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Christian life and conduct

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THE BIBLE STUDY UNION LESSONS
INTERMEDIATE GRADE



CHRISTIAN LIFE AND CONDUCT

BY
✓
REV. HAROLD B. HUNTING



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PREFACE.

To do right means, for a child, simply obeying father and mother. He is constantly under their guidance and care. As boys and girls grow into manhood and womanhood, however, they must learn to decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong. This is not always easy. This course of study offers them help by showing how the great leaders of the Hebrew people struggled with such questions and solved them; and finally by showing how they were solved by the Great Teacher.

Part I is a study of the moral achievements of the people of Israel, as illustrated in their laws. It shows why they decided that some actions were right and others wrong, and made laws accordingly. It is also shown that the principles on which these laws rested underlie modern laws also.

Part II is a study of the moral ideals of the Hebrew sages and prophets. To be a truly good man or woman means much more than not breaking the law. In these great moral pioneers of Israel, we find ideals which the world has only just begun to understand and appreciate.

In Part III we study the teachings of Jesus in regard to certain important life problems. Jesus said "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." Men have ever found Him the supreme moral leader, as well as the supreme source of spiritual strength.

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DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

In studying these lessons

(1) Read the passages in the Bible.

(2) Read what is said in this text-book to explain and illustrate the passages in the Bible.

(3) Under the questions at the end of the lesson write appropriate answers, and think out what to write in your note-book on the topics suggested.

If you do your work carefully, your text-book and note-book will become so valuable that you will want to keep them permanently.

Christian Life and Conduct

PART I

LIVING ACCORDING TO THE STANDARDS OF LAW

INTRODUCTION.

Boys and girls, most of us have gone camping in the summer time. Here is a story of what occurred in a camp of boys. In this camp there was a set of rules; for example, all the boys must be in bed and quiet by a certain time every night; there must be no noisy games and loud talking on Sunday; no one was to stay in swimming more than an hour, and there were other rules of this kind. The boys complained that the rules were too strict. So an experiment was made. It was agreed that for one week every boy should be allowed to do exactly as he pleased. But every time a boy felt that his rights were interfered with in any way, a report of the case was to be made in writing.

Promptly on Monday morning, the new plan was put into effect. In less than an hour, written complaints began to pour in. Among those handed in during the week were the following:

Fred complained that when he went in swimming, the other boys, who were larger and stronger than he, tied up his clothes. George complained that John had borrowed his fine new razor steel jack-knife, and had refused to return it. Tom had a grievance because when he was tired and sleepy at night, the other boys kept him awake by their noisy talk. Finally, all the boys had a grievance at Jim. One day he accidentally set on fire the large dining tent, so that they had to eat their meals out of doors, and that was not pleasant on rainy days. At the close of the week all the boys were glad to go back to the rules.

Girls, also, often complain about the strictness of the rules that father and mother or teacher expect them to obey. We can imagine a similar experiment being made for one week at a girls' boarding school. Probably there would be such complaints as these:

Nancy is always late to breakfast; and Mary and Kate, who have charge of the dining-room work this week, are compelled to wait for her, and are late to first hour classes. Mildred, who is trying to win a scholarship by high marks in her studies, fails in several recitations because Kate comes into her room at all hours.

In short, these girls would discover, just as those boys in camp discovered, that rules are necessary. *If every one undertakes to do as he pleases, no one can do as he pleases.* That is just as true of men and women as of boys and girls. That is why we have laws. In this course we are to study some of the more important laws, which all should obey. We shall try to understand why these laws are important.

In Part I we take up certain laws which have been written down in statute books, or are enforced by the courts. These laws we shall find in the law-books of the Old Testament—Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—and also in our own modern law-books. The ancient Israelites lived under a system of government in many respects like ours, and the laws that we find in the Pentateuch are not merely "something written in the Bible," but actual laws, like the laws of England or the United States. For example, if a man robs a store in your town, he is arrested by the sheriff or a policeman, and is put in prison. After a time he is tried before a judge and jury, and if he is found guilty, he is sentenced to some punishment, whatever the law of the state requires. This sentence is carried out by the sheriff or his deputies. In ancient Israel, if a man committed a robbery or other crime, he was usually arrested by men called "elders of the city" (see, for example, 1 Ki. 21:5-10). These men were the oldest and most prominent citizens of that city, and they combined in themselves the offices of sheriff, judge and jury. They decided whether the accused person was guilty, and if guilty they saw to it that the proper punishment was inflicted. They were guided in all such cases by the laws which we find in the Old Testament.

So you see, though the form of government among the Israelites was different from ours in many ways, yet it was a real government, with real laws, under which actual men and women lived.

Lesson 1. THE RIGHT TO LIFE. Laws for its Protection.

Scripture Lesson: Ex. 20:13; 21:12-14; Deut. 19:1-13; 22:8;
Mt. 5:21, 22.

Note 1. The Sacredness of Human Life. A party of young men recently spent an afternoon at a pleasure resort. While there, two of them got into a dispute, which led to angry words, then to a fight, and finally to the death of one and to the imprisonment of the other. Neither one dreamed of such a tragedy when he began the fight. The one who was attacked felt that he had a right to protect himself, and in so doing to injure the other as much as he could. But human life is a priceless possession, which no one has a right to endanger unless it be clearly his duty. The Declaration of Independence affirms that "all men are endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Life stands highest in this list.

Note 2. Old Testament Laws for the Protection of Human Life. We are studying in this lesson a fascinating chapter in the story of the upward progress of the human race. We are to see how from long past ages even down to our own day there has been a developing appreciation of the value of human life. Savages held life cheap. Anger, hatred, and greed quickly lead to bloodshed. But as men become more civilized, laws are framed protecting the right to life by severely punishing those who violate them.

In the early days of Israel the responsibility for the punishment of the crime of murder rested upon the nearest male relative, who was called the avenger of blood (Deut. 19:6). There were many evils involved in that custom. The "avenger of blood" in his anger was likely to go too far. Frequently innocent persons who had accidentally caused the death of others were put to death. Very early in their history, therefore, the Hebrews passed laws for the protection of such persons also. In Ex. 21:12-14, we find an early "law of asylum." "If a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand," that is, if the killing was accidental, he might flee to God's appointed altar, and take refuge there. But if the killing had been intentional, and therefore was real murder, the priests were not to permit the murderer to take

refuge in the temple. They were to deliver him to the avenger of blood. The law in Deut. 19:1-13, which was adopted somewhat later in the history of Israel, carries out the same principle. Cities of refuge were to be appointed in different parts of the land. To these the man who had killed another by accident might flee. If he could prove that he was innocent of murderous purpose he was permitted to remain in the city. Otherwise the elders of his home town were to send for him and deliver him to the avenger of blood.

The law in Deut. 22:8 carried a long step forward this effort to protect human life. It held a man responsible not merely for actual violence against another person, but also for causing death through neglect. Oriental houses were flat-roofed, and people spent much of their leisure time on the "house-top." This law, therefore, commanded that a low wall or battlement should be built around the roof of every house, to prevent people from falling over the edge. Do you not think it was a good law?

Note 3. Modern Laws for the Protection of Human Life.

The humblest person is of importance to society. Murder is, therefore, a crime committed not merely against a private person, but against the entire community. Whenever a murder is committed a blow is struck at you and me, even though the victim is a stranger to us. Society, like the church (1 Cor. 12:12-31), resembles a living organism. An injury to any part is an injury to the whole. For this reason, in our modern system of government, the whole community assumes the responsibility of protecting the life of every member, by taking the right to punish murder from the individual and giving it to the state.

Modern law expresses its sense of the sacredness of human life by making the penalties for taking it so severe as to keep men from giving way to their evil passions. The penalty for murder—the unlawful killing of a human being with premeditated malice—is, accordingly, the severest known to modern law, either death or imprisonment for life.

There are many cases, however, where the fatal act has not been planned beforehand, but is due to a sudden fit of anger or is committed in connection with some unlawful deed. Such killing the law designates as manslaughter, or murder in the second degree, and punishes by imprisonment

for terms of years varying according to the degree of guilt as fixed by the court.

Our modern laws, however, do not take away a person's right to defend his own life, whenever necessary. A man may even go so far as to kill his assailant, as for example, a burglar, or highway robber, if that is necessary in order to protect himself or his family. But our laws are most carefully framed, so as to limit this right to kill in self-defense strictly to those cases where it is really necessary. There must have been no way of escape, the danger must have been immediate, and the man who kills in self-defense must have been himself "without fault," that is, if he himself started the fight in which his opponent is finally killed, he cannot justify himself on the ground of self-defense.

Note 4. Modern Sanitary and Industrial Laws. This growing sense of the right to life is further illustrated by many laws which have been passed within the last few decades. These are similar in spirit to the law in Deut. 22:8. In almost all our towns there are ordinances which prohibit spitting in street cars and public buildings. This is to prevent the spread of tuberculosis. In all our cities there are laws which regulate the erection of buildings. It is no longer legal for unscrupulous contractors to build hotels, public schools, or theaters, which shall prove to be "fire traps," or which are liable to tumble down upon people's heads. Railroads are required to adopt safety appliances on their cars, and are being compelled more and more to do away with dangerous grade crossings. In fact, we are living in the midst of a great crusade for the protection of life. This is partly because the rapid development of modern machinery has multiplied the sources of danger, especially in our crowded cities. But it is also true that men are coming to appreciate as never before the sacredness of human life.

