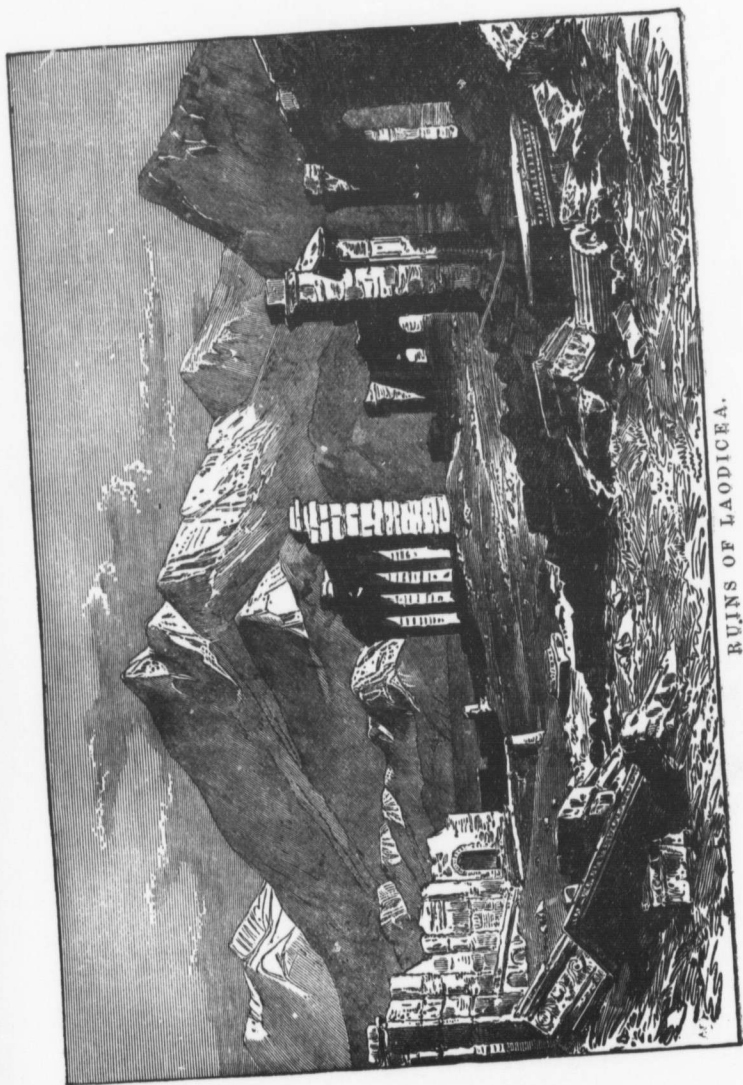


PAGES

MISSING



RUINS OF LAODICEA.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOL. XX.]

NOVEMBER, 1886.

[No. 11.

St. John and the Robber.*

AN INCIDENT FROM EUSEBIUS (*Hist. Eccl., Lib.*
iii., *Cap. xxiii.*)

BY REV. W. H. WITHROW, D.D.

My son, my son! nay, fly not from me—me,
Thy father in the Gospel of our Lord.
Far hast thou wandered from thy early faith,
But not too far for Christ's dear love to bring
Thee back. Even as I, with tottering feet,
Have sought thee out upon the rugged hills
Of Ephesus; so, but with tenderer love,
The Lord Christ, yearning, seeks thy soul.

Nay, now

Thou weep'st, baptized a second time in thine
Own tears. I knew thou would'st forsake thy
dire

Apostacy and turn again to the
Dear Lord that bought thee with His blood.

Here, on

This bosom lay the Holy Head. These lips
That speak have felt His blessed kiss. These
eyes—

Oh, why were they not blinded first!—beheld
The agony, the streaming wounds, the pale
Death-swoon, and then the hill-side tomb. But
in

The Isle of Patmos, drear and lone, I saw
The heaven ope, and by the throne of God
That Form—though, oh, how changed!—which
erewhile was

So marred; that brow, once crowned with
thorns, but now

*A touching story is told by Eusebius of St. John meeting in his old age a robber who had been in his youth a Christian and his own disciple. The aged apostle addressed the wretched robber in the tender words paraphrased in the following lines.

With glory crowned. And low before His feet
The elders and the angels fell. Oh, fall
Thou, too, my son, in lowly penitence
Before Him now, and rise in trustful faith;
And as these lips that Christ hath kissed now
give

Thee, erring but repentant, the fond kiss
Of peace: so feel that God, the loving God,
Now prints the seal of pardon on thy soul.

O little children, love ye one another;
And, once a robber band, be now a band
Of brothers in the Lord. Do good to all.
Await with watchful souls the coming of
The Christ, who comes and will not tarry.

Watch!

Be strong in God and in the Spirit's might;
And, little children, love ye one another.

The Seven Churches of Asia.

THE lessons in the latter part of November refer to the wonderful vision of St. John in the Isle of Patmos. He is said to have lived to a great age and to have grown constantly more and more like Jesus, his beloved Master, being filled especially with the spirit of love. He was driven away from Ephesus in some time of persecution, fifty or sixty years after the death of Christ, and sent an exile to Patmos, a little rocky island in the Ægean Sea. It was in Patmos that he had this glorious vision of the Saviour. John did not know Jesus at first, and was so overcome with awe and a sort of fear that he "fell at his feet as one dead." He had never seen Christ in his glory and majesty; but as soon as he knew it was the dear Lord who said, "Fear not," his courage and strength came back again. The Saviour, besides sending messages to the Churches, *revealed*, or made known, to John things that would come to pass in the future, and commanded him to "write" them.

The September number of the *Methodist Magazine* contained a finely illustrated article describing the present condition of these Seven Churches, from which we take the following account of one of them, the Church of Laodicea, of which only the ruins are shown in our cut.

More than forty miles to the east of Ephesus was situated Laodicea, now known as *Eski-Kissar*, or the Old Castle. At an early period it became the seat of a Christian Church. Its inhabitants were distinguished by their successful cultivation of the arts and sciences, and especially by the famous medical school which they supported. It was owing, perhaps, to their cold philosophical culture that those among them who had embraced Christianity called forth the rebuke of the Saviour by their "lukewarmness."

In 363 Laodicea was gill of so much importance that one of those gatherings of bishops and priests, known as Councils, was held here, and determined the arrangement of the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. In 1255 it was ravaged by the Turks, again in 1402, when it was literally razed to the ground. It is now a pile of mouldering ruins. "It is even more solitary," says a traveller, "than Ephesus—sitting in widowed loneliness—its walls grass-grown—its temple desolate—its very name perished! The threatening is accomplished; it now stands rejected of God and deserted of man—its glory a ruin—its name a reproach."

In the East, under Ottoman rule, a blight seems to rest upon the fairest and most favoured lands on earth. The glory of the Seven Churches of Asia has departed; the candlesticks are removed out of their places, and thick darkness has settled upon the land. The beautiful myths of Homer and the sublime Gospel of Christ are alike forgotten, and the Turkish mosque has superseded both Pagan fane and Christian temple. As we contemplate these things we cannot help asking, Is it forever? Is there no resurrection for those nations? no regeneration for those lands? Yet, though oppression and superstition may have crushed and degraded the inhabitants, nature is eternal, and the golden sunlight falls, and the sapphire seas expand, and the purple mountains rise as fair and lovely as of yore. The valleys of the Orontes and Cayster and the slopes of Lebanon are no less beautiful and fertile to-day than in the time of their greatest prosperity and glory.

The Christian nations of the West are called upon by every principle of moral obligation and of human sympathy to reciprocate the benefits they originally received from the East. Christian schools and Christian missions are sowing the seeds of new and nobler civilization. The candlesticks may be relighted in the Seven Churches. The crescent may ere long give place to the banner of the cross upon the battlements of Zion, the long-rejected Messiah be adored amid the scenes of His passion, and Jerusalem become again a praise in the earth.

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Sunday School Banner.

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

TORONTO, NOVEMBER, 1886.

Report of the Sunday-School Board of the Methodist Church.

PREPARED FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE, 1886.

We give in abridged form the substance of this Report, omitting the paragraphs on Missions, Temperance and Sunday-school Statistics given in the October number of the BANNER.

GRANTS TO POOR SCHOOLS.

Special prominence has been given to what may be called the missionary operations of the Board, in promoting the establishment of new schools and assisting poor schools in remote and destitute neighbourhoods, by means of grants of books and papers from the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund. The growth of this Fund, which is sustained by one collection taken up each year in each school, has been very gratifying. During the first four years of its existence its income averaged \$524 per year; during the second four years, \$785 per year. During the last four years the income has averaged \$2,044 per year.

¶ The disbursements of this Fund have, as a matter of course, kept pace with its growth. The grants of aid to poor schools have advanced from 84 in the two years preceding the last quadrennium to 963 during the last quadrennium. Of these grants 398 were made during the last year. The amount of these grants to poor schools during the quadrennium has been \$6,419.34, as against \$1,646.65 during the previous quadrennium, an increase of nearly four-fold. The income received and aid rendered have steadily increased year by year.

Schools applying for aid are required, if possible, to contribute something toward the grant given them. In this way the schools assisted have during the quadrennium contributed, in part payment on grants, the sum of \$1,822.08, as against \$48.93 the previous quadrennium. The amount thus paid is regularly increasing, having reached \$829.39 during the last year, as against \$571.80 the previous year, and \$278.33 the year before. With each school receiving aid a separate account is kept, and part payment is required, except where the Board decides that the grant shall be absolutely free—chiefly in the case of new schools and very destitute neighbourhoods.

¶ The grants have been distributed through every province of the Dominion and Island of Newfoundland, especially in the regions of the Upper Ottawa and in the Muskoka and Algoma territory, in Manitoba and the North-West, and in the mining settlements of British Columbia. Many grateful testimonies have shown the warm appreciation with which these grants have been received.

This rapid growth of the operations of the Board has required on the part of its Secretary a very extensive correspondence, exceeding 3,000 distinct communications during the quadrennium, and over 1,200 distinct communications during the last year.*

The Sunday-school Board also pays for the printing and mailing of all Sunday-school Schedules, Circulars, Reports, etc., prepared by the Secretary, and for express charges and postage on donations of Sunday-School Libraries.

About 10,000 volumes of second-hand Library books, donated by schools, have been gratuitously distributed during the quadrennium.

For these there are always several applications, and schools can do much good by sending to the Secretary their old libraries.

Within a very small fraction of the entire income of the Board is disbursed directly for the benefit of poor schools, there being no expenses of management beyond a small amount for postage and petty sundries of the kind. It is gratifying to observe that the schools throughout the Connexion are responding much more uniformly and much more liberally to the appeals made for this Fund. In so doing they are but fulfilling the exhortations of Scripture: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ;" they that are strong bearing the infirmities of the weak.

The magnitude of the Sunday-school operations of our Church, and the depth of the interest felt in those operations, is shown by the fact that during the year \$71,358.60 have been expended in the maintenance of those schools. When to this are added the amounts raised by the schools for missions and for the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund, we reach a total of \$92,903.80, or an average of over 42 cents for every scholar in these schools.

PERIODICALS.

It is very gratifying to be able to report the very great increase in the circulation of our Sunday-school periodicals. That circulation, during the last quadrennium, has nearly doubled; the increase being from 103,729 on 30th April, 1882, to 194,074 on 30th April, 1886, or 87 per cent. This is more than three times the increase of the previous quadrennium.

The increase in circulation during the year ending 30th April, 1886, has been over 34,000. On the 31st of July, 1886, there was a still further increase, in the number printed, of 65,676, making an aggregate of 259,750 copies, or an increase since 1882 of 156,021, or nearly 150 per cent. There are now EIGHT distinct periodicals, of as many different grades, meeting the varied requirements of our schools; and they are now being printed at the rate of over thirty-five and a half millions of pages a year, 119,000 for every day, and nearly 12,000 every working hour.* Of these periodicals there are 138 distinct issues in the 308 working days of the year, being almost one to each alternate

* Correspondents would materially lighten the labours of the Secretary, if they would give distinctly their Post Office, Conference, and Province. Many letters omit all these particulars.

* If to these be added the circulation of the *Methodist Magazine*, under the same editorial management, the aggregate circulation is over 40,000,000 pages a year, over 131,000 per working day, over 13,000 per working hour.

day. The results of this flood of direct religious teaching pouring forth from the press is simply incalculable; only the Great Day shall reveal it.

LIBRARIES.

The work accomplished by our schools in supplying instructive and interesting reading, of a direct religious tendency, to the people, is often overlooked or underestimated. The number of books in the libraries is reported at 246,274. In many cases these are almost the only books accessible in the families and communities where the schools exist.

WINNOWNED LIST.

As a "Winnowed List" of about 1,600 Sunday-school books had been prepared during the previous quadrennium, at a cost for books and printing of about \$700, it was not thought advisable to spend much more money for that purpose. Publishers were requested, however, to send books gratuitously for review for such a list; about \$400 worth have been so sent, and a classified "Winnowed List" has been prepared of those books. Examination of this list is invited.

THE CATECHISM.

The number of children and youth reported as studying that excellent compendium of Christian doctrine, the Methodist Catechism, is 31,962; but this is far too small a proportion out of 220,000 scholars. Superintendents and teachers are earnestly urged to do all they can to promote, as much as in their power, the study of those Christian doctrines that make wise unto salvation. These Catechism lessons find a place in all our Sunday-school Lesson papers, and circulate to the extent of nearly 250,000 copies every Lord's-day.

FOUNDING NEW SCHOOLS.

In no department of its work has the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund been more successful than in promoting the planting of new schools in remote and religiously destitute parts of the country. It is safe to say, that never in the history of Methodism in this land has the founding of new Sunday-schools been so actively and successfully prosecuted as during the past year. The brethren on remote circuits and in destitute neighbourhoods—among the fishing villages of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia; amid the pine forests of the St. John and the Ottawa; in the wilds of Muskoka; upon the prairies of Manitoba and the Far West; and among the mining settlements

of British Columbia—have been diligent in planting these nurseries of piety and nuclei of future churches. In this work they have been greatly helped by the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund. There is no way in which its aid can be so profitably employed. Many schools established by its assistance soon become self-supporting, and in turn contribute to the planting of new schools in still newer neighbourhoods. Brethren are urged to freely seek its aid, and such aid to the limit of its ability, will be freely given.

During the last year there has been an increase of 142 new schools, 1,349 officers and teachers, and 10,785 scholars. It is impossible to state the number of new schools founded in the previous years of the quadrennium, as in the transition state of our work the Minutes afford no basis of comparison.

Notwithstanding the growth of our Sunday-schools, there are still a very large number of appointments in connection with which no Sunday-schools are yet organized. In some cases there are union schools, where no schools of separate denominations can be maintained. But where there are no such schools the assistance of the ministers is urgently solicited, that in every place where there is Methodist preaching there may also be a Methodist Sunday-school. It is in helping this work that the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund has been most useful in the past, and may be expected to be increasingly useful in the future.

The following utterance of the Guelph Conference, in its Sunday-school Report for 1886, expresses, doubtless, the sentiment on this important subject of the entire Church: "The results of Sunday-school work are beyond our power to fully estimate, but enough is manifested to rebuke the most distant approach to despondency, and to encourage firm and assured confidence for the future."

ONE reason why many children do not attend the church service is that no place is provided for them there. In one instance, several years ago, a gentleman invited a Sunday-school superintendent to select twenty boys and girls, who were unable to pay for sittings, and invite them to accept seats, for which the rent would be paid. Most of them were grateful for the gift. As they grew older and able, they began to pay the rents themselves. Several of them have united with the Church, and have become Sunday-school teachers. In many churches this experiment might be repeated with gratifying results.

