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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for

TEACHERS

AND

YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. XXX.]

APRIL, 1896.

[No. 4.

Easter.

BY JOSEPH RUSSELL TAYLOR.

THERE comes one knocking on t' a stone
That shuts you down in gloom :
Awake, dead heart, like Lazarus,
Come from your wintry tomb ;
The robins pipe about the fields,
The spring is all abloom.

The snow of grief, the wind of sighs,
The hoar frost of regret, —
They melt, till like the grass your cheeks
With dew of tears are wet
And sparkle while the sparrow trills
His tinkling trioleit.

The blood-root from its leafy grave
Has risen even as you ;
The wood-slopes are set daintily
With violets glimmering blue,
And crow'-foot shakes, and adder-tongue,
Whene'er the winds come through.

Then leave that graveyard of the heart
Hollow where you have lain ;
The echoes to the Easter bells
Drop like a golden rain :
And lo, in every crocus-cup
The Christ is risen again.

New Dictionary of the Bible.

MESSERS. T. & T. CLARK, of Edinburgh, have in preparation a new "Dictionary of the Bible," under the editorship of the REV. JAMES HASTINGS, M.A., editor of the *Expository Times*, who is being assisted by specialists in the

oversight of the various departments of the work. The new dictionary will seek to cover the whole range of Bible knowledge, including biblical theology ; and as the articles have been entrusted in all cases to men, both in Europe and America, who have made special study of the subject in question, it may be expected with some confidence that it will supply the need which has been so long and so widely felt.

Among the writers of Old and New Testament articles are Professor Sanday, of Oxford, "Jesus Christ;" Professor Bruce, "Hebrews;" Professor A. B. Davidson, of Edinburgh, "Hosea, Jeremiah, Prophecy and Prophets of the Old Testament;" President Harper, of Chicago, "Minor Prophets;" Professor McCurdy, of Toronto "Semites;" Bishop Westcott, of Durham, "Revised Version."

The theological articles will chiefly be written by Professor Adams Brown, of New York; Professor Agar Beet, of Richmond, "Christology;" Professor Driver, of Oxford, "Law, Priests and Levites in Old Testament;" Professor Warfield, of Princeton, "Faith."

The geography of Palestine will be written chiefly by Colonel Conder, Sir C. W. Wilson, Sir Charles Warren, Professor Hull, Dr. Bliss, Dr. Selah Merrill, Dr. H. Clay Trumbull and Professor G. A. Smith; the history and geography of Assyria and Babylonia, by Professor Hommel, of Munich, Professor W. Max Muller, of Philadelphia, Dr. Sayce, of Oxford, Professor Price, of Chicago, and Mr. Pinches, of the British Museum; of Egypt, by Professor Flinders Petrie; and of Asia Minor, by Professor Ramaay. The natural history will be contributed by Dr. Post, of Beirut.

It is expected that the work will consist of four volumes, imperial 8vo, of about nine hundred pages each. The writers are now practically all engaged, and a large part of the first volume is in type.

OUR PUBLICATIONS.

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Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, APRIL, 1896.

What the School Can Do for the Home.

It can do very much. It can bring the home into living contact with the great truths of religion. Some of the homes, alas! whose children come to the school, are Christless homes, where the Bible is not read, where prayer is not offered, where God's holy day is not observed. But even such homes prize the Sunday-school. Even bad men wish their children to be good. They recognize that no means will so promote this end as the teaching of the Word of God in the Sunday-school. These teachings react upon the home. Very often the singing of the bairn's hymns learned in the school will awaken long dormant emotions in the hearts of the parents. They may themselves have wandered far from God and goodness, but the hymns sung by their children will quicken olden memories, which often stir the fount of tears, and not unfrequently lead the parents to salvation. So is fulfilled again the words of the Scriptures, "A little child shall lead them."

Even if the home is nominally Christian, the quickened interest of the children in the

Bible and its teachings will often awaken a responsive interest in the home. The dust-laden volume will be brought out. The great family Bible, with its pictures of the life of Jesus, will be opened, and parents and children alike will drink instruction and inspiration from its pages.

New ideals will be created. In humble homes the children will be better dressed to go to school. Personal cleanliness and neatness will take the place of grime and dirt. The aforesaid frouzy mother and unkempt father themselves will share this same moral contagion. They will spruce up a bit, and will be often led to the house of God. The lazy lounging or idle pleasure-seeking on the Sabbath will give place to more moral observance of the day of rest.

The home shares the improvement of the person. The bright books and papers from the school bring a gleam of gladness and light to the dull homes and sombre lives. Often the pictures are clipped from the papers and pasted on the wall. They create a sense of beauty before unknown. The visit of the teacher to inquire about the welfare of Johnnie or Mary will kindle in lonely hearts, pining under a sense of neglect, if not of imagined contempt, a feeling of brotherhood, and will lead the poor to feel that the Church is their friend and not their enemy, and that the Christ of Nazareth, whose words it teaches and whose example it practices, is the true Saviour of the workingman, and its holy Sabbath and the ordinances of its house his best heritage.

Even among the well-to-do households of our land, the school, with its winter's entertainments and summer's picnics, its Christmas *fete* and flower Sundays, becomes a social rallying ground, and leads to humanizing and Christianizing influences and acquaintanceships.

These are not far-fetched nor imaginary benefits. We saw a vital illustration of these at the great Sunday-school convention at St. Louis, Mo., three years ago. The Sunday-schools of the city marched in their thousands through the streets. Great triumphal arches and platforms were erected. Like a conquering army, with banners and music and flowers trooped the children—those too small to walk rode in vans and carriages. The schools of the poorest of the people, and of the coloured children, whose parents were born slaves, were cheered to the echo, and many a rough, hard hand furtively wiped a tear of sympathy from the eye.

The whole city seemed stirred by common joy. On two evenings the complete system of street illumination and electric lights with changing colours, created at a cost of a million dollars for great civic holidays, flashed their fires through miles of streets, and many special devices were created for this special occasion. The Sunday-school touched every home in the city. It was a demonstration of a new, strange

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power to enlist most loving sympathies, to instruct in the wisest and best of lore, to gladden the humblest home, to ennoble the lowliest of lives.

Book Notices.

Methodist Magazine and Review for March, 1896. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, \$2.00 a year; \$1.00 for six months; single number, 20 cents.

Of special and timely interest in this number are the illustrated articles on the "Red Cross Society and Its Work," on "Cuba," and on "Huxley," with portrait, and on "Recent Science," with engravings of Roentgen's Cathode photos. Of wide interest also are the splendidly illustrated articles on "Here and There in the Home Land," with a score of illustrations, and "A Recent Visit to Spain." "McGregor's Removal," by Douglas Hemmeon, is a touching Nova Scotian story. Generous instalments of "The Elder's Sin," and "The Story of Irish Methodism" are also given. Among other timely articles are a sketch and portrait of the late Dr. Jeffers, Dr. Carman's vigorous article on "Soui-Winning," and Chancellor Burwash's review of Salmond's great work on "Immortality." "The First Fifty Years of Methodism," by E. S. Orr, and "The Old-Time Sabbath in New England," by the Rev. J. S. Gilbert, A.M., will reveal that marked improvement has taken place. Rev. J. T. Pitcher, of Stanstead, Que., gives an able paper on "The Social Life in the Church." The departments of "The World's Progress," "Current Thought," "Popular Science," "Book Reviews," "Religious and Missionary Intelligence," are of more than ordinary interest. This popular magazine should be in every Methodist household. Book numbers can be supplied.

The Diary of a Japanese Convert. By KANZO UCHIMURA. Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Co. Tokyo, Japan: Keiseisha, Idzumocho, Kyobashiku. Methodist Book-Rooms: Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Price \$1.00.

This is a book of remarkable interest. The experiences of this young heathen's introduction to Christianity, his impressions of Christendom at a religious meeting in Japan, where "a tall man with a long beard shouted and howled, and pretty women sang all for nothing," and his subsequent impressions in New England College life are instructive. He became a sincere convert, and visited America for religious training. He reached college miserably clad, with only \$7 in his pocket and five volumes of Gibbon's "Rome" in his valise. He returned home with only 75 cents after a journey of 20,000 miles. His father, "the owner of a twelfth part of an acre upon this

spacious globe," and his beloved mother were overjoyed at his return. His criticisms of missionary methods are incisive and instructive.

The Spirit-filled Life. By the REV. JOHN MACNEIL, B.A., Evangelist. Introduction by REV. ANDREW MURRAY. Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Co. Methodist Book-Rooms: Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Price 75 cents.

The visit of the Rev. John MacNeil, the Glasgow railway porter who became a world-wide evangelist, to Canada will be long remembered. He has had a wonderful career in Australia, and writes here of the privileges of the sons of God. His book, he says, is for those only who possess the title of B.A., that is, Born Again from the King's college. It is on the privileges of Christians, not of unbelievers, he discourses. He shows them the greatness of the blessing which is employed in being filled with the Spirit.

Bible Study.

THE literary study of the Bible has assumed proportions that are gratifying to two distinct classes of people. Those who prize the Bible as the Word of God take heart at the return of large numbers to its study, even though that study may begin in what they regard as an inferior form; while those who prize it as literature as well as revelation, rejoice at seeing it take rank above the great classics of ancient and modern times. The book that will probably take precedence of all others as a guide and manual is "The Literary Study of the Bible," an account of the leading forms of literature represented in the sacred writings, intended for English readers, by Richard G. Moulton, M.A. (Camb.), Ph.D. (Penn.), Professor of Literature in English in the University of Chicago.

The body of the work is occupied with the classification of the sacred writings into such forms as Lyric, Epic, Prophetic, Philosophic, and the sub-divisions of these, the distinctions of which are obscured by the mode in which our Bibles are printed. Notable examples of each are analyzed.

The price of the book is \$2.00. The publishers are D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, who also publish Haskin's "Abridgment of the Bible," and Cook's "The Bible and English Prose Style."

THE Lord is risen indeed,
He is here for your love, for your need—
Not in the grave nor the sky,
But here where men live and die;
And true the word that was said,
"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"
—Gilder.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

SECOND QUARTER: STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE—CONTINUED.

A. D. 30.] **LESSON I. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.** [April 5.]**GOLDEN TEXT.** He is not here, but is risen. Luke 24. 6.**Authorized Version.****Luke 24. 1-12.** [*Commit to memory verses 6-8.*]
[Easter Lesson.]

1 Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Je'sus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Gal'i-lee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the sepulcher, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Ma'ry Mag-da-le'ne, and Jo-an'na, and Ma'ry the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

12 Then arose Pe'ter, and ran unto the sepulcher; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

Revised Version.

- 1 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the tomb, bringing the 2 spices which they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.
- 3 And they entered in, and found not the body 4 of the Lord Je'sus. And it came to pass, while they were perplexed thereabout, behold, two 5 men stood by them in dazzling apparel: and as they were affrighted, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why 6 seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake 7 unto you when he was yet in Gal'i-lee, saying that the Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and 8 the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, and returned from the tomb, and told all these things to the eleven, and to 10 all the rest. Now they were Ma'ry Mag-da-le'ne, and Jo-an'na, and Ma'ry the mother of James: and the other women with them told 11 these things unto the apostles. And these words appeared in their sight as idle talk; and 12 they disbelieved them. But Pe'ter arose, and ran unto the tomb; and stooping and looking in, he saeth the linen cloths by themselves; and he departed to his home, wondering at that which was come to pass.

TIME.—Sunday, April 9, A. D. 30. **PLACE.**

—The tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, in a garden at Golgotha (Calvary), just outside the wall of Jerusalem. **PARALLEL PASSAGES.**—Matt. 28. 1-15; Mark 16. 1-8; John 20. 1-18.

HOME READINGS.

- M. The Resurrection of Christ. Luke 24. 1-12.
 Tu. Appearance to Mary. John 20. 11-18.
 W. Testimony of witnesses. 1 Cor. 15. 1-11.
 Th. The pledge of future life. 1 Cor. 15. 12-22.
 F. Jesus crucified. John 19. 16-24.
 S. Vain human efforts. Matt. 27. 57-66.
 S. (Easter) "He is risen." Matt. 28. 1-15.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 311, New Canadian Hymnal.

"Christ, the Lord, is risen to-day,"
 Sons of men and angels say.

No. 309, New Canadian Hymnal.

Ring, ring the bells over ocean and shore.
 Jesus, the Risen, shall suffer no more.

No. 308, New Canadian Hymnal.

Low in the grave He lay,
 Jesus my Saviour.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.**1. The Sepulcher, v. 1-3.**

- At what hour did the Jewish Sabbath end?
 When did this visit to the sepulcher occur?
 Who were these women? (Compare Matt. 28. 1; Mark 16. 1; and John 20. 1, with verse 10 of this lesson. Read also Luke 23. 55, 56.)
 What proofs of love did they bring?
 Who had been engaged in the preliminary work of embalming the body of Jesus? (John 16. 39; Mark 15. 46.)

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Did this "sepulcher" differ from any ordinary tomb?

What anxious question did they ask by the way? (Mark 16, 3.)

How was the question answered?

Who had rolled away the stone? (Matt. 28, 2.)

What was missing from the tomb?

2. The Messengers, v. 4-8.

How were the women affected by their discovery?

Who suddenly appeared to them?

How did the sight affect the women?

What question did the visitors ask?

What did they say about Jesus? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

What saying were they bidden to recall?

3. The Disciples, v. 9-12.

To whom did the women tell their story?

What were the names of these women?

How did their story appear to the disciples?

What disciple went to prove the story?

What shows his eagerness?

What did Peter discover?

Who went with Peter on this errand? (John

20, 3, 4.)

What is the importance of the statement of verse 12 concerning "the linen clothes?" (See Matt. 28, 11-15.)

Practical Teachings.

What is there in this lesson that teaches—

1. Love to Christ?

2. Hope in the presence of death?

3. Faith in the word of God?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Verses 1-3.

1. When did the women first go to the sepulcher? For what were the spices meant?

2. How had the stone been rolled away?

3. Why did not Mary enter with the rest?

2. Verses 4-8.

4. What vision did the women see? What was the appearance of the angels?

5. Why should they not seek Jesus there?

6. Who first told of his resurrection? Why did the angel mention Galilee? Why did the angel quote Christ's prophecy that he would rise?

8. Had they at first understood this saying?

3. Verses 9-12.

9. How far was the sepulcher distant from the city?

10. Give the names of the women here mentioned. To what company did they belong?

11. How did the disciples receive their story?

12. What caused Peter to run so eagerly? Had any special message been sent to him? Why? Did he find any proof that the body had not been stolen? Did he quickly believe?

Teachings of the Lesson.

It is right for us to honor the bodies of our dead. Fear of dreaded difficulties is often groundless. Since Jesus rose every Christian's grave has an angel of hope in it. If we know of the risen Christ we ought to run and tell others of him. He is able to save us from death because he himself conquered death. The message borne by these women was the most joyous ever uttered in the world's history.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

On what day did Jesus die on the cross? **Friday.**

What had he told the disciples? **That he should rise the third day.**

When did some women go to his tomb?

What did they bring with them?

Why did they do this? **To show their love.**

What did they see as they came near?

Why had a stone been rolled before the door? (Matt. 27, 62-66.)

Why were the women troubled?

How had the tomb been opened? (Matt. 28, 1-4.)

What was the tomb like?

Whom did they find there?

What question did he ask?

What news did he tell?

What ought they to have remembered? **What Jesus had told them.**

What did the women hurry away to do?

Who went to the tomb to see for himself?

What does the resurrection mean to us?

Something to Remember.

The light of eternal life shines out of the grave. Jesus spoke to Mary; have you heard him speaking to you?

Jesus lives now to help us in all our little troubles.

LESSON OUTLINE.

BY J. L. HURLBUT.

The Morning of the Resurrection.

I. THE TIME.

1. Upon the first day of the week, v. 1.

When the Sabbath was past, Mark 16, 1.

In the Spirit on the Lord's day, Rev. 1, 10.

2. Very early in the morning, v. 1.

As it began to dawn, Matt. 28, 1.

When it was yet dark, John 20, 1.

II. THE VISITORS.

1. They came unto the sepulcher, v. 1.

Joanna, . . . and other women, v. 10.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, Matt. 28, 1.

2. Bringing the spices, v. 1.

Prepared spices and ointments, Luke 23, 56.

To anoint my body to the burying, Mark 14, 8.

3. *Found not the body.* v. 3.

There was a great earthquake. Matt. 28. 2.

Jesus was risen early. Mark 16. 9.

III. THE MESSENGERS.

1. *Two men... in shining garments.* v. 4.

Two angels in white. John 20. 12.

Are they not... ministering spirits? Heb.

1. 14.

2. *He is not here, but is risen.* v. 6.

Become the first fruits. 1 Cor. 15. 20.

A lively hope.... resurrection. 1 Peter 1. 3.

3. *Remember how he spake.* v. 6.

The third day he shall be raised. Matt. 17. 23.

I will go before you. Matt. 26. 32.

IV. THE DISCIPLES.

1. *Seemed... idle tales.* v. 11.

We were like them that dreamed. Psalm 126. 1.

Upbraided them with their unbelief. Mark 16. 14.

2. *Then arose Peter.* v. 12.

Went into the sepulcher. John 20. 6, 7.

Other disciples.... saw.... believed. John 20. 8.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

BY ROBERT R. DOHERTY.

General Statement.

We study this lesson to-day because this is Easter Sunday, and Easter, with the rest of Holy Week, is the one anniversary of the Church—the one date—which we certainly know to be correct. The Eas-ers of Christendom have been celebrated for thirty-three centuries in a succession as unbroken as that of Dominion Day through twenty-six years, only that Easter day is fixed by the lunar and not by the solar year, as astronomers would say; that is to say, it is dated by the full moons of the year, after the Hebrew method, rather than by the year's longest and shortest days, according to ancient and modern European fashion. Our Lord was crucified in that famous memorial week, the passover, which has been religiously kept by the Jews from an age long before men had learned to calculate time by the sun. It is this "lunar" method of calculation which makes Easter Sunday come in some years so much earlier than in others. Dr. Spence calls attention to five notable facts connected with the resurrection: 1. The holy women are the principal actors in all the circumstances connected with the tomb, but their assertions were not believed by the disciples. 2. When Paul (1 Cor. 15) sums up the great appearances of our Lord as the basis of our faith he makes no reference to Mary Magdalene or to the other women. 3. No evangelist describes the resurrection, for no earthly being was present, though Matthew announces some facts which may have accompanied the resurrection. 4. The risen Lord appeared only to his own. 5. But he showed himself not only to solitary individuals, but to companies (once to over five hundred brethren), at different hours of the day, in different localities. Confining ourselves now to our lesson, the order of the facts alluded to was probably as follows: Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James watched, with broken hearts, the burial of our Lord's body in Joseph's tomb, late in the afternoon of the day of crucifixion; this burial must have been hurried, for at nightfall the Sabbath began. They stayed at home during the twenty-four hours of the Sabbath—which, beginning with what we call Friday evening, ended on Saturday evening. On that evening all the shops were opened and business was resumed. These two sad women went to some shop and bought spices for the "embalment." But we are not to think of any such process of embalming as was pursued either by the ancient Egyptians in the making of mummies or by the modern "undertaker" when he seeks to prevent decay for a few weeks or months. The Jews applied to the body powders and oils of sweet and strong perfume, and sought, as we do with flowers, to hide with tokens of beauty the repulsiveness of physical death. After this purchase came the hours of night; then, at earliest dawn—say about four in the morning—they set out to make their way to the sepulcher, which they reached when the sun had risen (Mark 16. 2). It was what in our phraseology would be called the dawn of Sunday. One item more. It is always wise when studying this subject to keep in mind the ten or eleven appearances of our Lord after his resurrection. So, at the risk of being chargeable with repetition, we insert the list here: 1. To Mary Magdalene (John 20. 11-17; Mark 16. 9). 2. To the women returning from the sepulcher (Matt. 28. 9, 10). 3. To Peter (Luke 24. 34; 1 Cor. 15. 5). 4. To the disciples on the way to Emmaus (Luke 24. 13-25; referred to in Mark 16. 12, 13). 5. To ten disciples and others (Luke 24. 34-49; John 20. 19-23; Mark 16. 14). (These first five appearances were all on the day he arose from the dead.) 6. To the eleven apostles; the incredulity of Thomas removed (John 20. 26-29). 7. To apostles, five of whom are named, near the Lake of Galilee (John 21. 1-24). 8. To eleven apostles on a mountain in Galilee, generally regarded as being identical with the appearance to five hundred brethren mentioned in 1 Cor. 15. 6 (Matt. 28. 16-20; Mark 16. 14-18). 9. To James, the Lord's brother (1 Cor. 15. 7). 10. Immediately before the ascension (Luke 24. 50, 51; Mark 16. 19, 20; Acts 1. 6-9).

Verse 1. Upon the first day of the week.

Which was the day after the Jewish Sabbath, and was the same as our Sunday, only that it was a secular day. It began, like all Jewish days, not at midnight, as with us, but at sundown on what we would call the previous day, and lasted from evening to evening. (See "General Statement.")

Very early in the morning. Literally, at deep dawn. Let us conjecture that it was about four o'clock. **They came.** The women mentioned in Luke 23. 55 and 24. 10. **The sepulcher.** The rock-hewn tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. The company consisted of at least five. **The spices which they had prepared.** The bodies of the Hebrews were not embalmed like those of the Egyptians, but aromatic powders and fluid perfumes appear to have been used in laying out bodies of the dead for burial. Evidently these women did not suppose that the Lord would rise.

2. The stone. A door made circular like a millstone, and rolled in a groove in front of the doorway. This was, if it is fair to take the measurements of one or two such tombs familiar to modern oriental travelers, about three or four feet in height, and from two to three feet in breadth.

Rolled away. By whom? By an angel. For the sake of whom? For the sake of the disciples whose duty it was to be to inspect the empty tomb; not for the sake of the Lord, who is represented as rising in spite of "the stone, the watch, the seal." **The sepulcher.** The site of our Lord's burial, like the site of his crucifixion, is not certainly known, but we know that the tomb was in a garden close to Calvary, and that it was hewn out of the rock.

3. Entered in. Such sepulchers were divided into apartments. We may fancy the women in the outer apartment; the angels, who will presently speak to them, in the inner. **The Lord Jesus.** This is the first time in the New Testament that our Saviour is thus termed.

4. Much perplexed. "Utterly at a loss." **Two men.** Angels ordinarily appeared as young men in white clothing, and they are described just as the women saw them. **In shining garments.** Literally, flashing as with lightning. Matthew and Mark mention only one angel, but that is not by any means a contradiction of this report.

