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Rev. R. Douglas Fraser,
Editor & Business Manager,

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THE TEACHERS MONTHLY

Toronto

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Volume XXIII.
Number 10

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PUBLISHERS NOTICE

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The Teachers Monthly

R. Douglas Fraser, J. M. Duncan, Editors ; John Mutch, Associate Editor

Vol. XXIII.

Toronto, October, 1917

No. 10

EDITORIAL

Is Entirely Self-supporting

From misunderstandings which have come to our knowledge, it is right that we should say once more that PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS (which is the business name of our Church's Board of Publication) is entirely self-supporting. It has never received a contribution from the Budget or from any other source. It lives by its earnings. Whatever profits are made, are, by instruction of the General Assembly, used in improving the PUBLICATIONS and adding to these as occasion may require. The Departmental Graded Lessons are an example of this necessary and desirable addition. If some increase in prices has been made, or may be made, in these War times, it is because of the abnormal increase in cost of production. The PUBLICATIONS, like all other businesses, must meet its expenses, if it is to continue to serve the church and its Sunday Schools and Young People's Societies as they ought to be served.

The New Intermediate Quarterlies

Our promise of some months ago has now been made good and the new Departmental Graded INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLIES for the 12, 13, 14 ages are in print.

We are anxious that all our Sunday Schools should see them ; for, to see them, we feel sure, will be to fall in love with them, so dainty are they in their appearance—so well printed and illustrated ; and the material both for the teacher and the scholar is as carefully as possible prepared for their precise needs.

It is the difficult age, this 12, 13, 14 years, and the object of the writers and the editors has been to make the task of teaching, on the part of the teachers, and of learning, on the part of the scholars, a delight and profitable. One aim never lost sight of is to leave the boys and girls to the decision which will bring them where, in their inmost heart, they desire to be into the army of the Strong Son of God as his servants and soldiers unto their life's end.

We shall gladly send samples of the new INTERMEDIATE TEACHERS and SCHOLARS QUARTERLIES to any who will write for them. For the special half-rate offer for these and the other DEPARTMENTAL GRADED QUARTERLIES and Leaflets, consult page 604. It will be found worth while.

It will be noticed that the new Quarterlies will begin with October. This is because the Graded Lesson Courses are arranged to begin each year, with October. We are, therefore, taking advantage of the issue of those in the Intermediate Department, to transfer the Volume number from January to October. This, of course, does not necessitate any departure from the normal method of ordering in January for this year.

Rally Day : The Follow Up

Rally Day is past. On the 30th September, our Schools all over Canada joined in the Service for the day. The teachers and scholars, in many cases, were encouraged by the presence of parents and friends in large numbers.

There should be no let up, during the coming months, of the enthusiasm which always marks Rally Day. If the attendance on the last Sunday in September reached a high-water

mark, as compared with previous records, earnest efforts should be put forth to keep it up to this level, or even go beyond it. The generosity of the Rally Day offering should be carried over into the offerings for the ordinary Sundays all through the year. There was specially good singing on Rally Day: let the singing for every Sunday be kept up to the same high standard. The subject of the Rally Day Service, His Dominion, excited keen interest in teachers and scholars: let the same interest be taken in the lessons for every Sunday of the year.

A vigorous follow up of Rally Day persisted in throughout the year will prepare for a Rally Day next year which will be far ahead of any Rally Day the Schools have ever known.

Our Girls

Not only to Canada is girl-life important, but we dare reverently say, to God himself. This is the high thought which has inspired the preparation of *Girls in Training*, a booklet for the training of teen-age girls, just issued by the Canadian Advisory Committee for Co-operation in Girls' Work,—a cooperation embracing the various Protestant Churches of Canada, along with the Canadian Y.M.C.A.'s and Provincial Sunday School Associations.

The booklet marks an era in this important field. It grapples with the question of the vital relationship of the church to girl-life, and seeks to provide, mainly through the organized girls' classes of the Sunday School, for the physical, intellectual, religious and service development of our Canadian girlhood.

"Standards," under the four headings above given, are set out in detail from the richness of a long experience on the part of the compilers. We can conceive of nothing finer than the tone of the booklet, and the plans and suggestions are practicable even in the most rudimentary Sunday School. The proposition is to utilize the Sunday class through a week-day meeting and week-day activities. To take the intellectual standard as an example, such items are provided as school (day school) and vocational training, home craft, home reading, knowledge of current events, public speaking, nature study, music, art, educational trips and lectures and even "hobbies" are not overlooked. Sample programmes embracing the four departments are given, everything is made so plain that in experiment leaders need have no fear to undertake this new and attractive work. The lists of books for reading and reference are remarkably complete and suggestive.

Our boys have already been provided for in the now well known Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests. Now there is nothing in the way of the work for girls being put on an equal footing. Our Sunday School and Y.P.S. Board, with the other organizations joining in this new enterprise, is taking active measures to make the plan, not merely a booklet, but a helpful reality.

About that 7,000

The number of those who, last year, came into the full membership of the church from our Sunday Schools was 7,000.

That there were so many is a cause for gratitude and joy. These boys and girls, with others like them, are the hope of the church and of the country. These new recruits, trained and disciplined, will be the soldiers to fight and win the battles of Christ and his church in the years to come.

But there is food for heartsearching, also, on the part of all Sunday School workers in the fact that there should have been only seven thousand. We have 3,723 Schools. The number of new communicants was, therefore, less than two for each School.

In our 3,723 Schools there are 31,207 officers and teachers. There was, therefore, less than one new communicant for every four officers and teachers.

There were of course Schools which went far beyond this low average. In some Schools the new communicants were numbered by tens and even by scores.

It follows that there were some Schools from which not a single scholar, all last year, came into the full membership of the church. There were some Schools in which all the officers and teachers, with all their equipment, did not succeed in bringing a single scholar into full church membership.

No more important matter can be taken up, in these opening weeks of a new season's work, by Sunday School officers and teachers, than the consideration of plans for bringing the scholars to make a public confession of Christ. There should be much earnest prayer and unceasing, intelligent effort put into this task, and these, under the blessing of God, are sure to produce results.

Getting Ready for Christmas

The Christmas entertainment affords the teacher a fine opportunity for most valuable teaching. The temptation at such a time is to make an eleventh hour snatch at some few boys and girls who already know some songs or readings and let them supply the programme, or else settle the whole matter by the importation of some outside entertainer.

But the occasion of the Christmas season is worthy of far more painstaking effort than it often receives. The teacher will find that suitable drills, recitations, songs and plays, carefully learned and intelligently given, will prove an effective means of developing Christian culture, which is his great concern.

In the November TEACHERS MONTHLY there will be an article or two with some suggestions for such training.

A Present Day Providence

The lessons for the present Quarter lay special stress upon God's providential care. They tell us how the Jews made their way safely back from Babylon to their own land, because of the divine care and protection. Amongst the lessons are psalms in which God is praised for the great deliverance which he had wrought for his people.

It will be the delightful duty and privilege of the teacher to show how God's hand was constantly upon his people in those olden days. In following the story of Ezra and Nehemiah and their followers, it will be seen how constantly they were guided, step after step, by their heavenly leader.

But the teaching of these lessons will fall very far short, if it does not bring out into the clearest light and lay the strongest emphasis upon the truth, that God's providence is a reality in the present not less than in the past. He guided and protected and cared for Ezra and Nehemiah and those who came back with them from captivity. Just as really is he the guide and protector and provider for all those in our own day who put their trust in him.

The teacher should not fail to dwell on the comfort and the confidence which the assurance of a present day providence brings to hearts that are troubled and anxious because of the War. One who never slumbers nor sleeps and whose power knows no limit, is watching our loved ones in danger, and will bring this cruel conflict to a happy ending. This is the blessed truth which the teacher may bring out of the lessons of the Quarter.

The Helplessness of the Untrained

There is no need of emphasis on this point now. Every camp is a training camp. In no arm of this service, land, or sea, or air, is officer or private, worth his salt without training and in the field of manufacture as in the shop and office and on the farm, the value of training, nay, its absolute necessity, is recognized as never before.

It is not otherwise in the highest of all employments, the teaching of the way of Christ. And perhaps for no other religious teaching is the need of training more necessary than in the case of those who teach the young. Trained teachers in the Sunday School would solve the problems of our Sunday Schools as nothing would; and trained leadership for and in our young people's organizations is equally vital.

The new Teacher Training Course, the four books of which we have just issued, should help mightily to provide trained teachers and trained leaders. With the additional help, by way of examinations and diplomas and general encouragement, given by the S.S. and Y.P.S. Board, our teachers and leaders have themselves to blame if they remain in the helplessness of the untrained.

What's the Use

The most faithful teacher often wonders whether his work is counting for anything. There seems to be little interest on the part of scholars or parents. Or if some interest is shown, there are few apparent results. Is all this preparation of the lesson and actual teaching having any effect?

When a person actually believes that he is cooperating with vast potentialities, his confidence and hope are increased. For this reason the teacher will take heart when he remembers that religion is absolutely essential to the maintenance of morality.

Perhaps there will be no spectacular manifestation of interest on the part of any scholar. But the habitual teaching of religion is keeping him somewhere in the right direction. The other day, Mr. H. W. Foght, of the United States Bureau of Education, said:

"This I know, that in the United States we have found that when religion is divorced from the teaching of morality, morality fails."

Such a statement from such an authority ought to help the teacher to take heart. He is putting into life a background, a motive which is necessary to keep it wholesome.

"If They Are Not There"

In the midst of a discussion of methods by a company of earnest Sunday School workers during the meeting of the General Assembly, one of those present interposed the very pertinent reminder, that the very best methods will not do the children any good at all "if they are not there."

The speaker touched upon the very first essential of Sunday School success,—to get the children, the boys and girls and the young people into the School and develop in them the habit of regularity and punctuality in attendance. Whatever method is adopted—and there are many methods which have proved successful—no School should be satisfied unless all those who ought to be in it are actually there.

The New Standard Teacher Training Course

BY REV. W. J. KNOX, M.A.

It is a truism to say that the young are the hope of the nation, but it is a truism so apparent that it fails to impress the mind as it ought. If the rising generation pass out of the years of childhood and youth without high ideals, without a conviction of duty and a consciousness of the sacredness of life's privilege, as a nation we shall perish.

There is no greater need in our church today, than a large body of men and women trained to conduct efficiently the work of religious education among the young. This need was recognized some years ago when a set of textbooks was issued which has been of great value in training those who taught in our Sunday Schools. Partly as a result

of the study of these textbooks such a high ideal of the Sunday School was created that a demand gradually took shape for a more thorough and complete system of teacher training.

After careful consideration on the part of the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations, representing thirty churches in North America, a scheme has been devised which provides a three years' course of training for those who are to bear the responsibility for the religious education of the young. The first year's course is now available and comprises four books: The Pupil; The Teacher; The Teacher's Study of the Life of Christ; The School.

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These four books reach the high-water mark in teacher training. Each book is written by an expert, and embodies principles which have become clear as a result of long experience and careful investigation.

They all recognize the fundamental place of personality in religious education. The essential thing is the teacher's character manifesting through word and deed the spirit of Christ, but there is no teacher, however noble and inspiring, who would not become more efficient by the training prescribed in these books.

The first of the series, *The Pupil*, is written by Professor L. A. Weigle. When we read in his introductory chapter that the teacher's aim is "to develop a personality," we feel he has the right conception of the teacher's task, and when we read further, that this "personality grows naturally," we feel he has the right conception of the child's development. This development proceeds according to certain laws which it is the purpose of the book to make clear. These laws are not merely mechanical: "Beneath them and through them there works the Spirit of God." The treatment throughout is scholarly, reverent and practical. The author places the child in our midst and directs our study of him as he passes through the various stages of his development from infancy to maturity.

The second book, *The Teacher*, is by the same author. One can scarcely imagine a book of ten short chapters containing more that is essential to the work of the Sunday School teacher. Every phase of the subject is touched upon with necessary brevity but with great thoroughness. A careful study of this book cannot fail to make any conscientious teacher more efficient in his work.

In the third book of the series, *Dr. Barclay* discusses in a most satisfying manner how to teach the life of Christ. He looks at his subject from the right point of view. The child is central in his treatment and we are directed how best to use the material in the Gospels so as to secure the fulfilment of the divine purpose in his life. The teacher must know his Bible and must be able to teach the great truths therein contained. He must, however, view his material not as something simply to be learned by the pupil but as something by which to influence him in such a way as most completely to develop his personality in the image of Christ. His object in Bible study will be that he may "use it effectively in nurturing the religious life of his pupils."

The last of the series, *The School*, written by Rev. J. C. Robertsol, B.D., our own General Secretary for Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies, is on the same high level as the other three. There is probably no book in print which describes so consist-

ently and completely that organization of the church which is designed to secure the complete religious education of our young people.

The organization set forth in the book does no minor work, paralleling other lines of Christian effort controlled by competing committees of the congregation. It is the one all-embracing organization in the congregation which bears the responsibility for the complete religious education of every child from infancy to maturity. If the principles expounded in *The School* are carefully studied and are allowed to shape the organization and equipment of our Schools throughout the church, a new epoch of Sunday School efficiency will begin.

London, Ont.



The Sunday School Teacher : A Man's Job

By John M. Keith

Several years ago a young man left for Winnipeg to enter a new business life. He was full of hope and enthusiasm. It had occurred to him, that he had served five perhaps six years as a Sunday School teacher, and now was a chance to throw off the yoke, so that he might bend all his energies to the making of his fortune.

The first few weeks of the prairie air fired him with a wonderful enthusiasm to do things. But the minister to whose church he went made him realize that the same God ruled and guided men in the West, as he did in the East. This minister sounded among the young men a call to arms. It was for something hard he wanted them, and the difficulty of the job appealed to the young man, as it appealed to others. The minister was directing the enthusiasm of the young men of the West into the service of Christ. So the young man met the class of boys that was assigned to him. He could not do otherwise, once the call came. He just had to go back and teach, for it meant work and hard work.

The call to-day is to do our bit in the service of king and country. Most of us have relatives at the front, and we think of them getting up and over the parapet at daybreak, for it is the beginning of a great battle. They go, and many fall wounded, while others fall to rise no more. It takes a real man—a well-trained and well-equipped man to go over the parapet and capture the first few trenches. They seem to do the super-human.

One does not need to go to the trenches to find a place for all the fight there is in him; he can find it in any Sunday School class. It calls for effort and sacrifice to get really inter-

ested in a bunch of boys and to become their hero. There is not only hard work in preparation for the Sunday session with the boys but constant thought about them during the week, and, if possible, meetings with them. It means real work, and hard work. It may go against the grain. But remember the soldier goes over the parapet and why not I? What does it matter to you or to me if we do fall as long as we are carrying the banner when we fall?

The cry these days is for recruits,—more men and yet more men. We are sending them over to represent us on the firing line. Are we doing our best to win new recruits for the kingdom of heaven? A great many men now abroad will never come back, and so we need recruits to take their place. Teachers! Men! It is not easy to make good with a class of boys and lead them to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. It is not easy to fit them for leadership among other boys. It is not easy to make it possible for some of them to choose a life work of service as a minister or missionary, but it is all possible if we are in earnest and if we are trained and developed as every true soldier of Jesus Christ should be in these days. We should give our best,—yes and more, for it is the

more that will really win many to the kingdom of God.

Speaking of sacrifice, Lloyd George in a recent speech, said:

"We have been living in a sheltered valley for generations. We have been too comfortable and too indulgent, and many perhaps too selfish; but the stern hand of fate has scourged us to an elevation where we can see the everlasting things that matter for a nation,—the great peaks we had forgotten of honor, duty, patriotism, and, clad in glittering white, the towering pinnacle of sacrifice pointing its rugged finger towards heaven."

Let us work and sacrifice for the boys and girls whom we are privileged to teach. Let the strong men of our church rally the boys round them and lead them out and forward, into real manhood unstained and blessed because of wholehearted service and sacrifice.

Sir Andrew Fraser, of India, speaking to the men of Canada, said he thought God had appointed him to be a savior to many of the natives of India. There is no greater opportunity in church work than in the Sunday School, for we teachers can be saviors of the members of our class.

Toronto

The Dull Scholar

BY DEAN H. T. J. COLEMAN, Ph.D.

Dulness is a name which we frequently use to describe conditions which, though outwardly the same, may, as to their real nature and origin, vary greatly.

Some children,—a very small proportion, fortunately—are dull because of inherent mental defect. They can never grow mentally beyond a certain point; even when they shall have reached physical maturity, they will still be children so far as their mental life is concerned. Such can never profitably be educated along with normal children. They suffer by such association and so do the normal children. Society is beginning to see that these mental defectives must be cared for and educated in separate institutions where they can be happy and useful under kindly and intelligent direction and in the company of others like themselves.

Other children are dull because their mental development proceeds at a rate rather slower than the ordinary rate. They are backward only in the qualified sense of taking longer to learn and to understand a given lesson than do most of their fellows. The thing which they most need is a sympathetic understanding which will suit the pace to their ability. The treatment which is most sure to defeat its own aims and to bring disaster to the

scholar and disappointment, if not also regret to the teacher is the one which keeps the whip and the spur always ready for use. With children of this class to hurry is to stumble both intellectually and morally and there is a very solemn warning in scripture against causing little ones to offend.

One very interesting thing about the sort of children just described is that they sometimes experience a surprising intellectual awakening. Every observant teacher will, I think, be able to cite instances where a dull pupil, through the quickening of some inner impulse or through the appearance of some hitherto latent power, has made more progress in one month than he had been accustomed to make in six months or a year. It is as if a dam which had been thrown across the current of his mental life had suddenly given way.

While, of course, one can never prophesy as to this event occurring in the case of any particular child, the fact of its occasional occurrence is an incentive to patience on the part of the teacher and is, also, a warning against making final judgments on the basis of present performance. The ugly duckling in the fairy story, whose stupidity and awkwardness were a source of embarrassment to

his foster mother and an occasion for derision to his smarter brothers and sisters, turned out eventually to be a swan. And biography contains many instances of dull children who, as men and women, displayed unusual ability and achieved unusual success.

There is another hopeful element in the problem so far as this particular sort of dull child is concerned. It is this : children who are slow to comprehend frequently make up, in part at least, for that slowness by the tenaciousness with which they hold a bit of knowledge or skill when once it has been acquired.

Sometimes a particular child is reckoned dull because the work at which he is set,—the memorizing of Bible verses, for example, or the answering of questions on the lesson—does not appeal to his special interest or enlist his special form of ability. Psychology has shown us the distinction between "idea" thinkers, those who handle words and concepts readily, and "thing" thinkers, those whose minds work easily only in the presence of objects. From the first group are recruited as a rule our professional classes, and from the latter our artisans and men of business. The ordinary schoolroom has been called the paradise of the "idea" thinker ; it is certainly often the very reverse for the child whose mental processes are of the concrete type.

Now the world has use for both of these types and our Sunday School teaching should minister to the needs of both. In fact it may be argued with considerable reason, that the church of the present day is especially in need of the "thing" thinker, of the man who may have no gifts in the field of theoretical religion, but who can yet deal in an effective way with the small duties of life. So many of us are, unfortunately, very much like the brilliant university graduate of whom Mr. Ian Hay speaks in his account of the experiences of a battalion of recruits in Kitchener's army. "Cockerell," he remarks, "knew all the manuals by heart, but he never was quite at home in drilling his platoon."

What has been said has been mainly a plea for the understanding of the dull scholar. But he needs sympathy as well ; not a patronizing sympathy, but a tactful one that gives him quietly and as a matter of course a chance to "put his best foot foremost." He cannot shine in memorizing scripture or in explaining difficult texts ; but he can at least recite single verses, or he can draw, or sing, or whittle with his jack-knife, or look after the class finances and all these gifts are needed in life and all can be put to some sort of use by a sufficiently alert teacher. We are apt, in the distribution of our attention in class, to apply in a very literal and in a rather mistaken sense, the text, "Unto him that hath shall be given," forgetful of that other text,

"A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." For, after all, the best test of our teaching ability as well as of our religion is in what we do for the dull scholar.

Queen's University, Kingston, Ont.



The Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests : An Experience

By Rev. W. R. McIntosh, B.D.

Three years ago the Men's Federation made a survey of our city under the direction of Mr. Walter A. Riddell, present Commissioner of Labor for the Ontario Government.

The survey revealed among other startling facts that the Sunday Schools of the city were not holding one half the teen-age boys. Our own General Assembly through its Sabbath School Board had made about the same time a similar survey for the whole Dominion with practically the same result.

Following these heart-searching disclosures, a new programme for boys made its appearance with the rather formidable title of Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests, but under the most trustworthy auspices, namely, the joint partnership of Y.M.C.A. and the religious denominations.

Some programme was clearly needed that would interest and develop boys from the church standpoint, and this one on the face of it looked promising. It did not call for a new organization but was merely a week-night expansion of the organized class. It was based upon the actual ascertained interests of boys. It was to be carried on not in any outside institution but in the church itself and by church folks. It was not a vaudeville of stunts and pastimes for boys but a real programme intended to develop the boy on all sides of his nature and to carry him forward through the perilous teen-age period right up to the threshold of man's estate, and to crown all it led straight to Jesus and the Jesus way of life, who is the only sufficient Saviour and ideal for boys, who in the days of his own boyhood grew up in a balanced way in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and with men.

We decided that under the circumstances it was up to us to give it a chance and put it to the proof. It has now had two years' trial and is no longer an experiment, and we are glad to say that notwithstanding the scarcity of leadership and other limitations peculiar to every new venture, it has proved in our case a real romance of religion.

There is an odd boy to whom it does not appeal and a few shut out by night classes, but practically all the boys connected with the church, from 13 to 19, are taking the full course of training either as members, group

leaders or mentors, and in the most enjoyable and enthusiastic way. The week-night work has reacted favorably on the Sunday School, giving us large, interesting, organized, mentored classes of boys, for the most part. The boys practically all join the church as they reach middle adolescence and as they approach the ten-age terminal are taking their places as mentors of groups and teachers of junior classes. One of the commendable features of this programme is that it requires little or no equipment, expense or machinery.

The boys themselves do all the work under adult leadership. The evening's programme following the outline prepared by our own church, consists of: Bible discussion, 15 minutes; practical talk, 15 minutes; general business, 15 minutes; tests, 15 minutes; group games and indoor team games, half an hour.

The boys are divided into groups and everything is competitive. Credits are given for all tests on the basis of weight and age so that there is little disparity in the scoring. The boys are charted from time to time to reveal defects and show what progress is being made in development.

The vitalizing element comes in through the standard constantly held up of development in the Jesus way towards an all-round Christian manhood, through the inspiration of God's Word in Bible discussion, contact with successful Christian men in the practical talks and the continuous influence and guidance of the adult leaders.

This movement, begun in a small way, gives promise at the present time of permeating all the Sunday Schools of our city and of capturing the boy-world for Christ and his kingdom.

London, Ont.



Graded Social Service in the Sunday School

By Rev. W. O. Rothney, B.D.

To train a child to know what he ought to do, without training him to do it, is spiritually fatal for the child. When Jesus indicated the lines on which he would divide "the sheep" from "the goats," he made it clear that the division would not be based on what people knew or did not know, or on what people thought or did not think, or on what people said or did not say; but that inasmuch as they *did it* or *did it not*, they would meet approval or condemnation. It is a serious matter for a church to train its children to know their duty without training them to do it. Every effort, therefore, should be put forth to make vital by activity, by normal expression, the teachings of the lesson hour. The pupils' thoughts and endeavors should be

directed away from themselves towards the needs of others.

Following every period of worship or study there should be provided some adequate volitional expression through which the melowered feelings and aroused sympathy would be carried into deeds of kindness and social service. The pupil finds with the growing years that there is much of sorrow and suffering in the world, and that there are many abuses that ought to be corrected. The spirit of Christ learned in the hour of study, which has called forth an attitude of loyalty to the master, must be related to the wrongs of our day, in the same way as Jesus was busy in alleviating the sufferings of his day. Hence social service has a large place in a well-rounded plan of religious education.

But there must be *graded expression* in social service. The six-year-old child cannot put forth an intelligent effort to abolish the saloon. Such a task requires all the maturity available in the adult Christian. Just as we find, that worship should vary with the important changes in the pupils' lives, just as we find a graded curriculum essential to successful religious instruction, so also we find that social service must be graded in accord with the age and interest of the growing child.

The material out of which a graded plan of social service may be made varies widely with different communities. Orphans' Homes always require services which may appeal to various ages. In larger cities social settlement activities call for a multitude of services and helpers. The various types of missionary endeavor, city, home, and foreign, with their numerous concrete needs, afford an opportunity for various appeals to which the pupils of the grades will respond. There are the poor, and the sick, and the aged, and the shut-ins, and the unfortunate families of the community that furnish ample material out of which to arrange a programme of social service. Adult classes may take an interest in social legislation; and at the present time the Patriotic Funds and the Red Cross Society afford a wide range of activity.