Mothers and the Sunday-School.

BY MARY L. BUTLER.

WHILE the earliest care of children was intrusted to the mothers, yet Jehovah himself saw fit to provide this larger and broader way of instructing them in the laws they were commanded to obey.

Yet for all this, the Sunday-school can not take the place of parental instruction. The two should go hand in hand, side by side. The mother's influence is felt before the child is even old enough for the primary department, and when he enters this school her influence should not depart from him.

Since the Sunday-school is the *divinely* appointed agency for instructing the youth, then surely there are some responsibilities resting upon mothers in connection with it. Many are so situated as to render it impracticable to be there themselves, but they can insist upon a regular attendance from their children. As a rule, nothing but sickness should admit of an absence. Many a child, when questioned by its teacher as to absence, replies: "I had no cloak;" or, "My new hat did not come," etc.

How I wish I could make mothers see the great harm that is done by permitting these excuses! Oh, if they could realize for one hour the distress that an over-dressed child causes in its class, surely they would institute a reform at once! First, there is injury done to the child herself, for her mind is so centred on her appearance that it is well-nigh impossible to turn it to the lesson.

Second, the influence of this fine attire is felt on all in the class, and in many cases much longer than the hour spent in the house of God. In one of the classes of my own school, this winter, a child was absent six weeks. On inquiry, the mother told me she had no cloak to wear. Had they been in abject poverty, this deficiency could have been speedily remedied, but I knew "no cloak" meant "no new cloak." The one worn during the week was worn and pretty, but not new. The mother said she had sufficient pride not to let her child appear in Sunday-school in such a garment, and since she could not afford to buy one ready made, why Nellie must wait until she could make her one. Six weeks she was kept at home, and, to my certain knowledge, much against her inclination. Surely such mothers have no realization of the great eternity for which they are training their children, and of the lasting and pernicious influence such irregularity in attendance at Sunday-school may cause.

It takes only a short time to make a child feel the importance of always being in her place *promptly*. When this habit is established, parents should regard it as a duty to see that the children are prepared with the lesson. This is perhaps a difficult thing to manage, but at least the Golden Text can be taught. There is always some kind of conversation at meal time, and during one of the daily

three meals the lesson could easily be discussed. If only the Golden Text is learned, it will make fifty-two of them before the next New Year's Day. Fifty-two Bible verses stored away in the mind are a good foundation on which to build character. When the child gets home from Sunday-school is a good time for talking over the lesson. If he is expected to repeat what has been learned, it will aid him in giving heed to what he hears.

From this the attention is often and easily turned to the teacher. A child begins life with absolute faith in his mother, and, oh, how careful she should be in speaking of her little one's instructor! Mother and teacher should be in such close sympathy with each other that the child will feel it though no words are spoken.

How many mothers feel it a pleasure, or even a duty, to call on their children's teacher? How many return the calls these teachers have made on them?

Some of my most successful teachers are girls from fifteen to seventeen years old; consecrated girls, from Christian families, who feel the responsibilities of their work more than many older ones do, and who want to know their little classes in their homes. One of them said to me one day: "I want to call on Allie Bennett, but I don't know whether to or not. Her mother has never called on me, and she is so much my senior I feel quite out of place in going there. I went last year to call on all the children in my class, and only one mother has ever been to see me. It makes me very uncomfortable."

Here was a case that made me feel that, if it were possible, I must blow through a trumpet to every mother in the land, saying, "Go and see your children's Sunday-school teacher! If you can't go, send them a note saying so, and invite them to come and see you, to tell you how your boy or girl is getting along."

Couldn't mothers arrange for the children to invite their teachers to tea or lunch once a year? The more simple the entertainment and informal the invitation, the better for both teacher and child.

Lastly, parents should have some connection with the Sunday-school, if only as visitors. Though circumstances may render regular attendance impossible, your child soon knows whether you have any interest there. Once a month, or once in two months, or once in three months, at least once a year, you can surely go to the school with your child and shake hands with the teacher and superintendent. That will settle the matter in the mind of the little one as to your interest in Sunday-school. Remember, you are building for eternity. Perhaps the good deacon's prayer might be suitable to frame into your own: "Lord help me to live this day as I shall wish I had lived when I come to give an account of the day's work."—*Pilgrim Teacher.*

THE earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy.

How to Help the C. L. S. C.

BY CHANCELLOR J. H. VINCENT, D.D.

THE C. L. S. C. is an institution. It has an aim, a plan, an organization, officers and members. It began, has grown, and will continue to grow. The ends it proposes are useful and much needed. They lay hold of personal character. They reach society in the family, in the community, in the Church. They are ends intellectual, moral, domestic, social, and religious. Every reason that can be urged in favour of general education, of refined manners, of cultivated tastes, of religious principles, of personal influence in favour of the true, the beautiful and the good, may be presented in behalf of the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle. Its enthusiastic alumni, its undergraduates and outside persons of sound judgment who have studied its philosophy and watched its progress have said many strong and beautiful things in commendation of it. And there is no danger of saying too much, for however crude the beginning of the movement, one may easily see in it the most splendid possibilities. The universal praise which the scheme has elicited is all deserved. The C. L. S. C. is a great institution.

But it must be remembered that institutions, however lofty in purpose and practical in organization, can not grow or work by virtue of mere aim and plan. Ideals and artistic apparatus are essential, but without personal genius and labour are impotent in the world of art. Something more is necessary to a transatlantic passage than a dock at Liverpool and a seaworthy steamer at New York. Between the two lie the conditions of success in human enterprise and effort. The C. L. S. C. needs appreciation as a scheme, but it needs also work—wise, unremitting, indefatigable work, on the part of those who believe in it.

The problem before us now is: How may we help the C. L. S. C.? Every member who receives benefit from it, and who believes in its value to others, may become an advocate and representative, and thus may induce numbers to test its worth. This service, voluntary and uncompensated, is due to the circle. I propose to show how it may be most effectively rendered.

[After enumerating a number of methods he concludes as follows]:

And now for the ministers! No class has greater influence in matters pertaining to education. To hear some wisacres talk one would suppose that churches and ministers were afraid of education. The fact is that both popular and higher education owes more to the church than to any other organization on earth, and college presidents and professors have for the most part been clergymen or active laymen ready for Christian service. The most efficient factor in the educational movements of the world is Christianity.

The ministers are able to do more for the C. L. S. C. than any other class. They have influence over the homes, and especially over

the youth of their congregations. If they do not it is their own fault; and I have sometimes felt that the Chautauqua plan was a providential appliance adapted to the age, by which pastors may secure a firmer hold upon the young people, and keep them in more perfect sympathy with the social and spiritual ideas which it is the business of the Church to set forth. What intellectual dissipation and what moral weakening follow the loose reading habits of the age! How can a minister of Christ bring people to an appreciation of stability, purity, thoughtfulness, by sermons on one day of the week while all the other days are filled (what time is left from business) with sensational and demoralizing stories, unreal in their pictures of life and fearfully false in the ethical and theological principles they embody? How can a minister train his people to solidity and self-sacrifice and spirituality, whose highest ideas of "society" are expressed in the sensuous and dangerous pleasures in which a frivolous world delights, and which by its consciousness requirements are made "fashionable?" Priestly prohibition is worthless. Bitter denunciation is worse. Appeals to higher tastes are useless—while the higher taste is lacking. There is only one way out of the difficulty. It is by "the explosive power of a new affection." To learn to loathe the low one must learn to love the high and holy. To banish bad books we must create a delight in good books. To make worldly society seem the sensuous and senseless thing it often is we must create a taste for refined, elevating and rational society. To put dignity and stability into a life we must feed it on truth, and cause it to delight in serving others. The C. L. S. C. is the pastor's helper in all these lines. It puts good books into the hands of youth and age. It opens broad fields for exploration. It discovers and develops personal aptitude. It gives high ambitions. It makes conversation with rational and cultivated people more agreeable than frivolous amusements which have neither ideas nor useful inspiration in them. It quickens conscience. It gives dignity to life. It makes usefulness more desirable than self-gratification. It supplements Sunday aspiration by week-day effort, and increases the power—intellectual, social and spiritual—of every life and of every home into which it comes. All this our ministers should feel. If they knew they would feel. Then cause them to know. By talk and by circulars stir them up.

When new tastes are developed among their young people, tastes sanctified by prayer and fostered by lectures and lessons, and books and conversation, the ministers seeing the good work will appreciate the agency, and thank you for calling their attention to the C. L. S. C.

Teachers and superintendents can do much by calling the attention of the ministers to this great movement and soliciting their cooperation.

—•••••
"LET no man beguile you of your reward."

Discouraged.

BY REV. E. A. RAND.

SHE uttered this one word, and then with a sigh of relief left the quaint little gothic church-porch. It was Miss Amy Marvin, teacher of "Class Fifteen" in the Sunday-school of Bethesda Church. Amy had been listening to an enthusiastic address by the superintendent of the school, Mr. Whittier: upon "The Praiseworthy Teacher." "I will describe an actual case," he said, for he disclaimed all intention to set up any flawless model, after which would come a hopeless attempt in carving out a copy. He only claimed to block out and shape what any conscientious teacher might expect to be, as illustrated by a case he knew. Unconsciously, in the increasing warmth of a good purpose, he made his statue more elaborate than he intended. He held up what might have been termed "The Model Teacher." He sent Amy Marvin home in a discouraged mood.

"There!" she exclaimed, "I do try to do all he spoke about. 'Teachers' meetings?'—yes, I attend them. 'Preparation of the lesson?'—yes, I try to have it ready. 'Calling on scholars?'—yes, I try to call at their homes. 'Attention to sick scholars?'—yes, I took Johnny Dove a soft blanket for his nest in bed last evening. 'Prompt attendance?'—yes, Mr. Whittier, I try to be here in school, and sharp on the hour, as you say. And I have tried—yes, I tried, though it did not seem to amount to much, to say something spiritually helpful to my class. But, oh, dear! I am so lacking! I can't be like that teacher he described. There! when I get home I will ask Aunt Eliza about it." "Aunt Eliza" was one of those blessed old family treasures, circulating from household to household, dealing out counsel to the perplexed, comfort to the sick, and help in general to all needing it. For every dark corner she had a lamp, not an ornamental one on a parlor table, never filled and used, but one ever ready for illumination. She was now visiting at Amy's house. Amy confided to her the story of her discouragement.

"Do you want to know, Amy, what I would do?" asked Aunt Eliza, turning toward Amy a round, rosy face, irradiated with the spirit of wisdom and benevolence. "What would I do about it? I would just keep a-doing."

"Well, I will!" declared Amy, very resolutely. "I will do one thing right off. I will go down to Will Stover's and find out why he is absent. Why, the boy may be sick!"

No, Will Stover was not sick, at least physically. In his soul he felt weak and bruised, as if he were in the midst of a fight where hard blows were given on every side. Sitting on the doorstep of his home—only a back-alley retreat—he bowed his head and rested it on his hands, while the battle went forward, or in his case, backward. Suddenly a thin, querulous voice, inside the rough doorway, shrieked out, "Will! Will! I want you to split me some wood before you go."

"O dear!" he groaned, "I don't believe there is any wood. Wish we could burn air! That would be cheap; and then we should burn, for everything would be on fire, and I don't much care if it were."

"William! where's William?" thick, husky tones were asking. Their gaunt, emaciated owner then said, "I wonder if William brought me that medicine."

It was Will's sick father.

"There's another want." Will inwardly groaned. "It gets worse and worse, and I have a great mind to—"

He did not finish the sentence. It was a part of the hard battle that was going on, the fight where wrong was sorely trampling down the right. He went into the house, but soon returned, and sitting down again, pulled out his pocket-book. He was opening it when the sound of a step checked him. He looked up, blushed, and said: "Why—why—Miss Marvin! come in; though you will take us as you find us, I know."

"Oh, of course," said his teacher. "Let me go in where your father and mother are."

When she came out with him she said: "I have some medicine at home that will do nicely for your father, and if you don't mind it, I would like to give you some wood."

"Oh, thank you! I—I—" His eyes glowed, his voice hesitated. He straightened as if a hand smiting sore had been lifted, and his soul was off the battle-ground.

"You don't know what you have kept me from," he said.

"What?" she asked, not understanding what he meant. "If I have helped you any I am very glad of it."

He could not speak at first. He said finally: "Thank you! You will see me next Sunday."

She went away wondering at his emotion. He seized his cap, hurried out into the street, went to an express office and paid a bill, and then ran to the store where he worked. It was the quick step of a victorious, happy soul. He had been asked on his way back from an errand home to stop at an express office, and with a sum of money entrusted to him pay a bill for his employers. He fought down a temptation to delay his payment, and use a part of the money for articles needed at home, returning it as soon as possible. A man or boy fighting down such a temptation fights it on the slippery edge of a great risk.

"Oh, I didn't touch it, thank God!" he now said. "Teacher don't know" (she never knew exactly in what) "that her visit helped me to do right."

Two days later her superintendent accosted her:—

"Heard you spoken of pleasantly at the store yesterday," he said. "One of the boys in our store came to me and said: 'Sorry I broke something just now, sir, but I will replace it. Hope you will excuse it.' 'Well, I like you to be honest,' I said. 'Always be frank and honest, and tell me if anything has gone wrong.'"

"My teacher would want me to be frank and honest."

"Teacher?"

"In Sunday-school."

"Who is she?"

"Miss Marvin, sir."

"Are you in her class?"

"Yes, sir."

"I didn't know it. I am superintendent there, but there are so many boys in the Sunday-school I don't always remember them. What is your teacher's name? Oh, you told me. And yours?"

"Will Stover," he said it was."

"My scholar," exclaimed Amy.

"Yes."

"That does please me!"

"You see, I have only been in the store a week back, and am just finding out some of the hands."

"What you say does me good, I did feel so discouraged."

"You?"

"After what you said one time about 'The Praiseworthy Teacher.'"

"You did? Why—why—how's that?"

"Oh, there's a horse-car I must take. Good-by" (hastening to meet the approaching car).

She left him standing on the sidewalk, smiling and saying to himself, "That is pretty good. When I made that talk I suppose I may have been too emphatic, but really the case of a praiseworthy teacher—I told them in many things a true case—was this very young woman! That's funny! I believe though I am right."

Primary Class Work.

THOSE who think can never doubt its importance. That it is in many particulars the most influential work wrought in the Sunday-school will appear if we but consider, first, that the material in this department is more impressive than in any other; and, second, that impressions made have more far-reaching results in life, because there is more of life to influence. That these results are not so conspicuous as those of later development may be confessed without affecting in the slightest degree the position just assumed. These things being so, we are bound by every consideration of duty to the adoption of such means and methods as shall most certainly secure the formation of Christian character in those who stand on the threshold of the kingdom of God. The maxim, "Now or never," has a tremendous significance in this relation.

But it is not our purpose to add to the anxieties that burden the heart of the faithful teacher by stressing the responsibilities of her position. We assume this teacher to be a woman, because the sterner sex has, by a very large majority, voted her his superior in this sphere of Christian endeavour. Its requirements are peculiar and trying to the last degree. Those who attain proficiency in it are justly entitled to our distinguished regard, being

peers of the best who have charge of advanced classes. If this be doubted, we have only to reflect upon the disastrous consequences that would ensue if an exchange of teachers were made on a given Sunday without previous notification. The locality where the disaster would most surely occur need not be specified. Concerning those who make up the primary class it has been truthfully said:

"They are the dearest of all.

They are the weakest of all.

They are the strongest of all.

They are the purest of all.

They are the most accessible of all.

They are the most susceptible of all.

They are the most promising of all."