5. They were afraid. Alarmed at the loss of the body of their Master; alarmed, also, by messengers from the unseen world. **Bowed down their faces to the earth.** They made a profoundly humble salutation, as being in the presence of superiors. **Why seek ye the living among the dead?** Why seek ye Eternal Life among graveclothes and in a sepulcher? Neither in the grave nor in the dying institutions of Jewry was Christ henceforth to be found. The so-called discrepancies between the accounts of the gospels

are beautifully said by Dr. Lange to unite in the first of Easter harmonies, but these harmonies are not formed into a choral in unison, but into a four-voiced and very agitated, but inexpressibly beautiful, fugue. (1) *Men have a nobler destiny than the dark sepulcher.*

6. He is not here. According to Matt. 28. 6 they showed the empty niche in the sepulcher where our Lord's body had lain. **Remember how he spake unto you.** (See Matt. 17. 23; Luke 18. 33; John 11. 25.) They had not, however, forgotten what he said so much as failed to understand it. Until we spiritually grow up to God's words they are neglected. **When he was yet in Galilee.** Where he had spent so much of his public career. These women were all Galileans.

7. So many of our Lord's teachings were in parables and in symbolic language that it is not strange that even such words as those of this verse were not understood in their literal meaning. **Sinful men** probably stands here for Gentiles, who by the Jews were proverbially called sinners. (See Gal. 2. 15.)

8. Remembered his words. Recalled them and read a new meaning into them. (2) *Events are often God's interpreters.*

9. Returned from the sepulcher. To the city, probably by a walk of fifteen or twenty minutes across a little valley and through the city gate. **Unto the eleven, and to all the rest.** From the narrative in John it is probable that the Magdalene ran at once to John and Peter to tell them that the stone had been rolled away, and that she had not, therefore, seen the angels that first appeared. "The eleven" very naturally held together now. In the death of their Saviour the world had lost all joy and value for them. Their association with the Galilean Prophet had cut off many of their earlier friends, and now there was nothing left but to cling to each other.

10. Mary Magdalene. We know very little about this woman beyond the fact that, (1) Her surname indicates that she was a resident of the town of Magdala; (2) that out of her Jesus had cast seven demons; (3) that she became one of the most devoted followers of our Lord. The traditional belief that she was that "woman who was a sinner," who gave peculiarly pathetic evidence of her love for her Master, has been popular in all ages; although there is little to substantiate it. An argument might be made from the fact that in the ancient oriental world women of good character were not independent householders; but most scholars reject the tradition. **Joanna** is in another place (Luke 8. 3) identified as the wife of Herod's steward. **Mary** was the mother of James the Less, and is supposed to have been a sister of the mother of Jesus.

11. Idle tales. Nonsense. They believed

them not. It is pleasant to recall this; if these remarkable stories had been straightway believed, we might well doubt them.

12. Then arose Peter. "Then" should be "but." John was with him (see John 20. 3-10), but Peter as usual is the leading actor. He was ready to believe. **Ran.** This shows the inten-

sity of the moment. Join outran him. **Stooping down.** To look through the open doorway. Afterward he entered in (John 20. 6). **The linen clothes.** In which our Lord had been wrapped, as we incase our dead in a coffin. They were not garments, but linen bandages. **Wondering in himself.** Astounded.

CRITICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. First day of the week. Our Sunday. On that day, the "Lord's Day," the Saviour rose from the dead; on that day he appeared to his disciples while he remained on the earth; and on that day the Christian Church was formally established by the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. **Very early in the morning.** All the evangelists place the visit of the women in the gray of the morning. At that time of the year, the vernal equinox, day would break about four o'clock, hence the statement that the visit occurred very early. **They came.** The women referred to in verse 55, previous chapter. And they

2. Found the stone rolled away. It is surprising what an eye some commentators have for difficulties! Meyer, for instance, the "prince of exegetes," says this verse agrees as little with Mark 16. 4 as with the narrative of the rolling away of the stone in Matt. 28. 2. There is not the semblance of a difficulty in the narrative. Matthew says an angel rolled the stone away; Mark says that when the women looked at the door of the sepulcher they saw the stone had been rolled back; Luke says that they found the stone rolled away. Where can any discrepancy be found in these several statements?

3. And they entered in. The stone being removed, they went into the tomb, naturally looking for the body of their Lord. **And found not.** No mortal eye had witnessed in the recesses of the grave the return of the Lord Christ to his body. All that could have been seen would have been only a movement, and then—the Lord is risen!

4. Much perplexed. The rolling away of the stone and the disappearance of the body dumfounded them; they were, in the expressive Greek of Luke, "quite at a loss" what to think or what to do. **Two men.** These were angels (verse 23), but they are described according to their appearance. **In shining garments.** Dazzling white. About angelic appearances our thoughts linger, because we are ever yearning to know something of the other world; and the problem which lies at the base of all our thinking, and which we hope can be solved, is: Given an appearance of an angel to determine the nature and mode of life in heaven. But we cannot conclude anything certain concerning heaven from the appearance of angels, for the reason that we have no means of knowing that the appearance in which they are manifested is their constant,

"everyday" form. Mark says, however, that one of the angels looked like "a young man." He may have been, measured by the years of earth, a million years old, for in heaven they are ever young, since there is no decay. There are concentrated all life forces, and life there is eternal life.

5. Why seek ye the living among the dead? The words "the living," should be rendered "him that liveth," and may mean, he who has life in himself, as probably in Rev. 1. 18, but although Olshausen in a note, and others, take this view, there is nothing in the context or in the subject to fully warrant the opinion. According to the context, the idea, we think, is, Why seek ye him who is now alive and is not dead? The dead are in tombs, not the living.

6. He . . . is risen. Had been for some little time. The guard that had been terrified by the supernatural occurrences at the tomb had not returned; they are probably at this time relating the marvelous event to the Jewish leaders. **Remember.** The angels had intimate knowledge of what Jesus had said to call the women to remember what he had spoken concerning his resurrection. Either they were with him always, unseen by him as by others, or else this knowledge was imparted to them for this special visit of the holy women. The subject is very suggestive.

8. They remembered his words. Whose? The words of the Lord, spoken in Galilee. There is nothing psychologically improbable, as Meyer thinks, in this sudden remembrance, at the prompting of the angel, of the Lord's teaching concerning his resurrection. That discourse had occurred some time before, and since then there had nothing happened to recall the idea of resurrection. Those were days when the disciples lived years. They had found, moreover, that much thought was sometimes necessary to understand clearly and certainly the meaning of their divine Teacher; and revelations relating to his death and resurrection may have been regarded as only fit to be considered in the far future, and for that reason may have been ignored until the empty tomb and the prompting of the angel recalled vividly the predictions of Jesus in Galilee.

9. Told . . . unto the eleven. St. Luke is acquainted with the fate of Judas. The women relate what they had seen and heard to the apostles and to the disciples associated with them, **the rest.** **10.** In this verse some of the women are named.

Probably there were two companies. For Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James, see Matt. 27. 55; for Joanna, see Luke 8. 3. Also for clear view of the Marys in the gospels, see the remarkable little book on the subject by Bishop S. M. Merrill.

11. Their words . . . idle tales. Each one had perhaps something slightly different from another, according to the thought uppermost in her mind at the time and the impression made upon her. The apostles, anticipating the objections of modern critics because of variations in the accounts and because of the astounding fact they all agreed in, regarded the whole statement as silly talk, baseless nonsense.

12. Then arose Peter. So Thomas was not the only apostle that demanded proof of what he had heard concerning the resurrection of the Lord. Peter felt that something must have happened, and what that was could only be ascertained by personal investigation. John, also, was of the same belief, and he accompanied Peter (John 20. 6). **The linen clothes laid by themselves.** (See also John 20. 7.) What a display there was in this sepulcher of omnipotent power! There was no haste, no confusion; and He who rose in glory and in power over death did not throw off the garments of death and hurriedly escape from probable recapture. He was Lord of all, and knew all that was being done; and when the disciples looked into the place where the Lord had lain they saw "the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about his head not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." Here is deliberation; and that regard for order which puts at rest forever every skeptical theory that was ever invented.

Thoughts for Young People.

Lessons from the Resurrection.

1. *The resurrection stands for all that is supernatural in Christianity, and if doubt be thrown upon it the whole Gospel narrative is shaken.*
2. *The resurrection is the perfect fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy, and is itself the most glorious of prophecies.* It points to the enthronement of Jesus on high as omnipotent Judge, and foretells our own life after death.
3. *The resurrection proves the divinity of Jesus.* All his indignities and sufferings he submitted to voluntarily. He "gave himself up" to the death of the cross that he might break the bands of death and take from the grave its sting.
4. *The resurrection is the type of conversion.* Giving life to a dead soul is an act even greater than restoring life to a dead body. But the divine power that performs one prophesies the other, and we have all seen the prophecy fulfilled.
5. *The Lord's Day was set for the commemoration of his resurrection.* Let us remember this every

recurring Sabbath, for this is the central fact of all history.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

BY J. T. GRACEY, D. D.

The doctrine of the resurrection has literally no counterpart in any of the religions of the Orient, except among Moslems, who borrowed it from the corrupt churches. The Koran teaches the doctrine, "After we have become bones and dust, shall we surely be raised a new creature? Answer. Be ye stones or iron or some creature more improbable in your opinions to be raised to life. . . . Who shall restore us to life? Answer. He who created you the first time" (Koran, chap. 17).

The striking contrast between the sentiment of the heathen on the death of friends with those of the Christians is abundantly illustrated in the inscriptions on the tombs in the catacombs. Some of the pagan readings are: "We are deceived by our vows, misled by time, and death derides our cares; anxious life is naught;" "Here lies, destroyed by fate, a son who was my only reason for living;" "Of all their wealth, they possess only this tomb;" "To a very sweet child whom the angry gods gave to eternal sleep."

Very different is the text on tombs, side by side with these pagan tombs, of those who believed that Christ was risen from the dead: "Not lost, but gone before;" "He went to God;" "Thou livest in the glory of God and in the peace of Christ our Lord;" "Refrain from tears, my sweet daughters and husband, and believe it is forbidden to weep for one who lives in Christ;" "Here rests my flesh; but, at the last day, through Christ, I believe it will be raised from the dead;" "The earth has the body, celestial realms the soul."

Loving and tender care for the dead is not confined to any nation. Even the Bedouin of the desert places a rough stone at the head of the grave, though there may be no inscription upon it. The better class erect a stone with a few words on it. Greeks and Romans burned their dead, but tenderly collected the ashes or unburned bones in vases, with charcoal ashes. Porter, in *Giant Cities*, speaks of ancient cities containing numerous excavations in rocks, in form of vaults, and rooms with side shelves for the bodies of the dead, the entrance being closed with a solid door cut from the same rocks. Most of these chambers of the dead about Jerusalem consist of a single room, or vault. The closing by a great roller or millstone, according to Van Lennep, of which pictures are seen, was not in use in Palestine at the period when Jesus was buried, but a great stone door on hinges, which rested in sockets cut out of the rock of the cavern. Many of these doors as found now have lost their hinges, broken by persons to rife the tombs. It was this kind of stone door which

admitted of being "sealed," a custom observed both in Egypt and Palestine. Seals stamped on clay, which had been used in this way, are often found in Egypt. It is not common now to use seals for this purpose in Turkey since the custom has obtained of burial in the earth.

It was prophesied of the Messiah that he should lie "with the rich" in his death, and the Scripture explains how he was placed in a tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathea. It is only the rich who can now afford a tomb in Palestine, numerous as are the caverns which might be utilized for that purpose. The common usage is to lay the dead in the ground and cover with earth, placing a gravestone over the place; sometimes in a coffin or box of burned clay, with a lid. The form of these simple monuments has varied considerably in different periods. It is the custom in most Mohammedan cemeteries to cut a niche in the gravestone, in which a small earthen saucer, with oil and wick, are placed and lighted at night. In Armenia, as in Persia, the gravestone is sometimes cut in the form of some animal; over a shepherd the relief may be of a sheep, over a soldier a lion, or the instruments of the man's trade may be represented on a flat stone only.

Ever since the captivity the Jews have esteemed it a great good to be buried in or near Jerusalem, because of the superstitious notion that persons interred here, and they alone, were to reign with the Messiah when he should come. The Greek Christians bury their dead in their churchyards, removing the remains after a time to make room for the bodies of the newly dead, as the number of possible graves in a churchyard is necessarily limited. (See Van Lennep's *Bible Lands*, pages 578-588; Geikie's *Holy Land and the Bible*.)

The spices which were brought to use in the care of the body of Jesus were not to embalm it. That process was far more complicated, and intended to preserve the body as nearly as possible as it was at the time of death, the viscera and brain being removed. The Hebrews employed aromatic spices, but not calculated to delay the processes of decay. Jesus was wrapped in linen cloths, with a "mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight, . . . as the manner of the Jews is to bury" (John 19. 39, 40).

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

Verses 1 and 2. On the resurrection morning the disciples sat in their rooms and put their heads down between their knees, and saw nothing but a future of impenetrable, horrible darkness. Notwithstanding the difficulties, the women went straight to the sepulcher, bearing their spices, considering the difficulties, expecting nothing fantastic, in simplicity doing all that they could. The apostle says that "faith works by love." Love is

the highest philosophy. Love is the eyes of faith. Be not faithless, and then you will not be loveless nor blind. How many a thing which might have issued in a grand success, if men had had the courage to go a few steps forward, have failed because they said: "The stone is very great." It must be so in our religious life. We must go out to the sepulcher. We must go forward as far as we can in the discharge of every duty, and stop only when we can go no farther. We must go toward Jesus. Instead of laying our aching heads against a hard, cold stone, we may clasp our risen Lord.—*Rev. Dr. Deems.*

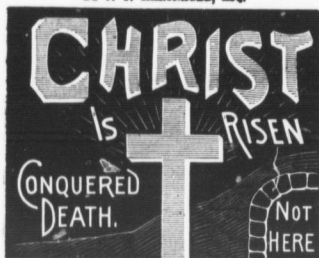
Verses 3-12. The death of Jesus Christ left his disciples utterly disheartened. They abandoned their faith in him as the expected Messiah. They began to scatter, and some resumed their abandoned fishing occupation. And yet in a quarter of a century after his death his Church was winning converts to his Messiahship, not only throughout Palestine, but throughout the Roman empire. The Christians of Rome had become, according to Livy, "a very great multitude." And in three centuries after the resurrection Christianity had become the dominant religion of the Roman world. This victory of Christianity was not due to the beauty of its ethical precepts, which do not differ materially from those by the best pagan moralists; nor to the death or even the character of Christ, whose character was but little comprehended even by his own half-converted followers, and whose death was a stumbling-block to both Jew and pagan. It was due to faith in his resurrection. Thus the Christian Church is a witness. Another witness is the change of the Jewish rest day from the seventh to the first day of the week. Let anyone imagine the difficulty which would be encountered in changing the Fourth of July to the fifth of July. But this Sabbath change was made quietly, almost unconsciously, simply because the Christians could neither be joyful on the day of Christ's entombment, nor silent on the day of his resurrection.—*Lyman Abbott.*

Christ triumphed not only over death, but over misery, sin, sorrow, and despair. For, if there be a living God, nothing is too good to believe about man nor to hope for in his future. When we turn to the Easter dawn, our thought of God becomes infinitely trustful and loving. Richter writes that he once dreamed that he was lost in the limitless universe when "there came sailing onward from the depth, through the galaxies of stars, a dark globe along the sea of light; and a human form as a child stood upon it. At last I recognized our earth before me, and on it the child Jesus, and he looked upon me with a light so bright and gentle and loving that I awoke for love and joy." That awakening out of love and faith into love and joy is the perpetual promise of the Easter dawn.—*The Outlook.*

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Blackboard.

BY J. T. HARTNAGEL, ESQ.



BY GEORGE W. PEASE, ESQ.

DEATH'S DEFEAT.

JESUS

IN DEATH'S DOMAIN | BREAKS the BONDS,

RISES to REIGN.

THE FIRST FRUITS OF THEM THAT SLEPT.

A GLORIOUS DAWN.

DARKNESS AND DEATH DISAPPEAR.

JESUS

THE

LIGHT OF THE WORLD RISEN FOREVER.

LOOK UP AND REJOICE.

"And their eyes were opened, and they knew him."

Teachers' Meeting.

Draw from class date and place. (Sabbath had ended with the close of the previous day.).... Ask for the reading of texts referred to in our "Notes," recording ten appearances of our Lord after the resurrection.... Word-picture: "The deep dawn;" the garden; the sealed sepulcher; the soldiers; the disciples; the earthquake; the rising Saviour.... Consequent transfer of the Sabbath from the day we call Saturday to the day we call Sunday.... The

order of events cannot be given positively. Show the apparent discrepancy of the Gospel narratives. Select your own from the various harmonies of commentators, and without dogmatism or discussion proceed with the lesson on that basis.... The women; read the accounts and give their names. Aspects in which Christ is here presented: (1) A beloved Saviour; (2) A crucified Saviour; (3) A living Saviour; (4) A prophetic Saviour.... How does the resurrection affect us: (1) Our creed; (2) Our faith; (3) Our hope; (4) Our personal life? *Illustrative Notes*: 1. *The tomb*. A sealed sepulcher in the garden; the world to-day if Jesus had remained where Joseph placed him. 2. *The visit*. The traits of these women; the origin of Sunday. 3. *The door*. Expected it to be shut; found it open; a type of death which has "lost its sting;" recount how that door came to be open. 4. *The message*. See aspects of Christ as given above. 5. *The report*. How it was received; attitude of disciples a proof of reality of resurrection. 6. *Examples in this lesson*: (a) Of love; (b) Of fidelity; (c) Of courage; (d) Of faith.

Before the Class.

Our object in teaching to-day's lesson is (a) to cause the class to realize this portion of the resurrection story; (b) to deepen their faith in the historical reality of the resurrection; (c) to lift their eyes to a risen Christ.

Why did the Lesson Committee skip over eleven chapters of Luke's gospel to give us this resurrection lesson to-day? Yes; but what makes to-day Easter Sunday? Who made the rule by which to-day happens to be Easter? See General Statement, page 205; it is part of the old Hebrew lunar calendar, made use of by Moses. Easter is simply the Sunday after the passover Sabbath.

Let us go back to that dreadful Friday afternoon. After the soldiers had proved that Jesus was dead, Joseph of Arimathea hurried into the city to get a permit from Pilate to bury the body. He returned just in time to take down the body, wrap it in a linen cloth, and lay it in his new tomb. Why did they stop work at sundown? What a dreary, desolate Sabbath it must have been for the disciples and the women! So Jesus was not the Messiah, for all his wonderful words and deeds. No use now for Salome to wonder who would get those chief places; there was to be no kingdom at all. What did those two men say on the way to Emmaus? How strange that they did not themselves recall his own predictions!

But deeper far than their disappointment was their love. If they could not have him with them, still, these women thought, they could go and weep—where? Yes, and there was something to do. They must finish the interrupted preparation of his body—if only they could get that big stone

rolled away. So, just at daybreak, after the long, long Sabbath was over, they start with their spices for the tomb. Who were these women? What prompted Mary Magdalene to be the leader of the party?

But see! the stone is rolled away. Something strange has been happening; hurry! Alas, the tomb is empty! Was it not enough to torture his life away, but they must come and disturb his poor body? And yet—and yet—he raised Lazarus; could it be possible? No wonder it says they were perplexed, with such alternate hopes and fears, and nobody to explain the mystery.

Suddenly, in answer to their questions, the angels appeared. What did the angels say? It seems far too good to be true. No disappointment, no disaster, no confidence misplaced; Jesus dead and gone, but yet alive somewhere, and their true friend still! This, then, must have been what he meant; they begin to remember one and another of his sayings. So his death, it seems, was only part of his plan. And we may still hope to see him. And there is to be a kingdom of heaven in spite of Pilate and the Jews. Hosanna! Let us go and tell the disciples.

Our lesson passage gives us only a small part of the events of that wonderful morning, and does not allude to the vision of Jesus himself. Did the

disciples believe? No; they thought the women were talking foolishly. Who ran to see for himself? What did he see?

Suppose you had been one of those disciples, would you have believed? Why should the women lie? What had the disciples to strengthen belief? Suppose their unbelief had proved true, would it have been any worse for them than for us now? What did a risen Christ mean to them? What is there for us to do as disciples of a risen Saviour?

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

No. 1.

The Saviour's tomb.
Morning red.
Now all the bells are ringing.
Easter Hymn.
God hath sent his angels.

No. 2.

Jesus lives.
Sing with all the sons of glory.
Christ, the Lord, is risen.
The day of resurrection.
The angels' story.

References.

FREEMAN'S HANDBOOK. Ver. 2: The door of the sepulcher, 734. Ver. 4: White garments, 472. Ver. 7: Mode of reckoning time, 868.

A. D. 29.] LESSON II. PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER. [April 12.] GOLDEN TEXT. Come; for all things are now ready. Luke 14. 17.

Authorized Version.

Luke 14. 15-24. [Commit to memory verses 21-28.]

[Read Luke 14.]

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

Revised Version.

- 15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. But he said unto him, A certain man made a great supper; and he bade many: and he sent forth his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a field, and I must needs go out and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And the servant came, and told his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and maimed and blind and lame. And the servant said, Lord, what thou didst command is done, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

TIME.—A Sabbath day in December, A. D. 29.
PLACE.—In the vicinity of Bethabara, beyond Jordan (Perea).
ENVIRONMENTS.—Jesus was dining with a Pharisee. Surrounded by the splendors of an oriental feast, he took his surroundings as a text, uttered a parable about seeking the best places, gave instruction about making feasts for the poor, and then spoke the parable of our lesson.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* Parable of the Great Supper. Luke 14. 15-24.
Tu. The marriage feast. Matt. 22. 1-14.
W. Wisdom's invitation. Prov. 9. 1-11.
Th. Sin of refusing. Prov. 1. 20-33.
F. Free invitation. Isa. 55. 1-7.
S. The truth rejected. Acts 13. 42-52.
S. The supper of the Lamb. Rev. 19. 4-10.

LE-SON HYMNS.

No. 77, New Canadian Hymnal.

Jesus, my Saviour, to Bethlehem came.

No. 75, New Canadian Hymnal.

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast.

No. 73, New Canadian Hymnal.

God calling yet! shall I not hear?

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. Invitation, v. 15-17.

What exclamation was made by one who sat at meat with Jesus?

What did he mean?

What assumption concerning the speaker's salvation seems to underlie this exclamation?

Is there any widespread solicitude to "eat bread in the kingdom of God?"