Note 5. How the New Testament Safeguards Human Life. To Jesus, more than to any other influence in history, we owe this increasing estimate of the value of life. Even a sparrow's life, He said, was not without value. "Not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father." And yet they were sold in the market, two for a penny. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows," Jesus added.

“The very hairs of your head are all numbered” (Mt. 10:29-31). It was natural, therefore, that Jesus should condemn whatever might tend to cheapen human life. Thus the Old Testament law against the actual taking of life was applied by Jesus (Mt. 5:21, 22) to all angry and malicious thoughts and words. “Every one who is angry with his brother [that is, unjustly angry] shall be in danger of the judgment.” Had the young men whose story is told in Note 1 been living in accordance with the spirit of Jesus, that tragedy never would have occurred.

EXPLANATION OF PHRASES IN THE SCRIPTURE LESSON.

Deut. 19:1. When Jehovah thy God shall cut off the nations whose land Jehovah thy God giveth thee: That is, when the Israelites are fully settled in the land of Canaan. **Deut. 19:3.** The borders of thy land: All the territory of Canaan. **Into three parts:** A northern district, a central and a southern. **Deut. 19:4.** This is the case of the manslayer: That is, the law in the case of any one who has killed another person. **Mt. 5:22, 23.** **Raca:** A Hebrew word with about the same meaning as “you fool.” Jesus taught that all these hateful expressions and even the malicious thought itself are murderous in spirit and wrong in the sight of God.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord’s anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o’ the building.”

—*Shakespeare.*

“Revenge is a kind of wild justice, which the more man’s nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out.”—*Bacon.*

“Laborin’ man and laborin’ woman
Hev’ one glory and one shame,
Ev’ythin’ thet’s done inhuman
Injers all on ’em the same.”

—*Lowell.*

“Boys flying kites draw in their white-winged birds.
You can’t do that way when you’re flying words.”

—*Will Carleton.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before writing the answers, read carefully *all* the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of this lesson.

1. By whom was the crime of murder punished among the ancient Hebrews? (Note 2.)

2. What would be one of the evil results of this method of executing justice?

3. What example is given in the law in Deuteronomy of the accidents which were likely to occur in those days? (Deut. 19:4-6.)

4. What provision was made by the Hebrew laws for the protection of persons who had killed others by accident? (Ex. 21:13.)

5. How many cities were set apart by this law as cities of refuge to which the innocent manslayer might flee? (Deut. 19:1-3, 7-10.)

6. How many were east of the Jordan, and how many were west of the Jordan? (Josh. 20:7-9.)

7. Locate these cities on the map in your Bible.

8. When a Hebrew built a new house, what did the law require him to do for the protection of life?

9. What is said in modern laws about self-defense? (Note 3.)

10. What are some modern laws for the protection of human life?

11. How did Jesus make more strict and far-reaching the command against murder? (Note 5.)

Note-book Work. Write a short essay on quarreling and fighting, considering the following questions: When, if ever, is it right to fight? Suppose two boys or two girls in school get into a quarrel, and try to injure each other in every possible way, do they injure the rest of their classmates as well as each other? In what ways?

Lesson 2. THE RIGHT TO PROPERTY. How it is Defined by Law.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 20:15; 22:1-4; Deut. 19:14; 27:17; 23:24, 25; 24:6, 10-13; Mt. 6:31-33.

Note 1. The Need of Clear Ideas concerning Property. Of course the boy or girl who is using this lesson will not steal; that is, will not pick a pocket on the street, nor break into a neighbor's house at night and carry off his property. But there are ways of taking what belongs to other people that are just as truly stealing, though they may pass under less disagreeable names. Some of these ways are practised by respectable persons who pride themselves on their smartness, and who would hotly resent being called thieves. For example, many persons see no harm in cheating a street-car company. If the conductor does not ask for their fare, they pocket the money with a chuckle. Such persons need to feel more keenly the duty of honesty in even small matters of property.

Note 2. The Purpose of Laws regarding Property. In partially civilized countries, robbery and theft are seldom strongly condemned by public sentiment. Things are kept or lost according to

“the good old plan
That they shall take who have the power
And they shall keep who can.”

Even in England as late as the twelfth century the exploits of Robin Hood seem to have been approved, at least by the English peasantry. In the long border struggle between England and Scotland, the raids of the Highlanders, with the "lifting" of the English cattle, were regarded, at least among the raiders, as a proper means of livelihood. In the early days of Hebrew history similar conditions prevailed. Even Jephthah appears to have been a brigand before he was called to be the deliverer of his people (Jud. ch. 11). This lawlessness, in all these cases, was an injury to the community as a whole. Merchants feared to send money or goods from one town to another. People feared to make journeys of any kind. Naturally the roads were not kept up, the mud making them almost impassable after rains. Every one was poor. Houses were mean in appearance, and uncomfortable to live in. Gradually, however, people began to realize that it would be better for all, if each individual could be protected in the possession of his property. Laws were enacted, and enforced, against various forms of theft. Social order was established. Material prosperity increased, and civilization rapidly advanced.

Thus we see that laws punishing theft and protecting private property were first established, not only for the purpose of benefiting private persons who might be robbed, but also and perhaps chiefly to benefit the community as a whole.

Note 3. Old Testament Laws regarding Property. Among the most ancient of these Old Testament laws are those found in Ex. 20:15, and 22:1-4, forbidding stealing, and defining the punishment for theft. Under these laws the Hebrews lived as nomads in the earliest centuries of their history. The principal form of theft with which the law had to deal was that of sheep and cattle. In Deut. 19:14, and 27:17, there is a law prohibiting the stealing of land. Boundaries between different fields were commonly marked in those days by large stones, called "landmarks." An unscrupulous person could increase the size of his own field by moving the stones farther over upon his neighbor's land. This law evidently comes down to us from a time when the Hebrews had passed from a nomadic to an agricultural type of civilization. Such laws represent efforts to suppress

lawlessness and establish order. The object is not merely to protect individuals, but to benefit the people as a whole. Why should the man who has stolen one ox be required to pay back five oxen, since the owner would usually be glad to get back his one ox? The reason is that the cattle thief has injured not merely the one man from whom he has stolen, but the whole community. He has made people feel that cattle raising is an unsafe occupation. Those who are engaged in it do not dare to use pastures far from home, and cannot raise large herds. So the whole community is the poorer. Hence the thief is made to pay a heavy penalty, besides restoring the stolen property. By this means, he and other men, who might in the future be tempted to steal, are deterred. The whole community is thus protected.

There have always been people who have not understood the purpose of such laws. They interpret the right to property as the right to do with it as one pleases. But Deut. 23:24, 25 and 24:6, 10-13 show that a man's property is not absolutely his own. To be sure, he has a right to use it and enjoy it, in a proper manner. But it is his duty to use it for the good of others besides himself. The starving man had a claim on his neighbor's field of golden grain, or his vineyard loaded with ripe grapes. The man who had money to lend could not legally take in pledge his poor neighbor's millstone which he needed in order to prepare his daily food. His ownership was not absolute. He had no right to use his money to drive hard bargains.

Note 4. Modern Laws regarding Property. Our present laws on this subject fill many volumes. This is due to the complexity of modern civilization. The early Israelites did not possess a great variety of property. The poorest man to-day enjoys luxuries of which the wealthiest Israelite never dreamed. Hence we need a great many more laws for the protection of property.

Ordinary theft is known as "larceny." Larceny of more than "twelve pence" was called "grand larceny" in Old English law. In some parts of the United States the limit is fixed at \$25, in others at \$50. "Robbery" is larceny from the person with force, that is, larceny plus assault. Embezzlement is the appropriation for one's own use of money entrusted to one's care. Forgery is the obtaining

of money by signing another man's name to a check. Burglary always means breaking into a building, for the purpose of stealing. All these crimes are usually punished by terms of imprisonment, and are thereby recognized even more clearly than in the ancient Hebrew laws as offenses against the whole community.

There are three chief ways in which property may be legally acquired: by inheritance, or gift, by personal labor, and by trade. In every trade, both parties to the transaction should be benefited. For example, a farmer raises wheat. A shoemaker makes shoes. The farmer is glad to exchange wheat for shoes. The shoemaker is equally glad to exchange shoes for wheat. The man who conducts a grocery store or clothing store is therefore benefiting the whole community.

Gambling, on the other hand, is an injury to the whole community. It promotes laziness and cheating. For the gambler's whole soul is consumed by the passion to "win next time." Honest toil is too unexciting to appeal to his demoralized passions. The law therefore prohibits gambling houses. Thus we see that modern law, like the ancient Hebrew law, while carefully protecting the right to property, does not interpret that right as freedom to do with one's property wholly as one pleases. No one has a right to use his money in such a way as to injure his fellow men.

