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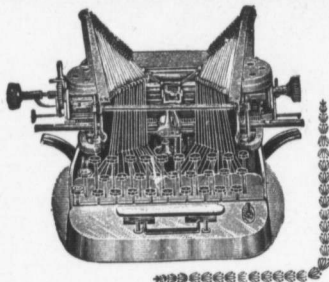
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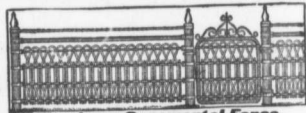
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Vol. X

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SUNDAY SCHOOL BARRER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXXIV.

MAY, 1900.

No. 5

If Christ Were Here.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

If Christ were here to-night and saw me
tired,
And half afraid another step to take,
I think he'd know the thing my heart
desired,
And ease that heart of all its throbbing
ache.

If Christ were here in this dull room of
mine
That gathers up so many shadows dim,
I am quite sure its narrow space would
shine
And kindle into glory, around him.

If Christ were here I might not pray so
long,
My prayer would have such little way
to go,

'Twould break into a burst of happy song,
So would my joy and gladness over-
flow.

If Christ were here to-night, I'd touch
the hem
Of his fair, seamless robe, and stand
complete

In wholeness and in whiteness; I, who
stem
Such waves of pain, to kneel at his
dear feet.

If Christ were here to-night, I'd tell him
all

The load I carry for the ones I love,
The blinded ones, who grope, and faint,
, and fall,

Following false guides, nor seeking
Christ above.

If Christ were here! Ah, faithless soul
and weak,
Is not the Master ever close to thee?
Deaf is thine ear that canst not hear him
speak,

Dim is thine eye, his face that cannot
see.

Thy Christ is here, and never far away,
He entered with thee when thou camest
in;

His strength was thine through all the
busy day,
He knew thy need, he kept thee pure
from sin.

Thy blessed Christ is in thy little room,
Nay more, the Christ himself is in thy
heart;

Fear not, the dawn will scatter darkest
gloom,
And heaven will be of thy rich life a
part.

—Congregationalist.

For the Young Workers.

Find your work where Christ has put
you.

Seek to make at least one spot of the
earth brighter by a deed of yours.

When you begin to worry do not forget
that God still has control of everything.

Christ has redeemed you and lifted you
up, that you, in turn, may lift up others.

If you truly love God, your heart will
be filled with his Spirit, and you will be
obedient to his commands.

The true Christian is like the sun,
which pursues his noiseless track, and
everywhere leaves the effect of his beams
in blessings on all.

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Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., EDITOR.

TORONTO, MAY, 1900.

**The Possibilities, Adaptability and
Practicability of the "Home
Department."**

FIRST—POSSIBILITIES.

The possibilities of the Home Department work in any Sunday-school can only be measured by the possibilities of the open Bible in the home. And surely the need for such work is as great as the need for the Sunday-school itself or even the preaching service of the church.

If there is any one thing which the Church, the State, and our whole nation most needs, it is more vital religion in the homes of the people, and such religion is never found in homes where the Bible is a closed and unused book.

"What is home without a mother?" asks the old familiar song, as if nothing could be quite so bad; and as if the question was unanswerable. But we think, "What is home without a Bible?" is as hard a question as the other and almost as pathetic. Full many a home

could better be without its fretting, scolding, worldly, fashion-loving, unsaved and unsanctified mother than to be without the refining, quieting, peaceful, happy and holy influence of the Word of God, loved, revered, and daily read and studied. Better a Bible-loving, Bible-teaching stepmother, or hired house-keeper in a family of growing children than a mother in whose heart and life Christ and the Bible have no place. Is this a strong statement? Is it too strong? How can anything be too strong which pleads earnestly for more vital religion in the home? Indeed, we will venture to emphasize the thought a little further by saying that there are thousands and tens of thousands of godly Sunday-school teachers who are truer mothers to the children in their classes than are the mothers who bore them.

The sole object of the Home Department of the Sunday-school is to open the Bible in the homes of the people, and persuade those persons who cannot or will not attend the Bible study service of the church, to study the current Sunday-school lessons one half hour or more every week. Such regular, systematic study aided by our splendid "Lesson Helps," even for a half hour a week, cannot fail of spiritual and moral benefit, for it gives God a chance to speak to, and the Holy Ghost an entrance into, the heart of him or her who reads the open book. And this is why the possibilities of the Home Department can only be measured by the possibilities of the open Bible in the home, as we said in the outset.

SECOND—ADAPTABILITY.

Wherever the Bible should go, the Home Department can take it, and wherever it does go, the Home Department can follow, and provide helps for the study of it. This is what makes it applicable to every home and to every community. Think not for one moment that the Home Department is not suited to city, town or country Sunday-schools. Wherever people are neglecting the weekly study of the current Sunday-school lessons, right there the Home Department fits. In all our experience we have never yet found a misfit, though we are compelled to admit that mistakes and mismanagement have often resulted in total failure in Home Department effort. Still we think that most schools which have tried it and failed, failed because they were content to fail, and really preferred failure to success.

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THIRD—PRACTICABILITY.

To say a thing is "practical" is equivalent to saying "You can do it," and that is what we would like to say to every Sunday-school in the world, "You can do it." That is, you can have a Home Department.

But "can do it" said "will do it," are not, alas! twin brothers. Can always can, but, unfortunately, will often won't, and there's the end of it!

How is it with you, reader? Will you or won't you?—Selected.

The Methodist Publishing House, Toronto, will mail to any address samples of all necessary Home Department supplies, and full particulars how to start a Home Department, and keep it going.

Our Connexional Monthly.

One of the best writers in Canadian Methodism, a Conference President, writes of the April number of The Methodist Magazine and Review that it contains several articles, any one of which is worth the price of the whole number, and has reached high-water mark. The article by the late lamented Rev. J. E. Lancelotti on Dr. and Mrs. Parker, with their portraits, is of very special importance, as also are several others. The illustrated article on the "Beginning and Probable Age of the Niagara Gorge," is of fascinating interest. Our new Canadian story, "From the Hills of Algoma," begins also in this number. The Easter poems, stories and pictures are specially attractive.

Schools opening in the spring will find it greatly to their advantage to accept our special offer of \$1.00 for the whole year. Some schools have taken from ten to forty numbers, as being fresher, cheaper, more attractive than libraries. Back numbers from January can be furnished.

Planning the Lesson.

BY WILLIAM T. ELLIS.

Before a teacher uses any helps in his preparation of each week's lesson he should make for himself an outline of treatment. After a careful reading of the Scripture text he will perceive for

himself its principal teachings; others may develop as he studies further, but the outstanding and essential points, as a rule, will be plain at once.

The first question to be considered is, "Which of these truths is most suited to my class?" Ability to determine this is one test of a good teacher. All truths are not applicable to all people. The Bible contains milk for babes and meat for men. He does not handle aright the word of truth who feeds men on milk or babes on meat. In this matter the teacher can get little assistance from commentators. His own judgment must tell him what phase of the lesson is most adapted to the needs of his scholars.

Having determined this important question, the teacher should proceed to make for himself a lesson plan. Around the one or two truths selected for treatment he should group his lesson study. Upon these points, and these alone, he should prepare his questions and illustrations. It follows naturally that he must overlook other important aspects of the lesson. But it is futile to attempt to make all possible applications of a lesson in the average class, for the result would be that the scholars would probably remember none. It is better to drive home one or two essential truths that will stick than to discharge an ineffective shower of applications which do not penetrate either the understanding or the interest.

The teacher who thus plans his lesson must abandon the time-honoured custom of taking up the lesson text verse by verse and of making comments on each. This style of teaching is generally productive of the least results. All verses in the Bible are not of equal importance. Some are but steps up to a great truth; others are only the background and setting of a scene. The best teachers do not use the verse-by-verse method, for many reasons. One of these, and not the most important either, is that the study period usually closes before the teacher is two-thirds of the way through the lesson and before he has reached the climax and the application.

A lesson plan is only the beginning, and the rough framework of real study. After it has been secured the teacher should, of course, make use of the best helps obtainable. It will be found that the commentaries are most suggestive and profitable when they are studied with a definite plan in mind. Work well planned is always done with half the labour that would otherwise be required, and with double the results.

All Days for Thee, my God.

All days for thee, my God!
Yea, all my times be thine;

The feet with holy sandals shod,
The path of peace on Sabbaths trod,
On every day be mine.

The more my toil and care,

The more I need thy grace;
The more I need to breathe the air
Of heavenly love in answered prayer,
In every time and place.

From morn to eventide,

From eventide to morn,
May faith and love in me abide,
Thine arm my strength, thy hand my
guide,
Thy robe of service worn.

Upon my forehead set

The mark thy chosen bear,
And when the tempter spreads his net,
Lord Jesus, let us not forget
The sacred sign I wear.

'Mid sorrow's wintry drifts,

Take me beneath thy wing;
If summer air from rocky rifts
The overweary head uplifts,
Thine be the praise, my King!

On every day do thou

Thy willing servant bind
With cords of love—the why or how
I may not see; but trustful bow,
Content in soul and mind.

Spring wakens seed and root,

And buds and flowers appear;
The autumn crowns the ripen'd shoot,
And yields to man both bread and fruit—
So make my mission here.

While thine each passing day,

Not one long day in seven,
Lord, teach me so to work and pray
That all my steps along the way
May be to thee in heaven.

—Thomas MacKellar, in New York Ob-
server.

"A Forward Movement in Sunday- school Work."

BY MR. THOS. BRYANT, NANAIMO.

[We regret that we have not room for the whole of Mr. Bryant's excellent paper, which is published in The Methodist Recorder, Victoria, B.C. We have

pleasure, however, in giving the concluding and essential part of it.—Ed.]

As the twentieth century dawns upon us, our rallying cry should be, "A forward movement in Sunday-school work." Twentieth Century funds are all right, but by all means let us take a broader view of our obligations, let us have more development of the latent talent of the church and more adaptation in our methods. What I would like to see is a forward movement in the teaching of the mere letter of sacred truth. Without a knowledge of the letter, how can we expect our children to catch the spirit which the letter contains? The spirit is bound up in the letter. The letter is the doorway into the temple, and if the doorway be not opened, access to the holy place becomes impossible.

The use of the International Sunday-school Lessons forms a capital basis for a more efficient system of instruction, inasmuch as it assures a gradual and uniform effort. The use also of The Banner and other publications of like nature are most commendable aids to the teacher in his or her preparations. But there are other aspects of our work in which advance must be made if we are to fulfil our mission, and adapt ourselves to our changed environment.

1. We want a more efficient teaching staff. Teachers thoroughly consecrated to Christ, intellectual and pious. This will necessitate the establishment of training classes and institutes for teachers.

2. We may then command a more intelligent system of teaching. Simultaneous teaching, with the aid of the blackboard, should take the place of much of the hum-drum class work which is made to pass muster as teaching in our schools to-day. This is the system which was adopted by the Methodist day-schools in England when they shared in the responsibility of religious education. Experience shows that in the younger classes especially simultaneous teaching gives better results, and is in every way more suitable. In our own school at Haliburton Street, Nanaimo, gallery teaching has been introduced in the case of the infant class in a separate room, so that whereas formerly three or four teachers were employed, and these only fairly succeeded in "keeping them quiet," now one teacher takes the whole, on an average from fifty to seventy children—a service adapted to their needs is held; habits of reverence and order are enforced, and the lesson is drawn from

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3. This class-room production infant Class shows to g ment of the education,

which she Sunday-sch of accomm of the same b church ser unavoidable rural distric the future specially de ments of a religious ed means an a scholars ma the devotion addresses m connected t classes is of by all means of the schoo and easily v decorated w bouquets and round the r system of e complete eith lar or religio

4. Examin ought to be schools at th for finding ou tended our ef instruction i some schools been utilized tion on the qu been done in o ton Street, Na if not satisfact second prize—an hymn book the most corr drawn up by a

5. Lastly, mo the work. At odist Sunday-s Nanaimo, a ye to suggest tha the Sunday-se double purpose the carrying ou tem of instruc

them by simple illustration and questioning. By this system we claim that one trained and intelligent teacher is worth more than half a dozen teachers who have no special aptitude for the work.

3. This will involve an increase in class-room accommodation, and the introduction of galleries for the Junior and Infant Class. There is nothing which shows to greater disadvantage the sentiment of the church in regard to religious education, than the complacency with which she regards the buildings in which Sunday-schools are held. The practice of accommodating the Sunday-school in the same building in which the ordinary church services are held is, I suppose, unavoidable in most cases, especially in rural districts, but the Sunday-school of the future will consist of a building specially designed to meet the requirements of a more intelligent system of religious education. Let there be by all means an auditorium in which all the scholars may assemble to take part in the devotional exercises, and in which addresses may be given, but class-rooms connected therewith for the separate classes is of paramount importance. And by all means let the physical conditions of the school be suitable—light, warm, and easily ventilated. Let the walls be decorated with mottoes and pictures; let bouquets and flowering plants be placed round the room in suitable places. No system of education, however, can be complete either in connection with secular or religious subjects, unless

4. Examinations should be held. There ought to be in connection with our schools at the present time some plan for finding out how far success has attended our efforts in seeking to impart instruction in religious subjects. In some schools the Review Sunday has been utilized in holding an oral examination on the quarter's lessons. This has been done in our own school at Halliburton Street, Nanaimo, with very salutary, if not satisfactory, results. A first and second prize—one a Bible and the other an hymn book—is offered quarterly, for the most correct answers to questions drawn up by a committee.

5. Lastly, more time will be given to the work. At a union meeting of Methodist Sunday-school teachers, held in Nanaimo, a year or two ago, I ventured to suggest that a morning's session of the Sunday-school be held, for the double purpose of giving more time for the carrying out of a more efficient system of instruction, similar to what I

have tried to outline in this paper, and also as being, in my judgment, the most plausible method of discharging a duty which we owe to those whose spiritual interests are entrusted to us, just as imperative, viz.: that of securing the attendance of the children at the public service of God in the sanctuary. And I still maintain that position. Neither is it any new fangled notion, but, on the contrary, is a plan that has been tried. In saying this all I have to do is to appeal to the experience of any who have been connected with our English Sunday-schools, and can we fully estimate the value in a spiritual sense, that has accrued to English Methodism by thus bringing the children to the house of God? See the propriety of this, as indicated in the report of the Sunday-school Committee recently presented to the Conference at Nanaimo, and adopted by it. I am aware that there are objections urged against this. We are told (1) that a large number of children could not attend in the morning. But have we ever made the experiment? And even if there is any force in this objection, still if we can only get a small minority of them there, the good thereby accomplished would, in my estimation, fully justify our making the experiment. And the very fact of a session being held would offer some inducement at least to those who otherwise would not attend, to be present. But (2) the chief difficulty, we are told, would be in getting teachers to attend. This is or ought to be regarded as a libel on the consecrated talent in our church to-day. There never was a time when there was so much intelligence in the church as there is to-day. Neither was there a time when there was so many consecrated, earnest Christians as there are to-day. But what sort of Christianity do you suppose a man must have who will urge as a reason for not being able to attend on a Sabbath morning, that his work has been so arduous and protracted during the week? If ever that excuse could have been valid, it surely was, when, in the good old times, as in the case of my own father, a man had to toil underground, under far worse conditions than prevail to-day, from six o'clock a.m. to six p.m., which in winter time prevented him from seeing daylight for six days out of the seven, and yet was invariably found at his post in the Sabbath-school at nine a.m. and again at two p.m. The fact is, I believe this excuse is made only by those who find attendance at the Sabbath-school, even for

one session, irksome; not by those, certainly, who find in it a pleasure and a joy. For of such it may be said that :

"At work for God is loved employ,
They lose the duty in the joy."

Principles of Adaptation in Sunday-school Teaching.

I. The teacher must know the world in which the pupil lives.

(1) He lives in a social world. His home, parents, the unconscious influence there. His daily associates—on the street, at school. What are the tendencies? What are the standards? No teacher can do his work well without knowing this social world in which his pupil lives.

(2) He lives in a religious world. His parents have a faith of some kind, even if it is the faith of no-faith. They believe or doubt. They allude in some way to religion even if they do not worship. They have lax or strict opinions. They are reverent or profane. They are Romanists, or Protestants, or Rationalists. They are sensitive or stolid in reference to the great interests of religion. The teacher must know this religious world.

(3) He lives in a Bible world. He has some idea about it. He has a superficial knowledge of its history, etc. He has perhaps mixed up facts, traditions, human imaginings, etc., with divine truth; confounding them together; and perhaps accepting the misrepresentations of sceptics as the actual teachings of the Bible. We have little idea of the indefinite and confused impressions of the majority of our Sunday-school pupils concerning the contents of our holy Bible. The teacher must know this Bible world in which his scholars live.

(4) He lives in a literary world. He reads some paper. He has some books. He sees pictorial papers, and must both look at the pictures and read the letterpress. He possibly subscribes for some paper. Remember the sensational issues of the press to-day—dime novels, etc. Do your pupils read such as these? What do they read? What books at home? The teacher must know this literary world of his pupils.

(5) There is a business world in which the pupil lives. The trade he is at, or which he proposes to follow. The home

theories and maxims concerning business, and the business practices with which he has always been familiar. Many an honest boy has learned his first lessons in dishonesty from the man whose apprentice he has become. The teacher must know the business world of his pupils.

II. The teacher must go to the world in which the pupil lives—

- (1) To know its range of thought;
- (2) To know its vocabulary;
- (3) To know its charms to his pupils;
- (4) To know its perils to his pupils;
- (5) To know its personal influences.

III. The teacher must connect himself with the world in which the pupil lives—

- (1) By adapting to it the teachings of every lesson;
- (2) By bringing his personal influence to bear upon it;
- (3) By bringing himself into fullest sympathy with it.

IV. The teacher must elevate and improve the world in which the pupil lives—

- (1) By bringing to it a better social influence—the church, the ministry, the membership;
- (2) By bringing to it a wholesome religious literature—a weekly paper, tracts, books, etc.;
- (3) By bringing the pupil into the regular church services, public and social;
- (4) By bringing the pupil into his own house as a visitor and friend;
- (5) By the thorough teaching which will bring his pupil to a better understanding of the holy Bible;
- (6) By bringing his pupil into personal fellowship with Jesus Christ.

A Plan.

BY SALLY CAMPBELL.

Here is a little plan which I am making for my Sunday-school class. It is a big class, of twenty or more girls and boys. My ideal, of course, is that every one of these girls and boys shall have a real, vital feeling of interest and responsibility toward all the others. As an effort to promote this, I am going to get twenty or more square blank cards, and knot some loops of ribbon at the top of them, by way of decoration. Then I shall write on one side, in two rows, the names of all the members of the class, including my own, and on the

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other side, perhaps, a Bible verse or scrap of poetry that will be apt and inspiring. "Ye are all members one of another," may be my choice.

Then on New Year's Sunday, though any other Sunday would do, I shall distribute them to the class. And I shall say something like this to the scholars:

I hope that you will keep these in your Bibles, or somewhere where you will see them often. Please do not put them away in a drawer and forget them. My idea is that you shall look at them regularly, say on every Sunday. Read the names, one by one, and stop after each and think. Ask yourself what your influence is over that one. Has he been faithfully at Sunday-school and at church? If not, what have you done to persuade him? When he is there does he find you in place? Does he find you intelligent about the lesson? Does he see that you think it worth while to study into the things of God? And then his temptations—you know what some of them are, at home, at school, by disposition or surroundings. Do you, in any degree, make it easier for him to do right, harder for him to do wrong? Do you ask God to put about him his everlasting arms, and keep him safe and make him strong? And when you see him do a brave, true thing—and my boys and girls do such things, I know—have you thanked God for it? Ask yourself all these things and more about each name on the card. Do not skip any, and do not jumble them together. That is one great difficulty about our good resolutions; they are too vague and indistinct. Religion, like any other business, in order to be successful must be a matter of detail. So take your classmates and your teacher, name by name, and search into your own behaviour in the light of how it will affect them each. Consider your faults, your idle words, your sharp tempers, your lazy letting slip of opportunities, from the point of view of the fruit they may be bearing in these other lives. And consider again the splendid value of every struggle after long-suffering and love and light, when it may be reflected in those lives.

My dear scholars, let us in the new year, day by day, see our relations to one another with clearer eyes and wiser hearts. Let us love one another better, and help one another more, and hinder one another less. Let us put away our little grudges, if we have any, our poor, unworthy jealousies and spites, and let us begin fresh with the purpose to have

a happier and holier time together than we ever have had before. May God grant it.

I have sketched it lightly. Every teacher will know how best to fill it in for his own use. Sometimes by means as simple as this great good is done.—
Pilgrim Teacher.

The New Psalm of David.

BY ROBERT HIND.

Two years ago, some Egyptian peasants were digging up and carrying away the light soil which is used by the farmers as "top-dressing," in a certain locality in Upper Egypt. It appears there was at the place the ruins of a Coptic church and monastery. As they proceeded with their work their tools struck a slab. A little further digging revealed a rectangular stone box fastened in the ground, evidently with considerable care. When the slab forming the lid of the box had been removed, it was found that the contents were not the remains of an ancient Egyptian, as the shape of the box might have led them to expect, but a parcel of books, carefully wrapped in strong linen cloth. The books were two in number, but a peculiar feature of them was that though written upon papyrus, they were bound in strong leather like European books.

These books are now in the hands of the translators in the British Museum, and the work of translation is already considerably advanced. One of the books contains several complete homilies by fathers of the Monophysite Church, which are likely to throw considerable light on the state of religious thought in Egypt, in a period regarding which little is known at the present time. Valuable as this volume is, however, it cannot be compared in interest to the other, which is a complete copy of the Psalms, written in a Coptic dialect, the language of the descendants of the ancient Egyptians in the times of Christ. Regarding this book, four things are specially worthy of note: (1) The papyrus is well preserved; (2) it is the oldest complete Bible manuscript now in existence; (3) it is the only complete book of the Psalms in existence written in one of the ancient dialects; (4) it contains the 151st Psalm.

The fact last named is of course the most extraordinary. The following is a translation of this additional psalm :

PSALM CCL.

"Written by David after his Combat with Goliath, telling surely how he slew the Oppressor of his race.

"1. I was small among my brethren, and youngest in my father's house. I tended my father's sheep.

"2. My hands formed a musical instrument, and my fingers tuned a psaltery.

"3. And who shall tell my Lord? The Lord himself, he himself hears.

"4. He sent forth his angel and took me from my father's sheep, and he anointed me with the oil of his anointing.

"5. My brothers were handsome and tall; but the Lord did not take pleasure in them.

"6. I went forth to meet the Philistines; and he cursed me by his idols.

"7. But I drew his own sword and beheaded him, and removed reproach from the children of Israel."

Although not in the Bibles used at present by the churches of Christendom, this psalm has for many years been known to biblical scholars. Keen discussions about it have taken place in certain circles, but the result was that it came to be believed that it was not genuine. But this new discovery shows that in the first centuries of our era it was regarded as a part of the Psalter by the Christian churches then in existence. —Primitive Methodist Magazine.

The Sunday-school.

The Sunday-school has become an important factor in the education of the children and youth of our land. The country is looking to the church to train the rising generation in religious things. If we expect our young people to be efficient workers in League and other departments of Christian work, the children must be educated in the fundamental facts concerning the Book of God. They must be familiar with the principles of religion and the doctrines of the churches found in the Catechism. They must have stored in their memory the precious truths of God's Word as represented in memory Scriptures.

We are pleased to find that the Home Department is being formed in connec-

tion with many of our schools. This department, we believe, has great possibilities of good, and we urge that it be pressed with enthusiasm on all our circuits.

After a careful examination of the Sunday-school schedules, the fact is plainly shown that the spiritual results from the work are not nearly as great as they should and can be. It is recommended that on certain Sundays, when an appropriate lesson is to be studied, the exercises of the school be made evangelistic in character, and opportunity be given for personal work in the classes, and that invitations be extended for immediate surrender to God.—Wesleyan.

Rules Concerning Answers.

1. The answer should come from some member of the class.
2. The answer should be direct and definite, and the whole class should understand what it is.
3. The answer should, wherever possible, be given in the pupil's own language.
4. The answer should contain as few unnecessary words as possible.
5. The answer should restate so much of the question as to make the answer a complete statement of a fact or proposition.
6. Allow no guessing at answers.
7. Allow pupils time to think before giving answers.
8. Allow the timid and dull pupils special time and favour.
9. Correct defective answers by a series of helpful questions.
10. Commend correct answers occasionally but not invariably.
11. Don't repeat the answers given by your pupils.

Methodist Magazine and Review.

CONTENTS OF APRIL NUMBER.