What is the difference between this parable and that of the king's supper? (See Matt. 22. 1-10.)

Whom does the giver of the feast in this parable represent? (Psalm 25. 6.)

What is said about the number invited?

Is it an Eastern custom to give a second invitation when the supper is ready? (Prov. 9. 1-5.)

What was the servant's message? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

What man of God did for Jesus duties corresponding somewhat to those of this servant?

What is typified by the supper time?

What gracious invitation have we? (Rev. 22. 17.)

In what sense are the good things of Gospel grace now ready? (Luke 10. 1-9; Matt. 3. 1, 2.)

2. Excuse, v. 18-20.

Why do men so readily make "excuses" to God, and refuse to accept his invitations? (John 1. 11; 5. 40; 15. 24; Luke 13. 34.)

What was the excuse of the first invited guest? What was the second excuse? What was the third?

From what was marriage considered a proper excuse? (Deut. 20. 7.)

Did any of these apologizers distrust the fact that the feast had been prepared?

Did anyone suggest that the lord of the feast was unworthy of his company?

Was any of the three detained from any other than worldly causes?

Was any of the excuses valid?

What says Wisdom to those who refuse? (Prov. 1. 24-26.)

3. Rejection, v. 21-24.

Why was the master of the house indignant?

How does God regard the wicked now?

What is the character of the lanes of an oriental city as contrasted with the streets?

What class of sinners is meant by the poor, the lame, etc.?

Why was Jesus so anxious to invite to himself gross sinners? (Luke 4. 18; Matt. 21. 32; James 2. 5.)

What did the servant report?

Where next was he sent?

What class of sinners is indicated by the tramps and squatters of the highways and hedges?

How are they to be compelled to come in? (2 Tim. 4. 2; 2 Cor. 10. 4; 5. 14.)

What class may be referred to by these wretches of the country as compared with those of the city?

To what people may Jesus have referred by the phrase, "Those men which were bidden?" (Luke 4. 29; John 8. 59; Luke 8. 37; 9. 53; 10. 13; Acts 13. 46; Heb. 12. 25; Matt. 21. 43; 22. 8.)

Practical Teachings.

1. All excuses from God's claims are groundless. Neither possessions, business, nor pleasure should stand between us and him.

2. None of these excuses were honest. And most modern neglecters of divine grace resemble these invited guests in their failure to squarely meet the divine claims.

3. How often the "children of the kingdom" are left out, while those whose opportunities are not nearly so good embrace God's offers and are saved!

Where in this lesson are we told of—

1. A gracious privilege?

2. A great danger?

3. A sad calamity?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Verses 15-17.

15. Where was this parable spoken? What led one to speak about eating bread in the kingdom of God? Of what was eating bread a Jewish figure?

16. Why was this a great supper? Where are Gospel blessings compared to a banquet?

17. Was it strange to give more than one invitation to a feast?

2. Verses 18-20.

18. How do Eastern people regard such excuses? Why was the first man's excuse of no value?

19. Why the second man's?

20. Why the third man's? What was the real reason all stayed away?

3. Verses 21-24.

21. Is anything said in the Bible about God's anger? Are the poor and maimed numerous in the East?

22. Where is there room?

23. What was meant by the "highways?" What by the "hedges?" When the rich and religious people refused the Gospel who came? When the Jews rejected it to whom was it given?

24. If we reject salvation and die unsaved, can we hope for any other remedy?

Teachings of the Lesson.

To be a member of the Church will not admit us to the feast in God's kingdom. The Gospel invites us to a feast, not to a funeral. Neglect without meaning to be lost is what ruins many. Worldly gains and pleasures are common excuses for neglect of religion; the more needy and helpless we are, the more Christ will welcome us. God will use every means to bring us to Christ. All who willfully refuse to come will be "excused" and excluded.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Where was Jesus now?

Find Perca on the map.

Which side of the Jordan was it?

What was it called in the Old Testament?

What people lived in Perca?

Why did Jesus go there?

Do you know how the people treated him there?

Where did Jesus tell some of his best parables?

What did Jesus see one day at the house of a Pharisee?

What makes us want the best places? **Pride.**

How did Jesus show his love for these proud Pharisees? **By telling them the truth about pride.**

What did the Pharisees think Christ would do when he came?

How did Jesus teach them?

What did he mean by the great supper?

Who made it?

Who was the servant?

Whom had he invited?

Why did they not go?

Whom did he then invite?

Something to Remember—

That pride in the heart is displeasing to Jesus.

That we are all invited to the feast God has made for us.

That it is very foolish and unwise to make excuses to God.

LESSON OUTLINE.

The Gospel Feast.

I. THE FOUNDER.

A certain man. v. 16.

Wisdom . . . furnisheth her table. Prov. 9. 1.

The Lord of hosts . . . a feast. Isa. 25. 6.

II. THE FEAST.

A great supper, and bade many. v. 16.

A marriage for his son. Matt. 22. 2.

He brought me . . . banqueting house. Sol.

Song 2. 4.

III. THE INVITATION.

Come, for all things are now ready. v. 17.

The Spirit and the bride say, Come. Rev. 22. 17.

Ho, every one that thirsteth. Isa. 55. 1.

IV. THE REJECTION.

1. Bought a piece of ground. v. 18.

The cares of this world. Matt. 13. 22.

2. Bought five yoke of oxen. v. 19.

They that will be rich. 1 Tim. 6. 9.

3. Married a wife. v. 20.

He cannot be my disciple. Luke 14. 26.

V. THE GUESTS.

1. The poor . . . maimed . . . halt. v. 21.

Base things . . . hath God chosen. 1 Cor. 1. 28.

2. Compel them to come in. v. 23.

Be instant in season. 2 Tim. 4. 2.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

General Statement.

While Jesus is still in the Perca dominions of Herod Antipas, slowly walking to Jerusalem, and teaching as he went, he is one Sabbath day (December, A. D. 29) invited to dine with a large company at the dwelling of a wealthy Pharisee. For the scruples of the Pharisees, which forbade cures of the poor on the Sabbath, made no objection to feasts of the rich. We cannot say precisely where this parable was told, but it was in the neighborhood of Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where Jesus had been baptized by John. Three or four of his closest followers began their friendship for him at that time, and many holy and strange memories must have hurried hotly through their minds as familiar landscapes called

back the hour when the Baptist first pointed out to them the Lamb of God who was to take away the sin of the world. That holy sacrifice was now about to be made, though these men but dimly understood it. Read this whole chapter very carefully, as requested by the Lesson Committee. Our Lord takes the opportunity to warn the assembled guests against selfishness and pride, and to urge generosity toward the poor. Then he presents the picture of the Gospel feast, with its abundant provision, neglected and despised by those who received its earliest invitation, until others are called to possess their neglected privileges. A similar parable (Matt. 22. 1-14) was uttered in the temple on Tuesday, April 4, the last day of Jesus's public teaching. All excuses from God's claims are groundless. Neither possessions, business, nor pleasure should stand between us and him. None of these excuses were honest. And most modern neglecters of divine grace resemble these invited guests in their failure to squarely meet the divine claims. How often the "children of the kingdom" are left out, while those whose opportunities are not nearly so good embrace God's offers and are saved.

Verse 15. One of them that sat at meat with him. Our Lord was the guest of a Pereaean Pharisee. The dinner was probably served in the evening. Although it is said that the company "sat," we are to understand that they reclined on couches, after the fashion of the Romans and the wealthier Jews, each man leaning on his left side and taking the food from the table with his right hand. As we look back over the centuries on that little company we cannot but feel how honored were the guests who thus sat at supper with our Lord; but (1) *Much more highly honored will those be who shall sit down with him forever in heaven.* **These things.** The blessing which this candidate for the Messiahship had just pronounced on those who gave feasts—not to the rich and the famous, but to the poor. **He said unto him.** We do not know the name of the guest who now speaks, but we owe him a great debt, for it was his ejaculation which led to the telling of the rich story that follows. **Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.** If, instead of the word "blessed," we read, "O, how happy is he!" we will come nearer to the original. "Eat bread" means, of course, partake of food, and would, in the ancient language, refer to a sumptuous banquet as well as to biscuit and water. "The kingdom of God," in the mouth of an ordinary Jew, probably meant the dominion of the Messiah. How far it may also have referred to the glorious future after death we cannot say. On our Lord's tongue, "the kingdom of God" had a broader meaning; it meant the prevalence of God's ideas—the fulfillment of the prayer, "Thy kingdom come." But this guest probably used the phrase with a thoroughly secular meaning. Doubtless, he took it for granted that, as a born Jew, he would inherit rights to all the luxuries of the kingdom of God, and it is very likely that he had in his mind expectations of luxurious banquets to which this young Messiah would invite his friends so soon as he was established on the throne of Judah.

16. Then said he unto him. The man was right in his theology, but wrong in his application of it. Those that might be thus "blessed" were unconsciously refusing to "eat bread"—to partici-

pate in the Messianic banquet. **A certain man.** This parable and that of "the marriage of the king's son" (Matt. 22) nearly resemble each other, but there are also important differences, and they belong to different periods of Christ's ministry. This "certain man" represents God, and the "great supper" is the feast of fat things which Isaiah mentions—the blessings of the Gospel dispensation. **A great supper.** In the East rich men frequently gave feasts for their own glorification. The guests are not necessarily family friends. They are made up of all sorts of folks, whose presence will increase the ostentatious splendor of the host. Read the description of Sindbad the Sailor's banquets, as given in the *Arabian Nights*, or, better still, the story, in the same strange book, of the Barneide's feast. To both of these were invited the deplorably poor. We are not to suppose that such Pharisees as the one who was now entertaining Jesus invited him because they believed in him, but rather because his presence at the banquet would make the outside gossips talk of the banquet. (2) *God's grace is a feast of the richest fare, the fullest enjoyment, and the most noble companionship.* It is well for us to think much of this figure of speech, "a great supper." The great King, through unnumbered centuries, has been preparing a spiritual feast for your soul and mine, and longs for us to come and enjoy it. **Bade many.** Our Lord here probably would refer to the Jewish people, to whom the Gospel was first preached, but, as in most of his parables, there is a secondary meaning, which applies to all who hear the call of Christ. The Eastern custom, which invited the guests long beforehand, as we do for a wedding, which announced the coming feast to the whole neighborhood and allowed the men and women of the streets to crowd in and line the walls and gaze on the guests, must be kept in mind as we follow the course of the story. (3) *All who have been brought up in Christian families, all who have been trained in church and Sabbath school, all who have studied the word of God,* are bidden to the Lord's banquet.

17. Sent his servant at supper time. The "servant" represents every bearer of the Gospel

invitation, preacher, Sunday school teacher, friend. (4) *It is a high honor to be God's herald of the glad tidings. At supper time.* Kitto went too far when he stated that it was customary in the East to formally remind invited guests of their engagement; but such a course would not be contrary to custom, and in a place where timepieces are practically unknown, and where the guests live close together, it would be convenient both for the host and for the guests. **Them that were bidden.** Those that had accepted the first invitation. **Come.** The invitation to the Gospel feast is (1) authoritative, from God; (2) joyful, promising only pleasure; (3) urgent, demanding immediate attention; (4) none can partake of the feast unless he "comes." **All things are now ready.** The food was cooked, and the waiting maids were ready to serve it. So the Gospel came in the fullness of time, when the world had been prepared for it. So **now**, in the accepted time, our souls shall find, if we only come, that every provision to meet the full needs of our souls has been made, and all things are now ready.

18. They all with one consent began to make excuse. Their hearts and minds were one, although the guests were of several sorts. "They all" refers, first of all, to God's chosen people, who as a race rejected Christ—"have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" But there are many around our churches and homes who make similar excuses where a cordial acceptance might be expected. (5) *The wonder is that any should seek excuse from heavenly delights.* True friends do not make excuses; they may at times feel the need of giving sufficient reason for their action, but no one with love in his heart will frame an excuse; besides, no excuse can be framed which will suffice to explain the neglect of salvation. The feast at which they all "sat" gave point to this whole story. Those who surrounded the table had not treated the hospitable summons in any such contemptible way, but very likely that man who had piously sighed about eating bread in the kingdom of God was at this very time making excuses in his heart for rejecting Jesus. **The first.** An excuse in the East is almost equivalent to a declaration of war, bitter enmity. The first is that of the man who, like all wealthy farmers in the East, lives in the village, but owns fields far and near. He has bought a new one and makes his purchase an apology for not going. The frivolity of the excuse is evident. His farm would not run away; he might have looked at it before he purchased it; he might have looked at it after

the feast had been eaten. His excuse was really an insult courteously expressed. (6) *We should attend first to that duty which can least afford to wait.* (7) *How many and how varied are the influences which tend to hinder our soul's salvation!*

19. I have bought five yoke of oxen. An evasion as absurd as the last. Many peasant farmers in the East have as many as five yoke of oxen. (8) *The one already rich has no desire for salvation; the one seeking to be rich has no time for it.* (9) *Things lawful in themselves, when the heart is too much set upon them, prove fatal hindrances in religion.*—Matthew Henry.

20. Married a wife. (10) *How often earthly affections stand in the way of heavenly treasures. Cannot come.* It is not customary for women in the Orient to accompany their husbands to public places or to parties. The luxurious nabob had simply added one woman more to his harem, and it was a plain statement that there was more pleasure for him at home in his own resources than in his friend's house from his friend's resources. Read Deut. 24. 5 for excuses granted to newly-married bridegrooms.

21. Showed his lord these things. (11) *He who is unsuccessful in his holy endeavors should go at once to the Master and tell him all his disappointment. The master of the house being angry.* Being indignant. He felt that something must be done at once. (12) *Workers for God must be prompt. Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city.* The creditable and discreditable portions of the city. To the Jews who listened this meant that as the elders had rejected Jesus he had now turned to the masses, to the publicans and sinners. **The poor.** This described most of the congregations that Jesus preached to. **The maimed, . . . the halt, . . . the blind.** Those who have defects in character can have them supplied by him who summons them to the feast.

22. It is done. This servant unquestioningly obeys the strange command.

23, 24. Highways and hedges. The reputable and disreputable parts of the country. **Compel them to come in.** Not by force, but by the constraint of good reason and much love. The ultimate decision of every soul rests with itself. There was no persuasion offered to those who had already excused themselves, because they showed no interest; but those who are really unfit, and not at all prepared for the royal feast, are urged and besought to come. **None of those.** God never tolerates the contempt of the self-righteous.

CRITICAL NOTES.

Verse 15. Blessed. The words of the Lord just spoken concerning the resurrection of the just, called forth the ejaculation of this unknown, who

might indeed have expressed thereby a desire to enter the company of the prophets and patriarchs and fathers of Israel, and to **eat bread** in their

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presence. To eat bread in this sense signified, to a Jew, the attainment of his spiritual hopes. **In the kingdom of God.** That kingdom was the Messianic kingdom. But this was not supposed to be set up till after the resurrection, when the just, the elect of God, the Jews, would all be raised and together enjoy the delights and comforts prepared for them. This is the Jewish millennium, and the Millenarians in the early Church adopted similar notions. Jesus distinctively opposes all such interpretations of Scripture and all such rabbinical teachings, and widens the thought of the kind of people that will be at the feast in the kingdom of God to the possibility of all classes and races of men being included among those who shall sit down with the patriarchs in that kingdom.

16. Then said he. This parable of the supper is not the same as the parable of the king's son's marriage. The two are often confounded, but they were both spoken on different occasions, under different circumstances, and in different places. This of the supper was at an entertainment; that of the marriage of the king's son was spoken in the temple. This was addressed to those who presumed on their supposed relation to God; that was directed to the Pharisees who had begun to plot for the Redeemer's life, and from whom divine justice, he declared, would take away their kingdom and give it to the heathen. **Bade many.** The invitation went in the first instance to a certain class of people belonging to the social plane of the generous host. This class, in the thought of our Lord, may have represented the Jews, and the different individuals employed in the picture may, as Alford thinks, stand for the different classes among the Jews.

18. They all . . . began to make excuse. They would not openly and expressly reject the invitation as desiring to have nothing to do with the host, but the secret determination of their hearts was veiled under various pleas of necessity in personal affairs. **The first said . . . I have bought a piece of ground.** We are to interpret this according to an idiomatic use of the Greek aorist tense in order to preserve the natural truthfulness of the picture, and render, "I am buying a piece," etc., which fact afforded a reason for the going to see it, unless we suppose the man bought first and examined after, which is not natural. The excuse of this one is based on a supposed necessity.

19. Another said . . . five yoke of oxen. This man offers no plea of necessity. In purpose he has already started, interested in the quality of his oxen. He has his own plans and purposes in life, and while sitting at a feast may be agreeable, yet his own personal desires exercise over him a predominating influence.

20. Another . . . I have married a wife.

That there is a gradation in the character of the excuses will be seen by every one: (1) Land, possessions of every description; (2) oxen, the activities of mercantile life; (3) wife, social influences. The excuses are of a threefold nature, but one spirit underlies them all—the spirit of this world.

21. Go . . . streets and lanes. That is, everywhere. The invitation now is not to one class, race, or nation, but to all. Over the application of the parable to men everywhere who defer obedience to the call of God, there hovers the national application of it to the Jews as a people. The Jewish nation will not accept the Gospel, the call now made by the **servant** of Jehovah, hence the invitation is given to all races of earth. **The poor, . . . maimed, . . . halt, . . . blind.** The good host, the Giver of all good, calls the spiritually destitute. Those who are satisfied with themselves excluded themselves, and are rejected in turn by him.

23. Highways and hedges (walls). Seek the most hopeless, the abandoned, the lost. Here is the call to the Gentiles. **Compel them to come in.** The only compulsion this one **servant** could use was persuasion. They are to be entreated, for the idea that they are really invited to the rich man's house and bounty will be difficult for them to believe. **That my house may be filled.** The kingdom of God does not depend on any one people. The gracious purposes of God shall not be frustrated because his call is rejected.

24. Shall taste of my supper. Remember, these last words, we think, must be understood not as the words of the householder to his servant, but as a direct address of our Lord to the company present. Christ's habitual form of speech when announcing some fact of special application, "I say unto you," leaves little doubt of the correctness of this interpretation, although Meyer affirms that the statement, "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper," is not an assertion of Jesus, but of the master of the house. The teaching of the Lord was that, since the Jews had rejected the invitation to accept the Gospel—for which purpose they had been originally called into nationality and preserved through ages—the call would be given to the nations of the earth, and they would come into the kingdom of God without the instrumentality of the Jews, as was originally intended, and the Jews, as such, would themselves be rejected. The same principle underlying this parable is as applicable to-day as then. If we fail to fulfill the purpose of our call in history, the law of rejection will grind us as it ground the Jewish Church, and God will find some other way to carry out his plans and to fulfill his purposes in humanity without us.

Thoughts for Young People.

The Gospel Feast.

1. *God invites men to enjoyment.* Not to disagreeable, burdensome duties. His service is one of pleasure and of privilege. The Gospel is the greatest of blessings.

2. *The Gospel table is ever spread.* All mankind are welcome.

3. *Excuses are easily framed.* But (1) an excuse that is not a sufficient reason is a falsehood; (2) As the acceptance of this invitation is a duty, an excuse becomes a sin; (3) Christian life is a perennial delight that culminates in heaven; the self-excused shuts himself out from a life of privilege and an eternity of bliss.

4. *None are too unworthy or too wicked to find a place in God's kingdom.* Not the righteous but sinners Jesus came to call to repentance.

5. *People should be urged to seek salvation.* We are God's servants, sent with a personal message to all whom he purposes to save, and that includes everyone. We are to go to those who have already had a distinct divine invitation, and remind them that all things are now ready. We are to go behind every hedge, down every highway, along every thoroughfare, and up every lane, and bring into the Gospel banquet hall the poor and the maimed and the halt and the blind.

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Messengers are sent on the occasion of a Hindu feast to invite the guests, when not only relatives, but all persons of the same caste, are invited from the neighborhood. A refusal to come is a great affront. In the East an invitation to a feast, to be considered sincere, must be repeated two or three times. When this man sent his servant at supper time, they had already been invited and had accepted the invitation. Invited guests were summoned while the dishes were coming in. Morier gives an account of his dining with one Ameer-ud-Doulah, a vizier who was giving an entertainment to an ambassador and his suite in Persia, on a day appointed, when the messenger came as usual at five o'clock to bid the guests to the feast, though every one had been previously invited and all had already accepted the invitation.

It is little wonder that, sending out among the poor of the East, this man could get a large attendance, for the scant meal of orientals in general leaves them always ready for a full meal. Bishop Thoburn says there are millions of people in India who never know what it is to eat till they are satisfied; Dr. Trumbull tells of Bedouin Arabs who for weeks together live absolutely on milk alone, and Professor Palmer affirms a well-authenticated case of an Arab in North Syria who for three years had tasted neither water nor other food than milk only.

Hospitality seems to have been a very ancient

virtue. A writer has recently made an analysis of Homer's *Iliad*, which shows that in Homer's day it was recognized as a duty alike to strangers and foreigners, even to beggars. The height of courtesy was to treat a person to refreshments or even entertainment, sometimes extended through some days, before asking his business. The *Odyssey* as well as the *Iliad* is replete with multitudinous instances of hospitality to strangers and suppliants, even down to common beggars. So it may not have been so forced and unnatural as seems to us that this man should have diverted his hospitality to the poor and crippled, who always abound and often wait near the premises to secure relief.

The excuses these men made are in keeping with Eastern life. In fact, the oriental is a practiced diplomat in his most common speech, and thoroughly ingenious in finding plausible reasons for doing or not doing. Even when there is no necessity for it his speech will be preferably or by habit indirect. One must be experienced to know what he means, though his speech may or may not enter into the data by which he judges. But these excuses have a natural form. Buying a farm would not be a tract of land fenced in, nor would the contract be concluded as among us. Proving it might mean closing the bargain, which in India would be by the purchaser in the presence of the seller being permitted to dig the soil with either spade or pick. That is stronger than any written deed. It gives possession. The purchasing of five yoke of oxen would not be unusual, as some of these farmers now own this many, the number of oxen indicating the number of acres to be cultivated. The oxen of today and for some centuries mean also the water buffalo, which was introduced from India, and is stronger and thrives in malarious districts. It must have water and mud to wallow in to keep it healthy. The excuse of having married a wife would have a base in certain technical freedom from civil and military obligation or compelled absence from home for a year after marriage, recognized in old Jewish law and usage.

By Way of Illustration.