The method of procedure in constructing a social service programme is:

1. To make a list of the societies and organizations in the immediate neighborhood, or more remote, with which the School can most naturally work.
2. Ascertain what forms of services by children and young people these institutions and societies would most appreciate.
3. From these forms of services select such as all the departments of the School can more or less constantly participate in, and formulate them into a graded programme which recognizes the gradations in interest and capacity in young people.

4. By means of speakers representing these institutions, and excursions to them, get the pupils thoroughly informed regarding the people they are going to assist.

The important thing in social service in the Sunday School is, that the pupils get into sympathy with those who are the objects of their benevolence. They must be trained to help those in need because they are their brothers and sisters. Any tendency towards a patronizing spirit should be promptly checked. Anything that would tend to stimulate, on the part of the pupils, a feeling of superiority over those whom they are trying to help is fatal to the aim of the School. Pupils must be trained to go forth to the assistance of their fellow men in the spirit of brotherly love.

University of Chicago



Some Problems of the Small School

By Rev. John Mutch, B.D.

*III. THE CHILDREN AT CHURCH

The small church has its problem of the attendance of the children at the service. Indeed, one almost wonders whether the difficulty is not more acute there than in the large congregation.

The other day, after having preached about, and urged in one way and another, the attendance of the children, I was greatly surprised to have a faithful, Christian worker tell me that she told her boys that they must not remain after Sunday School as she was afraid they would get together and disturb the worship. Such a difficulty can be met by seeing that the children sit with their parents, where they ought to be, by trying to make the service interesting to them, and by older persons not being peeved at their natural restlessness.

There are two natural ways of approaching the whole question. One is through the parents. Wherever the parents are aware of the importance of the presence of their children with themselves at public worship, the children will be there. This can be brought home by the pastor and members of his congregation who are interested.

Occasionally a sermon may be preached bearing upon the whole subject. Occasionally, or even persistently, the matter may be mentioned from the pulpit. Often a word may be spoken in private to the delinquent parent by pastor or teacher, and perhaps this last method is the best to use with the church member.

The other way of approach is through the child himself. A word spoken to him in

* The first two articles in this series, The Absent Minister and The Hour of Meeting appeared in the TEACHERS MONTHLY for July and August respectively.

private about his duty of attending church, and the desire of the teacher, pastor and the whole church to see him there, is not always without avail. The need of reverence and good behaviour can be impressed in the same way. The service can be made of interest to him by a special hymn for the young; by having occasionally a children's choir, or a child's solo or reading; by a five-minute sermonette; by illustrations chosen for the sermon with the children in mind; and, if the minister has the power, by following the example of one great preacher who, when asked how he managed to make his sermons so interesting, replied, that he always had his eye upon a certain boy to whom he preached, and as soon as he saw the boy was not following him he knew that he was becoming uninteresting to everybody.

Besides, there are the regular Sabbath School methods of an attendance mark in the class-register, of the pink envelope to be given at the regular service, marking both attendance and contribution on the part of the children, of the punched card or other attendance record taken at the door, and the award of a certificate or other prize for being present a certain number of Sundays in the year.

The contagion of interest among children must ever be borne in mind. There are no recruiters like interested children.



Decision Day : An Experience

By Rev. J. A. Pue-Gilchrist, B.A.

The 27th of May last was observed as Decision Day in Knox Church, Bracebridge, Ont., with the result that 40 signed Decision Cards, and 35 united with the church, most of these being from the minister's Bible Class. The following is a brief account of the plans carried out.

1. An unannounced series of preparatory sermons was preached during the preceding three months on the great gospel themes displaying man's need and God's remedy, culminating on Decision Day in a sermon to church members in the morning on Ezek. 33: 7, 8, and in the evening a message to the unsaved on Acts 16: 30.

2. In the Bible Class, a half year's teaching of the lessons from John's Gospel always kept prominent the writer's own declared aim (see John 20: 31).

3. There was earnest and long continued prayer both public and private for the salvation of souls.

4. The Session committed itself to the policy of holding Decision Day. The date was publicly announced and kept before the congregation for their prayers and cooperation.

5. A personal letter from the pastor was sent to every member of the congregation, asking for personal reconsecration and prayerful cooperation.

6. A personal letter was written by the pastor to many who were being prayed for,

active service, and John's purpose in writing the Gospel was the basis of an appeal to the Bible Class members.

8. Decision cards were used to obtain the signatures of those deciding.

9. Following Decision Day an instruction

Decision Day

I KNOW that Jesus Christ died for my sins, and has asked me to accept Him as my loving Saviour. I know that He wishes all who love and accept Him to do this publicly before others, and so, looking to Him for strength, I have joined with others to-day in deciding to accept Him as my Saviour.

(Teacher).....

urging them to accept God's revealed plan of salvation and decide for Christ on Decision Day.

7. The way having thus been prepared and suitable literature having been distributed the preceding Sunday, on Decision Day the pastor met with the older classes of the Sunday School and with his Bible Class, each class by itself, and had a carefully prepared talk with each leading up to the duty of decision for Christ.

In a class of girls an illustration, suggested by the patriotism and production campaign, of the result of a garden growing without decision in favor of fruit and vegetables, was used to point the need of youthful decision for the making of Christian character. Reference to a recruiting meeting, its aim and result, was used with a class of boys to illustrate the need of Christian soldiers enlisting for

class and personal interviews by the pastor completed the campaign.

Thus all were instructed in the meaning of Christian profession and the duties of church membership and those who had full understanding of the meaning of the step and had fully decided to take it were received into church membership.

The full results are not recorded in numbers added to the church. Some who signed cards did not unite, but will no doubt do so later. Some who did not sign cards were nevertheless profoundly moved, and results, we believe and pray, will follow. The campaign was entered upon in doubt with fear and trembling, but now we are praising God for the glorious results of the application of the gospel which is still "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Ottawa

A Rounder in the Sunday School

BY REV. W. D. REID, B.D.

Since being settled in the regular pastorate I have always felt it my duty to take charge of a Bible Class in the Sunday School.

Last winter I tried an experiment which was new. Turning the Bible Class over to an intelligent, devoted layman, who is an exceedingly competent teacher, I became a free lance in the Sunday School. I attended

Sunday School just as faithfully as formerly, and when any class in the School had no teacher, it was turned over to me. In this way I taught almost every class from the Beginners up to the Bible Class.

The experiment was certainly interesting and illuminating,—at least to the "occasional" teacher. I got to "chum in" with a

great many boys and girls whom I had scarcely ever known before. My theology, too, was wonderfully helped as I sat with the various classes and endeavored to see things religious from the viewpoint of the child. My method of teaching is what one might call Socratic. I asked them questions and they did the same with me.

Touching on the mysterious question of the Trinity, one day a little boy of ten explained to me and to the class that "Jesus was just a piece of God. Part of God remained up in heaven, and part of him came down to this world, and after Jesus had ascended, the both parts came together and dwelt in heaven to-day as one person."

It may sound almost blasphemous to outside ears, but it was anything but that to the teacher and the class as they looked into the little bright face trying so hard to explain a great truth which has puzzled theologians for centuries.

Talking to a bright little class of boys about eight, one day, the subject under discussion was using bad words. Upon being asked if any one in the class ever used bad words to hold up their hands, several hands went up. Upon being asked why they did so, one honest little chap said: "Please, Mister, it's pretty hard when a fellow is hammering in a nail, and strikes his thumb, not to say bad words, isn't it?" "But," he added, "I pray a good deal about it, and I think Jesus is helping me to keep my tongue and my temper."

These youngsters also propound questions that sometimes bring dismay to the heart of the teacher. Teaching a little class of girls about seven summers, the question was "the meaning of prayer, and how to secure answers to prayer." I endeavored to show these little tots that sometimes God did not answer our prayers, because it was not for our good. One little tot looked up, and said: "I have prayed for over a year for a little baby brother, and God has never sent him yet, and I don't see what harm answering that prayer could possibly do." It was rather a difficult proposition for the teacher to tackle.

On the whole I feel that my winter's work was profitable, both to myself and to the Sunday School. I have got to know the children in the Sunday School as never before. I can now call them all by name when meeting them on the street. They have got to know me in such a way, that when they meet me on the street it is always "Hallo, Mr. Reid." It has given me, as never before, the child's viewpoint with regard to many religious questions. It also helps the teacher to sit now and then and see how another teacher handles a class. And it has given the minister an entree into homes hitherto unvisited, thus enabling him to bring some of them to church,

who had drifted from church. It was a profitable experience. Try it!

Westmount, Que.



Graduating from the Bible Class

By a Teacher

What are some of the results of Bible Class work? One often hears the question asked, but the answers are not always to be had. One of the chief functions of a class is so to train the members that they will want to become teachers as well, and any class that has a healthful and continuous life, will have this among its encouraging results.

You may imagine the pleasure given to a teacher over the following letter received recently from one of his former members who has since removed to another city:

"My minister has given his consent to my tackling the job of organizing a Men's Bible Class here. For some time now (it is running into years) St. Andrew's has had no Bible Class of any description, and I was rather amazed when I first found it out. However, I want to get busy on the job, and as a new industry will bring into town a good many men, perhaps the scheme will work out well.

"As I don't like leaving things till the last minute, I wish you would put me on the track of as many suggestions as possible towards organization, schemes, and methods of all kinds. Your own experience will mean much to me, if you will give me the benefit of some of it. Perhaps you will remember my telling you that while I was with the old class, I was seized with the longing to lead a Bible Class of my own, and it looks as if my desire is to be granted, if I go about it in the right way, and am privileged to stay here long enough. If you don't mind, at your convenience, giving me some hints on the subject, I shall be more than obliged."

Thus there is the hiving-off process from a strong men's class. The above letter is but one of the scores that have reached its teacher, and the latter now has the satisfaction of knowing that scores of his "Old Boys," as he terms them, are teachers of classes in many other cities and towns.



Canada's Greatest Asset

Undoubtedly the greatest asset Canada possesses to-day is her boys, both because of what they are and what they may become. The greatest national menace might be these same boys under the influence of harmful or negative leadership.

The controlling factor which will determine the issue is to be found in the character of the leadership our boys receive during the next few years.

Character is the product of constant striving to realize in everyday life a high ideal—or a low one. Because adolescent boys are peculiarly susceptible at this period in their lives to leadership of one kind or of the other, it is vitally important, if Canada is to be kept inviolate for the discharge of her high mission among the nations of the world, that her boys, through helpful, trained, consecrated leadership should be assisted to a high standard of mental, physical, religious and social life.

The burden of national responsibility, which will surely be placed upon the boys of to-day within a very few years, will then not prove to be too heavy but will evoke a response which shall result in the protection of our country from the calamities of materialism, social injustice, political corruption, and insure for it a national type, strong, sane, virile and Christian—Report of Commission, Ontario Advisory Committee on Boys' Work



The Sunday School a Recruiting Ground for Lay Workers

By Rev. Geo. E. Ross, B.D.

There is a demand and a place to-day for lay workers as never before. And one of the best recruiting grounds for these is the Sunday School. We cannot all be ministers. It was not intended that we should be. But we can all have a part in Christian service and be a vital force somewhere in the life and work of the church.

The Sunday School is primarily a place for religious instruction. But closely related to religious instruction is practical training. The one finds expression in the other. In the Sunday School we not only *learn*; we also *learn to do*. And many of our leading lay workers in the church and various Christian organizations of to-day tell us that they got their first practical lesson in Christian work in the Sunday School.

In every well-conducted School there is an atmosphere of activity. Every scholar is conscious that this is an organization with a definite purpose to accomplish something, and he is made to feel that he is a constituent part of its working force.

The organized Bible Class, in a very special way, however, affords training. The president of the class occupies the chair and learns how to conduct a meeting. The secretary learns very quickly how to discharge his or her duties as such. Every member of the class committees has something to do. The membership committee constitutes a group of personal workers. Even if nothing more is acquired than a high sense of responsibility, this in itself is of priceless value. For this is just what so many office bearers in every

church lack. If the organized classes succeed in instilling into their members a sacred regard for the obligations of office, the future leadership of the church is certainly bright with promise.

No Sunday School is complete without a Teacher Training Class. And this is a rare opportunity for our young men and young women to learn how to do their work effectively. From this class teachers for the several departments are drafted. Ultimately scholars become teachers and thus the door of opportunity for lay work is thrown wide open. Not only so but they themselves are prepared to do the work.

More than teachers are needed. Officers are required. Many who may not be "apt to teach" are gifted as Secretaries, Librarians, Home Department Visitors, Cradle Roll Superintendents, assistants in various departments. And the never-failing source of supply is to be found in the young men's and young women's classes. Having received instruction they ought to grade into service. And the School that is doing the best and most systematic work will pride itself in having the majority of its teachers and officers home-grown.

Nothing is clearer than the fact that the leadership of to-morrow is in the Sunday School of to-day. Here is a recruiting ground we must in no way neglect. The elders and managers and strong men and women of every department of the church of to-morrow are with us in training now.

Montreal



Communicants' Classes

By Rev. F. W. Kerr, B.A.

Communicants' classes are of two distinct types: first, for prospective, and second for actual, communicants.

1. For prospective communicants.

The Sabbath School and Bible Classes are the best recruiting grounds for these. In collecting recruits for his prospective classes, the minister goes to a boys' class ripe for church membership, and during the regular session, firmly, urgently, presents the question of deciding for Christ. After the Sunday School session, a similar class of girls remains for a similar purpose. After the evening service, classes are held for adults for four successive Sabbaths preceding communion; while on some evening during the week, classes are held for the boys and girls invited through the Sunday School.

In order to interest the homes in these classes, the writer has tried with splendid results, the plan of six simultaneous cottage prayer meetings, held throughout the congregation, at which the elders presented the case

of the communicants' classes, and made an appeal for the active cooperation of parents.

2. For actual communicants.

More difficult than to get people into the church, is the problem of keeping them up to Christian standards, and of leading them into the life of service and of prayer.

About four months after being received into church membership, each member receives a personal letter from the minister, inviting him or her to a conference in the church parlor. At that conference are assembled all who have joined the church by profession of faith for the past two years.

The conference opens with a frank discussion of what they have been getting out of their new essay into the Christian warfare, and of what they are putting into it; of their problems and difficulties, their triumphs and defeats.

Then the minister tells of the new communicants' classes he is planning to form; of certain persons whom he is anxious to win; of certain classes of boys and girls who must be won now, or who, otherwise, will drift away; and above all, of how much it means to be carried into church membership on a tide of prayer. All this is done in the most intimate and confidential manner.

These communicants are then formed into a League of Prayer for five weeks (that is, until Communion Sunday). They pledge themselves to pray daily for some one, and work to bring that "some one" to the communicants' classes; they further pledge themselves to be praying intensely at every church service while the minister is preaching.

This Prayer League with its twofold obligation becomes the inner circle of one's ministry. By it we test the efficacy of prayer, we maintain the ideal of individual soul-winning, and it gives to the minister a most magnificent sense of triumphant power to realize that as soon as he begins to preach, these young co-workers are pouring out their soul-energies in prayer for him and for those whom he is trying to reach for Christ.

New Westminster, B.C.



Institutes of Religious Education in the Presbytery of Chatham

By Rev. Henry Dickie, D.D.

So regularly and systematically have Institutes of Religious Education been held throughout the Presbytery of Chatham during the past five years, that in 1916 only five places remained in which there had not been an Institute, namely, Calvin Church, Chatham Township; Buxton; Fletcher; Goldsmith; and Puce.

The Presbytery's Committee, accordingly, arranged last year that the Institutes for 1916

should be held at these places, and the contiguous congregations were asked to send their representatives there.

The time agreed upon was November 6th to 10th, and under the energetic leadership of our convener, Rev. W. H. Burgess, B.D., of Harwich, the Institutes were successfully carried out, and financially more than paid for themselves.

Thus, while every year the whole Presbytery has been reached in this important work with a new programme and new speakers, the centres of meeting have been so changed that, at some time or other during the five years, every congregation has had the advantage of being a centre for an Institute.

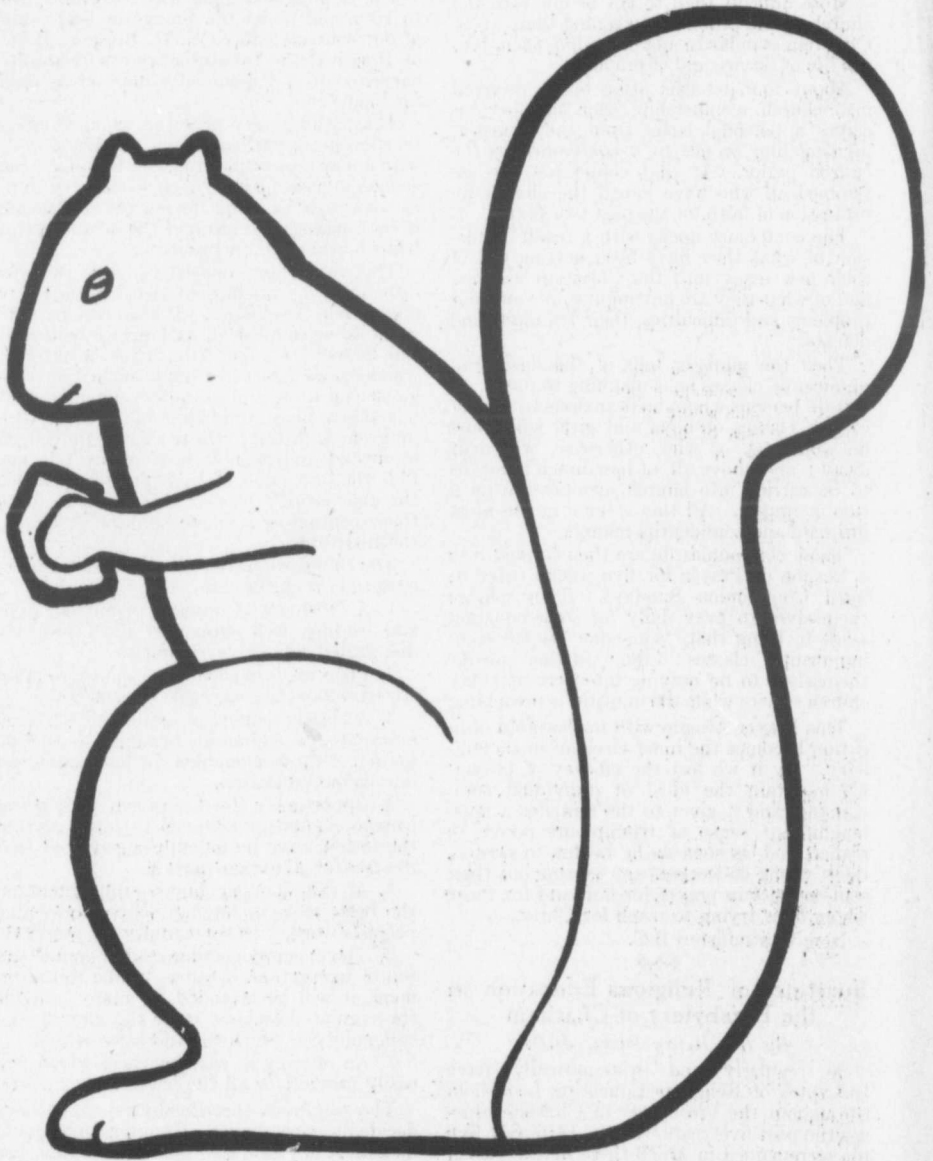
This year it is proposed to carry the war into Africa by holding an Institute in every one of our 27 charges. If this can be successfully accomplished, as I firmly believe it can, it will be a fine tribute to the interest which these Institutes have evoked in religious education, and to the development that has taken place through religiously continuing the work from year to year. Indeed, so interested and capable have many become, that the last series of Institutes was carried through entirely by our own workers, with the exception of a single speaker at two of the Institutes.

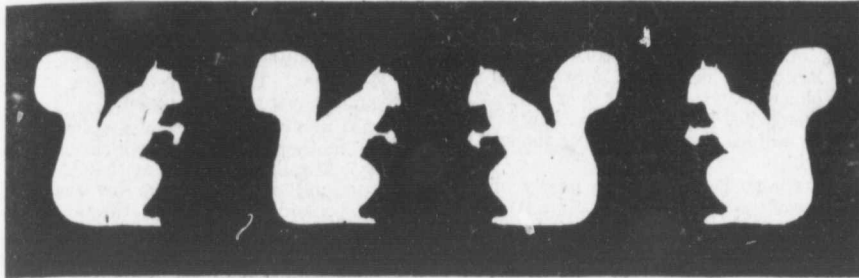
The things we have found to be absolutely essential for success are:

1. A Presbytery Convener of life and light and leading, well supported by a properly distributed and active committee.
2. Plans made in good time, and thoroughly advertised in the congregations concerned.
3. A clearly defined programme with good informational addresses, bringing to the attention of those assembled the latest and best in religious education.
4. Opportunity for discussion, with a few persons chosen in advance to open it, that the feeling may be quickly engendered that it is free for all to take part in.
5. An exhibit of our church publications and the best books on Sunday School and young people's work, with opportunity for purchase.
6. The evening meeting made popular and full of inspiration, because, unlike the afternoon, it will be attended by many, outside the regular delegates, from the church and community in which the Institute is held.
7. An offering at each meeting which will easily provide for all the necessary expenses.

The results in this Presbytery have been decidedly encouraging. Congregations could be named in which a complete revolution has been effected. In every such case a wide-awake and deeply-interested minister was at the back of it, but it was the Institute which gave him the opportunity to accomplish it.

Chatham, Ont.





A Blackboard Border Design

At their teacher's request twenty little children were drawing a tree—"a tree with a hole in it." As one little lad straightened up to view his work, he announced, "I know what we are going to talk about. We are going to talk about squirrels," and they were. Having drawn the picture, they were ready to tell what little creatures lived in trees, what they needed to eat and how they secured their food, who made nuts to grow for squirrels, and seeds and worms for birds, and finally to sing :

Father, thou who carest
For smallest tiny flowers,
Thou teachest bees and squirrels
To save for winter hours,

To thou, we little children,
Our loving thanks would bring:
For all thy loving kindness
Of all thy goodness sing. Amen.

All children are interested in squirrels. Even little city children know something about them, because they have seen them in parks and have fed them nuts or have watched other children feed them. It is for this reason that a squirrel with its nut has been chosen as the motive for the blackboard design for October. It will furnish the point of contact for conversation about God's care and good gifts, and help the children to feel grateful at the Thanksgiving season.

A Class Session: Beginners

BY RAE FURLANDS

To begin with, let there be an individual greeting for each child.

If there are no assistants to attend to such duties as getting pictures and other material ready and attending to the proper arrangement of the chairs, let the teacher be early enough to get everything done before the first arrival, so that she may be free to have a personal word with each child as he or she comes in, a handshake if possible but at least a smiling "Good afternoon," with the child's name added.

More can be done for the children by the personal touch than by the lesson. Or, perhaps it would be better to say, more can be done with the lesson because of the personal touch.

It is a good thing to take the offering at this time because it so easily rolls on the floor otherwise; besides it is frequently in the overcoat pocket. It need not be the less an act of worship. The remarks of the teacher will make it what it shall be.

Have wraps removed and children and visitors seated in their allotted places so that the hour of opening may see the exercises promptly begun. If you wait for late-comers you will find that they will allow you to do so more and more regularly. Of course there will be unavoidable lateness occasionally. An assistant should, if possible, be on hand to attend to such cases.

If you have a piano, a few bars of soft music is the best signal for all private conversation to cease and to call all to attention. Otherwise, the movement of the teacher to her usual place, whether familiarly seating herself in the circle (which is most approved) or quietly standing before the class, should be enough. It is not desirable to have things too formal in the Beginners class. The more like a well regulated home it can be, the better.

Begin the conversation with something you are sure will be of interest to each child, for example, "This afternoon as I came to Sunday

School I saw," etc. You may have gone out of your way to see it, but the children need not know that; or, "May told me she has a new brother;" or, "I am sure you all saw the soldiers last week." It does not matter particularly just how you open so long as what you say will lead naturally to the thought for the day.

The Circle Talk embraces nearly all the exercises of the hour. The Lesson and Closing Exercises and a rest period (which is really a period of activity that rests the little bodies which easily tire of keeping still) take up the remainder of the time.

Let there be plenty of singing of well selected, short hymns which develop naturally out of the conversation and from each other. The prayer or prayers should be spontaneous and practical, the class usually repeating short clauses after the teacher.

The Cradle Roll and birthday exercises are included in the talk.