Sir John Bourinot concludes his admirable series of four well-illustrated articles on "Canada During the Victorian Era." A touching interest is given to the illustrated article on Dr. Joseph Parker, in the striking style of the late Rev. J. E. Lanceley, from the fact that it was the last literary work of his pen. An illustrated scientific article, by Professor

Dionne, on Age of the World with much describes by two famous Richardsons striking of Science "Gnosticism in illustrations striking an Conspiracy Canon W Sketches of

I. A ril 1. Comm. Compa are the Matt. 5. H. April 3. Comm. 29. C. Whatso do ye ev April 15. 5. 22-24. 5. 25-34. believe. 28. 1-15. rsen, as IV. April 22. 7. 1-10. Mark 2. Like as a pieth t V. April 29. 13-28. C. GOLDSB. Mark 7. 3. VI. May 6. —Jgs. ok. Com. TEXT: Co heavy lat 11. 24

I. SILVER. H. RESPONSIVE. Surr. The an an tir School. And an kn so hav Surr. And the be pro School. Char cha not Surr. Doth not thin School. Rejo: the Surr. Bear: hope And r thes is ch HI. SILVER.

Dionne, on the "Beginning and Probable Age of the Niagara Gorge," will be read with much interest. T. C. Bonney describes with vivacity and graphic interest two famous cities of the Adriatic. J. H. Richardson, M.D., M.R.C.S., Eng., has a striking comparison between "Christian Science" and the ancient heresy of "Gnosticism." The war is fully treated in illustration and context, including a striking article on "The South African Conspiracy Against British Rule," by Canon Wirgman, of Grahamstown. Sketches of "A Gentle Anarchist," Count

Kropotkin, with portrait, "Lavengro—the Scholar, Gypsy, and Priest," "Barbe-Julie de Krudener," and "Julia Ward Howe" are given. A strongly written Canadian story, "From the Hills of Algoma," by Maude Pettit, a successful young author, begins well. A striking Easter character is given this number by pictures, poems, Easter stories, legends of the Saviour, and Easter readings.

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

Lessons and Golden Texts.—Studies in the Life of Jesus.

- I. April 1.—THE BEATITUDES. Matt. 4. 25 to 5. 12. Commit vs. 3-9. (Read Matt. 5. 1 to 6. 18. Compare Luke 6. 17-36.) GOLDEN TEXT: Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Matt. 5. 8.
- H. April 3.—PERCEPTS AND PROMISES. Matt. 7. 1-14. Commit vs. 7, 8, 13, 14. (Read Matt. 6. 19 to 7. 29. Compare Luke 6. 37-49.) GOLDEN TEXT: Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. Matt. 7. 12.
- H. April 15.—THE DAUGHTER OF JARIES RAISED. Mark 5. 22-34. Commit vs. 39-42. (Read Mark 5. 22-34.) GOLDEN TEXT: Be not afraid, only believe. Mark 5. 36. Or, EASTER LESSON. Matt. 28. 1-15. Commit vs. 5. GOLDEN TEXT: He is risen, as he said. Matt. 28. 7, 12.
- IV. April 22.—THE CENTURION'S SERVANT HEALED. Luke 7. 1-10. Commit vs. 9, 10. (Read Matt. 9. 37-34; Mark 2. 23 to 3. 19; John 5.) GOLDEN TEXT: Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. Psa. 103. 13.
- V. April 29.—JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST. Luke 7. 18-28. Commit vs. 22, 23. (Read Luke 7. 11-35.) GOLDEN TEXT: He hath done all things well. Mark 7. 37.
- VI. May 6.—JESUS WARNING AND INVITING. Matt. 11. 20-30. Commit vs. 28-30. (Read Isa. 23.) GOLDEN TEXT: Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. 11. 28.

- VII. May 13.—JESUS AT THE PHARISEE'S HOUSE. Luke 7. 36-50. Commit vs. 44-47. (Read Matt. 18. 23-35.) GOLDEN TEXT: Thy faith hath saved thee. Luke 7. 50.
- VIII. May 20.—PARABLE OF THE SOWER. Matt. 13. 1-9, 18-23. Commit vs. 22, 23. (Read Matt. 12. 22 to 13. 23; Luke 8. 1-3.) GOLDEN TEXT: The seed is the word of God. Luke 8. 11.
- IX. May 27.—PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM. Matt. 13. 24-35. Commit vs. 31-33. (Read Matt. 13. 24-33; Mark 4. 21-29.) GOLDEN TEXT: The field is the world. Matt. 13. 38.
- X. June 3.—THE TWELVE SENT FORTH. Matt. 9. 35 to 10. 8. (May be used as a lesson for Pentecost.) Commit vs. 36-38. (Read Matt. 9. 35 to 11. 1; that s. s. s. but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Matt. 10. 20.)
- XI. June 10.—DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. Mark 6. 14-29. (May be used as a Temperance Lesson.) Commit vs. 21-24. (Read Dan. 5. Compare Matt. 14. 1-12.) GOLDEN TEXT: Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit, Eph. 5. 18.
- XII. June 17.—THE FEEDING OF FIVE THOUSAND. John 6. 5-14. Commit vs. 9-12. (Compare Matt. 14. 13-21; Mark 6. 30-44; Luke 9. 10-17.) GOLDEN TEXT: Give us this day our daily bread. Matt. 6. 11.
- XIII. June 24.—REVIEW. GOLDEN TEXT: Thy kingdom come. Matt. 6. 10.

Order of Services.—Second Quarter.

- I. SINGING.
- H. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. (1 Cor. 13. 1-7, 13.)
Suff. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.
- SCHOOL. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains and have not charity, I am nothing.
- SUFF. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. I am nothing.
- SCHOOL. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked, thinketh not evil;
- SUFF. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;
- SUFF. Bearerth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.
- 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, GOLDEN TEXT AND OUTLINE by the school in concert.
- IV. REVIEW AND APPLICATION OF THE LESSON by Pastor or Superintendent.
- V. SUPPLEMENTAL 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. (Psa. 89. 1, 5, 6.)
SUFF. I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.
- SCHOOL. And the heavens shall praise thy wonders O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints.
- ALL. For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

LESSON VI. JESUS WARNING AND INVITING.

GOLDEN TEXT. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matt. 11, 28.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Isa. 23.]

Matt. 11. 20-30. [Commit to memory verses 28-30.]

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21 Woe unto thee, Cho-ra'-zin! woe unto thee, Beth-sai'da! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Si'don, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Si'don at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Ca-per-na-um, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sod'om, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sod'om in the day of judgment, than for thee.

25 At that time Je-sus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Time.—November, A. D. 29. **Place.**—Caper-naum.

Home Readings.

- M. Jesus Warning and Inviting. Matt. 11. 20-30.
 Tu. Rebellious children. Isa. 1. 1-9.
 W. Pretense and sincerity. Isa. 1. 10-20.
 Th. Responsibility for privileges. Matt. 25. 14-30.
 F. Worldly wisdom rejected. 1 Cor. 1. 18-31.
 S. Hated without cause. John 15. 18-25.
 S. Made nigh. Eph. 2. 11-22.

REVISED VERSION.

- 20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe unto thee, Cho-ra'-zin! woe unto thee, Beth-sai'da! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Si'don which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.
- 22 Howbeit I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Si'don in the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Ca-per-na-um, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sod'om which were done in thee, it would have remained until this day.
- 24 Howbeit I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sod'om in the day of judgment, than for thee.
- 25 At that season Je-sus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Lesson Hymns.

- No. 79, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish:
 Come to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel;
 Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell
 your anguish:
 Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot
 heal.
- No. 86, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,
 Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
 Jesus ready stands to save you,
 Full of pity, love, and power.

No. 268, New
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QUESTIONS

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 20-24.
 To what place

No. 269, New Canadian Hymnal.

Come to the Saviour, make no delay;
Here in his word he's shown us the way;
Here in our midst he's standing to-day,
Tenderly saying, "Come!"

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. *The Consequences of Impenitence*, v. 20-24.

To what cities was the warning given? Locate them.

Why was the warning uttered?

What "mighty works" had been done in Bethsaida? Luke 9, 10-17; Mark 8, 22-25.

With what cities were these compared?

When would Tyre and Sidon fare better?

What message is spoken to Capernaum?

What special privileges had this city enjoyed?

What doom is foretold for it? Why more tolerable?

What warning is given to all impenitent? Luke 13, 3.

2. *The Mystery of Godliness*, v. 25-27.

What thanksgiving did Jesus utter?

Whom did he mean by "the wise and prudent?"

Whom by the "babes?"

What were "these things?"

Why was this discrimination made?

Who alone knows the Son?

Who only can know the Father?

3. *The Simple Terms of Salvation*, v. 28-30.

What classes are invited to Christ? GOLDEN TEXT.

What command is laid on them?

What gracious promise is made to them?

With what "yoke" did Christ compare his own?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Privilege means responsibility. Where much is given much will be required. The saddest fall will be from great heights. Will any heathen rise up in judgment to condemn us?

2. Knowledge means blessedness. To know God is occasion for boundless thanksgiving. We may know him in his Son (John 14, 9); this is eternal life (John 17, 3).

3. Obedience means rest. Our burden-bearer is our rest-giver. All other yokes are calling; his is easy. Come, submit, learn; the rest is sure.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. *The Consequences of Impenitence*, v. 20-24.

To what place did Jesus declare woe?

For what cause was the woe proclaimed?

What miracle was wrought near Bethsaida? Luke 9, 10-16.

What was the privilege of Capernaum? Matt. 4, 13.

To what should such blessings have led the people?

What punishment followed the neglect of such blessings?

What was the fate of Sodom? Gen. 19, 24, 25.

Why would the people of Capernaum deserve a heavier punishment?

Who are there now living whose sin is even greater? *Those among us who do not obey Christ.*

What is the meaning of Heb. 2, 3?

2. *The Mystery of Godliness*, v. 25-27.

For what did Jesus offer thanks to God?

What things were hidden? *The truths of the Gospel.*

From whom were they hidden?

To whom were they revealed?

What is meant by "babes?" *Those who felt and confessed their own ignorance, and were willing to be taught.*

How may we know God? See John 14, 6.

3. *The Simple Terms of Salvation*, v. 28-30.

What is the invitation of the GOLDEN TEXT?

To whom is it given?

How may it be accepted?

What rest may we find in Jesus?

What is the promise of Jer. 6, 16?

Who find Christ's yoke easy?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. The duty of repentance?

2. The rewards of humility?

3. The promise of rest?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Where was Jesus now? *Near the city of Nain.*

Can you think of any wonderful work that Jesus ever did?

Where did he cast out a legion of devils?

Were the people glad to have such a wonder-worker in their midst?

If some one had healed your brother or sister who was very sick, would you have wanted him to go away?

What cities had treated Jesus in this way?

What did Jesus say of Chorazin and Bethsaida? *"Woe unto thee!"*

What did he say of Capernaum? *That it should be brought down to hell.*

Why? *Because it had rejected him.*

What is it to reject Jesus? *To refuse to believe and follow him.*

For whom did Jesus thank God? *For the believing ones.*

What does he promise to give?

What must we do? *"Take," "learn," "pud."*

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. For what did Jesus rebuke the cities in which his mighty works were done? *Because they did not repent.*

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

BY J. L. HURLBUT, D.D.

Christ's Requirements and His Rewards.

1. WHAT CHRIST EXPECTS.

1. *Repentance.* "Repented not." v. 20.
Turn from their wicked ways. 2 Chron. 7. 14.
Except ye repent... perish. Luke 13. 5.
2. *Teachableness.* "Unto babes." v. 25.
Become as little children. Matt. 18. 3.
Chosen the foolish things. 1 Cor. 1. 27.
3. *Obedience.* "Take my yoke." v. 28, 29.
Keep my commandments. John 15. 10.
Into captivity every thought. 2 Cor. 10. 5.
4. *Imitation.* "Learn... meek." v. 29.
Given you an example. John 13. 15.
Even as he walked. 1 John 2. 6.

2. Who are the only ones who know of God? *Those who learn from Christ.*

3. What is Christ's call in the GOLDEN TEXT? *"Come," etc.*

4. What is Christ's command? *"Take my yoke upon you."*

5. What does Jesus say of his yoke? *"My yoke is easy."*

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

33. What is regeneration? Regeneration is that work of the Holy Spirit, wherein we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, being renewed in the image and likeness of God.

John iii. 3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

11. WHAT CHRIST BESTOWS.

1. *Opportunity.* "Mighty works." v. 20.
Thy light is come. Isa. 60. 1.
Yet a little while. John 12. 35.
2. *Salvation.* "Tolerable... day." v. 22-24.
Shall be mine... in that day. Mat. 3. 17. 18.
Come, ye blessed. Matt. 25. 34.
3. *Knowledge.* "Revealed them." v. 25-27.
Given unto you to know. Matt. 13. 11.
Know the things... given. 1 Cor. 2. 12. 13.
4. *Rest.* "Will give you rest." v. 28, 29.
He giveth quietness. Job 34. 29.
The good way... old paths. Jer. 6. 16.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The tour of Jesus through central Galilee, the third and last of his journeys through that province, was marked by a change in the character of his preaching. For a year he had invited, urged, pleaded with the people; now he began to warn them of the wrath to come. He gave his last call to the cities where he had wrought his most significant miracles and preached his most earnest discourses. To Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum he holds up the fate which had overtaken other places, and warns them that their fall shall be the more signal as their privileges have been the higher. But even in his warnings there is tenderness. The Saviour sees how heavy are the burdens with which men are laden, their sorrows, their trials, and their yearnings, and he promises rest to every heart that seeks him and leans upon him. The rebuke to the cities of Lake Genesaret is inserted by Luke in his charge to the seventy. According to Luke's arrangement this lesson would immediately precede the anointing of our Lord by the sinful woman. It is not improbable that it was repeated at different times, but the exact date does not modify the teaching. Its scene was Galilee; probably, not certainly, at Capernaum; about A. D. 29, and probably November.

Verse 20
immediately the Baptist, his impenitent great, then, those who l Then bega There is no h our Lord's w holy grief an the history a appeals and n change in his wherein most These "cities" shore of the S translated "m "powers." T logical prepos words as Mat ous sin of the "mighty wor their lives; v miracles were sake, wete no ence, were n they were lou holy living. S any (Rom. 2 speaks throu "though a fool the unbelieving not; some sup nited the genu accepted their any spiritual ordinary grati treat the work God's mercy h increases future

21. *Woe un*
striking contra of the Beatitud These towns ar busy region in v now identified north of Capern on the banks of end of the lake of at least three Peter, Andrew, works, which acc in Tyre and A miracle recorded either Chorazin don are mentio

Verse 20. This verse seems to connect immediately with the discourse about John the Baptist, whose plain preaching had left his impenitent hearers without excuse; how great, then, must be the responsibility of those who hear the Son of man himself! *Then began he to upbraid. Or to rebuke.* There is no hint at hot or bitter temper here; our Lord's words are rather an outburst of holy grief and indignation, which marks in the history a turning from one class of moral appeals and reasonings to another—a radical change in his method of teaching. *The cities wherein most of his mighty works were done.* These "cities" were all on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The Greek word translated "mighty works" literally means "powers." *They repented not.* Drop theological prepossessions, and understand these words as Matthew wrote them. The ruinous sin of these people was that our Lord's "mighty works" had made no change in their lives; which shows that our Lord's miracles were not performed for their own sake, were not merely acts of divine beneficence, were more than "Messianic signs;" they were loud calls to change of life and holy living. So are all the works of God to-day (Rom. 2: 4; Acts 17: 30, 31). God speaks through them so clearly that any man, "though a fool," might hear and heed. But the unbelieving majority in these cities heeded not; some superciliously and perversely denied the genuineness of the miracles; others accepted their physical advantages without any spiritual effect, and sometimes without ordinary gratitude. So to-day thousands treat the works of God. Every refusal of God's mercy hardens the human heart and increases future woe.

21. Woe unto thee. An expression in striking contrast with the "Blessed are ye" of the Beatitudes. *Chorazin . . . Bethsaida.* These towns are selected as typical of the busy region in which they stood. Chorazin is now identified with Kerazeh, a few miles north of Capernaum. Bethsaida Julius stood on the banks of the Jordan near the northern end of the lake of Galilee. It was the home of at least three of our Lord's disciples—Peter, Andrew, and Philip. *If the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon.* Strange to say, no miracle recorded in the gospels is placed in either Chorazin or Bethsaida. Tyre and Sidon are mentioned as the heathen capitals

nearest to Galilee. They had been through many centuries singularly wicked as well as singularly prosperous. Cradles of the worship of Baal, the most vicious influences which had injured early Israel had sprung from them. If such tender appeals could have been made to Phœnicia as were now being made to Galilee, it *would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes;* a keen sense of sin would have brought keen sorrow to its cities, and, forgiven much, they would have loved much. Some pupils may need the explanation that orientals in their bitterest sorrow thrust themselves into coarse garments like sacks with armholes, and throw ashes on their heads. That sinful Tyre and Sidon were thus ready for repentance has pleasing illustration in the story of Matt. 15: 21-28, in the fact that thirty years after our lesson Paul found believers there, and in the further fact that Tyre early became a Christian city.

22. It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon. Each city, and each individual soul, shall be judged according to its own opportunities. But corporations have no souls. Cities and nations are said to be punished when "a due proportion is observed between their degree of sin and of ruin." But individual souls—"every one of us shall give account of himself to God." *The day of judgment* here includes the general system of God's judicial decisions. But it is as difficult for us to conceive final judgment without definite date as to conceive a heaven without place. This verse would seem to intimate what seems to be assumed throughout the New Testament, that there are degrees of punishment and reward in the eternal world.

23. Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell. The language throughout is highly figurative. "Heaven" stands for the loftiest exaltation; "hell," Hades, for extinction as a city. The Revised Version, following the best texts, turns the first part of this verse into question and answer: "Shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down unto Hades." "The amount of light given and rejected is the measure of the guilt of the nation and the individual." The site of Capernaum is still in doubt. For many years Dr. Thomson's identification of Tel Hum with Kepharnahum was generally accepted by English and American scholars. Perhaps the chief reason for this identification is a resemblance of the

last syllable of each of the names, a resemblance not made very plain in English. But later investigation, and especially the arguments of Dr. George Adam Smith, have led to the adoption of Khan Minyeh as the site. Like Tel Hum, this place is on the north-western coast of the Sea of Galilee; it has a fountain, referred to by Josephus, while the other site has none. *If the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.* Sodom is the most notoriously wicked city of all history. Our Lord does not imply that Sodomite sins were rife in Capernaum, but that Capernaum was further than Sodom from repentance. But why were not such mighty works wrought in Sodom, and its repentance thereby secured? A complete answer may not be given; but much of the mystery is dissipated when we remember that our Lord is talking of these cities collectively. Sodom's punishment was of a physical sort; spiritual punishment is not the primary thought in either case. Sodom sinned; it was punished by overthrow and extinction. Capernaum sinned, not by committing greater sins than did Sodom, for sins cannot be classified into less and greater, but by sinning against greater light than did Sodom; and its punishment, also, was extinction.

24. The lesson up to the close of this verse shows emphatically the consequences of impenitence, and that sin is greater or less, not in proportion to the greater or less breach of certain commands, but to the greater or less turning away from the spirit of goodness. Let us again remind ourselves that there is for individuals (in a sense that nations and cities cannot realize) a *day of judgment*, spiritual and permanent, for the deeds done in the body.

25. *Jesus answered and said.* The word "answered" may refer to the woes just uttered, or to unuttered thoughts in the hearers' minds, or it may be merely an idiomatic phrase. If it be closely connected with the punishment of Sodom and Tyre and Sidon, we are to think of what follows as our Lord's way of teaching that God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. *I thank thee.* I praise thee; confess thee; abide by thy decision. *O Father.* A study of the passages in which our Lord refers to God as Father will be found helpful. (See, for example, John 17: 11. 21; 12. 28.) *Lord of heaven and earth.* Supreme Sovereign,

Creator, Preserver, Destroyer. *Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent.* The Revised Version brings out the meaning plainer: "Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding." It is another way of saying that human wisdom cannot find out God. "To get God's infinite wisdom we must renounce our finite wisdom" (Isa. 5. 21; 1 Cor. 1. 18-27). *Revealed them unto babes.* The "wise and prudent" are the Pharisees; the "babes" are our Lord's disciples. "Children," says H. Clay Trumbull, "can understand many things just because they are children. The hope of older ones is in learning from children or becoming again as children." The reference here is to a docile, humble, childlike disposition.

26. *Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.* Infallible Love and Wisdom cannot err. What is good in God's sight must be good for his children.

27. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father.* "Of" means by. Jesus is directly addressing his disciples. They are supposed to have the childlike spirit, and so will bow to the will of the Father, which is also the will of the Son. *No man knoweth the Son, but the Father.* The relation between God and Jesus is a mystery; "it as far transcends mortal understanding as does the nature of God." The Revised Version gives "no one"—neither man, nor angel, nor devil. *Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* Jesus understands the Father because of what may reverently be called kinship, and, the sovereignty over all things having been given him, he confers a profound practical knowledge of the Father upon his beloved ones.

28. *Come unto me.* "Only by coming to me can you know God." The invitation is to all. He did not mean merely that those who heard him should in their physical bodies press nearer to him. It was men's souls he invited; and as "he ever liveth," we as well as they may approach him in our souls. *All ye that labor.* All whose bodies or minds are weary with active toil; but not only they. In Judea thousands of men in utter weariness and desolation of soul were laboring to secure holiness by minute attention to innumerable exactions imposed by the "scribes and Pharisees." To-day there are thousands like them who are wearing out their lives trying to do right. All that any have to do

—whether it is to come Overstrained have had to laden too m you rest. O dems "grievous demand labor give rest.

29. *Take referred to traditions, as and leadership hard to obey anxieties, sick it's burdens;*

Here are ca are reproached dicted as if Testament is f tions, were arr Egypt, so Nine so Balylon. I Testament. Cl um—not simply their population were to have a Jerusalem. Jes throw. (Read Matthew.) The with warnings a and nations. No fore, than that vidual men and peoples—certain, of the Scriptures the record of his tears.

DOUBLE

A man, therefore for his own pe sly of the commu ber, the nation of private personali personality, and h his city, of his co private sins he n sional account to C partly in this life come. As an indi exist after death.

—whether strength or comfort be needed—is to come unto his Son. *Heavy laden.* Overstrained, worn-out people. The laborers have had too much of active toil, the heavy laden too much of passive toil. *I will give you rest.* Other "masters" enjoin legal burdens "grievous to be borne;" other "lords" demand labor; I, "your Lord and Master," give rest.

29. *Take my yoke upon you.* The Jews referred to the Mosaic law, with its annexed traditions, as a yoke; but our Lord's doctrine and leadership were *easy and light*. Laws hard to obey, sinful habits, heart sorrows, anxieties, sickness—these are some of humanity's burdens; but the only burden our Lord

gives is companionship with him, and that brings comfort and peace. *Learn of me.* As teacher and example. *Meek and lowly in heart.* Dr. Robertson says that three causes produce unrest in men—suspicion of God, inward discord, and dissatisfaction with outward circumstances; for all these meekness is the cure. *Ye shall find rest unto your souls.* Such abounding peace within that pressure from without is unfelt.

30. *My yoke is easy.* Pleasing, wholesome. *My burden is light.* It harmonizes with the deepest needs of all human beings. What is our Lord's burden—the law he places upon men? Love to God and to fellow-men. Such love produces peace and rest.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

CIVIC JUDGMENT.

Here are cases of civic judgment. Cities are reproached and their punishment predicted as if they were persons. The Old Testament is full of this. Cities, whole nations, were arraigned, warned, punished. So Egypt, so Nineveh, so Samaria, so Jerusalem, so Babylon. It is continued in the New Testament. Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum—not simply the individuals composing their population, but the cities themselves—were to have a day of judgment. So, also, Jerusalem. Jesus foretold its utter overthrow. (Read the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew.) The Book of Revelation thunders with warnings and judgments against cities and nations. Nothing is more certain, therefore, than that God judges not simply individual men and women, but communities and peoples—certain, not merely by the teachings of the Scriptures, but indubitably certain by the record of history, written in blood and tears.

DOUBLE ACCOUNTABILITY.