Note 5. The Teaching of Jesus about Property. Mt. 6:31-33. The teaching of Jesus implies this same idea of the right to property which we have traced in the laws of the Old Testament and in our modern laws. Jesus reminds us that we are all brothers and sisters, children of our heavenly Father. Strictly speaking, we do not earn the material good things which we enjoy. The richness of the soil, the warmth of the sunshine, the showers of refreshing rain, are given to us by our Father. But they are not given to us to use selfishly. Our chief business in life is to seek first God's kingdom, the reign of justice and brotherhood among men. All needful things are "added unto us," to be used for this end. I cannot claim, therefore, that I own, absolutely, anything that I possess. Even the food that I eat God has given, not only for my personal health and pleasure, but also that I may thereby be more useful to my

fellow men. It is my duty to share the strength of that food with my brothers and sisters. Nothing is strictly mine. Everything is ours. In all questions of property, therefore, we should strive to conduct ourselves in a brotherly way. This means, of course, that we must not disturb others in the rightful possession of what God has given to them.

EXPLANATION OF PHRASES IN THE SCRIPTURE LESSON.

Ex. 22:1-4. The sense of this passage will be somewhat clearer if the verses are read in the following order: 1, 4, 3b, 2, 3a. This brings together the clauses which logically belong together. **Ex. 22:3. He shall be sold for his theft:** Sold into slavery to pay for what he has stolen. **Deut. 27:17. And all the people shall say, Amen:** That is, in the public reading of the law. **Deut. 23:24. Thou mayest eat of grapes thy fill:** This humane law would not work well now. The population of our country is so much greater than that of ancient Palestine that many a vineyard or orchard might easily be stripped of fruit, if every traveler might stop to eat his fill. **Deut. 24:6. The mill or the upper millstone:** "The handmill consists of two circular stones, one of which is placed on top of the other, and the upper and lower surfaces of each of them are flat. From the center of the lower stone, a strong pin of wood passes through a funnel-shaped hole in the upper stone. Into this hole, the grain to be ground is thrown, and it escapes as flour between the two stones at the circumference, and falls on a smooth sheepskin which is placed under the lower stone. On the surface of the upper stone, near the circumference, the handle is inserted." —Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*. **Deut. 24:10. Thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge:** If the lender could go into a man's house and find out exactly what he possessed, he could then demand unreasonably valuable pledges as security for the payment of the loan. The borrower, in case he needed the money very badly, might feel compelled to yield to these unjust demands. **Deut. 24:12. Thou shalt not sleep with his pledge:** Thou shalt not keep the pledge at night. That is, "If a man gives you as a pledge his garment, you are to allow him to come for it every evening, that he may be protected during the night from the cold." **Deut. 24:13. His garment:** "The garment referred to is

the largest and heaviest article of Oriental dress, being the dress of travel, worn for protection against cold and rain, and used as a covering during sleep. It consists of a piece of cloth about 7 feet long, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ wide."—Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*. **Mt. 6:31. Be not therefore anxious:** This does not mean that we are not to provide beforehand for our daily needs; but rather that we are not to waste our energy in useless worries, and that the chief concern of life should be something larger and nobler than mere eating and drinking.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"He that steals an egg, will soon steal an ox."—*Old Proverb*.

"He that loseth his honesty hath nothing else to lose."—*Lyly*.

"Rich through my brothers' poverty?

Such wealth were hideous: I am blest

Only in what they share with me,

In what I share with all the rest."—*Anon*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before answering these questions read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What is the purpose of laws regarding property?

2. In the early days of Israel, if a man stole an animal, and was detected before he killed it, or sold it, what was the penalty? (Ex. 22:4.)

3. If the thief had killed or sold the stolen animal, what was the penalty (*a*) in the case of an ox, and (*b*) in the case of a sheep? (Ex. 22:1.)

4. What was the Hebrew law regarding the killing of a burglar by the man whose house was being robbed: (*a*) in case the attempt were made at night; (*b*) in case it were made by day? (Ex. 22:2, 3.)

5. How could land be stolen, in ancient Israel? (Note 3.)

6. Suppose a man should pass through his neighbor's vineyard or field of standing grain, to what extent was he permitted to help himself? (Deut. 23:24, 25.)

7. Name an article which according to the Hebrew law could not be taken as a pledge from a debtor to a creditor. Why was this law enacted?

8. What was the law regarding the taking of a man's garment as a pledge? (Deut. 24:12, 13.)

9. For what purpose, according to Jesus, ought we to use the good things given to us by our Father in heaven? (Mt. 6:31-33; Note 5.)

10. What is the true meaning of the right to property? Is there anything of which a man can truly say, "It belongs to me, and only to me, and I can do with it as I please"?

11. "I don't believe in gambling," said one young man to another. "Why not?" was the answer. "If the other fellow wants to risk his money, isn't it his own money? Can he not do as he pleases with it?" How would you answer the latter speaker?

Note-book Work. Write your opinion on one or all of the following topics: What do you think of the "swiping" of souvenirs from hotels? To what extent would it harm other people for one to take in that way an article of small value?

What is legitimate business? Find out what is the law in your town regarding gambling.

If a man cheats the street-car company by not paying his fare, how may that injure you?

Lesson 3. THE RIGHT TO FAIR DEALING. The Meanness of Cheating.

Scripture Lesson, Lev. 19:35-37; Deut. 25:13-16; Prov. 11:1; 26:10, 23; Micah 6:10, 11.

Note 1. The Prevalence of Some Forms of Cheating. In October, 1910, a boat might have been seen going down New York harbor carrying what was perhaps the strangest cargo ever shipped. It was a load of false scales and measures to be dumped into the Atlantic. They had been confiscated during the summer, in various parts of the city, by Clement J. Driscoll, commissioner of weights and measures. Mr. Driscoll's campaign has shown that this kind of dishonesty is very common. Every one knows that business brings many temptations to dishonesty. Indeed, there are people who say that it is impossible to be successful in business and be absolutely honest. They quote David Harum's version of the Golden Rule as applied to a horse trade: "Do unto the other feller as he would do unto you—and do it fust." There are students who speak in the same way regarding cheating in examinations. "Practically everybody cribs," they say. "If you do not you cannot keep up with your class." Are these statements true? That is one of the questions before us in this lesson.

Note 2. Origin of Laws against Cheating. Among semi-civilized races, there is little opportunity for cheating, because there is little buying and selling. Among the early Israelites, for example, nearly every one raised sheep and cattle and lived on their products. But when many different occupations develop, and people begin to exchange goods one with another, it becomes necessary to have systems of measurement. Many kinds of trickery are thus made possible. Laws become necessary in order to protect the community from swindlers.

Note 3. Hebrew Laws against Dishonest Measures. The laws in Lev. 19:35-37 and Deut. 25:13-16 prohibit the use of dishonest weights and measures. Special reasons are given for obedience. "I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt" (Lev. 19:36). Jehovah had done so much for His people that in return they owed Him absolute obedience. The solemn words seem to imply that cheating is a particularly heinous sin, in the eyes of Jehovah.

In Deut. 25:16 we read, "All that do such things . . . are an abomination unto Jehovah thy God." The same word, abomination, is applied to false measures in the passages in Proverbs (11:1; 20:10, 23). In Micah, also (6:10), a scant measure is said to be abominable. This word emphasizes the meanness of cheating. It is among the most contemptible of crimes. The thief takes certain risks. His victim is likely to defend himself in various ways. But the cheat is the thief and the coward and the sneak, all in one. He seeks to rob his fellow men by unfair means, against which they are unable to defend themselves. There may be "honor even among thieves." There is certainly no honor among habitual cheaters. The false weight, and all such meanness is indeed an abomination not only to Jehovah, but to all fair-minded men.

Note 4. Modern Laws against Cheating. The old English law prohibited the use of false weights and measures and all forms of cheating "of a nature against which common prudence cannot guard." A mere lie could not be punished. The law was based on the old Latin principle, *caveat emptor*, which means, "let the buyer beware." As the volume of business increased, however, the old law was felt to be insufficient, and statutes were enacted against the obtaining of "money, goods, wares and merchandise," under false pretenses. These statutes have been copied in all the American states. They apply to many forms of cheating beside the use of dishonest weights and measures. To give a check on a bank in which one has no money is to obtain money under false pretenses. Not many years ago, a man who pretended to be a physician and accepted money from an ignorant person for so-called "professional services," was convicted under this law. Only recently a case was reported in the newspapers of a coal dealer who was paid for three tons of coal. The woman who bought it, suspecting that she had been cheated, had the coal taken out and weighed, and found only a ton and a half. The dealer was arrested. The punishment for obtaining property under false pretenses is a fine or a term of imprisonment, according to the value of the property dishonestly acquired.

Certain forms of cheating are dealt with by our federal government. The use of the mails for swindling schemes of any kind is severely punished. Makers of counterfeit

money are pursued by detectives with the utmost energy, and if caught and convicted, are sent to a federal penitentiary for long terms.

One way in which the government has done much to encourage honesty in business is by providing uniform standards of measurement. In the Middle Ages, not only different countries in Europe, but nearly all the principal towns, and even different quarters in the same town, had their own weights and measures. Such confusion often made fair dealing difficult, even when men wished to be honest. Even in the United States, in the early days, the length of the yard, and the weight of the pound, was not always the same in different sections. In 1836, the secretary of the treasury sent to the governor of each state a complete set of all weights and measures, exactly like that adopted by the national government for use in the custom houses. Accurate copies were kept in Washington. Our American weights and measures are therefore uniform in every state.