The general programme for the hour is: (1) Circle Talk. (2) Rest Exercise. (3) Lesson. (4) Closing Exercises. Having these in regular order continually, gives definiteness to the proceedings; but the order of the exercises in the Talk, should vary from day to day.

The teacher will have a definite plan in mind for the Talk but it will not be so hard and fast that it cannot be changed if occasion arises.

One afternoon the windows were all open in a certain class-room. A sudden storm arose. The pictures, lightly pinned to the board for the day's use, caught by the strong breeze, created great disturbance, some coming off altogether. Such an event could not be passed over. The class was familiar with the verse from Rosetti's little song:

"Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I;
But when the trees hang trembling,
The wind is passing by."

The teacher changed her plan to include this song and also changed the words of the latter part to:

"But when the pictures blow about,
The wind is passing by."

This made the song an especial favorite for some time to come, and also caused to make the little commotion among the children cease in a pleasurable manner.

The rest exercises should not be boisterous, and should be always connected with high thought. The Departmental Helps show how to do this, so that they form a legitimate part of the lessons to be impressed.

The children should not be expected to listen to a lesson story of ten or fifteen minutes

without physical movement and visible illustration, so be sure to plan for this.

Let the Closing Exercises be short and right to the point. If the lesson closes with a prayer, just sing a goodby hymn.

A not unimportant part of a class session is the motherly oversight which must be given to the little ones. See that the temperature and air of the room are what they should be and be sure that the wraps are properly put on in cold weather.

The last thing before dismissing, give out the papers containing the lesson just taught. These may be referred to during the lesson and shown to be of interest, but let the children expect to receive them only on going out.



The Religion of a Primary Child

When is a child religious? What should be expected of a child of seven in the way of Christian attitude? What should be his reactions to certain situations as the results of his Christian training?

A child is religious in "so far as he is capable of organizing his whole life around what is conceived by him to be of most worth." To be sure, his life is more limited, his experience more circumscribed than that of the adult. But his problems are real, quite real; and his acts are Christian in so far as they are determined and controlled by values and ideas that are Christian.

But, perchance, we can make this more clear by concrete illustration. A little six-year-old in a certain school of religion was returning to her class-room after the usual morning service of worship in the chapel. She had heard at that service the familiar old hymn "God is my strong salvation," and its meaning was very clear to her. As she and her classmates were going to their room, the elevator in which they stood suddenly stopped. It was apparent something was wrong. Some of the children were frightened, but this little girl of six stood calm and said:

"God is my strong salvation;
What foe have I to fear?"

Was not this a true exhibition of faith, and that under circumstances which might have tested a "grown-up"?

When should the child begin to pray? Should he learn formal prayers to "say," or should the prayer be the spontaneous expression of the child's joy over the good things that the day has brought, of love and good will toward family and friends and helpers, and of communion with God concerning any and all of the little affairs of his daily experience? Should the child be compelled to "say his prayers" at stated times, even though the programme may prove distasteful

to him? How should we treat the child's request that his prayers be not "heard" by some adult?

Formal prayers, if good in content, might well be used. They are the first steps that lead on to later participation in the common prayers of the church, of which the Lord's Prayer is the most universal and, we believe, the most perfect example. But we have specified that the formal prayer should be good in content. That is, it should be such as the child can understand and appreciate.

But there are seasons and times when the formal prayer will not adequately express the feelings of the child. It is when he comes to feel that prayer is talking with God, the heavenly Father. Out of several years of experience with the seven-year-old child I have come to think that most children believe that we pray so that God will take care of us, or that we may ask him for the things we need, or that we may thank him for all the friends we have and the pleasures we enjoy and the gifts we receive. But there is the occasional child, more mature in thought than the rest or more skillfully taught, who has come to realize that when he prays he talks with God, his heavenly Father, about any of his childish interests; hence the prayers: "O dear Lord, isn't it jolly to ride in a trolley-car?" from the youngster who has had a new and delightful experience; and "Dear Father in heaven, take care of the babies in the day nursery, and help kind people to give them enough milk to eat," from the more serious-minded six-year-old who has become interested in welfare work among his own city neighbors.

Most children "say" their prayers at night, before retiring. But two little girls in one class, of one home, had always said their prayers in French to their governess. So when the governess was dismissed, the children forgot how to "say" their prayers, and alas! they never prayed.

Another four-year-old is accustomed to pray at night. But there are times when he and his father have been having a frolic together before bedtime, when he does not wish to pray, so the father wisely excuses him. Is it not better that the child should go to sleep with the remembrance of a happy evening spent with his father, whom he can see, than that he should unwillingly pray to the Father whom he cannot see? Is not the social situation, here, clearly a religious one?

While visiting recently in a home where there is a small boy, I was interested in all that he said and did and was seeking for sources and causes of action. One evening, after he was prepared for bed, I entered the room for the last "good-nights." All went well until it was time for the prayer to be said,

"I don't want Miss Wright to hear me say my prayers." Do you suppose we remained in the room? No. Though he was only a tiny lad, he had a certain idea about prayer that night, and we were bound to respect his desire for secrecy.—Eleanor Wright, in *The Graded Sunday School Magazine*.



The Junior as a Hero Worshiper

By Mabel Crews Ringland, B.A.

Staying in the same summer cottage where I used to visit was a lad of about twelve years who was the most enthusiastic tennis player for his age I have ever seen. Besides being quite aware of his own ability in that direction, he was rather scornful of the girls in the house and would never condescend to play a game of tennis with them. One day I challenged him to a set or two, and, to his great amazement, beat him. I could see that he was altogether nonplussed, although he said very little, but his manner to me thereafter betokened the profoundest respect. He had great admiration for any one who could outstrip him in the ability he coveted most, for just at this time his ideal was to be an expert tennis player.

According to the Chinese, an ideal is literally "the thing you have your eye on." Every Junior has an ideal which he worships because he cannot help himself. He has his eye on some particular ability that he longs to possess and wherever he sees that ability he worships it. It will invariably be embodied in a personality, for deeds are the things that count with the Junior, and the person who can do the things he longs to do will be his hero.

So the Junior boy and girl are hero worshippers, although they are all unconscious of the fact. Physical strength and skill, daring and courage are what the boy admires most, because his own development at this period is so largely physical. He may find these characteristics in his father, perhaps in the Y.M.C.A. physical director, in his Sunday School teacher, or in a champion baseball player, but he is just as likely to admire them in a prizefighter, a pirate or a desperado in whom moral strength may be altogether lacking. Physical strength makes a strong appeal to the girl of this age too, and not until a few years later will she admire womanly charm.

Whatever the ideal be, it is certain that the instinct of hero worship is one of the most potent forces in moulding the young life and supplying incentives to action. The teacher's great responsibility, then, is to provide the right type of heroes, those in whom physical and moral strength are closely allied, and who are worthy of imitation. "The flame of hero worship," says Mrs. Lamoreaux

in *The Unfolding Life*, which every teacher should read, "is fed from two sources—the life of some one near to the child and the passionate delight in reading which characterizes the years from about ten to fifteen, and is especially marked from twelve to fourteen." These words make the teacher's duty very clear.

In the first place, you as a teacher are near to the child's life. What if he or she should have exalted *you* as a hero and be patterning a life after yours? Would you feel satisfied? Are you representing Christ in such a way that the child may see him exalted in your life and want to make him his or her hero? That is for you to decide.

The teacher has a broad field of influence in the matter of the child's reading, which so largely supplies the ideals. If you can place before your boys the Knights of King Arthur's Round Table or the heroes of ancient history in an appealing way, they will admire the strength and courage they find in them just as much as in the pirates and villains of the thrilling but trashy boys' books with which the market is flooded. Of course you would not think of recommending to him a book which lacked action and excitement, but there is enough thrill and movement in the biographies of great explorers, inventors and

missionaries to satisfy even the most exacting Junior. The missionary boards of the different churches are now bringing out books that are full of the very thing you need—stories in which the spiritual heroism makes its unconscious impression along with the physical.

Now is the time to make the Bible a very dear friend to the boy and girl, and our course of lessons in the Departmental Graded Series is planned with this very instinct of hero worship in view. The daring deeds and thrilling adventures of Old Testament heroes, of Christ and his followers that appeal to the heroic in the Junior are the very finest material on which this instinct may feed.

To sum up, I should like to quote the words of Emma A. Robinson: "Hero worship unguided produces: admiration of brute force, lawlessness, disrespect of parents, irreverence for things holy, formation of evil habits, low ambitions, ideals that degrade, taste for pernicious literature, cigarette smoking, drunkenness. Hero worship guided: high ideals, emulation of noble characters, formation of right habits through emulation, pure thought, the formation of a taste for good literature, a spirit of reverence, and the development of a strong character."

Toronto

The New Lessons for Boys and Girls

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

What shall we teach the boys and girls of from 12 to 14? To answer this question the boys and girls themselves must be studied. We must know what their special characteristics are.

First, we shall find in them a new sense of power. They are growing rapidly towards the full strength of men and women. They want to find exercises for their powers. They are eager to do things. The boy, especially, wants to go to work. It is hard to keep him at school. He longs to go out into the big, busy world, find a place for himself in it and do some real work of his own.

Secondly, the boys and girls of this age are anxious to do something worth while. The little child is content with imitating others. Later on he becomes a hero worshiper, and thinks that everything that his hero says and does must be right. But when boys and girls reach the age which we are considering, they begin to have opinions and judgments of their own as to what is right and noble. They form the ideas of truth and faith and self-sacrifice. They are no longer content with imitating and admiring these virtues in others, but begin to regard them as virtues which they themselves ought to practise. They

want to make the most of themselves, and they begin to feel that they can do so only by acquiring and expressing in actual conduct the qualities which, as seen in others, have excited their admiration.

A regard for the welfare of others, which we call altruism, is a third characteristic of this interesting age. The boys and girls who have reached it are peculiarly susceptible to the appeal to endure hardships and make sacrifices for others.

Keeping before us these characteristics of boys and girls, from 12 to 14 years old, we can see how eminently suitable for them are the new Departmental Intermediate Lessons, which commence with this month.

For these lessons are taken from Mark's Gospel, and that is the Gospel which, more clearly and vividly than any of the others, pictures Jesus as the mighty worker. As we turn the pages of this first and simplest story of the life of Jesus, we always see him busy at work, putting forth, in some way his wonderful power. How all this will appeal to the active, energetic boy and girl!

All these works of Jesus, it is to be further noted, manifest those inward qualities which

the boys and girls are beginning to appreciate. They reveal his perfect holiness and fidelity and surrender to the will of God.

And where else will the boys and girls find so perfect an example of unselfishness as in the works of Jesus? They were all done not

for his own advantage but for the good of others.

Truly the teacher is to be envied who will have the privilege, during the next six months, of guiding the studies of boys and girls of 12, 13 and 14 in this wonderful Gospel.

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

Love an Essential

Men think there are circumstances when one can deal with human beings without love, but there are no such circumstances. One may deal with *things* without love—one may cut down trees, make brick, hammer iron, without love—but one cannot so deal with *human beings*.—Tolstoi

The Primary Concern

Remember that the function of every Sunday School worker is ministerial. Not teaching, but influence—holy, prayerful influence—is the primary concern of the Sunday School. We are losing children to-day, not through ignorance of the Bible, but through ignorance of Jesus Christ. Sunday School teaching, to be effective, requires, first, prayerful and thorough study; second, faithful attendance; and third, personal interest in and knowledge of each scholar. All other things—method and organization, and the like, valuable as they are, are secondary to these. Lacking these, the most highly skilled teacher, with the best methods, cannot succeed, while if they be present, the humblest and most ignorant cannot fail.—The Burning Bush

What Percentage?

A teacher was asked what percentage of his class he expected to bring to Christ. He answered with a shrug of his shoulders that if two or three out of the dozen were won, he would feel as though his work had been greatly blessed and would hope that the others would eventually be influenced in their lives by his teachings.

Another teacher of boys was asked the same question and he looked up with clear eyed surprise. "Why, I have faith," he returned, "that God can and will save every one of them if I am faithful in my work. I am sowing the seed with the *expectation* of harvest, otherwise I should get discouraged in no time, for there are bound to be times when there doesn't seem to be much evidence of anything

being accomplished. But as I look back over the months I can always see that there has been a gain.

"Often I am rebuked when I realize the courage and hope and steadfastness of purpose in the lives of these young fellows. Of course I expect them all—every one—to be won for the master. If it were not so, I should feel that my own work was seriously at fault somewhere. I intend to do my work the best I can, to sow God's seed lovingly and with faith, and to leave the results to him."

It is our privilege to sow with God and to know for a certainty that however faulty our part of the work may be, that his will never be neglected or slighted in any particular.—The New Century S.S. Teacher's Monthly

A Spelling Match Review

When teaching a class of Intermediate boys, I conducted the review like an old-fashioned spelling match. The Sunday before, two boys were selected by the class as captains and then these two "chose up" the boys for their sides. During the following week, I wrote out a number of questions on each lesson, bringing out the main characters and facts in the lesson and the spiritual truth taught. On Sunday morning, the two sides sat facing each other, the captains at the head. Beginning at the left, the first boy was asked the first question, and if he answered it correctly he was given the written question. If he failed to answer it was passed to the first boy on the other side and so on from side to side until it was correctly answered.

At the close of the session, the slips were counted to determine the winning side. I found that it was better to have a great many questions requiring short answers rather than a few questions with long answers. The pupils are apt to grow restless if one talks too long. When there were not enough present to have sides, I used the plan of passing the question from one pupil to another until it was correctly answered and counting the slips held by each pupil to determine the winner.

This plan has always proved interesting and Review Sunday, which was formerly a bore, became the most interesting and pleasant Sunday of the Quarter.—Mary L. Wilson, in *The Westminster Teacher*

When there are no Blackboards

Blackboards may be purchased so cheaply nowadays that there is hardly a reasonable excuse for any Sunday School being without this very helpful piece of equipment. But even if the School is unprovided with a blackboard, the service which the blackboard renders can be performed in another way.

Go to any newspaper office and get sheets of cheap paper cut about the size of a newspaper page, or any other size if preferred. Fasten these sheets of paper together with a piece of cardboard for a back so that they make a kind of large pad. For fastening the paper together, wire staples may be used or pieces of string.

Take this pad to Sunday School, set it up in place or hang it in position, and your blackboard is ready, although in this case it is a "whiteboard," and it will be necessary to use colored rather than white crayons to make your letters stand out distinctly.

In a well-equipped Sunday School in a city which I visited recently, a School which has as many blackboards as it needs, this "whiteboard" plan is in use for announcing the report of the secretary and of the treasurer. The superintendent of the School is the editor of a newspaper and he has seen to it that both these officers are provided with one of the large pads. Each officer sets forth in large letters the day's attendance and the day's offering, and compares it with the offering a year ago, or the previous Sunday as the case may be.

At the close of the School session the sheet of paper with its lettered report may be destroyed or filed away for reference.—James Elmer Russell, in *The Pilgrim Teacher*

Securing and Retaining Attention

In securing and retaining attention the qualifications of the teacher are important factors.

1. The teacher should be of a cheerful disposition. She will find that her own moods are reflected in the pupils. If the teacher is gloomy, the class is very apt to be dull and unresponsive. Nothing attracts and interests a pupil like a teacher who radiates a cheery atmosphere.

2. The teacher should be very much in earnest about her work. If she shows by her manner that her heart is not in the work, her pupils will likely assume the same attitude

toward their work. She should act and speak as though the work in which she and the class are engaged is of vital importance.

3. The teacher should be the most enthusiastic person in the class. A teacher without enthusiasm for her work is very much like an engine without steam, in that she will never get anywhere. If she truly loves her work, and has the interest of the class at heart, she will be filled with an enthusiasm that "springs from a genuine, fervent desire for the accomplishment of a well-understood purpose."

4. The teacher should strive to be as interesting as possible. Her aims should be not only to bring out the truth of the lesson, but to do it in as interesting a way as possible. No teacher has a right to be dull and prosaic. If her presentation of the lesson is dull and uninteresting, the pupils are bound to be unresponsive.—R. W. Settle, in the *Convention Teacher*

Range-Finding in Teaching

The fact is, those teachers who are most intelligently aware of the pupils while preparing the lessons are apt to be least painfully aware of them while teaching. And it is just as true that the teachers who most intelligently observe the pupils while teaching know best how to get ready to teach. There is no escape from the pupil. He cannot, with impunity, be ignored. Child study is to the teacher what range-finding is to the gunner. The teacher must learn from the pupil before the pupil can learn from the teacher. There must be obedience and confidence on both sides. "Nature must be reckoned with or nurture cannot be reckoned on."

The pupil who disregards the teacher should be disciplined, we say. But what about the teacher who ignores everything but the physical presence of the pupil? Children are often unable to appreciate the earnestness of their teachers because the latter seem to be unable intelligently to appreciate the former. Ignorance of the true nature of undeveloped human life is the prolific source of heartache and failure among those who have come under the spell of the great teacher. Even love cannot take the place of intelligent insight.—S.S. Journal

Should the Pastor Teach?

Should the pastor teach? Yes; practically every Sunday, but only as a substitute teacher. He cannot afford to allow the teaching period to be unused. He should not be visiting the classes and thus disturbing them, except under stress of necessity. There is no more profitable employment of the period for him than by serving as substitute teacher in different classes. He will thus win

the gratitude of the superintendent by being always willing to substitute. He will also have a chance at almost every class in the course of the year. He will be quick to see what rare and precious opportunities this will give him to come into coveted relations with the pupils. It will be group work under the most favoring conditions. Many members of the School ought thus to be led to Christ or helped in their Christian life.

The pastor belongs to the whole School and the whole of the School belongs to him. He should be the best-informed man with reference to every detail. No interest of the School is beneath his concern or should escape his attention. He should be familiar with its every problem and know its solution, although he may think it best many times to let some one else solve them. He must make it his business to keep the Sunday School machinery working at its highest efficiency. He must enlist the energy and support of new workers. He must get the best work out of the old workers. Everything that goes with the chief place, its responsibility, its opportunity, its skill, its knowledge, its rewards, are his, for the pastor occupies the chief place in the Sunday School.—President George B. Stewart, in *The Christian Educator*

Any Questions to Ask?

Long ago we remember a little girl talking to a busy old Methodist, and she asked so many questions that we suggested she had better go a little slow; but the old man turned and said, kindly, "Never discourage a child from asking questions. That is the way in which they learn." We have never forgotten the remark, and we have often realized that back of it lay a deep truth. The asking of questions is one way, and a good one, of acquiring knowledge. And in the church, in the School and in the home it is well to encourage this habit.—*Christian Guardian*

Curtains in a One-Room School

It was next to impossible to do good graded work with my Junior class; for our church, like many other rural churches, has but one room, and my boys would not, could not, give close attention to the teaching. Soundproof partitions were, of course, impossible, but as the next best thing I settled on curtains; then tried to get the Sunday School board to purchase some. But adequately heavy curtain material is rather expensive, and the board was disinclined to invest.

So, after several months of saving and planning, the boys themselves bought the material, including curtain wire and rings, and I made the curtains. The material we used was regular drapery, very heavy, myrtle green on both sides, and cost fifty-two cents

a yard. It wears well and does not show the dust. Sliding on rings, the curtain operates easily and does not cause the confusion that creaking folding and sliding doors create.

Soundproof? No; but you would be surprised how like a separate class-room it seems. We are all to ourselves and can pursue our study as we please. I find it convenient to make use of many objects in teaching the lessons which would spoil the attention of other classes if used in the open room. We have a blackboard and a map of Palestine, too.

And now the Intermediates are doing it. Our curtain had not been in use many weeks before they got busy and partitioned off another corner of the room, using the same kind of material.—Mary A. Snyder, in *The Sunday School Journal*

The Door Men

The door men are regular officers in the Marion Lawrance Sunday School, Toledo, Ohio, appointed by the superintendent and having clearly defined duties. Their motto is this:

"I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

The door men are not like those of the lodge, compelling you to give some mystic knock or say some curious word. They are at their post to facilitate entrance, or exit, not to prevent it. They may put a warning hand before you, possibly, when certain parts of the service are going on—prayer, scripture reading, or even an important announcement. They may delay your entrance if one section of the School is moving to another place. But there is always a reason! They know how to greet strangers quietly, and turn them over to the easily summoned courtesy committee. They recognize new pupils and welcome them on their way to the enrolment and assignment superintendent's desk. They indeed "welcome the coming, speed the parting guest." Often their hands deftly catch the swinging door lest it strike some unthinking one a blow in the face. They have a smile for the supply teacher passing to her emergency work in another department.

It was a great and easily understood utterance of Jesus when he said, "I am the door; by me if any man enter" . . . ! Every man ought to be a door man. The door man in a Sunday School is a very special institution! He oftentimes creates first impressions. He is charged with the duty of protecting the service of the School. He is the embodiment of a great principle: people need to be "let in." He makes it easy, cheerful, natural. God bless him!

Have you door men in your Sunday School?
—Ernest Bourner Allen, D.D., in *The Westminster Teacher*

THE S. S. AND Y. P. S. BOARD

The space in this Department is at the disposal of the General Assembly's Board of Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies, of which Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., and Rev. C. A. Myers, M.A., Confederation Life Building, Toronto, are the Secretaries, and is devoted to the plans, policies and work of the Board.

Our Task

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CONVENER

We are entering upon another winter's work among the children and young people. If we fail in our task, the whole church will be the weaker. The hope of the church and the redemption of the world lie with those who are passing through these impressionable years.

When we contemplate this service to which we are called we are at once impressed with its complexity. We are dealing with no isolated problem.

We cannot cut off our special constituency, the children, and educate them, at will, according to our own ideals. For many hours every week their characters are being influenced by forces quite outside the church. We must have in mind their parents, their teachers in the public school, their playmates on the street and elsewhere. With these we must cooperate in every possible way. As we concentrate on our own particular duty, let us not view it too narrowly. When we see how relatively limited is our opportunity, let us study to make our work as effective as the opportunity will permit.

A task so worthy, so difficult, so fundamental should receive from us our very best. We need a greater number of workers, but we need still more workers who have the spirit of the great servant and who are thoroughly trained for their work of laying truly the foundation for the structure yet to be.

London, Ont.

W. J. KNOX



\$120,000 for the Budget

The missionary budget of the church for 1918 is \$1,200,000,—one million, two hundred thousand dollars.

It is expected that the Sunday Schools will raise one tenth of this amount, that is, \$120,000,—one hundred and twenty thousand dollars.

The Schools can do this. Last year they raised \$70,000. Now there are practically 300,000 teachers and officers and scholars in our Schools. This means that only 24 cents for the whole year was given for each member

of our Sunday Schools,—less than a cent for every two weeks.

It was not very hard for the Schools to do that. Of course, many Schools gave a great deal more than that, or else not even the \$70,000 would have been raised. If all had done their very best, the amount would have been very much larger.

No School should be satisfied this year unless it does its very best. Our soldiers are doing their best at the front. Farmers are doing their best to produce food. Should not the Sunday Schools do their best in raising money for the work of Christ throughout the world?

If the Schools are going to do their best, they must have wise plans. A letter or post card to Rev. J. C. Robertson, Confederation Life Building, Toronto, will bring suggestions of plans that have proved successful. Let the superintendent or treasurer or secretary or some teacher write to Mr. Robertson.

The Schools should keep their eye on that \$120,000 for 1918. It will look a good deal better than the \$70,000 of last year.



Amongst the Students

It is the earnest desire of the Board that students of all sorts should be reached, during their school and college days, with an appeal for help in the great work of religious education. These young men and women, with their educational advantages, are sure to wield a great influence in the communities where they may settle for their life work.

In the Agricultural Colleges of all the Provinces are those who will become leaders amongst the farmers of the country. They will have the opportunity of moulding public opinion wherever they may go. No one can estimate the good which they may do, if they go out of college impressed with the importance of religion as a factor in all true education.

The teachers in training at our Normal Schools present another most inviting and promising field. At every Normal School centre in Ontario, and in some of the other provinces, one hour a week of religious instruction is given to the students by local ministers.

In the colleges and universities the Board is working in cooperation with the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. in promoting the work of religious education amongst the students.

The Board would urge upon all ministers and other church workers in educational centres, the importance of caring for the religious education of the students, before whom lie such splendid opportunities of leadership. The Board will gladly render all possible assistance in this work.



The Outline Curriculum

The Outline Curriculum is simply a brief, clear statement of the work that should be done in each department of the Sunday School. It also suggests tests that may be used to see if the required work is being done effectively.

All our Sunday Schools, in city, town and country are asked to adopt this curriculum which has been approved by the General Assembly. All scholars who do the required work will receive a Certificate at the end of each year showing their standing, and a Diploma on completion of all the work in any department.

Leaflets containing this Outline Curriculum in detail, with the requirements for securing the recognitions may be obtained free of charge on application to the General Secretary.



The Other Fifty Per Cent.