Verses 15 and 16. "A great supper." Christ often compared the Gospel to a supper or feast. What suggestion does this bring to us? First, food, a necessity of life, and also companionship, entertainment, joy. This the Gospel brings us. "Good tidings of great joy." Dr. Joseph Parker says: "Christianity has given to the world more poems, hymns, melodies, and manifold utterances of joy than any other influence which has touched the nature of man. It is not an accident that in the science and practice of music harmony was unknown until Christianity became dominant."

Verses 17. "Come." During a religious awaken-

ing in a factory village in New England, a foreman sent to a workman whom he knew was considering the matter seriously a letter requesting him to call at six o'clock that evening. Promptly he came. "I see you believe me," said the foreman. The man assented. "Here is another message sending for you, from One equally in earnest," and he handed him a paper upon which was written, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

He read it carefully and said, "Am I just to believe that in the same way I believed your letter?"

"Just in the same way," answered the foreman. And from that hour he believed and was saved.

Verses 18. "To make excuse." A young man said, "I was brought to see my danger through this request of a friend. He said to me, 'Why are you not a Christian?' I answered candidly, 'I have several reasons which I think good ones.' Very well, suppose you write them out, not for my eyes, but as an answer to God's invitation and for no eye but your own. You must have excuses which will stand in the judgment." When in the quiet of my own room I attempted to write them out, they seemed so flimsy and weak that I threw them away and said, "Jesus, I come."

Verses 18-20. Not poverty, but prosperity kept all these guests away. I knew a young couple who were very faithful in Christian service when in plain circumstances, but when the new home was built it was too pleasant to be left for a prayer meeting. And when the new team of horses was bought, it was found more pleasant to spend the Sabbath in riding than churchgoing. Abundance of books and pleasures crowded out the reading of God's word. Pastors will testify that years of financial depression rather than years of financial prosperity bring increase of spiritual life.

The Teachers' Meeting.

Time, place, and circumstances of this parable. . . . The Gospel kingdom resembles a feast: (1) The bountiful Host; (2) The rich provision; (3) The kind invitation; (4) It is ready now; (5) The invited guests make excuses; (6) A final exclusion of those who refuse; (7) The outcasts are invited; (8) Those whom men reject gladly receive and accept the invitation. . . . The Gospel feast: (1) Prepared; (2) Refused; (3) Enjoyed. . . . Analyze the excuses and the classes of persons represented by them. . . . State who were afterward invited, and what people are therein represented. . . . What does this lesson teach to workers for souls concerning opportunities? . . . Word-picture of the Jewish feast to which Jesus was invited. . . . Show how privileges of Gospel are illustrated by supper. . . . Strange conduct of people in hesitating, delaying, and ex-

ing themselves. . . . Various excuses which people offer for neglect of religion. . . . Loss of spurned privileges. . . . Notice the outline given in the *Illustrative Notes*: I. The Giver of the feast; (1) God's authority; (2) God's graciousness; (3) God's anger; (4) God's universal mercy, extended to the lowest and neediest. II. The great supper. Religion is not only a life insurance for the next world, it is a delight and banquet, joy, and divine companionship for this life. III. The servants. Lawgivers, prophets, martyrs, friends, preachers, teachers, workers for the Gospel. IV. The invitation. A king's call, a call to enjoyment, an immediate call. V. The rejecters: (1) The Pharisees and rulers rejected Jesus, while common people heard him gladly; (2) The Jews as a nation rejected Jesus, while the Gentiles believed him by the thousands; (3) To-day many brought up in Christian homes reject Jesus, while many who have few privileges accept him. VI. The excuses, of three sorts: (1) The treasures of the world; (2) The cares of the world; (3) The pleasures of life. VII. The guests. The disciples were fishermen and publicans; Luther's best followers were peasants; Wesley's early converts were miners.

Before the Class.

Our object to-day is to make the class realize that privileges, in the long run, go to those who appreciate them, with application to the particular privileges that they are in danger of neglecting.

What kind of a story is to-day's lesson? What is a parable? [Story with a moral.] Suppose we take up the moral first; if you answer promptly, we will get to the story part before the bell rings.

How many of you are getting an education? How much does it cost? [Run over items.] Who pays for it? Why do they give it to you? Suppose you don't take it; what then? What will be the difference twenty years hence? What do you think of the boy or girl who wastes the chance to get an education? Suppose you don't want it now; will they save it for you until you change your mind? Who will get it? Do you know anybody that appreciated his chance? What became of the others?

Yes, a good education is made up of somebody's generosity and your hard work; and it is worth every cent and every hour that it costs. But I know something that is worth more than an education. Suppose, while you are at school or college, you commit many sins—does that take much supposing? Who keeps a record of them all? Where will they come up against you? Before God can forget them he must forgive them. How is he able to offer forgiveness? When your sins are all forgiven, through faith in Christ, you are said to be justified. How much does God charge for justifying sinners? What did it cost him? What is

the good of being justified? (Rom. 5, 1, 2.) Is it worth while to be at peace with God and a friend and follower of Jesus Christ? Which is worth more, an invitation to go to college or an invitation to come to Christ?

Now, one of you tell this parable, while the rest see that he gets it all in. What a gay scene such a feast must have been! [Show a picture, or describe.] How did the Master of the house feel when he heard what the men said? Do you think those were their real reasons? Is it honest to offer a false excuse? Why did the men make such a strange choice? [Discuss briefly.] I believe it was simply because they thought it would be too much trouble to leave their work and dress up to go to the feast. It was easier to go right on with what they were doing. Who got their places? Did they come?

Now, you are that man in verse 15. You think it would be very blessed indeed to be invited to such a feast—to eat bread in the kingdom of God. You would never offer such foolish excuses—O, no. How many of you are members of the Church? Have you accepted Christ's invitation to give him all your heart? I sometimes catch myself offering just such flimsy excuses as these men did; do you? If we refuse, the offer goes to the heathen; and they will accept. But there is room for them and us too.

OPTIONAL HYMNS,

NO. 1.

Break Thou the bread of life.
Blest are the hungry.
So near to the kingdom.
Called to the feast.
Gather them in.

NO. 2.

Christ is knocking.
The Saviour calls.
Come, sinners, to the Gospel feast.
Ho! every one.
In from the highways.

Blackboard.



THE INVITATION.

COME,
THE EARTHLY | THE GOSPEL
FEAST IS READY.

THE EXCUSES.

THEN. | NOW.

Bought Land.	Study.
Try Oxen.	Work.
Married a Wife.	Pleasure.

"YET THERE IS ROOM."

WHY NOT ACCEPT?

"Come; for all things are now ready."

References.

FREEMAN. Vers. 16, 17: The double invitation, 691.

A. D. 30.]

LESSON III. THE LOST FOUND.

[April 19.]

GOLDEN TEXT. There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Luke 15, 10.

Authorized Version.

Luke 15, 11-24. [Commit to memory verses 18-20.]

[Read Luke 15, 1-32.]

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:
12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.
13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a

Revised Version.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:
12 and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of *thy* substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them 13 his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted

No. 10

No. 104

No. 106

far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry;

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

14 his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country: and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into

16 his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have been filled with the husks that the swine

17 did eat: and no man gave unto him. But when

he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and

18 to spare, and I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say

19 unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be

called thy son: make me as one of thy hired

20 servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his

21 father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed

22 him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight:

I am no more worthy to be called thy son.

23 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and

24 put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us

eat, and make merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again: he was lost, and is found.

And they began to be merry.

TIME.—Very early in A. D. 30. **PLACE.**—

Perea. Jesus was still journeying with his face toward Calvary, though none but himself could see the dark shadow of the cross that lay across his path.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Joy in heaven. Luke 15. 1-10.
- T^o. The Lost Found. Luke 15. 11-24.
- W. Joy of salvation. Luke 15. 25-32.
- T^h. Departing from God. Jer. 17. 1-10.
- F. Punishment and pardon. 2 Chron. 33. 1-13.
- S. The Father's voice. Ezek. 18. 20-32.
- S. Return! return! Hosca 14.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 103, New Canadian Hymnal.

Would Jesus have the sinner die?

No. 104, New Canadian Hymnal.

Lord, as to thy dear cross we flee.

No. 106, New Canadian Hymnal.

Pass me not, O gentle Saviour.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **Lost**, v. 11-16.
 - What were the property rights of a younger son according to Jewish law?
 - Could these rights be insisted upon before the death of the father?
 - Were famines rare in ancient times?
 - Did the "citizen" desire the prodigal's help?
 - How were swineherds regarded by Jews?
 - What sort of "husks" were fed to swine?
 - Did the prodigal eat these husks, or only long for them?
 - What does the "far country" typify?
 - What does the "mighty famine" stand for?
 - Why had the prodigal made no friends?
 - Is sin ever a real bond of sympathy?
 - What is God's remembrance with the lost and needy? (Isa. 55. 2.)
2. **Found**, v. 17-24.
 - By whom was this lost son first found?
 - What do the "hired servants" typify?
 - What is the first impulse of the contrite heart?
 - How does the prodigal show his repentance is sincere?
 - Tell the actions of this father which are intended to show the eager sympathy of God with penitent sinners.
 - In what did the "death" of this prodigal son consist?

What lesson may we learn from the spirit of the returning prodigal son?

What lesson concerning God's attitude toward returning sinners?

Over whom is there joy in heaven? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

Practical Teachings.

1. When the prodigal ceases his selfishness he begins to live to himself in a true sense.

2. The unutterable compassion of the father in this story is "very full of comfort."

3. God the Father is represented by his Son as thrilling with measureless joy over the repentance of one sinner.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That every sinner is lost and in want?
2. That every sinner may return to home and plenty?
3. That God will welcome every true penitent?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Verses 11-16.

11. Who are represented by the two sons?
12. What was a younger son's portion?
13. Why did he go far from home? How did he show his guilt and folly when there?
14. Were the pleasures lasting? What led him to seek employment?
15. To whom did he join himself? What degrading work had he to do?
16. For what food did he wish? Did his companions help him?

2. Verses 17-24.

17. What brought him to his senses?
18. What is the only remedy for those away from God?
20. Is it enough to resolve to do right? Had the father pity for him? Would this have saved him if he had not returned?
21. Why did he not complete his confession?

22. Of what were the robe and ring tokens?

24. How is God's delight at the sinner's return described?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Man wants to be independent of God. The willful child breaks away from home restraints. He wants possessions before he can take care of them. He rushes into sinful pleasures. He wastes money, time, health, character. The downward path is steep. Severe measures have to be used with the sinner. Christ welcomes every true penitent. There is joy on earth and in heaven over his return.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What is the first parable in the fifteenth of Luke? What is the second?

What is the third story about?

What lesson do all these stories teach?

To whom did Jesus tell the stories?

Which son of a rich man asked to have his share of the father's money?

What is the share of the younger son?

Why did he want to go away from home?

When are we like this foolish boy? **When we want our own way.**

What did he do with his money?

What hard work did he have to do?

What does this show? **That sin brings sorrow.**

What did he do at last?

How did his father meet him?

What did he do to show his joy?

How did the older brother like this? (Luke 15.

25-32.)

Something to Remember—

A sinner who is sorry for sin is dear to God. Self-love is sure to bring trouble and sorrow. God cannot help a Pharisee who thinks himself good.

LESSON OUTLINE.

From Sin to Salvation.

I. THE SINNER'S CHARACTER.

1. **Selfishness.** *Give me the portion.* v. 12. Their portion is in this life. Psalm 17. 14.
2. **Ingratitude.** *That falleth to me.* v. 12. Neither were thankful. Rom. 1. 21.
3. **Alienation.** *Into a far country.* v. 13. Alienated from the life of God. Eph. 4. 18.
4. **Sensuality.** *Riotous living.* v. 13. The works of the flesh are manifest. Gal. 5. 19.

II. THE SINNER'S CONDITION.

1. **Need.** *Began to be in want.* v. 14. Of his flesh reaped corruption. Gal. 6. 8.
2. **Degradation.** *To feed swine.* v. 15. I have made you contemptible. Mal. 2. 9.
3. **Misery.** *No man gave.* v. 16. He feedeth on ashes. Isa. 44. 20.

III. THE SINNER'S REPENTANCE.

1. **Conviction.** *Came to himself.* v. 17. Awake, thou that sleepest. Eph. 5. 14.
2. **Resolution.** *I will arise and go.* v. 18. To Zion with their faces thitherward. Jer. 50. 5.
3. **Renunciation.** *Arose and came.* v. 20. Let the wicked forsake his way. Isa. 55. 7.
4. **Confession.** *I have sinned.* v. 21. I acknowledged my sin. Psalm 32. 5.

IV. THE SINNER'S PARDON.

1. **Welcome.** *Ran and fell on his neck.* v. 20. Ready to forgive. Psalm 86. 5.
2. **Honor.** *Robe . . . ring . . . shoes.* v. 22. Now are we the sons of God. 1 John 3. 2.
3. **Pleasure.** *Eat and be merry.* v. 23. At thy right hand . . . pleasures. Psalm 16. 11.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

General Statement.

This parable was spoken in the last part of the third year of our Lord's public ministry, three or four months before his death. Like some other chief parables of our Lord, it was, so far as we can distinguish, spoken in Perea. The story is not told in any other gospel. The chapter from which it is taken contains three noble parables—of the lost sheep, of the piece of silver, and of the prodigal son. All three were spoken to the publicans and sinners who "drew near unto him for to hear him," and to the Pharisees and scribes who murmured at his kind reception of the outcast. The remaining eight verses of this chapter continue this parable by the story of the elder son. The moral condition of the lapsed classes, who are supposed to be as careless of God as they are of Mosaic law, temple, and synagogue, which was only hinted at in the bewildered sheep and the lost coin fallen from nobler uses, is now more fully and accurately represented in the degraded son who, in his disgrace, loathes sin and yearns for his father's favor more sincerely than any exemplary son can. The love of God toward the sinful is more faithfully suggested by a human father's eagerness for the return of his wayward and ruined son than by a woman's distress at the loss of a coin or a shepherd's anxiety for a lost sheep. The inexcusable apathy of the rulers toward the lost, which is no more than suggested in the introductory parables, is drawn in this one with striking faithfulness and precision.

Verse 11. A certain man had two sons.

The man represents our Father, the sons two sorts of his children. The whole story should be carefully read. It has gone into literature under the title of "The Parable of the Prodigal Son." Many careful students believe that the emphasis of the story is on the portion that is omitted from this lesson, and that if a title be given to it at all it should be the title of "The Jealous Brother." Another suggestion quite as profound is that it is "The Parable of the Bereaved Father;" it emphasizes our heavenly Father's eagerness to save his lost children and his rejoicing over the saved. All three views should be kept in mind as we proceed with this marvelous story.

12. Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. Really, no portion fell to him. He was the younger son, and would, according to Jewish law, inherit only one third of the patriarchal property, and that only at the death of his father. It was a selfish and unreasonable demand, not justified by the law of the country or its customs. He wanted this special favor for the worst of purposes—criminal indulgence. **He divided unto them his living.** Which he had no right to do. He could not set aside the responsibilities of life until he died, and he could not properly meet those responsibilities after he had divided his resources between his sons. Furthermore, he does not seem in the strictest sense to have done this. Practically, he merely gave up control of the wayward boy and kept control of the docile and obedient one, for he evidently retained his own authority over the elder son's share. (1) *Selfishness, ingratitude, and a rebellious spirit are at the root of all sin.*

13. Not many days after. He who craves indulgence and sees it within reach can never have patience. The sooner he could rid himself of his father and the synagogue and the Sabbath the better. **The younger son gathered all together, and took his journey.** This sentence might

stand as a concise biography of every selfish soul. **Into a far country.** No matter how disposed he was to engage in "riotous living," he would be restrained so long as he dwelt in Palestine, for, though Gentiles lived in large numbers among the Jews, especially in Galilee and Perea, and though heathen practices were familiar to most of the Jews, and though the Jews themselves by their frequency of divorce and their bad habits had greatly lowered moral standards, there was, nevertheless, a controlling sense of propriety which made a heavy line of demarcation between the Hebrews and other nations. The places to indulge unrestrained in pleasing vice were the hated centers of the pagan religion, and it was to Corinth or Ephesus or Rome or Alexandria that this young man went away. "The far country" represents estrangement from God. **Wasted his substance with riotous living.** He recklessly scattered his opportunities like one of the abandoned ones. There is no such waster as a sinner who wastes time, opportunity, physical vigor, mental power, holy character, neighborly influence.

14. When he had spent all. And that time came soon. The four scenes follow each other quickly: (1) Impatience with restraint; (2) Opportunity to indulge self; (3) Self-indulgence; (4) Want. **A mighty famine.** Famines have been common through all history until the last century or two, and are now frequent in the East. We would have them in our own country were it not for the modern inventions and methods of trade which make every part of civilization dependent on every other part and a diminution of pressure on any single locality; but where, as in the East, in our Lord's time and now, vast populations are packed together, and dependent for food on what they raise, these famines cannot be avoided. This famine stands in the parable for the painful hunger of the soul, the heart craving for divine things. **That land.** The far country,

the region farthest away from the benign Father. **He began to be in want.** The larger a soul is the more it hungers and thirsts, and if it does not turn to the Fount of every blessing, who only can appease the cravings of the human heart, it must pine and suffer with famine.

15. Joined himself. He glued himself. He stuck against the man's will. He was hungry, starving, and did not care how much of a bore he made himself to others. All his riotous living, which doubtless included many a banquet and many a spree, had been unavailing to win him a single friend. The freedom of sin had been turned into slavery. **He sent him into his fields to feed swine.** The most contemptible work that the ancients had to do, and especially loathsome to a Jew. Jesus is here picturing a man who was as wicked and wretched as the publicans and sinners whom the Pharisees hated, and it would seem by thus associating him with the pigs, which were a detestation to the nation, he would emphasize the degradation to which the young man went, so as in turn to make plain the abundant welcome of his father.

16. He would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat. He was eager to quiet the pangs of hunger with the earb pods that were given to the pigs. They are the color of chocolate and the shape of beans; they have a sickening, sweetish taste, but are no good for food, at least not for human food. **No man gave unto him.** Because no man cared for him. This was perfectly natural, though it was very wrong. Jesus does not utter one word in this parable which justifies otherwise good men in holding in contempt their fallen brothers and sisters. Every soul that it was worth while to make it is worth our while to save, and you cannot save a man by scorn. Satan cares not to alleviate the distress of his victims. (2) *Sin is selfish.* It is in Christian lands, by Christian people, that charities are founded and maintained. The miseries of the sinner's life: (1) Degradation; (2) Enslavement; (3) Need; (4) Helplessness.

17. Came to himself. He had been living to Satan; now his better sense again tries to rule. (3) *The first step toward salvation is to realize the wretchedness of sin.* **Hired servants.** (4) *The humblest saint is happier than the highest sinner.* **Enough and to spare.** (5) *Those look for nothing who labor for God.* **I perish.** (6) *Even in this life sin gives but a barren, unsatisfying recompense; and what of the life to come?* The first motive which prompts the sinner to repentance is sometimes the lowest one, the pressure of necessity. (7) *Any motive is worthy that leads to the abandonment of sin and the search after God.*

18. I will arise and go. It is a great, good deed to form a good resolution; it is a greater, better deed to carry it out. Put all your good resolu-

tions into action at once. It is better to make a good resolution and break it than not to make a good resolution. But why make it and break it? One prompt step out on the road of virtue will lead to countless others and give you a healthful impetus toward goodness. **I have sinned against heaven.** "Heaven" stands for the God of heaven, the goodness of our Father who is in heaven. He had sinned against Providence, against every revelation, and every appearance of good. It was well for him to acknowledge this first of all. (8) *Nothing so well becomes the sinner as humble confession.* But the words may mean, "I have sinned as high as heaven." **Before thee.** He had greatly wronged his father, and felt that he must directly confess the wrong he had done.

19. No more worthy to be called thy son. (9) *One of the tokens of true repentance is deep consciousness of unworthiness.* Well said Mr. Moody, repentance is right about face.

20. To his father. It should read "toward his father." His father did not let him come to him, but met him a **great way off.** His loving eyes had wearily watched for his bad boy's return. **Had compassion.** Characteristic of God and the god-like man. **Ran.** (10) *God hastens to meet the repentant sinner.* **Fell on his neck.** Like a true oriental, who never hides his emotion. **Kissed him.** Over and over again. Professor Wright phrases it, "He rained kisses upon him."

21. The son said. He begins a mournful confession which was too profoundly felt to be ever forgotten, but he was cut short by his father's demonstrative affection.

22. But the father said. "When the far-away wanderer came back," says Dr. Cuyler, "he found six things: a father, a home, a welcome, a ring, a feast, and a song." **Bring forth the best robe.** The long embroidered robe which was worn by all Jews of quality. **Put a ring on his hand.** A token of dignity and power. Poor men in the East do not wear rings. **Shoes on his feet.** The shoes were really sandals. This, too, was symbolical. Shoes were worn only by freemen, never by slaves. The sinner saved is after all not a hired servant. He is received as a loving son, and his service henceforth is a service of love.

23. The fattened calf. Reserved for an occasion of feasting. **Kill it.** In the warm climate of the East meat must be eaten very soon after being killed. **Eat, and be merry.** Christ often represents his religion by the figure of a feast, never by that of a funeral. Flesh food is a luxury in the Orient, and the eating of it is often accompanied by noisy demonstration, such as wine drinking would produce at the present time.

24. Dead. Death is a figure of unrepented sin. **Alive again.** (11) *True life begins when the sinner, dead in trespasses, is awakened to life again by the voice of righteous men.*

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CRITICAL NOTES.

Verse 11. A certain man had two sons.

Some commentators immediately turn them into Jews and Gentiles. The interpretations of this beautiful and pathetic parable, which has been called "the Gospel within the Gospel," according to such views are very ingenious and very instructive; but the sober truth is, there is no ground at all in the parable itself, nor in the context, nor in the circumstances under which it was spoken, for such an interpretation. Further, there is no reason why this parable should have been called the parable of the Prodigal Son. Repentance is as marked in the character of the returning son as his prodigality, and we might with equal correctness, and with more suggestiveness of the blessed truth taught by it, call it the parable of the Repentant or of the Backslider. Verses one and two show the occasion. This man, said the Pharisees, receiveth sinners. Then Jesus justified his mercy and love by using two parables, the Lost Sheep and this parable of the Prodigal. Jews and Gentiles, as such, have nothing to do with this parable. It is the Gospel of humanity, and is intended primarily to set forth the love of God for every human being. To our thought, then, the younger son represents the world's publicans and sinners; the elder son stands for the Pharisees of that day and of all days who are self-righteous and spurn the "crowd," as unadjustable to higher living and unworthy of any particular interest on the part of heaven, of which they claim the monopoly. **Give me . . . that falleth to me.** This son is not asking for the generosity of his father; he is with wrong intent demanding, according to law, what belonged to him (Deut. 21. 17). Where law predominates as a force love lies low as a motive. Man alienates himself from God, his Father, and in this self-reliance makes himself in plan and purpose independent of God. This was the original sin in Eden, attempted independence of God. **And he divided.** The father lets him have his own way. His heart is estranged, his affections are elsewhere, and to compel him to remain would be worse than for him to learn by experience the folly of his sin. The service of God is the freedom of love. He who serves God must serve him with a willing mind. Our heavenly Father wants sons, not slaves.