Note 5. Rising Standards of Honesty in Modern Times. The increasing effort of the government to make honesty easy, and dishonesty hard, is in itself proof of a growing public sentiment against cheating. A century or two ago dishonesty in business was practically universal. One could hardly go into any store and expect to be fairly treated. Buyers were indeed compelled to "beware," whenever they made a purchase. There is still much room for improvement, as Mr. Driscoll's New York campaign has shown. It may be true that there are some lines of business in which competition is so keen, and dishonest tricks so common that any single dealer is compelled to cheat like the rest, or be driven out of business. But it is also true that almost all modern business is based upon confidence in other men. And we believe that standards of business honesty are continually rising higher. A few years ago a merchant in Toledo, Ohio, was nicknamed "Golden Rule" Jones, because he tried to conduct his business according to the Golden Rule. When he died every one admitted that he had indeed lived according to that Rule, in all his business relations, and that he was a successful business man besides. There are many "Golden Rule" merchants in every city.

In our colleges, also, there are many indications that young men and young women are condemning all forms of cheating

more severely than ever. In many institutions the "honor" system has been adopted in examinations. The students themselves take the responsibility for suppressing cribbing. In athletics also, the rules against professionals are carefully enforced. A few years ago, a fine athlete refused, of his own accord, to "try for the team," because he knew, though at that time no one else did, that he had once received board at a summer hotel for playing baseball. These things are "straws, which show which way the wind blows."

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Lev. 19:35. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: Ye shall do nothing unjust. **Lev. 19:36.** **Ephah:** A measure of quantity, a little larger than our bushel. **A just hin:** A liquid measure, nearly equal to a gallon and a half. **Deut. 25:13.** **In thy bag:** The ancient Hebrew merchant was a peddler, and carried the weights for his balances in a bag. **Diverse weights:** In the vivid Hebrew, "A stone and a stone." The weights were common stones. If a peddler were dishonest, he had two stones for each unit of weight, the larger one to use when buying, and the smaller when selling. **Deut. 25:14.** **Diverse measures:** In the Hebrew, "an ephah and an ephah." A large ephah to buy with and a small ephah to sell with. **Deut. 25:15.** **A perfect . . . weight:** A full weight, *i.e.*, not scant. **Prov. 11:1.** **A just weight:** Literally, "a just stone." **Micah 6:10.** **Are there yet treasures of wickedness:** Better translated, "Shall I longer overlook treasures obtained by wickedness?" The prophet represents Jehovah as speaking to the nation.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"In vain we call old notions fudge,
And square our morals to our dealing;
The Ten Commandments will not budge,
And stealing still continues stealing."
—*Lowell.*

"In the elder days of art
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part,
For the gods see everywhere."
—*Longfellow.*

"No amount of intelligence and no amount of energy will save a nation which is not honest."—*Theodore Roosevelt.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What Hebrew measures corresponded to our bushel, and our gallon? (Lev. 19:36a; see "Explanation of Scripture Passages.")

2. To what motive did the law appeal for obeying Jehovah's prohibition of dishonest measures? (Lev. 19:35, 36b.)

3. In ancient Israel, did people "go to the store" to buy all their goods, as we do, or did the merchant usually come to them? (Deut. 25:13; see "Explanation.")

4. What did the ancient Hebrews use for weights in their scales? (Deut. 25:13; see "Explanation.")

5. What two reasons are given by the law in Deuteronomy to show the importance of being honest? (Deut. 25:15, 16.)

6. What special name is applied to false balances, in several of the Scripture passages? Why is it so applied? (Deut. 25:15, 16; Prov. 11:1; 20:10, 23; Micah 6:10; see Note 3.)

7. "Yes, ma'am, that cloth is all wool; not a thread of cotton in it." Suppose the customer buys the goods relying on this statement, and it turns out to be part cotton, what law has the merchant broken? (See Note 4.)

8. A young man is engaged as a clerk by a merchant who is not strictly honest. Will the young man be more likely to retain his position if he himself is honest, or if he is dishonest? Give your reason.

Note-Book Work. Suppose that all the schools in your state used professional players on their baseball teams, although pretending to have amateur teams only. What advice would you give the manager of your athletic association regarding the baseball situation?

Lesson 4. THE RIGHT TO REST. The Law of the Sabbath.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 20:8-11; 23:12; Deut. 5:12-15; Mk. 2:23-28.

Note 1. The Need of a Legal Rest Day. The conductors and motor-men of a certain street-car company went on a strike for shorter hours. The dispute was finally referred to a board of arbitration. It was shown by witnesses before the board that none of the street-car men had a chance to get acquainted with their own children. They went to work before the children awoke in the morning. They came back in the evening after dark. On Sundays they had to work even longer than on week-days. Some of the men had never even seen their own babies except by lamplight.

One sometimes hears people say, "I hate Sunday; you can't have any fun on Sunday." As you study this lesson, boys and girls, try to put yourself in the place of those conductors and motor-men; and you will understand why humanity needs this old custom of "keeping the Sabbath."

Note 2. Origin of the Hebrew Sabbath. The Babylonians, who were a race closely akin to the Hebrews, observed a day which they called *sabattum*. It occurred at the beginning of each phase of the moon, that is, at new moon, second quarter, third quarter, and full moon. As the moon revolves around the earth in exactly twenty-eight days, the *sabattum* came every seventh day. In the early history of Israel, also, the Sabbath was closely associated with the moon's phases. The prophets frequently class together "new moons" and "sabbaths" (Hos. 2:11; Amos 8:5). It is probable that both the

Hebrews and the Babylonians inherited from their common ancestors this custom of observing as sacred the days when the moon changed.

Among the Babylonians, and doubtless among the ancestors of the Hebrews also, the day was regarded with superstition. Their ideas in the matter were similar to the ideas of some foolish people now, about Friday in each week, or the thirteenth day of each month. They desisted from work, for fear of bad luck. To propitiate the gods, they offered special sacrifices.

Note 3. The Law of the Sabbath in the Old Testament. The purpose of the Sabbath among the Hebrews was entirely different. It was not a day of bad luck, when the deity must be propitiated, but a day of rest for the good of men. The law sought especially to protect the humbler classes of society, the hired servants and the toiling slaves. Even the beasts of burden were not forgotten. This might be inferred from the familiar passage in the Decalogue: "Thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle" (Ex. 20:10). The intent of the law is made clear by the passage in Ex. 23:12: "That thine ox and thine ass may have rest, and the son of thine hand-maid, and the sojourner may be refreshed." In the version of the Ten Commandments found in Deut. 5:6-21, this object is made even more emphatic: "That thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt." In other words, remember how it feels to have to work hard, and do you therefore give those who toil for you their day of rest.

Note 4. How the Sabbath was Observed among the Hebrews. The ancient Hebrews observed the Sabbath very differently from the manner in which many strict Christian people observe Sunday. They indeed rested from their ordinary occupations; and they offered special sacrifices to Jehovah. But people did not feel that they were bound to deprive themselves of all enjoyment, as some strict keepers of the Sabbath do now. The ancient Hebrew Sabbath at its best was very much like our Thanksgiving Day at its best, a day of true re-creation, when our powers are renewed through

rest, relaxation, and change of occupation, and through the thankful worship of God.

In the later centuries of their history the Jews in some measure lost sight of the original purpose of the Sabbath rest. They made it a religious form to be observed for its own sake. The scribes and rabbis filled whole books enumerating the things which people were forbidden to do on the Sabbath. These regulations seem to us extremely petty and absurd. Thus, to tie a knot, to sew two stitches, to write two letters, were all declared to be violations of the Sabbath. A priest who hurt his finger on the Sabbath might bind it up in the temple, but not elsewhere. A sprain might not have cold water poured on it, though it could be washed in the usual way. Thus the Sabbath became a burden.

Note 5. The Change from Sabbath to Sunday. When Christianity spread to the Gentiles, the observance of the Sabbath, which was the seventh day of the week, was looked upon as a Jewish ordinance, not binding upon Christians. The churches, however, felt the need of a regular day for worship; and soon it became their custom to hold their weekly meetings on the first day of the week, the day of our Lord's resurrection. This day was called the Lord's Day (Rev. 1: 10). Gradually, as the centuries passed, the Lord's Day came to be set apart both for rest and worship, just like the ancient Hebrew Sabbath day. It is therefore proper to call the Lord's Day our Sabbath day.

Note 6. Modern Laws Protecting the Right to Rest. Modern laws do not, as a rule, try to regulate a man's personal religious practices. But even apart from religious considerations, the maintaining of one day in the week as a day of rest is recognized by the law as essential to the health and well-being of the community. The underlying principle is the same as that of the Hebrew law, that the working man may have rest and "be refreshed." The laws vary in different states. They are not so strict now as formerly. Fifty years ago, all ordinary labor and business, even the running of stage-coaches and trains on Sunday was forbidden. To enforce such laws now would cause much hardship. Steamships cannot stop their engines on Sunday, in the middle of the ocean. Train-loads of fruit from California must be hurried to their

eastern markets, without delay, or else the fruit will be spoiled. Ice factories cannot very well close down on Sunday, because it would require many hours on Monday to restore the necessary degree of cold in their ice-machines. Because of these necessities of our complicated city life, Sunday laws are enforced less and less strictly.