But for all that, only the most devoted spirits are willing to take charge of them.

It not unfrequently happens that the very preeminence accorded the teacher in this department excludes her from the bond of sympathy existing between the officers and teachers of the main school. All agree that her work is the most difficult and perplexing, and hence it is liable to be regarded as something quite separate and apart from that which legitimately occupies the attention of her co-laborers. Now, in behalf of those whose energies of body and soul are taxed to the utmost in this noble work, we suggest that caution be exercised, lest to the labors incident to this position there be added a feeling of isolation. Let your primary teacher have constant assurance of hearty appreciation not only in word, but in deed as well. Let her be generously furnished with such requisites as will add to the comfort of her class and the efficiency of her instruction. No school can afford to lay any restriction upon either. And finally, O brother superintendent, don't forget the primary teacher and her class in the opening and closing exercises.

—S. S. Magazine.

THE pastor of a New England Church stated in a recent public address that of one hundred and sixty persons admitted to his Church on profession of their faith during a certain period, one hundred and forty were members of the Sunday-school. Another pastor, on a similar occasion, stated that of one hundred and twenty-one thus admitted ninety-eight had been members of the Sunday-school.

"Good, but too long," is the verdict upon many a Sunday-school anniversary exercise. Each department of the school must show its honour in song, three or four friends must be honoured by invitations to speak, the report of things done or to be done cannot be curtailed. Thus, from ninety minutes to two hours or more pass before the concluding song. Scholars and visitors are so wearied that the delight of the excellent exercise is forgotten. Better put half as many items on the programme, so that all will feel inclined to say, "So good that we wish there had been more of it."—*Sunday School World*.

Opening and Closing Services for Fourth Quarter.

OPENING SERVICE.

I. Silence.

II. The Doxology.

III. Responsive Sentences.

Supt. O give thanks unto the Lord; or ill upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Psa. 116. 13, 17.

School. I will offer to thee the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. Psa. 116. 13, 17.

Supt. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.

School. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. Psa. 145. 18.

Supt. I called upon the Lord in distress: the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place. Psa. 118. 5.

School. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Acts 2. 21.

IV. Singing.

V. Prayer.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. Class Study of the Lesson.

II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

III. Recitation of the Title, Golden Text, Outline, and Doctrinal Suggestion, by the school in concert.

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

V. The Supplemental Lesson.

VI. Announcements (especially of the Church services and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. Singing.

II. Responsive sentences.

Supt. My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

School. The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

III. Dismissal.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried: the third day He rose from the

dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

Peculiar Children.

SOME teachers seem to think that children are responsible for the unpleasant peculiarities which they have inherited. But these are misfortunes. Instead of treating unkindly the child with an irascible temper or a natural selfishness, or an obstinate will, you should pity him. As you would treat with extreme tenderness a blind or deformed child, so should you have the greatest tenderness for one whose soul is deformed. You will not conquer the defect by disheartening the child. What he needs is praise, is encouragement to meet the foe that is so hard to defeat, to bear the weight that crushes him. Ye that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. How often do parents and teachers add to the already unbearable burden of such a child the crushing weight of perpetual censure! Start, then, with recognition of the fact that a natural trait is not a thing for which a child, in the first instance, is responsible. Help him to conquer it. Let him understand that you recognize it as a misfortune rather than a vice, but not a hopeless one.—*Christian Teacher.*

THE teacher is like the switchman, who holds the key to the switches on the railroad. If he does his duty faithfully the train will reach its destination safely; if he neglects it disaster and ruin follow. A misplaced switch or a wrong signal may send hundreds into eternity unprepared.

THE *S. S. Times* tells of a child-waif who found her way into a Sunday-school, and asked the superintendent, who happened to meet her at the door: "Is this the way to heaven?" That question is said to have set the superintendent at thinking about his Sunday-school; whether or not it were the way to heaven. A Sunday-school ought to be the way to heaven; but is it so in every case? Both superintendent and teacher can set scholars at thinking by wisely-directed questions.

A LARGE volume comprising all the methods of church and Sunday-school work which have proven valuable in the experience of pastors is to be published by Funk & Wagnalls. The Rev. Sylvanus Stall, of Lancaster, Pa., the author of "How to Pay Church Debts," has been engaged to compile this volume, and desires pastors everywhere to furnish him such plans and methods as they have successfully used in enlarging the work of the Master in their own fields, or know of elsewhere.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FOURTH QUARTER: THREE MONTHS' STUDIES IN THE WRITINGS OF JOHN.

LESSON VI. THOMAS CONVINCED.

[Nov. 7.]

A. D. 30.]

John 20. 19-29.

[Commit to memory verses 26-28.]



19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

20 And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were they glad, when they saw the Lord.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

23 Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

General Statement.

Of the ten recorded appearances of the risen Saviour, the first took place on the day of his resurrection. The first was to Mary Magdalene, as related in the last lesson. The second was to certain women, whom Christ greeted with the words "All hail!" The third was to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, as told in the Gospel according to Luke. These two disciples had returned back to Jerusalem, and there learned that he had appeared a fourth time to Simon Peter; but what transpired at the meeting of the crucified One and his penitent disciple has not been revealed. On that evening, ten of the apostles, and perhaps some of their friends and the believing women, were assembled in "the upper room." Suddenly, without unbaring of door or turning of hinge, the Master stood in the midst with words of

peace. Joy took the place of sorrow, as the disciples realized that their Lord had really risen from the dead. But one had been absent, and that one to whom faith was hard and doubt was easy. Thomas the twin declared that, as he had seen the gaping wounds in the body of his dead Master, he would not believe until he could touch those same wounds in his living form. A week passed, and all were present on the first Sunday evening after the resurrection. Again the doors were closed, and again Jesus stood in the midst. He was the rebuke to Thomas, but was the living, how full was the confession of the hitherto doubting disciple! It was well for us that in the apostolic company there was one so slow of faith that he could believe only upon the most indubitable proofs.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 19. The same day. The day of the Saviour's resurrection, the first Easter Sunday. When the doors were shut. For fear of an attack from the Pharisaic faction, all the more enraged since rumors were abroad that Jesus had risen from the dead. Where the disciples were assembled. This may have been the upper room where the last supper was eaten, and where afterward the Holy Spirit descended. Came Jesus. He appeared suddenly, without opening the door, showing that his body was now subject entirely to his Spirit, and could appear and disappear, and in whatever form and place he would. (1) Perhaps it may thus with all Christ's followers after his resurrection, for they shall be like him. Peace be unto you. This was the usual Jewish salutation, but it now possessed a new meaning, coming from the lips of the risen Lord; bringing joy for sorrow, and rest after fear.

20. When he had so said. Perhaps because their faith could not fully grasp the fact that he had risen, he called attention to evidences that he was the very same Jesus who had died. Showed... them his hands and his side. In which were still remaining the holes where the nails and the spear had entered the holes and his side. They were alarmed when they thought that it was the appearance of a departed spirit; but now, when convinced that it was parted spirit; but now, when convinced that it was really their Master, and that he was not dead but living, they were filled with joy. (2) We may well rejoice with them, for on the fact of a living Christ rests our Christianity.

21. Peace be unto you. The "peace" is repeated, for peace is what Christ brings to men first of all. As my Father hath sent me. As God sent his Son into the world to bring salvation, so the Son sends his disciples to bear the news of salvation, now purchased for men by the death on the cross. So send I you. The resurrection of Christ was not to bring to the disciples ease and enjoyment, but work for the salvation of the world. (3) What an honor to us to be associated with our Lord in the work of saving men!

22. He breathed on them. As a significant sym-

bol of the baptism on high which was soon to come upon them, and at the same time reminding them of that act of God whereby life had originally come to the first man. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. By some this has been interpreted to be simply a promise of endurance which they were to receive ten days later; by others, and we think correctly, as a partial realization, then and there, of the divine power which came in full degree afterward.

23. Whosoever sins ye remit. Whatever power was here conferred was given, not to the apostles as such, but to the believers as a body, to the Church; for we find that one of the apostles was absent, and that others besides apostles were present. Luke 24, 35-38. It does not mean that any priest or any church officer, by the act of his will, or the utterance of a word, can shut men out of God's kingdom and eternal life. It does mean that those who are endowed with the Holy Spirit, as were the disciples after the day of Pentecost, shall have power to discern who are truly penitent and therefore pardoned, and who are not; as did Peter in the case of Simon Magus.

24. But Thomas. Thomas, surnamed Didymus, "a twin," was a man of slow spiritual apprehension and skeptical tendencies, yet a loyal, warm-hearted disciple, for he it was who said in an hour of danger, "Let us go, that we may die with him." John 11, 16. Was not with them. Why he was not present is not stated, but the inference is that it was because he had given up all hope, and believed the cause to be lost. How much he missed by his absence that night! (4) And how much we always miss by absence from the gatherings of God's people!

25. We have seen the Lord. Their testimony was strong and positive, for it was the testimony of personal experience. He said unto them. He was not a disbeliever, nor an unbeliever, but an honest doubter, requiring complete evidence before he could believe. He finds no counterpart to-day in men of a skeptical temperament, who seek candidly to know the truth, investigate its evidences thoroughly, and accept it heartily when con-

vinced. Evidence is seen those who believe. I one of the upon the m

26. After day evening first day of believers of kneeling at stances, yet there in do faith. (5) Then came in the room.

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vinced. **Except I shall see.** He had seen the gaping wounds in the dead body of his Master, now he must see those same wounds in his living body. **I will not believe.** Let it strengthen our faith to remember that one of the first company of Christians believed only upon the most infallible proofs.

26. After eight days. This was the Jewish method of expressing a week. The meeting was on the Sunday evening following Easter, showing that already the first day of the week had begun to be observed by the believers in Jesus. **His disciples were within.** Kneeling at the same place and under the same circumstances, yet with what different feelings. One was there in doubt and trouble, all the rest in the joy of faith. (5) *He who puts off faith, puts off joy in the Lord. Then came Jesus.* As before, appearing miraculously in the room. (6) *And even now he comes where believers meet.*

27. Then saith he to Thomas. Showing by his words that he had heard the words of unbelief spoken by Thomas, and was, therefore, omnipresent and omniscient. (7) *Our Lord hears all our utterances and is ever present at our side, a fact to make us rejoice while we tremble. Reach hither.* He answers the declaration of Thomas sentence by sentence, and offers to meet the test. **Thrust it into my side.** There was the open, bloodless wound, penetrating to the heart, and so large that a man's hand could be plunged into it. **Be not faithless.** He was in that spiritual condition from which he must pass either into faith on the one side or

open disbelief on the other, and he must make his choice between the two states.

28. My Lord and my God. Thomas leaps at a bound from the depths of doubt to a height of faith far above that of the other disciples; for up to that moment no one had addressed Jesus as God. He saw in his Master not only the risen Saviour, but the King of Israel, and the Divine One. And it is to be noticed that Jesus did not reject this title, which, if addressed to any man, would be blasphemous.

29. Because thou hast seen me. Words of commendation, yet almost suggesting a rebuke. **Blessed are they.** This last benediction of Christ is the peculiar privilege of those who have not seen him in the flesh, yet have believed in him as their Redeemer. (8) *We can enjoy a privilege of faith higher even than an apostle's.*

30. 31. Many other signs. As John relates many events unnoticed by the other evangelists, so there were many more wonderful facts which John has left unwritten, and the half of Christ's life has never been told. **These are written.** The purpose of the Gospel is to strengthen faith in Christ, to show him in his divine nature, and to give to men the knowledge of eternal life. **The Son of God.** John's gospel more than any other reveals the divine side of Christ's personality. **Might have life.** The life of God here, which leads to the everlasting life hereafter.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Thomas convinced. John 20, 19-29.
 Tu. The disciples partakers of Christ. Heb. 3, 1-19.
 W. The Holy Ghost bestowed. Acts 19, 1-7.
 Th. Using the power given. Acts 8, 5-17.
 F. Faith without sight. 2 Cor. 5, 1-10.
 S. Eternal life by faith. 1 Pet. 1, 1-9.
 S. Convincing the Gentiles. Acts 13, 38-52.

GOLDEN TEXT

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. John 20, 28.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 136, Dominion Hymnal.

Let us sing with one accord,
 Praise to Jesus Christ our Lord.

No. 140, Dominion Hymnal.

Glory be to God the Father,
 Glory be to God the Son,
 Glory be to God the Spirit,
 Great Jehovah, Three in One.

No. 150, Dominion Hymnal.

We praise thee, O God! for the Son of thy love,
 For Jesus who died, and is now gone above!

TIME.—A week later than last lesson.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The blessedness of faith.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **Jesus and the Ten,** v. 19-23

What had been the effect of the crucifixion upon the populace?

How long after the separation in the Garden of Gethsemane before the disciples were again united?

What kind of meeting were they holding?

What does the fact that they were together hint at as to their purposes?

How could Jesus appear to them when they were in secret with fast doors?

How did he calm their fears?

What was his commission to them in this interview?

2. **Jesus and Thomas,** v. 24-29.

Thomas is called the doubter. Why?

Was he the only one of the eleven who had doubted? Luke 24, 11.

Who first of the disciples had his doubts dispelled? Luke 24, 34; 1 Cor. 15, 5.

What things did the ten probably tell Thomas about the appearance of the Lord to them? John 20, 19.

Did Thomas ask more than the others had received? How long was Thomas left to his doubts? Had any been added to the company of believers in these eight days?

Practical Teachings.

1. The apostles gathered in his name in spite of their danger from the Jews. Learn from them Christian courage.

2. Jesus came to them when they did not expect. Doors and bolts were no bar to his presence. Learn to feel that he is ever near, though unseen.

3. His presence each time was a benediction of peace. He is the Christian's peace. Is he yours?

4. Unbelief vanished at sight. But it is more blessed to believe without sight. ONLY believe in Christ's message.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. **Jesus and the Ten,** v. 19-23.

Where did the disciples meet?

Why were the doors closed?

Who met with them?

What was his salutation?

What token did he show them?

What effect had his presence upon them?

What was his charge to them?

What gift did he bestow upon them?

What power was given to them?

2. **Jesus and Thomas,** v. 24-29.

Who was absent at this meeting?

By what other name was he known?

What did the disciples tell him?

How did he receive their story?

When did Thomas meet with the disciples?

Who appeared among them?

What did he say to them?

What did Jesus say to Thomas?

What was Thomas's answer?

What did Jesus say of his faith?

Upon whom did he pronounce a blessing?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. That the presence of Jesus brings peace?

2. That his presence drives away doubt?

3. That faith in Jesus brings blessing to the believer?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who gathered together in an upper room to talk of the resurrection of Jesus? **Ten of the disciples.**

Who came and stood in their midst? **Jesus, their risen Lord.**

What did he come to bring them? **Peace.**

What did he show them? **The prints of the nails and of the spear in his hands and his side.**

Why were the disciples glad? **They believed that he had risen from the dead.**

What did Jesus give them? **Power to forgive sins.**

Who was away when Jesus came into the upper room? **Thomas.**

What did the disciples tell him? **The Lord is alive, we have seen him.**

How did Thomas answer? **I will not believe it until I put my finger into the print of the nails.**

When did Jesus again stand in their midst? **After eight days.**

What did he tell Thomas to do? **To touch the prints in his hands and his side.**

What did he want him to be? **"Not faithless, but believing."**

Did Thomas believe? (Repeat the Golden Text.) **Who are happier than Thomas? Those who believe in Jesus without seeing him.**

What do we call believing in Jesus without seeing him? **Faith.**

What will faith in Jesus give us? **Eternal life.**

Words with Little People.

