best human love, is active and spontaneous, and seeks for opportunity to serve, and takes benevolent initiatives, and gives even when not solicited, and gives beyond all asking. There are some things which God cannot do for us except we ask—because our own attitude and spirit involved in asking make a condition for the divine grace; but we have probably not sufficiently considered the extent of the unsolicited blessings which God is continually bestowing upon us. For a time even after he was healed this man did not know who his benefactor was. And multitudes of people now are indebted to Christ as deeply as the impotent man was who do not know or recognize to whom they are under obligation.

PUNISHMENT OF SIN IN THIS LIFE

When Jesus said to the man after he was healed, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee," he unquestionably implied that his bodily infirmity was the effect of his own sin. It was not an inherited infirmity, for in that case Christ's words would have been inappropriate. Not for any sin of parents, but for his own sin, this man had been helpless for thirty-eight years. That is a striking comment on the seriousness of the view which nature takes of sin. And we have come to know that nature is grim and remorseless in the infliction of punishment for the transgression of law. The commission of sin may take but a little time, while its penalty may cover a whole life. In the case of the impotent man Jesus implied that, dreadful as his punishment had been, it was not the limit. "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." Worse things have come to thousands of people because of their sins. And we

must not forget that sin in this world is punished in ways besides physical wretchedness.

A crippled intellect is worse than a crippled body. A loathsome mind filled with impure thoughts is worse than a body smitten with loathsome disease. And the most dreadful penalties for sin are visited upon the moral nature. Moral degradation, the loss of the crowning qualities which make man better than the brute, the development of passions and appetites which turn the heart into a dwelling place of demons; the scourgings of conscience and the agonies of despair—these are the things which show us what a grievous and dreadful thing sin is in the world. All these things appear here in this world and now in this life. We need scarcely inquire about the punishment of sin in the life to come. Its punishment in this life is so appalling as to stagger the imagination.

THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT OF THE SABBATH

The Jews were perpetually complaining about Christ's violation of the law of the Sabbath. And he did habitually disregard that literal Sabbath law. And his disregard was not simply for the rabbinical traditions which had grown up around the law of the Sabbath, but of the original law of the Sabbath as it had been fairly interpreted during the past centuries. There was an original necessity for literal observance. But that necessity did not belong to the kingdom of God which Jesus was bringing into the world. The literal must pass away and the spiritual must take its place. So Jesus simply disregarded the old law of the letter. As observed in a preceding lesson, Jesus was a nonconformist. He made no proclaimed war on effete institutions and outgrown customs and traditions. He simply ignored them. It was so in this case in the lesson. He did not select the Sabbath as the time for healing the impotent man. He would have healed him just the same if he had found him on any other day of the week. But finding him as he did on the Sabbath, he was not held back from healing him by any prevalent false notions concerning what was lawful on the Sabbath. To have done otherwise would have been to recognize those false notions. His method for abolishing an evil practice was by bringing the right practice in.

The Lesson Prayer

© God, though we have destroyed ourselves, yet our help is in thee. Thou art stern in thy punishments, but thou art also marvelous in thy compassion; and thy delight is not in our sufferings, but in our deliverance from evil. We thank thee for the Pool of Bethesda and the message of hope which it brings to all the weakness and helplessness of life. To those vainly lying by the disappointing pools of earthly healing, impotent to help themselves, and with none to bring them help, the voice of thy Son speaks, and they stand upon their feet made spiritually whole. Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

Bethesda reminds us that Christ came into the world to cure cripples.

Bethesda reminds us that sin has changed many a porch of pleasure into a place of pain.

Bethesda reminds us that the miseries of men are multitudinous.

Bethesda reminds us that there is always some man in the crowd whose case is worse than ours.

Bethesda reminds us that only the "Man of Sorrows" can take away the sorrows of men.

II

The Lord always has his eye of pity on the man whose need is greatest.

The Lord always sees to it that every man has at least one fair chance for recovery.

"Newness of life" comes only from the "Ancient of Days."

He whose mercy forgets our sins remembers that we are dust.

He who casts our sins behind his back keeps his saints before his face.

III

Bethesda reminds us that the "impotent folk" are not few. Omnipotence is always moved with pity at human impotence.

Many a man has lost something out of his life which he would gladly call back. If courage has gone out of your life it can only come back with Christ. If hope has gone out of your heart it can only come back when you take God as your help.

IV

The song will come back to your lips when the Saviour comes back to your life. Joy can never return to the soul till the soul returns to Jesus.

No man is ever too feeble to take the Lord as his strength. The Master will be his strength and stay who stays him on his Master's strength.

Christ is so uncommonly kind that the commonest penitent sinner may trust in him for pardon.

The master sorrows of men were the sorrows of our Master.

V

God's way is in the "troubled waters" as often as on the placid sea.

If men had ears to hear they should often hear the Master's voice above the storm, saying, "Tis I, be not afraid."

God's angel visitants are all about our beds of pain.

The angel touch that mastered Jacob made him a master of men.

Peter was touched by an angel in prison and the doors of the prison flew open.

Trouble is the "fan" in the hand of our

Father with which he sweeps the chaff from our souls.

VI

The world has many "impotent folk" who are waiting for some movement of mercy.

We shall never find the best things till we forsake our worst ways.

Selfishness always stands in the way of itself. The self-seeker always "steps down" in the way of somebody. The self-contained man never contains much.

VII

God helps us often when we do not know it is he.

If we could see the mountains of others' miseries we should see our own as mole hills.

Are we not all "waiting" for some *best thing* to come to us?

There are times when men make the most progress by waiting.

Only the holy Christ can make us whole. Somebody in your community will miss the goal unless you help them some.

Strength to take the last step is what wins the race.

VIII

We ought to be able to tell others who made us "well."

Testimony has given us our chief treasures. The most valuable works on mathematics are the testimonies of mathematicians. The standard work on anatomy is the recorded testimony of the anatomist. Psychology is but the testimony of the psychologist. The statements of science are but the testimonies of the scientists. The testimony of Christianity is the truth that Christians know about Christ.

IX

The Sabbath-maker is greater than the Sabbath.

The Sabbath was made for man and not for the Pharisees. The Sabbath was made for souls and not for sects.

The Sabbath was made for service and not for censure. Pharisaism was a good cloak on a bad character.

An empty chalice, however fine, cannot quench the thirst of the soul.

You never get at the heart of truth till you get at the truth of the heart.

X

Jesus came to administer cures and not to excite curiosity. He came close to the cripple, but he "moved away" from the crowd.

It was the pain in the multitude that moved the Master, and not the people.

Christ would discount a miracle if it concealed his mercy.

XI

No day is too good to cure a bad case. Quality is in deeds, not days.

What we sow to-day we shall reap to-morrow. He who is only a critic is in a critical condition.

Right things will look wrong to a bad man on the best of days.

Harsh echoes will come back to the ear of him who speaks harsh words among the hills.

The reason that other men looked so mean to the Pharisee was because he was always seeing himself in them.

The soil that gets nothing but weeds from the sower will have nothing but weeds to give back to him.

XII

The man who "goes on sinning" will go on sighing.

"A worse thing" is always waiting for him who goes on in his wicked way.

The path of the sinner is as a fading light which fades more and more unto the perfect night.

Sin may be sweet on the lips, but it will be bitter in the life.

The way of the transgressor is hard to-day, but it will be harder to-morrow.

In sin there is no remedy for sin.

It may be that "the bird with a broken wing never soared so high again," but the man whose broken heart the Lord has healed may soar higher again than he ever did.

The Lesson Heart Talk

Thirty-eight years of sin, suffering, disappointment, neglect. It is a pitiful story. But all was changed in one moment through the pity and the power of the wonderful Saviour. There were plenty of people as needy as himself in that great multitude beside the pool, but somehow this man was alone in his misery. Poor, forlorn wreck! he had been left to drift on the rocks with no one to care. He had probably been a great sinner, and his suffering was his own fault, because Jesus told him to sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon him. Very likely his friends were tired of helping such a "good-for-nothing," so there he lay helpless and hopeless. But there are no good-for-nothings in God's view in the humanity redeemed by his Son.

If you would see the heart of God here it is opened to us in the sympathy of Jesus with this outcast. Men and women had seen him there for years, and perhaps had said, "Poor fellow!" but nobody offered to help him. Some were in too great a hurry, "going" somewhere to "do" something; others thought it was not their affair, his own people ought to look after him; others said, "O, I have known that poor soul for a long time; he is always sitting there; it is no use to do anything for people who never try to help themselves." Jesus saw things just as they were. He knew the man had not lived a right life; he saw him sitting hopelessly as if there was nothing else to do; he knew he had been that way a long time. He was one of the "recurrent" cases that wear out the patience of charitable societies. But he saw what we often fail to see, a spark of desire to be something better than he was, like a faint little star in the dark of the man's soul; and to this possibility the Lord appealed. "Wilt thou be made whole?" he asked. Hope awakened at the sound of that sympathetic voice. "O, yes," he answered, "I think I might, but I have no one to help me.

Every man is for himself; they all get ahead of me, and here I sit, a miserable failure." But, although he may have been a failure in his own eyes, he was not a failure in the eyes of Jesus. He thought it worth while to help the one everybody else had given up.

There is much of this spirit of the Master in the hearts of his disciples now. His blessing is upon every one who is standing by some "forlorn and shipwrecked brother." But too often we say, "He brought his misfortune upon himself, let him suffer for it." We may well ask the searching question, "O Lord, if thou shouldst mark iniquities, who could stand?" We must be careful not to pass by in our indifference or self-righteousness any soul in which the Lord may see possibilities of recovery.

"Down in the human heart,
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore;
Touched by a loving hand
Wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more."

Mr. Moody says: "This poor, lost world that has swung out into the cold and dark does not know anything about the love of God; and if we do not love men with the same kind of love Jesus had for the lost we are not going to help them. How easy it is to work for God if the heart is filled with love! And if it is not filled with love let us ask God to fill it." There are thousands around us, near and far, like this man at Bethesda, with no one to help them. Jesus is not passing by now, in person, but he sends you and me in his stead. Somebody has helped us, or else we would have been like these others; let us be ever watchful and ready and eager to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

The Lesson in Literature and Art

1. The most famous of all [art representations of the miracles at Bethesda] is by Murillo, painted for the Hospital of Charity at Seville, but now in a private collection in England. Our Lord stands in the center looking down on the sick man, who lies stretched on a couch in the extreme left of the foreground. The head of the Saviour is a noble ideal of manly beauty. He reaches his hand down with friendly helpfulness to say, Come, arise. The simplicity of the action contrasts strongly with the conventional treatment of Christ as healer, where his gesture is commanding, as that of a magician, or blessing, as that of a priest. Three disciples accompany our Lord and are just behind the paralytic, bending over a little to peer at him with curiosity. The background shows a rich arcaded portico surrounding a pool, about which several of the impotent are gathered, while an angel hovers far above in the upper air. Critics are united in placing this beautiful picture in the foremost rank of Murillo's works. It was at one time owned by the English poet, Mr. Samuel Rogers, at whose house Mrs. Jameson saw it. Writing of it afterward, she said, "For grandeur and poetry, for the sober yet magical splendor of coloring, for its effect altogether on the feelings and on the eye, there are few productions of art that can be compared to this."—*Estelle M. Hurl.*

2. It is a representation of the world, also, that the presence of the Son of man should be felt rather in scenes of sorrow than of joy. It is not in the day of high health and strength, when our intellect is powerful, our memory vigorous, when we feel strong in our integrity and our courage, but when our weakened powers have made us feel that we are "a worm and no man"; when our failing faculties convince us that, except for our connection with immortality, our minds would be as nothing; when we feel temptation getting too strong for us, and that we are on the brink of falling—then it is that we are taught there is a strength not our own. It is then that the presence of the Son of man is felt; then is the day of our merciful and mysterious deliverance.—*F. W. Robertson.*

3. Verses 2-4. The gospel river of life does not branch out into divers streams. There is not a broad sweep of water for the rich, the intellectual, and the cultivated, and a little scanty rill where the poor may now and then come and get healed by the side of its precarious wave. There is no costly sanatorium beneath whose shade patrician leprosy may get by itself to be fashionably sprinkled and healed. Naaman, with all his retinue watching, must come and dip and plunge like common men in Jordan. There is no sort of salvation except the one ransom and deliverance that is purchased for rich

and poor together by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the poor beggar, his garment ragged from the havoc of a hundred storms, and his flesh bleeding from the ulcers of a hundred wounds, may dip eagerly into the same Bethesda, and emerge unscarred and comely as a child.—*W. M. Punshon.*

4. Verse 3. Enforced Waiting.

I will not dream in vain despair
The steps of progress wait for me;
The puny leverage of a hair
The planets' impulse well may spare,
A drop of dew the tided sea.