Many, however, feel strongly that this tendency has gone too far. Thousands of working people no longer have any rest day at all. There is certainly not less, but more, need now for such a day than ever in the past. Never before has mankind lived at such high tension, or gone about its affairs at such speed as to-day. The Sunday rest is most of all needed by the poor—they who called out the greatest sympathy and interest of the Master. It is mainly the prosperous who drive them to yield this great blessing, preserved by Christianity. The household servants, those who render personal services, the drivers of public vehicles—such as these are the ones whose rest day is taken away or mutilated.

In some of our states laws have been passed not only protecting the worker in his Sunday rest, but also limiting to eight hours, in many occupations, the regular working day. Such laws are really Sabbath laws, in the original meaning of the word. For the Sabbath is not primarily a matter of the calendar. My Sabbath is that leisure time which I may use for rest and worship, whatever day of the week it may be. Most people, however, can worship with greater depth of devotion in company with others, in a worshiping assembly. Each catches the feeling of his neighbor, and enthusiasm grows. In so far as possible, therefore, the law should protect each person in his right to rest, not merely on week-days, but on Sundays, so that he may be able to worship at church with his fellow men.

Note 7. The Teaching of Jesus regarding the Sabbath. Jesus was bitterly condemned by the narrow-minded scribes and Pharisees of His time as a desecrator of the Sabbath. In reply to His enemies, He simply called attention to the original purpose of the law. "The sabbath was made for man," He said, "and not man for the sabbath" (Mk. 2:27). This means that we are not commanded to sit stiffly in idleness all through the long dreary day, simply to obey an arbitrary command of God. We are to use the day in the way which will

do ourselves and others the most good. Jesus showed by His example what He meant by that. He seems to have conformed to the customs of His time in resting from His ordinary occupations. He was very free, however, in His interpretation of the meaning of the word rest. To Him, it certainly did not mean idleness.

From His boyhood it was His custom to attend the services of the synagogue on the Sabbath (Lu. 4:16). He saw, as did the ancient Hebrews and the early Christians, that mankind needs one day in seven as special opportunity to receive inspiration from above. "Man cannot live by bread alone." He must have times of leisure, when he may turn from drudgery to higher things, which will in turn illumine and uplift the drudgery.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Ex. 20:10. Cattle: That is, the animals used for plowing and hauling. **Stranger that is within thy gates:** Any foreigner, living among the Hebrews. **Ex. 23:12. Son of thy handmaid:** A poetical expression for "servant." It means, literally, a son of one of the women slaves in the household. **Deut. 5:15. By a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm:** Referring to the wonders performed by the power of God at the time of the exodus from Egypt. **Mk. 2:24. Why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful:** According to the rabbis, threshing was one of the occupations forbidden on the Sabbath. The disciples were guilty of threshing. **Mk. 2:25. Did ye never read what David did:** Jesus refers to the story of David's flight from Saul, related in 1 Sam. 21:1-6. In his necessity he stopped at the priestly city of Nob, and begged for bread. The priest gave him the show-bread, or holy bread, which was dedicated to Jehovah, and as a rule only eaten by the priests. Jesus means that all laws, like this of the holy bread, exist only for humanity's sake, not humanity for the sake of the laws. The law of the Sabbath is no exception.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

" O day of rest and gladness,
 O day of joy and light,
 O balm of care and sadness,
 Most beautiful, most bright!"

—Ray Palmer.

“Six days at drudgery’s heavy wheel she stands;
The seventh sweet morning rests her weary hands;
Oh, child of poverty, thou mayest well be sure
He who ordained the Sabbath loves the poor.”—*Holmes*.

“Although the night apparently equalizes the circulation well, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a long life. Hence, one day in seven, by the bounty of Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation to perfect by its repose the animal system. You may easily determine this question by trying it on beasts of burden. Take that fine animal, the horse, and work him to the full extent of his powers every day of the week, or give him rest one day in seven, and you will soon perceive, by the superior vigor with which he performs his functions on the other six days, that this rest is necessary to his well-being.”—*Dr. Farre*.

“I hold that a world without a Sabbath would be like a man without a smile, like a summer without flowers, and like a homestead without a garden. It is the joyous day of the whole week.”—*H. W. Beecher*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What reason is given in the Old Testament for the institution of the Sabbath? (Ex. 23:12; Deut. 5:14, 15.)

2. How did it come to pass that the Sabbath occurred one day in seven, rather than one day in six, or in ten? (Note 2.)

3. What did the disciples of Jesus do on the Sabbath day which aroused the condemnation of the Pharisees? (Mk. 2:23, 24.)

4. Why did the Pharisees say that this particular act was unlawful? (See “Explanation of Scripture Passages”; comp. Lu. 4:1.)

5. To what example in the Old Testament did Jesus refer, in defense of His disciples?

6. How did the example of David justify the action of the disciples? (See "Explanation.")

7. What principle did Jesus lay down to guide us in our observance of the Sabbath?

8. Does this principle mean that any particular man can do whatever pleases him? Who are included by the word "man"?

9. In the light of this principle, is it ever right

(a) To play ball on Sunday?

(b) To travel on the train on Sunday?

(c) To study on Sunday?

Note-book Work. Write a short incident or story showing the value of a day of rest.

Lesson 5. THE RIGHT TO TRUTH. Why Enforced by Law.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 20:16; Lev. 19:11b, 12; Deut. 19:16-21; Prov. 26:18, 19; Mt. 5:33-37.

Note 1. The Seriousness of the Vice of Lying. Humorous writers in recent years have frequently referred to persons more or less conspicuous in public life as members of, or candidates for, the "Ananias Club." This implies that those persons, justly or unjustly, have been charged with falsehood as gross and deliberate as that which, according to the New Testament story, brought down on Ananias the immediate judgment of God (Acts 5:1-6). This story illustrates not only the right which every man has to expect truth from every other man, but the baseness and peril of deception. The fact that every liar is not smitten with immediate death as a punishment for falsehood does not prove that lying is the comparatively innocent and harmless habit that some people seem to consider it.

Note 2. Old Testament Laws against Perjury and False Swearing. The ninth commandment in the Decalogue (Ex. 20:16) does not refer to lying in general, but to perjury in a court of law. To give false testimony at a trial, in which a man's reputation or life is at stake, is of course a particularly heinous form of lying. It is, moreover, readily dealt with by courts of law. The passage in Deut. 19:16-21 treats of this crime more fully, defining the punishment to be inflicted.

In Lev. 19:11 we have a law which plainly refers to lies uttered for the sake of dishonest advantage in trade. "Neither shall ye deal falsely, nor lie one to another." The next verse (19:12) prohibits all false swearing, that is, all lies spoken under oath.

Note 3. Modern Laws against False Swearing, Perjury, Libel and Slander. We in modern times have laws against false swearing. A man, for example, goes before an officer called a notary, and takes his oath that a signature on a certain business paper is genuine. If the statement is false, and the man who made the statement knew that it was false, he may be punished for false swearing.

Perjury is any intentionally false testimony, on some essential matter, in a court of law. The law thus punishes not merely false accusations against the man on trial, but also other lying statements material to the case in court. All such statements, if unpunished, weaken public confidence in our courts. Men are thus tempted to take the law into their own hands, rather than trust to juries and judges. Mob violence is fostered, and barbarism takes the place of civilization. Perjury has been called by a modern jurist, "the most infamous and detestable of crimes." It may be punished by a term of imprisonment.

Other forms of lying punishable by modern laws are false pretenses in business relations (see Lesson 3), and also false libel and slander. A libel is "a malicious or injurious publication, expressed in printing or writing, or by signs or pictures, tending either to injure the memory of one dead or the reputation of one alive, and to expose him to public hatred, contempt, or ridicule." The statements published need not be false, but if false, are always criminal. A slander is a spoken libel. Since the spoken word reaches so few people, compared with the written or printed statement, a slander is seldom punished by the state as a crime. An individual, however, may sue the man who has slandered him for damages in money, and if his contention is upheld, the slanderer must pay the damages awarded by the court.

Note 4. The Teachings of Proverbs and of Jesus regarding Truthfulness. When we turn to the great moral teachers of humanity, we find them unanimous in proclaiming the baseness of deceit, and the fundamental necessity for truth. Could anything be more emphatic than the simile of the wise man, given in Prov. 26:18? A man had better play with fire, or the germs of pestilence, than trifle with truth, even in sport. The teaching of Jesus is no less impressive. He says, "Swear not at all." This was not merely in order to avoid the frivolous and profane use of God's name, although this idea also seems to have been in Jesus' mind, but chiefly to promote a higher standard of truthfulness. The ancient law says, Keep your promises made under oath. Jesus said, Keep *all* your promises. And that you may not be blinded to the sacredness of all promises, do not use oaths. Let your "word be as good as your bond."