Are you not glad this letter was written, so that you, his little people, might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? and that, believing, you might have life through his name? Do you believe? Jesus said, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. To whom did the risen Saviour appear on the evening of the resurrection day? **To ten of the disciples.** 2. What were his first words to them? **"Peace be unto you."** 3. Who was absent at this appearance? **Thomas.** 4. How did Thomas receive the news of the Saviour's resurrection? **He would not believe it.** 5. What did Jesus say to Thomas at his next appearance? **"Be not faithless, but believing."** 6. What did Thomas say in the Golden Text? **"And Thomas,"** etc.

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....
Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE. The Privileges of Faith in Christ.

I. PEACE.

Peace be unto you. v. 19.

"Justified by faith, we have peace." Rom. 5. 1.

"Peace I leave with you." John 14. 27.

II. JOY.

Then were the disciples glad. v. 20.

"Your heart shall rejoice." John 16. 22.

"Rejoice in the Lord always." Phil. 4. 4.

III. POWER.

1. *Even so send I you.* v. 21.

"Go ye... preach the Gospel." Matt. 28. 19.

2. *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* v. 22.

"Another Comforter... the Spirit of truth." John 14. 16, 17.

3. *Sins ye remit... remitted.* v. 23.

"Bind on earth... bound in heaven." Matt. 18. 18.

IV. TESTIMONY.

We have seen the Lord. v. 25.

"That which we have seen... declare we." 1 John 1. 3.

"We have not followed... fables." 2 Pet. 1. 16.

V. KNOWLEDGE.

My Lord and my God. v. 28.

"The word was God." John 1. 1.

"The image of the invisible God." Col. 1. 15.

VI. ETERNAL LIFE.

Believing ye might have life. v. 31.

"Believe in him... everlasting life." John 3. 16.

"Believe in me shall never die." John 11. 26.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Lessons from the Doubting Disciple.

1. The doubter stayed away from the very place where his doubts would have been dispelled. So now, those who doubt the Bible and the Gospel are the very ones who should read the Bible and hear the Gospel; yet how often they neglect both!

2. The doubter lost much by absence from the meeting of the disciples. He missed peace, and joy, and assurance. For a whole week he was in darkness, while the rest of the disciples were in light.

3. The doubter was determined to have evidence in a way that suited himself. So there are very many now who reject the Gospel because God does not give proofs in a manner which they choose. The question is not "Are the evidences such as please me?" but "Do they prove that which is claimed?"

4. This doubter, however, was willing to open his eyes when the evidences were presented to him. In this he differed from many modern doubters and unbelievers. Very few of those who deny Christianity have ever given it through study. Most open infidels are ignorant people.

5. This doubter, when he saw the proofs, at once accepted them and passed out of the stage of doubt into that of faith. In which condition was he the happier?

6. Notice that it was a personal experience which converted Thomas from a doubter into a believer. There is no argument so powerful as that of a personal contact with Christ.

7. There is a blessedness which the believer knows, and of which the doubter is ignorant. v. 29.

An English Teacher's Notes on the Lessons.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

AMONG all the names which our Lord adopted as indicative of his character and his office, there is only one (as already noticed in the lesson for July 11) which is taken from any human profession. The Son of God is indeed called in Scripture our Priest, King, Advocate, Captain of Salvation, etc. But the sole human title he gives himself (with the exception once of "Bridgroom," Mark 2, 19, 20) is that of Shepherd. And this same title is the prominent one given to Jehovah, God of Israel, in the Old Testament. The Lord Jesus appears as the "Shepherd" in Luke 15. 4; but it is in the gospel of John that all the title expresses is most fully worked out. There he shows himself to us first as the "Good Shepherd" who "lays down his life for his sheep." But in Heb. 13. 20, in connection with his resurrection, he is called the "Great Shepherd;" and in 1 Pet. 5. 4, in connection with his coming again, he is called the "Chief Shepherd." And both these latter titles we find illustrated in the closing narrations of John's gospel. He appears to Thomas as the "Great Shepherd." He appears to Peter as the "Chief Shepherd."

It is one of the chief characteristics of the "Shep-

herd" that he "goes after that which is lost until he finds it." On thinking of the "lost" we generally picture to ourselves the lonely desert waste, far away from the fold, where the straying sheep lies "Sick and helpless, and ready to die."

But let us to-day picture the fold, safe and peaceful, where the sheep are gathered together under the protecting care of the Shepherd—all but one, whom he misses, and without whom he will not be satisfied. So it was in the "upper room" when the Risen Shepherd appeared with the salutation, "Peace be unto you." What gladness filled the hearts of the disciples when they "saw the Lord!" They had sat there in grief and anguish. Their sorrow was now (as he had promised them, chap. 16. 20) "turned into joy." They had sat there in unrest, agitated and perplexed by their own thoughts and the tidings of the women; now all was peace and satisfaction. They had sat there "with the doors shut, for fear of the Jews;" now all fear left them, dissipated like the mists at sunrise, and we hear no more of "the doors being shut."

But one was outside of all this comfort and peace and gladness. Thomas was "not with them when Jesus came." He had missed the glad meeting, and Jesus noted his absence. His eyes went round the circle, and he missed Thomas, just as a father coming home might miss one of his children who ought to have been there to welcome him. A stranger who knows not the home group would be unconscious that one was absent. Not so the father; not so the shepherd who "knows" his sheep. Chap. 10. 14. And this lost, missing one must be found.

Why was Thomas absent? We are not told. But if we may judge from his subsequent behavior, it was probably his own fault. When he returned to the company of disciples he refused to share in their gladness; he refused to believe; he refused to be comforted. He shut himself out of it all—remained out in the gloom, and the cold, and the solitude, and the wretchedness. Though outwardly in their company, he was spiritually far away. He needed to be sought and found. A whole week of unbelief and wretchedness went by for Thomas; and then again, in the evening, suddenly the Lord appeared. Would Thomas know him then?

First. There was the voice: after the first salutation he spoke to Thomas, "He calleth his own sheep by name."

Second. There was the call: "Reach hither thy finger," etc. Thomas was not to stay in the background, covering up his thoughts and feelings. He was bidden to come forth, and not only to believe, but to make profession of his faith. "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

Third. There was the visible proof: "Behold my hands . . . my side." Here was the "Good Shepherd" who had laid down his life for his sheep.

All this Thomas saw; but he saw more yet. An earthly shepherd may give his life for his

sheep, but that is all. He can do no more. He cannot rise from the grave again to seek and tend them. Again, an earthly shepherd has literally to search for his lost sheep. He knows not where it is until, by patient searching, he comes upon its hiding-place. Not so had the Lord Jesus searched for Thomas. He knew all about him—just where he was, what he thought, how he felt—saw into his inmost soul and fathomed it all. In the Risen One Thomas recognized not merely his "Lord"—the "Good Shepherd" whom he had known in this mortal flesh—but the "Great Shepherd," Jehovah, the Mighty One, his God—"My Lord and my God!"

This is our lesson to-day—Jesus as the Great Shepherd, pre-eminent in love, in power and majesty. For those inside his fold there is gladness, rest, and safety. But when he looks round on his sheep he misses many a lost one, wandering outside. Are there any in the class whom he thus misses?

But though he misses them from his fold, he knows where they are; where they have strayed; sees every step they take; looks into the depth of each heart; knows that this one is led away by pleasure or by worldly advantage, that that one is kept outside by the fear of his companions; knows who is looking wistfully toward the door and wishing he were inside, yet somehow keeping at a distance. Not one in the class but he knows all about him—knows and cares too.

But may any one expect such a sight as Thomas had? What did the Lord say to him on his profession of faith? "Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." No vision now for the bodily eye. "Blessed are they that have not seen."

The sight Thomas saw with his bodily eye soon passed away. The Risen Lord returned to heaven, and as Man he sits on the right hand of the Father. But there is a sight, that does not pass away, to be had now. Look at Hebrews 11. 27; 2 Cor. 4. 6.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

State and explain the circumstances of the first five appearances of Jesus. . . . It might be well to draw a rough map of Jerusalem, showing the place of the sepulcher, the supper-room on Mount Zion, and the road to Emmaus, and then to indicate at each place the numbers corresponding to the appearances there. . . . Show the traits manifested by Jesus at these several appearances, as knowledge, love, interest in individuals, omniscience, etc. . . . In the Analytical and Biblical Outline is presented a line of teaching on the subject of the privileges of faith in a risen Christ, as shown in this lesson. Show how we may enjoy the same privileges, taking as a lesson-thought, "Blessed are they that have not seen, yet have believed." . . . In the Thoughts for Young People, Thomas is made the central figure. Study his character, as shown in all the events with which he is named, and notice the lessons here given concerning doubt and inquiry. This is an important.

subject, as there are many doubters among young people, but it should be presented carefully, and from the stand-point of an earnest believer.

REFERENCES. FREEMAN'S HAND-BOOK. Ver. 19: Saltation, 823.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

57. What is the Providence of God?

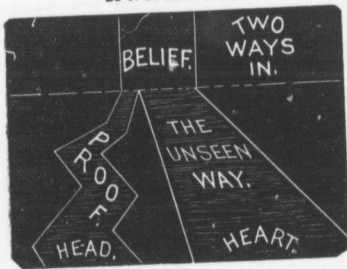
The Providence of God is his preservation of all his creatures, his care for all their wants, and his rule over all their actions.

And thou preservest them all.—Nehemiah ix. 6.

(Acts xvii. 28; Heb. i. 3; Psa. cxli. 19; cxlv. 15, 16.)

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



EXPLANATION. By this diagram it is expected to show that there are two ways common to man to reach belief in Christ. One way is the straight, though unseen, way of love that proceeds from the heart. [Write the word heart at the place designated in the diagram.] Look at the other way! It leads up to belief, but it is not a direct way, and is therefore more difficult. Its entrance into belief is narrow, and yet many minds like that of Thomas must enter in this way. It is the way of the head, and not the heart (write *Head*), and it requires experience and proof to satisfy the intellect. Jesus says, "Blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed." The enemy of truth will take neither of these roads, but the honest inquirer will find his way into faith even though it may be a difficult path.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *My Hands for Jesus.*

Review last lesson by asking a few questions concerning the resurrection, who saw Jesus, how the disciples heard of it, etc.

Ask how many disciples there were. Some will say twelve. Some will remember that Judas was no longer living. Tell that the disciples held a meeting after they heard that Jesus had risen. Make ten marks on the board, letting children count. One was absent. Who? Print "Thomas." He did not believe the good news, so he did not make haste to come to the meeting when he heard about it. Teach that disciples should always be ready to go where Jesus is to be spoken about. Ask, What do we have Sunday-school for? Yes, to hear about Jesus. And does Jesus come to the Sunday school? Yes, and the little disciples who do not come because it is too cold or too hot, or they want to go somewhere else, or do something else, will be

very likely to miss seeing Jesus! Listen, and hear about Thomas.

Jesus with the disciples. While the ten disciples sat together in a room talking about Jesus, suddenly Jesus stood there! The door was shut and no one knew how he came in. Can Jesus come into this room without opening the door? Yes, for he is a Spirit. If he should open our eyes as he opened the eyes of the disciples that day, perhaps we should see him here now. What did Jesus say? "Peace." That means, "Do not be troubled." "Be kind to one another." "Be loving and gentle to each other." Would Jesus say that now, if we could see him and hear him speak? Yes, he says it to us to-day. Read from Bible, "Peace I leave with you," etc. Tell how he showed them his hands, and what for.

Jesus and Thomas. Tell vividly how Thomas came in after Jesus went away; how the disciples told him the wonderful news, and what he said. Teach that if any child says, "I won't believe Jesus is here unless I see him," that one is like Thomas. Teach how kind Jesus is even to those who do not believe him, and illustrate by Jesus coming another time and showing Thomas his wounded hands and side.

Jesus and us. How many hands are here? Who made your hands? What for? Make outline of a cross on the board. Tell how our Saviour's hands were nailed to the cross for us. *He gave his hands to us.* What shall we do with our hands? If we give them to him, how shall we use them? Strike, push, snatch, with them? Talk about helping hands, gentle hands, hands given to Jesus. Sing, "Two little hands," etc.



Lesson Word-Pictures.

That first day of the week had been such an exciting occasion for the disciples! "Jesus risen!" How the announcement had thrilled them! And then that counter-statement of the soldiers, bribed by the Jews, that the disciples had stolen away the body of Jesus. Jerusalem might naturally have been agitated by these conflicting reports like a sea cut up by cross-currents of wind and water; and what wonder if any disciple's heart were a little bay where this agitation was reproduced! Was it strange if any disciple said of the resurrection, "It is too much to believe!" But the day goes by. The sun, like a conqueror, goes down the western sky, hung as with glorious triumphal banners. Evening brings the disciples together. Shut, though, the door; fasten it, bolt it, bar it. There are enemies without who may disturb this gathering within. The disciples talk over the day's wonder. I hear Peter giving his story, while John tells what he saw, and a third what Mary Magdalene said. How intently, with eyes fixed and staring, listen the others! Is—Is—Christ now? they may be wondering. Hark! Is—is—some one coming into the room? No, the door has not opened, and yet there is a mysterious approach, and—look up! Out of the seemingly empty space about them emerges the form of the Master! There is a voice also, his voice, saying, "Peace be unto you!" The disciples, half-shrinking, half-approaching, look in wonder. But see! He is holding out his hands. He is pointing at his side. It is He! Nail-print and spear-print are all there! O, to what grateful hearts comes again the music of that salutation, "Peace be unto

you!" "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." But what does he say now? He bends over them. I seem to see his lifted hands. He breathes upon them, and down on that bowed, hushed, rapt group of disciples comes the mysterious blessing of the Holy Ghost. "Yes, the Lord has risen. We have seen the Lord," the disciples cry. All the disciples? Thomas was not there in that room of peace, and he will not believe. He must put his very hands into the very wounds of Jesus. Can he ever make that test? After eight days, again the disciples are within, and Thomas is there, and closed is every door. Perhaps Thomas is saying, "I cannot be-

lieve except I shall see in his hands"—hark! What is that stir? Is that a step behind the disciples? Has the door opened? Suddenly, without the swinging of any door or the rupture of any wall, the form of the risen Saviour is before them! Again, his voice makes the music of its "Peace be unto you!" And Thomas, listen! He speaks to you! "Reach hither thy finger!" Startled, bewildered, hesitating, he advances, reaching out his hand to test that presence; and O, I do not think he waited to complete that proof, but I hear him, as lovingly, trustingly, fervently he cries, "My Lord and my God!"

A. D. 30.]

LESSON VII. PETER RESTORED.

[Nov. 14.]

John 21. 4-19.

[Commit to memory verses 15-17.]



4 But when the morning was now come, Je'sus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Je'sus.

5 Then Je'sus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast there-

fore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Je'sus loved saith unto Pe'ter, It is the Lord. Now when Si'mon Pe'ter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him (for he was naked), and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Je'sus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Si'mon Pe'ter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Je'sus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none

General

The seventh appearance of the Saviour after his resurrection took place on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, among the scenes of his ministry and his miracles. A number of the disciples went forth upon the sea at night to engage in their old employment of fishing. All night they toiled, but without success. The Master was not with them, and their work was all in vain. In the early gray of the morning they saw a figure standing upon the shore, and heard a voice, which bade them cast their net on the right side of the ship. They supposed that the stranger had seen on that side the evidences of a school of fish, and followed his advice. Their toil was rewarded by a wondrous ingathering, for their net was filled with fishes. In the boat was one thoughtful man, who at the empty tomb had been the first to realize that his Lord had risen, and now was the first to recognize

Explanatory and

Verse 4. When the morning. The Rev. Ver. reads, "When day is now breaking." In the early dawn, **Jesus stood on the shore.** Watching their work, as now from the heavenly shore he watches ours, his fishers in the sea of the world. **The disciples knew not.** The resurrection body of the Saviour was so controlled by his spirit that it could assume any form and appear in any place at will. *"Perhaps our celestial bodies will have like traits hereafter."*

5. Children. A common term of address from a superior or a friend, **Have ye any meat?** The Rev. Ver. gives the more correct rendering "Have ye aught to eat?" The question meant, "Have you caught any thing?" **They answered him, No.** They had not been guided by their Master in their work, and their work had been without result. He knew of their failure, yet he would have them acknowledge it. *"It is when we have fully realized our own insufficiency that we receive of the fullness of Christ."*—Dr. Whelan.