Presbyterial Institutes of Religious Education were held last year in about fifty per cent. of the Presbyteries throughout the church, reaching from 800 to 1,000 congregations.

Experience has proved that there is no better way of promoting the work of religious education than by the holding of such Institutes. By means of these gatherings, the very best and most up-to-date teaching methods and plans for organization are brought right to the door of the individual School, and congregations are familiarized with the great work of the church for the children and young people of the country.

An interesting account of Institutes held in the Presbytery of London by Rev. W. J. Knox appeared in the September TEACHERS MONTHLY, and in this issue, Rev. Dr. Dickie of Chatham gives a similar account of Institutes in the Presbytery of Chatham.

It is safe to say that fifty per cent. of the Presbyteries in which Institutes were held last year will repeat them this year. They are too good a thing to let go. And the fifty per cent. of last year should be a hundred per cent. this year. That is the request of the General Assembly by a resolution passed at Montreal last June.

Why Not a Teacher Training Class ?

There is no good reason why any Sunday School should not have a Teacher Training Class during this autumn and winter.

A new set of four textbooks, specially prepared to meet the needs of our own Schools, is now available: The Pupil, by Professor L. A. Weigle, The Teacher, by the same author, The Teacher's Study of the Life of Christ, by Dr. W. C. Barclay, and The School, by Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., our own General Secretary. These are on sale by PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS, Church and Gerrard Streets, Toronto, at 20c. each.

No new organization is required in order to take up this Course.

Ordinarily, the best way to take up the Course is by the formation of a special class of volunteers, who desire to prepare for the work of teaching. Where, however, this is not feasible, one or more of the textbooks may be temporarily substituted for the ordinary lessons in some of the older classes in the School. The books are such that the ordinary teacher can easily handle them. The Course also presents a fine opportunity for Organized Bible Classes, whose members, by a study of its books, may fit themselves for giving effective help in the Sunday School.

This is the season, too, when Young People's Societies are considering courses of study for a new season. No better use could be made of at least some of the evenings before them than a study of a part of the Teacher Training Course.

It is desirable, of course, to have a specially qualified leader to guide the study of the Course. But even where no such leader is available, a group of students can quite profitably meet for the discussion of one or other of the textbooks.

Solitary students, in places where it is not possible to form a Teacher Training Class, will find delight and profit in taking up the Course. Some of the very best work in the examinations of the old Teacher Training Course, now replaced, was done by such students.

The common complaint that there are so few qualified Sunday School teachers, should soon be a thing of the past in our Schools. We may confidently hope that a multitude of our brightest young men and women will take up the new Course and fit themselves for the great work of teaching. Those already engaged in teaching will also find the studies of the Course of great help to them in their work.

The need is great. The call is loud. The material is at hand. The methods are simple. Let the response be quick and enthusiastic.

RESULTS OF TEACHER TRAINING EXAMINATIONS

The following have successfully passed the Teacher Training Examinations, and have received Certificates and Diplomas from the office of Rev. J. C. Robertson, General Secretary for Sabbath Schools and Young People's Societies, Toronto, in the First Standard and Advanced Standard Teacher Training Courses, respectively :

FROM JULY 16, TO AUGUST 15, 1917

I. FIRST STANDARD COURSE

Cardino', Ont.—Rev. D. H. Currie, Minister. *The New Testament* : Kathérine MacKenzie, Willie Grant, D. H. Currie.

Delhi, Ont.—Rev. W. Carpenter, Minister. *The Old Testament* : Rev. W. Carpenter, Myrtle Kelso, Edith G. McKnight, Mabel Pettit.

Spencerville, Ventnor and Roebuck, Ont.—Rev. C. A. Mullin, Minister. *The Old Testament* : Margaret Gillespie, Mrs. Wallace Davidson, Lola A. McKee, Grace Burnie, Art. M. Gillespie, Nellie Kelso, Mrs. Freeman Boyd, Mrs. J. H. Steele, Mrs. Fred Attridge, Alberta Attridge, Mrs. Isaac Steele, Mrs. S. Reid, Helen G. Fairbairn. *The New Testament* : Bertha Lockerbie.

Englehart, Ont.—Rev. J. Macdonald, Minister. *The School* : Eva Macdonald, Mary Tennant, Mary W. Burns, Gordon Skinner. **Diplomas**—Eva Macdonald, Mary Tennant, Mary W. Burns, Gordon Skinner.

Guelph, Ont.—Rev. George A. Little, Minister. *The Pupil* : E. M. Stockford, Henrietta B. Parker, William McCrae.

Winnipeg, Man.—Rev. W. A. Maclean, Minister. *The Pupil* : Mildred Hyde, Edna Fair, Isabelle Clark.

Nakusp, B.C.—Rev. A. J. Mitchell, Minister. *The New Testament* : Florence Mitchell.

N.B.—Those interested in the work of Teacher Training should take notice that a new course has been arranged with new textbooks, to begin this fall. It is strongly recommended that all beginners take up the new course rather than the courses formerly recommended as the latter are out of date in some important particulars, and that those who have covered part of the old course should transfer to the new. Arrangements have been made, however, to provide diplomas and furnish examinations on the old course for all who wish to complete it and to give ample credit for work done on the old course to those transferring to the new at the present time. Leaflet giving full information in regard to the new course may be obtained by writing the General Secretary, Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., Confederation Life Building, Toronto

HOW THE WORK GOES ON

On December 25, 1913, there were 583 organized Sunday School classes among the boys and girls of America. On March 25, 1917, the number had jumped to 30,000.

The Annual Conventions of the Ontario Sunday School Association will be held at Chatham, Ont., October 23 to 25, and at Peterboro, Ont., October 30, 31 and November 1.

Five Daily Vacation Bible Schools were held in Toronto for six weeks during July and August. The school time was occupied in worship, work and play. Hammock-making, sewing, clay-modeling were features of the work; singing, prayer, Bible stories and memorization of scripture entered into the worship; a weekly picnic, besides supervised games, constituted the play. Various denominations cooperated in the work at these five centres. During the first week the registration was 1,461 scholars attending, and this increased to over 2,000.

Among the Presbyterian Churches in Korea, Sunday morning is given up to Sunday

School work—three separate sessions being conducted in some churches for the men, women and children, respectively. The men meet from nine to ten, women from ten to eleven, and children from eleven to twelve. This arrangement gives greater seating capacity and also overcomes any difficulty from lack of teachers. The regular preaching services then are held in the afternoon and evening.

"All the Sunday School in the church and all the church in the Sunday School" continues to be the motto of Korean Sunday School workers. In our Hoi Ryung field even those places where but five or six meet the Sunday School session is a regular part of the Sabbath's worship, it taking the first hour of the morning meeting. The past year Matthew's Gospel has been studied. The great difficulty is to secure teaching in a proper method. Teachers are not, usually, difficult to secure, but they prefer to preach a sermon to their class rather than ask leading questions. Wherever possible, a preparatory class for the teachers is held on a week night.

Major Gerald W. Birks, Supervisor of the Y.M.C.A. work with Canadian troops in Europe, with his headquarters in Great Britain, writes: "While readily appreciating the magnificent opportunities of Christian service over here, I am every day becoming more and more impressed with the fact that the real constructive work of the kingdom is what is being done at home by the Sunday School, Y.M.C.A., and kindred organizations for there seems but little chance of a man coming through these awful experiences straight, unless his feet have been firmly planted on the rock before he leaves home. So I urge upon you, as this War may possibly be drawn out for years, to do your part with the older boys who are now being called to the colors."

Last summer the York County Ontario Sunday School Association undertook a canvass of the county outside Toronto, primarily in the interests of the Home Department, but also with the object of securing every last boy and girl in the School. Ministers were asked to preach upon the object of the canvass and prepare the people for it. Each rural church was given a district in its own neighborhood and asked to appoint canvassers for it. In the villages and towns the churches appointed representatives on a central committee which selected visitors, gave them districts and considered the results. Printed cards, with the necessary questions, were given all visitors and deference was paid to anyone's church preference by giving their card to the minister of the church mentioned. The names of others with no church preference were given to each minister and his workers.

The Patriotic Service held in Westminster Church, Toronto, July 1, was of unusual interest. Addresses were given by Dr. Pirt, who has recently returned from service in hospital work near the front, and Mr. Isaac Pitblado, K.C.,

a former superintendent. The names on the Honor Roll, numbering 78, were read, special reference being made to Bruce Lawrie, one of the Westminster Sunday School boys who has received the military medal. He ordered several Germans out of a dug-out, compelled them to surrender, and brought them safely back to headquarters, all the time carrying only an empty rifle. Another of the boys, Bruce Pozer, has also received the military medal for dressing wounds under heavy fire. Pozer was in Dr. Pirt's hospital for 8 months, and the doctor was able to add his testimony to the lad's bravery and devotion. Over 100 copies of O Canada were printed and distributed amongst both scholars and teachers and others present.

From the Surplus Material Department of the World's Sunday School Association, 216 Metropolitan Tower, New York City, comes the following reminder of how Sunday Schools in the homeland may help missionaries in foreign countries: "The missionaries lay away many things which come during the year and bring them out for distribution at the Christmas season. They are always asking for simply dressed dolls. These should be of the go-to-sleep variety and about 10 inches in size. Dolls can be sent to many countries by parcel post, and that rate is twelve cents per pound. Besides, pictures by the thousand are needed at every foreign mission station. A missionary in China just wrote: 'Yesterday 35 boys more than usual came to the Sunday School and registered their names. They had heard about the pictures and calendars. I am sure that most of them, if not all, came only because of the pictures. But they came and heard about Jesus, and I will try to make them come again. These pictures are a real help to us.' Picture time abroad is any time during the year. Gifts for use at the Christmas season should be forwarded by October 15."

A WORD FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

OUR 1918 CATALOGUE

A Sunday School teacher once said: "I always look forward with pleasure to the month of October, because then I receive a copy of the PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS' latest Catalogue. I find in it so many supplies and suggestions that are a great help to me in my Sunday School work."

Our Illustrated Catalogue for 1918 will be ready as usual this month.

A feature of the 1917 Catalogue was the Sunday School Almanac, giving the Uniform Lessons for each Sunday, and the special days such as Mother's Day, Patriotic Day, Rally Day, etc., marked in red. This feature will be continued in the 1918 Catalogue, which will be good news to the many superintendents and teachers who found the Almanac so useful this year.

There are quite a number of new things listed. Amongst them the Intermediate Departmental Graded Lessons, the New Standard Teacher Training Course, based on the standard adopted by the Sunday School Council representing thirty different denominations in Canada and the United States and the approved International Sunday School Association, The Children's Guide to Christ and the Lord's Supper, a little book for very young communicants, by Rev. Robt. Pogue, a set of new Promotion Certificates in colors, which we think are the most beautiful yet introduced to our Sunday Schools, etc., etc.

A copy of the 1918 Catalogue kept in the Sunday School at the secretary's desk, will prove exceedingly helpful many times during the year. When supplies are needed, there is no delay, the Catalogue is handy and the index will guide you to the page you want.

Every minister, superintendent, Sunday School teacher, and in fact every one engaged in any kind of Christian work should have a copy of our 1918 Catalogue.

If you do not receive a copy by the end of the month, drop a postcard to R. Douglas Fraser, PRESBYTERIAN PUBLICATIONS, Church and Gerard Sts., Toronto, and a copy will be gladly sent, and your name put on our mailing list for future Catalogues and other matter that you may be interested in.

THE NEW DEPARTMENTAL GRADED QUARTERLIES, AND A HALF-RATE OFFER

For a mention in detail of the new Departmental Graded INTERMEDIATE TEACHER'S and SCHOLAR'S QUARTERLIES, see page 638.

Samples of either or both of these will be furnished free on application. Special attention is drawn to the following

TRIAL OFFER

In order that Sunday Schools may have a trial of the new Quarterlies, they will be supplied in any quantity, at Half-price, for Quarter October-December, 1917.

The present subscription prices are :

Intermediate Teachers Quarterly 48c. per year, 12c. per quarter ; Intermediate Scholars Quarterly 40c. per year, 10c. per quarter.

The above offer and prices are for the remaining portion of 1917. For orders for 1918, the price of the whole series of Departmental Graded Lessons will be increased, as per the following schedule :

Beginners Teachers Quarterly, 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter ; Beginners Bible Stories, 24c. per year, 6c. per quarter ; Primary Teachers Quarterly, 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter ; Primary Bible Lessons, 24c. per year, 6c. per quarter ; Primary Hand Work Envelopes, 40c. per year, 10c. per quarter ; Junior Teachers Quarterly, 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter ; Junior Work and Study Lessons, 40c. per year, 10c. per quarter ; Intermediate Teachers Quarterly, 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter ; Intermediate Scholars Quarterly, 50c. per year, 12½c. per quarter.

This advance in prices is made with reluctance. But it is a simple necessity, owing to continued increased cost of paper, printing and labor. It is a question of the crippling of the Church's Board of Publication, or the asking of the Sunday Schools and churches to carry part of the burden. The Board and the Business Manager have confidence that the Schools and the churches will willingly take up their share. Even with the increases proposed, the subscription prices are lower than those of any other Graded Lessons on the market in Canada.

OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL PERIODICALS

ILLUSTRATED PAPERS

EAST AND WEST (Weekly). 75c. per year. Two or more to one address, 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter. (May begin with any date).

THE KING'S OWN (Weekly). 40c. per year. Five or more to one address, 30c. per year, 8c. per quarter. (May begin with any month).

JEWELS. 30c. per year. Five or more to one address, 25c. per year, 7c. per quarter. (May begin with any month).

UNIFORM SERIES

TEACHERS MONTHLY. 70c. per year, 18c. per quarter. 2 or more to one address, 60c. per year, 15c. per quarter.

PATHFINDER. (A monthly Bible Class and Y.P.S. Magazine), 50c. per year, 13c. per quarter. 2 or more to one address, 40c. per year, 10c. per quarter.

HOME STUDY QUARTERLY. 5 or more to one address, 20c. per year, 5c. per quarter.

INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY. 5 or more to one address, 20c. per year, 5c. per quarter.

PRIMARY QUARTERLY. 5 or more to one address, 20c. per year, 5c. per quarter.

HOME STUDY LEAFLET. 5 or more to one address, 7c. per year, 2c. per quarter.

INTERMEDIATE LEAFLET. 5 or more to one address, 7c. per year, 2c. per quarter.

PRIMARY LEAFLET. 5 or more to one address, 7c. per year, 2c. per quarter.

COLORED LESSON PICTURE ROLL, \$3.25 each per year, 82c. each per quarter. (Includes American postage).

COLORED LESSON PICTURE CARDS (Corresponding to Roll), 12c. each per year, 3c. each per quarter. (Includes American postage).

DEPARTMENTAL GRADED SERIES

BEGINNERS DEPARTMENT

FOR THE TEACHER :

BEGINNERS TEACHER'S QUARTERLY. 48c. per year, 12c. per quarter.

BEGINNERS PICTURE ROLL. \$3.25 per year, 82c. per quarter (American postage included).

FOR THE SCHOLAR :

BEGINNERS BIBLE STORIES. 20c. per year, 5c. per quarter.

PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

FOR THE TEACHER :

PRIMARY TEACHER'S QUARTERLY. 48c. per year, 12c. per quarter.

PRIMARY PICTURE ROLL. \$3.25 per year, 82c. per quarter (American postage included).

FOR THE SCHOLAR :

PRIMARY BIBLE LESSONS. 20c. per year, 5c. per quarter.

PRIMARY HAND WORK (13 sheets per quarter in envelope). 32c. per year, 8c. per quarter.

JUNIOR DEPARTMENT

FOR THE TEACHER :

JUNIOR TEACHER'S QUARTERLY, 48c. per year, 12c. per quarter.

FOR THE SCHOLAR :

JUNIOR WORK AND STUDY LESSONS. 36c. per year, 9c. per quarter.

INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT

INTERMEDIATE TEACHER'S MANUAL. 60c. a year, in four parts, 15c. a part.

PUPIL'S TEXT-BOOK (with map or picture supplements) in four parts, 50c. a year, 12½c. a part.

SENIOR DEPARTMENT

SENIOR TEACHER'S MANUAL. 60c. a year, in four parts, 15c. a part.

STUDENT'S TEXT-BOOK. In four parts, 50c. a year, 12½c. a part.

Lesson Calendar : Fourth Quarter

1. October 7... Psalms of Deliverance. Psalms 85 and 126.
2. October 14... Returning from Captivity. Ezra, ch. 1.
3. October 21... The Temple Rebuilt and Dedicated. Ezra 3 : 8-13 ; 6 : 14-18.
4. October 28... Ezra's Return from Babylon. Ezra 8 : 21-32.
5. November 4... Defeat through Drunkenness (Temp. Sunday). 1 Kings 20 : 12-21.
6. November 11... Nehemiah's Prayer. Nehemiah 1 : 1-11.
7. November 18... Nehemiah's Prayer Answered. Nehemiah 2 : 1-11.
8. November 25... A Psalm of Thanksgiving. Psalm 103.
9. December 2... Nehemiah Rebuilds the Wall of Jerusalem. Nehemiah 4 : 7-21.
10. December 9... Ezra and Nehemiah Teach the Law. Nehemiah 8 : 1-4a, 5, 6, 8-12.
11. December 16... Nehemiah Enforces the Law of the Sabbath. Nehemiah 13 : 15-22.
12. December 23... Christmas Lesson—Preparation for the Messiah : Advent of the Messiah. Malachi 3 : 1-12 ; Matthew 2 : 1-12.
13. December 30... REVIEW—God's Redeeming Love. Read Psalms 123 and 124.

AN ORDER OF SERVICE : Fourth Quarter

Opening Exercises

I. SINGING. Hymn 90, Book of Praise.

All hail the power of Jesus' name !

Let angels prostrate fall ;

Bring forth the royal diadem,

To crown Him Lord of all.

II. SHORT PRAYER. All remain standing.

III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Proverbs 3 : 13-17.

Superintendent. Happy is the man that

findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding.

School. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

Superintendent. She is more precious than rubies : and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

School. Length of days is in her right hand ; and in her left hand riches and honor.

Superintendent. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

IV. SINGING. Hymn 250, Book of Praise.

The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar:
Who follows in His train?

V. PRAYER.

VI. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn Selected. (This selection may usually be the "Lesson Hymn" in the PRIMARY QUARTERLY. See each lesson.)

VII. READ RESPONSIVELY. See SCRIPTURE PASSAGE FOR OPENING WORSHIP in the TEACHERS MONTHLY, in connection with each lesson (given also in the DEPARTMENTAL GRADED QUARTERLIES.)

VIII. SINGING. See Memory Hymns in the TEACHERS MONTHLY in connection with each lesson (given also in the Departmental JUNIOR, PRIMARY and BEGINNERS TEACHERS QUARTERLIES.)

IX. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.

X. SINGING. See HYMN FOR OPENING WORSHIP in the TEACHERS MONTHLY in connection with each lesson (given also in the DEPARTMENTAL GRADED QUARTERLIES).

Class Work

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

I. ROLL CALL, by teacher, or Class Secretary.

II. OFFERING; which may be taken in a Class Envelope, or Class and Report Envelope. The Class Treasurer may collect and count the money.

III. RECITATION. 1. Scripture Memory Passages. 2. Catechism. 3. The Question on Missions.

IV. Lesson Study.

Closing Exercises

I. SINGING. Hymn 464, Book of Praise.

II. REVIEW FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK; which, along with the Blackboard Review, may include one or more of the following items; Recitation in concert of Verses Memorized, Catechism, Question on Missions, Memory Hymn (see also Departmental JUNIOR, PRIMARY and BEGINNERS TEACHER'S QUARTERLIES), Lesson Title, Golden Text and Heads of Lesson Plan. (Do not overload the Review; it should be pointed, brief and bright.)

III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Romans 8 : 27, 28.

Superintendent. He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit.

School. Because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

All. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

IV. BENEDICTION.

V. NATIONAL ANTHEM.

Lesson I.

PSALMS OF DELIVERANCE

October 7, 1917

Psalms 85 and 126. *Scripture Memory Verses.

GOLDEN TEXT—They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.—Psalm 126 : 5.

1 LORD, thou hast been favourable unto thy land:
thou hast brought back the captivity of Ja'cob.
2 Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people,
thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.
3 Thou hast taken away all thy wrath:
thou hast turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.
4 Turn us, O God of our salvation,
and cause thine

anger toward us to cease.

5 Wilt thou be angry with us for ever?
wilt thou draw out thine anger to all generations?

6 Wilt thou not revive us again:
that thy people may rejoice in thee?

7 Shew us thy mercy, O LORD,
and grant us thy salvation.

*The Scripture Memory Verses for each Sunday are from the General Assembly's Lists of Scripture Memory Passages, for the correct recitation of which Certificates, Diplomas and Seals are awarded by the Assembly's Sabbath School Board. The various QUARTERLIES and LEAFLETS, both Uniform and Graded, give the passages appropriate to the various grades in the School. For Form of Application for the awards, and also for a scholar's Card Certificate to be given for the recitation of any one of the yearly Parts and exchanged later for Certificate or Diploma in Colors when all the Parts have been completed, with a sample copy of Lists of Passages, write to Rev. J. C. Robertson, B.D., our General Secretary for Sabbath Schools, Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

8 I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

9 Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 Yea, the LORD shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before him; and shall set us in the way of his steps.

Revised Version—1 indignation; 2 quicken; 3 springeth; 4 hath looked; 5 make his footsteps a way to walk in; 6 unto; 7 nations; 8 South (capital "S"); 9 Though he goeth on his way weeping, bearing forth the seed; he shall come again with joy, bringing.

LESSON PLAN

I. A Memory of the Past, 1-3.

II. A Prayer for the Present, 4-7.

III. A Hope for the Future, 8-13.

IV. The Harvest of Tears, Ps. 126: 1-6.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)

M.—Psalms of deliverance, Ps. 85. T.—Psalms of deliverance, Ps. 126. W.—"We wept when we remembered," Ps. 137: 1-6. Th.—"Sorrow turned to joy," Ps. 30. F.—"To God all praise and glory," Ps. 124. S.—Moses' song, Ex. 15: 1-13. S.—Deborah's song, Judg. 5: 1-12.

Primary Catechism—Ques. 48. *How long did Jesus remain on earth after he rose from the dead?* Jesus remained forty days on earth after his resurrection. Ques. 49. *What was Jesus doing for his disciples during the forty days after his resurrection?* He came to his disciples at different times to comfort and teach them.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 101. *What do we pray*

Ps. 126: 1 When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zi'ou, we were like them that dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.

3 The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

4 Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

for in the first petition? A. In the first petition (which is, *Hallowed be Thy name*) we pray, That God would enable us and others to glorify him in all that whereby he maketh himself known; and that he would dispose all things to his own glory.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise: Memory Hymn—Primary, 17; Junior, 19, 189, 193, 195, 474.

Special Scripture Reading—Ps. 95: 1-6; given also in Departmental Graded Teacher's Quarterlies. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.) It is expected that each scholar will have his or her Bible, and so be prepared to take part in this reading, which may form part of the opening exercises of the School.

Hymn for Opening Worship—Hymn 22, Book of Praise; given also in Departmental Graded Quarterlies.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 924, Psalms of Deliverance. For Question on Missions, 15907, Mission Hospital, Rutlam, Central India. (These slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto. Schools desiring slides made may procure them on short notice by sending negatives, prints or photographs. Slides are colored to order.)

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

By Rev. M. B. Davidson, M.A., Galt, Ont.

Time and Place—These two psalms belong to the time soon after the return from the Exile; Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—Psalm 85 belongs to a group known as the Psalms of the Sons of Korah, who evidently constituted one of the two great temple choirs. As a group, they are largely devoted to the exaltation of the temple worship. Psalm 126 belongs to a group (Ps. 120-134) similar in thought, style, and language. Each is called a Psalm of Degrees, or, as in the Rev. Ver., of Ascents. This title is probably to be interpreted, "Songs of Pilgrimages," these psalms being used by pilgrims on their journeys to the feasts at Jerusalem. Some, however, take the view that the "ascent" refers to the return of the exiles from Babylon.

I. A Memory of the Past, 1-3.

Vs. 1, 2. *Thou hast been favourable.* The return of the exiles, from the point of view of their conquerors, was a bit of state policy; but the psalmist views it as a result of God's

working. *Brought back;* turned back, sometimes used as a figure to denote the restoration of prosperity. Here it is to be taken literally. *Forgiven . . . covered;* the first word bringing out the idea that the weight of sin resting on the people has been removed, the second word emphasizing the thought that sin is a stain to be hidden by God's mercy.

V. 3. *Taken away;* drawn in, as a man draws in his breath, or a serpent its sting. *Turned;* a favorite word with this psalmist. *Fierceness;* glow.