Note 5. The Importance of Truthfulness. This conception of the importance of truthfulness finds an echo in the conscience of all right-minded men. To call a man a liar is to use the most insulting of epithets. What is the explanation of this instinctive horror of lying? Two reasons may be given. In the first place, a lie breaks down men's confidence in each other. When one man deceives another, the man who has been wronged has not only lost faith in the man who lied to him, but has his faith in all men disturbed to some degree. The liar has thus struck a blow at the confidence that holds society together. Imagine yourself in a world in which you could believe absolutely no one. Business would be impossible, for there could be no credit. Friendship would be impossible, for no one could believe any other one's professions of friendship. No social relationships whatever would be possible. Can you imagine a worse state of things? And the liar is helping to create just that kind of world.

In the second place, sincerity is essential to personal moral character. To trifle with truth is to weaken your power to recognize truth, to impair your moral eyesight. And the man who cannot see straight morally is in danger of becoming speedily not only a liar, but every other kind of scoundrel as well. George Eliot has portrayed just that type of character in her novel *Romola*. In Tito's case, selfishness and love of an easy, pleasant time led to untruthfulness, and that weakness resulted in a complete breaking down of the moral nature. In short, lying "is not merely the principal kind, but the soul of all wickedness"; and the obligation to truthfulness is more fundamental than any other duty.

In view of this fact, some have maintained that deception is never, under any circumstances, justifiable. On the other hand, can we say that it is wrong to deceive a burglar, in regard to valuables in the house; or that in war a general should not deceive the enemy, or that the pitcher in a baseball game should not deceive the batter as to the course of the ball? Surely deception in these instances is wholly justifiable. And yet we may still insist that the obligation to be loyal to truth is unique, and permits of no exceptions. For deception in cases like these, where deception is invariably expected, does not in the slightest degree tend to break down any man's faith in his fellow men. Where, however,

the truth is expected of us, or may by any possibility be expected of us, the obligation to speak and act the truth is absolute. It makes no difference that we think we can do good by deception; mere expediency can never make of any lie a "white lie."

Apply this principle to the following questions: Is it right to say, "I'm so delighted to see you," when your feelings are just the reverse? Is it right to send word to a caller whom you do not care to see that you are not at home? Is it right to treat cordially a person whom you greatly dislike? In a letter to a person you care nothing about, is it right to begin it, "Dear Sir," or "Dear Madam"? Is it right to say, "You are looking real well to-day," merely to encourage an invalid? Where does courtesy end and lying begin?

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Deut. 19:17. Shall stand before Jehovah, etc.: In the later history of Israel the priests acted as judges. Trials were held in the temple, before the altar. This is the meaning of the words "before Jehovah." **Deut. 19:18.** Diligent inquisition: Thorough investigation. **Deut. 19:20.** Those that remain: The rest of the people, aside from the guilty perjurer. **Deut. 19:21.** Eye for eye: Suppose the perjurer has accused a man of putting out another man's eye. According to Hebrew law, the man guilty of such an assault would have his own eye put out. **Mt. 5:36.** Neither shalt thou swear by thy head: In all these oaths, Jesus means you are really swearing by the omnipresent and all-powerful God just as truly as though you spoke His name. **Mt. 5:37.** But let your speech be, Yea, yea: In the epistle of James, which is full of quotations from the Sermon on the Mount, we find this saying in a different form: "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay" (Jas 5:12). That is, let your simple yes, ungarnished by oaths, always mean just what it says, and your no, likewise.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"This above all, to thine own self be true,
And it doth follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

—*Shakespeare.*

"I will not stain speech with a lie."—*Pindar.*

“The genuine lie is hated by all gods and men.”—*Plato*.

“What a flaw is in steel, that a falsehood is to the character.”
—*Newman Smyth*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. To what particular type of falsehood does the ninth commandment refer? (Ex. 20:16.)

2. What punishment was inflicted by the Hebrews upon a man guilty of this type of falsehood? (Deut. 19:19-21.)

3. What other forms of lying were prohibited by Hebrew law? (Lev. 19:11, 12.)

4. What was said by one of the Hebrew wise men about the danger of trifling with truth? (Prov. 26:18, 19.)

5. How does Jesus make more strict and comprehensive the law's demand for truth? (Mt. 5:33-37.)

6. What forms of falsehood are punishable under modern law? (Note 3.)

7. Explain the harmfulness of perjury.

8. Why is lying so universally despised? (Note 5.)

9. Do you consider that deceit is ever justifiable? If so, under what circumstances, for example?

10. Under what circumstances is deceit not justifiable?

Note-book Work. Write the story of some famous deception, and its evil consequences; for example, either of the following: Absalom's rebellion (2 Sam. ch. 15); Arnold's treachery. Or take some important incident in fiction, as Tito's broken promise to his foster father, and its consequences, in George Eliot's *Romola*; Iago's deception of Othello and Desdemona, in Shakespeare's great tragedy.

Memory Work. The Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17).

Lesson 6. REVERENCE IN SPEECH AND CONDUCT.

Laws against Blasphemy.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 20:7; 22:28; Lev. 19:12, 32; Mt. 5:33-37; 8:9; 21:12, 13.

Note 1. What is Reverence? A soldier had come home from service in the Philippine Islands. He had spent two years with the troops, and several months in the hospital. On this particular afternoon he was one of several thousand persons gathered in a great city park to listen to the band concert, and when, as a final number, the musicians played "The Star Spangled Banner," he at once rose to his feet and stood at attention; then he removed his hat and held it over his heart, and so remained till the last strains of the national anthem died away. That was reverence for flag and country. Reverence towards God is like this. It seeks at all times to show honor to God's name, the Bible, the church, and to all sacred things and places. Our lesson will show why

reverence is so important in speech and conduct, and in the heart as well.

Note 2. Old Testament Laws against Irreverence. Two of the Hebrew laws associate irreverence toward God with irreverence toward certain human beings (Ex. 22:28; Lev. 19:32). These laws help us to understand the harmfulness to the community of all irreverence. All genuine loyalty to one's father and mother and friends, or to one's church and country, grows out of reverence for God. On the other hand, to the man who has no reverence for God, nothing is sacred, not even his country. He will therefore be a bad citizen. This is the reason that the Hebrew laws forbade not merely the profanation of God's name through false oaths (Lev. 19:12), but also all forms of irreverent speech (Ex. 20:7).

Note 3. Modern Laws against Profanity and Irreverent Conduct. Our modern laws, also, recognize that the strength of a nation depends very largely on the spirit of reverence. When the Romans began to make fun of the gods they had once revered, and actors in the theatres held up religion for the sport and laughter of the crowds, the people began to lose respect for the government also. This decay of the feeling of reverence was one of the chief causes of the fall of Rome. To-day, practically all our states have laws forbidding the profane or blasphemous use of the name of God, or of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, these laws are not always strictly enforced. Yet only recently, in a New Jersey town, a man was arrested for blasphemy in the public square, and was convicted and punished. We also have certain laws prohibiting irreverent conduct. Any disturbance of religious gatherings, such as church services, prayer meetings, Sunday schools and camp meetings, is forbidden by the law.

Note 4. The Teaching and Example of Jesus. Jesus disapproved of all oaths (Mt. 5:33-37) because they tend to weaken one's respect for truth (Note 4, Lesson 5). But this was not the only reason in the mind of Jesus. When a man thus implies that some promises are not binding, that therefore truth is not always sacred, he has entered upon a path which leads to all manner of irreverence. Sooner or later even the name of God will lose its sacredness. He will utter

solemn oaths with no realization of their meaning. This was shown by the habits of the Jews themselves, as pointed out by Jesus. While for superstitious reasons they avoided the use of the name Jehovah, even in worship, yet they employed expressions like "heaven," or "the temple," in oaths, and did so carelessly and profanely.

The reverent attitude of Jesus' whole life is indicated by the opening sentence of the Lord's Prayer. How bitterly He hated the misuse of sacred places is shown by His whipping the traders out of the temple court. We have already seen (Lesson 1) His profound sense of the sacredness of human life. It was from Jesus that Paul caught the inspiring thought that every Christian is a temple of the Holy Spirit. All human beings, even little babies, are sacred, according to the Christian teaching, since every one may become a temple of God. Wherever Christianity has gone, the spirit of reverence has been deepened. This is notably true of the world's attitude toward womanhood. In heathen lands, ancient and modern, woman has been for the most part despised. The Christian attitude is one of reverence. For woman's chief mission is motherhood; hers is the holiest of all missions; for to be a mother is to nurture and cherish human life. Hence true Christians reverence all womanhood.

Note 5. Why Profanity should not be Used. Those who indulge in coarse and profane expressions frequently do so without intending to be irreverent. One hears many such expressions on the street and elsewhere, and it is easy to fall thoughtlessly into loose habits of speech. None of these expressions, however, add real force, much less beauty, to one's language. If only for the sake of preserving one's ability to use clear, expressive English, it is better to follow the advice of Jesus, and "let your speech be, Yea, yea." One should be very cautious even in the use of slang. It may be that some slang words are expressive and picturesque. But there is danger lest one fall into the habit of overworking these words, using them indiscriminately, without trying to express one's real meaning. The greater part of current slang is silly and vulgar.

There are other and even more weighty reasons for avoiding all expressions which even verge toward profanity.