13. Not many days after. He does not put his purpose into immediate execution. Few people do. He remains awhile at home, but the secret design is in his heart and it will soon make itself visible. Men do not become bad suddenly. The wicked deed has its roots in the past, and they have been silently growing in strength, and then some one act reveals all. **Wasted his substance.** Free from restraint, sinking from liberty to licentiousness, all that he left home with was squandered. Spiritually, man apart from God dissipates his ener-

gies, and wastes his powers and life forces in the things that can never satisfy him or recompense him for the outlay. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

14. And when he had spent all. He knows not what the future has in store for him, and so he continues his riotous living until a crisis is reached. The midnight is coming, the cry will be heard at the unexpected, unprepared hour, the lamp will be out, the oil gone. **He began to be in want.** He himself, as well as those with him, began to feel the need of assistance. The want did not come suddenly, but gradually it crept toward him and finally engulfed him. **There arose a mighty famine.** His want was the result of his own act. The famine was the outcome of the workings of Providence. It comes at the time when he has spent all and hunger and wretchedness stare him in the face. The soul that bankrupts itself in lawless living finds itself slipping yet lower down, when the ordinary graces and gifts of God are withdrawn and the man is made to feel the awful need in which he stands. But the famine was God's messenger.

15. Joined himself to a citizen. This son was not naturalized in that far country. He was no citizen of it, and his allying himself with a citizen there marks another step in his degradation. He who commits sin is the servant of sin. Man uses the world for selfishness, and by a mysterious law the very things he delighted in and made to serve him become his masters. **Sent . . . to feed swine.** In the eyes of the Jew this was the vilest occupation. Here, then, is another step downward. Satan never leaves a man where he finds him. To the profoundest depths of ignominy he drags him, and blasts his memory when he has ruined his soul.

16. He would fain have filled . . . with the husks. He was glad to eat the husks, the beans of the carob tree, not to satisfy his hunger, which they could not, but to allay his craving. In his *Confessions* Augustine says the soul was made for God, and nothing but God can satisfy it. **And no man gave unto him.** That is, no one gave him anything better. He did not need that any one should give him the husks—he had those—but food suitable, that was wanting, and hunger could not be appeased. The condition of the poor prodigal is now as low as it can go. He was a son, he is now a servant; would not love his father or be guided by him, he now serves in misery a master; would not remain in the father's house, he now labors among swine in the fields; he who ate the bread of comfort now eats the fodder of brutes. So man gone from God.

17. When he came to himself. Sin partakes of the nature of mental aberration. **Hired**

servants. They bore the same relation to his father that he did to the citizen, the owner of the swine. But it makes some difference whose servants we are, whether of sin or of righteousness.

18. I will arise. Hunger, surroundings, condition, memory of what he had been and what he had lost, impel him to return. **And will say unto him, Father.** Back of all his thoughts and alienations he still feels that the father is still father. In this sweet word which Jesus puts in the mouth of the prodigal he shows as it had never been shown the close relation between God and his erring children. If men did not even in their wanderings have some confidence in the unchangeableness of God's fatherly nature, they would not, for they could not, return to him. **I have sinned.** True repentance may be known by humble confession. Where there is no confession there can be no repentance, for there is nothing felt to repent of. Following confession is humility.

19. Am no more worthy. Consciousness of past failure, realization of unknown weakness, makes one truly humble and sparing of promises, doubtful of ability, and desirous of obscurity. Self-advertising and automatic laudation are self-condemned inducements to confidence. Hence, the penitent prodigal will say, **Make me as one of thy hired servants.** No demand is made for the position he forfeited.

20. A great way off. Jesus was a wonderful artist. With one touch which appeals to the human heart he shows the yearning love of the father ever watching for his son, and with a father's heart recognizing his son a long way off. The father's joy is excessive. He put on his returned son every symbol of honor.

24. For this my son was dead. Dead to him, to home, to filial love. **And is alive again.** Restored to all he left. **And they began to be merry.** In verse 6 the shepherd rejoices over the rescued sheep; in verse 9 the woman calls her neighbors; here the father calls the servants to share in the joy of his heart, and Jesus tells us the angels rejoice when the sinner returns from wandering.

Thoughts for Young People.

God Shows His Love to Sinners.

1. By revealing himself as a Father. Men regard their Creator with awe and their Judge with fear, but their Father with love; and we love God because he first loved us.

2. By his forbearance. No prodigal Pereaean youth ever showed such ingratitude, selfishness, and rebellion toward his earthly father as most of us have shown toward God; and no earthly relative was ever half so lenient as he.

3. By his bounty. Far more than "our portion of goods" has been given us. Think of the peren-

nial munificence of Providence "while we were yet sinners."

4. By his patience in waiting for our return from the "far country." He is the eternal "Lover of my soul."

5. By his eagerness to save. He longs to pardon even the "chief of sinners."

6. By his spiritual blessings, lavished upon all who turn toward him. Feasts and robes and rings are but faint types of his welcome given to the returning penitent even in this world, and the delights of heaven "do not yet appear."

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

The division of the property appears not to have been impossible, as it is in India among Hindus, where the family is a corporation—all the property being held by the oldest father of the group of married sons. There it is customary for men of the family to wander far from home to secure employment, but they send of their savings to the corporation treasury, and, if they are sick, return home—all the families descended from one father being of right participants in the undivided estate. It is not even divided at death, as the oldest father inherits the entire property to be held for the cooperative group of families. Under Jewish law the son had no legal right to ask for a division of the property while the father was still living; then they might choose to divide or not, share and share alike, among the sons, the oldest son having double that of the others. If these two of the parable were all the sons, then the younger would be entitled to one third of the estate at the death of his father. Now, he could not get more than an estimated equity, for the servant, houses, and lands do not appear to have been touched. Whether the father gave him any principal, or only his portion of the revenue or income, scarcely seems determinable, as there is apparently no law nor custom to found his claim on that he got anything except what would have accrued to him to live on if he had remained at home.

The carob tree, known as St. John's bread, is a box-horn, related to the locust tree, one species having pods like the locusts, which furnishes but a slight amount of coarse nutriment, eaten only by poorest people in great extremity and sometimes, for want of better food, given to cattle and hogs. The fact of its being fed to these, however, shows the scarcity which the famine had superinduced. The Syriac version of the gospels speaks of it as "the food of beasts." R. Simeon ben Joehai and his son, when hid in a cave for fear of the king, are reputed by legend to have been supported by the miracle of the creation of a carob tree for them.

The welcome of the returning son was celebrated with a meat feast. Solid meat is rarely eaten in

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Syria, beef seldom under any circumstances. In summer mutton is scarce, and lean goat's flesh is all that is eaten in many localities for months at a time. This cannot be kept to render it tender, hence it is stewed or boiled while the carcass is still warm. The Bedouins, who rarely taste meat on any other occasion, on the arrival of a guest whom they desire to honor, kill a sheep, lamb, or goat, the wealthiest, however, only affording a calf, the entire animal being cooked at once in a great iron pot. When cooked the joints appear whole, but, being boiled to tenderness, are easily pulled into shreds with thumb and forefingers, that being the manner of partaking of it.

The essential meaning of this lesson is compassed in a proverb after an Eastern formula, thus: "If a man draw near to God an inch, God will draw near to him an ell;" or, "Who approaches me a span, to him do I make haste an ell; and who comes to meet me, to him do I make haste in leaps."

By Way of Illustration.

Verses 11-17. Sonship. Let us notice that the sinful son was still a son. The sheep which the shepherd sought was not a goat or a wolf; it was lost, but it still belonged to the shepherd, and he sought it because it was his own. The coin which the woman lost was not a counterfeit; it was still a coin bearing the image of the king, and though lost belonged in a very real sense to the woman who sought it, and she sought it because it was her own. The prodigal was not an alien, born outside the father's house and rescued and adopted; he was a son before he left the father's house, and to the father he still remained "my son." "All souls are mine, saith the Lord." The sinner is God's. He is not a child of the devil whom God is endeavoring to lure away from his own paternity and give to him a fictitious relation to himself. We may be bad sons, but we are still his sons.—*W. E. Barton.*

Verses 22-24. The love of God. The marriage of an English noble to an American heiress brings no joy to the great court of heaven. The winning of kingdoms and crowns is of small account in the heavenly world. But let the vilest, humblest, poorest sinner repent of his sin, and at once there is jubilee in glory, while angels and archangels and all the host of heaven join in the oratorios of joy.—*Talmage.*

The story is told of a young woman in Scotland who left her home and became an outcast in Glasgow. Her mother sought her far and wide, but in vain. At last she caused her picture to be hung upon the walls of the Midnight Mission rooms where abandoned women resorted. Many gave the picture a passing glance. One lingered by the picture. It is the same dear face that looked down

upon her in her childhood. She has not forgotten nor cast off her sinning child, or her picture would never have hung upon those walls. The lips seemed to open and whisper, "Come home; I forgive you and love you still." The poor girl sank down. She was the prodigal daughter. The sight of her mother's face had broken her heart. Take the picture of a loving Father into the places of vice, show him as forgiving and loving still, and the wanderers will return.—*Mooly.*

The Teachers' Meeting.

Make a brief "word-picture."... Make sure that peculiar phrases and all "manners and customs" alluded to are fully understood: "portion of goods," "living," "a far country," "husks," "swine feeding," "robe," "ring," "shoes," "fatted calf," "men kissing," etc.... This lesson is so fruitful of thought that we are in danger of attempting to teach too much. Choose a simple outline and keep close to it, and you will secure the best results. Take the line presented in "Thoughts for Young People," or any of the following: I. (1) The misery of sin; (2) The way of salvation; (3) The mercy of God; (4) The joy of forgiveness.... II. The four steps of the sinner: (1) Selfishness; (2) Ingratitude; (3) Separation from God; (4) Worldly pleasure. The four steps of repentance: (1) Thinking; (2) Resolving; (3) Seeking; (4) Confessing. The four privileges of the penitent: (1) Welcome; (2) Pardon; (3) Honor; (4) Joy.... III. Draw out the elements of repentance, the privileges of salvation, and the attributes of God illustrated by this parable.... Additional practical lessons: (1) The root of sin is alienation of the heart from God; (2) True repentance affects the (a) understanding, (b) the affection, (c) the will; (3) The pardoned sinner is restored to the full measure of his first estate.

Before the Class.

Inasmuch as Jesus seems to have spoken this parable primarily against the Pharisees (whom he typifies in the elder brother), and as his own defense for loving sinners, let us strive to arouse in our scholars' minds a love like his for lost souls and a superiority to the Pharisaic, elder-brother spirit, touching incidentally upon our own lost, prodigal state, and our Father's welcoming love.

Who likes to read a good story? Don't you enjoy reading about some one who did a good, noble deed, like rescuing somebody from ruin? You want it to end happily? Listen, then, while I tell you the story that Jesus told in to-day's lesson—one of the most beautiful stories in all literature. Hold up your hand if I make a mistake. [Tell, graphically but briefly, in your own words, including the incident of the elder brother.]

Now, whom did Jesus mean by "the father" in the story? God. Who is the prodigal? The sinner. That includes us, doesn't it? Yes; we have all run away from our loving Father's house into sin. I hope we have never done any of the dreadful things this young man did; but then, you know, what is dreadful to one person seems all right to another. [Illustrate.] And when our eyes are opened, so that we see sin as God sees it, we come to ourselves just as the prodigal did, and find ourselves clad in rags of self-righteousness, feeding with swine on the husks of worldly pleasure. Then we turn and seek our Father's house, and he welcomes us in all our misery, as this father did. People call that being converted. Wouldn't it be a happy time if every prodigal were to come home! Have you come home?

But a great many sinners are prodigals still. Some are nearly or quite as bad as that young man. Can a person continue in sin of any kind and not show the effects of it sooner or later? I know one sin that many prodigals indulge in. It makes the face red, takes away a man's sense, money, good clothes, character, happiness, the happiness of his dear ones, his hope of heaven, and finally brings him to the grave of a —? But all sin leads to unhappiness. Did you ever get into serious trouble through your own wrongdoing?

When a man commits sin and gets into trouble and disgrace, what do some people say? "Served him right." Yes; I have heard people say, "That man needn't expect any help or sympathy from me; it was all his own fault." Is that the way God treats us? How did Jesus feel toward sinners? This is the way it looks to me: If the man had been innocent and the trouble came, we should all pity him; how much more when he has the trouble and the sin too! Do we need to apologize for his sin or pass it over lightly? Does God always remove the penalty, even when he forgives the prodigal? No; but he loves him.

Now, that elder brother is the man who says, "Serves him right." As far as he detests the sins of the prodigal he is right. But when he objects to the father's welcome, do you agree with him or with the father?

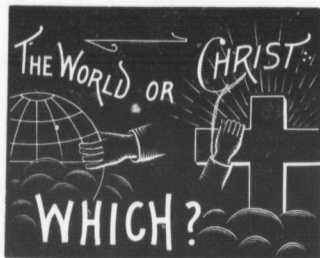
What shall the peacemakers be called? Is it not even more blessed to bring together man and God than man and man? Would you have been willing to go out and bring that prodigal back to his father?

Now let us, for a minute, hold a committee meeting and decide what we can do this week to help some poor prodigal to come back to his Father's house. Who will be with us if we try to work for him?

References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 12: Division of property, 779.
Ver. 15: Swine feeding, 780. Ver. 20: Men kissing, 53. Ver. 22: Shoes, 654.

Blackboard.



LOST.

THE SON.

WILLFUL,
WASTEFUL,
WANTING.

I.

SELFISH,
INFUL,
SUFFERING.

LOST THROUGH

LUSTFUL
LIVING.

WILLFUL
WANDERING

"Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die."

FOUND.

THE SON'S

REMEMBRANCE
REPENTANCE
RETURN

MY

REPENTANCE
AND
PRAYER

BRINGS

RESTORATION

TO ALL

PRIVILEGES OF SONSHIP.

"There is joy . . . over one sinner that repenteth."

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

No. 1.

Jesus is tenderly calling.
Why do you wait?
Just as I am.
I was a wandering sheep.
Rescue the perishing.

No. 2.

Hear thou my prayer.
Saviour, I come to thee.
Come, every soul.
I'm kneeling at the door.
Like the prodigal.

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A. D. 30.] LESSON IV. THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

[April 26.]

GOLDEN TEXT. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Luke 16. 13.

Authorized Version.

Luke 16. 19-31.

[Commit to memory verses
25, 26.]

[Read the chapter, Luke 16.]

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day :

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table : moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into A'bra-ham's bosom : the rich man also died, and was buried :

23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth A'bra-ham afar off, and Laz'arus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father A'bra-ham, have mercy on me, and send Laz'arus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue ; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But A'bra-ham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and likewise Laz'arus evil things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed : so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot ; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house :

28 For I have five brethren ; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 A'bra-ham saith unto him, They have Mo'ses and the prophets ; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father A'bra-ham : but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Mo'ses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Revised Version.

19 Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring
20 sumptuously every day : and a certain beggar named Laz'arus was laid at his gate, full of
21 sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table ; yea, even the
22 dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was
23 carried away by the angels into A'bra-ham's bosom : and the rich man also died, and was
24 buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth A'bra-ham afar
25 off, and Laz'arus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father A'bra-ham, have mercy on
26 me, and send Laz'arus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue ;
27 for I am in anguish in this flame. But A'bra-ham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-
28 time receivest thy good things, and Laz'arus in like manner evil things : but now here he is
29 comforted, and thou art in anguish. And be-
30 side all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they which would pass
31 from hence to you may not be able, and that
27 none may cross over from thence to us. And
28 he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou
29 wouldest send him to my father's house ; for I
30 have five brethren ; that he may testify unto
31 them, lest they also come into this place of tor-
ment. But A'bra-ham saith, They have Mo'ses
and the prophets ; let them hear them. And
he said, Nay, father A'bra-ham : but if one go
to them from the dead, they will repent. And
he said unto him, If they hear not Mo'ses and
the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if
one rise from the dead.

TIME.—A. D. 30 (probably). **ENVIRONMENT.**—This parable was uttered by our Lord somewhere in Perea, during his last journey to Jerusalem. It is given only by Luke.

HOME READINGS.

M. The Rich Man and Lazarus. Luke 16. 19-31.

Tu. Dangerous ease. Amos 6. 1-8.

W. Unsafe trusting. Luke 12. 13-21.

Th. Wealth without goodness. Eccles. 6.

F. "Love not the world." 1 John 2. 8-17.

S. Treasure in heaven. Matt. 6. 19-34.

S. The eternal reward. Matt. 25. 31-46.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 248, New Canadian Hymnal.

Give me the wings of faith to rise,
Within the veil, and see.

No. 235, New Canadian Hymnal.

Who are these arrayed in white.

Brighter than the noon-day sun !

No. 243, New Canadian Hymnal.

Sitting by the gateway of a palace fair,

Once a child of God was left to die.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. Our Lord's View of a Palace, v. 19-21.

What class in antiquity was robed in purple ?
Was it sinful to live, like the rich man, a life of
banquets ?

Were there many beggars in the ancient Orient ?
Why was this one laid at the rich man's gate ?

For what portion of the rich man's food did Laz-
arus hunger ?

What horrible incident aggravated the pains of his ulceration and hunger?

What does Jesus say of the rich? (Matt. 19. 24.)

2. Our Lord's View of Hell, v. 22-26.

When the beggar died what became of his soul? Why do you suppose nothing is said about his funeral?

When the rich man died what became of his body?

Why do you suppose nothing is said about his escort into the invisible world?

By what phrase did the Jews describe the happy condition of the blessed?

What is meant by the word "hell" in the New Testament?

What was the condition of the rich man in the other world?

Where did he see Abraham and Lazarus?

What relationship to Abraham did he claim?

On what errand did he ask that Lazarus might be sent?

Did this request indicate arrogance, or was it a pitiful cry for mercy?

What may we infer concerning retribution after death from this narrative?

Did Abraham recognize the sonship of the rich man?

How will memory affect us in the future life?

What four ominous words in Matt. 6. 2 illustrate verse 25?

What did the rich man choose during his lifetime?

Was he punished in the other world because he had been rich here, or because he was self-centered?

Was Lazarus rewarded because he had been a beggar in this life, or because he had used its painful discipline to make his character better?

What does the impassable great gulf mean?

What lesson had the rich man now to learn? (GOLDEN TEXT.)

3. Our Lord's View of the Human Heart, v. 27-31.

What inference may be drawn from the request of the 27th and 28th verses?

Why did Abraham refuse this request?

Would you not suppose that men who neglect Bible warnings would be made serious by the appearance of a warning ghost?

What was Abraham's final response?

Who now speaks to us from the skies? (Heb. 1. 1, 2.)

What does God command us to do? (Luke 9. 35.)

Practical Teachings.

1. Death is not a "sleep and a forgetting." No interval of unconsciousness on the part of either Lazarus or the rich man is intimated.

2. A man's *choice* determines his character, not his *chances*. Even without the "law and the prophets" an unenlightened heathen may choose that which is good, and his blind gropings after virtue will be regarded by God. But law, prophets, Gospel, and ghostly warnings, all added together, will not of themselves alter the conduct of the man whose evil heart has chosen evil.

3. Better Potter's Field and a convoy of angels than a pompous funeral and fiery torments.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That we cannot serve God and mammon?
2. That there is no path from hell to heaven?
3. That the Bible is God's final warning to men?

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. Verses 19-21.

19. Whom did the rich man represent? How is his great wealth indicated?

20. What words are used to show how helpless Lazarus was?

2. Verses 22-26.

22. What was meant by "Abraham's bosom"?

23. How are men divided after death?

24. Which is the only prayer to saints mentioned in the Bible? Was it answered?

25. Will there be memory in the life to come?

What are the "good things" of the rich man?

26. Why is the gulf called "great"?

3. Verses 27-31.

28. What led him to ask for a message to his brethren? What did the request imply?

29. How has it been proved that the return of people from the other world would not lead people to repent?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Our gifts and possessions are to be used for God and our fellows. There will be terrible changes in the next world. We cannot hide our real condition from God. Sins of omission will condemn many. The evil and the good will be separated hereafter. It is not more light we need, but an eye to see and a heart to love. Our last chance comes in this life.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What did this story Jesus told teach?

Who was the rich man, and how did he live?

What does "Dives" mean? **A rich man.**

What does the name of the beggar mean? **The help of God.**

What do you know about the beggar?

Why ought the rich man to have helped him? **Because he needed help.**

Why did he pass the poor man by?

Where did Lazarus go when he died?

Where did the rich man go?
 What made the difference?
 What did Dives see one day?
 What did he ask?
 Why could he not get help?
 What spirit do we carry into the next life?

Questions to Think About.
 Do you like to keep your good things to yourself?
 Do you ever give away something you want to keep?
 How much did Jesus give up for your sake?

LESSON OUTLINE.

The Saved and the Lost.

I. THE SAVED HEREAFTER.

- His Privilege.** *Carried by the angels.* v. 22.
 Shall gather together his elect. Matt. 24. 31.
 We shall all be changed. 1 Cor. 15. 51.
- His Fellowship.** *Into Abraham's bosom.* v. 22.
 Shall I know even as . . . am known. 1 Cor. 13. 12.
 So shall we ever be with the Lord. 1 Thess. 4. 17.
- His Happiness.** *He is comforted.* v. 25.
 God shall wipe away all tears. Rev. 21. 4.
 Eternal weight of glory. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

II. THE LOST CONDITION.

- Consciousness.** *He lifted up his eyes.* v. 23.
 There shall be weeping. Luke 13. 28.
 The fire is not quenched. Mark 9. 43.

2. Misery.

I am tormented. v. 24.
 The smoke of their torment. Rev. 14. 11.
 Tribulation and anguish. Rom. 2. 9.

- Separation.** *A great gulf fixed.* v. 26.
 From the presence of the Lord. 2 Thess. 1. 9.
 Depart from me, ye cursed. Matt. 25. 41.