A man, therefore, is responsible, not simply for his own personal sins, but also for the sins of the community of which he is a member, the nation of which he is a citizen. His private personality is merged in the public personality, and he will suffer for the sins of his city, of his country, of his times. For his private sins he must give private and personal account to God, and his punishment be partly in this life and partly in the life to come. As an individual he will continue to exist after death, and so may be reckoned

with after death. But cities and nations only exist in time, and must be dealt with in time. If punished at all, they must be punished here. Hence for them God's court is always in session. And in God's civic judgments all the members of the community are involved. Whether we will or not, we must bear vicarious responsibility and endure vicarious suffering. We are members of the body politic, and must suffer with the body politic if it goes wrong. And the innocent will suffer with the guilty. It seems a hard law, but apparently in no other way can God teach us the great truth that we are our brothers' keepers. By this stern law God is showing us that we cannot afford to be indifferent to public righteousness.

ESSENCE AND DEGREE OF PUBLIC SIN.

The essence of all public sin, as of all personal sin, is unbelief. A city that deliberately, by force of public opinion and popular vote, sanctions evil is atheistic. It denies God; it does not believe in the reality and the authority of God. No matter how many churches it may have, or what pious proclamations on set occasions it may issue, it is blind to God. It was a national atheism, in spite of the fact that we called ourselves a Christian nation, that fostered and protected slavery. And it is only because we believe very feebly and faintly in God that we are now sharing profits with the rum traffic. Jesus Christ now is walking our streets, and we recognize him but little better than they did in Capernaum. And the degree of public

guilt, the guilt of public unbelief, is in proportion to the degree of moral light resisted. Sodom was less guilty than Capernaum, for Sodom would have repented if works like Christ's had been wrought there. Nineveh was less guilty than that generation, for Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah; but a greater than Jonah was there.

THE CHILD SPIRIT A CONDITION OF KNOWLEDGE.

Between verses 24 and 25 of the lesson we must read Luke 10. 17-20, from which we learn that this expression of thanksgiving concerning God's method of revealing truth was made by Jesus on the occasion of the return of the seventy whom he had sent forth. These seventy disciples were doubtless very common people, unlearned and undistinguished; but believing in the name of Jesus, they had been able to heal the sick, and found that even the devils were subject to them. They returned, reporting joyously to Jesus what they had done in his name. They appeared to him as little children in the sincerity and simplicity of their spirit, and he saw that because of this spirit the things of the kingdom were being revealed to them. Therefore "in that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee" (Luke 10. 21). It was the law of spiritual vision which Christ so often stated. It was the first and the sixth beatitudes. It was the lesson of the little child set in the midst (Matt. 18. 1-4). It is the eternal law of all spiritual knowing. It is more than that—it is the law of all progress in knowledge. Blessed is the man that knows he is ignorant, and is willing to learn. Pride, self-conceit, prepossession, and prejudice blind the eyes. Humility is necessary to teachableness, and only the teachable can learn. Bacon long ago taught the scientific world that the child spirit was necessary to all knowledge of nature. Nature's great secrets have not been revealed to those who felt themselves wiser than nature. In the spiritual realm not only meekness of mind, but poverty of spirit and purity of heart are necessary to the knowledge of the truth. Self-righteousness cannot see the kingdom of God. Not the wise, but the ignorant require a teacher. The man that would know the mysteries of the kingdom must be content to begin in the spiritual kindergarten, and carry within him always the heart of a little child.

THE SPIRIT OF THE TRUE TEACHER.

Jesus has just said that the child spirit is necessary in the pupil. Now he says the same spirit is necessary in all highest teaching. He invites men to take his yoke upon them and learn of him, because he is "meek and lowly in heart." Pride and self-sufficiency are as fatal to teaching as to learning. All great teachers have been men of great simplicity and childlikeness of spirit. Such was Socrates; such was Buddha; such preeminently was the Christ. So, also, have minor masters been. Such was Arnold of Rugby; such was Mark Hopkins; such, in rare degree, was Agassiz. Such men have been vitalizing and inspirational forces in the lives of their pupils. They did not simply impart knowledge, but they gave life. Jesus called those having the spirit of little children to learn of him; he himself had the child heart. Teachers can only impart what they have, and they have in truth only what they are. Jesus promised rest unto those who would learn of him, because in his own soul there was perfect peace. With him was not vexation, or care, or fruitless labor, or any too heavy burden, for he was in constant communion with his Father. Into like calm and strength enter all to whom the Son reveals the Father.

Thoughts for Young People. Concerning Salvation.

1. *Every person enjoys an opportunity for salvation.* Not all may have the same opportunity, but all have some. We have our opportunity whenever a sermon is preached or an invitation is given. (Verses 20, 21.)
2. *Our salvation requires of us repentance, which is a sincere forsaking of sin and a sincere turning to God.* (Verses 20, 21.)
3. *If we reject salvation, we must expect a fearful dealing in the judgment day.* (Verses 22-24.)
4. *The truths of salvation are received and understood by the humble more readily than by the great and distinguished.* Comparatively few of the rulers, legislators, political leaders, and men of great wealth are earnest Christians. (Verse 25.)
5. *Salvation comes to us only through Jesus Christ, the Son of God.* (Verse 25.)
6. *Salvation lays upon us a light burden, but it brings rich reward in its rest and peace.* (Verses 29, 30.)

1. Jesus working, a verses 20-2- places when wrought the scholar who of the Sea it and locat places was it happens th illeges until looking out d said: "For t and never c greatest wish to go to the These people they were ab Jesus. Show now, utterly s ture of the sp accept Christ. pent. What nce is not so ing to God an In that way God's goodness.

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3. Read ver trouble, and it they can find yoke;" but so i the street, with rest if he could yoke of obedie What tramp, h not be happier u in field or shop clerk, or into th ship as sailor,

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

1. Jesus had now been nearly a year living, working, and preaching in Galilee. (Read verses 20-24.) Here are the names of three places where more of his miracles had been wrought than in any other place. Can some scholar who has not already drawn the map of the Sea of Galilee before the class draw it and locate those places? Which of these places was the most favored of all? Often it happens that people do not prize their privileges until they lose them. A consumptive, looking out of the window at a church tower, said: "For twenty years I have lived here, and never entered that church. Now my greatest wish is that I might be well enough to go to that church once before I die." These people did not know what a blessing they were about to lose in the going away of Jesus. Show the condition of those cities now, utterly abandoned and in ruins—a picture of the spiritual ruin of those who fail to accept Christ. What ought they to do? *Repent.* What is it to repent? True repentance is not so much sorrow over sin as turning to God and seeking Christ as the Saviour. In that way let us show that we recognize God's goodness to us in sending his Son.

2. Let verses 25-27 be read by scholars. "The wise and prudent" were the Jewish teachers and scribes, who knew much about the Bible, but did not see in Jesus their Saviour. The "babes" were the simple-minded, open-hearted disciples who followed Jesus, believing in him. At a revival service a little boy went forward to the altar, and in a few moments found peace in Christ. A learned man sitting there said: "No, I will not go to the altar. I must make up my mind all about Genesis and Daniel and Romans and Revelation, and have a lot of questions answered, before I become a Christian." Which of these two was really the wiser?

3. Read verses 28-30. People are in trouble, and it seems strange to think that they can find rest only by putting on "a yoke," but so it is. What wanderer out in the street, without a home, would not find rest if he could obtain it by putting on the yoke of obedience to a kind father and mother? What tramp, houseless and hungry, would not be happier under the yoke of steady work in field or shop? If you go into a store as clerk, or into the army as soldier, or on a ship as sailor, or to school as a student,

there is a yoke to be put on. The easiest and happiest yoke is that of service to Christ. Ask those who wear it if it does not give rest.

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

Warning. Some years ago, at dead of night, a man rode down a valley in New England, shouting that a great reservoir was about to burst. He saved many precious lives by his warning. So the tender love of Jesus led him to utter these awful admonitions. These cities which did not heed him have all been utterly blotted out. Our faithful Saviour lets no man run the race to endless ruin without warning. As a faithful watchman swings a red lantern when a broken bridge yawns in front of an express train, so Christ would not let these towns perish without warning.

Verses 20-24. God judges us according to our advantages. He looks for more interest upon five talents than upon two. "To whom much is given, of them shall much be required." If I walk on the railway track, and pay no attention to the steam whistle, I have only myself to blame for my destruction. I had heard the warning. But the deaf man who met with the same fate cannot be thus blamed. Then surely God expects more of us, reared in Christian homes under religious influences, than of those without the Gospel, and who have been trained to profanity and sin.—*C. E. Cheney.*

Verses 26, 27. If it demanded wisdom and culture to accept the Gospel, most people would be shut out. In the elevated railway stations are signs to direct passengers to the different trains. I am glad these signs are in plain English, and not in Greek or Latin, for few can read those ancient tongues. All attempts to reason out the way of salvation are a complete failure. Our minds are not big enough to measure God. We are like the little children at the seashore, trying to dip up the ocean in a tiny cup.

Verses 27 shows how to get the knowledge of God which we fail to get by mere intellect. It comes by revelation. A friend of mine told me that one of the stars in the constellation of "the dipper," was really two stars close together. But by no straining of my eyes could I see more than one. Yet the moment I put a small telescope to my eyes the two stars were visible. So God reveals him-

self to those who are willing to see him. In the New Testament we have the telescope which reveals what God is.

Verses 28-30. There is a myth about the birds that when they were first created they had no wings, and the story is that God made the wings, put them down before the birds, and said, "Take up these burdens and bear them." The birds had beautiful plumage and voices, but they could not soar. But they took up their wings with their beaks and laid them on their shoulders, and at first they seemed a heavy load; but as they cheerfully and patiently bore them and folded them over their hearts, lo! the wings grew fast, and that which once they bore now bore them. The burden became pinions, and the weights became wings.

We are the wingless birds, and our duties are the pinions; and at first when we assume them they seem loads; but if we cheerfully bear them, going after Jesus, the burdens change to pinions, and we who thought we were nothing but servants bearing loads find that we are sons and heirs of God, free to mount up with wings as eagles.—A. T. Pierson.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

BY MRS. J. H. KNOWLES.

Above the noise and tumult of the world the gracious invitation of Jesus rises like the closing psalm of a glad, sweet song. All his pity and his power are in that winsome word "Come." You that are sad, burdened, tired, sinful, come to me, the strong, the loving, the mighty to save, the Deliverer. I will give what you cannot elsewhere find, nor buy for any price; I will give what you need so much, what you sigh for and dream of—rest. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Think of that message heard, believed, received in the deepest consciousness of the tired, driven, anxious men and women who rush about the city streets, wrestle with trade in the big shops, or faint under the long hours of work in farmhouses, where quiet is plenty, but rest is rare. What a change it would make! How the lines would smooth out on the forehead, the corners of the mouth curve up, and the eyes grow soft and pleasant to look into. For the sake of physical beauty alone it would be a blessed thing for people to find rest unto their souls.

Once in a while we see in the crowd the face of one who has found it, and it is a benediction. It was said of one, "He carries God's sunshine in his face in all weathers." It should be possible to say it of every Christian. The "weather" is hard on most of us. The larger part of humanity are beaten upon by wind and rain of sorrow. "God's sunshine" alone is unclouded. Let us live in it ourselves, and try to share it with everybody everywhere.

There is a difference between work and labor. Cheerful work that we have strength for is a pleasure. Labor that frets, and is beyond our strength, wears us out. A ship "works well" even in a storm when her machinery is in order, and she rides triumphantly over the waves. She "labors" when something is wrong or the storm is too heavy for her. We "labor" because the storms of life are too heavy for us, and sin has put the soul's machinery out of order.

There is no relief except to come to Him who has power to make all within us right and power to control the storm so that it will not overwhelm us.

One said to me not long ago, "My peace of mind consists entirely in the continued good health of my wife and children, my own good health, and sufficient money in the bank to meet my daily needs." That is the sort of peace the world gives. One hour may destroy every foundation upon which it rests. My friend, if you are looking for a sheltered place where you may find satisfaction in anything the world can give apart from Christ, let me tell you faithfully and tenderly you will be disappointed. I am not a misanthrope nor a pessimist. I see the rainbows in every shower. This is a good world to live in when we use it to get ready for a better one; but it never can satisfy a soul made to live in paradise. Take the yoke of Jesus upon you, and you will walk and work with him easily and restfully. His yoke was the will of God. Under the yoke of self, doubt, unbelief, disobedience, we chafe and fret and labor. In harmony with God, in sweet trust and obedience, how easily life's burden is borne! In the midst of the sin, the worry, and the feverish ambitions of men it seems like finding a cool, shaded place, where the birds sing and brain and nerve are soothed to hear Jesus say, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

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The Teachers' Meeting.

Review briefly the events of the last few lessons, and show where this address belongs in the life of Christ. . . . Draw a map of the Sea of Galilee, and locate upon it the places named in this lesson. . . . We may teach the lesson under the outline, I. Woe; II. Welcome. . . . I. The woes of Christ: 1. Wherefore? 2. Against whom? 3. What are they? 4. What result from them? II. The welcome of Christ: 1. To whom? 2. On what contradictions? 3. Giving what privileges? . . . Show in the lesson the following traits of Christ: 1. Authority; 2. Wrath; 3. Foreknowledge; 4. Sympathy; 5. Humility. . . . The teachings of the lesson concerning salvation.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Come, said Jesus' sacred voice,
Hasten, sinner.
Weary child, by sin oppressed,
Come unto me.
I heard the voice of Jesus.

Art thou weary?
When in the tempest he'll hide me.
Are you weary?
Whenever trials press my soul.
Go tell it to Jesus.

Blackboard.

BY THOMAS G. ROGERS.



Like the loud notes of the tossing bell buoy in the storm, the words of Jesus ring out in

warning to those who had continued in sin, regardless of many wonders and mighty works wrought to convince them of wrong and turn them from an evil course. Then his voice changes to loving words of invitation to the weary and heavy laden, calling them like the sweetly chiming church bells, and telling of the rest that can come only to such as take his yoke upon them and learn of him.

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BY REV. S. G. AYRES, B.D.

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LESSON VII. JESUS AT THE PHARISEE'S HOUSE.

[May 13.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Thy faith hath saved thee. Luke 7. 50.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Matt. 18. 23-35.]

Luke 7. 36-50. [Commit to memory verses 44-47.]

36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

REVISED VERSION.

36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he entered into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And behold, a woman which was in the city, a sinner; and when she knew that he was sitting at meat in the Pharisee's house, she

38 brought an alabaster cruse of ointment, and standing behind at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears, and wiped

them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying,

This man, if he were a prophet, would have perceived who and what manner of woman this is which toucheth him, that she is a sin-

40 ner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee.

41 And he saith, Master, say on. A certain lender had two debtors: the one owed five

42 hundred pence, and the other fifty. When they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave

them both. Which of them therefore will

43 love him most? Simon answered and said, He, I suppose, to whom he forgave the most.

44 And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly

45 judged. And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I

46 entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my

47 feet with her tears, and wiped them with her

48 hair. Thou gavest me no kiss: but she, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my

49 feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but she hath anointed my feet with ointment.

50 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven: for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth lit-

51 tle. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him

52 began to say within themselves, Who is this that even forgiveth sins? And he said unto

the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

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Time.—The summer of A. D. 28. Place.—Uncertain; probably Capernaum.

Home Readings.

M. Jesus at the Pharisee's House. Luke 7. 36-50.

Tu. Another anointing. Matt. 26. 6-13.

W. Hope for sinners. Matt. 9. 9-13.

Th. A contrite heart. Psa. 51. 1-17.

F. Rich in mercy. Eph. 2. 1-10.

S. Blotted out. Col. 2. 8-15.

S. Saved by faith. Rom. 10. 6-13.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 213, New Canadian Hymnal.

Be it my only wisdom here,
To serve the Lord with filial fear,
With loving gratitude;
Superior sense may I display.

No. 83, New Canadian Hymnal.

Art thou weary, heavy laden?
Art thou sore distressed?
"Come to me," saith One, "and coming,
Be at rest."

No. 188, New Canadian Hymnal.

"Must I go—and empty handed?—
Thus my dear Redeemer meet?
Not one day of service give him,
Lay no trophy at his feet!"

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. *Our Lord the Guest of a Pharisee*, v. 36.

What was the Pharisee's name? See verse 40.

What is the meaning of "eat with him?"

2. *A Penitent Sinner at Jesus's Feet*, v. 37, 38.

With what noted early Christian has this woman been traditionally identified?

How can the presence of a bad woman in such a place be explained?

Explain the use of the alabastron.

Explain how the custom of reclining at table would bring this woman "at his feet behind him."

How was she violating all custom in her personal attire?

Why would Jesus be expected to repel her?

3. *The Pharisee's Bad Logic*, v. 39.

Where do we learn that this man was half inclined to regard Jesus as a prophet?

What other Gospel character was disposed to test prophetic power by the power to read men's secrets? John 4. 19; comp. 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25.

4. *The Two Debtors—a Parable*, v. 40-43.

How did Jesus meet Simon's unspoken objection?

Wherein does this parable differ, in moral and in details, from that in Matt. 18. 23-35?

What is meant by the phrase "creditor"?

What inference concerning the condition of the country may we draw from our Lord's frequent illustrations from debtors and creditors?

What reason for the woman's impulsive gratitude did Jesus give by this parable?

5. *The Pharisee and the Sinner Contrasted*, v. 44-47.

Why was foot-washing regarded as one of the duties of hospitality? See Gen. 18. 4; 19. 2; Judg. 19. 21; John 13. 4, 5; 1 Tim. 5. 10.

Was Jesus generally supposed to be scrupulous concerning ceremonial ablutions? Mark 7. 8.

Give some biblical instances of the oriental custom of kissing. 2 Sam. 15. 5; 19. 39; Matt. 26. 49; Acts 20. 37; Rom. 16. 16; 1 Cor. 16. 20.

Of what was anointing a symbol? Comp. Psa. 23. 5; 45. 7; Eccles. 9. 8.

Where in these remarks to Simon do we find the real moral of the parable?

How can our Lord's fellowship with sinners be explained?

6. *The Sinner Forgiven*, v. 48-50.

What did Jesus say to the woman?

What question was asked by those who "sat at meat?"

What second assurance did Jesus give the woman?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. Not much sin, but a deep sense of sin, is needed to awaken much love.

2. Only God can read the human heart.

3. No man who is at heart a Pharisee can understand Jesus.

4. Jesus never shrank from contact with sinners.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. *Our Lord the Guest of a Pharisee*, v. 36.

By whom was Jesus invited to a feast?

How did most of the Pharisees regard Jesus?

Were there any Pharisees who revered Jesus?

2. *A Penitent Sinner at Jesus's Feet*, v. 37, 38.

Who came uninvited to the house?
What sort of a woman was she? See
verse 39.

Why did she come?
What did she bring?
Where did she take her place?
What four things did she do?
What was the meaning of such conduct?
What other woman anointed the feet of
Jesus? See John 12, 3.

3. *The Pharisee's Bad Logic*, v. 39.

Who observed the woman's act?
What did he say to himself?
What unusual knowledge of men and
women were prophets supposed to have?
How were even the most godly Jews taught
to treat sinners?

4. *The Two Debtors—a Parable*, v. 40-43.

Had the Pharisee spoken his thoughts
aloud?
How, then, did Jesus know what his
thoughts were?
About whom did he begin to tell a story?
What is a "creditor?"
How much did the debtors each owe?
How much could they pay?
What did the creditor do?
What question did Jesus ask about the
debtors?
What was Simon's answer?

5. *The Pharisee and the Sinner Contrasted*,
v. 44-47.

To whom did the Saviour direct Simon's
attention?
What three acts of courtesy had Simon
omitted?
How had the woman supplied the lack?
What did Jesus say about her sins?

6. *The Sinner Forgiven*, v. 48-50.

What did Jesus say to the woman?
What did the guests say to themselves?
What additional word did Jesus speak to
the woman?
How only can we be saved? Acts 16, 31.

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That those who love Jesus delight to serve him?
2. That those who serve Jesus will be rewarded?
3. That those who trust Jesus will be saved?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Where was Jesus now? *In Galilee, either in Nain or Capernaum.*

Who invited him to dinner?
Did the Pharisees love Jesus? *No; most of them hated him, and wanted to find fault with him.*

Who came to anoint Jesus?
What kind of a woman was she?
How did she show her sorrow for her sin?
Where is there another story of an anointing?

When did that take place? *Later in our Lord's life than this.*
Who was displeased when he saw this?
What did he say to himself?
How did Jesus reply to him?
What can our Lord read? *Our inmost thoughts.*

How had Simon received the Lord? *Without any sign of love.*
What had the sinful woman shown him?
Much love.

What was her reward?
What did Jesus say to her? *"Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."*

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. Who invited Jesus to dinner? *Simon, a Pharisee.*
2. Who intruded into the dining hall? *A woman who was a sinner.*
3. What did she do? *Bathed his feet with tears, and wiped them with her hair.*
4. What further did she do? *Kissed his feet and anointed them.*
5. Why did the Pharisee conclude that Jesus was not a prophet? *He thought no prophet would allow a sinful woman to touch him.*
6. What did Jesus say? **GOLDEN TEXT:** *"Thy faith," etc.*

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

34. How are believers assured of their sonship? *Believers are assured of their sonship by the witness of the Spirit, direct and indirect.*

Romans viii. 16. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*

1 John iii. 24. *And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

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by name (vers tion of Jesus S "chief rulers," John 12, 42.) with him. Th hospitable invi supper. Sat d the table" on a away from the social tendencie sible remove fr

37. *A woman* her. Ancient le and the woman evidently known

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Coming to Christ.

I. A SINNER COMING.

- A woman . . . a sinner. v. 37.
 Came . . . to save sinners. 1 Tim. 1. 15.
 To call . . . sinners. Matt. 9. 13.

II. COMING PROMPTLY.

- When she knew. v. 37.
 Now is the accepted time. 2 Cor. 6. 2.
 To-day . . . hear his voice. Heb. 3. 7.

III. COMING SORROWFULLY.

- Behind him weeping. v. 38.
 A broken spirit. Psa. 51. 17.
 Blessed . . . they that mourn. Matt. 5. 4.

IV. COMING HUMBLY.

- Began to wash his feet. v. 38.

Humbleth himself . . . exalted. Luke 14. 11.

Would not lift up . . . eyes. Luke 18. 13.

V. COMING WITH LOVE.

- She loved much. v. 47.
 Because he first loved us. 1 John 4. 19.
 Love . . . constraineth us. 2 Cor. 5. 14.

VI. COMING WITH FAITH.

- Thy faith hath saved thee. v. 50.
 Saved through faith. Eph. 2. 8.
 Victory . . . even our faith. 1 John 5. 4.

VII. COMING TO SALVATION.

- Her sins . . . are forgiven. v. 47, 48.
 Transgression is forgiven. Psa. 32. 1-5.
 White as snow. Isa. 1. 18.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The incident we now are about to study is related only by Luke. Most biblical scholars agree that the anointing at the house of Simon in Bethany, which is narrated by Matthew, Mark, and John, is not to be confounded with this. The place of this is not given (it may have been Capernaum or Magdala, or in Perea; the other was in Bethany, near to Jerusalem. This is placed near the middle of our Lord's ministry; the other a few days before his death. This is in the house of Simon the Pharisee; the other in the house of Simon the leper. It is true that the similarity is perplexing, especially when the peculiarity of the action is kept in mind. But our Lord's treatment of the two cases is entirely different, for the anointing by Mary, the sister of Lazarus, in Bethany, is received as a sort of pathetic preparation for his burial, while his words here, while recognizing the bad life of the woman who anointed him, are full of forgiving love. The story here is of a woman who, in a manner that would be impossible in our country but would be easy in the ancient East, entered the banquet room without invitation, approached our Lord, over his unsandaled feet wept tears of sorrow, wiped them with her long, unbound hair, and broke over them a box of costly perfume. The Pharisaic host looked on in scorn and doubted whether his guest were, after all, a prophet, for surely no prophet could be ignorant of the character of this woman, and no prophet, knowing her character, would permit her to approach. The Lord read his thought, and answered it in a parable, which was a commendation of the sinner and a rebuke for Simon's neglect; and then, careless of the scorn of the assembled company, he declared the woman's sins pardoned, and pronounced upon her the peace of God.

Verse 36. *One of the Pharisees.* Simon by name (verse 20). In his evident admiration of Jesus Simon was not alone among the "chief rulers." (See Luke 11. 37, 39 and John 12. 42.) *Desired him that he would eat with him.* This was probably a friendly, hospitable invitation to an ordinary meal or supper. *Sat down to meat.* "Reclined at the table" on a divan, with his feet turned away from the table. Jesus had strong social tendencies. He was the farthest possible remove from a hermit.