6. Cast the net on the right side. He would show

of the disciples first ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Je'sus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Je'sus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15 So when they had dined, Je'sus saith to Si'mon Pe'ter, Si'mon, son of Jo'nas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Si'mon, son of Jo'nas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Si'mon, son of Jo'nas, lovest thou me? Pe'ter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Je'sus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

Statement.

In this lone figure on the shore his risen Lord. He spoke to the disciple who was his very opposite in traits of character, yet his warm friend and chosen companion, Simon Peter. "It is the Lord!" With all the ardor of his nature, Peter leaped overboard from the boat, and swam to the shore, that he might cast himself at the feet of the Master whom he had so recently denied. Soon afterward came the rest of the company, dragging the net to the land, and all sat down together, as of old, to a meal upon the shore. After the breakfast came tender conversation between the Saviour and his repentant disciple. He who had in one night thrice denied his Lord now thrice declared his love for him, and was once more commissioned as an apostle and shepherd of souls.

Practical Notes.

them his complete knowledge of the deep and of the things therein, and would show them, too, that their success depended upon his direction and help. **They cast therefore.** Not yet recognizing the Saviour, they supposed that this stranger saw signs of a shoal of fish and was directing them toward it. **Were not able to draw it.** To draw it up into the boat.

7. Therefore. At that moment, and as a result of the event, the knowledge flashed upon the mind of John. **That disciple whom Jesus loved.** John, the deep thinker, is the first to remember a time when on that same shore there was another draught of fishes and a call to discipleship. He recognizes his Master in the stranger. **Saith unto Peter.** Opposite as were the characteristics of Peter and John, almost invariably in this book and in Acts they are named together. Each found in the other the complement of himself, in one the life of contemplation, in the other the life of action. **He girt his fisher's coat.** A short sack without arms, placed over the under-garment. **For he was naked.** Having on only his under-clothing, a sort of shirt, reaching from shoulders to knees, and girded

around the waist. **Cast himself into the sea.** It was like John to be first in recognizing his Lord, and like Peter to be forward in rushing to meet him. (3) *It is well for us to forget fish and nets, houses and lands, when we can find Jesus.*

8, 9. The other disciples. Some of them are named in verse 2. **Came in a little ship.** Perhaps the small boat used with the larger vessel in fishing. **Two hundred dressed cubits.** About a hundred yards. **Dragging the net.** It may be that they did not hear John's words, and hence did not recognize Jesus until they landed. **A fire of coals.** Perhaps of charcoal, much used in Oriental lands. **Fish . . . and bread.** The simple provision for a meal, provided in his own divine way by the Lord.

10, 11. Bring of the fish. Some expositors see in all this incident a symbolism of the work of winning souls, and at this point a picture of the earnest minister bringing the results of his toil to the feet of Jesus. **Simon Peter went up.** Always the leader of the apostolic band, in action and in speech. **A hundred and fifty and three.** Their size and number led the disciples to count them.

12. Come and dine. More properly, "Come and breakfast," since it was the first meal of the day. **None of the disciples durst ask him.** They knew that he was their Lord, but reverence restrained them from asking any questions.

13, 14. Takeeth bread, and giveth them. It may be inferred that Jesus, as on another occasion also, was a refection, partook of food with his disciples. So this was a retokening of the banquet of the Lamb, when the laborers for Christ shall sit down with their Lord on high. (4) *Perhaps we may learn also that those who give themselves up to Christ's work shall be fed by him.* **This is now the third time.** The third time in the presence of the disciples in a body; no account being taken of several appearances to individuals.

15. When they had dined. Rev. Ver., "Broken their fast." **Jesus saith to Simon Peter.** Three times had Peter denied his Lord, and now three times he is called upon to confess him. **Lovest thou me.** The verb is not the same in these three sentences. Dr. Schaff translates the three questions, answers, and commands as follows: 1. "Lovest thou me more than these?" 2. "I dearly love thee." "Feed my lambs," thus? 3. "I dearly love thee." "I dearly love thee." 4. "Lovest thou me?" "I dearly love thee." 5. "Dost thou love me dearly?" "I dearly love thee." 6. "Feed my sheeps." 7. "I dearly love thee." "Feed my sheepsings." **More than**

these. Peter had declared that he would be true to the Saviour, even though all forsook him; he is now asked whether he loves Christ more than these his fellow-disciples loved him. **Thou knowest that I love thee.** He no longer avouches his own loyalty, but appeals to his Saviour who knows his heart to behold his love. **Feed my lambs.** A charge to the apostle who had learned by experience the weakness of his own character, to care for and strengthen the weak ones in the flock of Christ. (5) *The first requirement of the disciple is love for his Saviour.* (6) *He who loves his Saviour will love his Saviour's followers and act with them gently.*

16. The second time. Again Christ asks the same question, and Peter makes the same answer. **Lovest thou me.** As before, Jesus uses a word referring to the higher love from man to God; and Peter answers with a word indicating the love of a natural affection, a friendship between man and man. **Feed my sheep.** Rev. Ver., "Tend my sheeps" or "act as a shepherd," meaning care and guidance as well as feeding.

17. The third time. The third time Jesus uses Peter's own expression and asks, "Do you, indeed, love me as a friend?" **Peter was grieved.** Not merely at the threefold inquiry, but at the change in his Lord's language, which pressed upon him the question, "Are you indeed my friend?" **Thou knowest.** Notice that the pride and self-confidence of Peter is all gone, and that now he bids his Saviour look within his heart and see his love.

18. Verily, verily. "Amen, amen." **Ye must, then a girdedst thyself.** When a man would go forth upon his journey he gave his limbs freedom by fastening his loose outer garments in his girdle. **Walkedst whither thou wouldest.** Then he was his own master, going where he desired. **Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands.** The image here suggested is of the hands outstretched upon the cross. We know not whether Peter stretched upon at that time apprehended his meaning. But from 2 Pet. 1. 14 it is evident that he afterward understood it.

19. Signifying by what death. He was crucified with head downward, declaring that he was not worthy to die in the same manner as his Lord. **He should glorify in God.** It was not only a prophecy of his death, but also of the honor which he should enjoy in it and the glory it should give to Christ's cause. (7) *The young Christian may work; the old Christian must enjoy.* **Follow me.** A new call to discipleship, to apostleship, and to fellowship in the sufferings of Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. Jesus by the Sea, v. 4-14.**
Where is the scene of this lesson laid?
Why were the disciples in Galilee? Mat. 28. 10.
How many of the eleven were present?
What had been the occupation in former years of four of these men?
What was a possible reason why those on the lake could not recognize Jesus on the beach?
What made them know him?
- 2. Jesus and Peter, v. 15-19.**
What had Peter done when John recognized Jesus?
What would such an act seem to indicate of Peter's feeling?
How did Jesus test Peter's real feeling?
Why was the question thrice repeated?
What was the effect on Peter's experience to Peter?
How had Jesus foretold this experience to Peter?
Luke 22. 32.
How was the prophecy of ver. 18 fulfilled?
How does John show in ver. 19 that he knew it had been fulfilled?

Practical Teachings.

1. Fatigue, disappointment, and hunger: Jesus upon the shore, and the disciples did not know him. Such things often hide Jesus from men's eyes.
2. "Children, cast on the right side." How simply they obeyed! Let us learn to obey just as simply.
3. The test of love. "Feed my lambs." "Tend my sheep." Rev. Ver. Service is the best proof of our love. How are we serving him?
4. "Follow me." So Jesus said to Peter. Has he ever spoken thus to you?
5. Peter obeyed. Have you?

HOME READINGS.

- M. Peter restored. John 21. 4-19.
Th. Peter rebuked. John 21. 20-25.
W. Peter fishing. Luke 5. 1-11.
Th. Peter's testimony. Acts 10. 34-48.
F. Feeding the sheep. Acts 2. 37-47.
S. Peter following Christ. 2 Pet. 1. 1-21.
S. The Great Shepherd. Heb. 13. 15-25.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. John 21. 15.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 201, Dominion Hymnal.
Gracious Saviour, gentle Shepherd,
Little ones are dear to thee.
- No. 25, Dominion Hymnal.
Open the door for the children,
Tenderly gather them in,
In from the highways and hedges,
In from the places of sin.
- No. 24, Dominion Hymnal.
Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on his gentle breast.

TIME.—Some days after the last lesson.

PLACE.—The Sea of Tiberias.

RULERS.—Same as before.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Love and service.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

1. *Jesus by the Sea*, v. 4-14.

- On what waters were the disciples fishing?
Who stood by the shore?
What was his question to them?
What direction did he give?
What did their obedience secure?
Who recognized Jesus?
What did Peter do on learning this?
How did the others reach Jesus?
What did they find on the shore?
What were they bidden to do?
What did Peter find in the net?
What invitation did Jesus give?
What proof that he was risen did Jesus give them?
2. *Jesus and Peter*, v. 15-19.
What question did Jesus ask Peter?
What was Peter's reply?
What charge was given him?
How often was the question repeated?
What charge was twice given?
What reply did Peter make to the third question?
What did Jesus tell Peter of his future?
To what did he refer?
What command did he give Peter?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. Proofs of Christ's resurrection?
2. Proofs of his divine power?
3. Proofs of his forgiving love?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who stood upon the shore where the disciples were fishing? *Jesus*.What did he ask them? *Have you any thing to eat.*What was their answer? *No.*What did he tell them to do? *To cast the net on the right side of the boat.*What happened? *The net was filled with fishes.*What did John say to Peter? *"It is the Lord."*How did Peter go to meet him? *He jumped overboard and swam ashore.*How many fishes did the disciples bring to land? *One hundred and fifty.*What invitation did Jesus give them? *Come and eat.*What was ready for them? *Bread and braided fish.*Why were they silent before Jesus? *They knew he was the risen Lord.*What did Jesus ask Peter? *"Lovest thou me?"*What was Peter's reply? *"Thou knowest that I love thee."*

How many times did Jesus ask Peter if he loved him?

*Three times.*What did he tell Peter to do if he loved him? *To love and care for his flock.* (Repeat the Golden Text.)What did Jesus prophesy of Peter? *That he should die for the name of the Lord Jesus.*

Words with Little People.

*"Feed my lambs," he said to Peter,**"If you love me as you say,**Feed my lambs, I'm sure they'll hunger,**Climbing up the heavenly way." (Golden Text.)*

There is a question which Jesus asked Peter three times that I think he is asking you. What is it? If you have little friends you love very much, you talk about them; you want to go and see them; you want to do something for them. The same will be true of Jesus and you if you answer as Peter did.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Where did Jesus appear to his disciples for the third time after his resurrection? *At the Sea of Galilee.*
2. What question did Jesus ask Simon Peter three times? *"Lovest thou me?"*
3. What was Peter's answer? *"Thou knowest that I love thee."*
4. What did Jesus then command Peter to do? *"He saith," etc.*

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Risen Christ and his Workers.

I. HIS INTEREST IN HIS WORKERS.

1. *Jesus stood on the shore.* v. 4.
- "Lo, I am with you always." Matt. 28. 20.
- Disciples knew not... was Jesus.* v. 4.
- "Ye see him not, yet believing." 1 Pet. 1. 8.
- Children, have ye any meat?* v. 5.
- "Without me ye can do nothing." John 15. 5.

II. HIS GUIDANCE TO HIS WORKERS.

1. *Cast the net on the right side.* v. 6.
- "Abide in me... ask what ye will." John 15. 17.
- The multitude of fishes.* v. 6.
- "Your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. 15. 58.

III. HIS REWARDS FOR HIS WORKERS.

1. *The fish which ye have caught.* v. 10.
- "I will make you fishers of men." Matt. 4. 19.
- Come and dine.* v. 12.
- "Will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. 3. 20.
- Take bread and give them.* v. 13.
- "Enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Matt. 25. 21.

IV. HIS DEMANDS OF HIS WORKERS.

1. *Lovest thou me?* v. 15.
- "That your love may abound." Phil. 1. 9.
- Feed my lambs.* v. 15.
- "Feed the flock of God." 1 Pet. 5. 2.
- Feed my sheep.* v. 16.
- "Feed the Church of God." Acts 20. 28.

V. HIS TRIUMPH FOR HIS WORKERS.

1. *By what death he should glorify God.* v. 19.
- "I must put off this tabernacle." 2 Pet. 1. 14.
- Follow me.* v. 19.
- "Shall sit upon... thrones." Matt. 20. 28.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Working for Christ.

1. In the New Testament fishing is often employed as an illustration of the work of saving souls. See Matt. 4. 19; Luke 5. 10; 2 Cor. 12. 16. He that would win men to Christ must use all the art and skill of the fisherman.
2. While we are working, Christ is watching, even though we know it not, and interested in our success. v. 4. 5.
3. When Christ directs our work it is abundantly successful, for he knows both the sea and the fish that swim in it. v. 6.
4. We are more likely to discern the Lord after our work than during our work. v. 7.
5. Those who work for Christ shall feast with Christ at the banquet which he has provided. v. 9-13.
6. The man who is himself a forgiven sinner is best fitted to be a worker among the souls of men. v. 15-17.
7. The great requisite of a worker for Christ is personal love and devotion to Christ. v. 15-17.
8. There is a work of fishing or winning souls, and there is also an equally important work of feeding or tending those won. v. 15-17.
9. When the worker has completed his task, he is taken home to his rest and his reward, and by whatever way he reaches heaven he glorifies God. v. 18, 19.

English Teacher's Notes.

THE Golden Text chosen for this lesson brings before us again the picture of a shepherd. But it is not the "Good Shepherd" dying for his sheep,

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....
Evening Text.....

nor is it the "Great Shepherd" risen, and living for his sheep. The Golden Text suggests two persons. There is a Shepherd who speaks, for he is the owner of the sheep—"My sheep;" and there is a shepherd who is spoken to; or rather, the one spoken to is by that word appointed shepherd, for he is bidden to "feed" the sheep. It is the Chief Shepherd appointing and directing the under-shepherd.

When one person deposes to another an office which belongs to himself, and intrusts that other with a work which he has begun, we may conclude:

1. That he is about to absent himself from the scene of the work. When Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden resolved to go to the assistance of the distressed Protestants of Germany he arranged for the care of his kingdom during his absence. When Queen Victoria, many years ago, intrusted the care of her young children to a lady of rank, it was because her public duties prevented her from being continually with them.

2. That he continues to interest himself in the work. Gustavus Adolphus had the welfare of his kingdom closely at heart. Queen Victoria loved her children with the love of a tender mother. The one would not leave his country, nor the other her family, without providing for the personal oversight which both needed.

3. That he hopes to return to those whom he leaves behind. If a man is leaving his country with the intention of taking up his residence in another land, he will, as far as possible, carry his property with him. He will prefer rather to sell his estate than to transfer to the care of a steward what he has no intention of ever re-visiting. To appoint some person to manage the property in his name and after his own manner is a sort of pledge that he may be looked for again.