III. THE WAY OF SALVATION.

- Knowledge.** *Moses and the prophets.* v. 29.
 Search the Scriptures. . . . eternal life. John 5. 39.
- Heeding.** *Let them hear them.* v. 29.
 Seek ye the Lord. Isa. 55. 7.
- Repentance.** *They will repent.* v. 30.
 Repent ye and believe. Mark 1. 15.
- Faith.** *Be persuaded.* v. 31.
 Believed Moses. . . . believed me. John 5. 46.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

General Statement.

While proceeding on his Perea journey Jesus was on one occasion brought into contact with a number of Pharisees who rejected with disdain his teachings concerning worldliness. Christ declared that the opinions of earth were not the standard of heaven. To show that the most envied here are not the favorites there, and that the despised here may prove the honored ones hereafter, the Lord lifts the curtain of the eternal world, and bids his revilers look upon the contrast of the rich man and Lazarus, both in this life and the life to come. It was now about three months before the crucifixion, and our Lord was still in Perea. Conjecturally we may locate the historical setting of this parable near Bethabara, beyond Jordan, late in December, A. D. 29, or early in January, A. D. 30. It was uttered not long after the parable of the prodigal son.

Verse 19. A certain rich man. Unnamed. The rich men of America are known by name even to schoolboys. It is the poor whose names are unknown in the world's conversation. But God has other standards, and writes some poor men's names in the roll books of heaven, where earthly riches do not count. This man is often called Dives, but that is simply the Latin word for "a rich man." **Clothed in purple and fine linen.** In the Orient a man's social rank, and generally also his trade, is shown by his dress. The uniform black garments of Europe and America, which make many a hungry poor man look as "respectable" as a millionaire, are unknown in that land of color and shadow. A rich man carries as much of his wealth as he can on his person, and in ancient times often ran through a whole gamut of color to show forth his wealth. Unostentatious wealth is unknown in the Orient. Pur-

ple robes were the sign of highest rank. There was a famous purple dye, made from a Syrian sea-shell, which was of almost incalculable value, but is now lost. Dr. M. R. Vincent says that under the term purple were included three distinct and very beautiful colors: a deep violet, a deep scarlet, and a deep blue. The first two were much in demand as dyes of wool. Fine linen was used for the inner garment. It was made from a sort of flax that grew on the banks of the Nile, was as soft as silk, and could be woven so fine as to be practically transparent. This Egyptian fine linen is also of wonderful costliness. **Fared sumptuously every day.** With wine and song, movement and color, luxuries for the palate, the ear, and the eye, he made his whole life one prolonged banquet. How he acquired his riches we are not told, and it would have no bearing on the moral of this story.

20. A certain beggar. Literally, a poor man. **Lazarus.** The same name as Eleazar, which means "God-is-the-helper." This is the only instance of a personal name in all our Lord's parables. (1) *Even the poorest of saints is known by name to the Saviour. Was laid at his gate.* We infer that he was too feeble to limp there, so had to be borne. The word translated "laid" would better be "thrown," left carelessly there. The gates in the East are almost constantly infested by beggars. The rich man could not pass from his business to his domestic luxuries without the presence of a beggar. (2) *So throughout the world, the rich and the poor meet face to face. Full of sores.* This is to be contrasted with the sumptuous fare of the rich man. Hard as times are occasionally, and desperate as is the condition of many in our land constantly, it still remains true that by comparison we do not know in America and western Europe what poverty is. The famished condition of hundreds of thousands of people in the Orient no pen can write. They do not know, from one end of their lives to the other, a day when they are better off than the prodigal son in the far country. Acorns and carob pods and pinches of barley are luxuries to them. And such poverty tends directly to painful ulcerations.

21. Desiring. Hungering, but not receiving. **Crumbs.** We make fine bread, so fine that the delicate and dainty might leave the crust and eat the soft portion; there was, on the other hand, a bread made in the ancient Orient of which the crust was the better portion. The inside was doughy and tough, but the crust was delicate in flavor and crisp in texture. It was this soft, doughy part which the luxurious wiped their fingers on and threw away, that Lazarus desired. **Moreover.** But even, **The dogs.** The ownerless, hungry dogs of Eastern cities are the only scavengers. They are detested by every one, and would not have been tolerated by Lazarus if he had had physical strength to drive them away. **Licked his sores.** There is no indication of tenderness on their part, and the licking aggravated and did not alleviate his sufferings. It should be added that in the East all the garbage and remains are thrown out into the street after every banquet.

22. The beggar died. To him death was a happy release. **Was carried.** His death was not the end, but the beginning of life. (3) *The real life is that of the spirit, which death cannot kill.* His soul was carried. "How shall we bury you, Socrates?" said Phaedon to the dying philosopher. "Just as you please," said Socrates, "if you can catch me." **By the angels.** "This," says Dr. Plumptre, "is in accord with the popular Jewish belief. Either good angels in general, or the special guardian angels of the righteous, took on them this office." **Abraham's bosom.** A popular phrase among the Jews to indicate the

heavenly state. Abraham was the father of the faithful, and he was supposed under God to "do the honors of heaven." When orientals thought of the dinner table the picture that came up to them was of friendly people reclining side by side very near to each other; almost "spoon fashion," as we might say. The man who thus reclined at the banquet table of heaven next to Abraham would be the most honored guest—the one who lay in Abraham's bosom. Those who have entered into heaven would also be there. **The rich man also died.** (4) *Not all the gold in California can buy off death. Was buried.* And doubtless his funeral was suitably pompous, but (5) *It is of more importance what becomes of one's spirit than what becomes of one's body.*

23. Hell. "Hades." The invisible world where, in the belief of the Jews, the spirits of dead men lived without their bodies; but they are separated, the righteous from the wicked. **Lifted up his eyes.** The spirit is represented as having similar senses to those enjoyed and suffered on earth. **Being in torments.** Suffering. **Seeth Abraham afar off.** At we know not what distance, amid the delights of heaven. **Lazarus in his bosom.** The wretched beggar of earth was now in the very heart of the heavenly banquet.

24. He cried. Shouted out so that his voice could soar over the great gulf, or chasm, between the two groups. **Father Abraham.** By birth this rich man, like Lazarus also, was a son of Abraham, and this was equivalent to modern church membership. It fixed close relations with God and his people. A quaint old English writer notices that the rich man is quite willing to say "Father Abraham," but even in his "torments" he does not say "Brother Lazarus." (6) *There are many even in hell that call Abraham father.* **Send Lazarus.** It is easy to fancy that even in hell this man thought of himself as better than the beggar who used to lie helpless at his gate, but that thought comes from the nineteenth century and from our surroundings. Christ our Lord pictures him as being concentrated in his attention upon Abraham and Lazarus, and he asks that the only one of the two who could leave the banquet should come to his relief. **Cool my tongue.** His request for a few drops of water from Lazarus's finger tips is as moderate as had been the desire of Lazarus for the broken pieces of bread. "The man who had lived so luxuriously now speaks of relief for his tongue, which had been gratified by dainties. This hints at the close connection with sin and its punishment."—*Riddle. I am tormented.* I am suffering pain. **In this flame.** The anguish or remorse which comes when the conscious sinner is brought into the presence of the holiness of God, which is as a consuming fire, is as intolerable as the touch of earthly flame is to the nerves of the mortal body.

25. Abraham said. The temptation is to get into this parable thoughts which may be correct enough, but which are not deducible from this text. It is well to notice also what Abraham did not say—he did not rebuke the rich man for praying to him, for instance. **Son.** Acknowledging the relationship on which the poor rich man builds his hopes. **Remember.** (7) *On memory will hang much of the joy and much of the pain of eternity. Thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things.* The thought goes much further than that he merely got good things. The meaning is rather that he lived in those good things; that his horizon was sensuous; that he did not care for spiritual life. **Lazarus evil things.** He had in a true sense chosen pains on earth as the price of heavenly joys. Not that the offer ever was made to him to choose between a life of wealth and comfort and a life of poverty and pain. If that choice had been given him it would have been his duty to choose the better of the two, but he evidently had lived a spiritual life, and the story shows that that was accompanied by temporal misadventure of the most painful sort. So now in heaven comes God's opportunity to right the wrong.

26. Besides all this. Not only is it wrong, unjust, it is impracticable. **There is a great gulf fixed.** A chasm, a canyon. (8) *Character is permanent. Neither can they pass.* There is no hint of a purgatory, a progression, or an eternal hope; but we again caution our teachers and scholars against regarding this parable as a portraiture of the actual conditions in the eternal world. Throughout the story we are in the region of symbolic imagery.

27, 28. Send him to my father's house.

Perhaps from a burning desire to save others—perhaps in a weak attempt to accuse God of not having given him enough opportunity. **Five brethren.** If the story throws any light on conditions in the eternal world, then we are to gather from this that there is much solicitude and love on the part of the departed ones for those they have left on earth. **Testify.** Tell them what he had seen of their brother.

29. Moses and the prophets. Sufficient to warn a heedful man from wicked self-indulgence. (9) *But how much clearer light have we with the New Testament in addition to the Old!*

30. Nay. The unhappy man thinks he knows his brothers better than Abraham himself. **From the dead.** This thought is the same we all have. How impressive would be the words of a ghost spoken to us—if such a thing could really be. **Will repent.** The rich man here recognizes his failure to repent as being the reason of his being in the place of torment.

31. If they hear not Moses and the prophets. The Scriptures are sufficient for salvation. **Neither will they be persuaded.** (10) *They who spurn God's word would sneer at a voice from the grave.* The raising of Lazarus of Bethany was a singular confirmation of this statement. "An apparition from the dead," says Dr. Trumbull, "might frighten men, but it would not change their natures nor cause them to think less of self and its gratification." (11) *Infidelity and humble faith in God are produced in most instances, not by outward circumstances, but by a man's own decision.* (12) *There are few men who have not within handy reach all means necessary to secure their salvation.*

CRITICAL NOTES.

Verse 19. A certain rich man. This is a parable of contrasts, riches and poverty, feasting and hunger, rich clothing and fine company, nakedness and dogs, heaven and hell. Note that against this man no flagrant sin is charged. **Purple and fine linen.** Beautiful combination of colors and richness of material. The purple dye was obtained from a sea shellfish, and the small quantity produced by each fish made it very costly. The fine linen was the Egyptian byssus. It was of exceeding whiteness and very soft. Such was his clothing. **Fared sumptuously.** Cheered his heart, enjoyed himself every day in a sumptuous manner.

20. A certain beggar. Literally, a certain poor man. **Named Lazarus.** That is, El-azer, "God-is-help." This is the only instance where a name is given to a character in any of the parables. **Was laid.** Had been laid as a customary act, perhaps.

21. Desiring to be fed. Was wishing to be

fed with the "scraps," says Bloomfield, "which chance to be sent from the table." **Dogs came . . . licked.** This is not said to show the ministry of the dogs, but the cruel neglect of the man at whose gate the poor man lay. His wretchedness might move the compassion of a dog, but it could not touch the heart of the self-indulgent man. Whether a dumb brute may have more humanity in him than a human being depends upon the human.

22. The beggar died. His death is to be attributed to neglect. This neglect is chargeable to the rich man, who had the means and the opportunity to relieve him. **Abraham's bosom.** In Jewish thought the general receptacle for the holy ones, where the patriarchs rest in peace and joy. The angels bear the soul of the outcast, friendless beggar to the company of the blessed in the eternal home. **Rich man . . . died, . . . was buried.** What a keen sense of the uses and power of language our Lord possessed! Contrast the

angels carrying Lazarus to heaven and the empty pomp of the rich man's funeral, he going to Hades.

23. In hell. Lazarus and the rich man are both in the invisible spirit world, which is divided into two regions, with an impassable gulf between.

24. Send Lazarus. So ingrained in the soul of the rich man was his conceit of the inferiority of Lazarus that even in hell his inborn egotism expresses itself. On earth he would not go to Lazarus. He now craves Lazarus be sent to him.

Dip the tip of his finger in water. Such is the depths to which he has sunk—sumptuous dining yesterday, begging for a drop of water today! **Tormented in this flame.** Spirit-suffering can only be expressed under physical forms. What Gehenna is no tongue can tell. If we say our Lord spoke in figures and there may be nothing corresponding, we trifle with terrible realities, for a figure must be the figure of something, and the thing figured is always more than the figure.

25. Remember. What a man leaves at death is the material. He takes all that has entered into his life. Hence he cannot blot out what he has known. Memory lives, and remembering is the agony of hell's agony. **Thy good things.** The things he had placed before him as the highest good and which were good to him. **Evil things.** Eternal justice cannot continue earthly conditions in the spirit world, because the unfeeling would feel the need of comfort; conditions change.

26. Great gulf fixed. Right is right and wrong is wrong. The distinction between them is not arbitrary. It is grounded in the eternal constitution of things, and cannot be otherwise unless the moral nature of God can be other than it is. The moral difference is **fixed**, always was and always will be. In this verse we also see that the moral states or conditions in the other world are so separated that passage from one to the other is impossible. Hell is eternal, and "eternal hope" is eternal despair.

27. In this verse we see the dreadful effect of a consciousness of being lost manifesting itself. The appeal that Lazarus be sent to his **father's house** arises not from love for those left on earth, but from a deep sense of resentment against God, for it is as if the rich man had said, "If I had been warned I would not have been here, and I am therefore wrongly punished." And yet, as Alford thinks, sympathy may be felt by a lost soul.

29. They have Moses and the prophets. The rich man had them also, and therefore was warned, and so he could not impugn the justice of God.

30. Nay, . . . but if one . . . from the dead. On earth this man had no regard for God's word. Moses and the prophets had no influence with him. In hell he continues to discount the same

word, but wants other means resorted to than the power of the truth attentively considered.

31. If they hear not. The moral nature is changed by moral truth. And not only will they not repent as the rich man imagined, but they will not even be **persuaded**. Unless there is a disposition for the truth, miracles will not change the heart. The rich man lost his soul because he loved this present world and neglected his fellow-man, and he neglected him because he had neglected God and God's word.

Thoughts for Young People.

On the Future Life.

1. There is a life beyond the grave, both for the just and the unjust. (Verse 22.)
2. The future life will be one of individual conscious existence and of keen susceptibility. (Verses 22, 23.)
3. The future life will have its own standards and principles of judgment, utterly different from those of earth. (Verse 23.)
4. The future life will have distinctions based, not on social or hereditary or financial differences, but on character only. (Verse 24.)
5. The future life will have distinctions which are eternal between saint and sinner. (Verse 26.)
6. The future life will have knowledge, companionship, communion between souls of kindred character. (Verses 23-25.)
7. The future life will have pains and penalties from which souls may vainly strive to free themselves. (Verse 25.)
8. The future life will depend upon the use which is made of the present life of the opportunities of salvation. (Verses 29-31.)

Orientalisms of the Lesson.

Herodotus describes a custom of the Babylonians thus: "They have no physicians, but when a man is ill they lay him in the public square, and the passers-by come to him; and if they have ever had this disease themselves, or have known anyone who has suffered from it, they give him advice, and no one is allowed to pass the sick man in silence, without asking him what his ailment is." Van Lennep says that this is so far the practice of the East still that a poor sick man may have to swallow a different drug every half hour, and drugs are cheap and so abundant that they become a chief article of export, as witness the variety of specimens exhibited in the various World's Expositions. He says anyone can practice medicine without warrant or diploma, and the doctor and the dervish with drugs and delusions travel about from city to city, making bargains at the bedside of the sick to cure them for a stipulated sum, of which they get as much as they can in advance, and then abandon the patient. The diseases which ultimate in sores

are numerous. An imperceptible sand fills the air of Egypt, vermin abound, the water is too dirty to use for cleansing sores, whether of eyes or wounds or eruptions of the skin. Skin diseases and those which develop in sores are often mentioned in the course of Hebrew history, often as a curse which God sent to punish the people.

By Way of Illustration.

Verses 19. No man can tell whether he is rich or poor by turning to his ledger. It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich or poor according to what he is, not according to what he has.—*Beecher.*

It were no bad comparison to liken mere rich men to camels and mules. They are often laden with India purple and gems upon their backs, attended, too, by a long line of servants as a safeguard on their way. Soon they come to their evening halting place, and forthwith their precious burdens are taken from their backs, and they, now wearied and stripped of their lading and their retinue of slaves, show nothing but livid marks of stripes. So also those who glitter in gold and purple raiment, when the evening of life comes, have nothing to show but the wounds of sin impressed upon them by the evil use of riches.—*St. Augustine.*

Verses 20 and 21. Luther said once, "I thank thee, O God, that thou hast made me a poor man on the earth!" When the elector sent him a valuable present, he begged him to send no more, for he began to be afraid that he should be numbered among those whose portion is in this world.

Verses 23. "Where is hell?" asked a scoffer. "Anywhere outside of heaven," was the answer.

Verses 24-31. Dives is not charged with open immorality. All that is implied is, that he failed to employ his riches as God's trustee for the benefit of his fellow-men and for the glory of him to whom they belonged. He kept them to himself and spent them simply and only on his own enjoyment. The beggar that sat neglected at his gate is the little feature which indicates his great unfaithfulness. He did no more for the outlying world than he did for the poor diseased Lazarus. He was like the lady of whom Thomas Hood has sung, whose large wealth might have relieved the world's suffering, but who never thought of such work until when, in her dream confronted with death, she saw the blind, the crippled, and the hungry and homeless and famished and naked whom she might have helped and did not. Dives was a type of those to whom it shall be said, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." And the lesson of his history is that to live for one's self is to lose one's self.—*Dr. W. M. Taylor.*

Christ depicts the divergence of characters by

the "great gulf." Character is an engraving more enduring than ever burin has traced upon hardest steel. It lasts. Death does not modify it. Dives finds it natural to ask the once beggar to bring him a drop of water. He wishes Lazarus to go back to warn his brothers. In every movement of the scene he regards Lazarus as inferior still. The same conceit is manifest in each new delineation of his character. The "great gulf" began on earth. Between the two there had been nothing in common. Is this fact not daily evident? Is there not a gulf between the libertine and the virtuous, between the drunkard and the clean man, the murderer and his innocent victim. People walk our very streets, touching elbows, who are farther apart than New York and London. The gulf begins with sin.—*D. O. Mears.*

Before the Class.

The lessons which may be drawn from this parable are almost as numerous as the questions which it will be sure to provoke. We will do well, however, to take for granted, as Jesus did, the future state of rewards and punishments, the impassable gulf, the sufficiency of the Scriptures, and other fruitful topics, and concentrate attention upon the lesson that selfish worldliness has no place in the kingdom of heaven, and is inexcusable.

What is the inside of a rich man's house like? Tell us about it. Do you know any rich men? What are some of the pleasures of riches? Are all rich men bad? [Talk about one or two Christian men of wealth known to the class.] And yet the Scriptures are full of warnings about the danger of riches. It is easier, Jesus says, for a camel, etc. What does Paul say is a root of all evil? Not money, but the love of money. And yet, if we have money, we love it, don't we? How rich will you have to be before you will love money? Love it now, do you? Take care; you are in danger.

There are two dangers in loving money. The first is this: You cannot love money and love God too. What does the Golden Text say? Mammon was the Syrian god of riches. Repent the first commandment. Could God say it any more plainly than that? The other danger is the one that this parable tells about: You cannot love money and love your neighbor too. Suppose we say those words together.

Now for the parable. Tell about the rich man. Does it say that he was wicked? No; he was just rich and selfish, and never did anything for poor Lazarus, except to let the servants throw out the crumbs to him. Does it say Lazarus was good? He was a devout Jew, of course, or he would not have gone to heaven; but all the parable says is that he was a sick beggar at the rich

man's gate. There were no hospitals then; they are a product of Christianity. [In older classes say a word for organized charity. Giving alms at the door may not be a test of one's true charity now; but it was then.]

By and by they both died. I suppose the rich man had a big funeral. Where did they go? Both went to "hell," or Hades, the place of departed spirits, good and bad; Dives was in the place of torment, on the other side of the great gulf or chasm. The Jews called heaven "Abraham's bosom." [Go over the dialogue to end of lesson.]

Now, what was Dives—that means the rich man—sent into torment for? Not for being rich; we saw that before. Not for being happy, any more than Lazarus was rewarded for being miserable. He went there because he received his good things and kept them for himself. What should he have done? But perhaps he knew no better—what does Abraham say about that? Who is our great Prophet? Where does he tell us these will go who "did it not unto the least of these?" Does that warning apply to us? Yes; that is the lesson of this parable: You cannot be a Christian and be self-ish too.

What can we do with our money to show that we have taken the warning? Who needs to be helped? How about the heathen—are they worse off than Lazarus was? What shall we do this week?

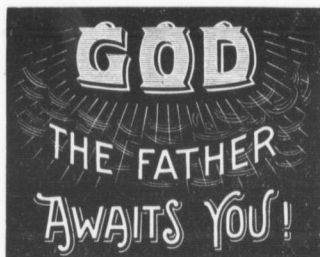
The Teachers' Meeting.

State the purpose of this parable.... A word-picture of the scene on earth: The rich man's mansion; Lazarus at the door-step.... Then two other word-pictures: Lazarus in the eternal state; the rich man in his eternal state.... Show what was his condition; why it was his condition.... How we may escape hell and enter heaven.... What inference concerning the future life we may draw from this story.... What it teaches to be our personal duty: (1) Love to man; (2) Use of opportunity; (3) Thought of the future; (4) Belief in Scripture; (5) Obedience to God's word.... Special application on the use of all privileges and opportunities.... Additional Practical Lessons: (1) The decisions of eternity are irreversible; (2) Our present life determines the character and surroundings of our eternal life; (3) Souls preserve their individuality in the world to come; (4) To every man is given sufficient light to guide him in the way of salvation.

References.

FREEMAN. Ver. 22: Disposition of crumbs, 782. Vers. 22, 23: Position at table, 814. Ver. 29: "Moses and the prophets," 834.

Blackboard.



OUR LIFE

IN THE
EARTH | FUTURE
INTERRELATED.

EARTHLY SERVICE

OF

MAMMON | GOD

BRING

RICHES,
REWARDS,
BUT

PRESENT
OVERTY,
BUT

Future Torment. | Future Treasures.

CHOOSE YE.

PREPARATION FOR HEAVEN.

THEY HAD

WE HAVE

MOSES,
PROPHETS.

MOSES,
PROPHETS,
CHRIST.

HEAR THEM AND BE PREPARED.

OPTIONAL HYMNS.

No. 1.

Weeping will not save me.
My Jesus, as thou wilt,
He leadeth me.
Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Lord, I care not for riches.

No. 2.