37. *A woman in the city, which was a sinner.* Ancient legends make the city Magdala and the woman Mary Magdalene. She was evidently known to Simon. Her sin probably

was that of unchastity. Her coming into the dining room unbidden was not without parallel in that country. *When she knew that Jesus sat at meat.* She "was getting to know." A phrase that hints that she had inquired closely as to his whereabouts. She sought Jesus. A banquet, however innocent, is hardly favorable for deep penitential emotion, and a Pharisee's house was the last place to which a penitent sinner would freely go; but it was Jesus that this woman sought. *Brought an alabaster box of ointment.* A delicate onyx vase of perfume.

38. *Stood at his feet behind him weeping.* "As she drew near to him she was overpowered by her feeling, and the tears fell upon

his feet before she was able to perform the act of love which she had in mind. The tears fell unexpectedly, and that she might wipe them, preparatory to the pouring upon them the ointment from the cruse, she unbound her hair, and then she 'kissed his feet again and again,' for this is the meaning of the verb which is used.—*Dr. Dwight.* A Palestinian woman will kiss the feet of a judge to-day, if from him she has received or expects a great favor; but this act was one of special reverence—"an extravagant honor"—and manifestly indicated her feeling of gratitude and love.

39. *The Pharisee . . . saw it.* He was watching the prophet, and with a shock that we cannot overmeasure he saw a wicked woman permitted to caressingly adore him. He had invited Jesus to watch him, but he had never expected this. *He spake within himself.* It would not do to speak aloud. *This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him.* He never dreams for a moment that that knowledge would lead this Prophet to increased tenderness. From his Pharisaical standpoint his reasoning was correct. He could not understand the true character of our Lord's tenderness. His position is one with which we should sympathize, for many Christians are in a similar position to-day. Are you? He was not an enemy of Jesus, but his friend, and our Lord's answer shows tenderness to the Pharisee as well as to the woman. But Simon was making three grave mistakes—he had a wrong conception of holiness, of Jesus, and of the woman.

40. *Jesus answering said unto him.* Answered the Pharisee's thought. *I have somewhat to say unto thee.* "Thee" is emphatic. "What I am about to say is for you, Simon, yourself." *Master, say on.* Like most of us, Simon tries to act politely, whatever may be his thought. When, in verse 39, he "spoke within himself" he said "this man;" when, in verse 40, he talks aloud he says "Master."

41. *There was a certain creditor which had two debtors.* The creditor stands for God; the debtors for those who fail to pay to God what they owe him, and they include the entire human race. *The one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.* Or, as we might say, the one owed \$85 and the other \$8.50. There is, then, a difference between

men in their obligations toward God; talents and opportunities have been evenly distributed.

42, 43. *When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.* Though the debt of one was so much larger than the other, the financial ruin was as great in one case as in the other, for both were absolutely bankrupt. So Simon and the woman are equally helpless in their moral state, until freely forgiven. *Which of them will love him most?* Or, in other words, which will be the more grateful? Jesus waives all questions concerning the supposed defilement of this woman's touch. He moves directly toward the question of character. He turns away from measurements of the law, and presents the measurement of love. And, strange to say, this measurement brings the prophet and the Pharisee together. Simon answers, *He to whom he forgave most*—which means, as the context plainly shows, the one that feels that most has been done for him. And Jesus says, *Thou hast rightly judged.*

44-46. Here begins a statement of what Simon had neglected to do; but there is no reason to suppose that Jesus was grieved with Simon because of any lack of hospitality, or that there had been any such lack. Our Lord is simply showing the difference between the man who has no keen sense of forgiveness because he has had no keen sense of sin, and the sinner whose gratitude springs from profound penitence. "Love," says Dr. Timothy Dwight, "in its manifestations of itself varies with what awakens it, whether the blessing seems to the soul—and is—greater or smaller. The dramatic way in which our Lord brings this before Simon is singularly characteristic." He is not intent on showing that he has not been treated with proper honor. He is intent on explaining the love of the woman and the forgiveness so closely identified with it.

47, 48. *Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.* In the parable (see verse 42) love followed forgiveness. The debtor loved because he was forgiven; he was not forgiven because he loved. The words of this verse on their first reading seem to imply that the woman is forgiven because she loved. There is a sense in which both meanings are true. But now, this woman having proved her own forgiveness by the love she exhibits, Jesus formally de-

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49, 50. The guests were astonished at our Lord's authoritative manner and assumption of power. There is no hint as to the lasting

impression made upon their souls or upon the soul of Simon. *Thy faith hath saved thee*, says Jesus to the woman. *Go in peace.* Or, more literally, *Go into peace.* Abide in the blessedness which has come to you.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

A COMPARISON.

Some have held that this account by Luke of the anointing of Jesus in the house of Simon the Pharisee is only a variation of the accounts by John (12. 1-8) and Matthew (26. 13) of his anointing by Mary at Bethany. But there is little in common between the two accounts except that the name of the host in both cases was Simon—one of the commonest names among the Jews—and that a woman poured precious ointment upon his feet. Simon the Pharisee was evidently unfriendly, while Simon the leper was evidently a friend of Jesus. The woman of the lesson is called a "sinner"—that is, a harlot. That is inconceivable of Mary of the Bethany home to which Jesus so often resorted. The woman of the lesson was in deep grief, evidently of penitence, washing Jesus's feet with her tears; but Mary of Bethany displayed no sorrow, but only tender affection. In the one case the Pharisee complained against Jesus that he permitted a sinner to touch him, or did not, pretending to be a prophet, know that she was a sinner; in the other the complaint is made by one of Christ's own disciples, and against the act of the woman as wasteful. Christ's justification of the acts in the two cases differed. In the first he recognized it as the expression of a penitent sinner's sorrow and gratitude; in the second, as the expression of a grateful friend's reverent love. In the case of Mary of Bethany nothing was said of pardon; while to the woman in the house of the Pharisee he said, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee."

THE ETHICS OF HOSPITALITY.

Even the red Indian recognized the ethics of hospitality, holding himself bound to refrain from hostile acts against those with whom he ate salt. The Bedouin of the desert holds sacred the person of a guest. The social code of the world condemns as despicable a man who will invite another to his table with sinister motives, or who, without any offense on the part of his guest, will

show him disrespect by failing to extend to him all conventional courtesies, or by any word or act manifesting toward him an uncordial spirit. Simon the Pharisee violated these laws of hospitality. His invitation to Jesus to eat with him was evidently not sincere. He failed, and purposely failed, in the common courtesies due to a guest. He provided no water for Jesus's feet, gave him no kiss of welcome, no oil for his head—discourtesies as gross as if we should receive an invited guest without a nod or word or hand of welcome, and should not offer to take his hat or show him a seat. Then he thought and spoke contemptuously of Jesus. "This man" (verse 39) was equivalent to "this fellow." And his words, "I suppose" (verse 43), in the original are supercilious and flippant, as if one now should say sneeringly in answer to a question, "O, I reckon." He meant to treat Jesus contemptuously, and in doing it he acted contemptibly. The typical Pharisee was not simply wicked; he was unmanly and mean.

THE TRAGEDY OF WOMANHOOD.

It was a fallen woman, a harlot, who came in and anointed the feet of Jesus. The Pharisee sneered, because he reasoned that if Jesus did not know what the woman's character was, he was not a prophet; or if he did know, he was lacking in decency. But Jesus did know, and that he permitted the woman to touch him was due to a motive the Pharisee could not understand. The loss of virtue is the supreme tragedy of womanhood, and the lesson presents Jesus in relation to that tragedy.

That this is preeminently woman's tragedy is recognized in the literature of the world. But literature does not represent the loss of personal purity as the highest tragedy of manhood. Victor Hugo's great novels, for instance, chiefly portray men's tragedies, not women's, and the moral issues which rise to the heights of tragedy with his men do not relate to personal purity. Jean Valjean's tragedy was in a terrific struggle with con-

science under the Titanic temptation to save himself from unjust punishment by the sacrifice of another. But the great dramas and works of fiction in the portrayal of woman almost invariably represent her loss of virtue or her reputation for virtue as her deepest tragedy. The characters of Irma, in Auerbach's *On the Heights*, and of poor Hetty, in *Adam Bede*, and of Hester Prynne, in *The Scarlet Letter*, illustrate this. The difference between woman's tragedy and man's tragedy is strikingly illustrated in the last-named book. The scarlet letter which Hester was compelled to wear was the sign of her tragedy; but Dimmesdale's tragedy was in the lie which he attempted to live after his sin.

What is Christ's word in the presence of this supreme tragedy of womanhood? It is hope, acquittal, pardon, possibility of life restored to purity. And if Jesus can save woman in this uttermost wreck of her life, then well may woman bathe his feet with tears, and pour out all precious ointment on his head. The question, however, which we must ask ourselves is, Do we look upon this tragedy of womanhood in the spirit of the Pharisee or in the spirit of Jesus?

THE FAITH THAT SAVES.

Jesus's final word to this woman was, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Here, then, is a case divested of many of those extraneous and non-essential elements with which the notion of faith has been loaded down by which we can see what saving faith is in its simplest form. Her faith was in quality and degree all that was and is necessary to salvation. Whoever has more faith, or other kind of faith, than hers has something in excess of what God requires as a condition of pardon. In her faith was reduced to its simplest terms. How much of theology was involved in it? Very little. Did she believe in the Trinity? She probably had never heard of the doctrine. Did she believe in the verbal theory of inspiration? The whole question was utterly absent from her thoughts. Did she even believe in the deity of Jesus? Jesus himself up to this point in his ministry was saying nothing about his divinity; and even later, when Peter for the disciples made confession that he was the Son of God, he charged them that they should tell no man. Did she believe in the atonement of Christ? She had not so much as heard that there was to be any atonement. It was months

later before Jesus told even his disciples that he was to be put to death, and they had no conception of the significance of his death. Much less, then, could she have held to any theory of the atonement, for there was none to hold. What, then, was her faith? Something in the words of Jesus, or something in his spirit, had revealed to her the hideousness of her sin, and brought her to repentance. And the conviction had come in upon her that for her Jesus represented God, and that through him she could be helped back to a life of purity, and that seen in him God was good and merciful. All the theological things which she did not believe, because she knew nothing about them, may be true; only they were not things she was required, or anyone is required, to know in order to be saved.

Thoughts for Young People.

The Saviour's Reception of the Sinner.

1. Jesus Christ has power on earth to forgive sins.
2. In God's sight all are sinners, the honorable as well as the base. Not intellectual, social, or moral rank will justify any.
3. Jesus welcomes and pardons the penitent sinner, but rebukes the self-righteous moralist.
4. Jesus rebukes sin faithfully, but tenderly; not in wrath, but in love.
5. Jesus treats the fallen kindly, gently, forgivingly, with desire to raise them and not to trample them down.
6. Forgiveness of sin Jesus pronounces freely. Its sole condition is the earnest, humble turning of the heart to God.
7. The forgiveness of sin may receive the direct and personal testimony of Christ.
8. The forgiveness of sin brings as its result peace to the heart.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

1. Let this entire lesson be read by the pupils before any of the teaching is given. Then bring out by a series of questions the details in order. What was this Pharisee's name? Why do you suppose this man invited Jesus to his home? Certainly not because he believed in him, or he would have treated him with greater honor. He invited him in a spirit of condescending curiosity: "I will see what sort of a man this so-called prophet is."

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Do any people deal with Jesus in that spirit now?

2. What customary services to a noble guest had been neglected by this man? Explain why it was usual to wash the feet when going into the house. They took off the sandals (explain *sandals*) and in the house sat most of the time barefooted, especially in the warm season. Evidently Simon thought that it was honor enough for this Galilean teacher to sit at his table, without any special attentions being paid to him.

3. In what position were the guests around the table? We sit; but in those times they were wont to recline upon couches around a little table in the center, with their heads toward the table, and their feet away from it. There were no individual plates nor knives nor forks; but the food was brought in cut into small pieces. Each guest took a fragment and ate with his fingers, reaching out occasionally for a glass of wine standing at each guest's head on the table. The wine was never strong, and was generally mixed with water. After each course a servant passed around with water and a towel, and cleansed the fingers of the guests.

4. Now let the story of the woman be told by one of the scholars, and corrected or improved by others. For a woman uninvited to come into a house at a semipublic dinner would not be as strange among ancient people in Palestine as it would be among us. Perhaps the supper may have been served out of doors, in the courtyard, which would make the entrance of the woman easier. But whether such a visit was usual or unusual, or even though it may not have been altogether proper, if, for a purpose, a woman determined to reach the supper table, she would find a way. See the earnestness of a soul in coming to Jesus; see, also, her liberality in giving to the Lord. Is there not an example here?

5. What did Simon think as he saw this act of the woman? How did Jesus know Simon's thoughts? Does not Jesus know our thoughts too. Notice how delicately Jesus rebuked Simon. He told a story; that is what we call a parable. Let one of the class tell the parable.

6. Notice that the woman was not forgiven her sins merely because of what she had done for Jesus. Forgiveness is not to be bought that way. She was forgiven because she believed in Jesus—"thy faith hath saved

thee;" and she showed her faith by an act of love. Here, then, is the way to the forgiveness of sins: seek Christ, believe in Christ, give your love to Christ, give to him your best of service.

By Way of Illustration.

The Pharisee and the woman. There is a story told by a Persian poet which seems an echo of this evangelical history. Jesus while on earth was once entertained in the cell of a monk noted for his sanctity. In the same city dwelt a youth sunk in every sin. He appeared before the cell of the monk, and, as if smitten by the very presence of the divine One, began to lament deeply his sin and misery, and with tears to implore pardon and grace. The monk indignantly interrupted him, demanding how he dared to appear in his presence and in the presence of the divine One, and assuring him that he had sinned beyond forgiveness. And then the monk prayed, "My God, grant me this one thing—that I may stand far from this man in the judgment." Then Jesus said: "It shall be even so; the prayer of both is granted. This sinner has sought mercy, and has not sought it in vain. His sins are forgiven; his place shall be in paradise at the last day. But this monk has prayed that he may never stand near this sinner. His prayer, too, is granted; hell shall be his place, which is far from heaven."—*Trinch.*

Christ's treatment of women. He boldly took the stand that men and women stood before God upon the same moral plane, and that they ought so to stand before human society. Every incident in which a woman figures finds him as fearless and as chivalrous in his treatment of her as if he had held the ruling of society in his own hands. With men he was sometimes severe; with women never. Men he could scathe with scorn; women never. For men he could reserve a rebuke amounting to denunciation; for women his impulse of forgiveness came uppermost.—*E. S. Phelps.*

Christ's treatment of sinners. Stalker reminds us that "to Jesus every soul was infinitely precious. It mattered not under what humble dress or social deformity the pearl was hidden. It mattered not even beneath what rubbish and filth of sin it was buried. He never missed it for a moment.

Therefore he spoke to hearers of every grade with the same respect."

Bishop Thoburn, Missionary Bishop to India, said: "When I first came to India I thought the way to do was to evangelize the upper classes, and let the Gospel filter down through the layers till it reached the lowest. I soon saw that was not possible. I must do as my Master did, and begin with the lowest class. How do we lift a great building? Not by attaching a powerful lifting engine to the roof. This would only pull the building apart. No, we dig down until we have gone under the very lowest layer of foundation, and put the power there, and then the whole structure is lifted so easily that one may be in the building and feel no jar. This is what we are doing in India; and in uplifting the lowest classes all India is being uplifted."

The Madonna and the Magdalene. In going through picture galleries I notice that beside the sinless Madonna is placed the sinning Magdalene. Art loves and exalts the forgiven sinner even as it exalts her who was most blessed among women. In that famous picture of Saint Cecilia, where Saint Paul, Saint John, and Saint Augustine are grouped together, the fourth beautiful face is Mary Magdalene holding her alabaster box. She who represents the forgiveness of sins which causes song in heaven and on earth is put with the patron saint of music.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

As I have read this beautiful story of a sinner with Jesus, and sought to find its lesson, I have read it as if it were myself with Jesus. And so I want each one of you to say, "Not that woman long ago in the Pharisee's house, but myself, here to-day, with Jesus." For the word says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Conscience says, "I have sinned," and our judgment approves the sentence when we compare ourselves with the pure and good whom we know, and, above all, with the holy Saviour. Yes; I am a sinner with Jesus; and glad I am that he receiveth sinners.

Among those who had heard his teaching, out in the crowd, unnoticed by any (except by the Lord, who overlooks no one), was a

woman. Hers had been a sad life, because it was a sinful life. She was so tired of it all! She could laugh and jest and dance and sing, but it was all so hollow. Her hungry heart had not one morsel to eat. She was soul sick and starving to death. One day she heard the Lord Jesus say, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And she heard him say: "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And out there in the crowd where nobody cared whether she, the "sinner," were happy or not, she received his message and found the rest he promised. Then a great love welled up from the depths of her soul toward him who had redeemed her life from destruction. How could she show it?

She knew that he had gone one day to dine at a Pharisee's house. While the guests reclined at table she silently stole, uninvited, and most unwelcome to the host, to a place at Jesus's feet, bathing them with precious ointment and with the more precious tears of grateful love. The Pharisee saw only the shocking disregard of conventional rules—a sinner intruding upon respectability! Jesus saw only a heart broken with grief for sin and full of love for the Saviour. How keenly his words cut the pride of the self-righteous man! How blessedly they fell, like her own precious ointment, upon the broken spirit of the sinner, who loved much because she had much forgiven! "Simon, which of you two would love me most? You, the proud man, who feel you have no debts to God to be forgiven; you who pride yourself on your goodness, so that you have no need of me as your Saviour, or this woman whose sins look her in the face until she comes to me for refuge from them? It is evident your self-righteousness begets no love. You never gave me one token that you loved me; this woman has proved her love by sweet humility, costly gifts, and grateful tears. I care nothing for your outside respectability, your cold-hearted attentions, and professions of friendship for me. It is love that I want. One forgiven sinner loving much is more to me than all Jerusalem filled with proud and formal Pharisees." So, in effect, Jesus answered what Simon spoke "within himself." Then, with a compassionate look she would never forget, he turned to the woman, saying, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Not the

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years nor the depth of sin, but faith and love are the measure of forgiveness and peace for a sinner with Jesus.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Draw out description of ancient oriental "manners and customs" at dinner table: sandals removed at entrance; foot-washing; reclining at the table; presence of uninvited people; Jewish contempt of women, etc.... Word picture—Simon's supercilious neglect; the woman's approach; anointing of Jesus's feet; thought of the Pharisee as he witnessed the scene.... Elements of character illustrated: 1. By this Pharisee's conduct: (1) his pride; (2) his self-righteousness; (3) his neglect of Christ; (4) his contempt for fellow-sinners. 2. Conduct of the woman: (1) true sorrow for sin; (2) earnest seeking after Christ; (3) humility; (4) gratitude; (5) love. 3. Christ considered: (1) as a guest; (2) as a friend; (3) as a teacher; (4) as a Saviour.... What the woman obtained from Jesus: 1. Acceptance; 2. Commendation; 3. Forgiveness; 4. Peace.... Show what the lesson teaches us about these three points: 1. How we should treat Christ; 2. How we should seek salvation; 3. How Christ receives those who come to him.... Having "naught to pay" is abundant reason for Jesus's compassion on sinners, and his free forgiveness of their debts.... Unbelief in Christ's forgiveness or in one's own need is sin.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

Come, ye sinners,
I'm poor, and blind,
Depth of mercy!
Jesus, my Lord, to thee I cry,
Just as I am.

I bring my sins to thee,
Saviour, I come to thee!
All glory to Jesus be given,
Come, ev'ry soul by sin oppressed,
Of him who did salvation bring.

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FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Vers. 36-38, Alabastra; ointments; reclining at meals, 712. Ver. 44, Foot-washing, 10. Ver. 45, Kissing the feet, 765. Ver. 46, Anointing guests, 426.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

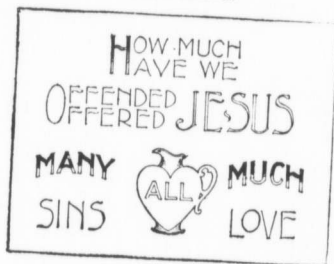
Verses 36-50.—Saurin, *Sermons*, vol. v, page 103. Ashmead, *Sermons*, page 188.

Verse 37.—Bean, J., *Sermons*, page 113.

Verse 42.—Morton, J., *Sermons*, page 87.

Verse 45.—*The Homiletic Review*, vol. vii, page 356; vol. xxxii, page 535.

Blackboard.



We are all guilty before God and without power to release ourselves from the curse and debt of sin. We have "nothing to pay" as the price of our redemption, nor can we make atonement for ourselves. How grateful, therefore, ought we to be to him who has purchased our salvation with the blood of his own Son; and how willingly we should offer him the homage and service of our hearts! Nothing less than all is good enough for Jesus.

LESSON VIII. PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

[May 20.]

GOLDEN TEXT. The seed is the word of God. Luke 8. 11.

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Matt. 12. 22 to 13. 23; Luke 8. 1-3.]

Matt. 13. 1-8, 18-23. [Commit to memory verses 22, 23.]

1 The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

8 But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it:

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; who also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Time.—A. D. 28. Place.—By the side of the Sea of Galilee.

Home Readings.

- M. Parable of the Sower. Matt. 13. 1-9.
 Tu. Speaking in parables. Matt. 13. 10-17.
 W. Parable of the Sower. Matt. 13. 18-23.
 Th. Wayside hearers. Acts 14. 8-20.
 F. No root. John 6. 59-65.
 S. Good ground. Acts 2. 37-47.
 S. Much fruit. John 15. 1-8.

Lesson Hymns.

- No. 165, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Work, for the night is coming,
 Work through the morning hours;
 Work while the dew is sparkling,
 Work 'mid springing flowers.

REVISED VERSION.

- 1 On that day went Jesus out of the house, 2 and sat by the seaside. And there were gathered unto him great multitudes, so that he entered into a boat, and sat; and all the 3 multitude stood on the beach. And he spake to them many things in parables, saying, Be- 4 hold, the sower went forth to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the 5 birds came and devoured them: and others fell upon the rocky places, where they had not 6 much earth: and straightway they sprang up, 7 because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered 7 away. And others fell upon the thorns; and 8 the thorns grew up, and choked them: and others fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.
- 18 Hear then ye the parable of the sower. 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the evil one, and snatcheth away that which hath been sown in his heart. This is he that 20 was sown by the wayside. And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, 22 straightway he stumbleth. And he that was sown among the thorns, this is he that heareth the word; and the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and 23 he becometh unfruitful. And he that was sown upon the good ground, this is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; who verily beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

- No. 166, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Now, the sowing and the weeping,
 Working hard and waiting long:
 Afterward the golden reaping,
 Harvest-home and grateful song.

- No. 167, New Canadian Hymnal.
 To the work! to the work! we are servants of
 God,
 Let us follow the path that our master has
 trod.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

1. *The Story*, v. 1-8.
 What crisis in Jesus's life was now ap-
 preching?

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sift his followers and keep the more carnal at a distance?

What rural activity was probably going on before the eyes of Christ's hearers at this moment?

Where did Jesus make his pulpit?

Where did his hearers stand?

Who is meant by the sower?

What was Jesus's purpose in thus veiling his truth by parables?

Why were thorns to be found so frequently in the field? Mic. 7. 4; Jer. 4. 3; Job 5. 5.

What has become of most of the word of God which has been sown before your eyes?

2. *The Explanation*, v. 18-23.

What is meant by the wayside?

What sort of ground is indicated by the stony places of the parable?

Why are shallow, impulsive listeners like to soil on stony places?

Is their joyful reception of the word of God sincere? Isa. 58; Mark 6. 20.

What is the "root" of good deeds?

Have you known any young people in whose hearts evil growth strangled a nobler life?

Is there any danger of either care or pleasure choking God's life in your soul?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. There were three classes of unfruitful hearers, and only one class that was fruitful. There are many wrong ways, but only one right.

2. The hearer is quite as responsible as the teacher. The main part in preaching belongs to the audience.

3. A heart without feeling is like a path which has been trodden hard.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. *The Story*, v. 1-8.

For what purpose did Jesus go to the seaside? Mark 4. 1.

What compelled him to enter a ship? Mark 4. 1.

Where was his audience?

Where did the "great multitudes" come from? Luke 8. 4.

What form did Jesus's teaching assume?

What is a parable?

From what laborer did Jesus draw an illustration?

What became of the wayside seed?

What happened to that which had little earth?

What seed was choked in its growth?

What increase was there on good ground?

What demand was made on the hearers?

What did Jesus mean by the seed?

GOLDEN TEXT.

2. *Its Explanation*, v. 18-23.

Who received seed by the wayside?

Who was the stony ground hearer?

In whom was the seed choked?

What marked the good ground hearer?

To which class do you belong?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson may we learn—

1. How to teach?

2. How we ought to hear?

3. The profit of heeding the truth?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What friend of Jesus lived in Capernaum? Do you think Jesus would stay at his house while in the city?