The loss, if loss there be, is mine,
And yet not mine if understood;
For one shall grasp and one resign,
One drink life's rue, and one its wine,
And God shall make the balance good.
O power to do! O baffled will!
O prayer and action! ye are one
Who may not strive, may yet fulfill
The harder task of standing still,
And good but wished with God is done!
—*Whittier.*

5. Verse 6. "Wilt thou be made whole?"

Think, and be careful what thou art within,
For there is sin in the desire for sin;
Think, and be thankful, in a different case;
For there is grace in the desire of grace.
—*Lord Byron.*

6. Our bodies are our gardens, to which our wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce; set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry—why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills.—*Shakespeare.*

7. Verses 7, 8. Now this kindness to the helpless, of which man's home, both in the humblest and highest walks of life, presents so many lovely instances, and which, you will observe, moves the roughest crowd on the street, without taking time to inquire into its merits, to throw themselves into the quarrel of a woman or weeping child, is a flower of Eden, that clings to the ruins of our nature—one beautiful feature of God's image which has to some extent survived the fall. "The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." Well named, "Our Father who is in heaven"; he sets himself forth in his Word as the Patron and Protector of the poor; he recommends them in many ways and by many considerations to our kindness; and teaches us that, if we would be like himself, we must remember their miseries amid our enjoyments, and fill their empty cups with the overflowing of our own.—*Guthrie.*

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8. Verse 10. The law of the Sabbath is a law of a Being who never rests from doing good.—*Chrysostom.*

9. Verse 14. If it were possible for those who have been for ages in hell to return to the earth (and not to be regenerated), I firmly believe that, notwithstanding all they have suffered for sin, they would still love it and return to the practice of it.—*Ryland.*

10.

Sin is the living worm, the lasting fire; Hell soon would lose its heat, could sin expire. Better sinless in hell, than to be where

Heaven is, and to be found a sinner there. One sinless with infernals might do well, But sin would make of heaven a very hell.

Look to thyself, then, keep it out of door, Lest it get in and never leave thee more. Fools make a mock of sin, will not believe It carries such a dagger in its sleeve; "How can it be," say they, "that such a thing, So full of sweetness, e're should wear a sting?" They know not that it is the very spell Of sin, to make men laugh themselves to hell.

Look to thyself, then, deal with sin no more, Lest He that saves against thee shuts the door.

—*John Bunyan.*

The Lesson Illustrated

Verse 5. "A certain man was there. The man was at the right place. He had been placed in the one spot where he would most likely get help. There are many who need help and cannot get it because they are not in the right place at the right time. Those who sit so near the door in church that they fail to hear all that the preacher says are not in a position to be helped. There are many who hunger for knowledge who do not allow their friends to help them in their search for knowledge. It may be that pride stands in the way. Almost any young man who really desires an education can get one if he will work for it. And one of the best places to work for it is in the institution that might be entered. In a spiritual sense we are not always waiting at the pool. I am sure we miss many blessings because we do not look for them.—*S. G. A.*

Verse 7. "No man to put me in." This recalls the story of the Ethiopian eunuch. He had no man to interpret, and God gave him Philip and he believed. The millions are calling for their friends to put them in the pool, but they cannot. The Christ himself must come and heal. In the home land and in the mission field it may be that cry arises from the eager and despairing soul, "No man hath cared for my soul."—*S. G. A.*

Verse 8. "Rise and walk." The next thing after cure is—action. The next thing after conversation is—action. Arise and walk, go forth to find others. This man must have been a delight to himself and his friends in his new condition. In his previous state his friends had deserted him. They now return. His moans are changed for smiles. He is another man.—*S. G. A.*

Verse 10. "It is not lawful for thee." How inconsistent the Jews were! The Sabbath is a day of rest and helpfulness. Some are inconsistent now in regard to the Sabbath. A friend

used to tell of a woman of his acquaintance who would never buy milk on Sunday. She "borrowed" of her neighbor who did, and never returned it. "O, consistency, thou art a jewel!"—*S. G. A.*

Verse 14. "Behold, thou art made whole." So dull and heavy we are, even after a miracle, so senseless after Christ hath laden us with his benefits, that we have need of a monitor, a doctor. The historian calleth his Circumspectorem, One that may look about us, and take care of us when the cure is done. As he who after victory rode in triumph had a public servant behind him whose office it was to cry out unto him, "Look behind thee, remember thou art also a man!" so have we need of continual monitorings and excitements to put us in mind of what we are. For when we are made rich how soon do we forget we were poor! When we are in health how soon do we forget we were sick! When we are upon our legs and walk, how soon do we forget the miracle! Or, if we do not forget it (for how can it slip out of our memory so soon between the pool and the temple? how can Christ's mercy be quite lost in this span of time?), yet we do not well weigh and consider it. Not a few but could have related the story of their leading out of Egypt, and of dividing the sea, and making the waters stand as a heap; yet the psalmist is positive, "They forgot his works, and his wonders which he had showed them" (Psa. 78. 11).—*J. Farrington.*

Verse 14. "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." How often the worse befalls! A man has made a brave fight and lost. He is in the depths of despair. It is harder to convince him than to restore him. A community visited by a great revival, and where many prove unfaithful, is a hard place in which to do spiritual work. It is as if a fire had destroyed a wheat field. There is not much chance of reaping even stubble.—*S. G. A.*

The School of Practice

1. Jesus, as this lesson shows, did not wait for those needing help to come and ask him to do something for them, but himself sought out the suffering and ministered to them. I believe this should be my

practice, and this week I will be on the outlook for an opportunity to help some one who would not come to me for help.

2. The impotent man who was healed testified to others concerning what Jesus had done for him. I know that Jesus has done very much for me, and I will this week find some opportunity to tell others about it and express my gratitude.

3. Jesus was in the habit of doing good on the Sabbath. I believe that I should not use the Sabbath simply for my own pleasure and profit. Hereafter I will seek on the Sabbath to do some special act of kindness to some one in need of help and sympathy.

The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

The Junior Grade

[Pupils between nine and twelve. For these the Intermediate Quarterly and the Lesson Notes on page 166 are prepared.]

In our study of this lesson we first observe that its story is not told by Matthew, Mark, or Luke, so that there are no parallel passages to be studied; and that in John it directly follows the passage we studied last Sunday. The Jews caviled because this miracle had been wrought on the Sabbath, and Jesus answered them in a notable address, showing by the testimony of his Father, of John the Baptist, of his own works, and of the Holy Scriptures, who and what he was. This address fills out the chapter from which our lesson is taken, and should be carefully studied now, for it has no connection with Lesson IX.

The lesson text takes to itself fresh meaning when compared with the Revised Version, and when studied in the light of other scriptures, with the help of WORD STUDIES. For convenience we will study it in five sections: **1.** Verse 1; **2.** Verses 2-4; **3.** Verses 5-9; **4.** Verses 10-13; **5.** Verses 14, 15. **Verse 1:** The note of time, with which we begin, "After these things," is indefinite. The "feast" is explained in WORD STUDIES. **Verses 2-4:** The Revised margin shows the uncertainty of the name of the pool. On "the Hebrew tongue" compare John 19, 13, 17, 20; 20, 16; Rev. 9, 11; 16, 16. It is important to note that the last clause of verse 3 and all of verse 4 are an interpolation, and are therefore omitted by the Revisers. The allusion in verse 7 to the troubling of the waters probably led some copyist to insert an explanation which he believed to be adequate. **Verses 5-9:** The change from "Wilt" to "Wouldst" is noteworthy. "Sir" should be "Lord." "Bed" should be "pallet" (comp. Matt. 9, 6; Mark 2, 11; and Luke 5, 24). **Verses 10-13:** Compare John 9, 14, and verses 15, 16, and 18 of this chapter. Light is thrown on the Sabbath customs of the Jews by Jer. 17, 21; Neh. 13, 19; John 7, 23; 9, 16; Matt. 12, 2. Throughout this section also the changes made by the Revision are helpful. **Verses 14, 15:** Our Lord's warning to the healed man is illustrated by Ezra 9, 14; Mark 2, 5; John 8, 11. With the entire lesson compare Psa. 103, 2, 3; 147, 3; Jer. 17, 14.

What truth should I present to my class from

this lesson? The entire chapter is a lesson in intelligent Sabbath-keeping—but that is for older people. The GOLDEN TEXT directs attention to Jesus as a wonder-worker, and perhaps the best course for the teacher of Juniors is to treat this lesson in unison with last Sunday's lesson, and again to bring to view the power and love of Jesus.

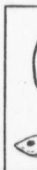
In seeking to make these truths of the lesson a matter of daily practice we have here a good opportunity to give further impulse to kindly, loving, thoughtful behavior.

PLANS FOR JUNIOR TEACHING

Tell the story; Make plain the lesson truth—that the Lord Jesus will make our hearts full of love for everybody if we ask him; Give impulse to helpful, loving behavior;—these are our three tasks.

The story may be told in three scenes: **1.** Beside the pool (including the miracle); **2.** On the street (including the carrying of the rug and the Jews' hatred of Jesus); **3.** In the temple (with our Lord's warning to the man). Omit any immaterial fact that cannot readily be understood. For example, the "sheep market," or gate, will help in making a mental picture, but the "five porches" might (to some children) have to be explained; and it is wise to explain nothing that is not essential to the lesson, for effective word pictures can only be made with materials already on hand in the listener's mind. The life of Jesus was so interwoven with "feasts of the Jews" that a simple explanation of those feasts, so different from ours, is desirable at an early age. The angel episode, not being a part of the inspired record, should be omitted. Avoid such words as "impotent," "infirmity," "season," "wist," and "content," except you are teaching directly from the text, in which case be sure they are thoroughly understood. The "bed" should be explained as a rug.

How terrible the disease must have been when thirty-eight years had passed without any physician being able to cure it! Jesus cured it by speaking one word—"Arise!" We all have faults: some of the older folk have had them very more than thirty-eight years, and some not for old boys and girls have faults that threaten to endure. Jesus can cure weakness and bad-

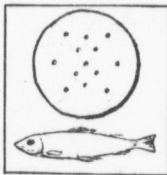


ness just as readily as he cured this man's disease. Recall the teachings given last Sunday.

Put the lesson into practice: 1. By trusting in Jesus, like this poor man, so that Jesus will help us to rise up out of our faults, and to walk through life as Christians. 2. By seeking out the sick, the sad, and the sorry, like Jesus, and doing them good. (Compare the SCHOOL OF PRACTICE.)

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (JUNIOR)

The SYMBOL PICTURE of a barley loaf and a



fish, such as were used as human means for the miracle which we are to study next Sunday, will be more easily drawn and are more interesting than some of our pictures. Require the READINGS to be read each day, and the

GOLDEN TEXT to be memorized.

The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils between the ages of thirteen and sixteen. Lesson helps: The Intermediate Quarterly or the Illustrated Quarterly.]

For the teacher's preparation of this lesson hints applicable to all are given in our JUNIOR GRADE. The LESSON EXPOSITION analyzes its teachings.

Chronological questions (treated in WORD STUDIES), though they have an importance of their own, are immaterial to the truths we are to teach. But observe that this is the second visit to Jerusalem which John records, and that it marks a distinct crisis in our Lord's ministry. On his first visit he had publicly fulfilled certain familiar prophecies concerning the Messiah, only to be quietly rejected. Now he comes quietly and performs a miracle of mercy on an invalid, which arouses the open hostility of the Jewish leaders.

Here is a story full of allusions to things unfamiliar, but exceedingly attractive to the juvenile mind. Its background is as picturesque and suggestive as that of a tale from the Arabian Nights. Be sure that your pupils understand the feasts of the Jews; why they brought Jesus periodically to Jerusalem; the sheep gate; the pool; the troubling of the waters; the bed; the Sabbath; the temple. Be sure also that they understand the unfamiliar words of the lesson text. A teacher who has in his own mind reasonably accurate and very vivacious pictures of Oriental religious festivals, with their hundreds of thousands of pilgrims; of the hauteur of Oriental religious teachers (modern duplicates of "the Jews" of our lesson); of the squalor of Oriental impotent folk; of pool, and city street, and temple court—who can mentally

see the color and motion, the sunshine and shadow, of these fifteen verses—can effectively present these pictures to his class. It is almost certain to be an interesting lesson. How can we certainly make it profitable?

PLANS FOR INTERMEDIATE TEACHING

After such a pictorial treatment of the lesson two subjects may be pressed upon the minds and hearts of the class: 1. The Mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ; 2. Hostility to Him. 1. Our Lord's mercy is for those without help and without hope. This man had been thirty-eight years ill—*thirty-eight years without a human helper* (otherwise he could have reached the pool). Our Lord's mercy is offered to the sin-stricken and unworthy; his love is extended to the unloved, the unlovely, and the unlovable. So long as we feel we can do without Jesus we are beyond his help. "Not the righteous; sinners Jesus came to call." 2. Those who are hostile to Christliness are nonresponsive to human suffering; and *vice versa*. One might suppose that the first words spoken to this man after his cure would be of congratulation; but they are of criticism! And when the name of the Healer is mentioned, the critics seek to slay him. So to-day the mercy of God is often met by the hostility of man. Why are newly converted youths so often teased? laughed at? persecuted? Those who deride them are not disciples of the Son of God, but of the "god of this world," Satan. Whoever mocks or hinders or tries to mar the work of Christ does service to Satan. 3. To these two thoughts may be added a third: Hostility to Christ is futile. The "god of this world" and those who continue in his service are in the end, against their will, used to accomplish the purposes of God. The Jews of our lesson after a while had their desire and slew Jesus; but by his death the sins of the world were atoned for.

To facilitate the study of the lesson by the scholars at home it may be grouped to advantage under the following heads: 1. Bethesda, verses 1-4. 2. Helpless, verses 5-7. 3. Healing, verses 8, 9. 4. The Sabbath, verses 10-13. 5. The Future, verses 14, 15. Some teachers may prefer to teach the lesson according to this grouping. Then each title may be used "in a figure," as Paul would say—as follows: *Bethesda* is a picture of the world crowded with unfortunate, needy, miserable people, each eager to better his condition regardless of others. *Helplessness* of body is symbolic of helplessness of soul. *The healing* is a type of the sinner's pardon. The teachings of Jesus concerning *the Sabbath* have a wide application. They are founded on a principle which underlies all the specifications of moral law. It is always, under all circumstances, "lawful to do well." *The fifth point* and the SCHOOL OF PRACTICE are essentially the same.