Whenever trials press my soul,
The Lord be in my strength,
Go tell it to Jesus,
Jesus all my grief is sharing,
I am safe in the Rock.

PRIMARY TEACHERS' DEPARTMENT.

The Aim of the Concert Exercise.

BY MRS. OTIS ATWOOD.

"SUNDAY school concerts—are they improving?"

This question is asked not only by the editor of the *Sunday School Superintendent*, but by many friends of children everywhere.

The monthly concerts of the past, with their Scripture readings, chorus singing, and addresses, have given place to the four stated observances: Easter, Children's Day (often combined with Anniversaries), Harvest Concert, and Christmas.

It remains to decide the important question concerning their improvement.

Let us ask: What is our aim in preparing a concert service? What is our thought as we look forward to the work it involves, the time and strength it may require?

Are we asking, as a teacher was heard to inquire, for "something novel, bright, and sparkling?" or do we reverently seek for wisdom, guidance, and the spirit of the Master as we draw nigh to the festival, and remember that the children look to us to inspire them with its meaning, and that our Father will hold us responsible for the impressions that shall remain upon the plastic minds.

If we are to prepare a "show off" entertainment, bringing forward the brightest and most confident of our pupils, then is our time expended in vain, our children receive no spiritual good, and the audience may as well have spent their time at any secular place of amusement. Far better the concert of the past!

There are teachers who consider the preparation for a concert as wasted time. Indeed, it is so if we look upon it in that light; but if we realize what its influence may be upon our pupils' lives through its teachings, then it becomes a message from Christ, and we who bear the message cannot esteem the honor too highly, asking ever that the gift of the Holy Spirit may guide us to teach the truth aright.

We must first select material—a very simple thing, one might say, with the shelves of our publishing houses filled with exercises adapted to each festal day. We need to choose wisely, and not only from these, for the earnest teacher has been watchful all the year for the best thoughts upon the subject. The pages of our choice maga-

zines and our favorite poets, with many a cutting from the daily papers, have constantly added to our treasures. Also let child voices tell the whole Bible story—learned, not read.

Let Bible selections form a prominent part of the exercises.

Do not plan too long a service. An hour and a quarter is as long as the children should be held or the audience will care to listen.

The selection of the children is an important matter. Surely the bright and attractive pupils should have their part, but remember the dull and uninteresting. They may answer a question or recite one line, and be made happy for weeks, because they have been "in a concert" as the "other children" were.

Have many children and short parts; thus more lives and more homes are reached, and more blessing is the reward.

Never select a nervous or sensitive child, and let no mother urge upon such a child the delights of "speaking in a concert," as is too often done, even by the promise of a gift.

We are now ready for rehearsals, which (save the singing, yet taking but a few minutes longer than the usual time) should never be permitted during the sessions of the school. In so far as this is done we believe the influence is harmful. Let nothing interfere with the teaching of that hour. Concerts are important and have their honored place, but they should be supplemental.

At the first meeting teach the children that they have come to prepare for their part in the coming service for Jesus; that the Saviour accepts their love and praise. If we keep this thought before our boys and girls, think you not it will largely counteract the admiration of unwise friends?

Can a little heart be turned by flattery who firmly believes, "This is my part for Jesus, and all I do or say or sing is for his glory?"

Aim for thoroughness in teaching, many times repeated, for a child learns easily and forgets quickly. How many Bible words and poetic truths are implanted in child-minds to bless all their lives, because learned so faithfully for a Sunday school concert!

Aim that these rehearsal hours shall be seasons when you "enter in" to the life of your pupils.

Notice how they linger after the study hour; how they group about you, rejoicing in the free-

dom from restraint. They talk of the coming concert, their school, home, and play. Watch, teacher! Now is your golden opportunity! In many Sundays, in many visits to their homes, you may not know their true selves as to-day, as they unconsciously reveal to you their thoughts, characters, and needs.

Doubtless the important question will be asked, "What shall I wear?" "My mother wants to know if I shall wear white?"

By all means encourage simplicity in dress. An elaborate costume at a Sunday school concert is a mistake in the mother, injurious to the child, and harmful in its influence.

If possible, let the last two rehearsals be in the audience room of the church, that the pupils may know their places, both in the pews and upon the platform.

Who has not been annoyed at the lack of system and order in many a child service, simply because little was expected of children and their disregard of church rules was considered charming?

Shall we forget it is the children's service for Jesus? and surely he approved of things done "decently and in order."

It is well that the pastor or superintendent should speak to the children and impress the truths of the hour upon the hearts of the parents; yet a short, practical talk is better than a long address. Nothing of a stiff, formal character is required. Let the address be bright as well as brief. Much that is useful and interesting can be packed in a short speech. Many who rarely enter the church portal have come to hear their child friend, and it has proved God's opportunity to lead their hearts to himself.

Dear fellow-worker, let us raise the standard of our concert services! Spiritualize them! consecrate them! and above all else, let us make them occasions when we shall obey the Master's word, "Feed my lambs!"



Gaining the Attention of Children.

BY MARY CHISHOLM FOSTER.

Part I.

If it be true that to do a permanent work for a child his memory must be impressed, and that this depends principally upon the power of attention, we are bent upon finding the best method of gaining this.

How may we do it? When does a little child

begin to give attention? Numerous records of child study state that from the second month to the second year attention to objects and then to the sensation of hearing is common to all healthy children. We are assured of the touching and beautiful truths that "the first object recognized is the mother's face;" "the first conscious smile is given to the mother;" "the smile of the parents is distinguished very early in life from that of strangers." These statements, which tell us that visual impressions precede those of the other senses, lead to another fact, which is, that memory becomes noticeably strong by the end of the first year, and in the third year, frequently, a child gives expression to his mental images revealing the strength of this faculty.

Mr. Darwin's boy at a little past three years repeated many incidents which had occurred nearly six months before.

Now it is often at about this time that the little child leaves the home nest and the home mother to come for one hour in the week, or for many hours, to the garden children and the garden mother.

Each in her turn, and both harmoniously, will develop the spiritual life.

Education has begun already (it begins at birth, if it does not, indeed, antedate that event), but it is necessary that the mother, the primary Sunday school teacher, and the kindergartner be familiar with the best methods of giving instruction.

A terse question by a leading psychologist is, "Which of the senses furnishes the most vivid and lasting memory images?" He then, in answering his question, shows that at first impulse preeminence is given to sight, but he decides with other writers that "the muscular sense is of paramount importance in acquiring knowledge." A free definition of this term "muscular sense" is that it refers to the sense of feeling or touch and is the work done by the hand of the child. The practical value of this idea to the Sunday school teacher is that she may introduce the principle of self-activity into her work and allow the children to illustrate the lesson, remembering always that the fundamental muscles of the child's hand should be developed before the accessory ones, and it is better, therefore, to do work with materials most easily handled. For instance, a piece of chalk is better for the child's use than a pencil is, though the latter is better than a large worsted needle, which is better than a sewing needle.

Upon the same principle, we know that a Prang cylinder of four inches in length is better for

handling in the beginning of a study of form than is a small one-and-one-half-inch cylinder—just as a child can grasp a cane more easily than he can a pen handle.

It is better, for these reasons, to give to very small children the large forms, sand and other materials which are easily handled. Drawing and outlining with crayon pencils or chalk is better than using a small pencil or needle. Few cards for sewing should be given to children, and the pricking they should not be allowed to do. Much care is given to children's eyes; more than formerly, we are told, but yet greater improvement is possible.

I was told recently by a physician that in Boston thirty-three per cent of the school children wear glasses.

Therefore, while we teach largely through the muscular sense, we must furnish material for the free and broadest development of the fundamental hand muscles.

The psychic life of children is bound up with movement, for children are full of action; hence the opinion of the best authorities of to-day is summed up in the statement that, "If children are to develop, they must do; for they remember what they do a thousand times better than what is shown to them." This is true in our adult life also, and in the Book we read, "Blessed are they that do his commandments!" It was in harmony with this that Froebel said, "Doing is better than knowing," and we all believe it.

The Catechism in Primary Classes.

BY JOSEPHINE L. BALDWIN.

THERE is a paragraph in the Discipline which says: "It shall be the duty of our ministers to enforce faithfully upon parents and Sunday school teachers the great importance of instructing children in the doctrines and duties of our holy religion; to see that our Catechisms be used as extensively as possible in our Sunday schools and families; and to preach to the children, and catechise them publicly in the Sunday schools and at public meetings appointed for that purpose."

So far as my experience in Sunday school work goes, all that relates to the Catechism in the above statement is a dead letter, and I believe this to reveal a fatal defect in denominational education. This is not intended as an arraignment of the preachers, for the whole trend of Sunday school teaching is away from the old memoriter methods

of hard drilling on the Catechism and Bible verses, and toward pictorial stories and a generally much more interesting line, in which we may be in some danger of carrying the children to the skies "on flowery beds of ease," but which enables us to make Sunday a day to look forward to rather than to be dreaded, and makes the word of God a delight to the little ones.

Still, is it not true that the Catechism should be taught? Should we not give the children some idea of what it means to be a Methodist? Do not many children join our Church and spend years in the Sunday school without having any distinct ideas that could be formulated into words as to the great foundation truths of the Christian religion?

It may be asked, "What has this to do with the primary department?" It has this to do with it—that, if the Catechism is to be taught at all, the children of the primary department should be thoroughly drilled in it. For six years I struggled with the problem of how this could be done without making it, by contrast with the attractive international lessons, a burden to the children, since there is of necessity much that they cannot comprehend in the language of even the first Catechism. Last summer I visited a Wesleyan Methodist school in Harrogate, England, and there saw the exact thing accomplished that I had so long wanted to do—namely, the Catechism taught in a thorough but interesting way.

The room was not very pleasant, there was no musical instrument or blackboard, it would be rank flattery to call any part of the exercises singing, and the prayer was rather boisterous than reverent. But the faces of the little ones (all under eight years of age) were animated; and as questions were asked hands were raised with a suddenness that showed perfect preparation.

One question was, "What is the religion of Jesus Christ called?" "Christianity," came clearly from a tot so small that one would think she could not possibly master so many syllables at once. "Are there any false religions in the world?" "There are many false religions, and have been many false teachers; there is but one true religion, Christianity, and one true teacher, Jesus Christ." This answer was given by all the children together, and by several separately, in a way that showed they understood it fully. Then said the teacher, "I remember the story of a time when there was a test between the true and a false religion." Instantly a dozen hands were

raised, and then the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal was drawn from the class, with no error on their part except a desire to put the barrels of water in before their time.

A question about the omniscience of God brought out the story of Gehazi, and when proofs of Christ's divinity were called for many miracles were described with marvelous accuracy and vividness.

Now our Catechism is not just like the one used by the Wesleyans, but it seems to me that such a method could be used in our primary classes, illustrating the questions where possible with Bible stories, teaching one new question and reviewing each week, and in this way we would lay a firm foundation of doctrine; for the children will remember what they learn in the infant class long after information acquired later is forgotten. This need not occupy more than five minutes of the session, generally, and never more than ten; but, in the interest of conformity to Church Discipline and of making the foundation strong and firm, such a supplemental lesson should have a place in the session of every Methodist primary Sunday school class.

The Church's Neglect of Children.

Is it not passing strange that the names of all good children should be found on gravestones instead of the Church roll? As though the untimely accident or widespread disease that took them possessed some spiritual magic or divine and redeeming element. Living or dying, the children are the Lord's, and it is evident that they must have some place, recognition, and training in the Lord's Church; and yet for centuries the Church made no provision for them, her services were not adapted to them, her folds were not open to receive them, her songs were not written for them, her prayers were unintelligible to them, her sacred inclosures were deemed too holy to be desecrated by girlish mirth and boyish playfulness, notwithstanding that Christ constantly repeated the admonition and cautioned her in unmistakable terms, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Is there not a possible threatening to-day that it would be more profitable for us if a mill-stone were hanged about our necks than that we should persist in despising these little ones? With an almost unbounded faith and intense enthusiasm, we have adapted our ingenious methods of Church enterprise to reach and reclaim the masses;

but what have we done to meet the soul wants and to foster the spiritual interests of the millions of children intrusted to us? Is there not a world of merited condemnation for us in Mrs. Browning's "Cry of the Children?"—

"They look up with their pale and sunken faces,
And their look is dread to see,
For you think you see their angels in their places,
With eyes meant for Deity:—
'How long,' they say, 'how long, O cruel nation,
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's
heart,
Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?
Our blood splashes upward, O our tyrants,
And your purple shows your path:
But the child's sob curseth deeper in the silence
That the strong man in his wrath!'"

—*Rev. Brian Wiberley.*

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS. SECOND QUARTER.

LESSON I. (April 5.)

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. Luke 24. 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT. "He is not here, but is risen" (Luke 24. 6).

Primary Notes.

BY MRS. J. H. POLHEMUS.



One day a little girl ran home from school. She was a very little girl; she had never been much away from her mother, and this was her first day at school. Whom did she want to see right away? She hurried into the house and looked through room after room, but no mamma was to be seen. How did she feel? Disappointed and almost ready to cry. While she was trying to make up her mind what to do, and feeling pretty sad, she looked up, and there stood her big sister, who said, "Why, little girlie, don't feel so bad. Mother isn't here; she had to go out, but she left word where you were to meet her." How did our little girl feel then? Her sorrow was turned into what? Did you ever have something like this happen to you? Not to find some one you love and for whom you are looking is a disappointment; but what will turn the disappointment into joy?

What do we call to-day? Easter Sunday always reminds us of a disappointment that was turned into joy. Who was the dearest friend the disciples had? With whom did they live for three years? [Print "Christ."] We have only half finished the story of that life as Luke tells it; but because the

spring brings to us our beautiful Easter we must stop for one Sunday and hear Luke's story of the sorrow that came to these friends and how it was turned into joy.

Why was it that Jesus left his heavenly home for this world? We have been talking of the wonderful words he spoke and the deeds he did, and you know well how at last he died on the cross. Who can tell what was done with Jesus's body after his death? [Give the complete story from the crucifixion, as found in Matt. 27. 55-66; Mark 15. 40-47; Luke 23. 50-56; John 19. 38-42. Picture the sad return to their homes of Jesus's friends, and what a sorrowful day they had while waiting for the time when they could go back to the tomb; then repeat the first verse of Luke 24 and tell the lesson story. When telling of the stone rolled away, draw the children's attention to the picture of a tomb on the board, and, at the proper place, print within the tomb, "He is not here," and at the right, "but is risen."]

What was it turned the sorrow of Christ's friends to joy? What is it that makes Easter such a glad day for us? [Print "The resurrection of" over the word "Christ" and explain the meaning of resurrection.] If Christ had not risen his work for us would not have been finished; but because he had power to rise we know he has power not only to save our souls, but that he has power to do what for our bodies? How this wonderful thing can be done is hard to understand; we never shall understand it perfectly here, but there is something that happens every year that helps us to know how such a wonderful thing is possible. [Show a cocoon and tell how the caterpillar rolls himself up and seems perfectly dead.]

A cocoon was once found in our yard; we carried it, fastened to a little branch of a tree, into the house and hung it up. Days and weeks went by and the cocoon hung silent and still, but one day some one going into the room where it was heard a little noise on the window pane and, looking, saw a beautiful butterfly. There hung the dead cocoon, and there was the same caterpillar who had lived in the cocoon changed into this lovely butterfly. No one knows how God works such a change for the caterpillar, and no one knows how he can change us at death so that we rise with a new body. This would never have been if Christ had not died and risen, but because Christ is risen we know that we shall rise. [Print, at right of the stone, "because," and "we shall rise" below the tomb.]

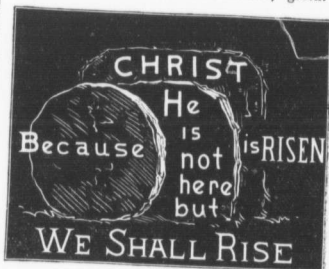
Because we know this we are comforted when our friends die. We think of them as being changed and made more beautiful than we can imagine, and that one day we shall see them again. Because Christ died and rose again, if we are trusting in him, we need not fear to die, because we

know we are not to lie in the grave, but are to rise with a new and beautiful body.

To remind you of this, try this week to make a butterfly out of a card, and paint it just as nicely as you can.

The story of Christ's death always makes us sad, but to-day our sorrow is turned into joy, and we can sing with glad hearts, "Carols for Easter, bright songs," etc. (Mrs. Kennedy's *Special Songs and Services*, page 43.)

COLORING FOR BLACKBOARD. Tomb, brown, brushed over with white; title, dark red; "He is not here, but," white; "is risen," white, outlined with green; "because," "we shall rise," green.



Kindergarten Hints.

BY MARY J. CHISHOLM FOSTER.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. Easter Lesson. John 20. 2-4, 11-16, 18, 28, 31.

GOLDEN TEXT. "In him was life" (John 1. 4).

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible; *Life of Christ* (Farrar); *Illustrative Notes* (Drs. Hurlbut and Doherty), pages 106-112; *God-Man* (Dr. L. T. Townsend), pages 403-409; *Credo* (Dr. L. T. Townsend), pages 119-149.

ATTENTION STORY.

It was a wonder to all the people of Jerusalem that Jesus did not sit upon a throne of gold, but that was only because they did not understand that he had greater power than any king could have—for all this great, beautiful world, all life, and all time, belong to his kingdom. There is a long story about those people who felt sorry, and were sure that they would have their own way, and they really thought that they could take the life and the power of Jesus away. One day, when they forgot that he had already told them that he had power to lay down his life, and he had power to take it again, they did something which they said would send him away and they would have another king. When he laid down his life because he loved us so dearly his body was laid in a pretty new room of stone, which had a stone door, but he took up his life again just as he had told them he had power to do, and he surprised everybody and

showed them that he was the truly great King, with all power. Dear children, it is because he is the Ruler of all life that to-day we talk of life and see his power everywhere. The little brooks dance and leap with life; the birds and the violets are waking to show the life in them, and all because of God's love. To-day everybody is thinking of him who said, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." No one else could do that. Do you want to hear how surprised the people were? People are surprised about it now, and they always will be, for life is so wonderful! No one can tell what it is; but we know that life and love are every where and all through everything—all the rest is God's secret. A woman whose name was Mary went just before daylight one Sunday morning to the little stone room, and she saw that the door was open. She ran right off to tell Peter. Let me read about it. [Read John 20, 2-4, 11-16, 18, 28, 31.]

Explain unusual words: "Runneth," "saith," "sepulcher," "outrun," "weeping," "seekest," "hence," "Rabboni."

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text.

Monday. Show that the disciples and Mary wanted to be with Jesus; they could not be happy away from him after they had learned to love him so much. (Verses 2-4.)

Tuesday. Mary's sorrow when she thought that Jesus had been taken where she could not find him. The angels were kind to ask her why she was crying, and she was surprised, perhaps, that they "cared;" but they did, and people find now that others "care" when they feel sad. (Verses 11-14.)

Wednesday. Mary's joy to find that Jesus lived and that he knew her, and he, too, was sorry to see her in trouble. She called him "Master." He is Master of all sorrow, for with only a word he can turn it into joy; and his word, his touch, can bring life everywhere. It is because he is King and Master that the life of all our nature stories is the beautiful part. The little dull cocoon feels his touch and becomes a beautiful butterfly. The pussy willow hears his voice and peeps from the bare stick, and, by and by, the leaves and blossoms follow. (Verses 15, 16, 18.)

Thursday. Most wonderful it was that Jesus took his life again, and that he lives forever. No one else ever did; no one but God's Son could do this. Thomas, one of the disciples, said, "My Lord and my God!" That means that he knew Jesus as greatest King and Master. (Verse 28.)

Friday. Jesus did many wonderful things and they could not all be written in a book; but some were written down for us that we may believe, as John and Peter and Thomas did, that Christ is the Son of God. We have life in his name. (Verse 31.)

NATURE WORK. Study the development of life in the pussy willow branches and note the growth

each day. Put some branches in water Monday. Mark the unfolding and expansion of a lily bud each day. Watch the downward growth, or root life, of a tulip or hyacinth bulb or of a sprig of what is known in the country as "Wandering Jew," or "inch plant." In such way we take hold of earth, but look toward heaven, and grow both ways in our earthly and in our heavenly life.

ART WORK. Get some good picture of the waking life of early spring and pass it in the circle each day.

HAND WORK. The kindergarten children may plant peas or beans in prepared soil. They will remember that these were planted at Easter time. Soon they will be above the soil.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** will sew the Easter lily upon the card in white silk or thread.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER. Talk of the different forms of life in common things. There is beauty and wonder in a plain potato, with its multiplied life. One potato will furnish seed for many hills, which will develop and produce dozens of potatoes. Life is such a force that even in a dark cellar the potatoes and onions know that the spring-time of bustling life has come, and in their dark corners they begin to put forth their sprouts. Examine them.

LESSON II. (April 12.)

PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER.

Luke 14. 15-24.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Come; for all things are now ready" (Luke 14. 17).

Primary Notes.

[Hold up an envelope directed to yourself, and ask what it is.] Did you ever have a letter? How did you know it was for you. I once saw a letter that was addressed in a very strange way: I'll make a picture of it on the board and print to whom it was addressed. [Make a large envelope and print "Everybody" on it.] That seemed a very remarkable way to direct a letter, but the lady who did so said there were several people in one house to whom she wanted to write, so she wrote one long letter which was meant for everybody there, and then directed the envelope in this way. You see no one could say, "That letter don't belong to me," because "everybody" meant all who lived in that house.

[Hold up another letter containing an invitation.] Here is something that looks like another letter, but though it is directed like the first one that was shown you, this one has no stamp; that shows it was not sent how! But how did it come to me?



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It was brought by a messenger. The letter inside is different from the other; let me read it to you. [Open and read an invitation.] This is not a letter; what do you call it? [Print "an invitation."] Is it for you? No, just for me. How many ever had an invitation? How was it directed? Very seldom an invitation is given taking in everyone who is known; usually only a few are invited at a time.

To-day I want to tell you of an invitation that is for [print "for"] everybody. It is a beautiful invitation, and it says everybody will be welcome to a beautiful feast. How long does it take your mamma to get ready for company? The one who gives this invitation was years in preparing for the feast. Of course you have guessed that this is a different kind of a feast from those we know about. Jesus once told a story called a parable to try to make plain what this feast meant.

One day the Saviour was invited to take supper in a great man's house. There isn't time to tell you of all that happened at that supper, though it was so different from ours that you would enjoy hearing about it. [Let the teacher tell, if the hour will allow, the manner of serving meals in the days of Christ and the incidents occurring at this supper [Luke 14, 1-14].]