II. A Prayer for the Present, 4-7.

V. 4. *Turn us.* In v. 1, the restoration is regarded as accomplished, but here the psalmist remembers that it is still incomplete. *Salvation;* deliverance, in this case from the evils resulting from exile.

V. 5. *For ever . . . to all generations;* a contrast, to v. 2, where God is represented as having already forgiven his people. But the psalmist feels now that the partial restoration

of the exiles means that God's wrath has diminished rather than ceased, and his prayer is that it may cease altogether. *Angry . . . thine anger.* God's anger in the Old Testament is not capricious, but is always connected with his holy aversion to sin.

Vs. 6, 7. *Quicken*; give life to, here, of course, in the sense of spiritual life. *Mercy.* There is no single English word to translate this Hebrew word, which contains both the idea of affection and the idea of fidelity. It is that in God upon which men can confidently rely.

III. A Hope for the Future, 8-13.

Vs. 8, 9. *I will hear*; expressing the psalmist's desire or resolve to hear. Perhaps it might be better translated, "Let me hear." *Peace*; literally, wholeness or soundness, and so well-being or prosperity. *Let them not turn*; a warning that there are conditions attached to the possession of the peace of God. *That glory may dwell*; the reference being to the Shechinah, the symbol of God's presence.

Vs. 10, 11. *Mercy . . . truth*, etc. These qualities, personified here, belong first of all to God, but through him they are to be reflected in the lives of his people. *Springeth out of the earth* (Rev. Ver.); that is, it is produced amongst men.

Vs. 12, 13. *The Lord shall give*, etc. Material prosperity is to accompany spiritual blessings, and it also is regarded as the gift of God. *Shall go before him*; as a herald. *Set us . . . steps*; better, as in Rev. Ver., "make his footsteps a way,"—that is, for men to walk in.

IV. The Harvest of Tears, Ps. 126 : 1-6.

V. 1. *Turned again*; either, brought back the exiles who returned to Jerusalem, or else, wrought a change in the fortunes of Zion. *Captivity*; the mass of captives. *Like them that dream*; the fortunate turn of affairs resulting in bewilderment and a sense of unreality.

Vs. 2, 3. *Filled with laughter*; the loud laughter that is opposed to mourning. (See Job 8 : 21.) *With singing*; as an expression of their joy. *Said they among the heathen*; God's deliverance of Israel being so manifest that even other nations had to acknowledge it. *We are glad.* We became glad. The

testimony of the heathen convinced the exiles that they were not being deceived by any dream or delusion.

V. 4. *Turn again our captivity*; perhaps, bring back the exiles yet in Babylon. *As the streams in the south*; like the hill streams in the southland of Judah, dry in summer, but suddenly swollen into torrents by the autumn rains.

Vs. 5, 6. *They that sow*, etc.; a proverb. The pioneers of the return, to whom the psalmist belongs, have encountered many difficulties in trying to rebuild the nation. *Weepeth*; suggestive of the anxiety which always accompanies the sowing of a crop. *Precious seed*; better, a measure of seed,—the quantity taken in the hand in one grasp in order to sow it.

Light from the East

By Rev. Professor R. Davidson, D.D., Toronto

"THY WRATH . . . THE FIERCENESS OF THINE ANGER" (Ps. 85 : 3)—After the Exodus no event made so deep an impression on Israel as the Exile. It cut deep in her life. It vindicated the prophetic warnings of judgment that must follow wrong-doing. It brought home to men a sense of sin. The exiles lived under a great shadow. Those who came to Jerusalem later were humbled and solemnized. And the shadow has not yet lifted from the Jewish heart. For 2,500 years the Jews have been conscious of God's wrath and the fierceness of his anger. For 2,500 years their religious observances have culminated in the Day of Atonement, a day of fasting and penitence. For 2,500 years the Jews have wept and prayed: "Turn us, O God of our salvation, and cause thine anger toward us to cease. Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? . . . Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" Every Friday still the Jews of Jerusalem and visitors from every land gather at the foot of Herod's wall to the southwest of the temple area. Thy will not come nearer lest their feet should defile the holy place, and they confess the sins of all the centuries. The sorrow and penitence of a hundred generations is poured out in wails and tears. "For the temple that is desolate we sit in solitude and mourn; for the walls that are torn down, we

sit in solitude and mourn ; for the majesty that is departed we sit in solitude and mourn." They mourn and weep until the sun is gone and night settles down over the city.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The city of Babylon reached its greatest glory in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who was king when the Jews were carried into exile. According to some ancient writers the area enclosed by the city walls was 200 square miles and according to others, 100 square miles. The walls were double with a deep and broad moat between the outer and the inner enclosure. Within the inner walls were vast spaces connected by gardens and open fields, which counted much for the area, but added little to



the population of the city. There were 100 gates of brass, 25 on each side. From these ran broad streets at right angles to the walls, the whole area being thus divided into a large number of smaller squares. The Jews in Babylon lived in houses of unbaked clay. Although they were at first treated as slaves, they were afterwards permitted to acquire land and settle in little colonies throughout the land. Here they maintained with great tenacity their religious customs and the love of their own land.

THE LESSON APPLIED

By Rev. F. H. McIntosh, M.A., Lindsay, Ont.

Praise God for the better day, v. 1. The days of exile are over and the people return to the land from which they were so ruthlessly deported. What a high hour it must have been for one and all when the ruined towers of old Jerusalem stood up above the sky line. What a day it will be in our experience when this War is over and God shall have brought back again the captivity of Belgium, Poland and Armenia. Then shall we all say with united breath : "Lord, thou hast been favourable unto thy land."

Praise God for sins forgiven, v. 2. In 1881, when he was nearing his end, Dante Gabriel Rossetti became very anxious for confession and absolution. It was suggested to him that absolution was contrary to his pronounced views. But he said : "I don't care about that. I can make nothing of Christianity, but I believe in a future life. What I want now is absolution for my sins,—that's all." What a pity this man and many others are not able to make more of Christianity. Forgiveness is the free gift of God. He asks only that we shall thankfully receive it.

Our God is a consuming fire, v. 3. The returning Jews had opportunity to know something of the fierceness of his anger.

Jesus did not teach a doting amiability. He hated evil of every kind. When a corrupt ring had taken possession of the outer court of the temple, his wrath flamed up and he proceeded to drive these people out with such force as to overturn the tables of the money changers. So is God angry with sin every day, and he who will not be separated from his sins must perish with his sins ; for God hateth iniquity.

Revive thy work, O Lord, v. 6. No progress is possible within the four corners of humanity without some invasion of the divine Spirit. One of the best known pictures is Millet's *Angelus*. In the midst of a field are two figures. Again the sky line is the steeple of a distant church. It is the evening hour, and as the church bell rings the two workers, with folded hands and bowed heads, stand for a moment in silent prayer. So should every life be open to the unseen and eternal.

God and man are reconciled in Christ, vs. 10, 11. The truth of man set up and the mercy of God came down like the angels in Jacob's dream. Jesus Christ is the true ladder of grace connecting heaven and earth. He alone has brought God and man together. Of himself the master said to Nathanael :

"Verily, verily I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." That day is come and now "righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

God is the source of our prosperity, v. 12. At the Pre-Assembly Congress of 1913, Ralph Connor said, "I sometimes hear men say that they grow tired listening to the description of Canada's greatness. For me I never tire of the theme. The very extent of it is impressive. It holds one-twelfth of all the land in the world, one-third of all the land in the empire,—and most of it good. Oh, Canada is a big thing, just in the extent of it, as it lies smiling in God's sunlight from ocean to ocean. Yea, the Lord has given us that which is good; "and our land shall yield her increase."

God's goodness sometimes seems to be too good to be true. Ps. 126:1. After a long separation or trial, when things turned again in our favor, how much were we, too, like them that dream? We could scarcely

believe it to be true. The romance of it fitted in so ill with the dull details of the past, and when by the grace of God we come to see life as we ought, how like those almost out of touch with reality we cry,

"O 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love,

The love of God to me,

That brought my Saviour from above

To die on Calvary."

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy, (v. 5, Golden Text). The poet Laureate of another day asks the question:

"But who shall so forecast the years

And find in loss a gain to match?

Or reach a hand thro' time to catch

The far-off interest of tears."

Every true child of God may do it. The sorrows of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us right now,—the glory which comes from a new value set upon time and the tenderness put into our affections for one another. Life stands to gain something even from death itself.

THE LESSON GRADED

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

For Teachers of Bible Classes

By Rev. Professor W. R. Taylor, Ph.D., Toronto

Psalm 85 ought to be described as a prayer for deliverance rather than a song of deliverance. The Psalm has been written probably for some season of public intercession. The nation or the community has been passing through a period of gloom and longs for a restoration of the days when the Lord brought back the captivity of Judah.

The Psalm may be divided into two main sections: (a) vs. 1-8; (b) vs. 9-13. In the first section the writer recalls what God has done in the past (vs. 1-3); pleads with God for relief from the present affliction (vs. 4-7); and determines to seek God's answer (v. 8) through intercession. After the service of intercession has ended, the writer is confident that God has not only heard but answered the petitions addressed to him, vs. 9-13.

1. *The prayer of affliction*, vs. 4-7. The writer does not tell us the nature of the affliction which oppresses the nation, nor

does he seem certain as to the cause of it. Most of our afflictions appear to us as strange and unintelligible. Though they humble us and make us conscious of unworthiness, yet the problem remains,—why are we assailed more fiercely than other men? (Ps. 73.) One of the fruits of affliction is that we are driven to prayer, however godless we may have appeared hitherto. "I had not prayed in ten years," a railroad man exclaimed when his train had just escaped a wreck, "but I prayed then." Does the attitude of men to God in times of national and private affliction seem to be a proof of the reasonableness of prayer? Is this a sufficient ground for developing the regular exercise of prayer?

2. *The past, a prophecy*, vs. 1-3. "No great blessing of the past completes the divine programme but is merely a pledge and symbol of the greater day still to come." The fact that God had delivered Israel in the past is regularly regarded as a revelation of his character and purpose. The past is rightly one of the best interpreters of the future. Is there any of us whose past has no evidences of God's special presence?

How far ought such memories to steady us in days when God seemed mysterious and remote? And if our own experience should seem too narrow, there are the records of history, the life of Jesus, the witnessing of the ages.

3. *The vision of faith*, vs. 9-13. But in life's perplexities there is another power to support us,—in the heart's intuitions. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." In times like these when we see the kingdom of heaven delayed in its fulfilment, and chaos, instead of ordered peace, possesses the world, the heart will believe that :

"God is God, and right is right,
And right the day must win ;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin."

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

By Rev. A. Wylie Mahon, B.D., Toronto

Have a talk with the class about some of the popular patriotic songs of to-day. Why do these songs make so tender an appeal to the heart? How much is due to the catchy airs, how much to sentiment, how much to religion? Suggest that the Book of Psalms contains the finest patriotic songs ever written, and bring out that the religious spirit dominates these songs, and links patriotism with God, and helps us to understand that a man cannot love his country as he ought to do who does not love God. We have two of the Hebrew patriotic songs in our lesson. The following treatment will bring out the leading features of these two psalms.

1. *A Prayer of a Patriot*, Ps. 85 : 1-7. Remind the class that great patriots are always praying men. Refer to Abraham Lincoln, who was so often driven to his knees because there was no where else to go. Show that the first part of this prayer (vs. 1-3) is a grateful acknowledgment of God's goodness to the land the psalmist loved so much. Question the class about what God had done for his people, and show how the tender thought of God's goodness to us should always enter into our prayers. Point out that the second part of this prayer (vs. 4-7) is a passionate appeal for mercy. No true patriot is ever satisfied with the present condition of things.

2. *A Favorable Answer Assured*, vs. 8-13. Draw attention to the psalmist's confidence,—he is listening for God to speak to him in answer to his prayer, and he knows what the answer will be. Question the class about the large and satisfying answer which this Hebrew patriot expects to his prayer,—an answer which includes peace and salvation and glory and mercy and truth and righteousness and prosperity. He is not easily satisfied, but he knows that his God is equal to his largest expectations. Like William Carey, we should expect great things from God and he will not disappoint us.

3. *A Varied Experience Described*, Ps. 126. Emphasize the joy (vs. 1-3) experienced by the Israelites in getting back out of captivity into their own land. Perhaps some of the members of the class may be led to relate certain experiences which were so full of joy as to make them feel a sense of unreality. The Israelites realized that God had everything to do with this. We lose much out of life by failing to recognize something divine in everything good in our national life, and in every joy which gladdens our hearts. Show how this joy was mingled with sorrow (vs. 4-6) when they saw the desolation of the land they loved, and remembered that many of their people were still in captivity. And yet they looked forward with hope to a brighter day.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. Harold W. Lyons, B.A., Toronto

An old commentator has said in reference to the first Psalm in to-day's lesson : "It is the prayer of a patriot for his afflicted country in which he pleads God's former mercies and foresees better days." How we need such patriots in these days! Prayer for our country is certainly a form of national service in which the boys and girls can join. Historically, the Psalm is of interest. It was upon Ps. 85 : 10 that Dr. Thomas Goodwin, the great Independent divine, preached at the opening of the English Parliament, January 27th, 1659, when Richard Cromwell was installed as protector, making a plea for liberty of conscience.

1. What do the scholars know about the book of Psalms? Bring out that they constituted the Hebrew hymn book and were

intended to be sung at the temple worship and the services in the synagogue. They were set to music, and were often accompanied by orchestras of stringed or wind instruments. Some were sung by male voices (Ps. 12); some by sopranos (Ps. 46); and some responsively (Ps. 24). There are really five books ending with Ps. 41, 72, 89, 106 and 150. Some Psalms are wonderful nature poems (Ps. 104); some breathe bitter hatred against enemies (Ps. 137); some plead forgiveness for sin (Ps. 51); and all breathe an intense devotion to Jehovah.

2. Bring out the reason why the Psalms of the lesson are called "Psalms of Deliverance." Point out that King Cyrus had encouraged all the Jews who wanted to go, to return to Palestine about B.C. 538. The nation had a new beginning. The permission was unexpected, unforeseen, hardly to be believed. The first verses of each Psalm should be read with a hushed, almost unbelieving joy. Emphasize that the reason for the joy was twofold: (a) because of the return home; (b) but chiefly because that return indicated God's forgiveness of the sins

which had sent them into captivity, Ps. 85:2, 3. The scholars will remember what they were.

3. Bring out the significance of Ps. 85:4-7; Ps. 126:4. The psalmist begins to realize how few of the people had come back, and that "the great hopes held out by the prophet, especially in Isa., chs. 40-66, have not been realized." Picture their disappointment when they could not till all the land, nor even, for almost twenty years, rebuild the temple. Only 50,000 people had come back. Now they pray for a fresh manifestation of God's power, for a great return of their brethren, like the winter streams pouring into the plain between Jerusalem and the Arabian desert, converting the wilderness into a fruitful field.

4. Do we love our nation and empire as well as the Hebrews loved Jerusalem? Where did they put their trust for national life? Bring out from the last part of Ps. 85 the true principles of patriotism: (a) listening for the voice of the Lord; (b) fearing him; (c) working with him. (Ps. 126:6). What shall we do for our country?

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Something to Look Up

[FROM THE INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY AND LEAFLET.]

1. "God is our refuge and strength." Which Psalm opens with these words?

2. "Be of good cheer," said Jesus, "I have overcome the world." Find the words.

ANSWERS, Lesson XIII., Third Quarter

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, Toronto

A Look Forward—We are going to have twelve more lessons about God teaching his people. We are going to think about him during these lessons as a loving God and we shall see how he shows his love to his people.

Golden Text for the Quarter—"With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption," Ps. 130:7. To-day we are going to hear about God making his people glad.

Lesson Thought—Teach the children that they should be joyful.

—(1) Acts 28:3-6. (2) Rev. 2:10.

For Discussion

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY AND LEAFLET.]

1. Can a nation be great without being righteous?

2. Is sorrow necessary for the making of a noble life?

Prove from Scripture

That God's people are happy.

Approach to the Lesson—Everybody made gardens this summer. Everybody tried to sow something. Why all this gardening? Do you all know about the great War that is going on? (Explain.) A time of famine was likely to come. Very little grain and vegetables were in the world. Some children who had not tasted potatoes since Christmas were given a few to plant. Every day those children watched their potato patch. At last, one fine day, what did they see? Here

and there a little green sprout poking itself through the ground. What rejoicing there was! And when the potato plants grew and blossomed, there was still more joy, but when the blossoms withered and the children poked their hands into the earth and felt the "dear little potatoes," they fairly shouted for joy.

Many people all over the world have sown in sadness this year, fearing there would not be enough food to keep people from starving.

Many are in sorrow on account of the dreadful War. How glad they will be when they see a good harvest! How very glad we will all be when the War is over and our soldiers are home again!

Lesson—Our lesson tells us about God's people long ago. War had come upon them, their cities had been destroyed, and their people carried away to a far-off land (Lesson IX., August 26th). (Recall.) Only some of the poorer people were left to sow the fields for their new masters. Many of them cried as they sowed (gesture), thinking of the happy

times that used to be.

Golden Text—After many years God brought his people home again and the harvests were once more reaped (gesture) in joy. After all the sorrow of this dreadful War now,

there will come peace and gladness again. God is able to turn sorrow into joy, to make good come out of bad. Repeat Golden Text.

Causes for Joyfulness—Our lesson is a song of joy which God's people sang because the captives were

getting home again. These songs are called Psalms. (Read in simple language.) We hear words of praise, prayer, hope.

We should be full of praise to God for his loving kindness to us, full of prayer that he will continue to bless and help us, full of hope that he will do what is best for his people, full of joy that he does so much for us. Let us name over so many causes we have to be joyful. How can we help others to be joyful?

Sing Hymn 455, Book of Praise.

What the Lesson Teaches Me—I SHOULD BE JOYFUL (repeat).

We should
be glad
and
thankful.



FROM THE PLATFORM

PRAYER = PRAISE
PETITION

In both lesson psalms we have a large element of PRAYER (Print). Part of the prayer takes the form of PRAISE (Print). Bring out by means of questions what the psalmists here found to praise God for. Ought we sometimes to go back in memory over the past in order to count our blessings? Are we in danger of forgetting the element of praise in our prayers? We more commonly see that our prayers are full of PETITION (Print). And, of course, petition is an important part of prayer. Ask the School for some of the things for which the psalmists here make petition. Point out that the petitions in these psalms are chiefly to the effect that

God will continue his past favors, and complete the work of grace he has begun. Insert the sign of equality to indicate that praise and petition are included in prayer. Now remind the School of some of the things which Christ taught his disciples concerning prayer.

Lesson II.

RETURNING FROM CAPTIVITY

October 14, 1917

Ezra 1 : 1-11. Scripture Memory Verses.

GOLDEN TEXT—The Lord hath done great things for us ; whereof we are glad.—Psalm 126 : 3.

1 Now in the first year of Cy'rus king of Per'sia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremi'ah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cy'rus king of Per'sia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

2 Thus saith Cy'rus king of Per'sia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth ; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jeru'salem, which is in Ju'dah.

3 Who is there among you of all his people ? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jeru'salem, which is in Ju'dah, and build the house of the Lord God of Is'rael, (he is the God,) which is in Jeru'salem.

4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jeru'salem.

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Ju'dah and Ben'jamin, and the priests, and the Le'vites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go

Revised Version—¹accomplished ; ²All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord, the God of heaven, given me ; ³in ; ⁴Whosoever there is among ; ⁵the God ; ⁶Omit the ; ⁷is left ; ⁸which ; ⁹heads of fathers' houses of Judah ; ¹⁰even all those ; ¹¹stirred ; ¹²round about ; ¹³bowls ; ¹⁴when they of the captivity were brought.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Decree of Cyrus, 1-4.
- II. Gifts for the Temple, 5-11.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)

M.—Returning from captivity, Ezra, ch. 1. T.—A stranger's aid required, 1 Kgs. 5 : 1-6. W.—A stranger's aid given, 1 Kgs. 5 : 7-12. Th.—Cyrus, God's instrument, Isa. 45 : 1-8. F.—Ruin and restoration, 2 Chron. 36 : 14-23. S.—God's promise to the captives, Jer. 29 : 8-14. S.—Cause of the captivity, Ezek. 39 : 22-28.

Primary Catechism—*Ques.* 50. *What happened at the end of forty days ?* After forty days Jesus went up to heaven. *Ques.* 51. *What is Jesus now doing for us in heaven ?* He intercedes for us, and he rules over all things for our good.

up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jeru'salem.

6 And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered.

7 Also Cy'rus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadne'zar had brought forth out of Jeru'salem, and had put them in the house of his gods ;

8 Even those did Cy'rus king of Per'sia bring forth by the hand of Mith'redath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbas'zar, the prince of Ju'dah.

9 And this is the number of them : thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives,

10 Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand.

11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbas'zar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Baby'lou unto Jeru'salem.

Shorter Catechism—*Ques.* 102. *What do we pray for in the second petition ?* A. In the second petition (which is, *Thy kingdom come*) we pray, That Satan's kingdom might be destroyed ; and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it ; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise : Memory Hymn—Primary, 17 ; Junior, 19, 69, 66, 583, 64.

Special Scripture Reading—Matt. 6 : 26-30 ; given also in Departmental Graded Teacher's Quarterlies. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Hymn for Opening Worship—Hymn 301, Book of Praise ; given also in Departmental Graded Quarterlies.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, 15829. Returning from Captivity. For Question on Missions, 15908, Old Dispensary and Patients. (Slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto.)

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Time and Place—B.C. 538 ; Babylon.

Connecting Links—The Book of Ezra is very important, as it is the chief authority for the period of Hebrew history with which it deals. It gives us the history of the Hebrew people from their return to their own land under their leader, Zerubbabel, in B.C. 536 to the return of a second body of exiles under Ezra himself in B.C. 458. It also relates the story of the building of the second temple. The book is also of interest as marking the beginning of that intense attachment to the

Law which so strongly characterized the Jewish people from this time on, and which was so marked in the days of Jesus. Ezra himself is shown to us as a man of personal piety who unites with that piety a high regard for the ritual of religion.

I. The Decree of Cyrus, 1-4.

V. 1. *Now, etc.* ; the book of Ezra beginning with the last words of the second book of Chronicles. (See 2 Chron. 36 : 22, 23.) *In the first year of Cyrus* ; the first year of his rule over Babylon,—B.C. 538. *Cyrus* ;

who, as a result of battle, became the ruler of Persia sometime between B.C. 549 and 546. In B.C. 538, aided by a revolt in southern Babylonia, he conquered that country. *The word of the Lord . . . Jeremiah.* See Jer. 25 : 11-13 ; 29 : 10 ; Jeremiah gives the period of the Captivity as 70 years. Its actual duration was about 50 years, but the interval between the destruction of the temple and its restoration in B.C. 516 is almost exactly 70 years. *The Lord stirred up.* Whatever may have been the direct motives under which the king acted, the purposes of God were carried out through him. *Made a proclamation ;* in accordance with the general policy which he adopted of restoring the captives of the different nations which he found in Babylon to their old homes.

V. 2. *The Lord God . . . hath given me.* Cyrus was in the habit of showing regard for the religious feelings of those over whom he reigned. In his Babylonian inscriptions he ascribes his victories to the chief god of Babylon. So here when dealing with the Jews he uses the language of their religion. *All the kingdoms of the earth ;* a boast quite in keeping with the exaggerated claims of Oriental rulers.

Vs. 3, 4. (*He is the God,*) which, etc. ; or, as in Margin of Rev. Ver., omit the brackets and the comma,—“he is the God which is in Jerusalem.” *Whosoever remaineth ;* of the captive people. *The men of his place ;* his Babylonian neighbors.

II. Gifts for the Temple, 5-11.

Vs. 5, 6. *Chief ;* the Hebrew word literally meaning heads. *Judah and Benjamin.* While our passage represents those taking advantage of the decree of Cyrus as belonging only to these two tribes, we know that some belonging to Ephraim and Manasseh were also included. *Whose spirit God had raised ;* there being only a comparatively small number of the exiles who were willing to leave Babylon with its comfort for their old home with its desolation. *Strengthened their hands ;* helped them. (See Judg. 9 : 24.) The dropping down of the hands is used to set forth the failure of strength. (See 2 Sam. 4 : 1.) *Beside all that was willingly offered.* It may be that the other things mentioned in this verse were levied by the command of

the king as a species of tax. Or, all that was willingly offered may refer to what was given specially for the temple, as in v. 4.

V. 7. *Also Cyrus ;* in order to express his practical goodwill toward the returning exiles. *Which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth ;* on both of the occasions when he captured Jerusalem. (See 2 Kgs. 24 : 13 ; 25 : 13-17.) *In the house of his gods.* Nebuchadnezzar was noted for the way in which he lavished an enormous amount of treasure upon the temples of Babylonia.