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (INTERMEDIATE)

With winsomeness and firmness require the DAILY READINGS to be read. Quite as much depends upon this as upon any part of the work of preparation. The MEANINGS MADE EASY for next Sunday should also be mastered by each pupil.

The Senior Grade

[For pupils of sixteen years and over. For these the Senior Quarterly has been prepared.]

The sectional sketch of the traditional pool of Bethesda (Senior Quarterly, page 40), apart from its bearing on the lesson, shows, more clearly perhaps than is generally understood, the successive layers of building and ruins which mark the site of many ancient cities.

PLANS FOR SENIOR TEACHING

In teaching the lesson we may observe that—

1. This world is full of impotent folk, burdened with troubles of many sorts, waiting for the moving of something that may relieve them; in each other's way while they wait; ready to turn to imaginary angels, and ignoring the present Christ. Senior scholars should be made clearly to understand that the passage concerning the angel is not found in the most ancient copies, and therefore has no place here and is properly omitted from the Revised Version.

2. The Christian is definitely appointed to be a reliever of this world's troubles. He is not gifted with our Lord's power of working miracles, but he does not need it. (He would be if he needed it.) Nine tenths of the troubles of this world may be relieved by true religion and aggressive common sense. The tenth tenth is a disguised blessing. To the Christian the opportunity comes to take off the disguise and reveal the blessing.

3. Our Lord first relieves bodily pain which would interfere with clear thinking; then leads the way to pardon of sin. Our Lord's miracles were not wrought for their own sake. They were means to spiritual ends.

The Illustrative Bible Readings on the Sabbath (page 38, Senior Quarterly) are well worth the few minutes necessary to look them up in the class.

Our Lord sanctified the doing of necessary work on the Sabbath day; preached and performed deeds of mercy on that day; and illustrated comprehensive and restrictive rules for a proper Sabbath observance. Jesus rebuked those who kept the letter but ignored the spirit of the Sabbath law. Compare SCHOOL OF PRACTICE.

The outlines given in the other GRADES may be found by some teachers of advantage in formulating their thoughts for presentation to the SENIOR GRADE. Or follow COIN THOUGHTS, I-XII.

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (SENIOR)

The lesson of the five loaves is at least sixfold. It is a lesson of divine care, divine compassion,

divine power, divine instrumentalities, and divine abundance, and the consequence—the duty of entire trust in Jesus. A beautiful series of Bible readings illustrating these teachings is found on page 43 of the Senior Quarterly, and might well constitute one of the items of the preparatory lesson to be brought in next Sunday; but nothing should interfere with the reading of the HOME READINGS.

Advanced Classes

I. Observe (1) the difficulty of determining the order and sequence of events in this part of John's gospel. Many things have happened since Jesus conversed with the woman of Samaria. His popular triumph in Galilee, his second visit to Cana, probably his rejection from Nazareth, his settlement at Capernaum, and the commissioning of his twelve apostles, besides many miracles and wonderful teachings, are to be placed between that event and this. Observe (2) that when Jesus visits Jerusalem he goes directly to the abodes of suffering and distress. He distinguishes one case of peculiar helplessness and hopelessness. The sick man seems to be as weak in ambition as he is in muscle, and our Lord's loving challenge to him brings forth as response only a tale of weakness and friendlessness. Observe (3) that with our Lord's command go forth healing energy. The words of Jesus are spirit and life. Sympathy awakens hope, hope prepares the way for obedience.

From the scene beside the pool of Bethesda come two lessons: 1. We are sinners and without strength to save ourselves. No one but Jesus can help us. We must be cured by a miracle. 2. Jesus pities and helps all sinners who accept his help. What he said to that sick man (verses 6 and 8) he says to you and me.

II. Scrupulous observance of outward form is frequently found where inward realities of religion are regarded with indifference. Observe the man's explanation to his critics. He was frightened by them. They might excommunicate him, and that would mean ruin worse than partial paralysis. So he threw all the responsibility on the Man who healed him. Observe the malignancy of his critics! They do not ask, Who healed you? but, Who said to you so and so? because they would throw doubt on the healing, and because they sought ground for a charge of heresy and violation of law.

III. Later Jesus found the man in a good place—in the temple. His words imply that the "impotence" had been due to an earlier vicious life. It is not easy to see what motive led the man to go directly to the Jews and tell that it was Jesus who had cured him. His motive may have been good or bad, but his conduct was imprudent. The general lessons of waiting on God, ceasing from sin, and acknowledging the help of the Saviour should be emphasized.

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The Responsive Review

1. What power was possessed by the water of the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem? *It healed those who bathed in it.* 2. Whom did Jesus find lying by the pool of Bethesda? *A helpless, sick man.* 3. What did Jesus say to him? *"Will thou be made whole?"* 4. What command did Jesus give to the helpless man? *"Rise, take up thy bed, and walk."* 5. What followed this command? *The man became well.* 6. What reason did Jesus give for doing this miracle on the Sabbath day? *"My father worketh, and I work."*

The Church Catechism

27. What are the conditional benefits which flow from the Atonement? The conditional benefits which flow from the Atonement are justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification and eternal glory. 1 Corinthians 1, 30.

LESSON IX. The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes

[Feb. 26]

GOLDEN TEXT. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. John 6, 51.

AUTHORIZED VERSION

[Read John 6, 1-71]

REVISED VERSION*

John 6, 1-14

[Commit to memory verses 11, 12]

1 After these things Je'sus went over the sea of Gal'lee, which is *the sea of Ti-be'ri-as.*

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Je'sus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 When Je'sus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Phil'ip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

7 Phil'ip answered him, Two hundred penny-worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, An'drew, Si'mon Pe'ter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Je'sus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Je'sus took the loaves: and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Je'sus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

1 After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. 2 And a great multitude followed him, because they beheld the signs which he did on them that were sick. 3 And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. 4 Now the passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. 5 Jesus therefore lifting up his eyes, and seeing that a great multitude cometh unto him, saith unto Phillip, Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat? 6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Phillip answered him, Two hundred shillings' worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. 8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, 9 There is a lad here, who hath five barley loaves, and two fishes: but what are these among so many? 10 Jesus said, Make the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11 Jesus therefore took the loaves: and having given thanks, he distributed to them that were set down: likewise also of the fishes as much as they would. 12 And when they were filled, he saith unto his disciples, Gather up the broken pieces which remain over, that nothing be lost. 13 So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with broken pieces from the five barley loaves, which remained over unto them that had eaten. 14 When therefore the people saw the sign which he did, they said, This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world.

Time.—April, A. D. 29, just before the passover. **Place.**—The plain of Butaiha, belonging to Bethsaida, on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Home Readings

M. The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes. John 6, 1-14.

Tu. The Bread of Life. John 6, 25-40.

W. Believe and live! John 6, 41-51.

Th. The seven loaves. Mark 8, 1-9.

F. The manna. Exod. 16, 11-18.

S. The handful of meal. 1 Kings 17, 8-16.

S. Filled and satisfied. Psa. 107, 1-9.

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The Lesson Hymns

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 183.

Cast thy bread upon the waters,
Ye who have but scant supply,
Angel eyes will watch above it;—
You will find it by-and-by!

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 320.

Lord, if at thy command
The word of life we sow,
Watered by thy almighty hand,
The seed shall surely grow.

New Canadian Hymnal, No. 148.

My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in his hands!
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full,—he has riches untold.

Library References

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND.—Trench, *Miracles of Our Lord*, pp. 281-295. Taylor, *Miracles of Our Saviour*, pp. 268-282. Dover, *Ministry of Mercy*, pp. 109-115. Bruce, *Miraculous Element in the Gospels*, pp. 102, 120, 207, 213, 270, 300. Steinmeyer, *Miracles of Our Lord*, pp. 249-259. Bruce, *Training of the Twelve*, pp. 116, 150, 399. Edersehim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. i, pp. 676-685. Andrews, *Life of Our Lord*, p. 299.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON

Verse 1.—Pitman, *J. R. Sermons*, vol. i, 303. Verse 5.—Banks, *L. A. Christ and His Friends*, p. 227. Verse 12.—Arnold, *T. Christian Life*, vol. i, p. 221. Stanley, *Sermons in the East*, p. 45. Buckminster, *J. Sermons*, p. 93. Hopkins, *Mark, Teachings and Counsels*, p. 155. Beecher, *H. W. Sermons*, vol. iii, p. 331. Banks, *L. A.*, *The Christ Dream*, p. 92. Macmillan, *Hugh, Two Worlds are Ours*, p. 328.

The Lesson Outline

[John 6, 1-14, studied in connection with Matt. 14, 13-21; Mark 6, 30-44; Luke 9, 10-17.]

1. *Before the Miracle* (verses 1-4).

1. Matthew connects this miracle with the death of John the Baptist; Mark and Luke connect it with the return of the twelve, after John's death. Compare verse 1 of our lesson.

2. A multitude "on foot from the cities" of Galilee (Matthew, Mark) followed Jesus—partly *because of what he was*; a man of greater "authority" than even the "scribes" (Matt. 7, 29), and a doer of "great things" (Mark 3, 8), especially "on them that were diseased (verse 2); partly *because of what they thought he was*: "the anointed one," whom they expected to throw off the Roman yoke and surpass the ancient heroes of their nation (comp. verses 14 and 15).

3. Jesus had left Galilee for rest, for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat (Mark); he now retired with his disciples into the mountain. Fresh crowds on their way to the passover at Jerusalem swelled the multitude. Our Lord's compassion was aroused. He welcomed them (Luke), taught them many things (Mark) about the kingdom of God (Luke), and healed their sick (Matthew).

II. *The Miracle* (verses 5-13).

1. Our Lord's conversation with his apostles (in the afternoon) is only partially recorded here. We may complete it from the other gospels, as follows:

The apostles: "The day is now far spent (Mark); send the multitude away, that they

may go into the villages and country round about, and lodge, and get provisions: for we are here in a desert place" (Matthew, Mark, Luke).

Jesus (to Philip): "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" (verse 5.)

Philip (a man apparently of slow spiritual perception but of clear practical sense): "Thirty-four dollars [modern phraseology] would not be enough to pay for a small lunch for each one."

The apostles: "Send them away."

Jesus: "They have no need to go away (Matthew); give ye them to eat" (Matthew, Mark, Luke).

The apostles: "Shall we go and buy thirty-four dollars' worth of bread?" (Mark.)

Jesus: "How many loaves have you? Go and see" (Mark).

Andrew, having ascertained, reports (verse 9).

Jesus: "Bring them hither to me (Matthew); make the men sit down (verse 10), in companies about fifty each" (Luke).

2. About five thousand men (verses 10) sat down in ranks by hundreds and fifties (Mark), "besides women and children" (Matthew), who, according to Oriental custom, would be separately fed.

3. The giving of thanks, the division of the food, and its distribution by the apostles, are recorded in all the gospels. All present "ate and were filled" (Matthew, Mark, Luke).

4. Only John mentions our Lord's direction to gather up the fragments "which remained over and above" (see *WORD STUDIES*).

III. *After the Miracle* (verse 14).

1. The multitude recognized our Lord's super-

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human power, and naturally inferred that he was the promised Prophet (whom apparently they now identify with the Messiah). With low conceptions of the Messiah "they were about to come and take him by force to make him king" (verse 15) when Jesus again withdrew into the mountain "himself alone."

2. John, Matthew, and Mark tell how in the evening the disciples set out by boat for Capernaum; of a great wind, and a rising sea; of their terror in seeing Jesus walking on the sea, and

how they were calmed by his words. Matthew tells of Peter's attempt to walk on the water, and of the sudden cessation of the wind when Jesus entered the boat.

3. John tells how the multitude hurried after Jesus to Capernaum, and records our Lord's Discourse on the Bread of Life, which caused caviling and dispute among the Jews and led to the desertion of many disciples. Matthew and Mark note soon after this a wonderful number of cures of all sorts of diseases.

The Lesson Word Studies

Intervening Events.—The healing of the impotent man at Bethesda (see preceding lesson) led to a public discourse by Jesus in defense of his having performed the miracle on the Sabbath day. This defense is based upon the relation of the Son of God (which title Jesus applies to himself, John 5. 25) to the Father; which relation explains the power of the Son both of communicating spiritual life and of causing the bodily resurrection of the dead. In chapter 6 we have the record of a twofold sign (6. 1-25), which again gives rise to a longer discourse (6. 26-59), this discourse in turn producing opposite results on different hearers. The miracle in this case is one involving the sustenance of life, the discourse which follows, in harmony with the intended teaching of the miracle, being on *the Son as the support of life*. How much of synoptic history intervenes between the two lessons is difficult to say, but excellent authorities think all the events recorded in Mark 2. 23 to 6. 30, Luke 7. 1 to 8. 56, and parallel passages, together with the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5 to 7), must be inserted at this point.

Four Accounts.—The feeding of the five thousand is one of the few events of our Lord's life recorded by all four evangelists (comp. Matt. 14. 13-21, Mark 6. 32-44, and Luke 9. 12-17), and as such is worthy of special study. The parallel synoptic accounts should be carefully compared throughout.

