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The Teacher's Monthly.

Vol. IV

AUGUST, 1898.

No. 8.

The Lesson Helps this month were prepared by Revs. R. Mackay, Hemmingford; J. A. McKee, Orono; G. S. Carson, Pictou and J. R. Munroe, Antigonish.

In making use of the QUARTERLIES and LAFLETS of this third Quarter, for Home study, please give some of the questions of the Junior or Senior departments for written answer. Next Quarterly will have special questions for written answer.

OUR S. S. HELPS, IN FUTURE.

The General Assembly has decided that from the beginning of 1899 the S. S. Lessons of our Church shall be issued in Toronto, and a committee has been appointed to select a managing editor and to have supervision of the work.

The Church is almost unanimous as to the advisability of publishing our own S.S. Helps, and our Sabbath Schools, in large measure, loyally support them. During the present year the circulation of the different Helps has increased to 75,000, from 60,000 in 1887, an advance of 25 per cent.; and when they are established by themselves, and not as an adjunct to other work, they should make even better progress.

While bespeaking in advance a cordial support for the Lesson Helps of 1899, whoever may have them in charge, there is one reminder not wholly unnecessary.

Do not expect that a beginner, in the first issues or months, is going to give a series of Helps that will take the Sabbath School world by storm, and do not compare them with other, older, Helps, or complain of them and give them up because they may not be quite the best that are printed.

Some of the worlds' best and brightest minds, specialists in Sabbath School work, with long training, are constantly engaged in perfecting the various S. S. Helps that are so

pleatiful in our day; and to expect that any man, when first undertaking the work, can excel, or even equal, in all respects, some of the S. S. Helps already produced, is to expect the unreasonable and impossible.

There are better looking men and women in the world, in some ways, than your husband or wife, but you "wouldn't swap." And for some time there may be, in some respects, more attractive S. S. Helps than those of our own Church, but they are our own, your own; and, all in all, the best for our Church, and we should loyally support them because they are such.

Further, do not compare the organization, and work, and system, of a new establishment, with limited means and small staff, and just getting into working order, with that of old, established, organizations, that are the growth of years; and find fault with the former, if, in its beginning, its system is not quite equal to that of the latter.

Remember that those who will be in charge of these Helps will be doing their utmost to make them in every way worthy of the Church, and that we should second their efforts by loyal and patient and helpful support.

--"Morbid people see all life and all the world through tinted glasses, tinted with the unhealthy hue of their own mental condition. They see their neighbor's faults, but not the excellences of his character. They have an eye for the blemishes and unlovely peculiarities of others and for the disagreeable things of life. They fret and chafe at the smallest discomforts in their lot, and fail to get happiness and pleasure from their many and great blessings. They are unhappy even in the most favorable circumstances, and discontented even in the kindest conditions. The trouble is not in outside things but in themselves. They are like a fever patient who tosses restlessly on his bed and complains of the heat of the room, ask-

ing that doors and windows may be opened, while all the while the fever is in himself, not in his room. It is the unwholesomeness of men's own spirit that makes the world and all life about them so full of discomfort for them."

SEND A LETTER.

"With the summer comes a period of rest. Many churches close their doors during July and August, and the little feet that crossed its sacred threshold are frolicking in the country fields, or splashing in the gray waters of the ocean. It is a time to rest, but not a time to forget. Often the teacher's mind wanders to the boys and girls far away—the quiet, attentive girl, the mischievous boy. She is a wise teacher if she keeps a link of remembrance between herself and her class. Let her write during the vacation time one letter to each member of her class. The thing most mysterious and fascinating after a Christmas tree is perhaps the postman's bag, or the country post-office box. It bristles with many possibilities. One of the proudest moments in a child's life is when he holds in his hand a letter addressed to himself. He feels his individuality as never before. If the letter is from his teacher the joy is heightened. If neither teacher nor scholar of the closed church go from the city let the letter of greeting be sent notwithstanding.—*The Sunday-school Helper*.

THE BIBLE IN THE INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENT.

"Children should not be transferred from the primary department to the intermediate or junior until they can read. As soon as they can read they should be taught how to use the Bible. It is the blessed province of the intermediate department to do this, and that it does so is one of the strongest reasons why this department should exist in every school.

1. "Encourage every child to own a good Bible. If it is possible that this should be given by the parents, it is much the best way. If not, it should in some way be provided by the school.

2. "Encourage these children to bring these Bibles to Sunday-school every Sunday. Hold-

ing them up as a regular part of the exercises is a great help toward this. Show them what assistance to the memory it is always to use the same Bible, as we learn to remember on what part of the page to look for certain verses.

3. "This, and not the primary department, is, in my judgment, the place to teach about the Bible—the names of the books, their contents, writers, etc., and, with some of the books, the epistles, for instance, why they were written.

4. "Call for but few references during the teaching of the lesson, but have regular drills by the whole department in turning rapidly to book, chapter, and verse.

5. "It is the memory age; therefore, there should be, in addition to the Golden Text, and what we call the standard memory passages (Beatitudes, 23rd Psalm, Commandments), the memorizing of some portion of Scripture each quarter. I recommend, in order not to discourage the child, that not more than an additional verse a week be required, but that this be learned perfectly. It is well if a passage is selected which embodies the teaching of the International Lessons for the quarter.

6. "Most important of all, cultivate a habit of daily Bible reading. I would far rather have one verse a day, read in the daytime, and with a thought running through the week, than a chapter at night, dragged through from duty. The very best way, it seems to me, is to have a plan by which the whole department scholars and teachers, read the same daily verse, and that not generally from the lessons, but teaching the lesson truths. At first the teacher may have to mark the verses for the week, but it is surprising how quickly this becomes unnecessary.

7. "We have had reading and memorizing. The second year a third part of Bible using should be added—searching. Give, each week, something not too difficult to search for.

"The average length of the child's stay in the intermediate department should be four years. With faithfulness and persistence on the part of the teacher, habits will be formed which cannot be easily shaken off. The words of the most eloquent teacher among us will be forgotten, but the word of the Lord endureth forever."—*Mrs. M. G. Kennedy in the Sunday-School Herald*.

NAGGING.

"Nagging is the bane of the Sunday-school, no less than of the home. In the infant room especially, the less apparent 'managing' the better. A primary teacher who is always fussily wandering about, darting toward this one here and pouncing on that one there, poking and patting and suggesting, for fear that visitors may get a bad impression of her children, has an irritating effect on the beholder. Almost any amount of quiet naughtiness on the part of the children would be preferable to so much unquiet zeal in preventing it."

At the same time the method defeats its own end, and results in nothing but general discomfort. No child, however, well-disposed, can bear up long under such treatment. We have lately seen, and sympathized with, a set of little folks brought out into the 'big room' to undergo the ordeal of Review Sunday. The little low seats were gone and the little legs were dangling. They had to sit up in the front rows to be looked at, and they had to sing their little kindergarten ditties and say their kindergarten pieces, and then sit still a solemn half hour or more and listen while the older folks harangued. In this Sunday-school it is the custom for subjects to be given out and papers written once a quarter on the interesting persons or places studied during that time.

... On this occasion the primary children bore up under it with exemplary patience. As one motherly old lady whispered, 'They'd 'a' been all right if that teacher o' their'n had only had faith to believe they was goin' to be all right.'"—*Pilgrim Teacher*.

TO A DISCOURAGED TEACHER.

"To-day is Communion Sunday. If I possibly could I would stay at home. I don't want to go. I shall bow my head and think, as I have so often lately, 'why can't he answer my prayers, as he does others?' Why has he given me no sign of encouragement in my class when he has given others so many?' Even when I was most full of his Spirit, my prayers all failed. There is no use in praying, anyway; my girls will not let him answer my prayers, so I may as well stop. I have stopped long ago."

Several months since these despairing words were written me by a young Sunday-school teacher; she is still hopeless concerning her work for her class of girls. God has not

answered her many, many prayers; her work has failed.

God gave her this work; she loved it; she loved to do it for his sake; she thought he would help her, and that he would permit her to bring those untaught girls to him.

She is a young girl; more than one in the class is older than herself. They are mill-hands, and she is cultured, travelled, and wealthy. To them, in her daintiness and brightness, she is like a being from another world; their admiration for her is equalled only by their demonstrative love. They love her, but she cannot win them to love her Saviour. She has given herself wholly to them; she has worked and prayed and—failed.

No wonder she is discouraged; no wonder she has given up praying "long ago."

But another Sunday is coming, and what shall she do?

In the first place, remember the work is God's, and it is none of your business whether it fail or whether it succeed. It is none of your business, because it is all of God's business.

The word you speak is his. He has touched your mouth and put his word into it. See that you speak it. Speak it and your work is done.

Let it fall to the ground; he has sovereign right to let his own words fall to the ground.

His words fall to the ground. That is the place for them, or he would not let them fall there. As soon as they leave your lips your work is done and his work begins. We have taken it for granted that your words have fallen to the ground; no one but God knows whether that is true or not. The girls you teach do not know whether the word is in their heart or fallen to the ground. Not until it spring up.

If it has fallen into their hearts, who planted it? Did you?

If it is hidden there, being watered now and then, and sprouting but never so little, are you doing it?

Suppose God wills to keep it hidden and to water it slowly, what have you to say against it?

Are you wiser than the Husbandman? Do you know about that girl's heart better than he does?

You have read about those hearers who "immediately receive it with gladness." Oh, that your girls had immediately received your message to them! How you would have thanked God and taken courage!

"With gladness," too. You would all have been glad together, and you would have said God had heard those prayers of yours. But, you know, those immediate and glad hearers had "no root in themselves." And there's another immediately: "Immediately they are offended."

That was very quick work all through.

The third class of hearers, "the good ground" (and may your girls be such!), heard the word and received it, and brought forth fruit. Bringing forth fruit is the sure evidence of good ground.

But some of these hearers brought forth only thirty fold, while others brought forth one hundred.

And now, young teacher, this is my second point of encouragement for you (don't forget the first—the work is God's), some brought forth only thirty fold.

One trouble with you is that you are looking for too much fruit; not only too much, but too soon. Those girls cannot become like you in one day, or one year, perhaps not in ten years.

There is Lucy—she has a quick temper. Yesterday she controlled her temper, because of something you said. Is not that fruit? (Perhaps God calls it a hundred fold.)

There is Susan—she is more respectful to her mother than she used to be; and Mary gives up her own pleasure for somebody; and Jennie never forgets to "say her prayers;" and Louise did not yield to the temptation to make a call on Sunday. You may not know these things; God knows them.

You cannot count them "fruit." God does. You think because they do not confess themselves to be Christians, and "join the church" (as Miss S—'s class have) that God is doing nothing for them, and not letting you do anything for them.

I am sorry you have given up praying; if you cannot pray, do something better, *praise*. Praise God for giving you these girls to teach; praise him for giving you his word to teach; praise him for the blossom, and pray him to make it fruit.

Don't hurry them. Wait. Just think how God is waiting for you.

My third point of encouragement is that God has a work for those girls to do for you, and the more faith and hope and cheer you have, the sooner they will do it. God thinks about the teacher as well as about the class.—

Westminster Teacher.

PREPARING THE LESSON.

BY AMOS R. WELLS, IN S.S. SUCCESS.

The weak point in the preparation most Sunday-school teachers make is their failure to prepare a schedule for their teaching—the order, that is, in which they shall take up and discuss the facts and lessons of the day's Scripture. Probably the majority of teachers begin with verse 1 and go stolidly through to verse 13, or as near it as the superintendent will permit them to get. This is teaching with a shovel, and not with a sieve.

Wise teaching selects, marshals, brings to a focus. It excels haphazard teaching as far as a painting by Rembrandt excels a white-washed fence. It does not permit ideas to neutralize each other. It has a purpose, clearly and determinedly held in view, and to this purpose it subordinates everything else. It knows that the effectiveness of the lesson depends quite as much on what is left out as on what is put in.

Now the more ideas a teacher has, the greater need has he of a schedule, just as the railroad that runs most trains is in most need of a good time-table. Indeed, the performance of a teacher without a plan bears a strong resemblance to a railway collision. Ideas, illustrations, exhortations, bump into one another front and rear, telescope each other, and form at the end of the hour a disheartening mass of splintered fragments, with here and there a jet of steam or a puff of smoke. If the teacher has no schedule, the scholars on his lesson train will grow confused and get nowhere. Small blame to them!

Imitating Paul, the wise teacher will take for his motto, "This one thing I teach." He will teach as much more as is possible, but first he will make absolutely sure of one thing. My own plan in connection with every lesson is to lay down one principal, and two or three subordinates. It is best to write these down on the margin of the quarterly, in precisely the order in which they are to be taken up. Ask yourself most earnestly, "What is the main lesson this Scripture is to teach my scholars?" Having decided on that, consider your teaching a success, whatever happens, if it has impressed this one truth. Leap to this task as swiftly as may be, even if to reach the

chosen point you must pass hastily over the first portion of the lesson.