Can you tell any good deed Jesus once did for Peter's family?

Where was he teaching one afternoon?

How did he get away from the great crowd?

Why did the people follow Jesus around? *Some were in earnest to learn of him, but many were only curious to see what he would do.*

What is a parable?

What was the parable about that Jesus spoke to the people that summer day?

What did Jesus mean by the "seed"? *The word of God.*

Who takes it away as birds pick up seeds? *Satan.*

What are thorns like?

Can you tell what the good ground is?

Is your heart good ground?

How can it be made such if it is not already?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

1. How did Jesus teach the people? *In parables.*

2. What is a parable? *A story which teaches the truth.*

3. To what did Jesus compare the teacher of truth? *To a sower.*

4. What is the seed? GOLDEN TEXT: *"The seed is," etc.*

5. In what soil is the seed of truth sown?
In the hearts of men.

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

35. What is the direct witness of the Spirit?
The direct witness of the Spirit is an inward

impression on the soul whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God.

Galatians iv. 6. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

Hearers of the Word.

I. THOUGHTLESS HEARERS.

Whole multitude stood. v. 2.
Hearing, they hear not. Matt. 13. 13-15.
Word... did not profit. Heb. 4. 2.

II. INQUIRING HEARERS.

Disciples came and said. v. 10.
Whosoever hath... given. Matt. 13.
11. 12.
Seek, and ye shall find. Matt. 7. 7.

III. FORGETFUL HEARERS.

Seeds fell by the wayside. v. 4, 19.
Be sober; be vigilant. 1 Pet. 5. 8.
A hearer... not a doer. James 1. 23-25.

IV. UNSTABLE HEARERS.

Stony places... not much earth. v. 5, 6,
20, 21.
Goodness... morning cloud. Hos. 6. 4.
Double-minded man... unstable. James
1. 18.

V. WORLDLY MINDED HEARERS.

Thorns sprung up... choked. v. 7.
They that will be rich. 1 Tim. 6. 2.
Cannot serve God... mammon. Matt. 6.
24.

VI. FRUITFUL HEARERS.

Fell into good ground. v. 8, 23.
Good tree... good fruit. Matt. 8. 17.
Like a tree... by the rivers. Psa. 1. 3.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The cavils of the Pharisees, who were closely watching and constantly misrepresenting the teaching of Christ, led the Saviour to adopt a new form of instruction. Moreover, he was now about to present the deeper truths of the Gospel, which would expose him to fresh accusations from his foes, and which even his friends would need to carefully consider. He began to teach in parables, stories which fascinated the hearers by their interest, and suggested some moral lessons to all, but which revealed their inner meaning only to the earnest inquirer. We behold the Master sitting in the prow of Simon's fishing boat, which rocks in the ripple, while the smooth waters stretch away astern. The green slope of the shore is covered with a dense mass of people, disciples, Pharisees, thoughtful seekers after truth, careless and curious listeners, while over all arches the deep blue of the Galilean sky. Every face of the thousands is fixed upon the Great Teacher, and every ear is attentive to the simple, suggestive stories which fall from his lips. All day long he teaches in parables, presenting illustrations of the Gospel from the plowman on the hillside, the fisher's net upon the beach, the mustard plant growing in the garden, the housewife sweeping her room and kneading her dough. The most captious critic could find in these stories no heretical statements, since each hearer drew his own moral. The simple Galilean peasant would carry home a lesson or two, and perhaps the next week as he watched his wife making bread, or the next year as he was scattering seed, would recall the parable, and gain a new meaning. And the earnest disciple who sought to know the mysteries of the kingdom would find still deeper truths in the story. For eighteen centuries students have been digging into these mines of truth, and not yet is their precious ore exhausted.

Verse 1. *The same day.* After the call of his mother and brothers, related at the close of chapter 12. *Out of the house.* The house in Capernaum which he made his home, perhaps that of Simon Peter. He went to the *seaside* so that a larger number might listen to his teachings. All the landscape gave him

texts, in the farmer sowing his field and the fisher drawing his net. He *sat*, because that was the position customary for a teacher.

2. *Great multitudes.* It was near to the close of the popular period of the Saviour's ministry; but not many weeks later he was left alone with the twelve. A crowd is not

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always the token of a successful ministry. *Into a ship.* This was probably the boat which was kept for his service in passing from place to place along the shore (Mark 3, 9). *And sat.* This was the customary posture of the rabbis while giving instruction. *Multitude stood.* On the northern end of the lake are several small inlets, where a boat may ride at anchor only a few feet from the shores, which slope gently up on each side, forming a natural amphitheater.

3. He spake many things. This appears to have been the beginning of his practice of teaching in parables. Of those given at this time Matthew has recorded seven, and Mark an additional one. Doubtless there were many others which were not written. But we are not to suppose that the preaching is lost which remains unpublished. *In parables.* A good definition of a parable is that of Lyman Abbott: "A fictitious narrative, true to nature, yet unobtrusive, veiling a spiritual truth under a symbol, for the purpose of conveying it to minds reluctant or indifferent." It taught some things to the indifferent, drove the truth home to the thoughtful and inquiring. *Behold.* Perhaps emphasizing his words by pointing to a farmer at work on the terraced hillside. *A sower.* The sower is, first of all, Christ himself, who is present whenever truth is taught; next, his apostles, or immediate disciples; but also all who labor in Christ's cause, whether preachers or lay workers. *Went forth.* In the East the farmer never lives upon his farm, but always in the village, from which he goes forth to his fields, which are often at a distance.

4. Some seeds. The seed is not all truth, but Gospel truth, that which brings salvation to those who receive it. *By the wayside.* There are no fences in the East, but the fields are separated by beaten paths, upon which some of the seed will be sure to fall. Such are the hearts beaten into hardness by the rush of worldly and sensual thoughts, so that they are not open to the truth, which falls upon them, but does not enter them. *The fowls.* Revised Version, "the birds." Just as the birds pick up the seed on the hard ground, so do the light thoughts and frivolous utterances drive away the impression of the truth from the careless hearer. Beware of the wandering thoughts, which are Satan's messengers. (See verse 19.)

5. Stony places. Revised Version, "rocky places;" not places where stones and soil

intermingled, but where the rock beneath is thinly covered with earth—an emblem of the shallow natures which seem to be converted when only the surface of the emotions is stirred, while the heart below remains unyielding. *Forthwith they sprung up.* Because the rock beneath was warmer than the soil, and started a premature but transient growth. So the weak, emotional nature is often the soonest to be aroused in time of revival. Let us not suppose that mere excitement is true conviction.

6. When the sun was up. In the late spring rains the seed quickly germinates, only to be as quickly burned out by the hot summer sun. *Because they had no root.* During the long drought of summer the surface soil becomes very dry, and only those plants live whose roots reach down to moisture below. *They withered away.* Every revival will furnish instances of this class, people of emotional nature, but weak will, easily influenced by circumstances. When they drop back to their former state of sin they are often called backsliders, when in reality they were never genuinely converted. The Christian character that cannot stand trial is not real, but only seeming.

7. Some fell among thorns. These are very abundant in Palestine, as in all countries where they are permitted to find a place. In the parable, as Christ tells us, they represent "the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of this life." Thorns will grow of themselves, but good seed must be planted and cared for. *Choked them.* They do not always kill the seed, but they prevent it from full development, so that it brings no fruit to perfection (Luke 8, 14). How many starve their souls that they may supply their bodies! Better be poor here than poor hereafter.

8. But others. Notice that in no instance is the seed different. Truth is the same wherever it falls upon the heart. *Good ground.* Representing the hearts which are receptive, tender, and ready to make good use of the Gospel. What kind of soil is your heart? *Brought forth fruit.* This is the purpose of all the toil, fruit which will repay the farmer for his toil. In the application it represents the renewed character wrought by the Gospel, and the ennobling influence which such a character exerts. *Some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold.* A single kernel of wheat has been known to produce twelve

hundred grains; but in the East the usual harvest is from twenty to sixty times the amount of the seed. So there are natures from which great effects come from the Gospel seed. It fell in the heart of Saul of Tarsus, and unnumbered have been the results. It quickened the soul of John Wesley, and the harvest is world-wide. *Some thirty-fold.* Some disciple may say, "No results have come from my salvation." Doubtless there might be a larger harvest from many, but no one knows how many are insensibly influenced by a single godly life lived in their presence.

18. *Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.* Listen to its explanation.

19. *The word of the kingdom* is the Gospel, the teachings that would hallow God's name, bring about his control of forces, and do his will on earth as it is in heaven. But Gospel teaching is sometimes not understood because all human hearts are not teachable. The seed is good, but the soil is unfertile. It is like the tramped earth of the wayside. Worryment, pleasures, and a thousand earthly interests have passed over the heart, as the camels and burdened donkeys and numbers of men pass over Eastern roads, until it is all hard and dusty. It is no longer improvable. It needs the Gospel plow, like the preaching of another John the Baptist, to break its solid surface, so that the showers of mercy and the rising of the Sun of righteousness may turn it again into arable soil.

20. *Stony places.* Ready emotion is not a sure sign of either shallowness or depth of nature; but superficial people are easily moved. Just as the sun dries up surface soil quickly, just as the rain moistens the surface first, so every slight movement affects some people. But they lack "root," they have no deep apprehension of divine truth. *Tribulation* in this world, we are assured elsewhere by our Lord, we shall have; *persecution* is sure to come where the spirit of Satan is strong enough to venture on it; and

it requires a person of some depth and substance to stand up against persecution and tribulation. The thoughtless, superficial character is *offended*. "It is a thought very full of comfort, however, that the fertility of our hearts, unlike that of the soil, is under the control of our own will."

22. *The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches.* The anxieties of the poor and the ease of mind of the rich are both alike thorns. They are weeds, which, while they do not always prevent the seed of the kingdom from germinating in the heart, "strangle" it, and make the life unfruitful. No one can be a serviceable Christian, a useful child of God, who is care-stricken, constantly worried by his troubles and responsibilities. Christ leads us through no darker rooms than he went through before. We have the repeated promises of God that his blessings will abundantly meet our needs, and if we cannot repose on those promises, we forfeit a large share of our usefulness. On the other hand, the comfort that comes from wealth is even more hostile to the growth of the Gospel spirit. If a man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Remember that these thorns grow unplanted, and the better the soil the more apt they are to grow, if the soil has not already been preempted for the planting of the good seed.

23. Astonishing stories are told of wheat and barley harvesting in the East. *He that heareth the word, and understandeth it.* Who seeks to know God's will, accepts what he understands, and seeks to live it, *beareth fruit.* If seed and soil are good, the fruit is sure. And the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. All these spring from the good ground in which has been planted the Gospel. The graces of the Beatitudes beautify it. *Some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.* All good soils are fruitful, but not all are equally productive. Talents and opportunities greatly vary.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

THE FIRST PARABLE.

Of the thirty recorded parables of Christ that of the sower, which constitutes the lesson, is the first. And of these thirty this parable is distinguished by the fact that it is one of the two only of which Christ himself gave a detailed explanation. And this exposition by its divine Author is so complete and

explicit that it leaves nothing for the commentator to add toward making its meaning clear. An attempt to explain Christ's own explanation would be like holding a candle up to the sun. And to read other meanings into the parable than those pointed out by Christ is not exposition, but imposition—a distinction not always respected by exegetes. We

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can therefore do nothing better than to read the parable and the explanations of its parts given by the Lord, and see what applications its principles and truths have to us and to others. But the parallel records of the parable as given by Mark (4, 4-8, 14-21) and by Luke (8, 5-8, 11-15) should be carefully compared with Matthew's statement of it. This should be the first duty of teacher and scholar in the study of the lesson. Having done that, there are a few associated thoughts which may properly be considered.

CHRIST'S METHOD OF TEACHING.

The parable was Christ's most characteristic form of teaching. The statement above that there are thirty of his parables recorded in the gospels does not cover the real facts. These thirty are those which are classified as parables according to the stricter definition of the word. There are at least twenty other examples, however, which have all the essential qualities of the parable, and in the study of Christ's method must be regarded as such. For instance, under the strict definition, it is said that the Gospel of John contains no parable. That is only technically true. The passage in which Jesus represents himself as the true shepherd (John 10), and that in which he compares his relation to his disciples as that of the vine to the branches (John 15), are in reality parables. So, also, are the illustration of the two houses with which he closed the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 7, 24-27), and the "children in the market place" (Luke 7, 32), and "the unclean spirit" (Luke 11, 24-26), the new cloth and the old garment, and the old bottles and the new wine (Matt. 9, 16, 17), and many other examples. From the standpoint of rhetoric these may be distinguished from the parables proper, but in their nature they are the same, the characteristic of them all being that they point out or imply a parallel between natural processes or aspects of ordinary life and the facts or laws of the moral or spiritual realm. Call it what we will—simile, metaphor, allegory, parable, analogy—what Jesus perpetually did in his teaching was to use familiar objects of nature and the ordinary actions of men to symbolize spiritual truths.

VEILING THE TRUTH.

In the study of the present lesson let no one fail to consider the section that lies be-

tween its two parts, namely, verses 10-17. After Jesus had spoken the parable of the sower to the multitude his disciples asked him, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" His answer is startling. No frank interpretation of this answer can avoid the conclusion that he meant to say that he used the parable in order to veil the truth from those to whom he spoke. Not from his disciples, for he explained the parable privately to them, but from those who had been deliberately sinning against the light, who had shown themselves unwilling to accept and obey the truth. From them the truth now was to be hidden. It was the beginning of judgment. Light was being withdrawn, and the enemies of the truth were being left to the darkness they had chosen. It is at this point that we must distinguish between the parables proper and the other though closely similar forms of Christ's teachings. The strict parable, such as the one in the lesson, is more difficult of understanding than the other forms of similitude used by Jesus; and while at heart they are the same, the parable in its strict sense is not so open in its meaning. And it was at this middle point in Christ's life that he began to use the strict parable, and he did it that his teachings might be more closely confined to those who had ears to hear. To the insincere and captious and willful he would no longer speak the truth. They had just declared that his most gracious works were wrought by the power of Satan (Matt. 12, 24). The fatal character of that perversion of truth is seen in what Jesus said about the sin against the Holy Ghost (Matt. 12, 31, 32). How utterly insincere they were is evidenced by the fact that even while Jesus was saying these solemn things to them they asked of him "a sign." He answered them with an enigma (Matt. 12, 39, 40), following it with words of stern reproach and warning to a "wicked generation." With a similar enigma had he replied to the rulers at Jerusalem, who had demanded of him "a sign" for his authority in driving the traffickers out of the temple (John 2, 18, 19). Even his disciples did not understand that answer until after his resurrection (John 2, 22). This inability of the disciples to understand the parables shows how deep hidden were the truths they contained. They did not understand this parable of the sower. Directly after they asked him to explain the parable of

the wheat and the tares (verse 36). And a little while after (Matt. 15, 16) we find them asking him to explain to them an even less parabolic bit of teaching, that "not that which goeth into the mouth defileth the man, but that which cometh out of the mouth." And if even the disciples found it difficult to understand, how utterly unable must have been the perverse multitude that did not care to know! The lesson which lies in all this is the appalling danger of two spiritual calamities—first, the deadening of spiritual faculty, gross hearts, dull ears, closed eyes; second, the withdrawal of light by truth being presented more and more enigmatically. Verse 12 is the statement of this inexorable law of judgment.

UNVEILING THE TRUTH

But the parable, while it veils the truth from unworthy eyes, enshrines it for the poor in spirit and the pure in heart. Unto such it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (verse 11). Not all at once, but according to the measure of character. To the disciples Jesus explained some things. Subsequent events explained others. When the Spirit came not only were Christ's words brought to remembrance (John 14, 26), but increase of understanding also. And still the meanings of these sayings of Christ are being brought out. Our eyes are yet holden that we do not see what our children will see in them. And beyond all this, we are brought to recognize that all nature and all life are books of spiritual parables; that everywhere God is in nature and in life, and therefore nature and life are full of spiritual meanings—meanings hid to the gross of heart, but ever opening in new surprises to the children of the kingdom.

Thoughts for Young People.

The Warning of the Parable.

1. *We are warned that merely to hear the truth is not enough to save us.* Not all those who stood on the shore listening to Jesus were "good ground hearers," and not all who attend church will be saved. Mere opportunities are of little value unless they are rightly used.

2. *We are warned against the careless hearing of God's truth.* The parable interested all, but benefited only those who sought

its meaning. Let us listen, not for enjoyment, not to criticise, but to obtain the truth.

3. *We are warned against the forgetful hearing of the truth.* He who hears without remembering is the ground from which the birds pick up the seeds. How often a joke or a sneer at a sermon has driven the truth out of the heart!

4. *We are warned against instability,* the character which receives the truth, but does not keep its power. How many have listened and wept, and been faithful only for a time! How many houses of character on which may be written, "This man began, but was not able to finish!"

5. *We are warned against the character which suffers from love of the world.* How many are pinched and withered and fruitless in their spiritual life, because they are crowded by worldly thoughts and cares and pleasures! The ball room, the social dance, and the theater have choked the growth of many Christians.

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

1. *The place* (verses 1, 2). Where was it? Near what city? Why did Jesus so often preach and teach out of doors in the country? (1) The houses were too small and the streets too narrow for the great crowds. (2) Already the rulers and the leaders in the city were opposed to him. (3) He loved country life, the freedom and openness of it. (4) He found out of doors the themes of many sermons. Now look at the picture—the blue water of the lake, distant mountains, city near by, sloping shores with many thousands of listeners standing, Jesus sitting in the boat.

2. *The plan* (verse 3). Just about this time Jesus began a new kind of teaching. What is it here called? Explain the parable. "A story or a fact in nature which illustrates spiritual teaching." Why did Jesus use parables? (1) To attract interest; everybody likes to hear a story. (2) To awaken thought; the illustration makes people think and ask questions. Note the effect on the disciples (verses 10-17). (3) God made the world visible and invisible, natural and spiritual; the parable shows spiritual law in the natural world. All around us is the open book of nature; here

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3. Now let us read this parable (verses 3-8). Yonder on the side of the hill overlooking the lake and in sight of the crowd is a farmer sowing his field. Notice the four kinds of ground on which his seed fell, and what followed. Let one scholar describe each of the four kinds of soil. Notice that the first sown seed did not grow at all, but was lost; the second grew and died; the third lived, but gave no fruit; the fourth alone brought forth fruit. When an Indian plants corn he puts four kernels into each hill—"One for the worms, one for the bugs, one for the birds, and one for Indian."

4. Now for the teaching of the parable (verses 18-23). What does the seed represent? (See notes.) Who is the sower? The sower was and is Jesus Christ; but everyone, young or old, who tries to tell Gospel truth to another is a sower. Again take up the four kinds of soil, and show how the seed of truth in the heart is affected by its surroundings. How often "the birds" of evil thoughts or bad habit make people forget the truth! Then the shallow, stony ground—we see it in every revival. There are people like hothouse plants, who must be kept under artificial heat, or they will perish. O, for more decision, purpose, determination, in the service of God! Then the "thorny ground;" we see constantly people who lose their interest in Christ because the world, its cares, its work, and especially its pleasures, crowd Christ out of the heart. Not all of them lose their religious life; but they starve and choke it. Last of all, "the good ground." What is a good heart for the word to grow in? What is the fruit? It is character in ourselves and the results of our life in others.

By Way of Illustration.

Seed by the wayside. A dying, despairing man, addressing one under whose ministry he had sat for twenty years, said, "I have never heard a single sermon!" The minister, who had known him for years as a constant hearer, looked astonished. "I attended church," he explained, "but my habit was, so soon as you began the sermon, to begin a review of last week's trade and to anticipate and arrange the business of the next."—*London Sunday School Chronicle.*

Stony places. "How do you account for

the falling away of the many who seem to be impressed during a revival?" was asked of an evangelist. The answer was: "There had been no real change of heart. When a dead body has been galvanized it moves several muscles as though it were alive, but when this outside power is removed there is still death just as there was before. Only a deep principle can carry a man through the testing which will surely come, and if there has been no real change of heart, we shall not see them after the revival."

Among thorns. An evangelist of large experience said: "One of my least successful series of meetings was held in a Western town just as it was having a period of great prosperity. The business men were buying and selling corner lots, and could not come to meeting. Everyone was so absorbed in money-getting and in money-spending that they had no time for prayer and personal work. The care of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choked the word, and the fruitage was small."

Good ground. A thoughtful girl living in the country at a distance from church read, on a Sunday, the life of a Christian woman. On closing the volume she said to herself, "That was a beautiful life." After a little thought she added, "And I should like to live such a life." A few minutes later she knelt down and said, "Lord, I will try from this time." The decision was made. She became one of the most useful of women, whose influence was felt not only in this country, but in India, where she has spent several years of her precious life.

The seed compared to the word. Jesus compared the word to a seed. There is in every seed a life principle which even the wisest man cannot understand. We none of us know why it sprouts and grows. It has a power which we cannot measure.

So with God's word. It has a power which we cannot understand. When we read it it affects us differently from the reading of other books. It works wondrous transformations in human lives. It seems to have in itself a life principle.

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Never was the good seed of the kingdom so widely and generously sown as now. The Bible is printed in almost every language; preachers, evangelists, teachers, books

abound. Yet there are barren wastes unreached. How shall we who have abundance of the golden grain of truth answer to God for this? The seed which is to make this world like a fair garden is in your hand. Are you sowing it faithfully. If you are, you will be glad when you come bringing your sheaves to hear the Master say, "Well done."

But let us see about the seeds in our own hearts. There has been no lack of sowing there. We have had the blessed Bible, earnest pastors, faithful teachers, books, Christian influences directed by the Holy Spirit, bearing to our hearts day by day the good seed, as the wind carries the life germ of flowers from field to field. Last Sunday, when we were with Jesus in the Pharisee's house, his gracious words to a soul sorry for sin were like precious seed dropped in our hearts. Did they fall upon good ground? Will they bring forth a hundredfold of fruit?

Jesus tells us why seed sowing is often a failure. The parable speaks closely to my Sunday school class, to each one personally. There is a form of deafness which prevents the person affected with it from hearing words. He can hear the tick of a watch or any other sound, but words are perfectly unintelligible to him. The injury is deeper than the ear. It is in the brain itself. There is a moral deafness like this. We may hear truth with the outer ear, with no impression upon the mind or heart. Many persons hear sermons—yes, and Sunday school lessons—just that way. The words are forgotten almost as soon as uttered, because they are not listened to earnestly and seriously. Jesus says Satan "catcheth away" seed that lies thus upon the surface. He has many ways of doing it. The impressions made by a sermon or in prayer meeting are often dissipated by the trivial conversation which begins as soon as the benediction is said. The good seed of a Sunday school lesson is often snatched away by thoughtless chatter in the class.

You would think it a ruthless thing to spoil your friend's garden by scattering the beautiful flower seed she had planted. It is far more serious to snatch away the seed of life from the heart of your friend by jesting or talking here about week-day plans and amusements. It is not a matter of indifference whether or not you cherish the good seed so that it may grow and bring forth fruit. It is a matter of life or death.

In India now there is a terrible famine, and thousands are dying because this year's crop of grain has failed. The seed was sown, but unfavorable conditions prevented its growth. There are spiritual famine and death where the seed or truth fails to produce a harvest. Many a soul is starving, not because good seed has not been plentifully sown, but because the soil is unfruitful.

In the country where Jesus spoke this parable the sower knows he must put his wheat in early to get the start of the thorns, which are sure to come. If we would have a good spiritual harvest, the heavenly seed must be rooted in us early, before the strength of the heart soil is spent in worldliness and sin.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Give in words a picture of the scenes: Lake, boat, shore, multitude, Saviour, sower at work, fields, etc. . . . The definition of a parable. . . . Why Jesus used parables. . . . Let the scholars describe the four kinds of souls here named. . . . Illustrations of different varieties from Scripture: 1. Wayside—Pharisees, Felix. 2. Stony—the rich young ruler, the scribe of Matt. 8. 19, 20. 3. Thorns—Lot in Sodom, Demas, Judas. 4. Good ground—Ethiopian treasurer, Saul of Tarsus, Lydia. . . . How to hear the Gospel, as shown in this lesson. . . . The parable may be presented under five heads: 1. The sower—the great Teacher, Jesus Christ; and every teacher of the Gospel of Christ is a sower. 2. The seed—divine truth. 3. The wayside—what sort of heart is this? Who are the fowls of the air? 4. The stony ground—what sort of heart is this? 5. The thorns—among which real spiritual life may exist, but so choked that no fruit is produced. 6. The good ground—a good heart is (1) honest, (2) good, (3) hearing, (4) keeping, (5) preserving, (6) fruit bearing.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

O scatter seeds.