Verse 1. After these things (μετὰ ταῦτα)

—The things mentioned in chapter 5. How long after is difficult to determine. John's sequence of events, as far as he records events, is probably correct, though his account certainly contains gaps, his purpose being quite another from that of writing a chronological narrative. Compare *Intervening Events* above.

Went over ["went away to the other side"]

—From the vicinity of Capernaum, on the west side of the lake, across northeast to the vicinity of Bethsaida Julias (Luke 9. 10), a little distance back from the shore of the lake.

Sea of Galilee—A little more than sixty miles northeast of Jerusalem, the scene of our last lesson.

Which is (the sea) of Tiberias—An explanation added for the benefit of readers not familiar with the older name Galilee. One of many little indications that the gospel of John was written outside of Palestine, where people were more familiar with the Roman names of places and people. Tiberius was emperor of Rome in the time of our Lord (A. D. 14-37), and the sea received this name in his honor.

2. Followed him—"On foot out of the cities," as Matthew explains.

Miracles ["signs"] which he did—Not the miracle at Bethesda alone, but many others which had intervened, recorded in Mark 2. 23 to 6. 30 and Luke 7. 1 to 8. 56, and parallel passages. It was out of the cities of Galilee, where

these miracles had been wrought, that the multitudes followed Jesus.

3. **Went up into a ["the"] mountain**—To be alone with his disciples, having just received the sad news of John the Baptist's death (Matt. 14. 12, 13).

4. **The passover**—Commemorating the escape of the Jews from the bondage of Egypt, and more especially their escape from the avenging death-angel who slew the firstborn of Egypt (comp. Exod. 12. 21-27).

A ["the"] **feast**—More correctly, *the feast*, as in the Revision.

5. **Unto him** (πρὸς αὐτόν)—Better, *toward him*.

Philip—The apostle and one of the Twelve; the fourth of those who became followers of Jesus, and the first whom Jesus directly called (John 1. 43); a fellow townsman of both Andrew and Peter, all three disciples having been residents of Bethsaida of Galilee; preached in Asia Minor; and, according to Polycrates, had several daughters. Not to be confused with Philip the Evangelist, one of the seven deacons chosen by the church at Jerusalem (Acts 6).

Bread—A plural noun (ἄψους) better translated *loaves*. Round or oblong cakes, composed of flour mixed with water and baked; in size about as large as a plate and as thick as a man's thumb.

6. **To prove him**—To test (1) *his sympathy* for this hungry multitude, some of the

disciples having suggested (Matt. 14, 15) sending the people away unfed; (2) his willingness and his ability to meet an emergency; (3) his faith in his Master's love (love for mankind, compassion) and power. Jesus is teaching his disciples as well as helping a needy, hungry multitude.

7. Two hundred pennyworth ["shillings' worth"] (Gr. *δηνάριον*)—The *δηνάριον*, *denarius*, (Lat. *denarius*) was a silver coin worth about 16½ cents. Hence the sum mentioned by Philip was equal to about 33½ dollars (\$33.33) in our (United States) money. Its purchasing power was doubtless greater.

8. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother—At first a disciple of John the Baptist; one of the first two disciples who followed Jesus (John 1, 37-40); less prominent in apostolic history than the brother whom he had led to Christ; a native of Bethsaida in Galilee. Of his later sphere of work nothing certain is known. Tradition reports him to have labored in Greece, Macedonia, and Asia Minor, finally suffering martyrdom at Patrae, a city of Achaia. Peter's personal character and history is better known and need not be set forth here.

9. Barley loaves—And hence an inferior quality of food. The word for loaves is the same (*ἄρτους*) as that translated bread in verse 5 above—which compare.

Fishes—The Greek word (*ψάρια*, *opsū'ria*) may apply to meat generally, or to anything eaten with bread as a relish, as well as to small

fishes so used. The synoptists use *ἰχθύες*, *ikthues*, the usual word for fishes.

10. Sit down—Literally, *recline*. This command would indicate that more than a scanty bite or simple luncheon was to be served. Men reclined to partake of a meal. The simple obedience of the disciples in seating so large a company of hungry people before a visible food supply was on hand is a remarkable commentary on their faith in Jesus.

About five thousand—Five thousand men "besides women and children" (Matt. 14, 21), and hence a total number easily twice as large.

11. Given thanks—Each of the other evangelists records his *looking up to heaven and blessing*. A familiar formula used in prayer by the Jews before eating was, "Blessed art thou Jehovah our God, King of the world, who causest to come forth bread from the earth."

To the disciples, and the disciples—Words omitted by the best manuscripts.

12. Fragments that remain ["broken pieces which remain over"]—Undistributed portions remaining in the hands of the Master and of the disciples, not crumbs and pieces left by those who had eaten.

13. Baskets (*κόφινους*, *kophinous*)—Small wicker baskets in which travelers carried food and other things useful on a journey.

14. That prophet—"Like unto Moses" (Deut. 18, 14-19); commonly understood by the people in Christ's time to refer to the promised Messiah.

The Lesson Exposition

CHRIST'S FINENESS OF FEELING

There is a revelation of Christ's delicate consideration and fineness of feeling given by the other evangelists, but omitted by John, in the reasons which prompted Jesus to seek retirement with his disciples by passing over the Sea of Galilee to the quiet coast of Bethsaida (see Matt. 14, 13; Mark 6, 19-31; Luke 9, 7-10). These accounts put two things in immediate connection with this retirement. The first was the news of the death of John the Baptist. The effect of that news must have been saddening to Jesus and his disciples. To the disciples it must have been not only sorrowful but depressing news, for it could hardly have appeared to them otherwise than a triumph of their Master's own enemies, for John had been his preëminent witness. To this sense of depression Jesus was superior, because he understood the meaning of the Baptist's mission and knew that it was not frustrated, but fulfilled. But we may be sure John's death touched the heart of Jesus very deeply. There was a pathos in the life of the stern preacher of the wilderness that had just ended so tragically in the prison of Herod, and

Christ's silence on receiving the news is a sign of his sadness. For the healing of his own sore heart and for the recovery of his disciples from the depression brought upon them by the news of John's death, Jesus sought for quiet and escape from human clamor and appeal by going to the uninhabited coast beyond the sea.

A second reason for the retirement is found in the return of the twelve disciples from the first mission on which Jesus had sent them. They were weary in body and overwrought in mind. There is a great tenderness and delicate comprehension of their needs in his words, "Come ye yourselves apart in a desert place, and rest a while." Better than all medicine for the restoration of the fagged and depleted mind are nature's open spaces and her soothing silences.

NO REST FOR LOVE

But Jesus found it hard to secure rest. The clamor and insistence of human want defeated his purpose in this case. The people observed his departure with his disciples and guessed their destination, and a great multitude of men, women, and children journeyed on foot about

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the northern end of the sea and came to him in the desert place to which he had resorted. To us it looks like unreasonable intrusion and lack of consideration on the part of the people that might well have been rebuked. But Jesus understood it. He gave no sign of disappointment or resentment. "Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick." All personal need of rest was forgotten in the presence of that foot-sore, heart-sore, and weary multitude that had traveled many hours to find him; and the soreness and sadness of his own heart were insignificant as he looked upon the wretchedness represented by that appealing crowd.

And this is the fate of the lovers and helpers of men always—the want of the world pursues them and gives them no rest. It is hard for love to take a vacation. The philanthropist can scarcely have any privacy. The great world has so many needs, and there are so few who will attempt to minister to them, that the very objects of benevolence, by the pressure of their wants, are likely to overwhelm their benefactors. The world runs after its helpers because they are so sorely needed. Their disappearance for even a little while is missed. There are men and women of great wealth who can go where they please and stay as they will, and the world will go on just the same and they will not be missed, for they do nothing for the world wherever they may be. But it is the proof of their worthlessness that the sorrows and needs of the world do not knock at their doors when they are at home, nor follow them into the wilderness where they sometimes go for relief from the weariness of their innate pursuit of pleasure. The centers of the world's highest interests are represented by the men and women who, in their love and compassion, permit the needs of humanity to give them scant opportunity for rest. The man who knows nothing of the insistence and pursuit of human need should not congratulate himself on account of the exemption. It is the sign of his selfishness, his emptiness, and his uselessness.

A MIRACLE-PARABLE

This multiplying of the loaves and fishes for the feeding of the five thousand is perhaps the most important example of what may be called Christ's miracle-parables—that is, miracles which had as their ultimate object the teaching of spiritual truths. Parables proper were stories which carried in them moral or spiritual lessons. The parable of the Good Samaritan taught the duty of compassion for the unfortunate; while the parable of the sower, not at all a duty-parable, set forth the relations of the truth to the varying conditions of the human heart. Now, many of Christ's miracles had as definite teaching purpose as his parables. Such was the withering of the barren fig tree, and such also the healing of the paralytic brought by his friends

and let down through the roof to Christ. This miracle of multiplying the loaves and feeding the multitudes, in the use which Jesus made of it, had a profound spiritual meaning. We lose sight of its deepest meaning if we merely interpret it as illustrating the providence of God which provides for our bodily hunger. It does mean that, but that was not its chief meaning. It means more than an expression of Christ's compassion for the wornout multitude. That was probably all the people at the time saw in it, if the majority of them saw even that. Jesus did not explain the meaning which he saw in it until the next day when he spoke to the people in Capernaum. Then, in his great discourse on the Bread of Life (chap. 6. 26-58), he expounded the parable of his miracle. The bread which he gave symbolized himself, the Bread from heaven which brought life to the world. He said to them, in effect, "Just as you were hungry and physically faint, and were strengthened and refreshed by the bread which I gave you, you are also famishing and ready to perish for spiritual bread which I alone can give."

RELIGION NOT A LUXURY, BUT A NECESSITY

The meaning of it is that religion is not a luxury, but a necessity. Some appear to regard it as a sort of high privilege, like the upper ranges of mental culture, good and even very enviable, indeed, but neither possible nor necessary for the majority of people. But Jesus was saying in his miracle-parable that his mission was not to a fortunate and exceptional few, but to all men; that what he offered to the world was not a refined luxury that might be dispensed with without serious loss, but a necessity to the soul, as the plain essential food upon which common people live is necessary to the bodily life. Jesus stands for the things upon which alone the spirit can nourish its life and strength. The body feeds itself upon materials drawn from the vegetable and animal kingdoms, but the soul must draw its sustenance from the things which belong to the kingdom of God, the things which are unseen and spiritual. And Jesus represents that kingdom and communicates its elements to the soul. A cutting off of the soul from those elements, therefore, means not the failure of moral luxuries, but the failure of the very sources of life itself.

A SUPERFICIAL FAITH

Christ's miracle of feeding the five thousand apparently made a great impression upon the people. It appears, as we first read it, that it created strong faith in him. They began saying, "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world." And a great enthusiasm was stirred up. They started a movement to make Christ their King, to take him by force, if necessary, and proclaim him King. It was the Passover season, and great multitudes were

going down to Jerusalem. It would have been an easy thing to have stirred up the people to such a fever of religious and patriotic fervor that they would have carried Jesus with shoutings down to Jerusalem and sought to put him on the throne of David. Jesus saw the nature and the purpose of their enthusiasm, and at once sent his disciples away lest they should become infected with the foolish fervor, while he withdrew into the mountain away from the people. He reckoned that a night's march around the head of the lake would cool their ardor.

The truth was, and Jesus saw it clearly, that they had failed entirely to feel the spiritual meaning of his miracle. They would make him King of an earthly kingdom—they had no conception of his spiritual kingship. He had fed them—they would have him feed them always. But Jesus had not come, as his primary mission, that men might have bread and meat and

have it more abundantly. Incidentally and secondarily that is one of the results of his coming. But his mission was to the soul-life of the world, and his kingship must be that of the spirit. And so he was not elated but saddened by the popular enthusiasm which his miracle awakened. It revealed to him the utter incapacity of the people to understand him. And he evidently determined to dissipate that shallow and misconceived enthusiasm, preferring popular disfavor to a popularity that proceeded upon false conceptions. And so on the morrow he so deeply probed the hearts of the people, and revealed himself to them in such unwelcome light that they who a day before would have made him king fell away from him in disappointment and resentment.

And so it is now—Christ would have no man's applause who is not ready to surrender to him his inmost life.

The Lesson Prayer

Lord, we fear that with us also is something of the blindness of the multitude that followed thee beyond the sea, and for whom thou didst multiply the loaves and the fishes. We also have missed the deepest meaning of the provisions which thou hast made for our material wants; we have not seen the parable in the snowy loaf upon our tables nor the water with which thou hast daily filled our cups. We fear that we have clamored more for the meat which perisheth than for that which endureth unto everlasting life. We would not forget that from thy hand we must receive our daily bread; but keep us, we pray thee, more intensely eager for the Bread which came down from heaven. Amen.

The Lesson Coin Thoughts

I

The providential power manifest in the miracle of the loaves and fishes has never ceased to operate in meeting the needs of men.

A new event may be as miraculous as an old one.

"Distance" may lend "enchantment," but it does not change the facts. God may change his methods, but the quality of his conduct never varies.

May not events which seem miraculous to men be commonplace to God? Does not the real miraculous begin just where man's power ends?

Whether it be wrought on mind or matter the miraculous is always the manifestation of mind.

It is no wonder that man should wonder at God's work.

II

Is it any surprise that He "by whom the worlds were framed" should have the power to feed them?