After driving home this truth, and making sure of it, take up in turn your subordinates. This will require a new view of the lesson story that will compensate for your previous haste. And reserve some time at the end of the lesson for a few parting words on your main truth. Save for this time your most telling illustration, your most ardent pleading. In preparation for this get all questions and difficulties out of the way. Be sure, before you begin, that your watch is with the superintendent's, and do not permit yourself to be caught by the closing bell with your lesson only half way to the terminus.

Some teachers are proud thus to be caught, but they should be ashamed. If their neighbor admits that he got over the lesson with his class, they are filled with amazed pity at his lack of brains. "Why, how could you? There was so much in the lesson that I scarcely made a beginning."

Teachers, it is a disgrace to any workman to leave behind him an improperly finished job; and we are, or should be, just as thorough workmen as any carpenter. *Select!* One truth a Sunday means fifty-two truths a year, while fifty-two truths a Sunday would not mean one truth a year. *Plan!* Definite results do not come from haphazard methods. *Finish!* One goal reached is greater triumph than fifty goals started for. *Form a schedule, and carry it out!*

MY LESSON CHART.

My recipe for a well-prepared lesson is expressed in Captain Cuttle's formula: "Make a note on 't.'"

I have read the lesson text, and the text before the lesson text and after it. I have read the wisest commentaries I can find, and as many of them as I can find time for. I have "mulled" over the matter for myself a day or two. By this time my brain is thronged with facts and a-tingle with suggestions.

Then, the lesson leaf or some other convenient copy of the lesson text before me, I construct the chart by which to make my Sabbath cruise.

As I plan my introductory questions, I write at the head of the lesson text some word to represent each question, such as "author?"

"time?" "place?" "circumstances?" "purpose?" "outline?"

With the questions concerning the text itself, however, I do no writing; I simply underscore neatly those words or phrases of the text that will hint at the point to be raised. For example, take the verse, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," and the questions: (1) How was this imagery prompted by David's life? (2) What use did our Lord make of the same simile? (3) What comfort should we get from this thought in the trials and uncertainties of life? (4) How does Christ's shepherding keep us from want? (5) From what kind of want does it keep us? (6) What makes you sure of this? (7) How was all this proved true in David's case?

As each question occurs to me, or is suggested by my reading, I underscore a word that henceforth stands for that question. These words, in the order of the questions, are: (1) "shepherd"; (2) "Lord"; (3) "my"; (4) a curved line from "shepherd" to "I" connecting the two sentences; (5) "want"; (6) "shall not"; (7) "I."

It will sometimes need a little thought to decide just which word will best represent the question, but that very thought will fix the question more firmly in the mind. If more than one question should be attached to one word, make two short underscorings, one beside the other.

When the question contrasts two persons, two expressions, or two events, "railroading" is in order—a line, that is, drawn clear across the printed page, connecting the words which the question connects.

If you have a parallel Bible, or some lesson help that gives the King James and the Revised versions in opposite columns, it is an excellent plan to mark in one version all the points of history, geography, biography, customs, dates, and the like, and in the other the points requiring practical application to heart and life. The latter will obviously go best in the Revised Version. The points indicated by the underscorings in the King James Version may first be considered and got out of the way.

If, however, you must use only the Authorized Version, distinguish in some manner between the two sets of points—the merely explanatory and the hortatory. Use black ink for the first and red ink for the second, or a

straight line for the one and a wavy line for the other, or for the first a single and for the second a double underscore,

Proceeding in this way, I soon have a line under every word requiring explanation, every hint of a strange custom, every reference to other parts of the Scriptures, every point for practical application. I have underscored words representative of all the thoughts that especially appeal to me as fitting the needs of my class.

When this has been done, it is time to make my outline. If my study has suggested to me an outline of my own, that will be better for me than any other man's. The outline is the plan of campaign, the thing I wish especially to emphasize, and under it, ranged in order, the points of minor importance. I write this outline on the margin of my lesson text.

Having decided on the outline, I go over my underscorings again, doubly or trebly underscoring the words that have reference to the thought around which I intend to center the entire lesson—the thought that is to be the lesson's enduring monument in the minds and lives of my scholars.

Now I am ready for review. I go over the whole, starting with the detached words jotted down at the beginning,—“author,” “time,” “place,” etc.,—and consider all the underscorings, railroadings, and curved lines, stopping at each to frame a question of my own and to make sure of my best answer. I do this in precisely the order in which I intend to take up these points in the class. Not the smallest part of my work at this juncture is to simplify, by erasing the underscorings where the questions may be spared without interfering with my main purpose; and then I review once more in the same way, to confirm my grasp on the lesson plan.

By this time every underscoring is luminous and my page of lesson text has become a graphic picture of the lesson I am to teach, a true chart for my voyage.

Do you think the process too tedious, brother teacher? It is not a whit too thorough when you remember the infinite interests involved; and every repetition of it will increase your skill, and the rapidity of your work. I have used this method for years, with various classes, and know it to be practical, pleasant, and profitable. Try it, and see.

ATTENTION.

GAINING ATTENTION.

I was once sergeant of a college military company that was being trained by an officer of the regular army from the nearest barracks. In one evolution it was made my duty to march at the head of a long column, shouting at the top of my voice: “Hep—hep—hep—hep!” This was to give the time; we had no drum. I conscientiously obeyed orders and started off, shouting the required “Hep—hep—hep—hep!” But alas! at a critical turn, thinking more of my glory than of my duty, I marched to the right, while the column more heedful, turned off to the left. So there I was, a long, lank, figure, strutting off by myself over the field, shouting “Hep—hep—hep!” How many times since, when standing before inattentive classes, have I repeated that mortifying performance, less obviously, but none the less really!

How often teachers are bent on planning what they are to say and how they are to say it, but omit to consider how they may induce people to attend to it; just as if (to change the figure) a locomotive engineer should polish and oil his engine and turn on full steam, but forgets the little coupling-pin that hitches the engine to the train! It is a very little thing, this coupling-pin of attention, and often the teacher goes puffing a long way before he sees that it is left out; and it is a general humiliation, as well as a great loss of time and steam, to go back and hitch on.

The first thing to be considered, if we would win attention, is the room. Poor janitors spoil more Sunday-schools than poor teachers. You remember how the Peterkins tried to take their drive, shaking the reins, clucking at the stationary horse, whipping and coaxing him by turns, and all in vain, until the lady from Philadelphia unhitched the obstinate beast. We make Peterkins of ourselves every time we try to take an intellectual journey with our pupils when they are tied down by hot air, poor ventilation, uncomfortable seats, and surrounding noise and bustle. All our pedagogical ingenuity will fight in vain against the fiendish ingenuity of a bad janitor.

Having made it possible for the children to pay any attention at all, the next thing is to get it. Attention has something to do with

tension. Now it takes two to stretch a cord, and there are two parties to every act of attention. How about the second party in this case—the children?

Imprimis, when you appear before the children, leap at once into your theme. Older folks rather like to doze along through the preliminaries of a speech, economically saving their enthusiasm for the end, if not for next time; but the attention of children is lost or won for good by the opening sentences. Our sharp boys and girls discover very quickly whether a veteran or raw recruit is calling "Attention!"

There are some beginnings which are sure to offend them. There is the bagpipe beginning—the long, droning prelude, which advertises a teacher set out on a mud-turtle to catch these lovely colts. There is the jack-in-the-box prelude: "Eh! Now, children! What's lesson 'bout? Quick!" There is the crapedirge beginning, which solemnly hopes the children have studied their lesson and will recite better than they did last Sunday. There is the plead-guilty beginning: "You'll have to teach me to-day children. I've been unable to look at the lesson."

But it is by no means easy to give affirmative rules. The best of beginnings, if stereotyped, becomes inefficient. No general can plan a campaign in advance. And yet a general must understand the art of war, and a teacher must study his tactics.

In the first place, attention is won partly by position and attitude. Happy the teacher whose class is a semicircle, himself at the centre! And luckless the teacher whose class, fixed on straight, fastened pews, sees past him the distracting background of a crowded, bustling school! He struggles against strong odds.

But whatever may be the position of the class, any one can see that his own attitude shall command attention. Let him be straight alert, confident, quiet—not flabby, nervous, and diffident. Let his face and voice and bearing expect attention, and he will get it.

The opening sentences must be business-like. There must be no indecision, no "puttering." The teacher must leap at once to that hand-to-hand combat with the theme which tells his scholars that there's purpose in it. The opening sentences may sometimes best catch the class by directly addressing one

person in it, the most restless, indifferent one, and nailing him.

A paradox is good to begin with, some statement of the lesson theme so startling as to spur to discussion, possibly to opposition. Then the next Sunday, perhaps a quiet picture of the historical setting of the story, or a description of the landscape surrounding the event, or a compact review of the last lesson. Then the next day you might begin with a bit of personal experience bearing on the matter in hand. Nothing wins attention better than the first person singular. Or your introduction might be a whiff of fun, for which the youngsters are so eager that the most witless piece of jollity, if it spring from a merry heart, is certain to reach theirs.

You are sure of their attention if you can get them to do something in concert, find a verse, or look at something. For this purpose maps, diagrams, pictures, all material objects connected with the lesson, are invaluable. Scholars yield their wills to yours through their hands or their eyes more readily than through their ears.

And none of this must be done with manifest purpose. Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird. Woe to the teacher who shouts the word "Attention!" He will get nothing but the echo of the word from stony cliffs of indifference.

And finally, woe to the teacher who relies at bottom on any skill of his own to draw young hearts to his teaching; whose main dependence is anything but the attention-winning power of that incarnate Sympathy and Love who promised to draw all men—and children—to himself.

KEEPING ATTENTION.

We are likely to think that the attention of children is hard to get; but the very opposite is true. The minds of children, like their tongues, are hung in the middle. It is the easiest thing in the world to turn them in any direction. No teacher need spend much force on his introduction. Merely appear and begin to talk—that is enough. A fresh voice and presence and a new theme will draw all eyes and hearts. If grown people are your audience, the situation is somewhat reversed. They are the heavy-weights—hard to move,

but just as hard to stop. An attention-forcing prelude will hold them attentive to a good half-hour of pl. 'tudes.

The teacher of children, however, flattered by the eager listening given at the start, is likely to relax his efforts and deem the crown of the children's interest already attained. But alas! soon here a little tot wriggles, and there another whispers, and yonder a third giggles, and now a fourth turns around to see what's up, and the teacher might as well be talking to a school of young fishes.

Demosthenes once said that if whatever a man got he took care to keep, he was grateful to the gods; but if he spent it, he spent with it all his gratitude. How many teachers are so prodigal of the attention given at the beginning that toward the close, dismayed at the listlessness, they forget ungratefully their initial capital of bright eyes and eager ears! There are many ways of squandering this attention capital. We may waste it on those long exhortations so very valuable (when omitted), on side issues, on quibbles. We may choke it with dullness, drive it off with scolding.

The only way always to keep attention is always to be expecting to lose it. Be prompt to note signs of its vanishing in drooping eyelids, wandering gaze, jerking in the seat, uncertain answers. The teacher whose ingenuity can always recall stray-away minds need fear few other recitation problems. How to do it?

The best provocative of attention is variety. The skilled teacher brings as many suits of manner to the class as the bulkiest clown wears costumes to the circus. Before one suit becomes wearisome he strips it off, and presto! a fresh teacher before the wide-eyed children. If he has been sitting, he rises; if erect, he leans eagerly forward. His utterance becomes rapid from slow, impetuous from drawling. He darts from generalizations into personalities. If motionless before, he begins to gesticulate. This is acting? No. It is only doing what the facile children themselves do on their kaleidoscopic playground, where no one goes to sleep.

Again, a teacher must learn to emphasize his important points, not by enlarging on them, but by reverting to them. Slight impression on a wall by holding a battering-ram against it! Nor can you impress a child's

mind by holding a fact up against it. It is intervals which make blows possible.

So the child will attend to two things or three better than to one. Concentrate on one matter, burning-glass fashion, but only while the sun of interest is shining. With the first mist of indifference the wise teacher will drop the burning-glass. More teachers fail from having too few points to make than from having too many.

But to retain attention, you need less to multiply points than points of view. A teacher can usually fix the attention of his class upon one subject while using in succession six different methods of treatment. Passing swiftly from questioning to formulating principles and illustrating them, from Bible quotations to personal experiences and exhortations, he will hold his audience delighted, though a single method would have wearied it. Note how a skilled cook presents the Thanksgiving turkey on different days. It is a lordly brown biped, a plateful of nice slices, a salad, a pot-pie, hash. Teachers will be able to hold the youngsters' attention as well as cooks, if they learn thus to put things in different lights.

Furthermore, let it be remembered that no one was ever dignified with a child, and won its attention. And some teachers are too staid to be useful. Startle into attention by a smart slap of the hands together, sharp extension of the finger, abrupt turns upon the floor. Preachers use such artifices when pews grow somnolent, and why not teachers? Never forget that the slightest inanimate object wins attention better than the greatest animation of the teacher. A pencil-tablet will rivet all eyes. A finger laid upon a map is cynosure for the most fidgety scholars. If you have a picture which can be brought into connection with the lesson, it is a pedagogical sin to omit it. A chart is as necessary to the Sabbath-school teacher as to the sailor, albeit the teacher's is best home-made. I used to hesitate to take time to use such helps; but I found that the poorest picture did better work than my most vivid word-paintings, and that my clearest statement was inefficient beside the clumsiest diagram.