As Jesus sat at the Pharisee's table and looked at the guests, his heart was filled with pity for them; he knew they didn't believe in him or love him; he thought of the good things his Father was preparing for those who should receive his Son, and so he told them a story that would teach them a lesson and perhaps make them think what they were doing. He looked around at the table with the tempting food upon it, and said, "A certain man gave a great supper." [Tell the lesson story, and have a little talk with the children upon the foolish behavior of those who were first invited.]

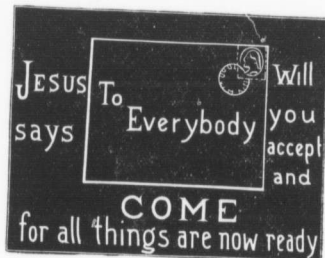
Now we must try and understand what Jesus meant by this story. By the feast he meant the Gospel, the beautiful "glad tidings" that our heavenly Father has sent us. What are the good things God has provided for us? Forgiveness, Love, Peace, etc. We can never finish telling all that he has prepared for those who come to him. [Show how this feast provides food for mind and heart.] By whom did God send the invitation to come and enjoy these things? The prophets were the first who brought it; listen to Isaiah (Isa. 55, 1). [Now tell how God sent his Son with the invitation, and after he had gone back to heaven how those who had believed in Jesus and accepted the invitation brought it not only to the Jews, but to the Gentiles, and how it is still being given by God's children to everybody.]

Is this invitation for you? What did Jesus say about children? (Matt. 19, 14.) And for fear some might feel left out, listen to these loving words. (Rev. 22, 17.) What does the invitation say?

[Print "Come" with the remainder of the Golden Text below.] Who says "Come?" [Print "Jesus says."] What will you do with the invitation? Let me write a question on the board. [Print "Will you accept and," the "Come" printed before completing the sentence.]

When you get home take a sheet of paper, write the date and where you live at the top, and if you really mean to accept Christ's invitation, print or write, "I will come to Jesus;" then sign your name. Sing "Come to Jesus just now."

BLACKBOARD COLORING. Envelope, white; stamp, pink; postmark, white; "Everybody," blue; "Jesus says," "Come," "Will you accept and," yellow; "for all things are now ready," blue.



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Story of a Great Supper. Luke 14, 16-23.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Come; for all things are now ready" (Luke 14, 17).

ADS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, Luke 14, 7-11; *The Parables of Jesus* (Goebel), pp. 169-189; *The Parabolic Teaching of Christ* (Bruce), pp. 325-342; *Oratorio of The Redemption* (Gounod), "The Earth is my Possession."

ATTENTION STORY.

Jesus was interested in the life of all the people about him, and he liked to see them careful of each other and thoughtful of each other's comfort. Once he was visiting at the house of a man who had invited other friends also, and Jesus was sorry to see that those who came wanted the very best places and thought of themselves only. Perhaps they did not care whether others had seats, if they only had good ones.

Jesus talked very kindly to them, and said that they ought not to be so selfish, and that it would be more polite if they would wait until the man of the house asked them to have good seats. He told them, too, that it would be a good thing for them to make a feast or a party sometimes for the poor and lame and blind, as they would be glad to come, and it would do them good.

Then he told them a story like this: Once upon a time a man made a great supper and invited very many of his friends to it. When all was ready he sent a servant to say so, but the people were so rude that they thought they would not go into this party. One man said that he must go and look at some land he had bought, and another said that he must look at some oxen, and they all made excuses. The man who gave the party was displeased to hear all this; no one would like it, certainly. So he said: "Then go and bring in the poor and lame and blind, that my house may be filled with people." Then they came from the lanes and streets and the roads, and down by the rows of bushes. I hope they had a lovely and happy time, don't you? The story is here. [Read Luke 14. 16-23.]

Explain unusual words: "Certain," "bidden," "yoke," "consent," "excuse," "maimed," "halt," "hedges," "compel."

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text.

Monday. Talk of the kindness of the man to take the trouble to prepare a great supper for his friends, and to send word to them that all was ready. God has made ready for us this beautiful world where we may live, and he has sent Jesus into it to show us how to live and how to be thoughtful for others.

Tuesday. The people who were invited thought of many other things, and did not come to the house; but the man was glad to have others come. If we do not care to be polite and kind to others we lose much happiness. Teach a lesson of consideration for others.

Wednesday. God's great love has given to us a world of life and beauty here, and by and by, when our journey in this world is all done, a beautiful home and a welcome will be all ready for us.

Thursday. Study the thought and word pictures of the lesson hymn upon the leaflet. All the dear children, no matter how poor, lame, blind, or from whatever countries, are invited to come to him and to share all the blessings of his love. They all will be welcome. They all are God's children.

Friday. Study the Golden Text. Let us "come" and do the right, the true, the helpful acts always, for all people, and God himself will help us if we try and if we obey the words of Jesus; for he has said we are to teach and to help people of all nations. It was Jesus himself who gave to us the Golden Rule.

NATURE WORK. Talk of the countries of the world wherein live the little children who are to be told of Jesus's love. They will be glad to "come," and will be ready to obey his words. Talk of seas, rivers, lakes, and of all that God has done in this world, so that "all things are now ready" and we may travel, we may write and send messages in wonderful ways to all people.

ART WORK. Show a school globe (borrow one for one lesson at least if you have not one), and explain its usefulness of beauty, color, and form.

HAND WORK. Make streets, lanes, and highways in the sand table, and with sticks and blocks make them upon the kindergarten tables.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may color the countries of the world upon the card.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER. Read the lesson hymn and talk of the little feet in every home which are walking through this world to the other and the better life. The older children may find something about the frozen Greenland and talk of explorers and of what they have found. India's flowers and heat may be explained and described to the little ones. The sandy Africa country and the customs of people living there will interest mothers and children alike. Talk of islands. Find them on maps and make them in your play when out of doors. Try to have all who are in the home interested in the children's lesson.

LESSON III. (April 19.)

THE LOST FOUND. Luke 15. 11-24.

GOLDEN TEXT. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15. 10).

Primary Notes.



There lived at one time in a large city a family in which there were a father and mother and two little boys. One day toward evening word was sent to the friends of the family that the children were lost. You can hardly think of the sorrow that was in that home; the mother was almost crazy from grief, and what do you think the father was doing? All he could think of to find the boys; he went in every direction and had all the policemen looking for them.

The hours went by while the parents and friends watched and waited and sought for the lost; at last, late in the night, a glad cry was heard; what was it? "The boys are found!" and not long after in they came. What was waiting for them? [Print "Welcome," in an arch, at the head of the board.] Where was the welcome waiting? [Uncover or make a doorway with steps, and print within it "Home."]

To find anything that we care for and that is lost always makes us glad. Tell me of some things you have lost and found. Were you ever lost? There is one way a person may be lost that perhaps you never thought of; when any one stops obeying and pleasing God, and just spends the days in

doing wrong, we say such a one is lost; he has wandered away from God and is lost. Are there many of such lost people in the world? [Picture how some are lost through drink, etc.] Does God care? More than you cared for any lost thing, more than you can imagine. Why? Because he loves us so, because he is our Father, and we are his children. Jesus saw many such lost ones as he walked up and down Palestine; he knew there would always be many such, and he wanted all who were ever lost in this way to know how the heavenly Father would sorrow over them, and how he was waiting and watching for them to come back to himself.

To make the people that gathered around him understand this, he told one day three beautiful stories; they were all about something that was lost. The first was about a lost sheep. [Show a picture of a lamb, tell the story in verses 4-6, and read the seventh verse.] The second was about a lost piece of money. [Show a piece of silver and tell the story in verses 8, 9, and then read verse 10.] But now the third was the most beautiful story of all, and that which was lost was more precious than either the sheep or the silver piece.

[Let the teacher, if possible, tell the story of the prodigal son in the Saviour's own words, as found in verses 1-24, closing with the tenth verse.] I am glad every time I read this story that Jesus told it, because I know then that even if I have wandered away from God and sinned against him, he will welcome me back to him. Can I be sure of this? Yes, if I come back the same way as the son in the story did. Let us see how he returned home. [Go over the story again, showing how in his trouble the son [print "The Son" at the foot of the steps] thought of his father's house of plenty, and how when sin brings us into trouble there comes a day when we remember God our loving Father, and all the comfort and happiness that is to be had with him. Then show how the son in the parable repented, turned, and came home, printing each word on a step, and show plainly that if we would come back to our heavenly Father we must repent or be sorry for our sin—we must turn from it—and then we will come to God with our whole hearts, to receive his welcome.]

Who welcomed the son in the story? [Print "The Father."] Yes, the father had a welcome for the lost son [print "For Lost"], and God our Father has a welcome [print "has a" above "The Father"] for what kind of lost people? We call such people sinners. [Print "Sinners."] What was in the home of the prodigal son when he was found? And what is there in the heavenly home when one sinner is sorry for and turns from sin? The Bible says there is what? Joy, joy among the angels.

Suppose you make at home this week a trumpet out of cardboard or paper and print "Joy" on it

to remind you of the joy in heaven over lost sinners found. This lesson to-day makes me think of a hymn we love to sing. Let us all sing "I am so glad that our Father in heaven."

COLORING FOR BLACKBOARD. Door and steps, brown; "Welcome Home," red, outlined with yellow; "The Father has" and "For Lost Sinners," green; "The son repented," "turned," "came," orange.



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Lost Found. Luke 15. 11-15; 17-20.

GOLDEN TEXT. "I will arise and go to my father" (Luke 15. 18).

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, Luke 15. 3-8; *Parabolic Teaching of Christ* (Bruce), pp. 279-294; *The Parables of Jesus* (Goebel), pp. 200-215; *Lectures on Shakespeare* (Hudson), vol. ii, pp. 40, 41; *Sermons for the New Life* (Bushnell), pp. 40, 41; *The Hunger of the Soul*, p. 71; solo, "Love Not the World," Oratorio, *The Prodigal Son* (Sir Arthur Sullivan).

ATTENTION STORY.

Many are the beautiful stories which the greatest and best Teacher told to all who listened to his words, and of these was one about a father and his two sons. This book does not tell us their names, but we can speak of them as the older son and the younger son. Perhaps they were good boys and loved their home, but one of them thought it would be pleasant to go away, far off into another country; so he went to his father one day and said that he wanted all the things that were his. The father gave them to him. A few days after that he went away, and he was very, very careless about his money, and spent it soon.

Then bread was not plenty in that country, and he did not have anything to eat. [The teacher may connect this fact with a lesson on Naomi and her family having left Bethlehem for that reason.] He went to work for a man who let him feed his pigs in the field. Sometimes this son was so hungry that he would be glad to eat husks, for no man gave him food.

Then he thought of his comfortable home and of his father and all in the house having plenty of bread, and he wished he was with them.

The more he thought about the dear home the more he wanted to go back to it, and one day he made up his mind that he would go, and he started. Do you suppose his father let him come back? What do you think? What do you say? Let us see. [Read Luke 15, 11-15; 17-20.]

Explain unusual words: "Certain," "falleth," "substance," "riotous," "famine," "citizen," "perish," "compassion."

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text.

Monday. The younger son wanted to go where he could have his own way and please himself. He forgot that his father knew better what he needed than he knew, but his own way was not the best way. His father was kind and loving, but he was a restless boy.

Tuesday. He went far away among strangers, and he did not know enough to save his money, so he spent it all and had nothing to eat. How much better if he had only stayed at home and obeyed his father!

Wednesday. He tried to earn his living, but he was hungry. I think he was hungry for home love as well as for bread, and he could not forget home.

Thursday. He made up his mind to go right home again. He knew that he had done naughty things, after thinking naughty thoughts, and he was sure he must tell his father so and ask him to forgive him. That was the only right way to do. It is as we should do always. Ask forgiveness for naughty words and acts, and come to our dear heavenly Father asking his forgiveness.

Friday. Let us say the Golden Text, and remember it. The young man's father saw him coming and felt sorry for him, and ran to meet him. He gave him a welcome with a kiss. O, are we not glad we have a dear heavenly Father, who is just as glad as this when he sees that we are sorry for naughty ways? Whenever we feel sorry let us go to our Father.

NATURE WORK. The children may talk of husks as being somewhat like any old or naughty habit which we put off. We may put away husks, and then will come the new and fruitful and good acts. Analyze beans and peas, taking off the husk or jacket, and show where the life bud is. Plant them, and as the bean comes up you can see it put off the old and put on the new.

ART WORK. Try to get some good picture representing the return of this son, and have the children tell what they see.

HAND WORK. Let the kindergarten children build flat-roofed houses, model bread loaves, and draw pictures of husks.

The **TRANSITION CLASS** may outline the words upon the lesson card. It is a prayer that we may

be shown the way when we arise to go to our Father.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER. Talk of the danger of people wanting to have their own way. Nothing brings so much trouble into our homes as selfishness and doing just what we want to do, not caring for others. Dwell upon the thought that good comes to the smallest child who is glad to do what will help others in the family.

"Be kind to thy father, for when thou wert young Who loved thee so fondly as he?
He caught the first accents that fell from thy tongue,
And joined in thine innocent glee."

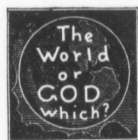
"Be kind to thy brother wherever you are;
The love of a brother shall be
An ornament purer and richer by far
Than pearls from the depth of the sea."

LESSON IV. (April 26.)

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. Luke 16, 19-31.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16, 13).

Primary Notes.



How many ever saw China or India? Do you believe there are such countries? What makes you? How many have ever seen heaven? Do you believe there is such a place? Why? Though you have never been there, you all believe there is another world. Who live in this world? Who live in the other? We are going to talk of these two worlds to-day. Let us call the world where we live now, Here [print], and the other that we can't see yet, There [print].

What kind of a world is this one? [Draw from the children the beautiful things to be found here, and then make them think how sin came bringing wickedness and sorrow.] In the other world we call heaven what is found? The beauty here is as nothing to the beauty there, the joy and greatest happiness here are small compared to the joy and happiness there. Which is worth most? Can all who live here one day have heaven for their home? There is another part of that other world that is full of misery and sorrow, deeper and sadder than any we know here; no one wants to go there, but if we would be sure of never going there, but of one day entering that heavenly world, who must we obey here? [Print "God" at bottom of the board.] Do all obey God? Ah! here there are many who are obeying other masters; some are trying to get all the good times and fun out of this world they can; they make pleasure their master, forgetting to obey

and rich, are t Only Jes pri mon, you t Noth Do yo mon p and so then where says, to serve Text.] that th God he master to more story to [Tell telling wall and "Lazar came to and the was! He and sho lesson st find? Co suffered a tort there had serv What di Exactly y are sure we can in had had s been serv ure, here, Oh! ch earnestly that there does not e this home Serve God do not ma and mam like this ["The Wor long to this you choose BLACKBO and Golden brown; gra ment, whit low; "evil things" an

and serve God. Others have no thought but to get rich, money is their master; and so you find there are many masters here; are there many there? Only one—God.

Jesus called these masters by a hard name. I'll print it below "God," the one Master. [Print "mammon."] When we have to leave this world what do you think these masters will do for their servants? Nothing; they will leave them to their misery. Do you think it would be possible to serve mammon part of the time here and God part of the time, and so have all that seems like a good time here, and then be taken to that blessed world over there where there are pleasures forever? No, no; Jesus says, "Ye cannot serve two masters, ye cannot serve God and mammon." [Finish printing Golden Text.] Jesus felt so anxious that all should know that this was impossible, and that even if serving God here should be harder than serving these other masters, there were comfort and happiness in heaven to more than repay for all. He told his disciples a story to help them to understand.

[Tell the parable as told in Luke 16. 19-22. When telling of the rich man, make a large house with wall and gate; print "rich man" on the house and "Lazarus at the gate."] Show the children how death came to both, ending the fine living of the rich man and the sufferings of Lazarus. How kind Jesus was! He gives us a little glimpse into the other world and shows us what came to the two there. [Finish lesson story, verses 23-41.] What did poor Lazarus find? Comfort. Do you think it was because he had suffered and been poor here that God gave him comfort there? No. It must have been because here he had served God even in his trouble and poverty. What did the rich man find? [Print "torment."] Exactly what that means we do not know, only we are sure that it means suffering that is worse than we can imagine. It wasn't because the rich man had had so much here; no, it was because he had been serving himself, his own comfort and pleasure, here, and had forgotten God.

Oh! children, this lesson makes us think very earnestly; it is a warning to us always to remember that there is another world than this, that our life does not end here, and that if we would go from this home to the heavenly home, we must do what? Serve God and be careful that the good things here do not make us forget that we "cannot serve God and mammon." Try to make a world on paper, like this [show a model], cut it out and print on it "The World [that means, the things that only belong to this world] or Christ, which?" Which will you choose?

BLACKBOARD COLORING. "Here" and "There," and Golden Text, white; house, wall, path, light brown; grass on the graves, green; cross and monument, white; "rich man" and "Lazarus," yellow; "evil things" and "comfort," pink; "good things" and "torment," blue.



Kindergarten Hints.

KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT. The Rich Man and LAZARUS. Luke 16. 19-21.

GOLDEN TEXT. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25. 40).

AIDS TO THE KINDERGARTNER. Holy Bible, John 12. 1-10; *The Parables of Jesus* (Goebel), pp. 232-257; *The Parabolic Teaching of Christ* (Bruce), pp. 376-400; *Credo* (Dr. L. T. Townsend), pp. 351-370; *Psychology* (James or Sully) [read what is said of "Memory"]; "If God be for us, who can be against us?" *Oratorio of the Messiah* (Handel).

ATTENTION STORY.

Jesus taught the people that they should be kind to neighbors as well as to fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters, and that is why he wanted all the lame and blind and poor people to be made happy and comfortable. If everybody obeyed the Golden Rule which Jesus had given to us all, how happy all people would be?

This word says in one place, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor" (Psalm 41. 1). That means that those who think about the poor and help them are happy and peaceful. Jesus told the people a story about a very rich man who wore a beautiful suit of purple cloth, and he had a great feast every day, but he was so selfish and forgetful of others that he acted worse than the priest and the Levite did when they passed by the sick man on the road. This man stayed in his house enjoying good things, and right at his gate was a man who was poor and sick, and who wanted some crumbs to eat; but no friends came to him except kind dogs. They tried to be friendly with him. If the man in the house had helped the sick man, he would have been happier, and the poor man would have been made comfortable and happy, too.

Jesus says that if we help anyone, even the poorest and "least," it is just the same as if we do it to him. Let us read the Bible verses and then learn the Golden Text. [Read Luke 16. 19-21.]

Explain unusual words: "Certain," "sumptuously," "desiring," "moreover."

OUTLINE.

Sunday. Attention Story, Bible lesson, and Golden Text.

Monday. Talk of the opportunities which we have for helping others. Jesus has taught us that.

we should give to others a part of what we have. If you want to make your life happy, give away some of your toys, or give your fruit to some little child that has not any. Give to some one else the penny that you really want.

Tuesday. Perhaps the man in the house had kept his clothing and money and food so long for himself that he did not like to give away even crumbs. It is not well for us to keep all we get; it is right to share with others.

Wednesday. Talk to-day about the difference in the action of the Good Samaritan and this rich man. Which had the happier heart?

Thursday. A pure and good life, helpful to others, loving God and obeying the words of Jesus, is like a white lily or a white dove, and those who live such a life are able to see God every where and in everything.

Friday. What would we do for Jesus if he were here? If we do that for some one else who is poor or sick, he sees our loving service and it is just as if we do it for him.

NATURE WORK. Talk of color, especially purple, and of linen. How is linen made? Play spinning games in kindergarten. Study the pussy willow branches and other seasonable buds and grasses.

ART WORK (in tone). Sing of the waking buds, "O, you pussy willow; pretty little thing!" and other spring songs.

HAND WORK. The children of kindergarten may outline pussy willow twigs upon their slates, and may make with their sticks of different lengths the letter I, the first in the Golden Text.

The TRANSITION CLASS may sew the picture upon the lesson card in white silk.

SCIENCE AT HOME WITH MOTHER. Talk of joy. What is it? We all have joy in the springtime. "All nature now rejoices with a thousand happy voices." Joyful, cheerful, helpful people in the home find it easy to be so outside the home. I think that the selfish, forgetful man in the home we have read about did not have a mamma or little children there, for they would have given food to the poor, sick man. The children would have found him at the gate and been as little Good Samaritans to him.

Whisper Songs for April.

FIRST LESSON.

Christ has opened wide the door
Of the grave's dark prison;
We may live for evermore
Since the Lord has risen.

SECOND LESSON.

Come; the feast is ready now!
Have you heard the Saviour?
He is calling little ones
To his love and favor.

THIRD LESSON.

Little children, have you heard
Just the sweetest story?
How our Father wants us all
In his home of glory?

FOURTH LESSON.

Would you choose a life of ease,
Selfish, sinful pleasure?
Or to live as Jesus lived,
Rich in heavenly treasure?

Order of Service

FOR THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

Second Quarter.

SONG OF PRAISE.

Teacher. I will delight in thy statutes.

Class. I will not forget thy word.

Teacher. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,

Class. And a light unto my path.

Teacher. Thy word have I hid in my heart,

Class. That I might not sin against thee.

Teacher. Who hears us when we pray?

Class. Our Father in heaven.

Teacher. In whose name should we always pray?

Class. In the name of Jesus, our Saviour.

CONCERT PRAYER.

Enter, Lord, these little hearts,

As we pray to thee;

Make us humble, patient, kind,

As we ought to be.

May our sins be all forgiven,

Take us when we die to heaven.

PRAYER BY TEACHER.

SINGING. Use one church hymn adapted to the lesson at each session.

CONCERT RECITATION to precede offering.

Now we bring our offerings small

Unto Jesus, Lord of all;

'Twas for us he came to die

When he left his home on high;

'Twas for us he rose again,

Conqueror over sin and pain;

So these gifts we gladly bring

Unto Christ, our Saviour King.

BIRTHDAY OFFERINGS.

SUPPLEMENTAL LESSON.

BLACKBOARD REVIEW.

MOTION SONG, OR QUIETING EXERCISE.

LESSON TEACHING, closing with ECHO PRAYER.

CLOSING SONG. "God be with you till we meet again."

CONCERT PRAYER. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

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 Robert Wreford's Daughter.
 The Fortunes of Cyril Denham.

The Heirs of Errington.
 The Story of Penelope.
 A Woman's Patience.
 Husbands and Wives.
 Emilia's Inheritance.
 Fortune's Favourite.
 Maude Bolingbroke.
 Sir Julian's Wife.
 Warleigh's Trust.
 His Next of Kin.
 Joan Carisbroke.
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