V. 8. *Mithredath.* This name literally means, given by Mithra, or the sun, the Persian god of light. It was a very common name among the Persians. *Treasurer.* The word used here comes from the Persian language. *Sheshbazzar.* The usual view is that this was the Persian or Babylonian name of Zerubbabel (see ch. 2 : 2). In support of this view is the fact that in ch. 5 : 16, Sheshbazzar is said to have laid the foundations of the temple, while this act is in ch. 3 : 8 ascribed to Zerubbabel. We know from our lessons in the book of Daniel that Jews in Babylon were sometimes given foreign names. Some think, however, that he was a commissioner specially appointed to accompany Zerubbabel.

Vs. 9-11. *Chargers ;* large plates or flat dishes, generally used for carrying a large joint of meat. *Basons ;* used in the sacrificial ritual of the temple. *Of the captivity ;* the whole number of captives.

Light from the East .

CYRUS—Cyrus is one of the most attractive figures of history. He was a man of great personal charm, marked out by providence as a leader of men. His handsome presence and his bravery of spirit remained with him all his life. He never lost his virility through luxury and self-indulgence, as many great men have done. His generalship was conspicuously free from cruelty and in his treatment of subject peoples he was so fair, moderate, and kindly that his yoke was lighter than that of any conqueror before him. He was a simple man—not proud ; nor did he hold himself aloof. He was easily approached. He had the saving sense of humor. The Greeks of Asia Minor came to him offer-

ing to submit after he had conquered Croesus, king of Lydia, though they had refused to join him against Croesus. Cyrus said to them: "A fisherman wished the fish to dance, so he played on his flute; but the

fish kept still. Then he took his great net and drew them to the shore, whereupon they all began to leap and dance. But the fisherman said, 'A truce to your dancing now, since you would not dance when I wished it.'"

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

The distance from Babylon to Jerusalem in a straight line was about 500 miles. But the great caravan of which Ezra was the head would scarcely have taken this direct route. They probably traveled up the Euphrates valley along the route which was afterwards called "The Royal Road" as far as the ancient city of Horan, Abraham's resting place, and then westward across the river at the ford of Carchemish. From Carchemish they went southward to Damascus, and then



on to the Jordan. The route would then follow the valley of the Jordan on the eastern side of the river until the ford of the Jabbok was reached, and thence up to Jerusalem. The journey would be at least 900 miles, and

occupied about 4 months. There was constant danger from robbers on the way. The few rich amongst the returning Jews rode on horses or mules; the aged, the children and the delicate women on camels. Ten leaders marshaled the host in as many divisions.

THE LESSON APPLIED

See how God makes the wrath of man to praise him, v. 1. Cyrus of Persia, like the Kaiser of Germany, proposed that he should rule the world, but, unlike the Kaiser up to date, he succeeded. All that, however, did not keep our God from marching on. Cyrus was an unbeliever and a man who sought great things for himself alone, but God cannot be defeated. He makes the wheels which turn his way and the wheels which turn the opposite way, in the great loom of life, all help in turning out the wonderful web of time.

God calls us all to build his church and kingdom, vs. 2, 3. In the home of a humble shoemaker in the suburbs of Aberdeen, on December 2, 1848, there was born a little girl who grew up to teach in the Sunday School and to take charge of a mission in the slums, and later on, to go out to Africa as a missionary. To-day her biography is one of the "best sellers" because, like the heroines of old, Mary Slessor of Calabar gave herself body, soul and spirit to the upbuilding of God's church and Kingdom.

God expects us to go or give, v. 4. The missionary command is to all, but it is quite

impossible for all to leave their homes. Then let us go by proxy. Let us give so that others may go in our place. When Carey was bidding farewell to his friends in 1793, before going forth to India, he said, "I'll go down into the pit if you'll hold the rope." There are young men and women throughout Canada to-day who would fare forth into the darkened regions if only the necessary funds were forthcoming to send them out.

The God of our fathers is the God for us, v. 5. The older generation took the lead and all the younger folk followed after. When Billy Sunday held his farewell meeting in Boston, the last hymn sung was his favorite:

"It's the old-time religion,
It's the old-time religion,
It's the old-time religion,
That's good enough for me."

Over and over they sang it, the mighty chorus, bringing color to the cheeks. Sunday just stood and watched, deeply impressed with the stirring scene before him, his eyes tear-filled. Oh, if only we would walk more faithfully in the way of our fathers!

Restore the vessels of the Lord, vs. 7-11. The church of God and the Kingdom of God are

too empty and bare. How different it would be if we could get back again the money, the music, the knowledge which properly belong to the household of God. And the lapsed masses,—what of them? How many chosen vessels of our God have found their way to the great temple of mammon? Who will join us in the great movement to bring back again all the long lost things of God?

In prosperity, God is good (Golden Text). The Jews were keenly sensible of this in the first burst of sunshine after rain. They said, "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream." It seemed too good to be true. How good God is to us, not only in the reversal of our bad fortunes, but in the generous gift of all our good ones. His paths drop fatness, and his tender mercies are over all his works.

In adversity God is good (Golden Text). The Jews were carried into captivity for their good. The Lord loveth whom he chasteneth. Bernard Gilpin, accused of heresy, set out for London to be tried before Bishop Bonner.

His favorite maxim was "All things are for the best." Upon his journey an accident happened and he broke his leg. "Is all for the best now?" asked a scornful companion. "I still believe so," Gilpin replied. And so it proved; for before he was able to resume his journey, Queen Mary died and instead of going to London to be burned, he returned home to live in triumph.

God's goodness should give us gladness (Golden Text). When Napoleon was sent to Elba, he adopted in defiance, the motto, "Ubi cumque felix," "Happy anywhere." It was not true. It could not be true in his case, but the genuine Christian may be truly "happy everywhere" and always. Dr. Henry Van Dyke tells us that the early Christians were the happiest people in the world. Poor, they were rich; persecuted, they were exultant; martyred, they were victorious. The secret of Jesus as they knew it, was a blessed secret. It filled them with the joy of living. Their watchword was "Rejoice and be exceeding glad."

THE LESSON GRADED

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

For Teachers of Bible Classes

How many years did the Jews spend in exile? What causes effected the downfall of the Babylonian empire? Trace the rise of the Persian empire. What is the date of Cyrus' capture of Babylon?

1. *The new king.* Cyrus was one of the greatest kings of antiquity. He was not only a great conqueror, but he possessed to an extraordinary degree the qualities of a great statesman. Show how this lesson indicates his methods of dealing with conquered peoples. How did his imperialism differ from that of Nebuchadnezzar? Which type was the more sound? How long were the Jews subjects of the Persians? How did they prosper under Persian rule?

It is said that Cyrus had a special interest in the Jews, first, because the spiritual character of their religion resembled that of the Persian religion which forbade the use of idols; secondly, because he had designs upon

Egypt, and Palestine could be of service to him in his projected campaign against that land. However we explain his immediate purposes, it must be admitted that he was a man of unusual personal qualities. He was one of the men of whom Rosebery has said: "These men form the pedigree of nations and their achievements are their country's title deeds of honor. It is these men who stand forth and mark the march of generations." To lead rather than to be led by the times in which we live is a sign of greatness. (Read Isa. 44:26-28; ch. 45.)

2. *The temple and the community.* It was agreed that the building of the temple was the first step in the restoration of the community. This was in accordance with the experience of the people who traced their downfall to the neglect of religion and also in accordance with the teachings of one of the prophets of the Exile. (See Ezek., chs. 47, 48.) Was this sound economic doctrine? How much does a community owe to religion? What does the church do for law and government? It was said that the Salvation Army saved the city of London the cost of 1,000 policemen.

Can the church become more valuable to town and country and the world? How?

3. *The new opportunity.* Not all the Jews in Babylonia were ready to return to Jerusalem. (Read vs. 4, 5.) Old age or sickness may have detained some. Others may have had the comfort of Babylonia, the world's seat of civilization in those days. These were deaf to the appeal to return to Palestine. (See Isa. 42:18-25.) The project needed more than presents of silver and gold; it needed lives consecrated to its realization. Those who returned showed that "they desire a better country, that is an heavenly," Heb. 11:13-16. Would it have been serious for the religious future of the world if none had been willing to go to Jerusalem? What do we owe to those who were willing to go? What similar challenges meet us to-day?

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Question the class about the Captivity—why God permitted his people to be carried away, the sufferings endured, the lessons learned, the hope which they cherished in their hearts of getting back again to their own land. (See Jer. 25:11, 12.) The story of Bagg, the London gutter-snipe, in Billy Topsail and Co., who had been exported to Newfoundland for adoption and who looked out over the great fields of ice in the direction of London, with a great longing in his heart for home, is suggestive of the undying yearning of the exiles as they turned their faces towards Jerusalem. The time had come at last for their return.

1. *The proclamation*, vs. 1-4. What was the nature of this proclamation? Why did Cyrus make it? What had Jeremiah to do with it? What had God to do with it? Make clear that in every good thought and aspiration and impulse God is stirring up our spirits to lead us to do his will, and that we are divinely wise when we work out our life along the line of the divine constraints. What is the gospel proclamation? God has made provision for the return of every captive of sin, and no power can keep a sinner in bondage if his soul wills to be free. Lay special emphasis upon the blessings which result when we act in conscious cooperation with the will and plans of God.

2. *The Response*, vs. 5, 6. How did the captives respond to the king's proclamation? Point out that these captives were divinely prepared to respond to the king's invitation. God put the divine spirit in their hearts to face the long journey and undertake the great work of rebuilding the temple. Remind the class that whatever other qualifications we may possess for doing the work which we have to do we cannot reach the highest success without God's spirit in our hearts. How were the hands of these returning exiles strengthened? Impress upon the class that we can all do something to strengthen the hands of those about us who need a bit of encouragement. Point out that there are not a few people in the world who would scorn any gift of money we could give them, but who would welcome the hope we may be able to inspire in them.

3. *The Restoration*, vs. 7-11. Trace the history of these vessels of the house of God. What thrilling incident is associated with the use to which they were once put? (See Dan., ch. 5.) Show that Cyrus did his best to make restitution; and remind the class that, although a man cannot always undo a wrong done by himself or others, he can often do something to make amends; he cannot recall an unkind word, but he can overcome its evil influence by a manifestation of love.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The story of the capture of Babylon by Cyrus might serve as an interesting introduction to to-day's lesson of the return from the Captivity. The boys and girls will tell you that Babylon appeared to be impregnable built as it was on both banks of the Euphrates, and protected by strong walls and gates. But, during a festival, the guards were careless; the Persians drained the river into a lake, and took possession of the city without fighting.

Added interest may be aroused in the scholars by the use of a map, indicating the ancient kingdom of Cyrus, together with present day countries formed from it. Have the boys and girls trace out the route followed from Babylon to Jerusalem, a road traveled almost fourteen centuries before by Abraham, and followed by innumerable caravans of

commerce and armies of conquest. Picture the methods of travel, of crossing rivers without bridges, of combating the dangers of the desert. A great hope and faith must have burned in the hearts of those who went on day after day and month after month toward their devastated homes and desolate city. Find a modern counterpart in the return of French exiles to the ruins of their homes in recaptured villages of France. Encourage the scholars to bring to the class such illustrations of Eastern travel as they may be able to secure.

Make clear the conditions of captivity which the Jews were leaving. Bring out that the Captivity did not mean imprisonment. The exiles retained their own customs, social and religious. "They were burdened with heavy taxation, and forced to labor without hire in building the temples and palaces of Babylon. . . But they were allowed to form settlements of their own." Many followed the advice of Jeremiah (ch. 29), and became wealthy. Some, like Daniel, attained to positions of political trust and power.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Something to Look Up

1. Where does the psalmist say that he that keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps?
2. Isaiah says that Jesus will proclaim liberty to the captives and open the prisons. Find the words.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

A Look Forward—We see God teaching his people that he is good.

Lesson Thought—Teach the children that they should be kind, and unselfish, and generous, and helpful to others.

Approach to the Lesson—One Sunday afternoon, just when the bells were ringing for Sunday School, a fire broke out in the town where Millie Martin lives, and her house was burned, along with many others. Some dear old friends from the country came and took Millie and her older sister away to stay with them till father and mother could get another house ready to live in.

Why did the exiles return to a country where they would have to begin life anew? The scholars will tell you it was because: (1) Cyrus gave them permission. He had a new imperial policy which permitted captive nations to occupy their own territory. Jerusalem, also, was a strategic point between Babylonia and Egypt. A strong fortress there formed a frontier defence against Egypt, now growing stronger again. (2) But the return was voluntary. The Hebrews who went were those so filled with homesickness, with love of Jehovah, with hope in the promises of Isa., chs. 40-64, that they were willing to brave all dangers and hardships to commence a new and a better nation. They knew now that idol worship was worse than useless; the old sins causing the Captivity were wiped out. Jehovah, they knew, had forgiven them.

Bring out clearly that it was this return of a purified people Jehovah had in mind when he permitted the destruction of Jerusalem. God does not stop half way. His blessing comes if we but follow to the end.

ANSWERS, Lesson I.—(1) Ps. 46. (2) John 16 : 33.

For Discussion

1. Ought the church to accept help from those who are not Christians?
2. Do we learn more of God in history than in nature?

Prove from Scripture

That God delivers the captive.

Millie was very quiet during the long drive, and even the pretty sights of the country did not make her happy. When bedtime came she began to cry for her own home, and sobbed till she fell asleep. At daylight she awoke and cried again to be taken home. The kind friends were very sorry for the homesick little girl. Very early they harnessed their horses and took Millie and her sister back to their father and mother. Now she was all smiles and happiness. She was going home.

God's Homesick People—We have heard about God's people who had been taken away

from their homes to a far-off land. (Recall.) They were very homesick.

Lesson—Our lesson tells us about their home going. Tell vs. 1-4. God put it into king Cyrus' heart to let them return to build again the house of the Lord at Jerusalem.

Picture the friends coming with gifts to those going away. The camels (describe, show picture) are laden with boxes and bales containing these gifts (describe). Tell v. 7. Describe the caravan as they journey towards Jerusalem. How excited the people are as they get near their old home!

Give and Work and Pray for Our Missionaries—Impress the thought of v. 6. We cannot all go away to work for God, but we who stay at home should supply well our missionaries, etc., who go to carry on the work of the Lord in our own land, and in foreign lands (speak of the boxes and bales sent by our W.M.S. and Mission Boards), just as those who cannot go to the front

should give money, etc., to the Red Cross for soldiers' comforts, etc.

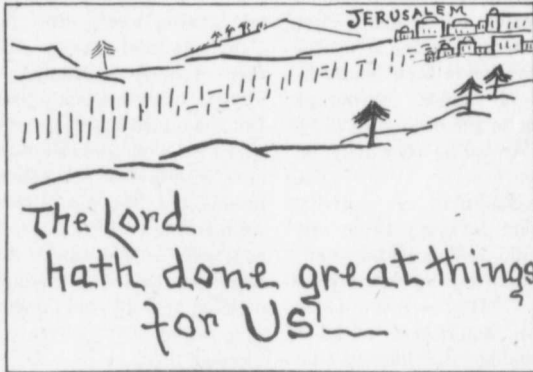
God's Power over the Hearts of People—God put into the heart of the heathen king, Cyrus, to desire to rebuild the house of the

Lord at Jerusalem. (In our own day God has wonderfully stirred the hearts of the heathen to serve him. They have built churches and formed missionary societies of their own to help others to know about Jesus.) God puts it into the hearts

of people to build churches and Sunday Schools in all lands and schools and hospitals and all helpful institutions in the world. Let us all help too.

Golden Text—Clap hands and repeat Golden Text. God's people sang this song of gladness long ago. We should sing it now, for he has done great things for us. He is full of lovingkindness and we should be kind to others for his sake.

What the Lesson Teaches Me—I SHOULD BE KIND.



FROM THE PLATFORM

THE FIRST SECOND EXODUS

Secure from the scholars their opinion as to what was the outstanding event in the history of Israel. They will probably agree that it was THE EXODUS (Print). It was the Exodus from Egypt which made the Israelites a nation. What does the word "Exodus" mean? It means a going out or departure. Ask whether the Exodus from Egypt was the only one in the history of Israel. We are told in to-day's lesson of another Exodus, this time from Babylon. So that there was really a FIRST (Print), and a SECOND (Print) Exodus. Question the School as to the respects in which the first and the second Exodus were alike. In both cases the Israelites went out from a foreign land, and in both cases they saw God's hand in it all. But there was also a contrast. Pharaoh tried to hold them back. Cyrus encouraged them to go.

Lesson III.

THE TEMPLE REBUILT AND DEDICATED October 21, 1917

Ezra 3 : 8-13 ; 6 : 14-18. Scripture Memory Verses.

GOLDEN TEXT—Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.—Psalm 100 : 4.

8 Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jeru'salem, in the second month, began Zerub'babel the son of Sheal'tiel, and Jesh'ua the son of Jo'zadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Le'vites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jeru'salem ; and appointed the Le'vites, from twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the Lord.

9 Then stood Jesh'ua with his sons and his brethren, Kad'miel and his sons, the sons of Ju'dab, together, to set forward the workmen in the house of God : the sons of Hena'dad, with their sons and their brethren the Le'vites.

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Le'vites the sons of A'saph with cymbals, to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of Da'vid king of Is'rael.

11 And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord ; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Is'rael. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid.

12 But many of the priests and Le'vites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid

Revised Version—1 rest ; 2 have the oversight or another ; 3 saying, For he ; 4 heads of fathers' houses,

LESSON PLAN

I. Organizing for Building, 8, 9.

II. The Laying of the Foundations, 10-13.

III. The Completion of the Temple, ch. 6 : 14-18.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)

M.—The temple rebuilt and dedicated, Ezra 3 : 8-13.

T.—The temple rebuilt and dedicated, Ezra 6 : 14-18.

W.—Preparing to build, Ezra 5 : 12-17. Th.—The first dedication, 1 Kgs. 8 : 10-21. F.—The temple of the body, 1 Cor. 3 : 10-23. S.—Glory and peace in God's house, Haggai 2 : 1-9. S.—Thanksgiving in God's house, Ps. 136 : 13-26.

Primary Catechism—Ques. 52. What promise did Jesus make to his disciples when he was going away ?

Jesus promised to send them another Comforter, or

before their eyes, with a loud voice ; and many shouted aloud for joy :

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people : for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

Ch. 6 : 14 And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Hag'gai the prophet and Zechar'iah the son of Id'do. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Is'rael, and according to the commandment of Cy'rus, and Dari'us, and Artaxer'es king of Per'sia.

15 And this house was finished on the third day of the month A'dar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Dari'us the king.

16 And the children of Is'rael, the priests, and the Le'vites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy,

17 And offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs ; and for a sin offering for all Is'rael, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Is'rael.

18 And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Le'vites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jeru'salem ; as it is written in the book of Mo'ses.

the work ; 3 have the oversight of ; 4 order ; 5 one to be old men, that ; 6 Omit they ; 7 decree ; 8 they.

Helper, to remain with them forever.

Shorter Catechism—Ques. 103. What is we pray for in the third petition ? A. In the third petition (which is, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven) we pray, That God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise : Memory Hymn—Primary, 17 ; Junior, 19, 383, 389, 573, 252.

Special Scripture Reading—Psalm 121 ; given also in Departmental Graded Teacher's Quarterlies. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Hymn for Opening Worship—Hymn 263, Book of Praise : given also in Departmental Graded Quarterlies.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 842, The Temple Rebuilt and Dedicated. For Question on Missions, 15909, Patients Leaving the Hospital. (Slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto.)

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Time and Place—The foundations of the temple were laid in B.C. 536, and the building was completed in B.C. 516 ; Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—The second chapter of Ezra gives the names and number of those who took advantage of the decree of Cyrus in order to return to their own land. That decree was issued in B.C. 538. In September or October of B.C. 537, a great gathering of the returned exiles was held in Jerusalem. At this gathering, in order that the sacrifices commanded by the law might be regularly offered, the altar was built under the direction of Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the governor. The feast of booths was held, and the regular sacrificial ritual was reestablished. But the foundation of the temple was not yet laid.

I. Organizing for Building, 8, 9.

V. 8. In the second year ; probably in B.C. 536. In the second month ; which would correspond to part of our April and May. Zerubbabel ; a name which calls up the Exile in Babylon. It may mean, "seed" or "offspring" of Babylon. Zerubbabel may also have had a Hebrew name. The son of Shealtiel ; called Salathiel in Matt. 1 : 12, one of the sons of Jehoiachin, the captive king of Judah. (See 1 Chron. 3 : 17.) Jeshua ; called Joshua in Haggai and Zechariah. His father, Jehozadak, was carried captive to Babylon where Jeshua was probably born. It was natural that he should take a leading part in the foundation of the temple. To set forward ; to help the progress of the undertaking.

V. 9. *Jeshua*; not the one mentioned in the previous verse, but a Levite. (See ch. 2:40; Neh. 8:7.) He was the head of a Levitical house. *Kadmiel*; the head of another Levitical family. *The sons of Judah*; should probably be, "the sons of Hodaviah." This may mean that the sons of Kadmiel mentioned are limited to those of the Hodaviah branch of the family. *Together*; literally, "as one man." *To set forward*; to assist. *The sons of Henadad*; another Levite family. *Their brethren*; other Levites.

II. The Laying of the Foundations, 10-13.

V. 10. *Laid the foundation*. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah seem to imply that the foundation was not begun until the second year of Darius Hystaspis (B.C. 520), sixteen years later than Ezra places it here. But the language of the two prophets may arise from the fact that the commencement of the work was so soon postponed that when it was begun in B.C. 520 it seemed practically a new work. *In their apparel*; in their official robes. *Trumpets*; specially used at the feast connected with the new moon of the seventh month (see Lev. 23:24), but also used on semi-religious occasions of joy. *Cymbals*; instruments of brass, used to mark the time of the music. *After the ordinance*; as set forth in 1 Chron., ch. 25.

V. 11. *They sang one to another* (Rev. Ver.); one part of the choir answering another part. Some of the psalms are specially composed to be sung thus. *For his mercy*, etc.; possibly a reflection of Ps. 136. *Shouted*; heartiness and loud noise being often accompaniments of Hebrew praise.

Vs. 12, 13. *Ancient men*; "old men," as in Rev. Ver. *The first house*; the temple of Solomon. *Wept with a loud voice*; giving expression to their emotion in true Oriental fashion. *The shout of joy*; raised especially by the younger people who were filled with hope now that the temple was again established. *The weeping of the people*; because of the contrast to the former building presented by the meanness of the new one, and the small resources for its completion.

III. The Completion of the Temple, ch. 6: 14-18.

Vs. 14, 15. *The elders . . . builded*; after the annoying postponements of the work

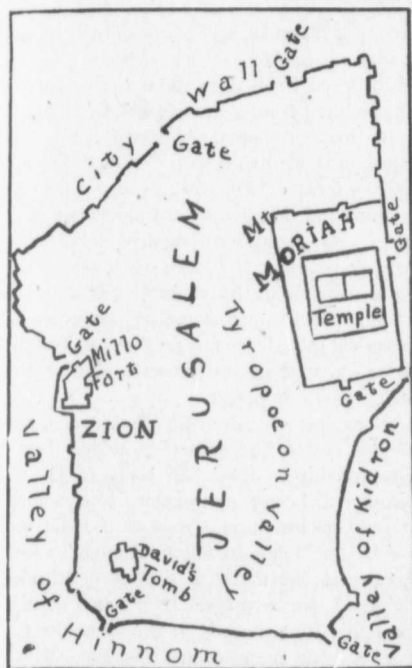
described in chs. 4, 5. *Haggai . . . and Zechariah*; the former a layman, the latter a priest. Haggai's message was a direct one; Zechariah made use of symbols. But both sought to bring practical encouragement to the builders. *The son of Iddo*; more probably the grandson. *The decree of Cyrus* (Rev. Ver.). See ch. 1:3. *Darius*; Darius Hystaspis, the third king in succession to Cyrus. *Artaxerxes*; the second king after Darius. There is a difficulty here, seeing that the temple was finished in the reign of Darius. Artaxerxes, however, bestowed treasure upon it. See ch. 7. *Adar*; February-March. *The sixth year*; B.C. 516. The temple had thus taken more than four years to finish after the second beginning.

Vs. 16-18. *Kept the dedication*. For the account of the dedication of the first temple, see 1 Kgs., ch. 8. *Twelve he goats*. See Num. 7:87. The number was representative of the twelve tribes, although only a few of them had returned and were present at the feast of dedications. *Divisions . . . courses*. See 1 Chron., chs. 23, 24.