The beginner in this fine art of attention-holding is likely to derive the word "attention" thus; from *teneo*, "I hold," *ad*, "on

to"; *attention*, "I hold on to" him. He tries to hold attention, therefore, by main strength. He grapples with his audience as a bulldog would. His nerves are tense. His voice is imperat-. His eye glares. He is rapid, impetuous, strategic. This is power, he thinks, and this is skill; but his audience astonishes him by going to sleep. Abashed, he tries milder means of holding on to them. He begins to buttonhole his audience. He uses soft and flattering tones. He coaxes. He wheedles. He jokes. He chucks them under the chin. And then his audience gets up and goes out.

The real meaning of the word "*attention*" contains an invaluable hint for all who are trying to win others by speaking or teaching. It is *teneo*, "I hold, I stretch," *ad*, "toward"; and it is not by any means applied to the speaker, but to the listener. To get your audience, whether of little folk or big folk, to stretch out toward the same goal of truth that you are seeking is the true art of winning attention.

This understanding of the matter implies that the teacher also is really in pursuit of truth himself. The failure of much teaching is because it cries "Go on" instead of "Come on." The speaker that you follow with most difficulty is the speaker who has the air of "knowing it all," while the speaker who succeeds best in holding your attention gives you the impression of a chase.

There's the game before you—that elusive truth slipping away through the thicket yonder. The huntsman's eye flashes. He whistles up the dogs. We all leap to the saddles. Off we go, over upland and vale, swamp and rock, fence and ditch, our leader far in the van, pointing here, waving there, and hallooing the huntsman on. And when the game is tracked down, and our leader stands above it, dripping knife in hand, our veins tingle with his, and we shout with delight at our triumph.

This is the first principle in the art of winning attention. The speaker must give the impression of a truth-seeker, if he would win others to seek truth with him. What Edward Everett Hale once said of a sermon applies to this. Every Sunday-school lesson should start out to prove something. It should have some

goal. It should *intend* something. *Intention* must precede *attention*.

But though there must be this element of pleasing uncertainty and suspense, we all have difficulty in attending to a speaker who does not appear to have himself well in hand or to be quite sure what he is about. Have you not caught yourselves, teachers, talking as if in your sleep? Have you not sometimes waked up at the end of a sentence, a question, or a harangue, and wondered what you had been talking about? Did you suppose that any one else knew? Did you expect to hold on to them when you had no grasp of the subject? Can listeners pay attention to any one who does not pay attention to himself?

Teachers make the mistake of dividing attention between the class, to watch that they hear; and themselves, to see how they are getting along; and the little attention left goes to the theme. Not unnaturally, the attention of the class is divided in the same way—much to themselves, less to the teacher, and least of all to what is being taught. Of course it is a teacher's business to hold his scholars' attention, but he will never do it by worrying and wondering whether he is succeeding.

Nay, I even go so far as to say, if one of your pupils pays no attention, then pay no attention to him, provided the mischief is not spreading. A teacher should not fritter away his attention on inattentive pupils. If he cannot win their attention by his own interest in his theme, he cannot win it all. Not that I would imply for a moment, however, that the teacher is to rest satisfied while a single one of his pupils remains inattentive. If your chicks are average chicks they are gregarious, and one stray-away is enough to carry the whole flock with him into foreign parts. While you have a single inattentive scholar you should conduct your lesson with a view to holding him. You will hold the rest then, as a matter of course. I am only speaking of the best way to win attention. It must be won, or you are beaten to some extent; and the attention of all *will* be won in the end if you are deeply enough in earnest yourself, if you do not allow your attention to be side-tracked by the inattention of a few. If you wish to win and hold the attention of others, *win and hold your own.*—*Amos R. Wells, in Sunday-School Success.*

Lesson, 2 Kings 2:6-15. Read the Chapter. Commit vs. 11-14.

6. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

7. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

8. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

9. And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

10. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee: but if not, it shall not be so.

11. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

12. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

13. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan:

14. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither, and Elisha went over.

15. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

GOLDEN TEXT.

“How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.”—Luke 11:13.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The last journey, vs. 6-8.
2. The parting request, vs. 9-10.
3. The separation, vs. 11-12.
4. Elisha's return, vs. 1-15.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Elijah's spirit on Elisha, 2 Kings 2:1-8.
 T. Elijah's spirit on Elisha, 2 Kings 2:9-15.
 W. The water healed, 2 Kings 2:16-22.
 T. Enoch translated, Heb. 11:1-6.
 F. Waiting for the Lord, Luke 12:32-49.
 S. Parting words, 2 Tim. 4:1-8.
 S. Promise of the Spirit, John 14:8-17.

CATECHISM.

Q. 30. How doth the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. The Spirit applyeth to us the redemption purchased by Christ, by working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling.

LESSON HYMNS.

Nos. 574, 585, 592, 594.

The translation of Elijah brings us face to face with the mystery of the resurrection of the body. What became of the material elements of Elijah's body? No one can answer.

It could not enter into the new sphere of existence, for, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.” If, as some believe, it were suddenly dissolved into dust, and thus rendered invisible, or at least, unrecognizable, then how did Elijah's change differ from sudden death? If it is a fact, as physicists tell us, and as our study of nature suggests, that no particle of matter is ever lost, then the material body could not have been transformed into a spiritual body. The same mystery attaches to the ascension of Christ, and also to the general resurrection of the dead. All we can do is to place this event in that class of things which we are not capable of comprehending in this lower state of existence; and to leave all by faith in the hands of the Almighty One, hoping for more light and greater power of comprehension in a future life.

2. The fourteenth verse in our lesson shows the disadvantage of not adopting a distinct

word by which to represent the highest name of God as the God of Israel. Two words are frequently used in the Old Testament as names for God. These are totally different in both sound and meaning. A misunderstanding of a certain passage led the Jews to represent both these names by one, the less awful of the two. Our translators, imitating this Jewish error, have, even in the revised translation, rendered both by the same word, varied only in the form of the letters, LORD and Lord; a variation which only appeals to the eye.

In a few passages, such as Num. 6:3; Ps. 83:18, etc., the translators were forced to adopt some word to represent the greatest Hebrew name for God, and they have used the word Jehovah, which, though not correct as to vowel sounds, is a very good word; and why it has not been adopted throughout, especially in the revised translation, is probably only known to the translators themselves. In the verse referred to, for example, how majestic would the question of Elisha sound, as he smites the river with Elijah's mantle, and cries, “Where is Jehovah, Elijah's God?”

Explanatory:

There are several events in Elijah's life similar to events in the life of Moses, his companion on the Mount of Christ's Transfiguration, a few of which are; their vision at Horeb; their mission to kings (Pharaoh and Ahab); their punishing of idolatry; their agency in dividing the waters (the Red Sea and the Jordan); their fore-knowledge of their own death; and the mysterious disappearance of their bodies.

In this his last journey on earth, Elijah set out with Elisha from Gilgal—not Gilgal near the Jordan, but a town about twenty-five miles north of Bethel. This first part of the journey may have been completed on the day before the translation; then there would remain some fifteen miles to Jericho, six miles or so to Jordan, and whatever distance they advanced beyond the Jordan.

Vs. 6. Tarry here.—Elijah probably felt that what was to happen was too sacred for any one to witness, except the actors in the scene, himself and Jehovah; as in the case of Moses on Sinai and Jesus in Gethsemane. **As the Lord liveth.**—This was the most solemn and the strongest form of declaration possible to a Jew. This is the form of oath which God himself used, as Ezekiel tells us, "As I live, saith the Lord God." Ezek. 18: 3; 33. 11. Elisha's love for Elijah, and his need and expectation of more help from him, thus led him to cling to his master.

7. To view afar off.—Anxious to see in which way Elijah's removal would take place, without actual intrusion; they knew vs. 3 and 5 show, that he was to be taken away. They were probably unable to see what Elisha saw, as we would understand by Elijah's answer to Elisha's great request, and also because of the distance; but they likely saw the stroke of Elijah's mantle and the strange division of the waters.

8. Mantle.—As to Jewish dress, everybody wore a coat or tunic, a garment something like a nightrobe, reaching to, or below the knee. Then most wore a robe or mantle, without sleeves, and reaching almost to the feet. Lastly, there was the cloak, or mantle proper, a large square cloth like a blanket or plaid, worn over the left shoulder and under the right arm. It was also used for a cover-

ing at night. See Ex. 22: 26. This is probably the garment referred to in our lesson. A fourth garment was the girdle, which bound the others more closely to the body. The only reason suggested for Elijah's crossing the Jordan is that he was a native of the country east of that river.

9.—Elijah's request here does not mean that he believed he could do for Elisha whatever he might request; but having been the instructor of Elisha, he wished, to the extent of his power, to help him before leaving him. Elisha's response does not mean that he desired to be twice as knowing and powerful as Elijah; but that, in order to succeed him as master and teacher, for the schools of prophets, and as God's interpreter to the people, he might have such a portion of Elijah's spirit as might be compared to the double share of the father's property allowed by the law for the first-born son. This law is alluded to in Deut. 21: 17.

10. An hard thing.—A thing which it was not in his power to give, but belonged to God, as Jesus answers the sons of Zebedee Matt. 20: 23. But Elijah believes that if God permits Elisha to behold the coming translation, it will be a sign that the great blessing asked for will be granted. This suggests that Elisha was the only one who beheld the rapture of Elijah.

11.—As they went forward, whirlwind lifted Elijah, as such a storm often raises material objects. Usually, these objects fall again to the earth; but in this case, by the exercise of God's power, the material body of Elijah seems to have been changed into a glorified or spiritual body, and was carried beyond the reach of natural laws. To Elisha's view, the whirlwind took the form of a chariot and horses, and the appearance of fire.

12.—Saw it.—This suggests that Elisha's request was to be granted, and so he himself believed, as we learn from his conduct afterwards. **My father, etc.**—These words do not refer to the fiery appearances which Elisha saw, but to Elijah. This seems certain when we compare it with a similar exclamation of Joash, king of Israel, as Elisha was dying, where no form of literal horse or chariot is referred to. The expression seems to mean that the person so addressed, is regarded by the speaker as a source of strength and

defence to the nation; as chariots and horsemen took a prominent place in ancient warfare. As Elijah soon became invisible to mortal eyes, Elisha, feeling his bereavement, rends his clothes as a sign of sorrow.

13.—The falling of Elijah's mantle, which Elisha took up, is thought by some to be another sign that Elisha was to succeed Elijah as prophet and teacher; from this occurrence, the falling of the mantle of one upon another, has come to figuratively express the idea that the spirit and duties of the one have been transferred to the other. **Went back.**—How far they had advanced beyond the Jordan is not known.

14. Lord God of Elijah.—This question suggests self-depreciation. Elijah and Elijah's God are alone looked to for help. Eli's mantle smites the water and his God is invoked. Elijah has departed, but Elisha believes that God is still at hand; and issues a sort of challenge to God to show his power.

15. At Jericho.—They had probably advanced towards the Jordan, as they could not see what took place at Jordan from Jericho, which is said to be about six miles distant, but Jericho was their place of abode, where they were being educated. As these sons of the prophets saw Elisha crossing the river in the same way as Elijah had done, they concluded that the same spirit now rested upon Elisha; and in acknowledgment of this spirit, which qualified him to be their master and teacher, they bowed down before him.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

V. 6.—Give other instances of this form of oath? Num. 14: 21, 23; Judges 8: 19; 1 Sam. 20: 3; 2 Kings 4: 30, etc.

7.—What previous mention is made of Sons of the prophets? 1 Kings 20: 35; see also 1 Sam. 10: 5-10. Had these fifty men any special interest in what was to happen?

8.—In previous dividing of waters was any material instrument used? Was this Jesus, method of miraculously crossing water?

9.—How could Elijah expect to bestow upon Elisha any favor which he might ask? Was it in man's power to bestow what Elisha asked?

10.—What relation may there have been between seeing Elijah's ascent and having his request granted? Is it probable that any one else beheld the removal of Elijah?

11.—Compare the account of Enoch's translation with that of Elijah. Gen. 5: 21-24; Heb. 11: 5. What similar appearance is afterwards recorded in connection with Elisha? *Can there have been in either case any material objects? What did the appearances teach?*

12.—To what does the word chariot refer in this verse? What did rending the garments symbolize? Give other instances. Gen. 37: 34; Josh. 7: 6; 2 Sam. 1: 11; Job 1: 20, etc.

13.—Of what has this falling of Elijah's mantle, and its being taken up and used by Elisha, been made a symbol?

14.—What does Elisha mean by the question or exclamation, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah"? What result showed that Elisha was filled with the same spirit as his master? What spirit dwelt in both?

15.—What led the Sons of the Prophets to make this statement? What was the meaning of the way in which they received Elisha? Gen. 43: 26; 2 Sam. 24: 20; Ex. 20: 5.