The sudden output of power changes neither its essence nor its source. God is as really in

the slow-moving river as he is in the rapids. He who suddenly unfolds the "moon flower" gradually brings the "century plant" to bloom. The greatest thing about a miracle is not the time it takes to do it, but the wisdom and the power.

He who wrought the great miracle on the loaves works greater miracles on men's lives.

Increase of mind is a greater miracle than the increase of matter.

If the mind is alert to-day it will see more to-morrow. Extension follows intention.

III

Great multitudes followed Jesus when he crossed the Sea of Galilee long ago, but greater multitudes follow him now.

Christ is like the sunshine, which never misses a chance to scatter shadows.

He whose following is really great must be a great leader.

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Master. The surest steps of science have most closely followed the Christ. The greatest workers of the world are turning their steps in the paths marked out by "the Prince of Peace."

Many followed Jesus yesterday, more are following him to-day, and the most will follow him to-morrow.

IV

What an everyday, human friend the Master was to sit on the hillside with his disciples! No place was too common for his uncommon ministry. His overflowing heart made heaven on that hillside.

Heaven must get to us here before we can get to the heaven yonder.

A heavenly atmosphere hangs about many an earthly spot. The best atmosphere comes from character, and not from climate.

V

Christ often accommodates himself to the limitations of men in order to show them the illimitableness of God.

We should be stronger in the valley of service if we sat oftener with him on the hillside in prayer.

No matter where his disciples meet, the Master is always there.

VI

The Lord will prove the rest of us just as certainly as he did Philip. If we are to be trusted we must be tested.

Some questions call out the character better than their answers.

God questions us, not for his *information*, but for our *reformation*.

The deepest questions must be answered by lives and not by lips. There is always some truth in the heart which never finds way to the tongue.

Faith may be at its best when there is nothing in sight to make it good.

Faith is power pivoted on a promise.

Philip recognized the insufficiency of what was in sight, but did not take into account the invisible resources of Christ.

Feeding the multitude did not depend on the fishes, nor the lad, nor the loaves, but on the Master of the multitude. He can supply a feast in a desert as well as in a garden.

Christ is a Friend who is more than a match for all our foes. He is a Helper who is stronger than any hindrance.

VII

We never know the possibilities of God till we are brought up against the impossibilities of man. We never know the strength that lies beyond us till we get to the end of our own.

Men only do the greatest deeds in alliance with the Almighty.

He is a mighty man who can marshal the might of other men.

He is possessed of wondrous power who can make the multitude pause. There may be no power in the pause, but there is in it the preparation for power.

VIII

Perhaps the multitude was selfish in its energy.

He never describes a large circle whose center is self.

The "prodigal son" did not go back to his father till "he came to himself." It was hunger that hurried him home. It was hunger that made the multitude mind the Master. God will stir up with hunger of heart, if there is no other way to get us home to his love.

Men must often go through the portal of pain to the palace of peace.

IX

Jesus fed the multitude by the hands of his disciples. If we pass to another what Jesus gives us we shall never be lacking.

If we thank God for fragments he will give us feasts. Everything good will grow greater in the atmosphere of gratitude.

To be ungrateful is to be ungodly.

X

When we are tempted to despair let us always remember that God has plenty to spare. Whatever else may be gone God is always left.

The hand can afford to be empty if the heart is full.

The real prophet of the people never covets the people's profits.

The true prophet of God is the most precious possession of any people.

Jesus retired from the crowd that wished to make him king, but that is the crowd that most men court. It is not a crowd, but a character, that makes a man king.

The Lesson Heart Talk

How to help the helpless multitudes is the problem always before the disciples of Jesus. "Send them away; let them buy for themselves," is an easy way to dispose of it, and too many are ready to so relieve themselves of responsibility. But this is not Jesus's way; he had compassion on the hungry people, and he would not

send them away hungry lest they should faint on the road. He put the responsibility upon his disciples—"Give ye them to eat." Like Philip, we are appalled at the task. The best we can do is not enough to give each one a taste; it is hopeless. Heathen population increases much faster than Christian conversion. It is like

"dipping out the ocean with a teaspoon" to try to Christianize the millions. We have many Philips in the church who "do not believe in foreign missions," and who hesitate to undertake any kind of service because they calculate their own inadequate resources and not the infinite power of the Lord.

Let us take heart in all Christian work from one sentence in the story of this miracle. Jesus "himself knew what he would do." Just think of a disciple getting discouraged and giving up, when by his side stands One who has all power in heaven and in earth! There is never a combination in human affairs perplexing to him. He is master of the situation and knows what he will do in every case. Our part is to obey and trust. This is the only way to live or to work without the fretting anxiety which dishonors God and prevents others from taking hold of the work with us. "Why did you not take that office in our society when Mrs. — asked you?" said one young woman to another. "O, she always seems so worried and anxious about everything, I was afraid I should grow old before my time," the other answered, laughing. Surely it cannot be pleasing to the Lord to have us overburdened with care about matters he knows how to manage.

Long ago there were six hundred thousand hungry people in a desert place, and Moses's faith gave way before the task of feeding them, although God had promised to do it. He said, "Shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together to suffice them?" And God answered: "Is the Lords hand waxed short? Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not." He did see. Everyone who waits upon God sees.

We have often read the story of the feeding of the five thousand in a desert place, and its lessons cannot be new; but they cannot be too often repeated. Let us remember that Jesus used the resources at hand; he gave thanks for

what he had; he was systematic, making the people sit down in companies, so they could be more easily and thoroughly served; he gave others their part to do, not taking it all upon himself, as some "leaders" in good works attempt to do; what he did was done with free-hearted generosity; he was economical, allowing no waste of energy nor of supplies. God will supply all our need, but makes no promise to provide for wasteful extravagance. The results were beyond all expectation. The disciples surely were astonished to see twelve basketfuls left over.

As he gave this rich supply to these hungry people, so he gives the bread of life to the hungry heart. "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." When he told them this even some of his disciples thought he was saying words without meaning. How can this man give us his flesh to eat? they asked impatiently. Why does he say things so impossible to understand? He said, "It would do you no good to eat my flesh, for I am not speaking to you of the life of your body; I am speaking of the life of your spirit. There is a sense in which your spirit lives through the death of my body which is crucified for you, and lives by a vital union with me by faith as your living Saviour. Many of them went back and walked no more with him. If they had only stayed with Jesus they would have learned to understand these blessed truths. But they went away with lonely and hungry hearts. Jesus asks us, "Will you also go away?" We answer, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

"Out of my bondage, sorrow, and night,

Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come;

Into thy freedom, gladness, and light,

Jesus, I come to thee:

"Out of my sickness into thy health,

Out of my want and into thy wealth,

Out of my sin and into thyself,

Jesus, I come to thee."

The Lesson in Literature and Art

1. If Jesus had sent the multitudes away he would have had to cease teaching. Instead he completed his teaching by an object lesson.—*G. W. Cable.*

2. The Sufficiency of Christ.

He is a path, if any be misled;

He is a robe, if any naked be;

If any chance to hunger, he is bread;

If any be a bondman, he is free;

If any be but weak, how strong is he!

To dead men, life he is; to sick men, health;
To blind men, sight; and to the needy, wealth;
A pleasure without loss, a treasure without stealth.
—*Giles Fletcher.*

3. Verse 6. "Whence are we to buy bread

that these may eat?" This he said, John tells us, "to prove" or test Philip. Apparently this disciple was a shrewd business man, quick to calculate ways and means, and rather apt to scorn the expectations of faith. Every man must rid himself of the defects of his qualities. And Jesus now gave Philip an opportunity to overcome his weakness-in-strength by at last boldly confessing his inability and the Lord's ability—by saying, "We have neither meat nor money, but we have Thee." But Philip, like many another, missed his opportunity, and, wholly oblivious of the resources of Jesus, cast his eye rapidly over the crowd and estimates that "two hundred pennyworth" of bread would

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scarcely suffice to give each enough to stay immediate cravings.—*Dr. Marcus Dods.*

4. Verse 6. "For he himself knew." This is sweet comfort: Jesus knows. He always knows all about it. He knew how many people there were. He knew how much bread it would take; he knew how many fish he would want, and how he meant to feed the crowd, and send them all away refreshed. He knew all before it happened. And he knows exactly, dear friend, where your help is to come from in your time of trouble.—*Spurgeon.*

5. Verse 10. This is the meaning which I find in the words of Jesus when he said to his disciples, "Make the men sit down." It is the change from the active and restless to the receptive and quiet state, from the condition in which all the life was flowing outward in eager self-assertion, to the other condition in which all the life was being influenced, that is, being flowed upon by the richer power which came forth from him. . . . The disciples as well as the stragglers from Capernaum—perhaps the busy disciples more than anybody else in all the crowd—must have needed Christ's call to sit down and be fed. The more earnestly you are in work for Jesus, the more you need times when what you are doing for him passes totally out of your mind, and the only thing worth thinking of seems to be what he is doing for you.—*Phillips Brooks.*

6. Verse 11.

"Twas angel's food that mortals ate that day,
Although no bright-stoled angel brought it
down;

But from the basket of a child at play,
And from the little hands all sunburnt brown,
Divinity did take, and bless, and share
Five barley loaves among five thousand there,
Not the boy priest who served the temple's
shrine,

And heard Jehovah's voice call him by name,
Had honor half so great, dear child, as thine,
Linked with the Christ in such a tender fame;

Not angels came the humble meat to spread,
But from thy hands he took the barley bread.

—*Lilly E. Barr.*

7. Verse 11. When you stand face to face with a hungry-eyed creature whom you want to feed with better life, be sure that you imitate your Lord. Be sure that you begin by asking him, "How many loaves have you, my poor friend? What can you give me to begin with? What has God done for you already? Show me your best, and we will pray to God together that

as you put it into his hands he will bless it and multiply it, till your whole life is fed with the grace which is all his but which he has made yours by bidding it work upon the substance of what he had given you already."—*Phillips Brooks.*

8. Verse 12. "Gather up the fragments." Why are not more gems from our great authors scattered over the country? Great books are not in everybody's reach; and though it is better to know them thoroughly than to know them only here and there, yet it is a good work to give a little to those who have neither time nor means to get more. Let every bookworm, when in any fragment of a scarce old tome he discovers a sentence, a story, an illustration, that does his heart good, hasten to give it.—*Coleridge.*

9. In 1503 the Siense painter Bazzi represented The Feeding of the Five Thousand in three large panels, the most important, of course, containing the group of our Lord with his disciples, while the other two are filled with the miscellaneous company waiting for the bread. Among them all there are but few interesting figures, and there is little or no dramatic sense shown in their action or grouping. A single group stands forth as possessing a striking interest and beauty, and this is happily our Lord himself and the lad with five barley loaves. The child has apparently come running up in haste, and holds up his offering with innocent delight. The Saviour greets him with a gentle smile of approval, raising his hand to bless the bread. His face is singularly refined and gentle, without weakness, and the entire figure is full of dignity.

10. By Murillo, in the Caridad (or Charity Hospital), Seville, the Miracle of Feeding Five Thousand was very appropriately chosen as the twin subject of Moses Striking the Rock. An extensive landscape forms the setting, with uplands where the multitudes are gathered. In the foreground are two independent groups—our Lord and his disciples at one side, and some spectators on the other. The Master is seated, holding a loaf in one hand and raising the other in benediction. A disciple is in the act of placing the whole collection of loaves in his lap. Another apostle, presumably Andrew, is talking with a lad at one side, and taking the basket of fish which the latter proffers. The picture, though not one of the artist's masterpieces, has many interesting features. The original sketch is in a private collection in England.—*Estelle M. Hurll.*

The Lesson Illustrated

Verse 2. "A great multitude followed." This was more than the ordinary following of a great leader. The multitude is everywhere stamped on the narrative of the New Testament until we

come to the final results, then—120 only. Where were the multitudes? Christ understood it all when he said, "Few there be that go in therat." Herein is a comfort for the discouraged. Crowds

do not count in the final success. The success of numbers is not always an indication of the true facts.—*S. G. A.*

Verse 3. "Went up into a mountain." How often Christ went up into the mountain! What prompted him? Four things. Solitude and quiet, rest, communion, vision. After the mountain experience came the continued life of helpfulness. In this busy life we sometimes forget that there is a mountain, and so fail to find the best experiences. Meditation is too rare, communion with God too infrequent, and the vision often lacking in our lives.—*S. G. A.*

Verse 6. "To prove him." Marvelous it is, but true, that we study everything but ourselves. There is not the most common occurrence in life but we study it, yet we study not ourselves. There is not the character of our neighbor that we study not, but we study not ourselves. There is not a peculiarity in our neighbor or acquaintance which we are not acquainted with, while we are strangely ignorant of the peculiarities in ourselves. There is not a fault in others we do not detect and examine with eyes most keen, while at the same time we are positively purblind with regard to our own faults and iniquities. Others can see them for us; we see them not for ourselves. It is this that God wants us to do. He wants to put us, so to speak, in the midst of a whole apparatus of tests, that those tests may bring to light that which is in us; for it is absolutely true that feelings may be lurking in us; just as there is fire lurking in the flint stone, which may remain there from the days of creation undetected and undeveloped until the genial steel strikes upon it, and then, when the blow of the steel brings to light the concealed, the long concealed fire, we are amazed to find that in that cold mass there could have lurked a thing so vivid and so sparkling. All this is that great teaching, that marvelous discipline of circumstances; for, after all, it is not by direct teaching that men ever learn to know themselves; it is by the wretched and by the painful instruction of circumstances. It is not the fact that a man shall discover more of himself; but let him be laid in that school of instruction and discipline, a sick bed, and there let him be left alone to ponder with his own heart and to search his own spirit, to go back in memory upon days gone and years past, to view himself in contrast with the peculiar circumstances of his life, and what an amount of intelligence begins to burst upon him, intelligence not regarding others, but intelligence regarding himself. And so, according to the old quotation, the man arises from his sick bed a wiser and a better man.—*Archibald Boyd.*

Verse 7. "Is not sufficient." How often a teacher will feel that his material is poor and the thought weak, even after he has done his best. If the Master is present all will be fed and go away satisfied. If he is not present there

will not be enough for even the teacher.—*S. G. A.*

Verse 9. "Five barley loaves and two small fishes." Christ's blessing on our littleness brings marvelous increase. Moody's little barley loaf of talent with God's blessing gave to the world a great evangelist. Wesley's gifts in the midst of universal darkness seemed very small. Joined with God's help they gave to the world a great church. General Booth had neither wealth nor social position, but his small gift linked on to God's power has been the greatest modern agency for uplifting the degraded.