Light from the East

WEeping AND JOY—The people of the Orient are like children; they give free expression to their feelings. If you give an Arab something to eat he must show his appreciation by smacking his lips and making many sounds and gestures that to us appear undignified. They will shout for joy and they will weep. I saw the men of a country village assemble night after night in front of their chieftain's house in Jerusalem,—he was mayor of the city at the time—and spend hours in dancing and sword play and shouting, all to do honor to their kinsman, the mayor, who was to be married in a few days. In the house of death and at funerals people's feelings break out freely in wailing and tears. Of course there is a tendency for both joyous shouting and the wailing of mourners to fall into rhythmical forms. When the younger people sang at the temple building it would be some such song as Psalm 136 with its refrain for all to join in the joyous shout. When the old men wept I have no doubt that wail answered wail and thus they comforted one another in their grief.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



"Jerusalem is situated on a tableland on the crest of the central ridge of Palestine and at one of its highest points. It has the same latitude as the northern end of the Dead Sea. The portion of the tableland occupied by the city is isolated from the rest of the plateau, except on the north. On the other sides it is encompassed by deep ravines." The site is thus a jutting promontory of a lofty central tableland. From the point where the southern and eastern ravines meet, another valley runs northward like the arc of a circle for nearly a mile, about midway sending a branch from its concave side due west. This valley, called the Tyropoean, divides the city into two parts. The hill west of the valley is called Mount Zion. The southern portion of the hill on the eastern side is called Mount Moriah. Here the temple stood on the site now occupied by the Mosque of Omar. Many scholars, however think that Mount Zion was part of the eastern hill, and that the name was afterwards extended to the whole city including the western hill.

THE LESSON APPLIED

Thank God for our pioneers, v. 8. The first to return laid the foundations of comfort and religion for those who came after. One of our young Canadian ministers says, "In the year 1746 the Jacobites, inspired by the charming personality of the young Pretender, made a determined attempt to defeat the Royalists, but failed on the battlefield of Culloden. Parliament immediately took steps to break the power of the Highland chiefs by abolishing their authority and parceling out their lands among the Royalist officers. Disappointed but undaunted, some of the chiefs accompanied by members of their clans, emigrated to Nova Scotia and settled in Pictou County. Here they were inspired by two men of great heart and mind, Dr. McGregor and Dr. McCulloch, the former the greatest minister, and the latter the greatest educationalist, Nova Scotia has seen. These men laid the foundations of the home, the school and the church in this new land.

Everybody sing, v. 10. Music hath charms,

not only to sooth the savage breast, but to make even more open to the truth the heart of the sage. Music opens wide the door. The politician knows this and seeks to put his audience into the right attitude toward his message through singing. The revivalist rocks his congregation upon a sea of song. Churches and nations before now have sung themselves into power.

Have faith in God, v. 11. When the skies were gray these people shouted with a great shout. Would that such a faith were ours! In the density of African heathenism Robert and Mary Moffat toiled on for ten years without a convert, but their faith never faltered. At a time when all seemed darkest, a letter was received from a friend in far-off England, asking if there was anything of use which could be sent. Mary Moffat replied, "Send us a communion service; we shall want it some day." It came three years later—the very day before the first converts were baptized. Their faith was justified.

Be patient with the old, vs. 12, 13. The old

folk worked, but their sorrow's crown of sorrows was remembering happier things. This temple was as nothing compared with the former building which they still gazed at through the mist of memory. The young folk worked and at the same time dipped into the future far as human eye could see, and that future prospect gave them joy. The old are apt to be too conservative and the young too radical, but the church has need of both. Let there be mutual patience. Especially let the young be patient with the old, who have borne the heat and the burden of the day.

Finish it, vs. 14, 15. To begin any good work is well, but to finish it is better. A young girl sat singing at the piano. "Sing it again," said the singing teacher, and the tired girl sang again and again. "But you do not sing it properly, and I question whether you will ever make a great singer." But the little girl tried hard that day and the next and the next year, until her training was finished. Then she stood before 5,000 people and sang with such power as to make people weep from excess of emotion. That girl was Lillian Nordica. If we would be anything in this world we must "stick it out" until our lesson is done.

Serve the church faithfully, vs. 16-18. The children of Israel dedicated their new temple, gave to it liberally, and organized the priesthood and people for its services. Henry Ward Beecher was once about to ride behind a horse hired from a livery stable. "That is a fine looking animal," he remarked. "Is he as good as he looks?" "That horse," said the owner, "will work in any place you put him and do all that any horse can do." Eyeing the steed with evident admiration Beecher replied: "I wish to goodness he was a member of my church." If only the notion, that all must somehow serve, could be worked into the congregations and into the nation, how the Lord's battle against the mighty would progress.

"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise" (Golden Text). Why worship? Hear the reply of O. W. Holmes: "I am a regular church-goer. I should go for various reasons if I did not love it, but I am fortunate enough to find pleasure in the midst of devout multitudes whether I can accept all their creed or not. For I find that there is in the corner of my heart a 'little plant called reverence' which wants to be watered once a week."

THE LESSON GRADED

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

For Teachers of Bible Classes

Read Ezra, chs. 2 to 5. Review the incidents of the preceding lesson. What events prepared the way for the return of some Jewish exiles? What did the colony accomplish during the first year in Jerusalem? (Ezra 3 : 3-7.)

1. *Faith in a cause.* The returning exiles must have suffered a disillusionment on their arrival at Jerusalem. The majority of them had never seen the country. They had been born in Babylon. They had learned of Palestine only through men who had seen it in other days, or through the prophetic addresses. They had been led by prophecy to believe that, as they came to the land, "the wilderness would blossom as a rose, and all the trees of the field should clap their hands." (See Isa., ch. 35.) But the site

of Jerusalem was marked only by charred timbers and heaps of stones,—a desolation,—ancient enemies occupying the best palaces. Instead of entering into a great Utopia, these Jews were faced with the difficulties of constructing a state from its very foundations. A similar disillusionment "has often been experienced in history, when bands of religious men, going forth, as they thought, to freedom and the immediate erection of a holy commonwealth have found their unity wrecked and their enthusiasm dissipated by a few inclement seasons on a barren and a hostile shore." Yet the Pilgrim Fathers and their descendants gave soul and power to the Republic of the United States. And so these exiles, disillusioned though they were, went forward. Faith had still its prophecies (see Isa. 44 : 26 ; 45 : 14 ; 49 : 14-21, 23). What has their history to say as to the fulfilment of their dreams? On what type of a cause may we stake life and happiness?

2. *The work of pessimists*, v. 12. Who were the pessimists and who were the optimists? The one class saw only defects, the other could see what had been achieved. The wails of the pessimists helped to stop the work. They were the best allies of the enemies of the colony, ch. 4:1-5. Thus sixteen years were lost in completing the work and two prophets had to be raised up to hearten the people, Hag. 1:1, 2. What are the words of the modern pessimists in congregation or in church? What does a pessimist promote? What is the best cure for pessimism? Learn something from team-play.

3. *The completion of the temple*, ch. 6:14-18. In spite of delays, the work was brought to completion. When did Haggai and Zechariah live? What had been happening in the Persian empire since the time of Cyrus? The prophets believed that the religious life of no community could be sound if the symbols of religion were neglected. A community which prefers material comfort to the proper maintenance of the institutions which foster religious life is in serious danger, Hag. 1:2-11. Can an indifferent attitude to the Sabbath, to religious exercises, etc., even if excused by the plea of liberty, effect good, spiritual living?

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Refer to Professor Drummond's booklet, *The City without a Church*, and bring out that no city but the New Jerusalem can afford to be without a church. Remind the class that a city without a church is not a very safe place in which to live, and refer to James Russell Lowell's saying, that no place is a decent place in which to live and bring up a family, where God is not known and worshiped. We can never tell how much we are indebted to the church for many of the best blessings we enjoy. Our lesson contains an account of the rebuilding of the temple by the returned exiles.

1. *The Foundations Laid*, vs. 8-13. Why were the returned exiles a year in getting started with the temple? They first had to provide some sort of homes for themselves. They lost no time in making provision for the religious wants of the people. Question the scholars about the laying of the corner-stone.

Who were the great leaders in this work? What was the character of the anthem sung? What part had the people in these ceremonies? Why was the joy of this occasion marred by loud weeping on the part of some? Was there any excuse for this? A flood of tender thought, of sacred memories came over them as they relived the days that were gone. No new building could ever be to them what the old one had been. A man who had spent many years away from home returned to find the old church where he had worshiped in boyhood removed and a new building in its place. He said that there was something he missed out of the service in the new church. He felt that if he could have sat in the old family pew, with a heart full of sacred memories, he would have received a larger blessing.

2. *The Temple Completed*, ch. 6:14-15. Why were they so long in completing the work? What two prophets had a good deal to do in inspiring the people to work? By consulting their prophecies we learn how they succeeded in doing this. Show that a great deal depends upon wise, inspiring leadership in every great undertaking. Ask the scholars which they consider worthy of greater honor,—those who inspire others in a noble undertaking, or those who do the actual work.

3. *The Temple Dedicated*, vs. 16-18. Ask for a description of the dedication service. What do we miss out of this service which we find in the dedication of Solomon's temple? Was no one able to pray the dedicatory prayer? Remember that all we are and all we have should be dedicated to the Lord. The daily prayer of our hearts should be—

"Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee."

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

To-day's lesson should be taught to the boys and girls as a "Come to Sunday School" lesson. The story as told by Ezra presents itself in a series of five scenes: (1) the returning Jews settling in their old, devastated homes; (2) the building of the altar and the immediate commencement of religious services; (3) the laying of the foundation of the temple, and of the corner-stone; (4) the

opposition of the mongrel Jews, union with whom would have meant debasing the fine spiritual religion of the former exiles, and the consequent delay of fifteen years; (5) the completion and dedication of the temple. The heart of the lesson for the boys and girls is in the building of the altar,—in the fact that the Jews early in their new life placed God at its centre and worshiped him publicly; and that they keep the ideal, the vision of the temple clearly before them all the time. The boys and girls may be too young to enter fully into communion with God through fellowship in his church. In the Sunday School, however, they may find their altar, an altar which should lead ultimately to worship in the temple if the vision of the temple is kept clear, and constant before their eyes. Emphasize the incompleteness of the life which is lived without religion.

After bringing out the incident of the story in its several scenes, and connecting the "altar" with the "Sunday School," make clear some of the more important advantages in attendance at Sunday School. Why do boys and girls go to day school? It is to get

an education, to be trained to take their place with men and women in the social and economic relationships of life. Emphasize that in the Sunday School we receive religious education; we are trained to take our place in God's society throughout all eternity.

The boys and girls will tell you that what is good for them is good for other boys and girls as well. If you think it advisable you might arrange a contest amongst the scholars for securing new members for any department of the School. In a boys' class averages could be worked out after the nature of the batting averages in a baseball club. Each new scholar brought, who is not an attendant at any other Sunday School, would count as a base hit. The same new scholar would count as a hit each time he is brought during the month or six weeks the contest lasts. Two-baggers, three-baggers and home runs should be credited to scholars who bring two, three or four new scholars on any one Sunday. In a girls' class the scoring might be done as in a basket ball game. Added zest to the contest might be given by dividing the class into two teams, each with its captain.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

ANSWERS, Lesson II.—(1) Ps. 121 : 4.
(2) Isa. 61 : 1.

Something to Look Up

1. Where does Paul say that we are the temple of God and that his Spirit dwells in us?

2. Jesus said: "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Find the words.

For Discussion

1. Which is the greater barrier to the church's success—opposition without or indifference within?

2. What should decide the amount of our gifts to God?

Prove from Scripture

That our worship should be joyful.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

A Look Forward—We see God teaching his people that they should love his house.

Lesson Thought—Teach the children that they should love and reverence and work for God's church.

Approach to the Lesson—Some children lived with their father and mother in a little cabin at the edge of a "clearing" in a bush away in our big Northern Ontario. One day they began to smell smoke and soon they heard the crackling of flames, and next the flames were spreading all around their

home. They ran for their lives, father and mother carrying the littlest ones to the nearest village, but soon the village, too, was in flames. The people had to get into small boats and many had to wade out into the lake to keep from being burned to death. Describe the black ruins and dreary scenes in those fire swept districts. Picture the people returning to what had been their homes. How sad they felt! But they began soon and built houses for themselves, and let me tell you something very nice.

God's House Rebuilt—In those burned towns among the very first buildings to be put up was a church. Our Presbyterian people did not wait very long before a "house of the Lord" was built and furnished for people to worship in. This is the very first thing that God's people rebuilt when they returned to their own land.

The Desolate City of Jerusalem—The enemy had burned Jerusalem (recall) and destroyed the temple. Our last lesson told

us about their return. (Recall.) Zerrubbabel was their leader or overseer.

Our lesson to-day tells about them rebuilding the temple of God.

Rebuilding the Temple—Tell the story simply. Let the children show how the builders built one stone upon another (fist over fist) till the building was completed. Listen to the music as some of the people played and sang to cheer the others as they worked. When the walls were built, the roof was put on and the inside made ready. Then the boxes and bales of gold and silver

dishes which the people in Babylon, had sent (recall) were unpacked and soon the temple was ready for the people to worship in. There were both glad ones and sad ones amongst them. The old men were sad when

they thought of the grand temple (describe Solomon's temple) which had been destroyed, and they wept sadly, but the young people were quite hopeful and joyous.

The Temple Dedicated—Tell ch. 6: 14-18. The building was then presented

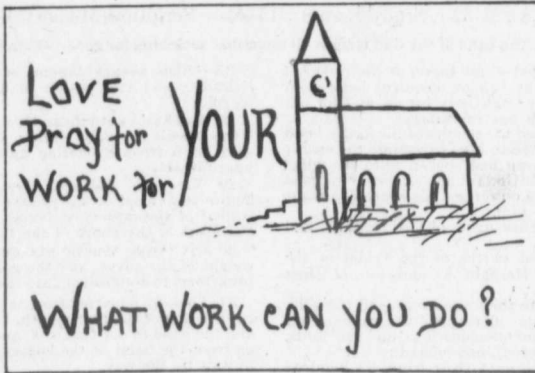
to God that he might dwell among them again.

Golden Text—Repeat Golden Text. We should love our church. How can you show your love for it? Perhaps you may be able to help churches in needy places. Can you "make a church" with your hands this way? "Here's the church and here's the steeple,

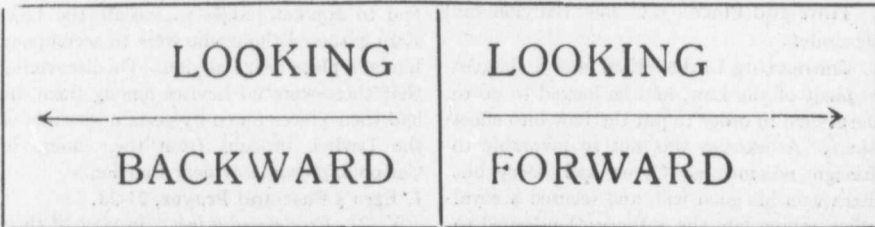
Here's the minister and here are the people."

Won't you try to go faithfully to church and listen to what the minister says, for he is bringing a message from God?

What the Lesson Teaches Me—I SHOULD LOVE GOD'S HOUSE.



FROM THE PLATFORM



Begin by drawing a line down the middle of the board. With the exception of the actual present, into what two divisions do we divide time? Into the past and the future. When we think of the past, we are said to be LOOKING BACKWARD (Print, and draw an arrow as above). Who usually look backward the most, the old or the young? Who looked backward to the past in our lesson? Why were their thoughts sad as they did so? When we think of the future, what may we be said to be doing? LOOKING FORWARD (Print, with arrow as above). Who among the Jewish exiles looked forward in our lesson? Why were their thoughts

joyful as they did so? Impress upon the School the importance of learning helpful lessons from the past, while at the same time we look forward into the future with true hope and enthusiasm.

Lesson IV.

EZRA'S RETURN FROM BABYLON

October 28, 1917

Ezra 8 : 21-32. Study Ezra 8 : 15-36. Scripture Memory Verses.

GOLDEN TEXT—The hand of our God is upon all them that seek him, for good.—Ezra 8 : 22 (Rev. Ver.).

21 Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river ¹ of Aha'va, that we might ² afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a ³ right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance.

22 For I was ashamed to ⁴ require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way : because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them ⁵ for good that seek him ; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him.

23 So we fasted and besought our God for this : and he was intreated of us.

24 Then I separated twelve of the ⁶ chief of the priests, ⁷ Sherebi'ah, Hashabi'ah, and ten of their brethren with them,

25 And weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, *even* the offering ⁸ of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his ⁹ lords, and all Is'rael *there* present, had offered :

26 I even weighed ¹⁰ unto their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents, ¹¹ and of gold an hundred talents ;

Revised Version—¹ Omit of ; ² humble ; ³ straight way ; ⁴ ask ; ⁵ that seek him, for good ; ⁶ chiefs ; ⁷ even ; ⁸ for ; ⁹ princes ; ¹⁰ into ; ¹¹ Omit and ; ¹² and twenty bows ; ¹³ darics ; ¹⁴ bright brass ; ¹⁵ and ; ¹⁶ Omit also ; ¹⁷ the ; ¹⁸ the princes of the fathers' houses of Israel ; ¹⁹ Omit took ; ²⁰ received ; ²¹ the liar in wait.

LESSON PLAN

- I. Ezra's Fast and Prayer, 21-23.
- II. Ezra's Care, 24-30.
- III. Ezra's Arrival, 31, 32.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association, Mr. S. C. Bailey, Hon. Secretary, 56 Old Bailey, London, England.)

M.—Ezra's return from Babylon, Ezra 8 : 15-23.
 T.—Ezra's return from Babylon, Ezra 8 : 24-30. W.—Ezra's return from Babylon, Ezra 8 : 31-36. Th.—Ezra's good resolve, Ezra 7 : 1, 6-10. F.—Ezra's reliance on God, Ezra 7 : 21-28. S.—Submission, James 4 : 8-17. S.—Gratitude, Ps. 66 : 8-20.
Primary Catechism—Ques. 53. *Who is the Com-*

27 ¹² Also twenty basons of gold, of a thousand ¹³ drams ; and two vessels of fine ¹⁴ copper, precious as gold.

28 And I said unto them, Ye are holy unto the Lord ; ¹⁵ the vessels are holy ¹⁶ also ; and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering unto the Lord ¹⁷ God of your fathers.

29 Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them before the ¹⁸ chief of the priests and the Le'vites, and ¹⁹ chief of the fathers of Is'rael, at Jeru'salem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord.

30 So ¹⁹ took the priests and the Le'vites ²⁰ the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring them to Jeru'salem unto the house of our God.

31 Then we departed from the river of Aha'va on the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jeru'salem : and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and ²¹ of such as lay in wait by the way.

32 And we came to Jeru'salem, and abode there three days.

forter or Helper whom Jesus promised to send to his disciples? The Holy Spirit is the Comforter whom Jesus promised to send.

Shorter Catechism—Review Questions 101-103.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise : Memory Hymn—Primary, 17 ; Junior, 19, 111, 116, 119 (Ps. Sel.).

Special Scripture Reading—Isaiah 55 : 1-13 ; given also in Departmental Graded Teacher's Quarterlies. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

Hymn for Opening Worship—Hymn 560, Book of Praise ; given also in Departmental Graded Quarterlies.

Lantern Slides—For Lesson, B. 1386, Ezra's Return from Babylon. For Question on Missions, 15910, New Dispensary with Patients and Staff. (Slides are obtained from the Presbyterian Lantern Slide Department, 96 Queen St. East, Toronto.)

THE LESSON EXPLAINED

Time and Place—B.C. 458 ; Babylon and Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—Ezra was a diligent student of the Law, and he longed to go to Jerusalem in order to put the Law into effect there. Artaxerxes was not so favorable to foreign religions as Cyrus' had been, but Ezra won his good will, and secured a royal edict, giving him the authority he desired to carry out his purpose. This royal decree gave permission to any of the Jews who so desired to accompany Ezra. Ezra was also authorized to carry to Jerusalem offerings for the temple made by the king and by the Jews, to draw upon the treasurers of the western provinces for necessary expenses,

and to appoint judges to execute the Law. Ezra gathered those who were to accompany him at a place near Babylon. On discovering that there were no Levites among them, he had their places taken by certain servants of the Levites brought from their home in Casiphia, presumably near Babylon.

I. Ezra's Fast and Prayer, 21-23.

V. 21. *Proclaimed a fast* ; in view of their hazardous undertaking. It was a sign of humiliation, a confession of sin, and an admission of absolute dependence upon the mercy of God. *The river of Aha'va* ; probably named after some town by which it flowed. It was likely one of the numerous canals of the Euphrates in the neighborhood of Baby-

lon. *Afflict ourselves*; better, as in Rev. Ver., "humble ourselves." A *right way*; most likely referring to the literal road they were to take, but the word "way" in the Old Testament often refers to conduct. *Our substance*; our goods.

Vs. 22, 23. *I was ashamed*; as it would seem like an expression of distrust in God. *To require*; sometimes, to demand, but here it simply means to ask, as in Rev. Ver. *The enemy in the way*; such a wealthy caravan as that with Ezra would be only too likely to provoke an attack from the roving hordes of Bedouin infesting the wastes of Syria. *The hand of our God*, etc. The hand of God is used as an emblem of the might of God exerted to help those who trust in him. *But his power*, etc.; the other side of the doctrine of the providence of God. *We fasted and besought*; fasting and prayer usually going together. *He was intreated*. He was successfully besought; he was persuaded.

II. Ezra's Care, 24-30.

Vs. 24, 25. *Sherebiah*; who also assisted Ezra in the exposition of the law. (See Neh. 8:7.) He and Hashabiah would seem from vs. 18, 19 to have been Levites, although here the verse reads as if they were priests. It is possible that the verse means that there were twelve priests and twelve Levites chosen to take charge of the gold, etc. *And weighed unto them*; in order that a proper accounting might be made at the end of the journey. *The offering*, etc.; of which we are told in ch. 7:15, 16. The temple had been built, and this offering was largely to support the worship which the Law prescribed.

Vs. 26, 27. *Unto their hand*; into their possession. *Talents*; which seem to have varied in weight from one period to another. The Persian talent is said to have weighed 66 pounds. *Drams*; likely a better word than the word darics used in the Rev. Ver. A dram was equal to about five dollars. *Copper*; better as in Rev. Ver., "bright brass." *Precious as gold*; as valuable as gold.

V. 28. *And I said*. As the one who had been placed in a position of responsibility by the Persian monarch, Ezra would impress upon the priests and Levites the trust imposed upon them. *Ye are holy*; the priests

and Levites having been specially set apart for the service of God. *The vessels are holy also*; having been given for the special use of the temple.

Vs. 29, 30. *Watch ye*. Be on your guard. *Keep them*; take constant care of them. *Until ye weigh them*; when a comparison with the record made by Ezra would reveal whether any of the treasure was missing. *In the chambers of the house*; for the service of which the treasure had been donated. *So took . . . of the silver*; that is, they took the silver which had been weighed out to them.

III. Ezra's Arrival, 31, 32.

Vs. 31, 32. *On the twelfth day*. Ezra had left Babylon on the first day of the month. (See ch. 7:9.) *The first month*; the month Nisan, corresponding to part of our March and April. *The hand of our God*, etc.; that is, God guided us by his providence. *From the hand of the enemy*. See v. 22. *We came to Jerusalem*; in the fifth month (July-August), according to ch. 7:9. The journey thus lasted some three months and a half. It was about 900 miles.

Light from the East

"A FAST" (v. 21)—A fast in the East means abstinence from food and drink from sunrise to sunset of one day; in the evening the fast is broken. If the fast is for more than a day we are to think of men abstaining each day till sundown and then eating and drinking just as the Moslems do during the whole ("fast") month of Ramadan every year. Fasting was an exercise that made it possible for men to come near to God. Moses received the law after a fast of forty days on Mount Sinai. Daniel's visions came after a fast. The most general use of fasting was to give a special appeal to prayer. God was the more likely to be affected and to hearken when he looked on the suffering and humiliation of the suppliant. It is this aspect of fasting that is set forward in post-exile times. Men came to speak of fasting as a "humbling of oneself before God." The great Hebrew fast, the Day of Atonement, survives till the present as the supreme religious exercise of the year. For 24 hours the Jews neither eat nor drink and they afflict their souls in the divine presence.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON III.]

"Jerusalem has three principal hills, an eastern, a western and a northwestern. The eastern hill is a ridge extending for somewhat more than half a mile from north to south, which rises to a height of from 200 to 300 feet above its encompassing valleys, tapers to a blunt point at its southern extremity, and at its northern end was almost separated from the tableland of which it is a part, by a branch of the eastern ravine (the Kidron). This ridge attains a general altitude of 2,400 feet above sea level.