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

1.—The sight of Elisha clinging to Elijah, and refusing, even to the bounds of intrusion, to be parted from him, has a good lesson for us. No one can be too earnest and persevering in clinging to those whose example and teaching have been for good in the past, and whose influence can do only good in time to come. "Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried, grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel." At the same time, as each thing suggests its opposite, we are taught to shun the companionship of the bad. A young man who has become dissipated, and is controlled by evil habits, can never return to paths of virtue and self-control, unless he breaks away from those whose influence is in the direction of his own bad habits.

2.—The eighth verse shows the sublime faith of Elisha. As he smites the water with his rolled-up mantle, he seems to have not the slightest doubt as to what will occur. An unbelieving spectator would be apt to scoff as the mantle is raised to strike the water; and would probably remind Elijah that all he was likely to do was to wet his mantle; but as the mantle comes down upon the flowing stream, the result justifies the faith of Elijah, and the scoffer is left to direct his laughter toward himself. So faith is always rewarded;

not, it may be, in the outward and visible way, but in the inward growth of him who thus exercises faith.

3.—The great request of Elisha is really a prayer for the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit, although the Old Testament does not use these words. Elijah was guided by that spirit, and in obedience to him was enabled to do mighty works. The same spirit dwelt upon Elisha from the day of Elijah's ascension, making him also to do wonderful works. And the comforting lesson for us is that the same spirit is available now. Christ has declared that those who ask the Father in heaven for the Holy Spirit, have more certainty of getting him than children have of getting good things from their earthly fathers. Elijah regarded Elisha's request a hard one to grant; but Jesus has made the following promise to all believers in him: "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you." What Elisha's intercessor counted hard, ours, Jesus Christ, regards as easy.

4.—Elijah's offering to do something for Elisha before leaving him suggests that not those who are about to leave the world, but those who are to remain, have need of help. Elijah has only to wait a few moments, and then be snatched away to his rest and reward; Elisha must remain and labor and teach, and do wonders for God; and it is he who needs divine assistance. And so always. If we look forward to months and years of life, we need help from above to enable us to fill up that time with active work for God's glory and man's good.

5.—Elisha's wise request has a lesson for us. He does not pray that his master may remain, or that he himself may be taken away with his master, nor does he ask for a future glorious translation with horses and chariots of fire; but that he may have the same spirit as his master. This is just like asking that God by his spirit would fit us for the work which we

ought to do in our lives. And as no one can fill the place assigned by God properly, without his help, let us seek the same spirit whom Elisha sought and obtained.

6.—Elisha's exclamation in verse 12 suggests that good and faithful people are the strength and defence of a nation. Any young person who will yield to good influences, and seek help from God, will become a power for good in the village or settlement in which he lives; and persevering in allegiance to God, may finally become to the nation a greater defence than guns, and swords, and ships of war.

7.—God is always with one who trusts him. Elisha cries: "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" and the answer of God is the dividing of the waters, as if he would say, "I am here to honor your faith." Elijah had ascended to glory, and God was with him; Elisha remained below and God was also with him. We are reminded of the Word of God through Jeremiah: "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" Jer. 23:24. If any one needs God's help, as all do, and trusts him, God is near, and will help.

8.—A man's inward spirit and character are known by his outward conduct. As the Sons of the Prophets behold Elisha smiting the waters, the waters dividing, and Elisha crossing on dry ground, they say, "This is not the man who went away with Elijah. He is now animated by the same spirit which used to dwell upon our master, and his, Elijah. Thus, the inward spirit and moving power in a man become manifest in his outward conduct. This statement would be universally true, if there were no hypocrites, (and everyone is in some measure a hypocrite, I suppose.) One can do acts which do not correspond with the inward self, and so outward conduct may, and often does, deceive the observer.

THE BLACKBOARD.

THE SPIRIT ON ELIJAH
SHA

Smiting the water
ealing instruction
eparating from earth
miting the water
ecuring confidence.

QUESTIONS.

Juniors.

- Of what two men does this lesson tell?
What was their relation to each other?
What is the title of the lesson?
- 6.—Where were they at the beginning of the lesson?
What did Elijah say to Elisha?
What was Elisha's answer?
- 7.—Who were watching them?
What were "sons of the prophets"?
- 8.—How did they cross the river?
When had it been crossed before in the same way? Joshua 3: 17.
- 9.—What was Elijah's parting offer?
What was Elisha's parting request?
- 10.—What kind of a request was this to grant?
Upon what condition was it promised?
11.—What suddenly parted them?
Where did Elijah go?
Where do all the forgiven go at death?
What other departures were something like Elijah's?
- 12.—What did Elisha cry?
What did he mean by these words?
What did he do with his own clothes?
- 13.—What did Elijah leave to him?
- 14.—How did Elisha get back across the Jordan?
How did this shew that his parting request was granted?
- 15.—Who were first to meet Elisha? What did they do? Why?

Seniors.

- Tell how Elisha began to follow Elijah. Kings 19: 19-21. Who were the sons of the prophets? What did they ask Elisha at Bethel and Jericho? What was his answer?
- 6.—What does "here" mean—see v. 4. At what other places did Elijah make the same request? See v. 1-5. What was Elisha's answer in each case? Why did Elisha wish to keep with Elijah? Did he know that Elijah was soon to leave him? See vs. 3, 5, 7.
- 7.—Why did the "sons of the prophets" watch Elijah and Elisha?
- 8.—What is a mantle? What dividing of waters had previously taken place? Ex. 14: 21-22; Josh. 3: 14-17.
- 9.—What law of Moses is referred to in the words "double portion"? What spirit rested upon Elijah and then on Elisha? In what way could Elijah be said to give his spirit to Elisha? Can we get the same spirit? Luke 11: 13.
- 10.—Did Elisha see Elijah's removal? Who else was taken by God without dying? Heb. 11: 5.
- 11.—In what form did the power which removed Elijah appear to Elisha? What name is given to the power in the latter part of the verse?
- 12.—What did the rending of garments mean among the Jews?
- 13.—What fell from Elijah as he was taken up? What might this be a sign of?
- 14.—Of how many dividings of the waters of the Jordan does the Bible tell?
- 15.—What led the sons of the prophets to believe that Elijah's spirit was upon Elisha? What did they mean by bowing before Elisha?

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

1. As death is regarded as a result of sin, it is thought a special favor from God that any should escape it; only two, Enoch and Elijah, are known to have been so favoured; but Paul tells us that all believers who are alive at the second coming of Christ shall be honored in this way. 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17.
2. It is a good thing to wish to be with good people; and the more we are with them and talk to them, the more we shall become like them; thus Elisha was right in clinging to Elijah as long as he could. V. 6.
3. Elijah's request that Elisha should ask a favor before he should be taken from him reminds us that it is while we are in this world that we can do anything to help others. So far as we know, no one can do any good on earth after he has been removed from the earth; and this should lead us to be doing all we can each day, not knowing but that each day may be our last, and our last chance for helping anyone. But what we are doing day by day will have an influence after we are gone, either for good or evil, because we are making others better or worse while here. V. 9.
4. To have the spirit of another is to have in our hearts the same desires and purposes as that other; and in that case our character and conduct will become like those of the other. The spirit of a good man will come upon us, if we observe him, and try to learn from him, and trust him. In this way faith in Jesus brings his spirit into us and makes us like him. V. 9.
5. "He saw him no more." V. 12. This shows that there are real things unseen to our bodily eyes. Elijah still was, although Elisha could not see him. Paul even tells us that those things which we cannot see are the best, because they are to last always. "The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are unseen are eternal," as faith, and hope, and love.
6. Men may leave one by one, but God remains always. Elijah disappeared, but God was with Elisha as he smote the water, and showed his power and will to help, in what is right, all who trust in him.
7. We should pray that the Spirit of a greater than Elijah may rest upon us.

Lesson, 2 Kings 4: 25-37. Read the Chapter. Commit vs. 32-35.

25. So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite:

26. Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.

27. And when she came to the man of God, to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone: for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me.

28. Then she said, Did I desire a son of my Lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?

29. Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again; and lay my staff upon the face of the child.

30. And the mother of the child said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose and followed her.

31. And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him saying, The child is not awaked.

32. And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.

33. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord.

34. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child: and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

35. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

36. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.

37. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee."—Psa. 55:22.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Death and Sorrow, v. 25-28.
2. Faith and Prayer, v. 29-33.
3. Life and Joy, v. 34-37.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Kindness rewarded, 2 Kings, 4: 8-17.
 T. Sorrow in the home, 2 Kings 4: 18-24.
 W. The Shunammite's Son, 2 Kings 4: 25-37.
 T. Elisha's care for the Shunammite, 2 Kings, 8: 1-6.
 F. The widow's son, Luke 7: 11-17.
 S. The ruler's daughter, Luke 8: 41-49, 49-53.
 S. Praise for deliverance, Psalm 116: 1-13.

CATECHISM.

Q. 31. What is effectual calling?
 A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

LESSON HYMNS

Nos. 301, 284, 293, 818.

The events of our lesson took place in the ninth century, B.C. Jehoram was king of Israel, he was the son of Ahab and Jezebel, under whom the prophets of the Lord had suffered so much.

Jehoram had indeed put away the image of Baal, (2 Kings 3: 2,) but was of the moral lineage of Jereboam the son of Nebat. There was idolatry at Bethel, Jericho and Gilgal, but there were there also schools of the prophets, and the true religion was kept alive.

We read of Elisha at his house in Samaria. (2 Kings 5: 3, 9 and 2 Kings 6: 32.) At the time of our story he was living, hermit like, on Mount Carmel, clothed in his hairy garment.

Elisha was the successor of Elijah and had from him the first born's prophetic portion. Before him the sons of the prophets bowed themselves to the ground. The allusion in v. 23 to new moons and Sabbaths may indicate that there were gatherings at the place where the prophet was, for religious worship. He was as a father to kings and was the real defender of Israel.

His large duties took him from place to place, he often passed through Shunem, a village on the southern slope of Little Hermon looking toward Gilboa. A woman of that place had a room built for him on the flat roof of her house, (a chamber with walls, R. V. margin.) He could reach this chamber by the outside stair without disturbing those within. In this simply furnished room Elisha frequently lodged.

A son was granted this woman of Shunem as a reward for her kindness to the man of God. When he was old enough to go out by himself he went one day into the harvest field, and there suffered what was evidently sun-stroke, he was carried to his mother and died upon her knees. She laid her dead boy in the prophet's chamber.

25. To Mount Carmel.—About sixteen miles distant. Her cry was to God, from him she would ask relief. The prophet was a mediator between her and God. She perhaps knew from the life of Elijah that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth

much," though she may not have understood that this death, like the death of Lazarus, had been permitted that the glory of God might be manifested.

26—Elisha in sending his servant to meet the Shunammite showed his consideration for the woman's welfare, and also observed proper decorum according to the customs of the time. The woman had said to the young man "Drive and go forward, slack not thy riding." Salutation took much time. It was Elisha she desired to see and her answer to Gehazi's inquiry was brief and may have been quite conventional.

27—She spoke but one word to Gehazi, and when she came to the man of God her feelings at first found no utterance. She cast herself down and clung to his feet. Gehazi resented the liberty she had taken with his master, but Elisha saw that a great sorrow had come to her.

28—The questions the woman asked show the agony of her soul, and tell what her thoughts had been on the way. She does not trust herself to say that her son is dead, but Elisha knows that nothing short of her child's death could have caused such bitterness of heart.

29—The staff was the official rod and the symbol of power. If Elisha expected this would be the means used by God in raising the dead child, he showed great humility, and a faith equal to that of the centurion who said "speak the word only and my servant shall be healed." On the other hand, as he said of the woman's bereavement, the Lord "hath not told me," so it may be that he had no clear indication from God that this instrumentality would be honored, and in sending his servant Gehazi he acted hastily.

30—Only once before had one been raised from the dead. A mighty deed was about to be done, and the prophet himself, and not his staff, must be the instrumentality used. The Lord would give his prophet a share in the honor. God may have taken the earnest faith and importunity of the woman as his way of revealing to Elisha what he should do, for "he arose and followed her."

31—The means proved ineffectual. Before Gehazi had time to lay the staff upon the face of the child, a more excellent way had been found, the prophet had gone himself. Gehazi in the light of the future developments of his

character was not a fit person to hold in his hand the rod of the man of God.

32—The child was really dead. From the Lord he had been received at the word of the prophet, and she laid his body upon the bed of the man of God. From the Lord she sought his restoration through the prophet. If this boy was prepared for the death that overtook him, he had the best possible preparation for the life that followed his restoration.

33—Them twain—himself and the dead child. God's people were early taught to seek his blessing through prayer. Elisha's life and work foreshadowed the life and work of Christ, his manner of prayer was like Christ's teaching "enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy father which is in secret."