Many persons love God and Jesus Christ so much that to hear these names used irreverently brings them sharp pain. They feel as any loyal son would feel if he heard some one speak coarsely of his father or mother. Furthermore, just as a man who lives in a dirty house ceases to care for beautiful surroundings; as a man who listens only to rag-time loses his taste for good music; so a man whose speech is irreverent sooner or later loses his finer regard for things true and pure and noble.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Ex. 20:7. In vain: This means falsely, and also carelessly, profanely. It refers to falsehood under oath, and to all irreverence in the use of God's name. **Lev. 19:12. Ye shall not swear by my name falsely:** To invoke God's name to make others believe a falsehood, is, as it were, an insult to God. **19:32. Thou shalt fear thy God:** Fear, in the sense of reverent awe. **Mt. 21:12. The tables of the money-changers:** Only Hebrew coins were accepted as offerings in the temple. Many pilgrims came to the annual feasts from Gentile lands, bringing with them the money used where they lived. It was necessary to exchange these foreign coins for money which could be presented to the priests, hence the presence of these money-changers in the outermost temple court. **Mt. 21:13. Ye make it a den of robbers:** These traders and money-changers charged exorbitant prices. It was bad enough to turn the house of God into a market place, but how much worse to make it a "den of robbers"!

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"The first condition of human goodness is something to love; the second, something to reverence."—*George Eliot.*

"In reverence is the chief joy and power of life."—*Ruskin.*

"Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell."—*Tennyson.*

"Maintain your rank, vulgarity despise,
To swear is neither brave, polite, nor wise."—*Cowper.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What do the third, fourth, and fifth commandments teach with respect to reverence? (Ex. 20:7-12.)

2. What is the meaning of the expression "in vain," in the third commandment? (See "Explanation of Scripture Passages.")

3. Irreverence toward what classes of human beings is associated in the Hebrew law with irreverence toward God? (Ex. 22:28; Lev. 19:32.)

4. How do these two laws explain in part the harmfulness of profanity to the community? (See Note 2.)

5. In which gospels do we find the story of Christ cleansing the temple?

6. According to the account in Matthew, what kinds of business were being carried on in the temple? (Mt. 21:12.)

7. What accusation did Jesus make against these traders, and what did He mean by it? (Mt. 21:13; see "Explanation.")

8. Give three reasons why we should not use profanity:
 - (1)
 - (2)
 - (3)

Note-book Work. After placing at the top of the page the lesson number and title, write below it this title: "How Jesus Showed Reverence for the House of God." Then paste in the picture, "Casting out the Money Changers" (Brown, No. 452), and under it copy Mk. 11:15-17.

Memory Work. The Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17).

Lesson 7. THE RIGHTS OF PARENTS. The Duty of Obedience and Respect.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 20:12; 21:15, 17; Deut. 21:18-21; Prov. 20:20; 30:17; Lu. 2:41-51; Mk. 7:9-13.

Note 1. Obeying the Coach. The baseball coach of a college team is an old player of the game, and he knows. He watches every play with the closest interest. Every good play gets its word of praise, and every bad play its sharp comment. The interesting thing is that, whatever he may say, no one takes offense. There at the first base is a senior, the president of his class, but the coach cries out, "Wake up there—that's no sofa!" and the senior looks sheepish, grins a little, and wakes up. The reason he does not get angry is because he knows that the coach is doing his best to help the team to win. A man who refuses to follow his orders or who resents his reproofs cannot hold his place on the team.

Fathers and mothers are the trained players in the contest of life. It is important to follow their guidance with the utmost loyalty and respect.

Note 2. The Hebrew Law as to Parents and Children. Obedience to parents is one of the oldest demands of society. According to the Babylonian law, a son who struck his father was condemned to have his hands cut off. The Old Testament also prescribes severe penalties upon disobedient children. These ancient laws seem to us severe. It must be remembered, however, that when these laws came into being, a Hebrew family, or "house," might include a man's mother, his wives and children, his sons' wives and their children, as well as his servants and their children. For the sake of protection, even distant relatives might attach themselves to a "great house." Thus Abraham could muster

three hundred and eighteen fighting men, "born in his house," for the defense of his nephew Lot. The only government in the land was the authority of these "patriarchs," the father and grandfather, in each family. The welfare and even the existence of any family, in that cruel age, depended upon maintaining this authority. Disobedience was treason. Moreover, polygamy constantly tended to breed quarrels in the household, and the groups of children by different mothers were often hostile one to another, and the mothers took sides. In order to preserve order, it was necessary that the authority of the father should be backed up by severe penalties. That there was, however, a happier side of Hebrew family life, is suggested by such passages as, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him" (Ps. 103:13), and, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (Is. 66:13). Parents have always loved their children. The very harshness of ancient laws shows that parents could ordinarily be trusted not to abuse unlimited power over their children. And we may be sure that there were many Hebrew boys like Joseph and girls like Ruth the Moabitess, whose fidelity and tenderness to their parents still touch our hearts.

Note 3. Duties of Children to Parents under Modern Law. Our laws like the Hebrew laws require children to obey their parents at least until they are of age. Other duties moreover are clearly implied in the rights and responsibilities of the parent. For example, modern law declares that the parent has a right to the child's services and earnings, until he becomes of legal age. It also provides that aged parents when sick or in need shall be cared for by the adult children. This implies the child's lifelong duty to be a loyal, helpful member of the family, in so far as his assistance may be needed.

In some states the law makes the parent responsible for wrongs and damages done by his child. Just as the coach is held responsible for a winning team, so parents are expected to train up their children to be law-abiding citizens. It would be very unfair for the child not to follow the counsels and obey the commands of his father and mother.

Note 4. The Example and Teaching of Jesus. Jesus as a twelve-year-old lad was obedient to His parents (Lu. 2:51).

When the gospels take up again the thread of His life story. He is a young man of thirty, no longer subject to parental authority. Indeed, the gospels indicate that His mother at this time did not wholly understand Him (Mk. 3:31-35, Jo. 2:3, 4). But the scorn which Jesus felt toward an ungrateful son is revealed in His words to the scribes and Pharisees (Mk. 7:8-13). He sternly condemned them because they declared it right for a man in some cases to give his money to the temple, rather than use it for the support of his needy parents. Through their tradition, He said, they had set aside the commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother." In the life of Jesus we see that transition from childlike obedience to intelligent loyalty, which should characterize an ideal son. A little child is too young to understand the reason for his parents' commands. He is expected to obey without question. Most parents, however, are glad to grant their children more freedom, as soon as they show sufficient intelligence and self-control to use it properly. One of the happiest experiences in life, for parents as well as for children, is when the child takes his place beside the parent as a partner and comrade, and even a chum, eagerly sharing the burdens as well as the joys of the family life.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Ex. 20:12. Honor thy father and thy mother: Obey them, and show them proper courtesy and respect. **Deut. 21:18. Chasten him:** Punish him. **Deut. 21:19. The gate of his place:** The gate of the village where he lives. All public business was transacted at the "city gate." **Deut. 21:20. A glutton:** Or, a spendthrift, a riotous liver. **Prov. 20:20. His lamp shall be put out:** "'Lamp' is a metaphor applied to life and happiness, to prosperity and reputation. The disobedient child shall suffer in body and soul, in character and fortune." **Prov. 30:17. Ravens . . . young eagles:** This passage indicates that in those stern old times the dead body of the disobedient son was cast out into the wilderness, where birds of prey would find it. **Lu. 2:43. When they had fulfilled the days:** When the passover ceremonies were completed. **Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem:** Doubtless He became separated from His own people in the narrow, winding, crowded streets of Jerusalem, and went to the temple, thinking that they would most naturally come there to look

for Him. **Mk. 7:9. Full well:** Literally, "Beautifully." It might be translated, "It is a fine thing you do; you set aside the commandment," etc. The scribes had objected because Jesus and His disciples did not perform the ceremonial washings required by their traditions. Jesus shows in this passage that they really did not care so much for the commandments of God as for their traditions; that indeed they often set aside the commandment, in order to observe the tradition. **Mk. 7:11. Corban . . . given to God:** If a man had vowed to give a certain part of his money to the temple, but found himself unable both to keep his vow and to support his aged parents, the rabbis held that his duty to the temple came first; he might say to his parents, "The assistance you might have had from me is dedicated to the temple."

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"Sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child."—*Shakespeare.*

"God could not be everywhere, so He made mothers."—*Holmes.*

"Mother is the name for God, on the lips and hearts of little children."—*Thackeray.*

"The noblest thought my soul can claim,
The holiest words my tongue can frame,
Unworthy are to praise the name
More sacred than all other.
An infant, when her love first came;
A man, I find it just the same;
Reverently I breathe the name,
The blessed name of mother."

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What was the penalty, in Old Testament times, for striking or cursing one's father or mother? (Ex. 21:15, 17.)

2. In ancient Rome, a father could put his own son to death whenever he chose. Was this true in ancient Israel? (Deut. 21:18-21.)

3. Why was it necessary in ancient times to have such severe laws against disobedience to parents? (Note 2.)

4. What punishments did the wise men declare would come upon one who dishonors his parents? (Prov. 20:20; 30:17; see "Explanation of Scripture Passages.")

5. How did it happen that the parents of the twelve-year-old Jesus were compelled to seek for Him? (Lu. 2:41-45; see "Explanation.")