Work, for the night is coming.

The Lord into his garden comes.

Far and near the fields are teeming.

We plow the fields.

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Matt. 13. 24-3

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Ever looking upward.
Sow, ere the evening falls.
Sowing in the morning.
Christians, lo! the fields are whit'ning.
Lo! the harvest field is bending.

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FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK: Ver. 2, Fishing boats, 662. Ver. 3, Going forth to sow, 663. Ver. 4, The wayside, 664.

SERMONS ON THE LESSON.

Verses 1-23.—*The Homiletic Review*, vol. xxxvii, page 450.

Verse 3.—Leighton, *Works*, vol. ii, page 254.

Verse 4.—*The Homiletic Monthly*, vol. vi, page 392.

Verse 18.—Burder, G., *Sermons*, page 248. Edmondson, *Short Sermons*, page 370.

Blackboard.



The seed is the word, scattered and sown as God's truth is taught, and unless our hearts are like the good ground, ready to receive and nurture the seed, our lives will be unfruitful. Some hearts are hardened and indifferent, like the beaten path on which the seed lies, only to be caught up or blown away. Others are dry and stony, and the seed finds no root and little nourishment, and soon withers. The thorny heart receives the seed, but worldly desires and idle habits, like thorns and weeds, crowd out the word, and no fruit is brought to perfection. Which is my heart like?

LESSON IX. PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM.

GOLDEN TEXT. The field is the world. Matt. 13, 38.

[May 27.]

AUTHORIZED VERSION.

[Read Matt. 13, 24-53; Mark 4, 21-29.]

Matt. 13, 24-33. [Commit to memory verses 31-33.]

21 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay: lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

REVISED VERSION.

- 24 Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when the blade sprang up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. And the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares? And he said unto them, An enemy hath done this. And the servants say unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he saith, Nay: lest haply while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reap-

30 Let both grow together until the harvest : and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them : but gather the wheat into my barn.

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field :

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds : but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 Another parable spake he unto them ; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

ers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them : but gather the wheat into my barn.

31 Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field ; which indeed is less than all seeds ; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 Another parable spake he unto them ; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened.

Time.—A. D. 28. **Place.**—Near to the Sea of Galilee.

Home Readings.

- M.* Parables of the Kingdom. Matt. 13. 24-33.
Tu. The parable explained. Matt. 13. 34-43.
W. Further parables. Matt. 13. 44-52.
Th. The enemy at work. Gen. 3. 1-8.
F. Separation. Matt. 25. 31-46.
S. Judgment. Rev. 20. 11-15.
S. Growth of the kingdom. Mark 4. 26-34.

Lesson Hymns.

No. 120, New Canadian Hymnal.
 I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice,
 And it told thy love to me ;
 But I long to rise in the arms of faith,
 And be closer drawn to thee.

No. 91, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Whoever receiveth the Crucified One,
 Whoever believeth on God's only Son,
 A free and a perfect salvation shall have :
 For he is abundantly able to save.

No. 115, New Canadian Hymnal.
 Take my life and let it be
 Consecrated, Lord, to Thee ;
 Take my moments and my days,
 Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS.

- The Parable of the Tares*, v. 24-30.
 What is a parable?
 Wherein does a parable differ from a fable?
 Why did Jesus speak in parables?
 How many parables does this chapter record?
 To whom was this parable spoken?
 What is the chief theme of the parable?
 What evil work went along with the good?
 What surprise greeted the servants?
 What explanation was given?
 What directions were issued for the harvest?

2. *The Parable of the Mustard Seed*, v. 31, 32.

What, besides the good seed, is the kingdom of heaven like?

In what contrast does the likeness consist?

In what particulars does this parable show that (1) the Gospel is a living principle? (2) it grows in the individual and in the world? (3) it becomes a blessing to mankind?

3. *The Parable of the Leaven*, v. 33.

What, besides the mustard seed, is the kingdom of heaven like?

Of what is this the symbol?

Teachings of the Lesson.

1. The sower sowed good seed. The divine purposes mean righteousness. God and good are kindred terms. His kingdom is one of truth, of purity, of uprightness, in thought and deed.

2. An enemy sowed tares. Evil and devil are closely akin. To mar and ruin is the Satanic purpose. His kingdom is one of anarchy, of defeat, of death.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- The Parable of the Tares*, v. 24-30.
 Who spoke this parable?
 With what kingdom did he compare what sort of a man?
 What does the good seed represent? Verse 38.
 Who sows it, and where? Verses 37, 38.
 What bad seed-sowing was done?
 Who sowed the tares? Verse 39.
 When did the owner of the field find the tares?

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Who questioned him about his seed-sowing?

Over what were the servants perplexed?

To whom did the owner refer the evil?

What did the servants propose to do?

Why were they forbidden to gather the tares?

How long were the wheat and the tares to grow together?

Which would, then, be first gathered?

How were they to be disposed of?

What was to be done with the wheat?

What, in brief, is the meaning of the Parable of the Tares?

What lesson from it should come to each of us?

2. *The Parable of the Mustard Seed*, v. 31, 32.

To what seed is the kingdom of heaven likened?

What is said of the size of the seed?

What does it become when grown?

What shelter does it offer?

What lesson comes to us from the Parable of the Mustard Seed?

3. *The Parable of the Leaven*, v. 33.

To what, again, is the kingdom of heaven likened?

What is "leaven"?

Where was the leaven placed?

What effect had it on the meal?

What transforming effect has the Gospel on human hearts?

From the Parable of the Leaven what lesson comes to us?

Practical Teachings.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That the wicked are found among the good here?

2. That the wicked will be separated from the good hereafter?

3. That the wicked will have a fate different from the good?

4. That true religion is progressive?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Where was Jesus when he spoke these parables?

Did many hear him speak?

What parable had he given them just before this one?

What does he go on speaking about?

What may he have seen as he looked off on the hillside?

Whom did he mean by the sower sowing the good seed? *The Son of man.*

What does the Golden Text say about the field?

Who are the good seed? *The children of the kingdom.*

Who are the tares? *The children of the wicked one.*

Who is the enemy that came in the night and sowed them? *The devil.*

When will the harvest be? *At the end of the world.*

What will be done with the tares? *They will be cast away.*

Where will the children of the kingdom be? *With God, in his heaven.*

How many parables did Jesus speak in this lesson?

Can you give the second?

What was the third?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

(For the entire school.)

Here are three stories telling what the kingdom of heaven is like.

1. What did the enemy of the Son of man do? *He sowed tares among the wheat.*

2. Who are the tares? *The children of the wicked one.*

3. How long are they found together? *Until the end of the world.*

4. What else is the kingdom of heaven likened to? *A grain of mustard seed which greatly grows.*

5. What else is the kingdom of heaven likened to? *Leaven in meal.*

6. What may we learn from these last two parables? *That the Gospel is a living principle.*

7. What is the GOLDEN TEXT? *"The field is," etc.*

NEW CHURCH CATECHISM.

36. What is the indirect witness of the Spirit? The indirect witness of the Spirit is the assurance which we have from the consciousness of the fruit of the Spirit in our heart and life.

2 Corinthians i. 12. For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.

THE LESSON OUTLINE.

The Gospel Among Men.

I. ITS AUTHOR.

- A man which sowed. v. 24.
 Lord hath appointed me. Isa. 61. 1.
 God sent forth his Son. Gal. 4. 4.

II. ITS NATURE.

- Good seed. v. 24.
 Children of the kingdom. Matt. 13. 38.
 The light of the world. Matt. 5. 14.

III. ITS FIELD.

- In his field. v. 24.
 The field is the world. Matt. 13. 38.
 Preached among all nations. Luke
 24. 47.

IV. ITS FOE.

- His enemy. . . sowed tares. v. 25.

- Of your father the devil. John 8. 44.
 The god of this world. 2 Cor. 4. 4.

V. ITS COUNTERFEIT.

- Then appeared the tares. v. 26-29.
 Children of the wicked one. Matt. 13. 38.
 The children of the devil. 1 John 3. 10.

VI. ITS GRADUAL GROWTH.

- A grain of mustard seed. v. 31. 32.
 A handful of corn. Psa. 72. 16.
 As the waters cover the sea. Isa. 11. 9.

VII. ITS TRANSFORMING POWER.

- Whole was leavened. v. 33.
 Ye must be born again. John 3. 7.
 Be ye transformed. Rom. 12. 2.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

The three parables that we now study are the second, third, and fourth of seven reported by Matthew in this chapter. They were spoken to a Galilean crowd, and quite probably, in connection with the parable of the sower, from the boat. This, however, is not certain. All the parables seem to have been spoken on the same day, in the autumn or early winter of A. D. 28, not far from Capernaum. We may easily receive the impression that the parable of the sower was spoken in a clear voice from the boat, so that the people on shore heard it distinctly, and that it was explained in a quieter, direct talk to the disciples in the boat. Then, lifting his voice the second time, Jesus resumed his address to the people who were still gathered on the shore. The parable of the tares is told by Matthew only.

Verse 24. *The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field.* We are to think of the seed as already sown when the story begins, and a good and wholesome growth already begun. (For a key to the explanation of this parable see verses 37-39.) The sower of wheat is the Lord Jesus; the sower of tares is the devil; the seed is human character, good and bad; the field is "the world," human life. But what is the kingdom of heaven? It is "the condition in human affairs in which those two petitions of the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' and 'Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,' shall be fulfilled." Salient features of that kingdom have been and are about to be made plain. From this parable we learn that in the earthly organization of the spiritual kingdom (what we call the visible Church) there are persons who do not belong to it. Other applications may be made with profit to our classes. Most boys and girls, recognizing the motivations of their consciences, will agree that there was an original sowing in their hearts of good seed—holy intuitions, impulses, etc.

They may, by a little graphic description, be made to realize the base interference of Satan, with his false seed. Their experiences, like our own, are of conflicting growth, good and bad apparently thriving together. But in personal life one sort tends to kill the other; and there is no need to wait for the final harvest before extirpating the tares.

25. *While men slept.* At nighttime. There is no hint that the servants of the farmer were negligent. *His enemy . . . sowed tares . . . went his way.* Satan often does his work in the dark, and hastens away—knowing that evil seed as well as good will germinate. *Tares* are darnel, which in the early stages of growth is not to be readily distinguished from wheat. So counterfeit Christians are sometimes indistinguishable from real Christians. "It is notorious," writes Dr. Tuttle, "that many in the Church cannot be distinguished from avowed worldlings."

26. *When the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.* The tares were sown soon after the

wheat, but could not be the full actor because

27. *Why can the Church be wrong?*

28. *In conversation The farmer have brought powers are human soul Will thou up? The*

29, 30. *culty than plants; the twined that stroy the v plies this p kingdom of is for us to tions of cha as well as e cult course most any ac waiting, and grossive men they of evil, moves in a perform," dr patience of and the cer Christian gra good and evil apparent per character of tory comes to manking that make judge Do not decide Do not reap reapers are t first the tares burn them. I fiently in sep wheat. Our be the end of the age, the nothing shall heaven but th are not to exp to Church disc velopment of t That kingdom*

wheat, but not until the grain appeared could the difference be seen. So only by the full "fruit" of men's lives can their character be discerned.

27. Whence then hath it tares? How can the Church or any portion of it ever do wrong? Why is evil permitted?

28. An enemy hath done this. The conversation is added for picturesque effect. The farmer knows that no accident could have brought this evil crop. He whose ripe powers are bent on the destruction of every human soul is the great sower of tares. *Will thou then that we go and gather them up?* The question is ignorant zeal.

29, 30. Nay. There was a greater difficulty than even the similarity of the two plants; their roots were so closely intertwined that to get rid of the tares would destroy the wheat. Our Lord distinctly applies this parable to the development of the kingdom of heaven on earth. God's method is for us to wait, not hastily to decide questions of character and life, but to give good as well as evil time to grow. This is a difficult course for a zealous soul to take. Almost any action is easier than that of patient waiting, and the purer and the more progressive men are, the more impatient are they of evil. Cowper's nervous hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," draws its keynote from the strange patience of God, who waits by the decade and the century for the development of Christian graces in the Church; who allows good and evil to work together, even to the apparent peril of the good, until the true character of each is shown and the final victory comes to the good. God would teach mankind that there is only one safe time to make judgment, and that is the last hour. Do not decide until all the testimony is in. Do not reap until the harvest comes. *The reapers are the angels. Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them.* In harvest time there is no difficulty in separating the tares from the wheat. Our Lord explains the harvest to be the end of the world, the consummation of the age, the time of final decision, when nothing shall be left in the kingdom of heaven but the sons of the kingdom. We are not to explain this parable as referring to Church discipline so much as to the development of the kingdom of God on earth. That kingdom was to be, as Dr. McLaren

says, "a rose amid thorns," to grow up amid antagonisms, as the next two parables set forth.

31. Another parable. Still our Lord has the fields in full view, and his third story also takes its figures and symbols from them. *A grain of mustard seed* has remarkable growth in size when compared with its smallness.

32. Is the least of all seeds. It is not needful to prove this statement to be scientifically exact. Jesus was holding conversation with country folk of Galilee; he was not teaching science to a class of students. He talked to them as they were accustomed to talk with one another. It is not certain to what plant he referred as "mustard." *The birds of the air come and lodge in the branches.* A fact that is mentioned to show the great size of the tree. The thought is not so much now concerning the sower as concerning the seed. God's great things always have small beginnings. Ezek. 17, 23 has a beautiful allusion which comes to our mind while studying verse 32.

The first of the three parables we study describes the evil growing along with the good in the kingdom of God. The second shows the outward growth and beneficence of the Gospel in the hearts of men, and of the dominion of Christ in the world. This parable has an individual, as well as a general, application. Turning to the third, we learn that the kingdom of God grows inwardly. "It spreads in space and increases in bulk; but it transforms inert matter into its own nature, and thus grows by assimilation."—*McLaren.*

33. Leaven, or yeast, is used as a symbol of the transforming power. The *woman* seems to have no special meaning. *Three measures* of meal are mentioned because probably that was the quantity most usually leavened at once, or because a definite number would make the story more realistic. But the main lessons of the parable are that the quickening influence which is to comfort and transform human nature is to come from without, that this world of men and women cannot of itself develop a kingdom of heaven. It is an exotic. God works in secret. His Spirit comes into the depths of the individual spirit and gradually permeates the whole being. But this cannot be done without a thorough fermentation and stirring up. In another place our Lord says he comes not to bring peace, but a sword; that is, not at

first, but eventually he is to bring peace. *Till the whole was leavened* is a very beauti-

ful indication of the final permeation of the mass with holy influences.

CRITICAL AND HOMILETICAL NOTES.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN AGAIN.

Our lesson of eight weeks ago on the Beatitudes prominently introduced the subject of the kingdom of heaven, or the "kingdom of the heavens," as the expression strictly rendered is. Back of that the word was introduced to us in the Baptist's herald cry, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3. 2), and that proclamation was the burden of Christ's own preaching as late, at least, as the early part of the second year of his ministry (Mark 1. 14), as it was also the announcement later with which he charged the twelve (Matt. 10. 7) and the seventy (Luke 10. 9) when he sent them forth. In the first sentence of his recorded teachings Jesus speaks of the kingdom (John 3. 3), and we find him still talking of it during his trial before Pilate (John 18. 36). Evidently it was a preeminent thought with him, the understanding of which is the key to his Gospel.

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

Let us approach it through other kingdoms that have come into the world. Some time in the history of our earth, at some place, no one knows when nor where, the first germ, or spore, or seed of life appeared, and the process of assimilation and growth began. In that first seed the vegetable kingdom was at hand—that is, was come near, was among the things of the organic world. It was in the world, and the world was to be transformed by it, but the world knew it not. But its coming made an epoch. Later, no one knows how long afterward nor where, an egg was formed in the world, a thing having in it the latency of a new kind of life. In that egg the animal kingdom was at hand, was in the world, and would master the world, but the world knew it not. It was, nevertheless, a second epoch. Still later, no one knows how much later, a child was born in Bethlehem of Judea. In that child, growing from infancy to manhood, the moral will of God for the first time in the history of the world was to be perfectly done. And so in that child the kingdom of God, the kingdom of the heavens, where the will of God was always done, was at hand, was among men. "He was in the world, and the world was

made by him, and the world knew him not." But he was to overcome the world, until every knee should bow to him, and every tongue confess his lordship. And so his coming was the supreme epoch, for in him the life of heaven first began to be lived in the earth. Christ was the kingdom of heaven in the world, and as many as entered into his life became like him in perfect surrender to the will of God, entered that kingdom; for "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM.

Matthew is the only one of the evangelists who uses the expression, "the kingdom of heaven." The other evangelists use the equivalent expression, "the kingdom of God." Mark uses it twelve times, Luke thirty-three times, and John only twice. Matthew uses both terms, but he employs the first thirty-five times and the second but four times. Matthew gives twelve parables which he introduces by the words, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto." Mark gives but two parables as directly expressed similitudes of the kingdom of God, one of which is that of the seed growing secretly (4. 26), which he alone gives, and the other is that of the mustard seed (4. 30-32), given also by Matthew and Luke. Luke also gives but two parables in which the comparison of the kingdom is expressly stated, namely, the mustard seed and the leaven. So that altogether there are but thirteen distinct parables expressly setting forth similitudes of the kingdom. But nearly or all the parables are, in fact, parables of the kingdom as well as these thirteen. For instance, the parables of the sower, of the good Samaritan, the lost sheep, and the prodigal son, while the similitudes are not stated, are, in reality, illustrations of various phases of the kingdom. And then we are not confined to the parables for our knowledge of the kingdom of heaven. The Beatitudes, with which the Sermon on the Mount opens, are descriptions of the characteristics of the subjects of the kingdom. The whole sermon is a statement of the way the citizens of the kingdom ought to live. Christ's words to Nicodemus tell us the only way one can know the kingdom,

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THE PARABLES

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namely, by being begotten into it from above. The nature and spirit of one thus born was illustrated by Christ when he said of a little child, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." This kingdom was distinguished from all political kingdoms, with all their outward pomp and show, when he said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," and to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world." Jesus lifted it above all nationalism and ecclesiastical succession and mere orthodox profession when he declared that even the publicans and harlots would enter the kingdom of God before the unfaithful children of Abraham, and that not those who said, "Lord, Lord," but those who did the will of his Father should enter the kingdom.

INTERPRETATION OF THE PARABLES.

Dean Trench states the most important principle to be observed in the interpretation of parables, namely, that we shall "obtain a firm grasp of the central truth which the parable would set forth, and distinguish it as sharply and accurately as we can from all cognate truths which border upon it." Every parable stands for one distinct idea. Its chief lesson lies in that. Other things are accessories, and many of them may have no teaching purport whatever. The rule in rhetoric that we shall not make a figure of speech go on all fours is particularly applicable to the interpretation of parables. In the parable of the sower the central thought is that the fruitfulness of the seed of truth depends upon the state of the heart of him who receives it. Everything is subordinate to that. We must occupy this central viewpoint in order to a correct perspective.

THE PARABLES OF THE LESSONS.

In general these three parables represent the vitalities or dynamics of the kingdom. Of the same character in this respect is Mark's parable of the seed growing secretly (4. 26). But while this thought is common to the four, or underlies them, it is not the central idea of any one of them. The focal thought of the parable of the wheat and the tares, as also of the parable of the net (verses 47-50), is that the wicked and the just must live together in this world, but will be separated in the world to come. The parable of the mustard seed stands simply for the expansive power of truth, growing from smallest beginnings to largest results.

While the parable of the leaven sets forth the assimilating power of the truth of the kingdom, which, as the yeast in meal, gradually but certainly transforms those who receive it. In all of these alike the vital, dynamic, transforming element is the "word of the kingdom," according to Christ's own interpretation of the parable of the sower (verse 19), something personally and purposely introduced into the human heart from without, as a sower puts seed into the soil, as a woman puts leaven into the meal; and what follows is an evolution, indeed, but an induced evolution, that would never have taken place but for the introduction of the new dynamic adapted to the elements of the nature of man as the seed is to the soil.

Thoughts for Young People.

Concerning the Kingdom of Heaven.

1. *The kingdom of heaven is antagonized by an evil personality, a mighty intellect, and a bad heart—the enemy Satan. He is the sower of bad thoughts, bad deeds, and bad men. He drops a serpent into Eden, an Ananias into the primitive Church.*
2. *God is the sower who went forth to sow. All things fell from his creative fingers as seeds. Butterflies and planets, gentle zephyrs and destructive whirlwinds, all the vegetable and animal and spiritual world come from him. But the best seeds that he sows, the seed most typical of his own character, is goodness.*
3. *"The devil's seed has vitality as well as God's." And it is very hard in this world to divide the evil from the good. The roots of the two are intertwined in the same communities.*
4. *The kingdom of heaven is like the mustard tree, which, beginning small, grows into great proportions, and is recognized by all as a refuge from the storm and from the heat.*
5. *The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, a self-multiplying power. Touching one particle of meal, it changes its nature, and then every particle that touches that modified one feels the changes. So it goes on until the whole is leavened. It is a self-multiplying power. Put it into one heart, and it reaches out over all the world.*

Teaching Hints for Intermediate Classes.

Here are three more parables. Let each one be read and explained separately, and let the teacher draw as much of the thought as possible out of his pupils.

I. The Tares (verses 24-30). Our Lord himself gave us the interpretation of this parable in verses 36-43, which should be read carefully. Now let us analyze the story, noticing especially how different it is from that of the sower.

1. *The two seeds.* In the other parable the seed was the truth, sown in the hearts of men. In this parable the seed is *men themselves*. "Wheat" are the good; "tares" are the bad. What is the difference between them? One is useful and does good; the other is useless and does harm. Which are you, wheat or tares? Out in the field tares can't be changed into wheat; but in God's field that wonderful change can be wrought.

2. *The two sowers.* One is God; the other is the devil. "The children of the kingdom" are God's children; the tares, the evil, are the children of Satan. Don't waste time over the idle questions about the personality of Satan—whether he was once a good angel or not; how he came to be evil; what will become of him, etc. These may or may not be themes for theologians; certainly they are not for boys and girls. Keep to the practical message of the parable. Will you be one of Satan's children or God's child?

3. *The field.* In the first parable this was the hearts of men; in this it is the whole world, with its billion inhabitants, of whom each one is a child of Satan or of God. We see that both kinds of people are in the world; let us leave them there, while trying to make the world better.

4. *The harvest.* We know not when it will come, but let us be ready for it and its rewards of glory.

II. The Parable of the Mustard Seed. Show in this the story of Christ's Church—at first very small; now covering the world. As an illustration regard each great denomination as one branch. There are the Presbyterian branch, the Baptist branch, the Methodist branch. Show the growth and greatness of the Church of Christ in the world.

III. The Parable of the Leaven. Did you ever see bread made? Did you ever go to the store for yeast? What is it like?

Explain its effect on the mass of dough. As we took the last parable to illustrate the growth of the Gospel in the world, let us take this to represent the power of the Gospel over the heart and life of the one who receives it. Here is a man with a bad heart, swearing, drinking, lying, doing harm. He takes the Gospel into his heart, and see how his whole nature is changed.

By Way of Illustration.

"While men slept," Our unwatchfulness is Satan's opportunity. When Christians are lukewarm and the pastors indolent the enemy is busy sowing tares among the wheat. There are two causes of sleepiness among Christians. One is inactivity. We know people who lead very active lives during the week, and when they sit down in their homes or in church they fall asleep in fifteen minutes. They never go to sleep while busy on the street or in their office. A Christian active in winning souls never goes to sleep. Exercise your mental, moral, and spiritual limbs, and you will not be yawning or drowsing in God's service.

Some climates induce sleep. The sleeping disease of Africa has been fatal to thousands. An ill-ventilated room and some poisonous vapors induce sleep. So there are moral and social atmospheres which induce sleep in Christians. The atmosphere of the bell room, of the worldly social circle, induces a sleepy state of indifference to winning souls, converting the heathen, and building up the Church. A church full of such people is a dormitory, and for all practical purposes is about as good as a cemetery.—A. C. Dixon.

The origin of evil. When God revives his work Satan revives his also. You may be sure that when there is any special religious interest in your town there will be unusual activity among those who care not for the Church. A well-known pastor said:

"I have grown to expect that all sorts of saloon combinations and social combinations will start in against me as soon as my meetings get well under way. Often good people are drawn into these things who do not realize that Satan is thus trying to thwart the work of God's people."

After a thousand volumes have been written on the origin of evil we shall know just so much as Christ has told us here. "As

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enemy hath done it," and this enemy is the devil.