Now we find by this passage

1. That Christ, the Shepherd, was going away. He had indeed returned to his disciples, but instead of dwelling with them as formerly he showed himself to them only from time to time. In the narrative he appears to them suddenly, and, at first, unrecognized. The old familiar companionship is not resumed, for they have to be prepared for the entire withdrawal of his bodily presence.

2. That he would not cease from his interest in those left behind. He had already promised them "another Comforter" who should "abide with them forever." Chap. 14. 16. But further, he would leave men who should walk among them, and dwell among them, and carry on his own work of constant, loving, and watchful care. The sheep should be tended and fed through the instrumentality of under-shepherds, to whom he would intrust this special work.

3. That he was coming back again. Verse 22. The words in which he refers to this are not included in the passage for consideration, but they belong to the subject. Long before he had drawn a picture of the servant or steward to whom the

Master should intrust the charge over the household, to "give them their portion of meat in due season" and of the reward awaiting such a one at his Lord's return. In this passage we see one of these stewards appointed, the first of a band innumerable who should be the Chief Shepherd's delegates until his coming again. For we must bear in mind that our Lord made the appointment, not only when he was departing, but because he was departing. He chose that the flock should not be left without the actual bodily presence of a shepherd whose business it was to care for them. Peter was the first under-shepherd. But as the flock increased it was manifest that there must be others. No authority or superintendence exercised from afar off would fulfill our Lord's intention. Wherever there was any portion of the flock, there was need of an under-shepherd.

What sort of person was the first to be appointed to this office? There are three things recorded about him in the passage:

1. He was a faulty man. He could not set himself up above the rest as superior in goodness and strength. He had been proved utterly frail in himself and powerless to face the enemy. But he had learned the lesson of his own weakness, and instead of vaunting, as before, his own attachment and devotedness to the Master, he only appealed with truthful humility to the Master's own knowledge of his inmost heart. He was a restored man.

2. His love to Christ was true and genuine. Greivous though his fall had been, the fact remained that he loved the Lord Jesus. He would gladly serve the Master who had chosen, and forgiven, and restored him.

3. He would learn to give up his own will and submit himself in all things to the divine will and the divine leading. This had not been his original character. He had "girded himself" and walked "whither he would." But grace would teach him to cease from self, and surrender himself to be led in truth "to prison and to death." Verse 18. Comp. Luke 22. 33.

Thus he was fitted for the work of an under-shepherd. Yet he was not to be left to do it alone. On that morning, by the Lake of Galilee, the Lord taught him three things concerning this.

Christ would be present with him. Not a visible, but a spiritual presence. He had watched Peter and his companions on the lake during that night when they "caught nothing," and the first dawn of morning revealed him standing on the shores. So would he be ever present with those who were doing his work.

Christ would direct him. Peter had not come home with an empty net that morning. The word of Jesus had given him an abundant draught of fishes. And he knew now that Jesus would not send him forth to fruitless labor.

The Lord's word would insure success.
Christ would reward him. When the disciples reached the shore that morning they found themselves "present with the Lord." He welcomed

them, approved their labor, fed them and refreshed them. So one day the absence which was before them would be over, and each faithful under-shepherd would hear the word: "Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

What has all this to do with our boys and girls? It touches them in two ways.

1. *Christ chooses his flock from among them.* He calls them to a fold over which he himself watches, and which he will not leave un-shepherded. Blessed flock, so loved, so tended, so remembered!

2. *Christ chooses his under-shepherds from among them.* That faulty, stumbling one is one whom Christ may use. Whoever loves Christ is called to help some one else. Whoever gives himself to be led by Christ shall assuredly prosper in Christ's work.

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Mention and describe an earlier fishing-scene and miracle which accompanied the call of four disciples. See Matt. 4, 18-22; Luke 5, 1-11.... Present a word-picture of the night of toil on the Sea of Galilee; of the appearance on the shore; the command; the filled net; the recognition; the breakfast on the shore; the dialogue with Peter.... To an adult class the line of thought in the Analytical and Biblical Outline may be suitable. It shows the relation between the glorified Saviour and those who work in his cause.... A somewhat similar plan, but adapted to younger pupils, is contained in the "Thoughts for Young People...." Study carefully the typology or likeness between fishing and work for souls, but do not carry the analogy to fanciful extremes.... Tell the story of Peter, as contained in this lesson, and show how changed he was from the self-confident apostle of an earlier chapter.... Notice, too, how successfully Peter "fished for men" on the day of Pentecost, a few weeks after this event.... Relate the tradition of Peter's martyrdom, as given in the notes.... Here is another ancient tradition about Peter. It is said that in old age, when he heard that the order for his arrest and martyrdom had been issued, he was persuaded by some friends to fly from the city of Rome. Just as he was going out of the gate he saw his Lord once more going into the city. He said, "Lord, whither goest thou?" The Saviour answered, "I am going to Rome to be crucified again in the place of one of my disciples." Peter accepted the rebuke, returned to the city, and suffered martyrdom. Though there is no historic truth in this story it contains a moral which all may profit.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 6: Fishing nets, 668. Ver. 7: Use of the term "naked," 261. Ver. 9: Charcoal, 819.

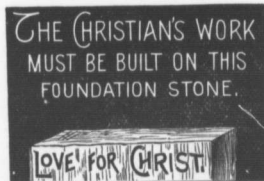
CATECHISM QUESTION.

58. Is there any special Providence over men?

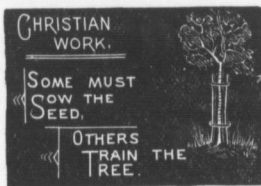
Yes; our Lord said: "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they?" (Matt. vi. 26.) And to his disciples he said: "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Luke xii. 7.)

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



Two diagrams are given for the blackboard; either or both of them may be used. The subject for both is Christian work. A good structure must be built on a firm foundation. Illustrate this by calling attention to houses, or monuments, that are placed on secure foundations. If not so placed, they will not stand. Just so with successful Christian work. It must have LOVE FOR CHRIST as the foundation. Peter's restoration to work followed his confession of love.



The second illustration is intended to show that there are two kinds of Christian work. One sows the seed in preaching or teaching the Word. When the young tree begins to grow, another takes it, and holds and trains it that it may grow straight. The young must be cared for first of all. Conclude the review with the great question, "Do I love Jesus?" The diagrams are so simple that directions for drawing are omitted.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Work for Disciples.* Print "Disciple" on the board, and tell that it means "one who learns." John and Peter and Thomas, and all the others, were Jesus's disciples because they learned about Jesus. What do children come to Sunday-school to learn about? Yes, about Jesus. Then are all children who come to Sunday-school disciples of Jesus? No, only those who try to do as Jesus says. We should make this point very clear. Obedience is the test of discipleship, with children as with adults.

Jesus Helping Disciples. Jesus had not gone away to heaven yet. One morning, very early, he stood on the sea-shore, looking at some of the disciples who had been fishing all night on the Sea of Galilee. They had not caught any fish, but when Jesus told them how to cast the net it was filled with fishes right away. Jesus always knows where we are and what we are doing. He knows just when and how to help us, and he loves to help us. But see, the disciples would not have been helped if they had not minded Jesus, and cast the net just where he told them to. So we must do just as Jesus tells us if we want him to help us.

Jesus Feeding Disciples. Tell how the disciples came to the shore and found a fire and some breakfast ready for them. Jesus cooked the fish and gave it to

his disciples with some bread. How sweet the food must have been which Jesus gave! Talk about our daily bread, who gives it, why he gives it, etc. Then tell about the better bread which comes down from heaven, fresh every day, right from Jesus himself! Yes, which is Jesus himself. Teach that we may have a taste of that heavenly food every time our hearts turn to God in prayer, every time we look into the Bible, every time we do a good act, or think a right thought, or speak a right word. And every time it is Jesus feeding us. Shall we not thank him?



Jesus Teaching Disciples. Ask what children remember about Peter. How many times did he deny Jesus? Jesus did not stop loving Peter for that. But he teaches him what it is to really love the Lord. Peter thought, perhaps, that he loved Jesus because he liked to be near him, to hear him speak, to learn about him and from him. But Jesus taught Peter that to love means to work. A little girl who loves mamma, loves to run errands for her and to help her in every way she can. So a disciple who loves Jesus wants to work for him, that is, to help others to know him and love him too. Jesus calls us his flock; his sheep and his lambs. Jesus teaches his little disciples in this lesson that there is work for them, and if they really love him they will love to do as he tells them to do.

Lesson Word Pictures.

It is early morning upon Galilee. Hardly with a ripple, as if asleep, the lake stretches from shore to shore. Blue, blue Galilee! Above it, is a sky as placid, a sky flushed in the east with the gold of the coming day. There are boats dotting the lake, and the cry of the fishermen echoes over the waters. Here is a boat but a little way from the shore. You can see those on board. Is that Peter? Yes, and John and Thomas and others are there. You see them swing the empty net over the vessel's side. You hear it as it splashes down into the water. Now it comes up again, dripping, lenn, empty. I can see the disciples looking into the net, to see only its meshes. It has been coming up empty all night. To the weary, faint, hungry, it is so discouraging. But, hark! There is a call from the shore! Somebody is asking if they have any "meat." Somebody is telling them where to cast the net. "What does he know about it?" one may have said. "It

wont do any harm. Let's try!" another may have suggested. Splashing into the water, down goes the net again. "Now haul it in!" the impatient Peter seems to cry. The net resists. What? Can't Thomas and Peter pull it in? Take hold, John! Still unable? Nathanael, James, every body, take hold! All, pull now! There they stand tugging, straining. The net now is so full, it cannot be drawn into the boat. But why does John stare so intently at the shore? He is looking at the kind friend who gave the fishermen that helpful hint. A veil is falling from his eyes. It is no longer a stranger, but—John is whispering to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Yes, the risen Lord! And Peter who once denied his Lord, and often since may have heard the shrill crowing of the cock which sent him away weeping, what does he do now? O, he cannot stay away from his Lord. Somehow he must get to those feet wounded for him, lie down there only to look up into the all-merciful face bending down toward him, and feel the touch of the pitying, forgiving hands. He just binds his fisher's coat about his body and into the water he drops. There he goes, pushing away, swimming with quick, eager, strong, steadfast strokes toward that waiting Lord. The other disciples are dragging landward that heavy, drooping net. There is no hint about that meeting between Christ and Peter, but I know Peter found a loving face and loving touch. Peter has gone now into the water, and he is pulling on that big, crowded net. Crowded, and not a mesh torn! But what is it twinkling like a star on the shore? A fire? Yes, and there is fish on the glowing coils. Bread, too, is provided. "Come and dine," says Jesus. That morning meal, the disciples reclining on a grassy bank, and Jesus in the midst of them, that big net full on the water's edge, the fishing-boat drawn to the shore—how vivid the picture! To the fainting and hungry was ever meal more strengthening? body and soul both fed by that risen Saviour. But, Peter, the Lord has a word for you. O, how the inquiry of the Lord rings through the soul of Peter! "Lovest thou me?" Asked again and again too! Does Peter look away? Does he look upon the scenes of that night of the trial? Does he hear his quick replies and the cock's shrill cry? I seem to hear his quick replies and see that face grievéd at the thrice repeated question. Let him feed the flock, the Saviour is saying: and then I look away, and as the Saviour speaks, I see rough hands, in the future, grasping Peter. They bind him. They drag him hence, and in his death he follows faithfully that Lord from whom he once turned away.

A. D. 68.]

1 John 1. 5-10, and 2. 1-6. [Commit to memory verses 1, 7-9.]



5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

LESSON VIII. WALKING IN THE LIGHT.

[Nov. 21.]

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

2 And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.

4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked.

General Statement.

The First Epistle of John may be regarded as the last message to the Church of the last of the apostles. John,

who in youth had pilloved his head upon his Master's bosom, and was the beloved disciple because he looked

most deeply into the Saviour's heart, and comprehended his inner teachings, lived to see the third generation of the Christian Church. In extreme old age he wrote his gospel and this epistle. The theme of the one is "The Son of God," and of the other "The sons of God." In this book, which Luther loved to call "The little Bible," we have the ideal Christian presented to us. The message is announced as coming from One who was from the beginning, yet of whom the writer had obtained a personal experience. He had himself

seen and heard and touched the Being of whom he writes. He declares that the great central principle of the Gospel is that God is light; and hence the sons of God should walk in the light. The entire book of five chapters is an exposition of this "walking in the light." Our lesson emphasizes three great truths, the truth of sin as a reality, the truth of salvation from sin as a privilege, and the truth of the divine law as our standard of duty.

Explanatory and Practical Notes.

Verse 5. This then is the message. John never uses the word "gospel," but speaks of "the testimony," or as here, "the message." In this verse is presented the theme of his epistle, which he presents as a message from his ascended Lord. **Which we have heard of him.** Rev. Ver., "from him." Not given at any one time, but as the central principle of all the Saviour's teachings, and seen under the illumination of the Spirit. **And declare unto you.** Better, as in the Rev. Ver., "announce," as a herald proclaims the message of his king. Notice that this book nowhere presents lines of argument and conclusions, but everywhere states truths as by divine authority. (1) *The business of Christ's messengers is not to discuss but to proclaim their message. That God is light.* "Light unites in itself purity and clearness and beauty and glory, as no other material object does; it is the condition of all material life and growth and joy." *Alford.* **No darkness at all.** A strong negation, "no, not one speck of darkness;" darkness being the representative of sin, error, and ignorance. The whole epistle is an elaboration of this thought, that as God is light, so must his children be.

6. If we say. There were some in that day, as now, who claimed that sin belonged to the body and not to the spirit, so that one could be a Christian while committing sin. This dangerous view John combats in this epistle. **Have fellowship with him.** Communion of heart with God, which is the privilege of every disciple. **And walk in darkness.** That is, lead lives of moral impurity and wrong-doing. **We lie.** Our profession is false, for light can have no fellowship with darkness nor sin with goodness. **And do not the truth.** We not only speak that which is false by our profession, but we lead a life of falsehood. It is true that Christians do not lead perfect lives, and that they do sin. But it is equally true that just in proportion as they give way to sin they become spiritually dead. (2) *The measure of our spiritual life is the measure of our freedom from sin.*

7. If we walk in the light. By a life patterned after the will of him who is the light, and a heart enlightened by his grace. **As he is in the light.** God is in the light, and we walk in the light as we do his will. **We have fellowship one with another.** Those who cherish the same purposes, live in the same atmosphere of thought, and enjoy the same pleasures, find much in common with each other. **The blood of Jesus Christ.** The blood is the life-current; and Christ's blood, in the New Testament, means his atoning death, through which we are saved. **Cleanse us.** Notice that we are not cleansed from sin by our deeds of righteousness, by walking in the light, but by the virtue of Christ's death—a mystery which we cannot fathom, but a fact which we can believe. (3) *"The red rose of pardon and the white rose of purity grow upon one stem and spring from one root."* Bishop Alexander.

8. If we say that we have no sin. John has just said that Christians should walk in the light; yet he now declares that we Christians have sin which needs to be cleansed, a truth which all must admit. **We deceive ourselves.** Self-deception is easy in matters of the heart, and many delude themselves in the thought that their hearts are pure, when in fact they have not looked into their hearts. **The truth is not in us.** Because we will not open our eyes and let the truth shine into our hearts. Few people are willing to know the real truth about themselves. Said Daniel Webster in his last illness, when the physician tried to evaluate his inquires, "The facts are what I am trying to find out, and I wish no concealment." We need something of

the same candor in our examination of our spiritual state.