34—The acts described in this verse show great earnestness. In stretching himself upon the child he followed the example of Elijah, (1 Kings 17: 21). Christ raised the dead by the word of his power, "come forth," he said, and "arise," and yet Christ also used personal contact in his great works, he touched the eyes of the blind, and the ears and tongue of the deaf and dumb, and in raising Jairus' daughter he took the maid by the hand.

35—He walked to and fro (once hither and once thither, margin) showing great anxiety. Doubtless he was wrestling in prayer. The restoration of the child to life was progressive.

36—God opened his door to Elisha and gave back the child's life Elisha opened his door to the Shunammite and gave back her son.

37—Elisha in sending his servant to call the woman did not forget propriety, and the Shunammite in all the joy of the moment did not forget to give thanks.

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. Death.—Vs. 25-28. This woman's child was dead—her only child, and her house was desolate. The state of sin is in the Bible spoken of as death, "and you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins;" "and you being dead in your sins." How desolate are the homes in which are the spiritually dead. This woman mourned not as those who have no hope. She took the lifeless form of her boy and laid it upon the bed of the man of God, she gave it into God's keeping, and she sought out the prophet that through his media-

tion she might bring her sad case before the Almighty.

We should bring our children to God through Christ, who hath said "suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." The helpless little ones we should lay in his arms; that they may early know his tender care and early learn to love him; and for those who are older let our prayer be like the entreaty of the Shunammite, earnest and importunate, "As the Lord liveth and as my soul liveth, I will not leave thee." In our great anxiety for the spiritual awakening of the young in our care, let us take for our comfort the words of Christ to Jairus, "Be not afraid, only believe."

2. Disappointment — Vs. 29-31. We have a lesson here on the use of means. The staff in the hands of Elisha was like "the strong rods for the sceptres of them that bare rule." In the hands of Gehazi the staff was ineffectual. There was a difference in the character of the men behind the staff.

In transmitting electric power—there is great waste of energy because a perfect conductor has not yet been found. If an attempt were made to carry the power a long distance it would all be spent before it got to the place where it was to be applied. God transmits spiritual power through us. He who is a poor medium will waste this power, a bad conductor will prove an ineffectual worker. We should seek consecration to God's use and then economize the time and the attention of those whom we teach, that there may be as little waste of the power as possible. If we do not give ourselves to God, and use prayerfully and diligently the means of grace, after all our

teaching and preaching there will be no voice nor attention, neither will the dead souls be awaked.

3. Deliverance.—Vs. 32-37. The child was raised up and given to his mother. It was an object lesson for the people of the time and for us. The deliverance was wrought through prayer.

It was secret prayer; the prayer of the shut closet, we will come forth from the place where we have been alone with God ennobled by his presence and strengthened by his might. *It was the prayer of faith.* He was asking a hard thing. When had it been heard that one was raised from the dead? As he prayed he stood before a door that was barred on the inside. He was asking God who was in there to open the door and give back the soul of the dead boy. And the Lord who heareth in secret and rewardeth the prayer of faith granted the request of Elisha.

It was earnest prayer. So earnest that it brought him in his anxiety very close to the one for whom he prayed. The margin of the Revised version reads, v. 35, "and embraced the child." He cared not for the polluting touch of unclean death.

We should get near to our scholars. We should touch them at as many points as possible, till our sympathies and anxieties and prayers embrace them.

The deliverance caused joy over the restoration of the spiritually dead, joy on earth and joy in heaven. There shall be joy at the last day when Jesus shall raise up all children, and many a mother will take up the son whom she "has loved long since and lost awhile."

THE BLACKBOARD.

Life and Joy,

Faith and Prayer.

Death and Sorrow.

QUESTIONS.

Juniors.

What is this woman called in verse 8? 10
 What had she and her husband done for
 Elisha? 18 What happened to her son? 20
 How long was he ill? 21 What did the mother
 do with the body when the boy died? 22
 What next did she do?

25—Where was Elisha living? What great
 event had taken place there? 1 Kings 18: 38.
 Who was with him as his servant?

26—What did Elisha bid his servant do?
 What questions was he to ask? What was
 her answer?

27—How did she show her grief? What
 did Gehazi do? What did Elisha say to him?

29—What did Elisha bid Gehazi do? What
 was he to take with him? What was he to do
 when he met people? Why was he to act
 thus? What was Gehazi to do to the child?

30—Was the mother satisfied with that?
 What did she say? What did Elisha do?

31—What did Gehazi do? With what re-
 sults? What did he report to Elisha? Where
 is death likened to sleep? John 11: 12.

32, 33—How did Elisha find the child?
 What did he first do when alone with the
 dead? What had Elijah done before the fire
 came down on his sacrifice on Carmel? What
 should we do before every undertaking in life?

34, 35—What did he do after he had
 prayed? How did returning life show itself
 in the child?

36, 37—What did he do when the child
 awaked? What did the mother do when she
 found her son alive?

What power will raise all the dead to life?
 John 11: 25. What other death is there from
 which Christ can raise us?

Seniors.

Where was Shunem? What shews the
 amount of travel Elisha did in visiting his
 colleges and preaching through the country?
 In what circumstances as to wealth and social
 standing was the woman of Shunem? Upon
 what did travellers in the East have to depend
 for shelter and food? What special accom-
 modation was prepared for Elisha? What sad
 event came to the home?

25-2—To whom did the bereaved mother
 go in her time of trouble? How did she shew
 the urgency of her errand? How was her
 grief shewn when she came to Elisha? What
 do we here learn of the measure and limits of a
 prophet's knowledge? How did Elisha judge
 that the lad was dead?

29 31—What was the first step for her aid?
 What special importance did Elisha attach to
 the staff? What were Gehazi's instructions?
 What did the mother think of this plan? What
 was the result of her urgency? Give an in-
 stance from the parables of Christ, of impor-
 tunity succeeding. What is here suggested
 about prayer? What was the result of Gehazi's
 mission? Where is death called sleep?

32-35—What was the first thing Elisha
 did when alone with the dead? What other
 instances in Scripture of prefacing important
 work with prayer? What means did he then
 use? What two things should always be done
 in trying to help or cure the sick? In how
 many particulars is this miracle like the one
 wrought by Elisha in 1 Kings 17: 23. Com-
 pare Christ's miracle Luke 7: 15.

36-37—What is the mother's first act on
 seeing her son alive? What do we learn as to
 our duty when blessings come?

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

Death and sorrow, 25-28.—In times of
 sorrow our hearts go out to God, from him we
 seek relief. When a dear child dies it is only
 our trust in God that can lead us to say "It is
 well." Jesus comes when there is death and
 sorrow and he brings comfort like that which
 he gave to Jairus, whose little daughter was
 dead, when he said "Be not afraid, only
 believe."

Faith and prayer, 29-33.—In our work
 for God we must have faith in his power, and
 we should so give ourselves up to him that our
 selfishness and sin will not hinder the work
 he wishes to do by means of us. The blessings
 we wish we should seek through prayer. When
 we pray earnestly to others it will bring us
 near to them. Let us try it with the heathen,
 or with some one who has done us an injury, or
 with some one we want Jesus to save.

Life and joy, 34-37.—The child was
 raised up and given to his mother. What a
 beautiful picture it would make. It is an object
 lesson for us. There is joy over those who are
 raised up from their death in sin—joy on earth

and in heaven. There shall be joy at the last
 day when Jesus shall raise up all children from
 their graves, and many a mother will take up
 the son whom she "has loved long since and
 lost awhile."

It was well to have Elisha to go to in her
 trouble, but she had to journey to reach him,
 and soon he too must die. We have a better
 than Elisha, ever near. He may not give help
 in the way this mother was helped, but he will
 always do so in the way that His All-wise love
 sees best.

Gehazi with the staff, useless, Elisha with
 the living power, picture the great truth that
 success in winning other people from moral and
 spiritual death depends more upon the charac-
 ter and life of the worker, his faith and prayer,
 his nearness to God, than upon his place or
 position, or the staff of authority he carries
 with him.

If we would be helpful in uplifting others
 we must put ourselves in contact with them,
 heart to heart, hand to hand, giving them
 sympathy and help.

Lesson, 2 Kings 5: 1-14. Read the Chapter. Commit vs. 13, 14.

1. Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper.

2. And the Syrians had gone out by companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife.

3. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

4. And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.

5. And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

6. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

7. And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

8. And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

9. So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

10. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

11. But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me; and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

12. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.

13. And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

14. Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God, and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved."—Jer. 17:14.

LESSON PLAN.

1. The Hopeless Leper, v. 1.
2. Cheered by a new hope, v. 2-4.
3. Seeking Relief, v. 5-13.
4. Wonderfully cured, v. 14.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Naaman Healed, 2 Kings 5:1-7.
 T. Naaman Healed, 2 Kings 5:8-16.
 W. Christ's healing touch, Mark 1:35-45.
 T. Gratitude for healing, Luke 17:11-19.
 F. Obedient faith, John 9:1-11.
 S. Grace abounding, Rom. 5:12-21.
 So. The source of cleansing, 1 John 1.

CATECHISM.

Q. 32. What benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?

A. They that are effectually called do in this life partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and the several benefits which, in this life, do either accompany or flow from them.

LESSON HYMNS,

Nos. 38 (Ps.), 532, 217, 544

The fifth chapter of 2 Kings is a continuation of the narrative of Elisha's miracles, - begun in the 2nd chapter, one of which we were studying last Sabbath.

Two miracles, very closely associated, and yet of a very different character, are recorded here—the one the cure of leprosy, the other its infliction.

It is with the first of these only that we have to deal to-day.

Our Lord referred to this miracle (Lu. 4: 27), to show that God's saving power was not limited to the nation to whom he had given a special revelation of himself; but that the blessings which his own people despised and rejected were sought and obtained by others outside of Israel.

1. King of Syria.—It is not very easy to fix the limits of Syria, the Hebrew Aram, owing to their variable and indefinite character. The name is somewhat vaguely applied to the territory extending from the Mediterranean on the west, to the river Tigris on the

east; and from the mountains of Armenia on the north to Palestine and the Arabian desert on south. The chief seat of power was Damascus.

The king of Syria referred to here was Benhadad II, and Naaman (pleasantness, grace) was the commander-in-chief of his army.

In his wars with Ahab, king of Israel, Benhadad led his army in person (1 Kings 20: 1-20; 22: 31), but in his old age he seems to have given the command to his trusted officer, Naaman.

II Lord had given victory.—Israel and Syria had united their forces to resist the invasion of the Assyrians under Shalmanezar II. Naaman had probably commanded the Syrian army in one of these encounters, and the Jewish historian attributes his success to the intervention of Jehovah.

A leper.—Leprosy in the East existed in many forms and degrees of intensity. That of Naaman seems to have been the predominant white variety, which covered either the entire

body or a large part of its surface; for we are told (v. 27) that it was Naaman's leprosy that clung to Gehazi, who went out from the presence of Elisha, "a leper, as white as snow." Other cases of this form of leprosy are referred to in Ex. 4: 6; Num. 12: 10. Compare also Lev. 13: 13. For a full description of this dreadful disease, with the laws concerning it, read Lev. xiii, xiv. Naaman's leprosy did not exclude him from the society of his fellows, as it would probably have done in Israel; nor did it incapacitate him for duty, though it may have been painful and disfiguring, and liable to develop into a worse form.

2. In bands—Referring to the raids made upon the border of Israel by bands of Syrians for plunder.

A little maid—One of the objects of these predatory raids was the capture of slaves, a cruel practice still carried on by the Arabs of Africa. In one of these forays the little maid of our narrative was carried off. Perhaps she had been sold to Naaman, as Joseph was to Potiphar.

4. Told his Lord.—Marg. R. V. "he." Probably Naaman himself went in and told the king what the little maid had said to his wife about the prophet in Israel. A man in his condition would be willing to try any remedy that held out the faintest hope of recovery.

5. Go to, go—i.e. "go at once." This proposal, as well as Jehoram's words (v. 7) shows that Israel and Syria were then at peace with each other. The readiness with which Benhadad consented to Naaman's departure, at the same time offering to assist him in his purpose, showed how anxious he was for the recovery of his trusted general. **Send a letter.** To Jehoram the son of Ahab. The art of writing was practised very early. The Egyptian kings had correspondence with the great Hittite nation before the time of the Exodus.

Took with him.—It was customary in those days to take a gift when seeking a favor from anyone; Gen. 32: 13-21; 43: 11; 1 Kings 10: 10, 24, 25; 14: 3. So none were to appear before the Lord empty, Ex. 23: 15; 34: 20; Deut. 16: 16, but were to bring an offering and come before him, 1 Chr. 16: 29; Ps. 96: 8. A talent of silver was equal to about \$1800, while the gold talent was worth about ten times this amount. The shekel of gold was worth \$8 or \$9. The value of the

gold and silver taken by Naaman has been variously estimated at from fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars of our money. This great sum, however, would be a small amount to give for health.

6. To the king.—Benhadad doubtless supposed that the prophet of whom Naaman had heard was under the direction of the King of Israel and would do his bidding, as did the magicians and servants of heathen kings. Only an outline of the letter is here given. It doubtless began with the customary formalities and empty compliments.