The southwestern hill is much the largest of the three. In form it is oblong, with a spur thrown out on the northeastern corner toward the eastern ridge. It rises abruptly from the encircling valleys. Its broad summit begins at an altitude of about 2,400 feet above the level of the sea and swells 150 feet higher, with its greatest elevation on the west. The third hill is rather a projection of the plateau than an isolated mound." (Davis.)

THE LESSON APPLIED

Be contrite in heart, v. 21. If the returning captives would have the help of Almighty God they must seek for it through fasting, prayer and penitence. We need the help of God to-day against powerful and ruthless Germany. Because our cause is so unmistakably just we are apt to think that we ourselves are fit for victory. But are we, while evil, public and private, flourishes to such a notorious degree? We need to turn from sin and return unto God, and since the repentance of a nation is but the aggregate repentance of its individuals, we do well each one of us to repent before God. We need men and money—more men and more money—in this awful strife, but contrition—national and individual—is the need of the hour.

Be consistent, v. 22. Ezra was very careful not to do anything which might be regarded as a denial of his faith. "Consistency, thou art a jewel." "That gentleman," said an infidel, pointing to a passerby, "is the founder of our club." "What," said the other, "that man is a Christian." "Yes," replied the infidel, "but his inconsistencies have driven many of us into infidelity and led to the founding of our club."

God can be intreated, v. 23. Some people do not believe in prayer and some of those who do believe in prayer have ceased to pray from want of will to do so. Prayer is a force. God hears and answers. The greatest men of history have been men of prayer. The lowest of the earth have been exalted in character through prayer. Mr. Harold Begbie in his *Twice Born Men*, tells of a criminal, who, during the frequent times spent in prison, came to think that his life was wrong

and that perhaps prayer might set it right. He prayed for the first time in his life, that heaven might send him a good wife who would help him to live a respectable life. On getting out of prison he continued to pray for this and for other things until one night at a religious meeting the crisis came and a change of heart was experienced. Ever since, he has lived a life that shows how faithfully God answers prayer.

Organize for church work, v. 24. These are days of stress when for the sake of truth and righteousness and liberty, the people of our land are organizing for national service. Oh, that the church membership and the roll of workers were co-incident! If all had a mind to work, how much sooner Christ would win.

A charge to keep we have, v. 29. Twelve priests and ten laymen had weighed out to them the silver and the gold and the treasures with a charge to watch and keep until the journey to Jerusalem was accomplished. Each boy and girl of to-day has a charge to keep. "As a lisping child, little Frances Willard learned the mighty first chapter of St. John's gospel from her mother's lips. Then came the rocking chair lullaby in her father's deep tones:

'A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age
My calling to fulfil;
Oh, may it all my powers engage
To do my master's will."

Life is one great adventure, v. 31. These people went out upon a strange path beset with many dangers. Professor Law in a great sermon on "He went out not knowing whither he went," quotes thus from General Gordon: "England was never made by her statesmen; England was made by her adventurers." Not by those who hug closely the beaten track, but by those who blaze new paths are the new worlds discovered.

"Are there not, Festus, are there not, dear Michal

Two points in the adventure of the diver
One—when, a beggar, he prepares to plunge,
One—where, a prince he rises with his
pearl?"

God will take care of you (Golden Text). One time a little chap was obliged to leave the old home for another country. The change was unwelcome and doubtful. Every-

body felt sad about it, but as the family drove together to the station in a cab, the little fellow looked out and turning abruptly to his mother cried, "Why, God's sky is going all the way along with us." That boy spoke better than he knew.

As individuals going out upon life's hidden journey, we can say:

"Within thy circling power I stand;
On every side I find thy hand;
Awake, asleep, at home, abroad,
I am surrounded still with God."

Or, as a nation and empire faring forth uncertainly:

"God of our fathers, known of old,
Lord of our far-flung battle line,
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine.
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget."

THE LESSON GRADED

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

For Teachers of Bible Classes

It seems clear both from Neh., ch. 1, and also from the reforms which Ezra introduced that the religious life of the Jewish colony in Jerusalem was not very good. The pressure of the pagan environment and adverse agricultural conditions (compare *riaggai*) had been too much for many of them; and so there had been a distinct lowering of spirituality. The Babylonian Jews were alarmed at the situation and sent Ezra to effect a revival. What were Ezra's qualifications for the task? How did later Judaism look upon his work? Let us remember that the same influences which were operating against the spiritual life of Jerusalem operate in our own day.

1. *God in the enterprise.* Read Mark 2:19. Ezra was seeking at the beginning of his enterprise: (a) harmony with God's will; (b) help for the journey. He believed that the enterprise was wholly in line with God's will. But he was not satisfied unless he had God's presence and power with him in accomplishing it. Evidently he believed that men might fail in religious work if they lacked

fellowship with God. The journey was dangerous, but he felt that it would be a betrayal of his faith in God's power to apply to the Persians for a guard. We are impressed by his calm faith in God's interest in the schemes of the little company. In our age, we are in danger of believing that all of our activities are of little concern to God.

"What is it all but the murmur of gnats
In the gleam of a million million suns?"

We need to remember that God makes gnats as well as suns. (See Ps. 147:4; Matt. 10:30; Luke 12:6.) No life, no plan is outside of his interest. There is power and a reservoir of love for every life that will lay claim to God.

2. *Helpers.* Though Ezra was a man of faith, he was not a fanatic. He was possessed of practical ability. He sought to associate others with him in the work. He believed in *organization*, and in *business methods*. He also saw that his helpers were *men of holiness*. And all were to see that there was *no waste* of treasure.

3. *Answered prayer.* How long was Ezra on the journey? (Ch. 7:9.) "The hand of God was upon us and he delivered us from the enemy." Can we expect all prayers to

be answered thus? Does Luke 18:1-8 shed light on the problem? What is prayer? "Adoniram Judson prayed for entrance into India; he was compelled to go to Burmah. He prayed for his wife's life, and buried both her and his two children. He prayed for release from the king of Ava's prison, and had lain there months chained and miserable. Yet at the close of his life he said, 'I never prayed sincerely and earnestly for anything but it came; at some time—no matter at how distant a day—some how, in some shape—probably the last I should have devised—it came.'" (Compare Phil. 4:19.)

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Who was Ezra? Bring out that the word "scribe" has a large meaning in this connection, when applied to a man like Ezra, who was an inspired interpreter of God's Word, and a religious patriot, who longed in exile to do something to improve the trying condition of his countrymen in Palestine. What did he propose to do, and what was necessary to the success of his undertaking? Bring out that he readily obtained permission from the king to carry out his plans, and vast sums of money which he needed were provided. Encourage the class to picture the little band of exiles, numbering about 2,000, with Ezra at their head, assembled at the river of Ahava, near Babylon, ready to start on their long, perilous journey over the waste, howling wilderness to their own land, so dear to them as the homeland of their fathers, and the Holy Land of their God.

1. *A Fast Proclaimed*, vs. 21-23. Why did Ezra not ask the king, who was so favorably disposed toward the expedition, for a military escort? What help did he seek? Ezra determined to face the difficult way relying wholly upon the King of kings, rather than upon the king of Persia. How long did the religious services preparatory to the journey last? These services brought the happy conviction that God had heard their cry for help. Is it always wise to follow the example of Ezra in cases of this kind? Bring out that it is often wise for us to avail ourselves of all the earthly help within our reach, realizing that this is one of God's ways of ministering unto us. In times of sickness,

for example, it is fool-hardy for us to do nothing for ourselves. John Wesley tells that on one occasion he was cured by sulphur and supplication. But point out that there are times in life when we do not know what to do. All we can do then is to cast ourselves upon the mercy of our God.

2. *Treasurers Appointed*, vs. 24-30. Show that Ezra was a practical business man as well as an inspired teacher and zealous patriot. He made sure that the vast treasure of the expedition should be honestly accounted for. He knew well that slipshod methods of business lead to dishonesty. Emphasize the solemn way in which Ezra sought to impress upon those who were to guard the treasure, the importance of their task.

3. *A Prosperous Journey*, vs. 31, 32. How long did it take the returning exiles to reach Jerusalem? To whom is credit given for this prosperous journey? The robbers of the desert could do nothing to harm the returning exiles when God was with them. We need never fear what man can do while we are dwelling in the secret place of the Most High.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The principal interest in to-day's lesson for the boys and girls centres in vs. 22, 23, 31. The scholars will remember something of the dangers of the journey from Babylon to Jerusalem,—the wild animals, the wilder tribes, the ambushes, the attacks by day or night. Caravans guarded by soldiers or armed men often found it a dangerous passage. Yet Ezra and his 1,800 companions, with the silver and gold and precious vessels, made the three months' journey in safety. They depended only upon the protection of Jehovah. They had fasted and prayed; they put their faith to the test; and God delivered them out of the hands of their enemies. Modern missionary enterprises puts our faith to the test; and missionary biographies contain many instances of God's protection accorded to his servants. Any such story would serve as a fitting introduction to the lesson.

1. Develop a picture of Ezra's life in Babylon. He was of a priestly family; but his work was chiefly that of a scribe,—not a mere copyist, but a diligent student of the

law." Have the scholars imagine the growing desire in Ezra's heart to return to Jerusalem as he received messengers telling of the life of the returned exiles, and of worship in the Lord's temple. So strong did this desire become that he went to the king himself to secure permission for the return.

2. The scholars will describe Ezra's visit to the king. What was the king's name? What argument would Ezra use? How would he prove from the history of his people the declaration of ch. 8 : 22? What edict did the king issue? (Ch. 7 : 12-26.) Draw attention to the wide and important powers conferred upon Ezra. He must have been a man already known to the king, of proven loyalty and integrity.

3. Bring out the preparations for the return. The careful division of the money, the preparation for food and water and means of transportation were similar to those for

any caravan. But Ezra was ashamed to ask for soldiers for protection. He had three choices : (a) to abandon the expedition ; (b) to ask for protection ; (c) to go ahead trusting in God. Either of the first two would have discredited Jehovah in the eyes of the heathen Babylonians, and himself before his own conscience. He chose his course ; he placed the issue with God. No record is given of the journey, except that there were enemies and those who lay in wait to destroy them.

4. The result of Ezra's faith. The scholars will tell you it was the same as it always had been when men such as Abraham, or Joseph or Daniel, or Daniel's friends trusted God perfectly. The hand of their God was upon them, and they received protection. These two things go together : faith in God, and a life full of courage. Help the boys and girls to realize that this lesson, and the words of Deut. 4 : 31 are true to-day for them.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

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

Something to Look Up

1. Find the proverb which says that a "just weight is a delight" to the Lord.
2. "God loveth a cheerful giver." Where are the words found ?

ANSWERS, Lesson III.—(1) 1 Cor. 3 : 16.

(2) John 4 : 24.

For Discussion

1. Is there any antagonism between strong faith and good business methods ?
2. Does prayer for protection ward off accidents ?

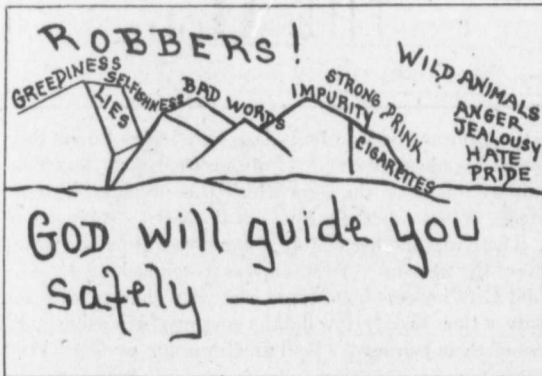
Prove from Scripture

That freewill gifts please God.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

A Look Forward—We see God teaching his people that he guides them.

Lesson Thought—Teach the children to take God as their guide.



Approach to the Lesson—"A guide" suggests so many delightful things,—from "a guide" in the snow-capped mountains, or the great St. Bernard dog "guides," or "a guide" through some beautiful building, or to some other place of interest, down to "a guide" in that well-known game "follow the leader." Anecdotes about any of these may be used to introduce the lesson.

What does a guide do for a traveler? Shows him the way, goes before him and points out

the safe path ; but a guide is of no use to us unless we follow him.

Lesson—Our lesson tells us how God guided his people home to their own land. Recall last lesson. For a time all went well enough with those people in Jerusalem, but their old home was not what it used to be. The walls of Jerusalem were not rebuilt. The temple services were not so well attended. The people did not trust God enough. Their leader Zerrubbabel died. They forgot God's laws. But their great guide was not forgetting them.

Ezra—God put it into the heart of the scribe named Ezra, who had studied God's laws, to go back to Jerusalem to teach his people God's laws and to help them all he could, ch. 7.

Picture Ezra talking with the king of Persia. He gives Ezra leave to go. Tell of the costly gifts the king gives Ezra for the temple. He also gave him a letter to give to the king's officers whom he would meet on his journey. (Show letter.) These letters told the king's officers to do whatever Ezra asked them to do to help him on his journey, ch. 7 : 11-26.

Departing for the Journey—Tell Ezra's words of thanks, ch. 7 : 27-28. Picture the scene beside the river Ahava as the people

pray to God to be their guide on the long, dangerous journey. Tell ch. 8 : 24-30.

Dangers—Great dangers were to be met,—robber bands, wild animals, rough roads. But God's hand guided and kept them from all dangers (ch. 8 : 13) and they reached Jerusalem in safety.

This journey may be acted by some of the children, or accompanying illustration may be used. Here are the people kneeling in prayer. Now they have started on their journey. See, there are robbers lurking behind those trees (chairs) ready to waylay them and steal their treasures, and there are wild animals here and there which may pounce out upon them and kill them. But God kept all these away from the people who had prayed to him. At last they all reached Jerusalem safely, waving their arms and praising God for guiding them through dangers.

There are "robbers" that meet little people every day. Behind these rocks we'll print the names of some robbers that would steal our *good character*. And here are some wild animals (anger, jealousy, etc.) that would kill our *good thoughts* if God did not keep them away from us.

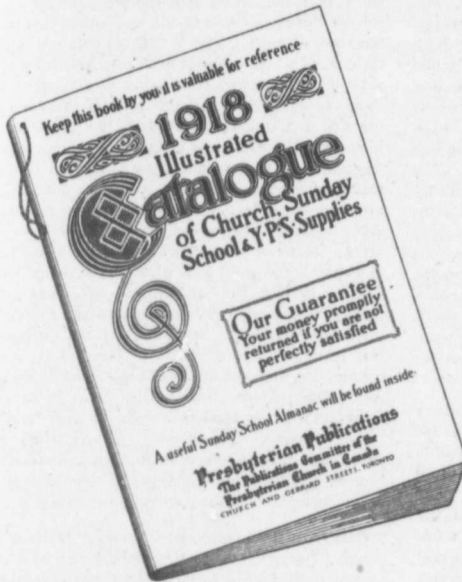
What the Lesson Teaches Me—God Is My GUIDE.

FROM THE PLATFORM

THE PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE AND THE GUIDANCE OF THE GOD

Before the returning exiles began their journey back to Jerusalem, Ezra insisted upon their making some sort of preparation for what lay ahead of them. Print on the board, THE PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE. Draw out by questions the form which this preparation took. One important feature of it was the fast. What was the purpose of the fast? Have one of the classes read in concert vs. 21-23. There was another feature of the preparation which was especially practical,—the weighing out of the treasure. To whom was it weighed out? Why was it weighed out? In what way did Ezra impress upon those who were charged with the keeping of the treasure the sacred nature of their task? How did the journey of the exiles end? To what did they attribute the success of their journey? To THE GUIDANCE OF GOD (Print as above, adding the word AND).

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THE BOOK PAGE

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Confederation and Its Leaders (McClelland, Goodchild and Stewart, Toronto, 333 pages, \$3.00) is a valuable book, by a reliable and vivid writer, Mr. M. O. Hammond, who writes from fulness of knowledge, and with the background, if one may so say, of daily present-day touch with Canadian politics and public affairs. As the name would indicate, the book is a blending of history and biography. The history is tolerably familiar. The biographical element, each of the great Confederation leaders being taken up one by one, is particularly fresh and interesting. The author's characterizations of the men is markedly individualistic. They were a notable group, and without sparing their faults and weaknesses, each man is shown for what he was at his best. Among the various volumes which the jubilee of Confederation has brought forth this of Mr. Hammond is worthy of a high place. It is especially timely now. The deadlock, out of which the Fathers of Confederation found a way for the country, to larger and better things, has its lessons for Canada in its present serious crisis in public opinion.

Anne's House of Dreams, by L. M. Montgomery (McClelland, Goodchild and Stewart, Toronto, 346 pages, \$1.50 net), a tale of "Anne's" early married life with Dr. Gilbert Blythe, adds some new and interesting characters to those of the author's former books. Outstanding amongst these are "Captain Jim" Boyd, the keeper of the lighthouse at Four Winds Harbor, a follower of the sea all his life and as true and gentle a soul as ever lived, the man-hating Miss Cornelia Bryant, whose sharp sayings add spice to the story, but whose heart is of the kindest, and the beautiful Leslie Moore, who, after many storms, comes at last to a safe and happy haven. The new "Anne" book completely measures up to, if, indeed, it does not surpass the high standard of its predecessors. It is a good, wholesome tale of the romance, pathos and humor of life in a sea coast community on the "Island," as our people down by the sea call the beautiful little province lying in the bosom of the Atlantic. **The Interlopers**, by Julie M. Lippman, author of *Martha-by-the-Day*, *The Governess*, etc. (same publishers, 325 pages, \$1.25 net), is an excellent story of a high-spirited, but generous-hearted school girl, who bitterly resents her mother's second marriage. Her rebelliousness leads to many adventures, some tragic and others ludicrous; but at last she comes into the happiest relations with her new father and sister.

Alan Sullivan, an engineer by profession, has come to be recognized as one of the fine band of present-day Canadian story writers. He writes in an unadorned, straightaway style, and reaches the heart of things. **The Inner Door** (S. B. Gundy, Toronto, 388 pages, \$1.35 net) deals with the labor question and factory conditions, and the high lights of the contrasts between employer and employees. A poignant love story is woven into the texture of the book. In the midst of a great strike, the hero of the story, of the employer class,

who had become a workman when his assets were suddenly wiped out, works out his own salvation and finds the woman he loves and needs.

Britain's Civilian Volunteers, by Thekla Bowser (McClelland, Goodchild and Stewart, 236 pages, \$1.50), in reality treats of but one phase of civilian volunteer work. This was first instituted a few years prior to the War in connection with the formation of the Territorial forces and like them, was intended originally for home defence. The V.A.D. (Voluntary Aid Detachment), which includes both men and women, consists of civilians who voluntarily give their time and means to train and make other preparations for attending sick and wounded. At first, like the Territorial forces, it received a great deal of ridicule, but since the beginning of War it has been found an invaluable means of meeting the problem of the wounded. Its members have been enabled to go into hospitals as subordinates to the trained medical supervisors of the army. Many of them have been given full standing in hospitals and in the field work of the Army Medical Corps. Besides, the organization has made possible many arrangements, such as the turning of homes and public buildings into hospitals and the providing of rest stations. The members of the V.A.D. work in conjunction with the St. John Ambulance Brigade and Association and the British Red Cross. The author reiterates with emphasis that there has been no friction between these various groups. We are taken by her on a round through hospitals in England, Ireland and France, and catch some glimpse of the amazing work that is being done in the restoration of wounded.

Carry On, by Lieutenant Coningsby Dawson (S. B. Gundy, Toronto, 133 pages, \$1.00), is a series of letters written from the Somme battle front to the home circle. They were never intended for print, but Lieutenant's Dawson's father wisely gathered them into a book because of their comfort and inspiration for all those who have dear ones at the front. Dawson, a brilliant graduate of Oxford University, the son of a Congregational minister, came with his family to United States some ten or twelve years ago, where he entered upon a literary career in which he was just beginning to win fame when the War broke out. He applied at Ottawa for a commission which he secured after a course at the Kingston Military College and at Petawawa. His two younger brothers, who were running a fruit farm in British Columbia, rented it to Chinamen and enlisted with the Motor Boat Patrol. In these intimate letters we meet with a quaint superstition, a profound faith, a gallant chivalry, a self-sacrificing endeavor, and a love for home and family that reveal to us the innermost thoughts and feelings of one of our finest officers. There is a rare literary grace about the style.

In **The Triflers**, by Frederick Orin Bartlett, author of *The Wall Street Girl* (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York, Thomas Allen, Toronto, 317 pages, 7 Illustrations, \$1.40 net), Monte Covington, a Harvard man, who, for ten years after his graduation, had succeeded in amusing himself by traveling from one scene of pleasure and sport to another, finds himself, at thirty-two in Paris, with a strange feeling of dissatisfaction and loneliness. In this state of mind he

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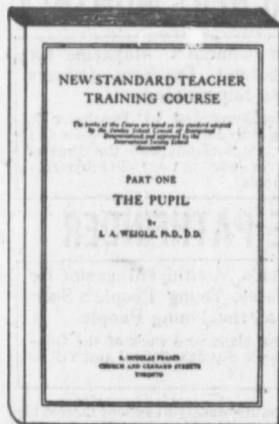
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A capital volume of Five-Minute Sermons to Children, forty-eight in number, is **The Soul of a Child**, by Stuart Nye Hutchison (Fleming H. Revell Company, Toronto and New York, 191 pages, \$1.00 net). The themes are interesting and suitable, and the treatment of them is full of suggestion to those who are really tackling the difficult but fascinating task of preaching to children. From Revell comes also **Studies in the New Testament**, by A. T. Robertson, A.M., D.D., LL.D., professor in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. This volume of 272 pages (price, 50c. net) is described in the sub-title as **A Handbook for Bible Classes in Sunday Schools, for Teacher Training Work, for use in Secondary Schools, High Schools and Colleges, and is admirably adapted to its purpose.**

Recreation and the Church, by Herbert Wright Gates (The University of Chicago Press, 185 pages,



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\$1.00). Mr. Gates is the director of religious education in Brick Church, Rochester, New York. There he has had an opportunity to put into practice the ideas of which he has made an extensive study and which he now brings into print. He is one of those who believe that the church has a magnificent opportunity in this branch of service. His treatment of the whole problem is forceful, sane and thorough. There are two sorts of people for whom the author has little respect. One is that class which does not see the great harm that may be done the boy and girl if suitable recreation is not provided and which does not realize what an opportunity recreational activity affords to train the young for Christian citizenship. The other class, which in like manner receives his condemnation, is that which, making some profession of providing such activity, proceeds with the matter in a slipshod, ignorant fashion. However, the author does not content himself with mere negative criticism. He not only indicates the religious educational value of play and recreation, but he gives useful hints as to how church workers may proceed to supply such a need. Suggestions are given whereby the sort of recreation needed by any particular community may be discerned and whereby the community may be organized to supply such a need. Some typical church programmes and a chapter upon equipments are also given. All who are interested in this important form of work are conscious from time to time of a lack of knowledge regarding suitable games, plays, sports, entertainments and socials. One of the most useful features of the book

is a bibliography of 16 pages in which the author gives many books which will supply every such need of the leader in recreational activity.

A Garden in the Waste, by Campbell M. Macleroy, B.D., of Glasgow (The Sunday School Union, London, 117 pages, 75c.), consists of a series of 25 short addresses given by Mr. Macleroy while minister of Victoria Park Church, Patrick, to his young people. The title is the subject of the first address in which the author, after telling a tale about an indomitable Highlander who turned a portion of rugged and barren land into a veritable garden of Eden, proceeds to the thought that every youth and maiden may make a garden somewhere till "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." The author manifests a combination of two qualities not always conjoined. He not only has a wide knowledge of book learning and of foreign places and customs, but he knows some of the common everyday objects. For instance, his illustrations comprise not only the triumph of Theseus over the Minotaur of Crete, but also the Panama Canal, garden spiders and even teaspoons. The plan of the author is to start with a story or with an object in hand and, after giving some information that is fresh and interesting, he proceeds to draw, in telling fashion, some lessons of spiritual worth. The book will be found useful in supplying the ever increasing demand for talks and sermonettes for the young. The Sunday School teacher will find it a prolific source of fine and impressive illustrations with which to point a lesson.

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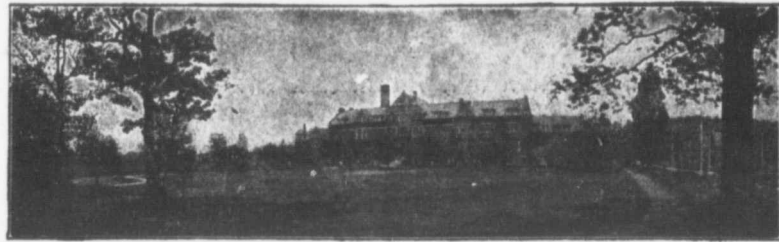
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