9. If we confess our sins. Not to a priest nor to the congregation, but to ourselves and to God. **He is faithful.** Because he has promised and will fulfill his promise. **And just.** Because our representative has died, and justice admits our pardon. **If it were not just God could not forgive us.** **To forgive . . . and to cleanse.** Forgiveness takes away our penalty and sets us free. But we need more, or we shall soon be again in the convict's place as guilty sinners. Therefore, God gives a power to rise above sin, to overcome it, to lead pure and godly lives; and this process is cleansing or sanctification.

10. If we say that we have not sinned. We must recognize and admit this constant tendency to fall into sin. **We make him a liar.** Because God has constantly affirmed that all men are sinners.

1. My little children. Those whom John was addressing were much younger than himself, the last on earth of the apostles; hence this endearing appellation. **These things write I unto you.** He states the object of his epistle was to induce men to live sinless like their Saviour. (4) *What a noble purpose, to lead us on up to purity! If any man sin.* So prone are men to fall that some provision for fallen men is necessary, and hence the whole scheme of salvation. **We have an advocate.** That is, one who intercedes for us and represents us before the throne of God. Jesus Christ is abundantly qualified for his office, for he is at once God and man, our brother and the Son of the Highest; and he has shown his love for us by dying in our stead. **Jesus Christ the righteous.** He who has no sins of his own to answer for can take upon himself the burden of the sins of others. An advocate needs himself to be pure and stainless.

2. He is the propitiation. That is, the one who opens the way for God to exercise pardon, by himself dying as our sacrifice. **Not for ours only.** The atonement is broad enough, and ample enough, to take in the whole world, every man who ever lived or ever will live. (5) *Let us proclaim salvation for all mankind!* In another place (5, 19) John says "the whole world lieth in wickedness;" but, if so, it is not because God wills it, but because men will not accept the divine salvation.

3. Hereby know we that we know him. Whoever reads this epistle carefully will find that it contains seven evidences whereby a man may know whether he is a Christian or not. The first of these is contained in this verse. **If we keep his commandments.** He who knows Christ as his Saviour will keep his commandments as a son. The test is an infallible one, he who truly loves Christ will love to do his will.

4. He that saith. Again the same words, "he is a liar," are spoken of the professor who is not a possessor. **Is a liar.** His fruits will show his root. It is no use in labeling a thistle "fig-tree," its fruit gives it lie to its name. So is it with the one who without obeying God claims to know him.

5, 6. Whoso keepeth his word. God's commands are just what a properly constituted nature would be glad to do. **Love of God perfected.** God's love has wrought its perfect work in us, we love God and return with a perfect love. **ought himself also so to walk.** If we are in doubt of God's commands we can ask ourselves, What would be the conduct of Christ in a given case such as we find ourselves in?

II. FELLOWSHIP.

We have fellowship one with another. v. 7.

"I have you in my heart." Phil. 1. 7.

"Walk in love." Eph. 5. 2.

III. FORGIVENESS.

Faithful and just to forgive us. v. 9.

"Redemption through his blood....forgiveness."

Eph. 1. 7.

"Their sins....will I remember no more." Heb.

8. 12.

IV. SANCTIFICATION.

To cleanse us from all unrighteousness. v. 9.

"That he might sanctify his people." Heb. 13. 12.

"Washed their robes." Rev. 7. 14.

V. INTERCESSION.

We have an Advocate with the Father. 2. 1.

"He ever liveth to make intercession." Heb. 7. 25.

"Who also maketh intercession for us." Rom.

8. 34.

VI. ACCEPTANCE.

He is the propitiation for our sins. 2. 2.

"We have peace with God." Rom. 5. 1.

"Reconciled to God by... his Son." Rom. 5. 10.

VII. ASSURANCE.

We do know that we know him. 2. 3.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness." Rom. 8. 16.

"We know that we have passed," etc. 1 John 3. 14.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Principles of the New Life.

1. All men have sin in themselves. There is no man who never sins, no man who can by his own strength rise above sin.

2. The difference between the Christian and the sinner is not that one is without sin and the other lives in sin; but that one hates his sin and seeks to overcome it, while the other cherishes it.

3. The way to rise out of sin is to recognize its reality in us, to confess it to God, and to our neighbor, if we have wronged him. Then we are in condition to be freed from sin.

4. He who seeks God needs a propitiation and an advocate: a propitiation making forgiveness possible, and an advocate to intercede for him. These we have in Jesus Christ our Lord.

5. If we will thus confess our sins God will be faithful to his promise and just in his dealings; will forgive our sins, and will cleanse us from sin in our lives by a new creation.

6. He who comes to God through Christ enjoys a full acceptance, an abundant cleansing, and a communion of heart with God's people.

7. The follower of God will seek to do God's will, and to follow the example of God's Son. This will be the evidence that he is a true follower.

English Teacher's Notes.

THERE is nothing in the world so pure as light. Water, to which we all turn for cleansing, often needs to be cleansed itself. It can receive all kinds of substances and hold them in solution. Yet it remains water. I may raise to my lips a draught clear and colorless, yet find by the taste that something has been mixed with it. Even the rain that falls from heaven gets contaminated with the impurities of earth. And so it is with the air we breathe. It may waft us what is sweet and whole-

some, or it may come laden with poison. It cannot repel the intrusions of injurious matter, though it may carry away and disperse them. With the light of heaven it is different. The sunbeam that passes through a chink in the shutter will reveal innumerable particles of dust before unnoticed. But the dust cannot mingle with the beam, it stands out distinctly defined against it and cannot penetrate the brightness. The light in its passage to the eye may be intercepted or obscured, but it cannot be sullied. It remains essentially unmixd and pure. Of all created things it is the one which most truly images its Creator.

No wonder, then, that this was an image which often recurred to the mind of the apostle who saw farthest into divine things, and that he placed it at the commencement of his letter of exhortation and warning to the Churches. Already he beheld the taint of heresy, of hatred and variance, and of careless living, assailing their purity. And he begins by reminding them of that fellowship with God to which they were called, and in virtue of which they were Christ's witnesses in the world, and shows them that such fellowship is incompatible with walking in darkness.

What is it to walk in darkness? We may look at it in three aspects:

(1) I know a short cut across a waste piece of ground which persons gladly take to save time. But it is necessary for those using it to take heed to their steps, or they may go deeper than is pleasant into mud and water. By daylight the matter is easy; by night one can hardly accomplish it without bearing away the marks of many false steps. To walk in darkness means failure and stain.

(2) In the same locality as this piece of waste ground there are many roads, turning different ways and crossing one another at various angles. Strangers get puzzled between them even by daylight. Landmarks, however, may be given, by which the right direction will be found. But at night it would be easy enough to lose one's way, and go wandering round and round. To walk in darkness means ignorance and error.

(3) Imagine sudden darkness coming on the building in which school is held, and each one having to find his way out as best he can. I am sure there would be much jostling and elbowing, and many would be hurt, especially the smaller and weaker ones. Brothers might run one against another without knowing it, and sisters would fail to find one another. Many untoward accidents have happened for want of light. General "Stonewall" Jackson is said to have been shot down by his own men in the dark. To walk in darkness means falling foul of one's neighbor.

This was just what John found in the Churches to whom he was writing. There were many living carelessly, saying they knew Christ, but not keeping his commandments. Chap. 2. 4, etc.; 3. 7, etc. There were many walking in error, some teaching false and heretical doctrine, others puzzled and led away by these. Chap. 2. 22-23; 4. 1-3. And

Lesson Word-Pictures.

He is a pilgrim bound to heaven. He has come up out of the darkness of sin into the beautiful light of the presence of God. I see him in some hour of temptation when the darkness threatens to come back, when out of the cloud fly the hot, hard arrows of the adversary. I watch him looking up to the Saviour, welcoming the light of his presence, and holding out to the tempter his shield of faith. I see him in some hour when he may have wandered into shadows, but comes back to bow at the feet of Christ, lying in penitence before that divine advocate with the Father, rejoicing in the light again. I watch him when in prosperity he is tempted to forget God, and in sickness to complain of him, and in sorrow to deny him, but he breaks away from these shadows, clings to the light of God in Christ, and keeps his heavenly Father's word. On and on he journeys. It is evening time now. Death is not far away. The pilgrim is almost home, nigh unto the fording of the river. The evening wind is cool, and the shadows thicken. It is only for a moment; on the other side is the light of God's fadeless eternity.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Walking in the Light.*

Introductory. Briefly review, by question and answer, the life of Jesus, his death, resurrection, and ascension. Tell that after he went to heaven, his disciples went about telling people the story of his life. John lived to be an old man; he spent all his life in telling about Jesus, and when he grew too old to visit the Churches he wrote them a letter, telling them how those who loved Jesus ought to live. Ask how many here love Jesus? Then how many want to know how they ought to live so as to please Jesus?

TWO WAYS.

Call some child to rise. Question: How did you get here? Do you know the way? Were you not afraid of being lost? Could you see where to walk? What made the way light and plain? Will you be afraid to go that way again? Let another child rise. Did you ever go anywhere in the dark? Do you like to walk in the dark? Why not? Why is it easy to lose the way? Why is it easy to stumble? Do papa and mamma want you to walk in the dark? Does God want his little

children to walk in the dark? Teach that there are two ways for children. One is a light way, a plain way, a safe way. The other is a dark way, a rough way, a dangerous way. Which is God's way?

THE LIGHT WAY.



Put symbol on the board. Explain that in this path of life, light stands for goodness, and as all goodness is in God we may name the light God. Teach that no light or goodness of our own can fall upon this path, any more than a light in our hand can light up the path by which we came here to-day. It takes the great sun shining in the sky to make our path to the Sunday-school light and pleasant. Show that God is shining on our life-path all the time, and that what we have to do is to walk in the light, that is, not to do wrong things, because wrong, or sin, is darkness, and if we sin we step off this light way, upon which God shines, into a dark way full of snares and pitfalls. Outline a path upon which no sun-rays fall, and with dark crayon make something to stand for stones, pits, etc.

THE DARK WAY.

Ask why is the way to Sunday-school dark at night? Because the sun is not shining upon it. Why is the path of sin dark? Because God is not there, and "God is light." Wherever God is not, there is darkness. Whenever we choose to mind Satan instead of minding God we shall get into this dark path. Point out the rough places in this path, and let children help to name them. Teach with great emphasis and particularity, and over and over again, that to be a Christian is to walk as Jesus walked, that is, to do the will of God. Make open Bible above the light-path, and show that from this book we learn how to keep in the light-path, or how to mind God. If our teaching does not lead children to see that a right life must result from believing in Jesus, it will be of little avail.

At the close of the lesson, let the class recite in concert the following texts: "I am the Light of the world;" "He that loveth his brother, abideth in the light;" "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."

A. D. 96-98.]

Rev. 1. 4-18.



LESSON IX. JOHN'S VISION OF CHRIST.

[Nov. 28.]

[Commit to memory verses 4-6.]

4 John to the seven churches which are in A'si-a: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

5 And from Je'sus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto

him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am A'l'pha and O'm'e-ga, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Je'sus Christ, was in the isle that is called Pat'mos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Je'sus Christ.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, I am A'l'pha and O'm'e-ga, the first and the last: and What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in A'si-a; unto Eph'e-sus, and unto Smy'r'na, and unto Per'ga-mos, and unto Thy'a-t'ira, and unto Sar'dis, and unto Phil'a-del'phi'a, and unto La-od'e'ce'a.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last.

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

"like unto burnt-bred brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace." His flesh glowed like metal under a white heat. His voice as the sound of many waters. He who has listened to the roar of the sea beating on the sands, can appreciate this conception.

16. In his right hand seven stars. Not on his fingers as jewels or rings, but held in his hand as a starry garland. From verse 30 we learn that these represented the seven "angels" or representatives of the churches. God's ministers are at the disposal of him whom they serve. **Out of his mouth went a . . . sword.** Not to be taken literally, but perhaps suggestive of the power dwelling in his utterances. Its two edges may refer to the opposite influences of Christ's words, converting some, condemning others. (*D. Brown.*) His

HOME READINGS.

- M.* John's vision of Christ. Rev. 1. 4-18.
Tu. The first-born from the dead. Col. 1. 8-20.
W. The Lord of lords. Rev. 17. 13-18.
Th. Witness to Christ's second coming. Zech. 12. 9-14.
F. The beginning and the ending. Isa. 41. 1-9.
S. Like the Son of man. Rev. 14. 13-20.
S. The living Lord. Rom. 6. 1-23.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Rev. 1. 18.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 144, Dominion Hymnal.
 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
 No. 140, Dominion Hymnal.
 Glory be to God the Father,
 Glory be to God the Son,
 No. 142, Dominion Hymnal.
 With joy we lift our eyes

TIME.—During John's banishment to Patmos in the reign of the Emperor Domitian.

PLACE.—The Isle of Patmos. (See Descriptive Index.)

RULERS.—Domitian, emperor of Rome.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The glorious Trinity.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

- 1. The Salutation, v. 4-8.**
 Who is the John who is so abruptly introduced?
 Name the churches to whom he writes?
 What words of Paul are suggested by ver. 4? Heb. 13. 8. *Rev. Ver.*
 What is meant by seven Spirits before his throne?
 How is the Trinity recognized in this salutation?
 What promise was John confidently quoting in ver. 7?
 Acts 1. 11, with 9; 1 Thess. 4. 17.
 What is the meaning of the phrase Alpha and Omega, which John uses so often?
- 2. The Vision, v. 9-18.**
 Where was John at the time of this vision?
 Why was he there?
 Who was Roman emperor at the time?
 By what was the vision preceded?
 What was the vision?
 What other vision had John had of the glorified Saviour when the Saviour was living?
 What characteristics of divinity were shown in this vision?
 What revelation of himself did this glorified Saviour make that made John know him?

Practical Teachings.

1. John, an exile and convict in the mines of Patmos, had this most wonderful vision. There is no condition so lowly, or service so hard, but that God's glory may illumine it.
2. God's message to his Church—grace—peace. Our return to him—adoration forever. God is ever ready to give us *His peace*. Are we always ready with adoration and praise?
3. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Can it be better spent?
4. The tenderness of the King of kings. His message ever is, "*Fear not.*"

countenance was as the sun. In a glory even greater than that of the transfiguration on the mount. Such will be the splendor of Christ when we see him at his coming.

17, 18. I fell at his feet. Such is the awe and terror inspired by meeting one from the other world, and especially one of divine glory. **Fear not.** Thus by voice and touch does Christ encourage his servant. **Liveth, and was dead.** The same who hung dead on the cross and lay dead in the tomb, now lives as the head of his Church. All our Christianity depends upon the fact of a living Christ. **Keys of hell and of death.** Rev. Ver., "of death and of Hades," the place of the departed, both of the good and of the evil. The realms of the dead are under Christ's control.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERMEDIATE SCHOLARS.

- 1. The Salutation, v. 4-8.**
 To whom does John write?
 What does he ask for them?
 What three titles are given to Christ?
 In what was Christ a faithful witness? 1 Tim. 6. 13.
 How was he the "first-fruits of the dead"? 1 Cor. 15. 20.
 What three things has he done for believers?
 To what are believers exalted? 1 Peter 2. 9.
 What is said of the coming of Christ?
 What does he declare himself to be?
- 2. The Vision, v. 9-18.**
 When did John see this vision?
 On what day of the week?
 What did he hear?
 What did the voice testify of itself?
 To what churches was John to write?
 What vision did John see?
 What form appeared to him?
 What was his appearance?
 How did this vision affect John?
 What assurance was given him?
 Whom did the voice declare himself to be?