7. Rent his clothes.—A mode of expressing grief, fear or horror. Comp. Gen. 37: 29, 34; 44: 13; Num. 14: 6; Jud. 11: 35; 1 Kings 21: 17; 2 Chr. 23: 13; Matt. 26: 65, etc.

Am I God.—In the mind of an Israelite, the power to kill and to make alive was associated with Omnipotence. Deut. 32: 39; 1 Sam. 2: 6.

Of his leprosy.—This would be equivalent to making alive, for leprosy was regarded as a sort of death, Num. 12: 12. Jehoram could not have known much about Elisha, or the power of Elisha's God even "to kill and to make alive" (see Ch. 4: 34-36), or he would not have given way to such hopeless grief.

Seeketh a quarrel—Benhadad had once sought an occasion for war with Ahab, by making extravagant demands, 1 Kings 20: 3-6, and this request for Jehoram to do what was humanly impossible seemed like a pretext for a quarrel with him.

8. The man of God heard.—Elisha did not wish to lose an opportunity for extending a knowledge of the true God beyond the borders of Israel. He would also teach Jehoram a much needed lesson as to where he should look in the time of trouble.

9. Chariots—These were used as conveyances in times of peace as well as in war (Gen. 41: 43; 50: 9). The Syrians and Hittites imported their chariots from Egypt. **At the door.** The great general does not seem to have had any intention of dismounting to enter the humble dwelling of the prophet. His affliction had not served to humble his pride.

10. Sent a messenger.—Naaman needed to learn that Elisha's God was no respecter of persons. Human greatness was as nothing in his sight. Further, Elisha did not wish it to

appear that he was the worker of this miracle; and therefore, kept himself hidden. **Wash in Jordan.** Comp. the command given by our Lord to the blind man, John 9: 7. See also Josh. 6: 3-5; 1 Kings 18: 43. This command involved a journey of twenty-five or thirty miles before Naaman could reach the river. It would put his faith and obedience to a severe test.

11. Naaman was wroth.—Elisha's conduct in sending his servant instead of going himself to speak to Naaman, seemed lacking in respect. The cure prescribed seemed absurdly simple. What if after going all this distance to the river Jordan, he should be none the better! If bathing in a stream was all that was necessary, why need he have left the beautiful streams of his own country to come on this long journey to Israel. Naaman came very near not entering into enjoyment of God's blessing, through unbelief.

Behold, I thought.—The scene which Naaman had pictured in his own mind, in connection with his visit to Elisha was in keeping with his views of his own importance. But God's thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are his ways our ways. "God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble." Naaman had to learn that if he would enter the kingdom of heaven, he must humble himself as a little child. Matt. 18: 3, 4.

12. Abana, or Amana, and Pharpar.—The Barada, called by the Greeks "river of gold," and the Awaj are now the principal streams of Damascus. The former of these was doubtless the Abana, and the latter the Pharpar. Travellers testify to the clearness and beauty of these streams. If it was the water that was to cleanse, certainly the rivers of Damascus would seem preferable to the muddy Jordan.

13. Servants came.—The servants were doubtless as jealous of their masters, however, as he himself was, but they were probably more accustomed to obedience, and were better able to control their feelings and to take a reasonable view of the situation. Naaman could not well dispute the force of their reasoning. If the prophet had asked him to do some very difficult thing, he would gladly have obeyed. That the requirement was simple and easy was all the more reason why he should not object to it.

14. Went he down.—The long journey would afford Naaman time for serious reflection. There were probably no signs of recovery until the seventh plunge, so that each time Naaman rose from the water, his faith would be still further tried.

Of a little child.—"Fresher and fairer than was natural in a full grown man."

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

1. The case of Naaman furnishes a striking illustration of misery in the midst of all that the world can do to minister to happiness. Naaman had wealth, honor, power, everything almost of earthly greatness and comfort which any man could desire. But yet, the one bitter ingredient in his cup of earthly happiness spoiled it all. The meanest slaves in this great man's household would not have exchanged places with his master. Naaman himself would doubtless have been willing to relinquish all his earthly greatness and become a poor and obscure man if thereby he could have purchased deliverance from the dreadful disease with which he was afflicted.

The rich and the great of the world are sometimes the subjects of envy, and yet those who think their lot so much superior to their own, little know what bitter elements of unhappiness it may contain. This thought should lead us to contentment with our own lot in life, thankful if God has given us health and strength to serve him.

2. The story of the little maid shows what even a child may do to bring blessing to others and to advance the glory of God in the world. She was only a little girl, in a very lowly station, and yet what important and far reaching results followed a word fitly spoken by her. Her influence for good was greater than that of Kings. She knew better where to direct her master for help than either Benhadad or Jehoram. The humblest stations in life afford opportunities for doing good.

3. How dark and mysterious are the ways by which God sometimes brings about the accomplishment of his gracious purposes! We can hardly imagine a sadder calamity in a home than the loss of a little child under such circumstances as the capture of this little maid by a band of rough heathen soldiers. What must have been the feelings of the grief-stricken parents, and how hard they must have found it to submit

to the will of God in this great sorrow! And yet we now see that the capture of this little girl was but one link in a wonderful chain of events by which God was bringing blessing and life to others, and glory to his own great name. Of many of God's ways it may be said, "Thy footsteps are not known" (Ps. 77: 19). "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing." (Prov. 25: 2). Jesus said to his disciples, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter" (John 13: 7). It should be enough for the christian to know that all things are for his sake, that God is making all things to work together for good to them that love him (2 Cor. 4: 15; Ro. 8: 28).

4. The case of Naaman serves to illustrate God's attitude towards those outside of Israel. The divine revelation was committed to the Jewish nation, not to be kept secret from the rest of the world, but for the purpose of making it known to all the peoples of the earth. The prayer, "That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations" (Ps. 67: 2) expresses the true end for which the light was given to Israel. Naaman, Rahab, the Canaanitish woman and others were first-fruits of the coming of the Gentiles to Israel's light. Jesus spoke of the time when "they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." God's purposes of love and grace were not limited to any single race of men, they are world wide.

5. Obedience is one of the first requirements necessary to obtain God's blessing. Naaman found it difficult at first to learn this lesson. His proud spirit rebelled against the prophet's orders. He thought he knew a better way, and would have been willing to make some great sacrifice rather than perform the simple act required of him. But he found out by experience that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." There are many to-day who would be willing to pay a great price to make sure of heaven, rather than submit to the conditions which God has laid down; and some are foolish enough to try to purchase salvation with money, or by good works, or by enduring bodily suffering. But God will not accept the most costly gift or sacrifice as a substitute for the way he has provided to cleanse from sin and to impart spiritual life.

We may safely follow, under all circumstances, the advice which Jesus' mother gave to the servants, at the marriage in Canaan, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2: 5). To know the will of his Master, and to do that will is the sum of the christian's duty in the world.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

1. Describe the persons and places mentioned in this verse.
2. What practise is referred to here? Give parallels from scripture and from modern times.
3. Where did Elisha live? (Ch 6: 32).
4. What is implied in this verse of the character and standing of the little maid in Naaman's home?
5. What custom is referred to in this verse? Give other examples.
6. What would appear from Benhadad's letter to be his ideas of Elisha's vocation and of his relation to the king of Israel?
7. What is the force of the expression "to kill and to make alive"? What grounds had Jehoram for thinking that the king of Syria was trying to provoke a quarrel with him?
8. What was the significance of rending the clothes? Give illustrations.
9. For what were chariots used? Where did the Syrians get their chariots?
10. Why did Elisha not go in person to meet Naaman?
11. Why was Naaman disappointed and angry at the reception given him by the prophet?
12. Why did Naaman so much prefer the rivers of his own land to the Jordan?
13. What does the language of Naaman's servants imply with regard to their relationship to their master?
14. What is the general significance of the number seven in Scripture?

THE BLACKBOARD.

Hear	{ GOD'S }	Invitation
Obey		Command
Receive		Gift

QUESTIONS.

Juniors.

1.—Who was Naaman? What was his position? What his character? What was his one great affliction? What is leprosy like? In what countries is it still found? Of what is it often taken as a type? Why?

2.—Who was Naaman's wife's maid? How did she come to be in that place?

3.—What did she wish for her master? Who did she say could cure him? How far was she right? What may we learn from her usefulness?

5.—What did the king say when he heard the little maid's wish? What did he do? What did he send?

6.—To whom was the letter sent? Why?

8.—What did the king of Israel say when the letter came? What did he do? What did he think the king of Syria wanted?

8.—Who heard that the "king had rent his clothes?" What did the prophet say?

9.—Who came to Elisha's door? How did he come?

10.—How did Elisha receive Naaman? What message did he send to him?

11.—How did Naaman like Elisha's treatment of him? What had he expected?

12.—What waters did he think better than the Jordan? What did he do?

13.—Who reasoned with him? How did they reason with him?

14.—What effect did his servants have upon him? How often did he wash in the Jordan? What was the result?

What can cleanse the leprosy of sin? Have you yet sought for cleansing?

What was last Sabbath's lesson? How long from that lesson to the present one? What can you tell of the history of that time?

Seniors.

What is leprosy like? What do we here learn as to its unfitting one for work? What were some of the Scripture laws concerning it?

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

We should not envy those whose lot in life seems to be a better one than ours. Outward things cannot of themselves give happiness. The rich and great have their sorrows as well as the poor and the lowly.

Even a child may do something to help others and to glorify God. Though in the humblest places in life, we may do good. God's blessing can make even a word powerful for good.

Our influence for good should be felt first of all in our own homes. See Mark 5: 19

Our own troubles should not make us indifferent to the sorrows of others. In the hour of our Lord's deepest sorrow, his thoughts and sympathies were going out towards others. John 14: 1; 27; 19: 26-27. See also John 18: 8.

God is able to overrule evil for good, and to turn our misfortunes into blessings. 2 Cor.

What intercourse was allowed in Israel between a leper and his fellowmen? Why was Naaman not driven out from his home? Of what is leprosy often taken as a type? Why?

2-4.—What mode of warfare is implied in v. 2? Compare the little maid and Joseph. Gen. 37: 36. How were they alike and unlike in the mode of their captivity, the families to which they were sold, and what they did for their masters?

5-7.—What does the trust placed in the little maid's word show as to her character, and the place she had won for herself in the confidence of the household? What is the best possession one can have in life? What is the best outfit for going out into life? What custom is shown in the "gift"? What was the value of this gift? To whom did the king of Syria send? Why did he send to the king? What did the king of Israel think of the letter? What ground had he for thinking as he did? What was the significance of "rending the clothes"? Give other instances of the same.

8-12.—How would such news usually spread? What did Elisha do when he heard of it? What did he say the Syrian would know? What was Naaman's idea of Elisha and his mode of cure? Compare this with the medicine men among the Indians or the fakirs of the East? Why did Elisha not appear? How did Naaman like such treatment? What two things offended him? In what way do the waters of Abana and Parpar differ from those of the Jordan?

13, 14.—How do the servants show themselves truly greater than their master? What does he gain by heeding them? Why seven times?

What made Naaman at first refuse the offered cure? How does the simplicity of the Gospel cure for sin sometimes affect men? How does the reasoning of Naaman's servants apply to men as a reason for accepting the Gospel?

4: 15; Ro. 8: 28.

In bestowing his blessings, God is no respecter of persons. The invitation is to all, "Ho everyone that thirsteth, etc." Isa. 55: 1; "Whosoever will let him take the water of life freely," Rev. 22: 17.

The purpose of God's revelation is set forth in the prayer "That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations," Ps. 67: 2.

The simplicity of the gospel is a stumbling-block to many. The spirit of Naaman is still in the world, for many would prefer to do some great thing rather than look to Jesus and be saved.

It is not easy to surrender our wills to God. But there is no other way to receive his blessing.

God's help comes to us in the path of obedience, V. 14; Lu. 17: 14.

Lesson, 2 Kings 6: 8-18. Read 2 Kings 6: 1-23. Commit vs. 15-17.

8. Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

9. And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place: for whether the Syrians are come down.

10. And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.

11. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?

12. And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

13. And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying,

Behold, he is in Dothan.

14. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host; and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

15. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

16. And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

17. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes; that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

18. And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the Lord, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Psa. 34:7.

LESSON PLAN.

1. Elisha saves Jehoram.
2. The Angel host protects Elisha.
3. Elisha leads the Syrians to Samaria.

DAILY READINGS.

- M Elisha at Dothan, 2 Kings 6: 8-18.
 T. Good for evil, 2 Kings 6: 19-23.
 W. Safety, Psalm 12.
 T. Faith gives courage, Pa. 27.
 F. God with us, 2 Chron. 32: 1-8.
 S. Who against us? Rom. 8: 24-32.
 S. Trust in God, Psalm 37: 1-10.

CATECHISM.

Q. 33. What is justification?
 A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherin he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

LESSON HYMNS.

Nos. 14 (Ps.), 509, 514, 293.

In the first section of the chapter from which the lesson is taken, an interesting glimpse is given of life among the Sons of the Prophets, the theological students of that day. Then follows the lesson.