Verse 9. "There is a lad here." The history of the progress of God's kingdom is the history of the use of unexpected means. Who expected the Methodism of a hundred years ago to do and be what it is to-day? Christ might have performed the miracle without the lad. Methodism without the Christ would have been obscure forever. Many a lay worker will do an untold amount of good in feeding the multitude. Even "a little child shall lead them."—*S. G. A.*

Verse 10. In the work of human salvation, and in Christian work, God does something and man does something. Men are slow to comprehend this fact and work fully and cordially with God. Some think God will do it all, and they content themselves with asking him to do so. Others think men can do it all, and so they leave God out of the account. In mechanics the most difficult thing to do is to make a splice. The joint is the weak part of every structure. And this line of connection between God's work and man's work seems to be the weakest part of Christian experience. Men are slow to learn just how to take hold of God, and work with him for themselves and others. Faith is the bond of connection, but to many persons faith is a very shadowy thing. There is probably a profounder meaning in the emphasis that Christ put upon faith than the church has yet discovered.—*Henry Graham.*

Verse 10. "There was much grass." And the poets of our modern time have shared with the masters of old in the delight occasioned by the springing grass upon which their weary eyes have rested. How Shakespeare loved the green grass of the fields! How dear it was to Burns, to Scott, to Thompson, to Wordsworth, to Bryant, to Longfellow, and to a host more of those who never wearied to sing its praise! How dear, too, it is to the common people, the hewers of wood and the drawers of water! Behold yonder laborer as at the close of the day he sits in the shade of the vine of his cottage door! What spot in all the world so sweet as that little plot of green whereon in the twilight his children are playing; upon which for years in noonday heat he himself has rested, even as rested his fathers before him?—*George E. Reed.*

Verse 11. "And when he had given thanks." The hymn by Martin Rinckart composed in

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1636, and sometimes called the German Te Deum, is used at all national festivals, and sometimes in the home before a meal. It is well worth inserting here. The translation is by Catherine Winkworth, 1858:

"Now thank we all our God,
With heart, and hands, and voices,
Who wondrous things hath done,
In whom his world rejoices;
Who from our mother's arms
Hath blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love,
And still is ours to-day.

"O may this bounteous God
Through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts
And blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep us in his grace,
And guide us when perplexed,
And free us from all ills
In this world and the next.

"All praise and thanks to God
The Father now be given,
The Son, and Him who reigns
With them in highest heaven:
The One Eternal God,
Whom earth and heaven adore,
For thus it was, is now,
And shall be evermore!"

Verse 11. "He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down." The men who have done most for God have not necessarily been the greatest scholars, or men of greatest intellectual power, but the men who have had the most intimate acquaintance with the Spirit and the fullest endowment of his power. The great achievements in soul-saving have not been man's work, but the work of God operating through man. The Romans built a number of vast aqueducts to supply their cities with water. These were simply large canals, extending in some cases fifty or sixty miles over hill and valley to carry the water of clear streams or fountains to distant thirsty cities. They did not seem to understand the principle

of physics that water confined in tubes will rise as high as its source; consequently they built open aqueducts, and were obliged to bore through hills, and fill up valleys, or raise the aqueduct on a series of arches one above another, to furnish a level bed, or a gentle decline down which the water might flow. We have learned that we can carry water in strong iron pipes, over hill and through valley, without any leveling, so long as the fountain head is higher than any point of the course. This leveling up was man's work; driving the water uphill and down through the iron tube is God's work. Man's part is simply to attach his iron tube to God's law. And this is the correct principle of Christian life and work. It simply requires that a human instrument—great or small, learned or unlearned—should make connections with the Spirit of God, and large results are sure to follow. Water can run through a crooked tube if the fountain is only high enough; and even feeble agencies can bring great things to pass when God is behind them and working through them.—*Henry Graham.*

Verse 12. "That nothing be lost." The lesson inculcated is that of thrift. We live in an age when fortunes are made from what was formerly waste product. The cotton gin solved the problem of extracting the seeds from the boll. For a time the seeds were valueless. Then cotton-seed oil was made from them, now so widely used for so many purposes. But the husks of the seed remained. These are now used for the manufacture of paper. This same care is exercised in other things. Old dumps are now worked over for the silver and gold they contain. Old tomato cans have a value for the manufacturer. Why not apply the same thought to our experiences. Have we found all the gold they contain?—*S. G. A.*

The School of Practice

1. Jesus had compassion on the sick and healed them, and on the hungry and fed them. This week I will, if I can, find out some sick person to whom I can show some kindness, and some needy person or family to whom I can give food.

2. I am impressed with the fact that the suffering and the needy expected help from Jesus. This was because he had shown an ability and willingness to help them. I will this week study my own life to see to what extent, if at all, those needing help expect anything from me, and will try to answer honestly whether I have had the proper willingness to help.

3. I see that I have received and enjoyed many material benefits of Christianity, just as those whom Christ fed had their bodily hunger satisfied, and at the same time I have not sought to enter deeply into the life of Christ himself. This week I will ask Christ to fill me with his own life, and I will try in all things to surrender myself to his will.

The Lesson Digest and Teachers' Guide

The Junior Grade

[For pupils above the Primary Grade and under the age of eleven or twelve. Lesson helps: Berean Intermediate Quarterly.]

Read our entire lesson text, John 6. 1-14; and then read, for comparison, the parallel passages, Matt. 14. 13-21; Mark 6. 30-44; Luke 9. 10-17. Ascertain as precisely as possible to what stage

in the life of Jesus this lesson belongs. (Our fourth paragraph for **ADVANCED CLASSES** will help here; also the first paragraph of the **LESSON OUTLINE**, and the **WORD STUDIES**.) In Matt. 13. 54 to 14. 12 (parallel with Mark 6. 1-29 and Luke 9. 1-9) the doings and teachings that preceded this miracle are recorded. Having carefully read these, make up mentally from the four gospels a complete account of the miracle. Assistance in this task is afforded by the second paragraph of the **LESSON OUTLINE**. Then study the discourse on The Bread of Life, recorded only by John. The events that preceded that discourse, including another astonishing miracle, are recorded in the first three gospels, Matt. 14. 22-36; Mark 6. 45-56; Luke 9. 18-27.

Light from other scriptures: On verse 1, "the Sea of Tiberias," compare verse 23. On verse 2, miracles or "signs," compare John 2. 11. On verse 3, "the mountain," compare verse 15, also Matt. 5. 1. (Jesus was fond of mountains.) With verse 4 compare John 1. 7; with verse 5, verse 32; with verse 6, 2 Cor. 13. 5. Concerning Philip see John 1. 43; concerning Andrew, John 1. 40. With verse 7 compare Mark 6. 37; with verse 10, Mark 6. 39; with verse 11, verse 23 and Matt. 15. 36; with verse 14, John 1. 21, Matt. 11. 3, and 21. 11.

PLANS FOR JUNIOR TEACHING

This lesson is full of pictures.

1. The journey over the lake, and the crowd walking around the head of the lake, joined by other crowds on their way to the passover feast. (In many classes of this grade this scene may be omitted without loss.)

2. Our Saviour resting on the mountain with his disciples—but coming forward when he saw the crowds to heal and to teach; observing their faintness for want of food; no stores near, nor money to buy with. If a man had worked from Christmas till the First of July and had saved all his earnings he would not have had enough saved to feed this crowd. What could be done?

3. Jesus knew what to do, and he was able to do it. See the lad with five loaves of bread and two small fishes—loaves not unlike large pilot biscuits, but coarser; fishes dried or otherwise preserved. (The teacher must be careful never to bring into the class an illustration or help anything that will divert attention; but there are teachers and there are classes which would be benefited by the unfolding at this point of a piece of biscuit and a nibble of dried fish. Let each child have a taste; but first, in a few soft-spoken words, "give thanks" for this opportunity.) Among how many people were the loaves and fishes divided? Not among five or six well-fed boys and girls, but among five thousand hungry men, besides women and children. About how many are there present in your Sunday school? Tell the children; then tell how many Sunday schools like that would be needed to

count five thousand people; and Jesus fed perhaps ten thousand that day! One hungry boy could eat far more than five biscuits and two little fishes. If Jesus had not been there it would have been enough to make people laugh or cry to think of those little crackers and fishes as food for that great crowd. But Jesus made the people sit down on the grass in fifties (*teach the lesson of orderliness and decorum*), looked up to heaven and gave thanks (*teach the lesson of thanksgiving in all we do, especially of offering thanks at meals*), broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, and they gave it to the people (*teach that we are workers together with God*). The bread grew no less; the fish grew no less. Everybody ate as much as he wanted.

4. The gathering up of the fragments.

5. Boys and girls can well understand that people have other wants, other hungers, besides hunger for food. Whenever boys and girls ask questions they are hungry for knowledge. If, for example, they want to know what makes a queer engine go, or what is inside a new book, it won't do to give them something to eat. They need not food for the body just then, but food for the mind. Our schools are dining rooms for the mind (*a teaching much needed*). But after the bodies of boys and girls have been fed and after their minds have been fed, there is still something left hungry—their *spiritual natures*. There are people whose bodies are starved; there are people whose minds are starved; *there are people whose spirits are starved*. Jesus says that he himself is "the Bread that came down from heaven." By that he means that those who receive him shall have their spiritual natures fed and made strong and good. (*A lesson in economy is taught at the close of this lesson.*)

This lesson lends itself exceedingly well to Primary Class teaching. It is not difficult to awaken the interest of even the youngest in the story of the boy whom Christ made such a blessing to this great multitude. (We can imagine what an object of interest that boy would be to his companions.) He would never forget the striking scene in which he bore so important a part, and boys and girls may still find many opportunities of doing good.

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (JUNIOR)

Call attention to the **SYMBOL PICTURE**; tell what it symbolizes, emphasizing the difference between a pitcher and a fountain, and ask that it be drawn during the week. Urge that the children carefully study the Home Readings for each day during the week. They will thus have a better approach to the lesson for Sunday.

The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils between the ages of eleven or twelve and fifteen or sixteen. They should be

provided with the Berean Intermediate Quarterly, or the Illustrated Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

Study the lesson text according to the hints given to teachers of the JUNIOR GRADE, page 159, and to ADVANCED CLASSES, page 161.

Before teaching make yourself familiar with every detail of the scene, every Orientalism, all the circumstances and "background." A careful study of the WORD STUDIES will be of advantage. Explain nothing that the pupils already know. 1. The Sea of Tiberias (so called to-day), named after Tiberias, the chief city on its shore; fringed in our Lord's time by towns and villages, trees and cornfields. Its boats are now about thirty feet long and seven feet beam; probably about the same size then. 2. Barley bread; fish, pickled or dried (fish-preserving is one of the industries to-day on the shores of Tiberias). 3. Men sitting separately from women and children—as in all Eastern assemblies—synagogues, churches, and crowds. 4. Baskets carried by ancient Jews whenever they travelled to hold unpolluted food. Compare MEANINGS MADE EASY of the Intermediate Quarterly.

1. Note the long interval between this and the last lesson. In that interval the Twelve had been chosen, the Sermon on the Mount had been preached, the centurion's servant had been healed, the dead son of the widow of Nain had been raised to life, Jesus had received John the Baptist's last message, had been anointed at the house of Simon the Pharisee, had delivered his series of parables by the sea, had stilled the tempest on the lake, had raised Jairus's daughter, had received the news of the death of John the Baptist, and the report of the Twelve on their return from their first mission.

2. The "rest" to secure which Jesus and his disciples crossed the sea. From what had they to rest? From the effects of work, trouble, poverty, crowds. For suggestions compare 1 Tim. 6: 6-8; Gal. 6: 9; Isa. 30: 15; Matt. 11: 28, 29. Although the multitude interrupted the rest Jesus so greatly needed, he welcomed them teaching? (Luke 9: 11.) By what attraction were the multitudes drawn to Christ?

3. The time of day when Jesus began to talk with his disciples about feeding the multitude (Luke 9: 12). Philip's estimate of the expense in modern coin (more than half a year's wages). Philip's association with Andrew (John 1: 44; 12: 22; Mark 3: 18; Acts 1: 13). The usefulness of the "lad."

4. Lessons from the miracle itself: the arrangement of the people; their attitude; our Lord's "thanks" (comp. Luke 22: 17-19; 24: 30). Why did he make use of loaves and fishes? What can be learned from his instruction to gather the fragments?