Forbidden to gather up tares. A zeal for the killing of heretics not regulated by these words of our Saviour allows no time for the one to grow strong in goodness nor for the other to forsake his sin. These zealots care not if wheat be rooted up, if only they can gather up tares.

Mary, Queen of England, who had so many Protestants put to death, rooted out the wheat instead of the tares. Philip II, of Spain, who declared that he was serving God by torturing to death all who did not believe that the pope and himself were infallible, put to death many of the best people of his realm.

Verses 31-33. A little germ and a large result. God's answer to the world's cry for help was a little baby—a little more weakness added to the weakness that was here already; a little more poverty added to the poverty that was here before. But that child has changed the course of empires, and rules in the civilized world.

Our own great Church was a very tiny seed away back there in the Epworth Rectory; and quite probably that wise sower, Susannah Wesley, never dreamed how great a tree would grow from it. In these comparatively few years of its growth it has come to be the most numerous Protestant denomination, and its power is felt around the world. And as Macaulay shows us in his *History of England*, the revival started by Wesley and his followers saved England from a reign of terror such as came to France.—*Bishop C. C. McCabe.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Let us study carefully these parables of the kingdom, remembering that they illustrate truth. Jesus told his disciples it was given to them to know the mysteries of the kingdom. The Holy Spirit will show us the meaning if we have a sincere desire only to know the truth. Jesus plainly teaches that tares grow in the world field as well as wheat. Evil is not a "false belief of mortal mind," as Christian Scientists illogically and unscripturally assert. A real, not imaginary, enemy with malicious purpose has sowed tares in the field which belonged to another, where only good seed was first sown. The problem of how evil came into the world and what will be done with it

is simplified if we take the Bible view. God understands, for he knows the end from the beginning, and it seems the only sensible way for us who know so little to believe what he tells us. He is not the author of evil. He made everything "good." An enemy full of jealous hate has sought to ruin all. He seems for a time successful, for the tares make a greater showing over the field than the wheat. They say in Palestine, where Jesus spoke this parable, "The ears which God has blessed bow their heads, but these accursed tares stick theirs above the whole field."

But if the tares grow, the wheat grows too. The owner of the field is only waiting for harvest time, when he will show his command of the situation. He will say to the reapers, "Gather first the tares in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." The sower of tares then will have nothing to say—affairs will have passed out of his hands. However flourishing his tares looked, they have come to naught, and the golden grain is the safe possession of the owner forever.

Do not be deceived. Sin is real; the adversary is real; the difference between the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one is real, though they grow side by side; the awful sorrow and disappointment of the wicked will be real; the glorious shining forth of the righteous as the sun will be real.

Solemnly, tenderly, Jesus says, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The mustard seed and the leaven also illustrate the final triumph of the kingdom of God over the kingdom of evil—a truth full of warning and of inspiration. See how the tiny seed of Christianity has grown since the few disciples of Jesus, unknown and unlettered men, began to preach it. Art, science, literature, commerce, "ledge in the branches" of this vigorous tree, although men do not always recognize or acknowledge that it is under its shadow they flourish. The world progresses in civilization and education only where Christian thought enlightens. Justice, mercy, truth, the rights of the individual, the brotherhood of man, are products only of Christian ethics. You have but to look at Christian nations compared with heathen to see the fulfillment of this parable's prophecy.

But the kingdom of God finally triumphs by the transformation of character in men

and nations. Christian teaching and, most of all, the lives of good men and women are silently working a change in the sentiment of society and of government. Notwithstanding the evil, the world is growing better. The present century would not tolerate the open cruelties and immoralities of the past. Evil thrives, but not in the light as once it did. Take courage; be strong for the right; be hopeful for yourself. There is inherent life in the good seed cherished in your heart. On this May day buds are growing, the once bare boughs are covered with beauty, the trees are coming into full leaf. Seeing the power of the life principle in them, we hopefully say: "His dew and sunshine are mine as well as theirs. I, too, am growing."

The Teachers' Meeting.

Uses of these parables: 1. To teach that evil is mingled with good in the Church of God; to forewarn God's children not to be discouraged when they find Church members dishonest or wrong. 2. To teach that counterfeit piety is a proof of the existence of genuine piety. The tares would not have been sown if the wheat had not been there. It is foolish to be alienated from the Church because bad people are in it. They belong to the world, and not to the Church, and their presence should alienate us from the world. As Dr. Schauffler says: "Nobody counterfeits cobblestones. It is a testimony to the value of diamonds that men counterfeit them." 3. To teach that God knows. 4. To teach that every one of us is every day sowing seed, good or bad, wheat or tares. 5. To teach that if one good seed be sown, God will care for the rest. If leaven be placed aright, God will see that the result will not fail. . . . I. Two sowers—good and evil, holiness and sin, God and Satan. II. Two seeds. Every good man is an unconscious promoter of goodness; every bad man is a seed of harm. III. Two growths, and yet hardly distinguishable. IV. Two destinities—the furnace and the garner; each soul seeks in the hereafter the condition and place for which it is fit. V. Two epochs—the time when the seed is dropped into the earth a tiny speck; the time when it stands on high with shade and fruit. VI. Two conditions—the unleavened dough, tasteless, heavy; the bread, light, luscious. There is a transforming power in the Gospel of Christ.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Love divine, all love excelling.
O could I speak the matchless worth,
My faith looks up to thee,
Jesus shall reign where'er the sun.

God loved the world of sinners.
Teach me, O Lord.
There's not a ray of sunshine.
Soon may the last glad song arise.
Come, thou long-expected Jesus.

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Blackboard.



In this world the good must mingle with the bad, the righteous with the wicked, the wheat with the weeds; but when the Son of man shall come in his heavenly kingdom the wheat will be finally separated from the tares, and while the good will be garnered, the bad will be burned. We need to watch and pray, lest in an unguarded hour the enemy sow in our hearts the seeds of an evil life, and in the end we be found unfit to be numbered with the children of the kingdom.

Thoughts for the Quiet Hour.

—We like to find fault ourselves; but we are never attracted to another man who finds fault.—*Faber*.

—Self-love makes us blind toward ourselves and sharp-sighted toward the actions of others.—*Gossner*.

—All we want in Christ we shall find in Christ. If we want little, we shall find little; if we want much, we shall find much; and if, in utter helplessness, we cast our all on Christ, he will be to us the whole treasury of God.—*Whipple*.

—Faith evermore overlooks the difficulties of the way, and bends her eyes only to the end.—*Bishop Hall*.

—Christian faith is a grand cathedral with dimly pictured windows. Standing without, you can see no glory, nor can possibly imagine any; standing within, every ray of light reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendors.—*Haethorne*.

—Christian lives should be illustrated copies of the Gospel. We are meant to be object lessons to the world of what God can do for sinful souls.—*McLaren*.

—The very gleanings of those mercies which God's people have are better than the whole vintage of the whole world.—*Caryl*.

—There is no sense in always telegraphing to heaven for God to send a cargo of blessing unless we are at the wharf to unload the vessel when it comes.—*Meyer*.

—Those who desire that others should look upon their infirmities with a compassionate eye must not look on the failings of others with censorious eye.—*Burkitt*.

Here and There.

. . . Some months ago there was organized in the city of Edinburgh, Scotland, a temperance society, bearing the mystical letters of "S. S. S.," the interpretation of which is the "Sober Scot Society." This society is about in the place where the early temperance societies of our own country were several generations ago; that is to say, they are pledged not to total abstinence but to moderation: they pledge themselves to drink no intoxicants before noon; not to drink except at a meal; not to treat their friends except at a meal; and not to give drinks in return for services rendered. This is very good as far as it goes. Perhaps some day the "Sober Scot Society" may take a step farther in the right direction.

Question—"What relation are the church and the Sunday-school?"

Answer—"Siamese Twins."

The surgeons never dared to separate the Siamese twins, lest it endanger the life of both.

Would to God all church and Sunday-school officials were as wise and cautious!

PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

Suggestions for the Primary Department.

An Envelope for Each Child. Some find it convenient to provide for each member of their class an envelope bearing his name. This holds the offering, and is placed by the child on the table as he enters the room. Much time is saved and confusion avoided by this method.

Ammunition. It is an excellent plan to keep a file of *Quarterlies* or lesson BANNERS which contain primary suggestions. They are profitable to look at "when the teacher does not know what to do next."

A Clock. Make the face of a clock on a piece of bristol paper. Cut the hands from the same material and cover them with black paper. Hang the clock in the front of the room and point the hands to the hour at which the scene of the lesson takes place.

A Handy Appliance. Stretch a strip of muslin across the room. Pin to it anything you wish to show the class, especially pictures cut from old lesson helps, picture charts, etc. Letters obtained from any available source can be pinned thereon to form words.

A Children's Choir. An excellent way to induce children to attend the preaching service is to form them into a choir. Then they will feel obliged to attend. They will also receive instruction in music, learn many wholesome hymns, and be a delight to the audience; for what is pleasanter to listen to than the clear, fresh voices of children? Another important consideration is that such a feature would settle the choir question, which is generally the most perplexing one in church management.

A Report to the Parent. The teacher of a class of children should send home once in six or eight weeks written reports of the child's attendance, deportment, lessons, and collections, the same to be signed by parents and brought back to the teacher. By reason of this method parents will take more pains to have their boys and girls have an excellent record. They will also know whether the money they have given their children has

gone into the collection basket or been deposited in some nickel-in-the-slot machine which they were obliged to pass on the way to the school.

Cards. The tiny picture cards are just the thing to give as a means of encouraging attendance. One is given out each Sabbath, and after the children have a certain number they change them for a large card. This method reminds us of one that has been made use of in India. Here the Sunday school children are given attendance cards. The teachers then take them back in exchange for toys. A little Mohammedan girl, noticing the love that is thus manifested to the children of the Christian school, said: "I like your Jesus because he loves little girls. Our Mohammed does not."

Scrapbooks. Teachers who have small classes can make for their scholars attractive scrapbooks in which to preserve their picture cards. These can be made of pink cambric muslin, cut into pieces twenty inches by twelve. Use fourteen or sixteen of these to a book. After pinking the edges stitch these together on the machine. The children should be instructed how to place their cards in their books, floor paste being preferable for an adherent.

For a Home Missionary Session. Have a box in which the children can place cards, papers, books, toys, etc., which they wish to donate to such as have less than they themselves. This box can be opened at certain times and its contents sent to hospitals for the children's ward, or given to deaconesses to distribute among needy children.

The Selection of Songs for a Primary Class.

BY JOSEPHINE L. BALDWIN.

Part 1.—The Words.

IN considering this subject we have two factors to study which are of almost equal importance—the words and the music. The marvelous growth of the kindergarten in the

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secular field, and its sturdy maintenance of the truth that only the best is good enough for the very little children, has had a marked and most advantageous effect on all departments of primary Sunday school work, but on none more than that of music. A few years ago the primary Sunday school teacher had a very small stock of songs from which to choose, and many of these were so babyish and inane that even the smallest of the children rebelled when asked to sing them. Now the quantity is sufficient to allow an intelligent selection, and the quality varies enough to make it more than ever necessary that judgment should not abdicate her throne at the call of a pretty tune or an attractive jingle of words.

The words, because they convey the more distinct meaning to the child's mind, need to be most carefully scrutinized, and to be of value they should meet these three conditions:

1. They must be simple enough for the child with his limited range of experiences to comprehend, especially in their references to material things.
2. They must express some sentiment that a child can truthfully utter as his own.
3. They must contain ideas of sufficient importance for a conscientious Sunday school teacher to be willing to take the time to teach them, knowing that the child will remember them long after he has forgotten much that is acquired later in life.

To illustrate the first condition: In a beautiful harvest hymn for little children is found this verse:

"Hill and valley richly praise Him
With their yield a hundredfold,
Clothing with redeeming glory
Fields that else were bare and cold."

Not only the words, but the form of expression of the last two lines lacks simplicity, though the idea is simple and could easily be expressed in a way that the smallest child could understand.

Under the second rule take that hymn which some years ago had the field of juvenile Sunday school song practically to itself:

"I want to be an angel,
And with the angels stand;
A crown upon my forehead,
A harp within my hand,"

Those words are undoubtedly simple enough for young children to understand, for they would not be troubled by the impossible theology involved; but the sentiment expressed is not one that any healthy child can make his own. In fact, we do not wish him to do so. Our desire is that the result of our precept in both song and speech shall move him to accept Christ as his Saviour, and to wish to be of some use in this world. It is not irreligious to hope that his days "may be long in the land," and if he has followed Christian teaching, his crown and place in the life to come will be assured.

Many nature songs are being put forth as suitable for Sunday school which contain no lesson, and do not connect the natural and the spiritual, but remain entirely in the lower realm. Some teachers use them and vindicate the use by saying that the application to things spiritual can be made in teaching, and that children instinctively look through nature up to nature's God. Neither of these theories will be found trustworthy. To throw the great power of melody and rhythm on the side of the natural, and expect a child to remember anything about the spiritual which it illustrates, is to expect a small sailboat, beating against the wind and tide, to keep pace with an ocean steamship. On the other hand, if the application is fitted to the same tune, the child will sing the one if he does the other, for they are welded together by laws which govern all his mental operations.

An illustration of this point is found in a very beautiful fall song, "Nature's Good Night," which has but this one verse:

"Clouds of gray are in the sky.
Flocks of birds are passing by.
Trees now dressed in faded brown
Send their leaves all rustling down.
Little flow'rets downward creep,
Nod their drowsy heads and sleep.
All the world must say, 'Good night'
Till spring comes back with sunshine bright."

In teaching this a Sunday school teacher could speak of the heavenly Father who cares for the flowers while they sleep, and tell how he cares for the children every night when they are asleep, but unless she can do more than this, such a nature song, with no hint of the Creator in it, should never be taught in Sunday school. But with this

verse added it will teach a very comforting lesson to little folks, who often, through unwise home treatment, regard the darkness of the night with fear and dread:

"When the sun sinks in the west
Sleepy children go to rest;
Darkness deepens, starlight gleams—
Sound their slumber, sweet their dreams.
God, our Father, watch will keep
O'er the children while they sleep,
Keep them safe all through the night,
Till dawn brings back the morning light."

Any teacher who believes that small children instinctively seek the great Giver of "every good gift and every perfect gift" beyond the forces of nature, and who trusts them to find him in that way, will undoubtedly have the experience which met one such last fall. She had been giving what she considered suitable nature teachings, supplemented by songs of the same sort; but when she questioned her children about the source of the grains and the fruits before Thanksgiving, expecting them to say that all blessings of the harvest time are from God, the only reply she could get was, "Mother Earth." She had been conscientious in following a theory which she believed to be true, but was shocked at the result, and made haste to revise her methods.

It is quite natural that in our joy at finding so much that is helpful for our work in the kindergarten field we should grasp too eagerly and without sufficiently careful scrutiny. In day schools generally facts are taught for their own sake, and ethical instruction is necessarily incidental. While it is true that in Froebel's system the building of character is the great aim, the point of view is of necessity very different from that of an exponent of the Christian religion. The kindergarten teacher cannot always, or even generally, use facts and phenomena as steps to lead the child from the known experience to the unknown spiritual truth. This the Sunday school teacher must *always* do. For this purpose nature may be used in our songs, and there is nothing better because nothing more like the teaching of the greatest of all teachers; but we must remember that if our teaching stops halfway, the thought of the children will not go any higher.

Teach Gratitude.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

GRATITUDE is a ladder with two rounds—to feel thankful and to say so. It is a good time of the year, with its brimming fullness, to teach children to be grateful to God and to tell him of their gratitude. If real and full, it can hardly do otherwise than seek expression. A fountain pours. And this appreciativeness that is spoken is a center of rare, rich influences. It is true that we ought to be able to do our work for the sake of doing it, but it is like bread to a hungry man to find a soul that appreciates your work and acknowledges it. Educate children to be appreciative. Teach them to be grateful. Teach them something beyond a silent gratitude. Tell them to say, "Thank you." Those two words in daily life are like dew to the flower. It is a beautiful quality in any life when there is appreciativeness that has a tongue. It is told of Bismarck that he said, when dying—and they were his last words to his daughter, wiping the perspiration from his head—"I thank you, my child." Was it a beautiful expression of character? It was something beyond that. Its memory will minister solace to a needy heart in a lonely hour. Teach children to be grateful, to say, "Thank you," to thank Father in heaven, and to all upon the earth.

Write higher figures on gratitude. Encourage everything in the Sunday school teaching a child to be grateful. It is a mark of a fine-grained nature when, opposite to a kindness done, there is a corresponding appreciativeness in the one receiving the favor. How the Psalms are like cups brimming with gratitude! One reason why God must have loved David was because he could say so heartily, "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" It shows a nice sense of what is due when one says, appreciatively, "Thank you." The case of a man discouragingly bad in many things is always hopeful if he says, "Thank you." The soul that has no round of gratitude in its ladder is not going up, but down. The child, on the other hand, that shows the appreciativeness which we call gratitude always stands on a stair of hope. Let us make much of days and seasons bringing to a child an atmosphere in which the grateful sentiment is helped to better growth. Teach thankfulness. Tell the child to say, "Thank you." Let its prayers be musical with such sweet notes. God, as the source of bless-

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ing, will come before the grateful little heart. The child looks up into a Father's face and hears a Father's voice of love.

A Sunday School Post Office.

BY ALICE MAY DOUGLAS.

How many have been led to Christ because of letters containing some word of Christian counsel. If children are taught to write such letters when young, they will be very likely to continue to do so when older. Such teaching may be best accomplished by means of a Sunday school post office. Place in one corner of the room a wooden box, neatly painted and containing the words "Sunday School Mail." Have an opening similar to the one in the real mail boxes. Distribute paper and envelopes to all who wish to write, and instruct them to choose one of their classmates as a correspondent. This done, tell each to write a letter in which incidents learned from the pastor during his sermon, or from the teacher during the lesson, are given, to properly address it and bring it the next Sunday to be dropped into the box. If desired, fancy wafers may be placed on the envelopes. At the close of the session have some one for postmaster to open the mail and announce the letters, also a mail carrier for each aisle to deliver them.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. SECOND QUARTER.

LESSON VI. (May 6.)

JESUS WARNING AND INVITING. Matt. 11. 20-30.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11. 28.

Primary Notes.

BY JULIA H. JOHNSTON.



Introductory. Come with me on a thought journey and look with the eyes of your mind, and I will show you something that has a lesson in it. Do you see, as you do when your eyes are shut and you think of things, this great water, stretching out farther than we can see? How the waves tumble about and dash upon the shore! But over this great ocean of water the ships go sailing, sailing to far countries. Where the water is deep enough so that the

ships do not strike against the rocks it is safe for them to go; but in some places the bed of the ocean is covered by sharp rocks that would break a boat to pieces if the bottom struck them. The vessel must keep out of the way of these rocks; but they are hidden under water, and cannot be seen. How shall the great ships go safely? Why, those who know where the rocks are build something tall and high, with a place at the top for big lamps or lanterns, and every night these lights shine out over the dark water, and those on the ships can see them. We call a house with lights a lighthouse, and a lighthouse is built upon a dangerous place. When the sailors see the lights they do not go near them, for the lights do not say, "Come this way," but, "Keep away." These lights are warnings. We warn people against doing wrong or going into danger. We say, "Don't," or, "Be careful," or, "Look out."

In this lesson Jesus gives us two things, and the first is a warning which shows that we must not do. He spoke to some cities that needed to be told where their danger lay, and we need to hear and to heed the same thing.

The warning. The Saviour said to the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum [see map] that they had had a wonderful chance to know what they ought to do, for he had done many mighty works in them, showing them that he was the Son of God. They ought to have been sorry for their sins, and have turned away from them to follow Jesus. They had not done so, but went on in their wicked ways as if Jesus had not shown them the true path. He said it would be much worse for them than for other cities—Tyre and Sidon and Sodom—that had not had the help and the light which had been given to Bethsaida and Capernaum.

Suppose two persons set out upon a dark and dangerous road, at different times, and one of them had a bright light given him to show him the way, and the other had none at all. Suppose that both travelers lost their way, which would be most to blame—the one who carried a light, but did not look to see where he was going and did not use his light, or the one without any, who stumbled on in the dark? Of course the one with the light would be to blame for not using it. Now, Jesus our Lord gives us light. He gives us his word to show us what to do and how to walk in the right way, following him to heaven. There are many people who have

not even heard of Jesus, and have no light such as we have. If we do wrong when we know the right so well, are we not much worse than those who do not know it as we do?

Then this warning is for us. We must be certain to use the light we have to do what we know. Watch, be careful, keep away from the wrong, for you know where it is.

The invitation. A poor, hungry, distressed, homeless man once came upon a beautiful house, with wide-open doors, over which the words "Welcome All" were shining in electric lights. "Then I am welcome," he said, and he accepted the invitation and went in. He was welcome, and was cared for and made comfortable.

Jesus gives an invitation in this lesson. He says, "Come unto me." There are tired and troubled people everywhere, and if you are not now, you will be, and will want rest and peace. Jesus says he will give it. We all want rest from sin in our hearts. Jesus bids us do four things; first, come to him; second, take his yoke, which means that we must live and walk and work with him, as two oxen who are yoked together for work go together; third, learn of him; and last, find rest.

Jesus's yoke is easy. It is sin that makes things hard. You are glad when you do right and sorry when you sin.

Jesus invites the children now, before they are old and tired and troubled. O, come now!

On our circle of blessing we will write "Rest."



Sub-Primary Hints.

BY JULIA E. PECK.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for

his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John 15, 13, 14.

Have you a friend whom you meet every day at school? And you? And you? Do you love to have an intimate friend of your very own? Do you like to receive invitations to visit your friend? Why? Do you ever want to be separated from him? Why not? How do you treat your best friend? In this informal talk with the children they will tell of the peculiar, quaint, and altogether childlike attentions which they lavish on their friend. They assure us that they must be kind and polite, or their friend will want to play with somebody else. If the teacher is in close sympathy, they are likely to tell of sad experiences in the loss of friends. "He moved away," "He wouldn't play with me any more." "He died and went to heaven." There are cases here of keen enjoyment in a friend's love. There are cases of loneliness from the loss of a friend by death. The saddest case is that of the child whose friend proved faithless. [Unless this latter is actual experience, do not even suggest that there is such a thing as a faithless friend.]

Our parallel lesson is to teach that Jesus Christ asks us to let him be our very closest Friend. He asks that we will never separate ourselves from him. When we are happy in the companionship of an earthly friend we sometimes grow careless and forgetful of the invitation of our heavenly Friend. It is when we are loneliest that we are more apt to think of the Friend who never changes, never leaves us, never forgets us. [Teach, "We love him because he first loved us."] He asks to stay with us in happy times and in troublous times. His friendship is like mother's friendship—stronger even, and deeper. "I would gather you," says Jesus, "as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings." How can we measure the tenderness and kindness of our heavenly Friend? As high as the heaven is above the earth. How can we measure his love? "Greater love hath no man than this," etc. We recall this thought always with the thought of our Easter lesson, teaching that Jesus rose again from the dead.

We recall something of the lesson on the first disciples of Jesus in their relationship as his close friends. Is there any way for his true friends to work with him, talk with him, follow him, now?

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thoughts and let him come in. We can follow him always when we keep so close to him that he tells us which way to go.

If our dearest Friend is standing outside the door of our thoughts because we refuse to open it for him, we are lonely indeed, for we separate ourselves from him. He waits patiently for us to open wide the door.

To have Jesus in our thoughts is like having a bright light shining in our house. We sing, "Jesus bids us shine with a clear, pure light."

Once our door is open wide to him, and he comes in to stay with us, he fills our thoughts with such brightness that the light shines out to friendless, lonely children.

We ask Jesus to come in and stay with us. He fills our thoughts with such love that we ask: "Where are the lonely and friendless children? We would share with the friendless this heavenly Friend."

LESSON VII. (May 13.)

JESUS AT THE PHARISEE'S HOUSE.

Luke 7. 36-50.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thy faith hath saved thee." Luke 7. 50.

Primary Notes.



Introductory. We will write on our circle of blessing the word "Gratitude." What is it to be grateful or to have gratitude? Thankfulness is another word for gratitude. You know how

you feel when thankful, don't you? When some one gives you a present, when some one does something to make you happy, you have a feeling of gladness and love in your heart, and you want to say "Thank you" to the one who has made you happy. Gratitude is a happy feeling itself. If we take things without being thankful, and if we are careless and unkind and do not treat our friends well after they have done so much for us, we cannot have happy hearts ourselves.