Jehoram was king of Israel and Benhadad II king of Syria. The time was not earlier than 896, B.C.

V. 8.—Bands of marauding Syrians were harassing the land of Israel. They troubled the land in this way from time to time as opportunity offered, probably for many years. Compare the preceding chapter, verse second. Now they desire to capture the king apparently. Benhadad and his officers made careful plans, selecting the most careful places for laying ambuscades. The operations detailed in this lesson were not carried on by large armies, but by comparatively small parties. We may contrast with the warfare described here, that referred to in the twenty-fourth and following verses of this chapter.

9-10.—Elisha had denounced the king of Israel, see chap. 3: 13, 14, yet he was a patriot, and was desirous that Israel should prevail. The king of Israel was moving about from place to place and the prophet found means of warning him against passing by the places

where the Syrians were lying in wait for him. Jehoram was wise enough to take advice from the prophet. If, as some suppose, he sent spies to see if the Syrians were indeed where the prophet warned him not to go he found they were there. He took another road or remained where he was, and thus escaped. This occurred a number of times.

The picture presented by these verses is more pleasing than much that we read of the kingdom of the ten tribes. The political head of the nation shows himself willing to accept advice and assistance from God's representative, the prophet Elisha. The result was a series of deliverances of his self and his followers. The history of Israel would have been very glorious had her kings and people always allowed themselves to be guided by God's servants.

11.—Benhadad had laid his plans very secretly and he was greatly troubled at the thought that some one had revealed those plans to Jehoram. He suspected that there must be a traitor in his court. Eastern rulers have in all ages been subject to plots and treachery among their own followers. Benhadad was himself assassinated by Hazael, one of his servants. See chap. 8: 7-15. But this

time he was mistaken. No one of his followers had betrayed him.

12.—It may have been Naaman who told him about Elisha. In their many raids the Syrian soldiers would be sure to come in contact with the people of Israel and they would hear from them of the great powers of the prophet. They would also be likely to learn that the king of Israel was dependent on Elisha for his success in outwitting the Syrians. When it pleased God, for his own glory and the good of his people, he permitted his prophet to see what went on in Benhadad's most secret councils. His weak servant was more than a match for the enemies of Israel.

13.—The king of Syria acts with the promptness of a soldier. He at once takes measures to effect the arrest of Elisha. He sends his spies to find out where the prophet is. They return with the information that he is at Dothan, a fortified place about twelve miles north of Samaria. Dothan is mentioned in only one other place in Scripture, namely, in Gen. 37:17. The ruins of the city are marked by a mound known as Tell Dothan. There is a spring and there are many cisterns, bottle-shaped.

14.—From the fact that Benhadad did not hesitate about sending a troop to Dothan, within twelve miles of Samaria, we may judge of the boldness of the Syrians in penetrating to every part of the country, as well as of the efficiency of the army of Israel. Oppressed by wicked rulers and harassed by the surrounding nations, it was wonderful that the nation was not swept off the face of the earth.

It is not thought that the army sent to Dothan to capture Elisha was large. It has been well observed that it was "a great host" only comparatively. There were horses and chariots and footmen, all these were sent to take one man. Observe the indications of military preparation and strategy. They took the precaution of coming by night in order that there might be no opportunity of warning Elisha. They probably beset all the gates of the city. It is likely that the city was guarded at least by night-watchmen, and yet it appears probable that the Syrians had crept up to the city and taken their places about the gates so noiselessly that their presence was not detected until the morning.

15.—Early rising is usual in the East. Much

of the business of the day is over at an hour at which, in the West, little is done. Some suggest that the narrative implies that the servant had risen earlier than usual. The servant or minister, was the immediate personal servant of Elisha. If the cure of Naaman took place before the events narrated in the lesson the servant would not be Gehazi. But the order of events is uncertain.

We need not decide that he was not a man who had faith in God because he was dismayed when he found that the Syrians were besieging the city. We have only to recall the case of John the Baptist—when he sent from his prison to inquire of Jesus if he were the Messiah—to prove how men of God may be so depressed by trying circumstances that their faith appears to waver. Some would explain the alarm of Elisha's servant by saying he was a new servant, and had had no experience of the special care God took of the prophet, his master.

16.—Naturally enough, the man in his alarm and distress went to the prophet. He was fortunate in his master. Elisha had been cared for by the Lord in a special way for many years and could testify of signal deliverances from the hands of his enemies. Nor did he doubt that the Syrians would fail in effecting his capture. Whether he saw the hosts of the Lord surrounding him, he knew they were there for the purpose of saving him from his enemies. He cheered his servant by telling him this.

17.—Even if Elisha knew by faith that heavenly protection were about him, the faith of his servant was weaker and required strengthening. How simple and direct his prayer. And his prayer was answered. The servant's eyes were opened in order that he might see that heavenly hosts were there, an army far mightier than that of the enemy, filled the mountain on which the city stood. They appeared under the symbol of horses and chariots of fire. We are reminded of what Elisha saw when Elijah was translated, chap. 2:11. The glimpses Scripture gives us of what we may call the invisible universe show that it lies very near the visible universe, or present state of things. The angels of God are much interested in all that affects the children of God. They are "ministering spirits."

18.—Elisha prayed again. He was often

at a throne of grace and asked great things of the Lord in all confidence. The prophet and his servant, some authorities suppose, came out of the city and the Syrians approached them. It is contended that the blindness which, at the prayer of Elisha fell on the Syrians, was not what is usually understood by the word, but rather "illusion" "bewilderment." When they came to the place where Elisha was they did not recognize him..

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY.

Name the kings referred to in this lesson? What was the particular mode of warfare carried on by the king of Syria against Israel on this occasion?

Give reasons why Elisha was solicitous that the king of Israel and his army should escape capture.

What principle to be observed in God's dealings with the people of Israel is illustrated by the divine interference on this occasion on behalf of Jehoram.

Why did Benhadad suspect that some member of his court had betrayed his military plans to the king of Israel?

By what means is it probable that Benhadad learned that Elisha was the man who assisted Jehoram?

How did the Syrian king expect, in the

event of his capturing Elisha, to prevent him from helping Israel?

Where is Dothan situated? What do we know of its situation and associations?

Describe the efforts made by the Syrians to capture the prophet?

Why was the servant of Elisha afraid?

What vision was granted to him?

What may we infer from this incident with regard to the protectors of God's people?

Describe the blindness with which the Syrians were smitten?

PRACTICAL LESSONS.

1. We have to do with a bold and able enemy.

2. We need wisdom superior to our own in order to our deliverance.

3. God grants many deliverances to his people. He never forsakes them.

There are times when believers display sad lack of faith in God and his promises.

The believer goes to the Lord in prayer in every time of need.

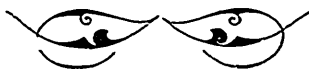
6. God answers prayer.

7. The servants of God are always safe. The heavenly hosts surround them. They are between them and their enemies.

8. All the plans of the wicked against the kingdom of God must be defeated.

THE BLACKBOARD.

GOD'S GLORIOUS DELIVERANCE OF HIS PEOPLE'S PROPHET.



QUESTIONS.

Juniors.

8.—What nation now made war against Israel? What was the name of its king? What plans did he make with his servants?

9.—Who was "the man of God"? What message did he send? To whom?

10.—What did the king of Israel then do? With what result?

11.—With what effect on the Syrian king? Of what did he suspect his servants?

12.—What answer did the servants give? How had the Syrians heard of Elisha?

13.—What order did the king of Syria then give? Where did they find Elisha?

14.—What was sent to bring Elisha? What time of the day did they reach Dothan? What did they do to the city?

15.—How did Elisha's servant find out they were there? What did he say to his master?

16.—How did Elisha comfort him?

17.—What prayer did Elisha then make? What did he mean by 'opening' his eyes? What did the servant see?

18.—What was the Syrian's next move? What did Elisha pray might happen to them?

For what purpose did he use their helplessness? What did he bid the king of Israel do to them? What was the result of such kindly treatment.

How did Christ treat his enemies? How does he say we should treat our enemies? Matt. 5: 94.

Seniors.

8-12.—What was the object of Syria's frequent wars against Israel? What was their usual method of warfare? What is there, somewhat similar, in British history? How were the plans of the Syrian king frustrated? Since God is the same God now, what shall become of all plans that are not in accordance with his plans? What should we seek above all with regard to our plans? What did the king of Syria think was the cause of his failure? How is the same mistake made in life now?

13-15.—How did the Syrian king shew his ignorance of Elisha and of God? What Egyptian king made a similar mistake with his hosts? For what is Dothan famous in earlier Jewish history? In what way are we liable to fear as did Elisha's servant?

16-18.—With what great truth does Elisha calm his servant's fears? How is that truth applicable to us? Ps. 34: 7. How were the young man's eyes opened? How may our eyes be opened in like manner? How was it with the eyes of the Syrian host? What is said about the blinding of those who are opposing God now? 2 Cor. 4: 4. What does Christ say of those who are living in sin? John 9: 41. See also 2 Peter 1: 9; Rev. 3: 17.

How did Elisha use their blind helplessness to teach a good lesson, both to the kings of Israel and of Syria? What lesson does he teach to us?

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS.

Elisha had often rebuked the king and denounced God's judgment for sin, yet he sincerely and patriotically wished the success of his country in their warfare with Syria. It has been found in every age that men of God make the best citizens.

Elisha was able to do more for Israel than Jehoram could. The king of Israel and his army were saved repeatedly by means of the prophet.

The man who lives near God knows more of the mind of God than other people can.

"Man proposes, but God disposes." The best laid schemes that have God against them are in vain. When our plans miscarry it would be well to inquire how they stand related to him.

Our first duty, our great privilege, whether in war or peace, in plans for work or rest, is to be on the Lord's side, to be right; then we will be sure of right guidance and safe defence.

The young and inexperienced should take this lesson to heart. There are enemies lurking in secret places waiting their chance to destroy the unwary. Father, mothers, ministers, and teachers, were appointed by God to warn those under their care.

It was natural that the servant of the prophet should be alarmed. He could see no way of escape from the hosts which besieged the gates of the city. How different when his eyes were opened. The hosts of the Lord were as a wall of fire around them. Their defenders were more numerous than their enemies. The protection was there all the time, but it was only when his eyes were opened that the young man saw it. The word of God assures us that the angel of the Lord encamps around us. We may by faith accept this blessed assurance.

We may "open" our own eyes by a prayerful study of God's promises. The more we practice committing our way unto him, the more real will his presence seem to us.

People often share in protection because of their being in good company. The young man had the same protection that Elisha had. Children are often blessed or accounted of their Christian parents.

The men who had come to arrest Elisha fell entirely under his power. The men of war are led captive by the man of peace.

In the kingdom of Christ victories of peace are its crowning glory. Christ is the Prince of peace, and all things shall be brought into captivity to him.

Primary Department.

HELPS FOR TEACHERS OF LITTLE FOLKS, BY MR. & MRS. G. H. ARCHIBALD, MONTREAL.

LESSON VI.—August 7th, 1898.

ELIJAH'S SPIRIT ON ELISHA. 2 Kings 2: 6-15.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." Luke 11: 13.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: The Holy Spirit of fire.

IV. REVIEW:

1. Who owned a vineyard near the king's palace?

2. Who coveted it?

3. How did he get it?

4. What was the Golden Text last Sunday?

V. SYNOPSIS:—It is an interesting and instructive thing to trace the journeys of Elijah. It will not take long to make two maps, showing these journeys, and will help the teacher to get a clearer idea of Elijah's life as a whole. After Elijah's fall, and his return to fellowship with God, he is bidden to choose a successor, and his choice of Elisha has been made. It is interesting to note the journeys referred to in the lesson to-day.

1. From Gilgal to Bethel.

2. From Bethel to Jericho.

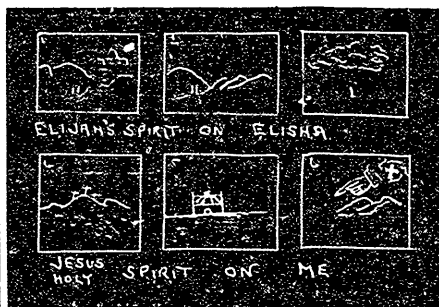
3. From Jericho to Jordan.

Each is a testing time for Elisha, but he stands the test. His love for his master Elijah, and the appreciation he has for the great work, as well as the desire to copy him and be like him, seems to be the motive that makes him so faithful. Like Jacob of old, he will not let go until he receives a blessing. He is afterwards watched by the Sons of the prophets. Elijah and Elisha cross over the Jordan on dry ground, where Elijah is taken up in the chariot of fire and a whirlwind. The mantle of the master has fallen upon the servant, and taking it up, in his turn he smites the waters of the Jordan, and they part as before, while the assembled Sons of the prophets cry out "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha."