5. Christ the Bread of Life: 1. Needed by a world spiritually starving; 2. The gift of divine

grace and providence; 3. "His body broken for us;" 4. Ministered by human means; 5. Partaken of by free will; 6. Abundance for all.

PLANS FOR INTERMEDIATE TEACHING

1. Jesus and the Multitude, verses 1-7. The problem always before Jesus was the problem which is always before us—how to help the helpless thousands. (See LESSON HEART TALKS.)

2. The Multitude Fed, verses 8-11. The abundance of food provided; of salvation offered freely.

3. The Result, verses 12-14. The multitude could see no farther than the symbol. They looked for earthly gifts and earthly joys, and got them. The Lord Jesus would raise their thoughts (and our thoughts) to heavenly and spiritual things.

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (INTERMEDIATE)

Ask for written answers to the following questions:

1. What reasons had Jesus for attending the Jewish feasts?

2. At what other time did Jesus say he could give living water to drink?



The Senior Grade

PLANS FOR SENIOR TEACHING

Study the LESSON Outline given on page 43 of the Senior Quarterly:

1. The Multitude (verses 1-4; comp. Mark 6: 34). The causes of the great crowd are given in verses 2, 4. The approaching feast at Jerusalem led many to pass that way. Others came because they had seen Jesus' success as a healer—sick people, the friends of the sick, and the curious.

2. The Miracle (verses 5-13). When the Lord saw the crowd he thought at once of their need. Human resources within reach were not sufficient to supply that need; but our Lord exhausted human resources before drawing on the divine: Jesus's disposition to figure and think before making an expenditure; Andrew's sociability; the lad's loaves and fishes; the disciples' helpfulness in distribution and their economy in gathering the fragments—all these were made use of. Then divine power was exercised.

3. The Effect of the Miracle (verse 14). This exhibition of a power unquestionably divine demonstrated to the multitude the divine authority of the worker.

If you did not give out the lesson of the Five Loaves as a Bible Reading to be looked up during the week, let it be read to-day. A few minutes may be spared for it, and it will be found directly illustrative of the teachings of the lesson. Our picture on page 45 of the Senior Quar-

terly was drawn by Mr. Harper while he was crossing the Sea of Galilee in a rowboat. The fish on page 44 is an exact reproduction of a fish taken from the lake.

Three applications:

1. The infinite resources of God are ours.
2. God distributes his blessings to men through human agencies.
3. A wise economy is needed in our religious life.

Apply the teachings of THE SCHOOL OF PRACTICE.

FOR NEXT SUNDAY (SENIOR)

Ask your pupils to ascertain beforehand all the facts they can concerning the Feast of Tabernacles and the great day of the feast. For paragraph on the subject see page 48 of the Senior Quarterly. Encourage the pupils to follow the guide to the Readings and Study for Each Day on page 47.

Advanced Classes

Study John 6. 1-11.

Note the minuteness of the description here, indicating that it was written outside of Palestine.

The four accounts of the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes should be closely compared by each student before coming to the class. Methods for harmonization are suggested in the LESSON OUTLINE. From Matthew, Mark, and Luke we learn the period of Christ's life to which this miracle belongs. John is intent on certain great teachings of the Master rather than on orderly narrative, and tells this story as an introduction to the sermon on the Bread of Life, which none of the other evangelists report.

Note especially Christ's Finesness of Feeling and A Superficial Faith in THE LESSON EXPOSITION.

Study the text of the entire chapter after the manner suggested to teachers of the Junior Grade, page 100.

We must measure the interval hinted at by "after these things" according to our identification of the feast mentioned in John 5. 1, and should perhaps read between this miracle and

that studied last Sunday all the events and teachings recorded in Luke from 6. 1 to 9. 9, with the parallel passages in Matthew and Mark. Verse 2 of this chapter fits naturally into the accounts of the other gospels.

What is the purpose of the mention of the passover in verse 4—chronological? or explanatory of the increase of the multitude? or "suggestive of the connection of the passover with Jesus as the True Bread"?

Reconstruct from the four gospels our Lord's conversation with his disciples. The LESSON OUTLINE furnishes a guide to this, but not a complete reconstruction.

Observe our Lord's purpose in his question to Philip.

Note the fed multitude's recognition of Messianic powers side by side with their misconception of Messianic functions.

Observe that the "sign" of verse 14 is the third of this gospel; recall the other two.

The miracle of the Loaves and Fishes was an acted parable—a wonderful deed done not for its own sake, but for the purpose of teaching wonderful truths. What are some of its teachings?

Note the bearing of John 6. 15 on Matt. 14. 22 and Mark 6. 45.

Note the power of reading men's hearts shown in verses 26, 64, 70. How should this impress Jews?

Study the miracle of Jesus walking on the water as an acted parable. What impressions on the disciples would be made by it additional to those received during the previous day? What was Jesus's purpose in working this miracle? Compare Mark 6. 48.

What did Jesus mean by "bread" and "heaven"? How did the Jews interpret his language? In what ways does bread metaphorically teach us concerning Christ and his relation to us? See INTERMEDIATE GRADE, "Christ the Bread of Life."

What prime duty does our Lord urge upon us by this sermon on the Bread of Life? Dr. Abbott in his Commentary answers, "Appropriation of himself." Is that correct?

What was the cause of the desertion of our Lord by many of his disciples at this time?

Analyze Peter's confession.

The Responsive Review

1. What was the result of the miracles which Jesus wrought? *A great multitude followed him.*
2. What did Jesus do for the multitude by the Sea of Galilee after he had taught them all day? *He gave them food.*
3. With what amount of food did he supply the needs of five thousand men? *With five loaves and two fishes.*
4. What was the miracle intended to teach? *That Jesus is the bread of life.*
5. Repeat the GOLDEN TEXT: "I am," etc.

The Church Catechism

29. What are the conditions upon which benefits are extended to all men through the Atonement? The conditions upon which benefits are extended to all men through the Atonement are true repentance and living faith.

Primary Teachers' Department

Primary Notes

Two things should be aimed at in every primary lesson: first, to develop a "point of contact" in the child's mind—a point at which the lesson thought or teaching may be linked with some experience known to the child; and, second, to show how the lesson teaching may be made practical in the child's life at home, in school, or on the playground.

SUGGEST some simple thing along the line of the teaching for the child to do, or to attempt, during the week. Many will forget, but some will remember and be helped, like the child who, when pushed violently down by a quick-tempered playmate, rose and walked silently away, saying softly, "Teacher said we must love one another, and not push back."

SOMETIMES a simple reminder of the lesson teaching may be provided. Little pink paper apples distributed at the close of a lesson on God's love and thought for us in giving us the delicious fruits in their season were greatly prized, and for months after the teacher was made glad by hearing the children tell, when she saw them in their homes, the meaning of the pretty symbol.

THERE are many of these symbols which can be used to enforce helpful lessons. If the teacher is not skilled in the use of the scissors, let her appeal to some artistic friend to cut her a pattern of the desired object. A paper chain, an anchor, a boat, a shield, a cross—these and others which will suggest themselves may be of great use in helping to impress some lesson truth.

IN many schools promotion of classes to the main school are made on Easter Sunday. If this be the case in your school, and you are to send out one or more little classes, it is none too early to be asking to whose care these lambs of your flock are to be intrusted. Few, indeed, are the primary teachers whose hearts have not been saddened by seeing a loss of interest, and even a loss of actual presence in the school, occur in the case of some, at least, of the promoted children. Can the primary teacher do anything to remedy this evil?

SOME primary teachers, with love and forethought, quietly make provision in advance for the shepherding of their lambs. The superintendent of the main school will not fail to be grateful for such cooperation. They invite the teacher to whom their thought turns to visit the primary class regularly for a few weeks before promotion day and become acquainted

with the children. Sometimes the mother of one of the children may be secured, and this is generally very desirable. Thus the change, gradually approached, is not so marked to the children, and they enter the "big school" feeling more or less at home. We cordially commend some such plan as this to the primary teacher who is looking toward the day of separation from a portion of her dear little flock.

Saint Valentine's Day

TO-DAY the postman's bag is full,
And very oft he carries
To leave for little boys and girls
The Valentines he carries.

Saint Valentine! Saint Valentine!
We hail your day with pleasure.
The love your pretty missives bear
Will make each one a treasure.

—*Emilie Poulsen, in Kindergarten Review.*

The Children and Saint Valentine's Day

It is impossible for the Sunday school teacher to ignore Saint Valentine's Day, especially in view of the fact that the beautiful legend of the day is so often completely lost sight of in the dreadful comic valentine, that carries no loving wish, but leaves a sting behind it in spite of its fun. Isn't it possible to tell the children something of the "once upon a time" story of the old saint who loved the birds and animals and knew how to call them and to talk to them; how the birds and all loved him, chose his birthday as their mating day, a day when the birds came together and sang their sweetest songs for him and for each other and then "chose the one whom they loved best"; and how this is still for us the happy "I love you day," when we send our friends and all whom we hold dear, a loving wish.

Would it not be a very happy plan for the children to say "I love you" to some one who doesn't get the sweet messages the postman brings in them? Suppose they each give you a part of their valentine money to buy a "living valentine," a flower or plant to be sent to some sick child to blossom in her window and say, "I love you" to her each day with its sweet flower face and voice—its beautiful fragrance. Or again, suppose the children meet you after school and you help them cut out and make little heart Valentines with birds and flowers pasted on them for the many little friends and the fathers and mothers.—*Teacher.*

International Bible Lessons

FIRST QUARTER

LESSON VI—February 5

JESUS AT JACOB'S WELL. John 4. 5-14

GOLDEN TEXT: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22. 17.

Primary Notes

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON



the streets while his father did his business. At last he grew very thirsty and begged for a drink. "Run around the corner," said father, pointing the way, "and you will see a beautiful drinking fountain. Take one of the pretty white cups and drink all the water you wish. I will be here when you come back." "But I haven't any money to pay," said Layton. "You don't need any. The water is free. Just take it," was the answer, and Layton ran off happily. It did not come into his heart to say: "I wonder if father knows. I wonder if the fountain is really there. I wonder if the water is free." He knew that he was thirsty, he knew that his father must be right about the fountain, and the only thing he had to do was to find it, as he was told, and take all the water he could drink without paying any price at all. But if he had not felt sure that his father knew, and that he told the truth, would he have gone to find the fountain? A great deal depends on believing. Before Layton went to take a drink he believed that the water was there, because father said so.

The Lesson Story. It is about a thirsty traveler, and a woman who needed help. Where? Picture the well-side, the old rocky well which Jacob dug, and the tired traveler sitting beside it. Who? It was Jesus the Lord of all, who "sat thus on the well, wearied with his journey." The disciples were gone away to buy food, for they were all hungry after the long walk in the heat and dust.

The Woman of Samaria. Make the children see the Samaritan woman coming with her waterpot, as the custom was, to draw water, little thinking that she would meet the Lord there, who had come through that country on purpose to see her. The woman knew that she needed water, but she did not know how much

Approach. Layton lived in the country and had never seen the great city not far away. One day his father took him in with him, and the little boy was wonderfully interested in all that he saw, as he went about

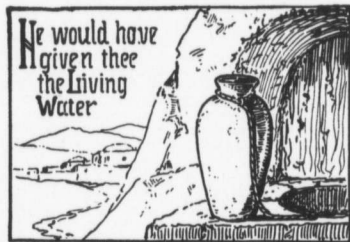
she needed the blessing which Jesus only could give. Her soul was more in need of this than her body was in need of water. Jesus first asked her for a drink. That began the talk. Describe the scene, give very simply the conversation. Jesus made the woman understand that the blessing of forgiveness for all her many sins was worth more than water to drink, and that it could be had for the taking, freely.

Go on and finish the amazing story, how the woman believed that Jesus was the Christ of God because he showed her how sinful she was. Picture her leaving her waterpot, one of her most precious things, thinking only of the good news, anxious to tell it, going back to the city, a missionary to carry the glad word about Jesus. She believed, or she would not have gone. Then, the men of the city came at the invitation and heard Jesus for themselves. They too said, "We believe and are sure." They said to the woman, "We have heard him ourselves and know." This is the way to make sure. Let us hear Jesus ourselves. That is better than listening even to stories about him. His own voice in our hearts, and in his Word, may be heard if we listen. (Teach Text.)

Some one may say, "But we cannot see Jesus as the woman could." No, we cannot see him with these eyes, but we can ask God to open our spirit-eyes, and our spirit-ears, and he will do it.

Lesson Thought: Believe and Take. As the woman let down her jar into the deep, dark well, because she believed there was water there, and as the boy Layton believed his father's word about the fountain, so we must believe Jesus and come to him, asking for his forgiveness and love. His blessing is worth more than water for our thirst. Let us take it. He waits to give it, freely.

Thought for Teachers. Talk about the difference between living water and dead, stagnant water. Jesus gives the living water of pure, kind words and deeds. What kind of water is in our heart-well? Dwell on the "whosoever will." Impress children with their power to will, to choose. Let us first apply the lesson



to our hearts. Do we "will" to "take" freely all that Jesus gives?

LESSON VII—February 12

THE SECOND MIRACLE IN CANA. John
4. 43-54

GOLDEN TEXT: "The same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."
John 5. 36.

Primary Notes



Approach. Once upon a time the owner of a beautiful home invited a new friend to visit him. The friend came, and was much pleased with all he saw. But the owner of the home kept talking about his son who was

away. He showed the visitor some beautiful pictures, saying, "My son painted these." Then he showed him over the lovely garden and grounds about the house. "Who planned all these beautiful flower beds and walks?" asked the visitor. "My son," was the answer. Then the friend was taken to a room where he saw some interesting and wonderful machines, and was told, "My son invented these."