Teachings of the Lesson.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. Our salvation through Jesus Christ?
2. Our exaltation through Jesus Christ?
3. God's watchful care over his Church?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

- Where was John sent as a prisoner in his old age?
To the island of Patmos.
 Why was he sent there? **For telling people about Jesus.**
 Who appeared to him? **Jesus, the Son of man.**
 What did he tell him to do? **To write what he saw in a book.**
 To whom was the book to be sent? **To the seven churches of Asia.**
 What did John see? **Seven golden candlesticks, and Jesus in the midst.**
 What was the dress of Jesus? **A long robe fastened with a belt of gold.**
 What were white as snow? **His head and his hair.**
 What were like flames of fire? **His eyes.**
 How did his voice sound? **As the voice of many waters.**
 What was in his right hand? **Seven stars.**
 What seemed to come from his mouth? **A sharp, two-edged sword.**
 What was bright with heavenly glory? **His face.**
 To what did John compare it? **To the sun when it shone brightest.**
 How was John affected by the vision of Jesus? **He fell, as if dead, at his feet.**
 What did Jesus do? **He laid his hand upon him, saying, "Fear not."**
 What did he tell him? **(Repeat the Golden Text.)**
 When shall every eye see Jesus in his glory? **When he comes to earth upon the clouds of heaven.**
 For what shall the earth tremble and mourn? **For its sins.**
 Who will be glad to see Jesus? **Those who love and obey him.**

Words with Little People.

No one but John ever caught a glimpse of the wonderful beauty, greatness, and power of Jesus after he went up in the clouds. We can never imagine how

beautiful he was, nor can we understand the vision; but, darlings, this wonderful being he saw was the very same Jesus who "died for us," and "came to life" again, and "is alive for evermore," our own Saviour, so we need not feel frightened when we study this lesson. After all he suffered, are you not glad he is so glorious now?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

[For the entire school.]

1. Where was the apostle John sent as prisoner in old age? To the island of Patmos.
2. What did God give to John there? A vision of things to come.
3. Whom did he see in the vision? The glorified Saviour.
4. What did the Saviour say to him in the Golden Text? "I am," etc.

TEXTS AT CHURCH.

Morning Text.....
Evening Text.....

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Glorified Saviour.

I. A RISEN SAVIOUR.

- The first-begotten of the dead.* v. 5.
"He rose again the third day." 1 Cor. 15. 4.
"The first-fruits of them that slept." 1 Cor. 15. 20.

II. A ROYAL SAVIOUR.

- Prince of the kings of the earth.* v. 5.
"Above all principality and power." Eph. 1. 20-22.
"Lord of lords and Kings of kings." Rev. 17. 14.

III. A REDEMING SAVIOUR.

- Washed us from our sins.* v. 5.
"Sanctify the people with his own blood." Heb. 13. 12.
"Cleanse us from all sin." 1 John 1. 7.

IV. A RETURNING SAVIOUR.

- Behold, he cometh with clouds.* v. 7.
"This same Jesus... shall so come." Acts 1. 11.
"Shall descend from heaven with a shout." 1 Thess. 4. 16.

V. A HUMAN SAVIOUR.

- One like unto a son of man.* v. 13. (Rev. Ver.)
"Upon... the throne... appearance of a man."
Ezek. 1. 26.
"In the midst of the throne... a Lamb." Rev. 5. 6.

VI. A GLORIOUS SAVIOUR.

- As the sun shining in his strength.* v. 16.
"His face did shine as the sun." Matt. 17. 2.
"Above the brightness of the sun." Acts 26. 13.

VII. A GRACIOUS SAVIOUR.

- His right hand upon me...* Fear not. v. 17.
"Not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb. 1. 11.
"Come boldly unto the throne of grace." Heb. 4. 16.

THOUGHTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Facts Concerning Christ.

1. We learn in this lesson that Christ, though once dead, is now living. Upon that fact depends the truth of the Gospel. If Christ did not rise, then we are all deceived. If he rose, we too shall rise.
2. We learn that Christ loves us. Rev. Ver., ver. 5. He loved the world, and from love came to save it; he loved his disciples on the earth; and now he loves all men, and is willing to save all.
3. We learn that Christ died for us, and by his dying takes away our sins. Ver. 5. We cannot understand

the mystery of his atoning death, but we can believe it as a fact, asserted all through the Bible.

4. We learn that Christ gives us high privileges. "Kings and priests." v. 6. Those who follow Christ in his humiliation, shall share in his exaltation.

5. We learn that Christ in his glory still wears the likeness of his humanity. He appeared to John as "one like unto a son of man." It is our brother-man who sits upon the throne. v. 13.

6. We learn that Christ in glory has a deep interest in his people on the earth. He holds in his hands the stars, which represent his ministers; and he walks among the candlesticks, which represent his churches. He knows their condition and their need. v. 12-18.

English Teacher's Notes.

We are approaching the end of our seven years' course of lessons, and closing, as is appropriate, with some passages from the last book of the Bible.

In reading letters from absent friends, if there is any part of them to which we give special attention it is to their closing words. And we may be sure that the closing words of the book of God—the letter, so to speak, which he has sent to mankind—will be not only commensurate with the sublimity and importance of the whole, but will press upon us the grand points which the divine writer desired to leave upon our memory.

A large portion of the Bible is occupied with the story of events which have occurred on earth. It has taken us into the great city and into the lonely desert. It has shown us kings with their armies, statesmen and their plans, men and women and children too, with their common needs and sorrows and sufferings. Sometimes it has brought us into contact with the great lines of the world's history, sometimes it has led us into by-ways into which no other record would have turned. But in the last book it takes us higher and farther. It takes us higher—giving us a glimpse into heaven itself and the glories there, glories such as can only be described to us by symbolic language, since the literal truth infinitely surpasses all we can conceive. And it takes us farther on into the future, making through its dimness a track of light, which the eye of faith may follow right on into eternity.

And this book, so high and wonderful, so strange and so sublime, is not beyond the reach of a child's interest, a child's enjoyment, or a child's profit. The young mind, not yet utterly absorbed by the things of this world, has a certain readiness for the glimpse of heaven and of the future which is given here. And surely it is of the utmost importance, that the last messages from the book of God, dealing with the subjects which, above all others, the worldly man strives to disbelieve or to forget, should be carefully impressed on the mind before its freshness is lost or its simplicity marred. A German poet (Chamisso, born a Frenchman) cherished a tender remembrance of the old home he had known in his infancy after the walls had long been destroyed, and the plot had passed over the ground where once a stately castle stood. Let our children, as they go forth into life, the full, hurrying,

changing, weary life of this world, carry in their minds and in their hearts a picture of the home which they indeed have never seen, but which is real and sure and glorious and eternal, prepared for those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and love and serve him.

Our lesson for to-day strikes the key-note of the book. We are not shown heaven first; we are not shown the future first. Before either of these is opened we are shown Christ, the first and the last, the center and end of all things. The lessons for the past year have been chiefly occupied with the life of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, in his mortal body. We now get a sight of him as the Risen One in glory, and the picture is drawn by the same pen which we have followed through the year, that of the one companion of our Lord on earth to whom it was given to see him in his glory.

To see this, John was withdrawn from the great world. He was shut up in Patmos (an inhospitable island, inhabited by convicts sent thither by the Roman government) for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. What was the condition of things in the world he had left?

The civilized portion of the earth was then under the sway of one central authority. The Roman Empire was still strong and vigorous, and the reins of government were held, nominally, at least, by one hand. The Roman Caesar was a sort of divinity to his subjects, whatever might be his personal character. This character was often far from being an estimable one. Claudius was weak in intellect; Caligula, verging on insanity; Nero, an actor and a tyrant; and Domitian, who at this time occupied the throne, is said to have beguiled his leisure moments by catching flies. Paganism still remained supreme. The Christians were despised and persecuted, and the Christian Church was in danger from false teachers—traitors threatening her from within, as well as foes from without, while the one remaining apostle was withdrawn out of sight and shut up in an ocean prison.

But what was shown him there?

1. *A divine yet human Ruler.*

The 't line in the description of him whom John saw (into which I can enter but briefly) is this: "One like unto the (or, rather, a) Son of man." Here is the man whom God had ordained (Acts 17. 31), the King whom he had set up (Psa. 2. 6). The destiny of mankind is in the hand of One who is their "bone" and their "flesh." 2 Sam. 5. 1. He is clothed in the long garment worn by priest, judge, and king, with the golden girdle of authority.

But how about his inherent fitness for this dignity? Six points are mentioned:

1. The hoary head of wisdom and ripe experience. Verse 14. Here is no novice on the throne, but one who is called the "Everlasting Father." Isa. 9. 6.

2. The fiery glance of discernment. Verse 14. No corruption can exist in his empire unknown to him. No wrong-doing can ever be hidden from him.

3. The walk of absolute purity and righteousness. Verse 15. The term "*chalcolibanus*," rendered "fine brass," was no doubt familiar to the people of Asia, and expressed the idea of entire refinement and separation from every particle of dross. Comp. Psa. 72. 2.

4. The voice of infinite strength and unbounded modulation, verse 15, which could shake the earth and the heavens, and yet could gently whisper in the heart of a child.

5. The word of power, like a two-edged sword. Verse 16. The Roman general Pompey boasted that he could call up an army by stamping his foot, but the word proved an empty boast. Christ's word shall "not return to him void." Isa. 55.

6. The countenance of dignity and beauty, verse 16—not hidden from the popular gaze, but shining on all who will look up to it, yet so dazzling that even the beloved disciple when he beheld it "fell at his feet as dead."

This is he, "The First and the Last" and the "Living One" (Psa. 31), "who was dead and is alive for evermore," who holds in his hands the reins of the world's government.

This vision brought such joy to the apostle that before describing it he bursts into a song of praise. Verses 5, 6. Why was this? Because he could say, "Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Joy to all who can say the same!

2. *A Church watched and cherished.*

The first thing John saw was seven golden candlesticks—the number corresponding primarily to the principal churches of Asia, and ideally to the Church as a whole. It was in the midst of these that the glorious One stood. The little communities of Christians scattered here and there throughout the Roman Empire would have counted among men as the most insignificant part of it. But their true place was next the King, in his immediate presence and under his personal guardianship. Joy to those who are Christ's!

Berean Methods.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Draw a map showing the location of the seven churches and of Patmos. Describe John, an old man in exile at Patmos. The vision which he then beheld: 1. The time—"the Lord's day." Show how early the first day of the week began to be observed, and find an allusion to it in Paul's life. Acts 20. 7. . . . 2. The apostle's condition—"in the Spirit." . . . 3. The voice, vers. 10, 11. . . . 4. The candlesticks. Show how they were a type of the Church. . . . 5. The glorified Saviour, his appearance. . . . 6. The effect of the vision. . . . The teachings will naturally group around the account of the vision which John beheld. In the Analytical and Biblical Outline is one line of teaching on this subject—"The Glorified Saviour." These points may be presented, the illustrative texts read, and the truths enforced. . . . Another line, somewhat similar, is given in the Thoughts for Young People.

References. FREEMAN. Ver. 18: Keys, 502.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

61. What is sin?

Sin is disobedience to the law of God in will or deed.

The mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be.—Romans viii. 7.

All unrighteousness is sin.—1 John v. 17.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The Living Jesus.* Make a cross on the board, or pin up one cut from paper. Ask who died on the cross, and by a few questions draw out the story of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Tell that this lesson shows that, though Jesus died, he is living now, and take the opportunity to impress the truth that the death of the body does not put out the spark of life in the soul which God gives. Teach that Jesus lives now and will live forever, because he was one with God through doing his will, and that if we obey Jesus we shall be one with him, and so shall live forever.

Seeing Jesus. Has any one seen Jesus since he went back to heaven to live. Tell that John saw him, and tells us in this lesson how he looked. Who would like to see Jesus? Who may see him? Teach that those who love him and serve him faithfully as John did will surely see him some day. John was now an old man. He had been sent to a little island called Patmos as a prisoner, by a wicked Roman emperor, for preaching Jesus. Show that this did not hinder him from seeing Jesus, and impress upon the children the truth that nothing but sin can shut out Jesus from our sight. This may be made very practical. Even a very little child will understand that anger, selfishness, falsehood, or any evil passion, shuts the eyes of the heart so tightly that Jesus cannot be seen.

Hearing Jesus. John not only saw Jesus, he heard him. Describe him as John saw him in vision. Speak of the eyes like a flame of fire, which can see into the very bottom of our hearts. Speak of the sharp sword which went out of his mouth—the sword of truth which must cut off and destroy all that is evil. With red crayon make seven stars on the board, and teach a lesson of the mighty power which can hold all stars in his hand, and move this great world at will! And yet this mighty God spoke to John! Will he speak to us? Yes, if we love him and serve him as John did. Who holds the keys of the other worlds in his hand? Ask what a key is for. Can we enter a room which is locked if we do not have the key? Suppose we have no key of our own, what shall we do? If we know some one who has a key we will ask him to let us in. Jesus holds the key to our eternal life. He holds the key to death and hell. We do not want to enter this door, and Jesus will keep it closed for us if we ask him. If we show by our love and obedience that we want to enter into life, Jesus will open the door.



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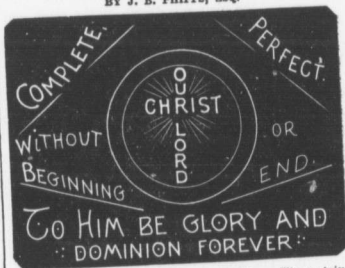
Lesson Word-Pictures.

It is the Lord's day upon Patmos. How still, secluded, is the hour when to the soul of the prophet is given the Spirit's rapt vision! Suddenly there is a great voice behind him. He turns. He looks. There is a glow, a glitter, a dazzle, and out of the stranger,

confusing, bewildering light, come into distinctness of outline the seven golden candlesticks. In the midst of them rises the form of the Shining One. Like the whiteness of the wool, like the whiteness of the snow, is his hair. Like flaming fire are his eyes. Like the brass in the fiery furnace, molten, clear, blinding the vision, are his feet. In his right hand are held seven stars. Sharp the two-edged sword of flame going out of his mouth, and all his face dazzling like the noon-day sun. How majestic his voice, like "the sound of many waters!" The prophet can no longer look. He cannot speak, He cannot stand. He falls as one dead. A step, a touch, a voice, and, lo, the Alpha and the Omega speaks!

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



Draw this before the school assembles. Tie a string to a piece of white chalk, and draw a circle. Hold the string against the board with the left hand, and make the circle with the right hand holding the chalk. Why make a circle? Because we want to represent the completeness of Christ, without beginning or end, thus symbolizing his eternal presence.

COLORS. Circle white; rays yellow; letters red, shaded with blue.

LESSONS FOR DECEMBER, 1886.

- Dec. 5. Worshipping God and the Lamb. Rev. 5. 1-14.
Dec. 12. The Saints in Heaven. Rev. 7. 9-17.
Dec. 19. The Great Invitation. Rev. 22. 8-21.
Dec. 26. Fourth Quarterly Review.

Book Notices.

With Pack and Rifle in the Far South-west. Adventures in New Mexico, Arizona, and Central America. By Achilles Daunt. With Twenty-five Illustrations. London and New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons. This is a book full of useful information conveyed in a manner very attractive to youthful readers. History, antiquities, geography, natural history, hunting scenes, and adventures are given, until the reader wishes he might have been with the writer, excepting in a few instances, when probably most of the readers would be glad they were at a safe distance.

Seeking a Country; or, The Home of the Pilgrims. By the Rev. E. N. Hoare, M.A. With Thirty-one Illustrations. London and New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons. The history of the founders of New England is here given under the thin veil of a story. The historical matters are true to fact, and the others are true to nature. The nobility and heroism displayed by the pilgrim fathers are worthy of perpetual recognition and remembrance, and this volume will aid in securing these.