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS:

The lesson story in to-day's lesson can be made, with the help of the blackboard, graphically interesting. Not only the lesson story, but the spiritual application, is one that can be made most helpful to the children. It has

been proved again and again, that the thought of the Holy Spirit can easily be brought to the child's comprehension. In this lesson to-day, the truth to teach, would seem to be, Elijah was Elisha's master. As a reward for the servant's faithfulness, he receives the master's Spirit. Jesus is our Master. He, like Elijah, has gone from the earth in person, but his Spirit still remains. If we are faithful the Holy Spirit will rest upon us. How shall we teach this? 1. Make clear the thought that every person has two parts, the body and the spirit. This can easily be done, and the child will readily comprehend it. It may be illustrated thus: The body dies and goes into the grave, the spirit passes into the spirit-land. When Jesus died, his body was put into the grave, but was afterwards taken



to heaven. His Spirit, however, is now upon earth, and abides in the hearts of those who are faithful to him.

2. To make this more concrete, tell the story of a child who was unable to overcome temptation or habit, not by trying, but by opening his heart to the Spirit of Christ.

3. Now tell the story of Elijah testing Elisha. Picture 1. With the blackboard make some rough pictures as suggested in the cut. Emphasize the thought of the journey to Jericho.

Picture 2. The Jordan. Elisha knew he needed the spirit of his master, therefore he kept close beside him, until he saw him taken up. Picture 3. In the whirlwind. Then he received the promised blessing.

4. Tell the story of Christ dying on the cross. This will be picture 4. Picture 5. Follow this up with the story of the ascension. The promise that if the disciples would go back and tarry in the Upper Room, they too should receive his Spirit.

Tell the story of the disciples receiving the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Make a picture of the Upper Room, and with red chalk the fire. (See picture 6.)

6. To be a true follower of Elijah, Elisha needed his master's spirit. To be a true follower of Jesus, we need his Spirit.

7. The best of God's good gifts is his Holy Spirit. He gives him to his faithful ones. To those who are willing to obey him. Who is?

8. Golden Text for the Quarter. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

LESSON VII.—August 14th, 1898.

THE SHUNAMITE'S SON. 2 Kings 4: 25-37.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Cast Thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Psalm 55: 22.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: Love for others.

IV. REVIEW:

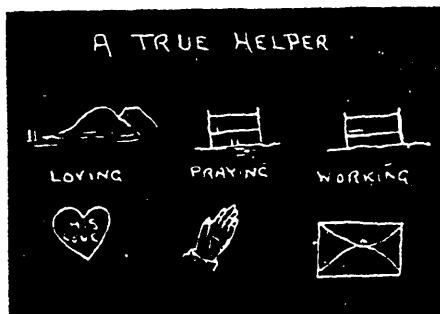
1. Who was Elijah's successor?
2. What did he want to get from Elijah?
3. How did he get it?
4. How was Elijah taken up to Heaven?

V. SYNOPSIS.—Elisha was a worthy successor of Elijah. To understand his character we read the series of stories which are given us in the Book of Kings. These stories help us to understand the people among whom he lived, as well as to better know Elisha's character. Among these stories is the one given us for our lesson to-day. During the journeys of Elisha he was in habit of calling at Shunem, where a woman resided who was equally distinguished for her wealth and benevolence, and who, as often as the prophet passed by, made him partake of her hospitality. "Elisha, desirous of rewarding this woman for such kindness, promised that she should have a son, which promise was in due course realized. (2 Kings 4: 8-17). The child having grown, went out one day to his father while he was in the harvest field, and was suddenly taken ill, exclaiming in agony, 'My head, my head.' This is what is called 'a stroke of the sun,' which often terminates fatally shortly after it occurs. A young man, one of the servants, at the father's command, carried him home to his mother, who nursed him upon her knees till noon, when he died. Having laid him on the

prophet's bed, and shut the door, she requested her husband to send one of the servants to saddle an ass and convey her to the man of God at Mount Carmel. And while she was yet at a distance Elisha saw her, called to his servant to meet and salute her, heard her melancholy story, and at length resuscitated the child, and delivered him to his mother, who, when she received him from the dead, fell at the prophet's feet, and bowed herself to the ground. (2 Kings 4: 26-37.)"

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS:

1. Before the lesson, place upon the black-



board the words printed in the cut "Elisha a true helper. Loving, praying, working."

There are two kinds of people in the world Two kinds of men and women, and two kinds of boys and girls. Both kinds begin with the same letter. Helpers and Hinderers. I do not know whether there are two kinds in my class or not, but perhaps there are. I know there are some Helpers, some true Helpers; but I wonder if there are any Hinderers? I mean by

that those who hinder other people from being happy, instead of helping to make them happy.

2. Did any of you ever help another? If you can do it in the right spirit, encourage the children to tell some helpful things they have done, or they have known others to do. Then aim to teach them by the lesson to-day how to be a true helper.

3. Tell the story of Elisha, and the Shunamite woman. Read the synopsis carefully, and the lesson carefully, in preparation, and as you tell the story make some marks on the blackboard, as suggested in the three upper squares, simply as a means of gaining, and keeping, attention. It does not matter how rough this work is, it will answer the purpose all right.

4. Refer back to last week's lesson, and review it. Show that without the Holy Spirit, our hearts will not be loving, and we will not want to help others.

5. Teach that many boys and girls love, and think they do, and yet they are not true helpers, for loving alone will not do. Now teach that Elisha not only loved, but prayed, and worked.

6. The Golden Text says that we should cast our burdens on the Lord. This means not only our own burdens, but also those of others whom we are trying to help. Elisha did this, and God heard him, and when he used the means that were in his power the boy was brought back to life.

7. What means may we use for helping others? I know a child who wrote a nice little letter to an old lady, and made her heart very glad. In the letter she told her that she had been praying for her, and I think it was when she was praying that God put it into her heart to send some flowers to her.

8. Let us repeat this verse together:

There are lonely hearts to cherish,
While the days are going by!
There are many souls who perish,
While the days are going by!
If a smile we can renew,
As our journey we pursue
Oh, the good we all may do
• While the days are going by!

9. Who is going to be a true helper this week? Suggest ways that we can help others.

LESSON VIII.—August 21st, 1898.

NAAMAN HEALED. 2 Kings 5: 1-14.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed, save me, and I shall be saved." Jer. 17: 14.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: A clean heart.

IV. REVIEW:

1. At whose house did Elisha often stay?
2. What happened to the woman's child?
3. What did the woman do?
4. What did Elisha do?

V. SYNOPSIS: The section chosen for the or the lesson to-day includes the whole story of the healing of Naaman, and the punishment brought upon Gehazi because of his sin. Living in Syria, in the house of Naaman, was an Israelite maiden, whose duty it was to wait upon Naaman's wife. She told her mistress of the wonderful cures that Elisha had wrought in Samaria. Some one told Naaman what the maiden said, and acting on the advice of the King of Syria, and taking with him ten talents of silver, and

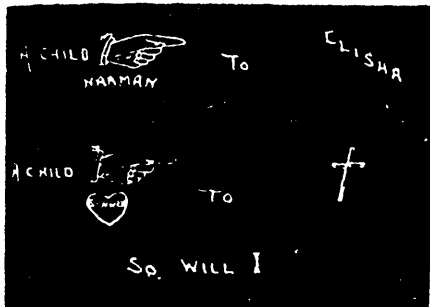
6,000 pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment, together with a letter to the king of Israel, he departed into the land where the prophet lived. Instead of going to the prophet, Naaman sought his help from king Jehoram, who thought the king of Syria was trying to make a quarrel with him. When Elisha heard that the king rent his clothes, the prophet sent to Jehoram, and bade the king send Naaman unto him. When Naaman came to the prophet, without coming out to see him, he sent him the simple message, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times." Naaman was wroth, and showed his anger by a comparison of the rivers of Israel and the rivers of Damascus. Face to face with the disease, however, and acting under the advice of his servants, he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, "and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean."

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS:

The captive maid was used by God in pointing a great man to a great physician. That a

child may be used to point a great sinner to a great Saviour, seems to be the lesson we want to teach the children to-day. How shall we do it?

1. Ask the children if they ever saw a leper. Write the word on the blackboard. Without dwelling too much on the horrible detail, but yet giving sufficient detail to show the awfulness of the disease, tell about the lepers. Teach that these lepers could not live with other people, but were turned out of the cities,



and were not allowed to come near to any who passed by. If they would speak to them, they must cry out at a distance. Food had to be taken to them, and when the person who brought it had left it and gone away, the leper would come and take it, etc., etc. It was an awful disease, and yet it was incurable, and as a result of which death would slowly but surely come.

2. There is a disease which is very like leprosy, and often boys and girls are afflicted

with it. Here bring out the thought that sin is the leprosy of the heart.

3. Tell the story of Naaman and his affliction.

4. Tell, or have the children tell, of the little maiden who lived in Naaman's house, and who was servant to his wife. She was a little missionary. She knew the awful disease, but she also knew that Elisha had cured others, and could cure her master. As a result of her talking about Elisha, Naaman made the long journey and was cured.

5. Is there no cure for the leprosy of sin? Yes. What is it? Jesus is the cure. Who is going to be a little missionary this week, and point those who do wrong to Jesus, who can cure them? Naaman could not cure himself. He tried hard to do so. Boys and girls cannot cure themselves of sin by trying hard. No one but Jesus can cure the leprosy of sin.

6. How can we point others to Jesus? The little maiden simply told the story of Elisha. So boys and girls, by simply talking about Jesus to others, can point those who do wrong to the Saviour, and he will cure them.

7. God has given us many good gifts, but best of all is a clean heart, which comes from allowing Jesus, our Saviour, to cure us of sin. He will do it for every boy and girl, and then when others see that our hearts are clean, and free from the dreadful disease of sin, they will want to go to our Saviour to be cured.

8. Review the good gifts of God as given in former lessons, and again emphasize the Golden Text of the Quarter. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

LESSON IX.—August 28th, 1898.

ELISHA AT DOTHAN. 2 Kings 6: 3-18.

GOLDEN TEXT: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Psa. 34: 7.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: Angels ever near.

IV. REVIEW:

1. Who was Naaman?

2. What was the matter with him?

4. How are sinful hearts cured?

SYNOPSIS: Elisha was a faithful servant of God. He was doing all he could lead the people to a national and a personal acknowledgment of Jehovah as King. The nation had not recovered from the evil brought upon it by Ahab, and his successor. It was a time of war between Syria and Israel. Acting under the

advice of the Prophet, the King of Israel had again and again, because of that advice, saved his army from destruction. The King of Syria could not understand this, and sought after the cause. He supposed that there was a traitor in his camp, but was told that Elisha the man of God was the cause. The king of Israel determined to kill Elisha, and when he found he was at Dothan, sent a great army to compass the city about by night. God was taking care of Elisha. When the Prophet's servant was risen early in the morning, he saw a host encompassed about the city, with horses and chariots, and he was afraid. The prophet told his servant that God and his army would keep them and that they need have no fear. As a result of Elisha's prayer, the Lord opened the young man's eyes and he saw that the mountain was full of horses and chariots, and presently the people were smitten with blindness, and Elisha and his servant were delivered.

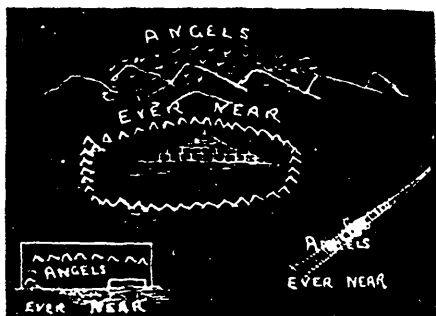
VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS:

We have a beautiful story to-day, and should reserve this lesson for special teaching. The Golden Text is well chosen, and we should seek to impress, not only the words, but the thought expressed therein. We often try to teach the children, that God takes care of them. Here we have an opportunity to teach them how he does it. How can we best do this?

1. Who is afraid in the dark, or of a dog, or of anything? The teacher should remember that as we begin the lesson by getting a child to admit that he is afraid in the dark, or of something of the kind, it will be much easier to teach the lesson truth. He who attempts to teach a child that God comforts the sorrowing, when the child really does not know what what sorrow means, has a difficult task before him. The dark room, or something of that kind will be a point of contact. Who takes care of us in the dark room? Yes, God. How does God take of us? Let us learn from our lesson to-day.

2. I know a person who is a little bit afraid to go in the railway train, fearful lest it runs off the track, and she be killed or injured. Only those who do not trust God are fearful of things.

3. Tell the story of the wonderful vision of Elisha's servant. Make it as graphic as possible. Draw a picture on the black-board of the city among the hills. Tell of the horses, and chariots encamped around the city so as to capture Elisha. Tell of the fear that came upon Elisha's servant. Ask the question here "Was Elisha not afraid? Tell of Elisha's prayer, and its answer...Describe as graphically as possible, the wonderful view that met



the sight of the young man when his eyes were opened.

4. Teach the Golden Text.

5. Who told Elisha and his servant when they were in danger? Who will tell us should there be any danger? Who is in the dark room to take care of us? Who goes before the quickest express train that runs, taking care of us? Repeat the Golden Text again.

6. God has given us many good gifts. His angels too are good gifts. Close with the Golden Text of the Quarter. "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