Now, suppose that after the visitor went away some one had said to him, "Has Mr. Barton any children?" He would say, "Yes, he has a son, a very wonderful son." "How do you know? Was he at home?" "No, he was not there, but I saw the pictures he painted, the garden he planned, and the machines that he made. I know he must be wonderful because of what he had done." You see, this visitor could not help believing the works of Mr. Barton's son. If the father had told him that the son did many things, but could show nothing to prove it, the visitor might say, "I cannot believe what you say," but when he saw the works he had to believe.

This is what Jesus says to us: "Believe my works." He tells us in the Golden Text that the wonderful works that he did were witnesses that God had sent him into the world. They were like people who tell what they know. Such people are called witnesses, and they are asked to prove things which have happened, by telling exactly what they have seen.

Jesus in Galilee. "Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine." His first miracle, or wonderful work, was done here, and now a second one makes Cana remembered.

Recall from children the first miracle. Point out Cana on map. Tell how Galileans received Jesus, because they had seen what he did at Jerusalem.

The Nobleman's Prayer. Show Capernaum, not far from Cana. The news of Jesus's coming to Cana was carried in some way to Capernaum. Picture the home of the nobleman with every-

thing comfortable and delightful, and yet full of sorrow because the son was sick. How did the father feel. What did he wish for most of all? Why did he take the journey to Cana on hearing that Jesus was there? Why did he seek Jesus? Why did he not send for some doctor, perhaps from Jerusalem? What was the man's prayer? "Come and heal my son." Why did he ask for just this? It was exactly what he longed for and went to see the Lord about. Do we pray like this? Do we come to Jesus wishing for something? Then do we tell him just what we want? This man's prayer had feeling in it. He felt sorry and anxious about something. It had a wish in it—he wanted his son made well. Then it had faith in it, for he believed that Jesus could do this great thing. Are our prayers like this?

Jesus wished to prove this nobleman's faith, so he said to him, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. Some of the Galileans received the Lord gladly because they had seen his wonderful works in Jerusalem. Was this man like the rest? Did he need to have Jesus give him some strange sign to help him to trust? No, he put all this away and prayed again, "Come down, ere my child die." Then Jesus said, "Thy son liveth."

The Nobleman's Faith. When Jesus said, "Thy son liveth," this man did not wait to hear it twice. He did not say, "I wonder if that can be true?" He started home at once. This showed that he believed the word of Jesus. He knew that Christ could make his son well, and now he believed that the wonderful work had really been done. He hurried home to see his boy.

The servants that met the nobleman told him his son was living, and at what hour he began to get well. It was the very hour Jesus said, "Thy son liveth;" and the man and all in his house believed.

Lesson Thought: Believe the Works. Recur again to Golden Text, and to the mighty works that Jesus did.

Thought for Teachers. We cannot begin to



early to fortify children in the "evidences of Christianity." Prove Jesus's power by his works.

LESSON VIII—February 19

JESUS AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA

John 5. 1-15

GOLDEN TEXT: "And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles." John 6. 2.

Primary Notes



Approach. Herbert was playing in the woods. By and by he heard sounds and followed them till he saw a strong man working. He was cutting down a tree, and it was wonderful to see how strong he was. Pretty soon a frightened squirrel ran out, and the man, instead of killing it, or chasing it, stopped his work, picked up some nuts, and tried to coax the little animal to come and get them. Herbert thought to himself, "That man is kind as well as strong." When the little boy tried to find his way back he could not tell which way to go. He was lost. It was almost time to stop work. "I'll go back to that kind man and get him to show me the way out," he thought, and so he did. It was a narrow path which the man took, but he said kindly, "Follow me and I'll take you home." The boy followed closely, though the shadows were falling under the thick trees, and at last he saw his own home, where he was soon safe and happy. It was watching the man, seeing how strong and how kind he was in all that he did, which made Herbert willing to trust and follow him.

Our Lord Jesus did many things when on earth which made people trust and follow him. (Teach Golden Text.) To-day we learn of another of Jesus's miracles, or wonderful works, such as no man could ever do.

At the Pool of Bethesda. Draw a word-picture of this pool, and make a few marks upon the blackboard to stand for the place, the water, and the waiting company. It is a pathetic scene as we look at it in imagination. Bring young hearts into sympathy with that crowd of weak and suffering people. Then impress them with the great gladness following the fact that to this sad country Jesus came. The Lord was sure to come to people in trouble. He never passed by as if he did not see or care.

Jesus's Question. The Saviour noticed one man who had had a weakness for thirty-eight years. Think how long, how hard his trial had been. The Lord asked him a question: "Wilt thou be made whole?" Portray the man's condition, repeat his pitiful story of waiting in vain these many years, and imagine what his answer to Christ must have been. Did he not wish to be cured? But how strange it is that some who are sin-sick and unable to do right

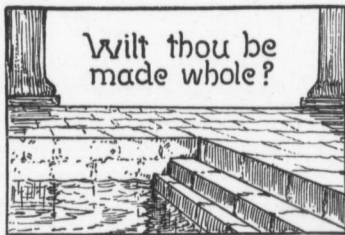
are not willing that Jesus should cure them! This man was not like these.

Jesus's Command. The Lord had a word for this poor man. He gave him a chance to do something to show his trust and obedience. "Rise," said the Saviour, "take up thy bed and walk." The bed was only a mattress, but weak as he was the man could not carry it till Jesus gave him strength. At the Lord's word he tried to rise and take up his bed. Jesus saw that he believed, and at once made him strong to rise, walk, and carry his bed. Everybody was astonished to see the man walking. Some found fault with him for carrying his bed upon the Sabbath. The man did not know who it was that told him to rise and take up his bed. Jesus wanted him to know. He found the man in the temple—a very good place for the healed man to go first of all, and told him to sin no more. Then the man knew who it was and went and told that it was Jesus who had made him well. He had a right to tell him to carry his bed away with him.

Many who knew of Jesus's wonderful works followed him because of his miracles, as our text tells us. Ought we not to do the same? We know from what he has done that he is Lord of all.

Lesson Thought: Believe and Follow. Who is willing to follow a guide who does not know the way? Unless we trust we will not follow. But if we have good reason to believe then it is easy to follow.

Thought for Teachers. Surely we have seen and heard of miracles of healing upon sin-sick souls, which show the power of Jesus. Have we not reason to believe that he will take the lambs in his arms and save them from the need of being brought back from wandering? It is far better to form than to reform, and to us is given the beautiful task of "working together with God" in forming fresh, plastic spirits in



the mold of right thinking and living. Let us magnify our office.

"In the young hearts soft and tender,
Guide our hands good seed to sow,
That its blossoming may praise Thee,
Wheresoever they may go."

LESSON IX—February 26

THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND FISHES. John 6. 1-14

GOLDEN TEXT: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven." John 6. 51.

Primary Notes



Approach. There was once a poor boy who was starving. He had nothing to eat and no money to buy bread. A man who found him shivering and starving in the street pitied him and took him home to give him a good meal. There, on the home table, was spread before the boy bread and meat and other good things to eat. They were well cooked, and there was plenty of everything. The good friend with the warm heart pitied the boy and gave him everything freely. He wished him to eat and be filled. He told him to eat all he wished, and he would give him more to take away. But there was one thing the good friend could not do. He could not eat for the hungry boy. The boy must do this for himself, or the food would do him no good. Was it a hard thing to expect the boy to take and to eat what was given him? Surely not. If he were really hungry he would be only too glad to eat. What his friend gave he could surely take.

Jesus has many blessings for us. He gives, but we must take. If we trust him, as we should, and believe that he wishes to bless us we will take what he offers.

The Hungry People. Tell of Jesus's journey over the Sea of Galilee and the following of the multitudes. Picture the weary people, hungry and ready to faint, and Jesus's pity. He knew what he would do, but to give Philip a chance to show what he thought and believed, Jesus asked how bread could be gotten for them all. Philip thought it would take a great deal of money to get enough to give even a little to each one.

The Lad's Luncheon. Sometimes what one does not know another does, and then he should tell. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, knew more than Philip did. He had found a boy with a lunch of bread and fish, only five barley cakes and two small fishes, and "what were they among so many?" he asked. But when brought to Jesus this lad's luncheon was enough.

Describe minutely the comfortable seating of them all, the blessing asked, the loaves broken and given out, the hurrying disciples going to and fro giving out the food that was never less but constantly growing to be more and more.

How good it must have tasted, and how wonderful that there was enough for all, and twelve basketfuls left over!

"Then those men, when they had seen the miracle which Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet which should come into the world."

The Bread of Life. Those hungry men were satisfied for this time, but next day they needed food again. Jesus afterward told the people who listened to him of the Bread of Life which they could have always, and which would make their spirits live always in happiness and peace. He told them that he himself was the Bread of Life. He meant that he would be like bread to the spirit, he would do for the soul what bread did for the body. Bread keeps the body alive. Jesus keeps us alive. Bread makes us strong. Jesus makes us strong. Bread is good for us. Jesus is good for us. We grow by eating food. We grow better, more loving, and more patient and good by trusting Jesus and doing what he says.

Lesson Thought: Believe and Take the Bread of Life. Show that as we eat for ourselves so we must trust and love Jesus for ourselves. As we take bread and eat it to make the body strong and well, so we may take the mind of Jesus, the love of Jesus, the patience of Jesus into our hearts to make us grow in all goodness.

Thought for Teachers. As the lad's mother prepared and gave the luncheon which fed so many in Jesus's hands, so, perhaps, we may fill the hands of some little ones with what Christ may bless and use to help many. Let us make ready the loaves. Read and ponder the beautiful poem of "The Barley Cakes" below:

"Drudgery, drudgery all the day.
The grassy-green mountains, the breeze-sweet lakes,
The fair, sweet flowers among the brakes,
The birdies that flutter about the trees,
The flocks on the hillsides—none of these
Gladden my life. I must throw away
My life's best days on the homely care
That falls to the lot of the housewife. Bare
As the rocks of Hermon the life of one
Who from dawn of day to the setting sun
Does nothing grander than sweep, or bake
In the ashes the little barley cake!

"Drudgery, drudgery, . . . ah, to-day
My lad goes into the desert to keep—
(My shepherd-boy brave!)—his father's sheep.
He must not know that my heart is faint,
Or catch the gloom of my sad complaint.
And shame to me that I've dared to lay
Across my threshold this bit of rye,
Forgetful that palm trees about me grew,
Fruitful and fair as the sixty and ten
That shaded the waters of Eлим. When

I think of my boy, 'tis with joy I make
For his lunch in the desert the barley cake."

The mother toiled on in her home that day,
But the Master came to the desert place,
And the multitude followed Him, quick to
trace

The steps of the Miracle-worker, who
Dropped blessings into their lives, like dew
That brightened the flowers beside the way.
A multitude hungry—and whence the bread
With which these thousands must now be fed?
O mother, bound close to a lowly task,
What "grander work" could your fond heart
ask?

The Master receives from your boy, and breaks
With blessing, your five little barley cakes!

—William N. Burr.

I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE



Whisper Songs for February

SIXTH LESSON

For all God's thirsty children
The living water springs,
And all along the desert paths
A brook of comfort sings.

SEVENTH LESSON

For all God's troubled children
There is a faithful Friend,
Who, like a loving mother, stands
Beside us to the end.

EIGHTH LESSON

For all God's helpless children,
The sick and desolate,
His arm of strength, his hand of help
Are ever at our gate.

NINTH LESSON

For all God's hungry children
There is a table spread,
And all the poor may gather there
And take the heavenly bread.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

First Quarter

Teacher. Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.

Class. Jesus said, Suffer little children to come unto me.

SINGING. Tune, "Webb."

"O happy were those children,
We wish we had been there!
Who gained the Saviour's blessing
And heard his loving prayer!

"We wish his hands had rested
Upon our heads as well,
And we had heard the lessons
Which from our Master fell."

Teacher. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him.

Class. Call ye upon him while he is near.

All. Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

PRAYER.

GIVING THANKS.

All. "For all the blessings from thy hand,
We thank thee, heavenly Father.
For keeping us, thy little band,
We thank thee, heavenly Father.

Boys. For health, for happiness and home,

All. We thank thee, heavenly Father.

Girls. That we unto thy house may come,

All. We thank thee, blessed Lord.

Boys. For Jesus Christ, our Saviour, King,

All. We thank thee, heavenly Father.

Girls. That we his praises here may sing,

All. We thank thee, blessed Lord.

Boys. That Jesus for our sins has died,

All. We thank thee, heavenly Father.

Girls. That safe in him we may abide,

All. We thank thee, blessed Lord. Amen."

OFFERING.

Teacher. How should we give?

Class. Freely ye have received, freely give.

T. In what spirit should we give?

C. The Lord loveth a cheerful giver.

CONCERT RECITATION.

"We bring the bright pennies;

They're little, we know.

But love going with them,

Great good they will do."

SINGING. "Hear the pennies dropping."

BIRTHDAY OFFERING.

PRAYER, consecrating offerings:

"Dear Father, receive our little gifts, which we offer to thee with glad hearts. All we have comes from thee, and we do not want to always receive, and never give. Use our little gifts and bless them, for Jesus' sake. Amen."

THE LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

SHORT REVIEW OF LESSON TEACHING.

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MIZPAH.

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