If some one should speak a pleasant word to you, of course you would like it and would be grateful, but if some one should give you a hundred dollars, or take you on a long journey, or do something that costs much trouble and much money, you would be more grateful for the big thing than for the little thing, wouldn't you?

Our lesson story to-day tells about one who had very much to be thankful for, and she was very full of loving gratitude because of it.

What happened at the Pharisee's house.

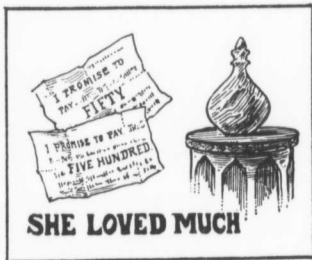
The title of the lesson is, "Jesus at the Pharisee's House." We want to know what happened there. A Pharisee is a proud man who thinks much of himself. In those days the Pharisees really knew a great deal, but they were so proud of it that this spoiled it all. One of these men invited Jesus to eat at his house one day, and when the Saviour went in and sat down at the table something strange happened. A poor woman who had been doing wrong and felt that she was a great sinner and needed to be saved heard where Jesus was, and went to find him. She took with her a precious box filled with sweet ointment, such as was used in those days to put upon the body and give out a pleasant smell, just as we use cologne sometimes now.

To show her love for Jesus, who was able to save her, the woman poured this on his feet as she stood behind him weeping for her sins, and bending down, she wiped the feet with her long hair: before making them sweet with the ointment. The proud Pharisee saw it all, but was not pleased. He said to himself that if Jesus knew everything, he would know that a sinful woman was doing this to him, and would not have allowed her to touch him. He did not need to speak aloud. Jesus heard his thoughts and answered them.

The story Jesus told. Christ answered by a story. He said to the man, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee," and Simon said, "Say on." Then Jesus told of two men who owed some money. One owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. Pennies in those days were worth more than our cents, and would buy more. Five hundred pence meant a large debt, and fifty was large enough. But the man to whom these two owed the money, when he found that neither had anything to pay, forgave both, and said they need pay nothing at all. "Which man loved most?" asked Jesus, and Simon said, of course, the one that was forgiven most. Then the Lord spoke about the poor woman, who had many sins to be forgiven and who loved much, and was very thankful indeed for the great gift of forgiveness. Turning to her, he said, lovingly, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." When all wondered at that he

said again, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

Showing gratitude. We know how to show thankfulness to kind and loving friends, but how shall we show it to Jesus, who has given his life for us? What did the woman do? She was sorry she had ever sinned against such a Saviour. Her tears showed it, but tears are worth nothing unless they mean that we are so sorry that we will do so no more. This woman's tears meant this. Then she brought what she had and did what she could for Jesus. When he told her she was forgiven she believed him. It is very ungrateful to doubt the word of one who has done much for us. Let us do these things. Let us be sorry we ever sinned against the loving Saviour; let us come close to him, give him our hearts, our love, and all we are; let us do all we can to please him, and let us take him at his word.



Sub-Primary Hints.

GOLDEN TEXT: "I will confess my transgressions (sins) unto the Lord." Psa. 32. 5. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1. 9.

Lesson theme: If we are truly sorry for our sin and make confession, the Lord will forgive. To be forgiven is to be treated as though we had not sinned. To repent is to be so sorry that we will never do that wrong again. **Illustration hints:** John behaves very well while his mother's eye is upon him. When he thinks he will not be found out he is cruel to his brothers and sisters. Sometimes he is found out and punished. Then he is sorry about the punishment, and determines never to do wrong again except when he is sure he will not be found out. Is this repentance?

Teach the meaning of the word by its use in this illustration and the next. The meaning of the word "forgiveness" is brought out in our second illustration, given here merely in barest outline.

A little child strays away just as night is falling. He has been forbidden to go outside the gate. He chases fireflies across the field to the woods. Night comes on, and he cannot find the way home. The story goes on to show that the child was naughty, lost, sorry (repentant). The mother seeks the lost, finds, forgives, loves with all her heart.

Our parallel lesson shows that the Lord feels toward us as that mother felt toward her disobedient and repentant child. "All we like sheep have gone astray." The Lord is our shepherd. He will bring us back to the fold when we have strayed into paths of wrongdoing; but not unless we want to come. Our Bible lesson story tells us of a man who appeared to be good in the sight of men, just as John was good while mother's eye was upon him; but the man was really selfish and cold-hearted, not caring to be better. Our story also tells us of a sinner who felt herself lost, but wanted to come to the Lord and be forgiven and loved.

LESSON STORY.

Jesus was invited to dine at Simon's house. Simon, the man who seemed to be good. In that country any passer-by could look on at a feast whether invited or not. Let us join the people who are standing in the door to watch the feast. We notice that as the guests come in they all take off their sandals [showing picture]. Jesus takes off his sandals with the others. This is always the polite thing to do on entering a house in that country. We notice that Simon is not kind or polite to his heavenly guest. He fails to give him the kiss of welcome and to offer him water for his dusty feet, which is always the kind and polite thing to do in that hot country. Simon shows no love for his heavenly guest. He probably invited him because he wanted to see a man who could open the eyes of the —, heal the —, and raise the dead to —.

Here is a woman pushing her way among the lookers-on who are standing in the door. She wears on her neck a beautiful and costly little vase full of rare and sweet perfume, and carved out of a stone like this [showing specimen of alabaster]. This woman has

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been so wicked that nobody loves her. She is truly sorry. [Let the children suggest the word "repentance."] Simon, who is not at all sorry for his pride and selfishness, and cares not to be any better, looks darkly on this uninvited guest, and grumbles at the interruption. [After describing the scene of the anointing in the simplest words—the words of our text in verse 38]: How did the mother treat her child who was lost through his disobedience? Will Jesus speak coldly and severely to this sinner who had strayed far away in forbidden paths of wrongdoing?

How will Jesus feel toward any and all of us, and what will he say to us when we are as bad as bad can be, yet are sorry and crying to him for his forgiveness and love?

LESSON VIII. (May 20.)

PARABLE OF THE SOWER. Matt. 13. 1-8, 18-23.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The seed is the word of God." Luke 8, 11.

Primary Notes.



Introductory. How many have ever been in the country? Have you ever seen a farmer sowing seed? Have you seen him with a bag or basket of wheat on his arm scatter the handfuls carefully over the ground?

After sowing wheat what would he expect to grow? Wheat, of course. Would it make a difference with the harvest whether he sowed good seed or poor seed? You know it would. But something else makes a difference, and that is the kind of soil. If the ground is poor, full of sand or stones, or not well plowed and made soft and smooth, then even the best seed may not bring forth a good harvest.

In this lesson to-day Jesus tells us the story of a sower who went out to sow. He had with him just one kind of seed, and it was the very best, but it did not grow alike in all the places where he scattered it. The difference was in the ground where it fell. We will learn about the

Four kinds of soil. The first seed that was sown fell upon the wayside, which was hard and smooth from the tread of many feet that passed over it. If you should drop

seed on a garden path or on the sidewalk, you would hardly expect it to find its way down into the ground. This seed did not. The birds came and ate it up, so there was no harvest from that.

The next seed fell upon ground that was stony underneath, with a thin covering of earth on the top. The seed went down under cover, but not far, for it struck the rock. Then, as it had not far to come up, it soon sprouted and lifted up the green heads above ground. But there was no room for the roots to go down and suck up food for the plants, and this wheat soon withered away under the hot sun when it rose and shone. There was stalk, but no root, and that wheat brought forth no harvest.

Some other seed fell upon ground that was good enough, but there was other seed in it first, and the thorn seed grew up so fast that the thorns choked the good seed before it had a chance to grow and ripen, and there was no harvest here either.

But there was good ground somewhere, and it, too, was sowed with the same seed. Here the ground was soft and deep enough and not choked with thorns, and the good seed grew, and at the harvest time there were thirty, sixty, even a hundred times as much as was scattered at first.

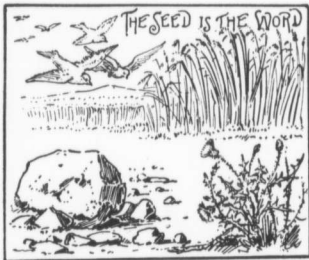
Heart soil. Jesus never told a pretty story just to please people. He always taught a lesson, and from this story he taught a lesson about hearts and hearers. There are hearts—are there any here to-day?—that are just like a hard, beaten path. When anything good is dropped they do not take it in and let it grow, but allow it to be caught up and carried away by such birds as play, pleasure, I forgot, I don't care, and I am busy. There are hearts that take in the Sunday lessons at once and say, "I will do these things," but they don't mean it, and as soon as it seems hard to do, away goes all the trying. There are other hearts so filled up with selfishness and sin and wrong thoughts and bad tempers that there is no room for anything good. It all gets choked out. Any hearts of this kind here to-day?

But there are hearts that are ready for good things, all soft and ready, with what is bad and hard like stones and thorns all taken out, and in these hearts the good seed grows. How many such are there here?

The seed. In the Golden Text we have the kind of seed sown, and we will write the

word on our circle of blessing, for O, how precious is this seed, the word of Christ! He gives it in the Bible. The ministers scatter it as they preach. Your Sunday school teacher scatters it in teaching the lesson. Your pretty cards carry it in the text on them, and when you read the Bible or hear it read anywhere, any time, then the good seed, always good, is being sown. We will make on the board the four kinds of soil in the lesson. Now, which is a picture of your heart?

Do you think any piece of ground could get itself ready for seed, make itself soft, cast out stones and thorns, and do everything needful itself? Never, never. The farmer does that for the ground, and Jesus must do it for our hearts. But does the ground refuse to be made ready? No, it cannot. But our hearts are different. They can refuse or they can let Jesus make them ready and put in the seed. O, let him, just now!



Sub-Primary Hints.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." John 4. 35. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6. 7.

The teacher needs to plan for this lesson several weeks beforehand. A lesson on figurative seed-sowing ("the seed is the word") can be more effectively taught when we have given the children a little experience, and have allowed them to make a few experiments in literal seed-sowing. It is the season when they are beginning to set out their own little gardens with all sorts of odds and ends in the way of rootless plants, twigs, and seeds. They are learning more about the laws of growth by these experiments than words could teach them. We anticipate this

lesson by several weeks, and give the children peas (because they grow so quickly) to plant in pots, setting the pots in our windows. We have glasses of water, each overlaid with cotton wool, on which the children set out common beans. These grow quickly, and make a good showing of stem, roots, and leaves in a few days, and in plenty of time for our lesson about the sower who went forth to sow.

Meanwhile the children are beginning to note results of their experiments at gardening in their secular kindergartens and at home. Their rootless plants will not grow. Their seeds are hurt when they are dug up for examination, and their harvest promises to be alike in kind to the seed sown.

We talk to them about giving the seed all that it needs to make it grow (fulfilling conditions of growth), and then leaving it in God's care. What makes it grow? Suppose the seed has no life, would earth, sunshine, and rain make it grow? Could you hurry its growth by pulling at it? Who gives it its tiny spark of life?

We give each child a kernel of Indian corn which has been soaked over night. The children notice that it has a plain and a figured side. With their finger nails they pry out the "little round lump" (embryo) in its figured side. Here is its very life center. God put the spark of life in this tiny round thing. If we plant our handful of corn, what will the harvest be? Alike in kind, but wonderfully large in proportion to the handful of seed sown. We learn our text: "Whatsoever a man soweth," etc. Seeds are like the word of God. When we plant the Golden Rule in the soul what will the harvest be? Unselfishness, peace, love, joy. Practical illustrations like this can be carried out by using texts which teach active service. These texts should be familiar to the class. Several points to keep before the class in making our parallel lesson. God gives the seed and his word the spark of life. The seed must have favorable conditions and, apparently, a waiting time. The seed will have a harvest time when we shall gather whatsoever we have sown.

Jesus, while in his boat, told a picture story to the people on the shore. While they listened they could see a man at work in the fields sowing seed. We show a picture illustrating our parable, and tell the story in few words. We keep these thoughts of likeness and difference in mind: The seed

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Matt. 13. 38.



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is good; it is full of life. The word is good; it is full of life. The sower is like the Son of God. The seed is like the word.

Some seeds fell in the trodden path. Hungry birds ate them. Some fell on the rocks where the earth was thin. They grew up so quickly that the sun scorched them, and they starved for want of earth. Some fell among thorny weeds, which crowded them to death. Some fell on good ground, and brought forth a large harvest. "What does this story mean?" asked the disciples.

The seeds which fell in the path are like the word to one who hears it without understanding. Wicked thoughts, like hungry birds, catch away the good word. The seeds which fell on the rocks are like the word to one who hears it gladly, but has no patience of faithfulness to obey it when trouble comes. The seeds which fell among thorny weeds are like the word to one who hears it and allows other things to crowd it out of the thoughts. The seeds sown on good ground are like the word to one who hears and always obeys. What will the harvest be?

Where is our Lord (who is like the sower) to sow the word (which is like the seed)? In the soul. Who will help us to make the soul fit to receive the word? What shall the harvest be? The Golden Rule. Love to God and neighbor. Obedience to parents.

What shall the harvest be when the word, which is like the seed, is carried over the ocean and sown in the souls of heathen children? How much seed-sowing is there for us to do?

LESSON IX. (May 27.)

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM. Matt. 13. 24-33.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The field is the world." Matt. 13. 38.

Primary Notes.



Introductory. Last Sunday we had a lesson about the sowing of seed on trampled, hard, wayside ground, where it was lost, because birds ate it; on stony ground, where the sprouts had tops, but no roots; on thorny ground, where there were roots below, but no room for stalks above;

and on good ground, where there were roots and stalks, and a harvest many times larger than the seed measured. To-day we have another of the Saviour's wonderful stories taken from outdoors. It is a little different from the last, and teaches another lesson.

Have any of you ever had a garden of your own? Who had a right to sow seed in it? You had, to be sure. The owner has the first and best right. But sometimes those who have no right find a chance to sow seed and do mischief. In this lesson we have

Two kinds of sowing. Jesus tells us of a field in which the owner sowed good wheat, but while men slept an enemy came and sowed tares or troublesome weeds. The servants were much troubled to find, when the wheat came up, that there were tares scattered all through the field too, and came to tell the owner, in great distress. "An enemy hath done this," he said, and it was true enough. No friend would do it. "Shall we root out the tares?" asked the servants. The owner said no, for they might pull up the wheat at the same time, but both should grow together till harvest time, and the reapers should then gather the wheat into the barn and gather the tares in bundles to be burned.

The harvest time would show plainly which was good and which was bad.

A little seed and how it grew. Jesus told another story about a mustard seed, the smallest seed of all, which a man took and planted in his field. It grew to be a tree so big that birds came and built in it.

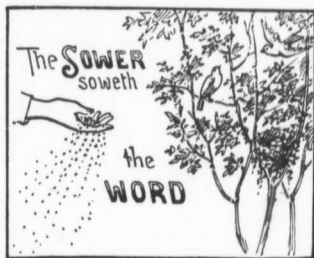
The lessons to be learned. These stories are called "Parables of the Kingdom." A parable is a story with a meaning, with a lesson in it. A kingdom is what is ruled over by a king. The land which makes his country is his kingdom, but, more than this, the people who live in it make his kingdom. Jesus's kingdom is made up of those who love him and take him as their King. It is called the kingdom of heaven because heaven begins in the hearts of Jesus's children here, and by and by they will go to be with him there. He wanted to show what this kingdom was like, and for this reason gave these parables and told the meaning.

The first parable about the wheat and tares means this: The great field is the whole world. Jesus's children are the good seed, and Satan is the enemy who sows bad seed, or tares, and these are those who obey

Satan instead of Christ. They let the enemy into their hearts, and he makes them unloving and disobedient to Christ. So in this big world there are good and bad people mixed up together like wheat and tares in a field. But God only can see the hearts of all, and can tell who is really good and who is really bad. We have no right to say, for we cannot truly know. We might say, "This is a bad person who ought to be sent away," and in doing this we might make a mistake and hurt some one who was trying to be good. We must not make up our minds, but wait till the end of the world. He will send the angels then to gather out the good from the bad. That will be like the harvest time. The harvest will then be a great blessing, for the children of the kingdom will go to be with the King. On our circle of blessing we will write "The Harvest."

Remember, we are not angels whose business it is to take the good from the bad. We must not do this, but, instead, see that we are like good seed in the great field ourselves.

The mustard seed story means that the beginning of Jesus's kingdom on earth, when he began with a few disciples, was so small as to be like this little seed. As the seed grew to be a tree, so his work grows, and the number of those who love him keeps growing and growing. As the birds built in the tree, so everywhere people will find a place of rest in this kingdom, and it will grow and spread till it is the greatest kingdom in the world. Do we belong? A little love and trust will make a beginning, and he will make it grow.



Sub-Primary Hints.

GOLDEN TEXT: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Matt. 6. 10. "For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17. 21. "And

there shall in no wise enter into it anything that . . . maketh a lie." Rev. 21. 27.

To speak of the kingdom of God intelligibly to little children it will be necessary for them to know the meaning of the words "king" and "kingdom." Do they know anything about the Premier of their own province, or have they knowledge of any territory beyond their own village streets? If so, we may, with some explanation, talk of "kings" and "kingdoms." If the children are fresh from the nursery, we may talk to them about places and occasions made beautiful by the ruling spirit of love and unselfishness. The will and spirit of the Master carried out and worked out among us will make the earth like heaven.

Tell me about the pleasantest place you were ever in. What made it pleasant? The happiest time you ever had was—where?

The children will most naturally describe the activities rather than the place where their "good time" was enjoyed. This is exactly what we want them to do. Some unselfish soul had planned and supervised all this for very love of the children. Activity guided by love—this the keynote.

We want the children to feel this, because they are apt to take whatever is provided for their happiness as a matter of course and with little thought of the source of their pleasure. It is well to call their attention to the unselfish effort made in their behalf on the occasion named, not so much in this instance to inspire gratitude as to inspire them with the impulse to make a pleasant time and a pleasant place for others.

Our underlying purpose is to teach the joy of making a heaven on earth for our nearest and dearest, and then with greater effort and sacrifice reaching out to transform the lives of those who have never yet had a glimpse into heavenly places.

The children talk freely of their "good times" and of what they enjoyed in a "beautiful place." Suppose you had all been quarrelling and showing bad tempers. Would not the "beautiful place" have seemed hateful and dreary? If the ruling spirit of the occasion was the love of host or hostess, let the children feel it. Teach them that love and unselfishness are strong and powerful to make even the dreariest places beautiful.

We appear to drop the subject when we ask the children to tell us what is the strongest thing they ever saw. They probably name some fierce animal of the tropics. Yet

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the unseen winds of the desert, in which this great creature roams, are stronger than he. Who directs and controls the force of the wind?

We speak of another unseen force—unselfish love. Directed and controlled by the Lord, it is the strongest thing we can name.

Everybody wants to live in a beautiful place and have a happy time. The old prophets, long before Jesus came, knew perfectly that there could be no happy times for God's children until they knew their Lord. One prophet grew quite discouraged, and began to think that the Lord had forgotten his children. Wickedness seemed to this prophet the strongest thing in the world. God cured his discouragement by showing him some of the strongest things in the world. A great and strong wind tore the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks, "but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice." God himself was in the still small voice.

We describe the glories—such as the children can appreciate—of the material kingdom which the disciples expected for their Lord. We repeat the parable of the grain of mustard seed to show that the coming of the kingdom is from small beginnings. The way for the coming of the Lord to the very ends of the earth is from such small beginnings as unselfish love in the souls of his children. "The kingdom of God is within you."

Whisper Songs for May.

SIXTH LESSON.

Hear the voice of Jesus,
Calling low and sweet;
"Come," he cries, and bids you
Gather round his feet.

SEVENTH LESSON.

Hear the voice of Jesus,
Loving, low, and sweet;
Speaking "Peace" to Mary,
Weeping at his feet.

EIGHTH LESSON.

Hear the voice of Jesus,
Listen as we read,
How the heavenly Sower
Sows the holy seed.

NINTH LESSON.

Hear the voice of Jesus,
Is thy heart his field?
Then his word within thee
Will a harvest yield.

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Second Quarter.

Teacher. This is the day which the Lord hath made:

Class. We will rejoice and be glad in it.
T. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

C. Serve the Lord with gladness.
T. Come before his presence with singing.

RECITATION (in concert).

"The day we love best!

The brightest and best of the seven,
The pearl of the week, and the light of our way;

We hold it a treasure, and count it a pleasure
To welcome its dawning and praise Him to-day."

SINGING (a familiar song of praise).

PRAYER (preceded by the following, softly
whispered after teacher):

"Jesus, Master! yes, we love thee,
And, to prove our love, would lay
Fruit of lips which thou wilt open
At thy blessed feet to-day."

OFFERING (with appropriate exercise).

MOTION EXERCISE.

"One little mouth and tongue,
Sweet and true to be,
Two little eyes and ears
Ready, Lord, for thee.

[*Raise hands.*]

"Two little feet and hands
[*Hands outstretched.*]

To do our Master's will,
One little heart and soul

[*Hands on heart.*]

To love and praise him still,
"Five little soldiers,

Ready there they stand.

[*Right hand raised, fingers spread.*]

Ten little soldiers
To work at his command.

[*Left hand raised.*]

"Christ Jesus is our Captain,

[*Hands on heart, looking up.*]

We cheerfully obey;
For all true Christian soldiers
Please Jesus every day."

LESSON TAUGHT.

ECHO PRAYER.

CLOSING EXERCISE (class, standing, forms a
"ring"—in small groups if class is
large. All sing):

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love."

My Saviour and I.

(As I turned and entered the house, such a sense of loneliness came over me that for a moment I thought I must die with the agony of it. Just then I seemed to hear a voice say, "Do not feel so desolate! Jesus is waiting in your room for you.")

He is waiting for me; I know he is there
As I wearily climb the long, winding
stair;

He is waiting above, in my lonely room,
'Mid the evening shadows and dark'ning
gloom.

And my feet have passed in through the
open door,

His arms are outstretched, his sweet
smile I see;

He says, "Thou art weary! child, come
unto me.

Come, tell me thy sorrows, thy pains
and thy fears,

Thy hopes unfulfilled through wearisome
years;

Though the story is old, and thou'st told
it before,

Yet 'twill ease thy sad heart to repeat
o'er and o'er,

To One who so loves thee, thy story of
grief—

For witness! I failed ne'er to give thee
relief,

Nay, fear not to open thy sad soul to
me;

I was tempted, my child, in all points
like thee."

So we let in the twilight, my Saviour
and I,

While the stars twinkle out in the beau-
tiful sky;

We talked it all over—my pains and my
fears,

My hopes unfulfilled through wearisome
years;

Of duties neglected in gratitude shown
To a Friend who is love and mercy
alone—

Until self-convicted, I start, and would
fly;

But his soft hand restrains me: "Fear
not, it is I;

And thou knowest my love; I freely
forgive,

Be strong! of good courage! I'll help
thee to live

Henceforth a life truer, more noble, and
pure;

Remember the promise to those who en-
dure."

Some way, as we talk there, my sad
heart grows light,

And my sorrows seem naught, they fade
out of sight;

He strengthens and calms me, and
soothes me to rest,

With my hand in his, my head on his
breast,

Like John the Beloved, who lay there
of old,

And, like him, I drink in such comfort
untold,

That life's woes all recede, clamours all
cease,

Where his kind, tender smile fills my
soul with sweet peace;

And the stars twinkle out on the beau-
tiful sky,

As we sit in the twilight—"My Saviour
and I."

Teaching a Child How to Give.

BY ALICE MAY DOUGLAS.

It has been said that children are taught at Sunday-school to receive rather than to give. There is much truth in this statement, but the evil can be lessened in many ways. In the first place, the children can be taught to look upon the bringing of their offering as a part of their devotion; as soon as it is taken, the teacher should, in a brief prayer, present it to God. The scholars can also be given tithe-boxes in which to gather additions to the missionary fund. Flowers can be brought for the sick, being used to decorate the room until the session closes. A hospital-box could be inaugurated to contain toys and books—contributions from the class to the little sufferers. A paper mission might be started, the children bringing their old Sunday-school papers and magazines to be sent to some child, whose address could be furnished by some missionary of the Woman's Home Missionary Society.

But, above all things, the little ones should be taught what true giving implies. Rousseau says: "Giving alms is the act of one who knows the worth of his gift and his fellow-creature's need of a gift. A child who knows nothing of either can have no merit in bestowing. He gives without charity or benevolence."

. . . A child would rather give away a hundred gold-pieces than a single cake. But suggest to this free-handed giver the idea of parting with what he really prizes—his playthings, his sugar-plums, or his luncheon, you will soon find out whether you have made him really generous."

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