6. What did He say to them when they finally found Him in the temple?

7. What kind of boy was Jesus at home? (Lu. 2:40, 51, 52.)

8. Suppose a man had vowed to give money to the temple, but afterwards found that his aged parents needed it for their support, and was therefore in doubt as to his duty in the matter; what did the rabbis say was duty? What did Jesus say (Mk. 7:9-13)?

9. How was Jesus an ideal son, both as a boy and as a man? (Note 4.)

10. What are some of the duties of children to parents, implied in modern laws? (Note 3.)

Note-book Work. Read the story of Rizpah, in 2 Sam. 21:1-14, and also Tennyson's poem, *Rizpah*. Write out one of these stories in your own words, to read to the class.

Read the story of Jephthah's daughter (Jud. 11:29-40). Tell what you think about her, as a character.

Memory Work. The Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:1-17) and "Thoughts from other Sources" (page 40).

Lesson 8. THE RIGHTS OF DUMB ANIMALS. Laws against Cruelty.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 23:10-12, 19b; Lev. 22:28; Deut. 22:6, 7; 25:4; Prov. 12:10; Lu. 12:24.

Note 1. What is Cruelty? During the last six months of 1907, plumes from one hundred and fifteen thousand white herons, or egrets, were sold at auction in London. These plumes, also called egrets, or aigrettes, are found only during the mating and nesting season. The parent birds are killed and the little ones are left to starve. Millions of little birds thus perished in the marshes of South America and along the Florida coast, as a result of this cruel fashion. The plume hunters, in their greedy haste, often tear off the plume while the bird is living, and leave it to suffer for days, until death comes to its relief. Absorbed in the care of their young, these mother herons lose all fear, and are easily killed. Surely there are not many people who would wear egret plumes if they realized these facts. But is it right for women to wear any sort of birds upon their hats? Is it ever right to cause animals to suffer for the needs of men? Let us seek for the answers to such questions, through the study of this lesson.

Note 2. Old Testament Laws for the Protection of Animals. Three of the laws referred to above may be said to be based on sentiment rather than on fact, namely, Ex. 23:19b; Lev. 22:28; Deut. 22:6. But true sentiment is well worth protecting. It causes no suffering to the slaughtered sheep or cow if its offspring be killed the same day. Yet, in view of the strength of mother love even among dumb animals, such an act seemed to the Hebrews cruel; and their legislators took care that this natural sympathy for animal mothers should be fostered by law. The other two passages are to be explained in the same way. The Hebrew laws for the protection of animals are unique among ancient legal codes. There were, indeed, many laws in Egypt and also in India giving special protection to certain animals. But these regulations were based on idolatry and superstition. The Hebrew laws, on the other hand, were inspired by genuine sympathy for dumb animals themselves.

Note 3. Modern Laws against Cruelty. Until recent

times animals have not been protected by law. If a man was notoriously cruel he might be punished for corrupting public morals. Even the old laws thus recognized that cruelty to animals degrades the character, and leads to cruelty to human beings also. But statutes have now been enacted in England and in most of our states directly forbidding all unnecessary cruelty. The following are examples of cruel actions which are forbidden by many of these statutes: Abandonment of a disabled animal; transporting animals on a railroad for more than twenty-four hours without unloading for rest, water and food; poisoning or attempting to poison animals; throwing broken glass or any similar substance in a public place; slaughtering with unnecessary cruelty; overdriving or overloading horses.

Note 4. The Recent Development of a More Humane Public Sentiment. These statutes are one expression of a great movement towards the suppression of cruelty, which began during the nineteenth century, and which is gaining strength every year. One of the great leaders in this movement was George T. Angell, who "spoke for those that cannot speak for themselves" (see Lesson 43, HEROES OF THE FAITH).

There are many other manifestations of this modern spirit; for example, the publications of the American Humane Education Society, including the famous story, *Black Beauty*. Hundreds of people in all parts of the land are now interested in the study and protection of birds, and are organizing Audubon societies, named after the great naturalist. In almost every city there are humane societies, with officers legally empowered to arrest any persons guilty of cruelty to animals. Many who go hunting now carry not a gun, but a camera. It requires much more courage to go close enough to a dangerous wild animal to photograph it than it does to shoot it from a distance. It is therefore more fun. In short, the public conscience seems more sensitive in this matter of duty to the lower animals than ever before in history. Many experiments have recently been made to find out the nature and extent of the mental life of animals. These experiments seem to show that if animals have reasoning power at all, it is very feeble; nor are they capable of forming moral ideals. Where animals, therefore, can be utilized, for example, as food, to meet real human needs, it is right for us so to use them.

Yet it is clear that animals have many feelings similar to those of human beings. Though they cannot reason, they certainly can love and suffer. It is surely wrong, therefore, to cause them unnecessary pain.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Ex. 23:11. The seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie fallow: That is, uncultivated. This does not mean that all the farmers in the land should observe the same year, but that each field should be allowed to lie fallow once in seven years. This was important for the sake of the soil. We seek to accomplish the same end by rotating crops, instead of wearing out the soil by raising the same kind of crop year after year. Similar customs having the same end in view were common among the ancient peoples. The unique thing about the Hebrew law was its special provision for the poor and for animals. **Ex. 23:19.** Thou shalt not boil a kid in its mother's milk: To do so would seem a wanton insult to mother love, unjustifiable even in the case of an animal mother (Note 2). **Deut. 22:6, 7.** Thou shalt not take the dam with the young: This law again seems based in part upon sentiment. The law is so worded as to prohibit taking the mother bird and leaving the little ones to starve. **Deut. 25:4.** Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the grain: In ancient times, grain was frequently threshed by means of heavy sledges dragged by oxen across the threshing floor. **Prov. 12:10.** The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel: Even in his most merciful moods, the wicked man is cruel. **Lu. 12:24.** God feedeth them: The main point in this passage is God's care for His human children. Yet the very fact that Jesus referred to the ravens as under God's loving care, shows that He thought of them as deserving human consideration also.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

" He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small,
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

—Coleridge.

" Detested sport,
That owes its pleasure to another's pain."—Cowper.

“ I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.”—*Cowper*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. According to the Hebrew law, how frequently was each field to be allowed to lie fallow for a season? (Ex. 20:10, 11.)

2. How was that beneficial to the land? (See “Explanation of Scripture Passages.”)

3. During the year that the land lay fallow, who was to have whatever grew on it of itself? (Ex. 23:10, 11.)

4. For the benefit of what animals was the Hebrew Sabbath partly intended? (Ex. 23:12.)

5. What were two Hebrew laws regulating the use of animals for food? (Ex. 23:19*b*; Lev. 22:28.)

6. What was the Hebrew law about taking birds from their nest? (Deut. 22:6, 7.)

7. What rule was made by the Hebrew lawgivers, regarding the treatment of the oxen at threshing floors? (Deut. 25:4; see “Explanation.”)

8. According to Proverbs how does a righteous man treat animals? (Prov. 12:10.)

9. What lines in the verse from Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, on page 44, remind you of the words of Jesus? (Lu. 12:24; see "Explanation.")

10. What are some of the ways in which boys and girls are thoughtlessly cruel to animals?

Note-book Work. (Choose one of the following topics.) Paste in your note-book some animal picture that you like, by Rosa Bonheur or Landseer. Underneath write an account of what is done in your town for the protection of animals.

Read the entire poem, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, by Coleridge, or Longfellow's *The Birds of Killingworth*. Write what you think are the teachings of the poem which you choose.

Write a sketch of John James Audubon (see any encyclopedia), or of George T. Angell.

Lesson 9. THE RIGHTS OF THE UNPROTECTED. Laws against Oppression.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 21:2-6; 22:21-25; 23:9; Lev. 19:9, 10, 13, 14; Deut. 15:12-18; 23:15, 16; 24:14, 15, 19-22; 27:18, 19.

Note 1. A Modern Form of Oppression. The following is the true story of a Lithuanian immigrant, told in his own words. It describes his experiences when he landed in New York, knowing nothing about the city and unable to speak or understand English. "In the six years since I landed with my wife and babies in New York, I have thought many times that it would be a good thing to keep a school where an immigrant could be taught how to get along in America without being cheated and fooled. When we came I had with me a letter to St. Joseph's Home, 117 Broad Street. We came out from quarantine. It was not pleasant there. My stomach was sick. My head went around with the noise.

Men surrounded me, and caught at me. They would take me, they would take me, they said. What could I do but go with some of them? 'Will you surely take us to St. Joseph's Home?' 'Oh, yes, yes.' The guide took us through the streets, at last to a crowded bar and tables. 'Here we are,' they said. Soon I saw there was a great deal of bad conduct going on. I could not believe that St. Joseph's Home would be such a place as this. But they insisted it was St. Joseph's Home. So I ordered supper. But when we had eaten our supper, I jumped up and said we would go. There was a big outcry that I could not leave, that I must pay. But the boy and I spoke out loud. I paid for all, and we struck out a little with our fists, and we got out on the street. Undoubtedly, as I know now, the people of that place intended to make us drunk and rob us."

Note 2. Old Testament Laws for the Unprotected. A foreigner in any country is naturally at a disadvantage. He is a stranger in a strange land, ignorant of its customs and language. In ancient Israel, he was still more at the mercy of wicked men, because should he be murdered he had no relatives near at hand to avenge his death. There was no police force in those days, and murder was not punished except through private vengeance (see Lesson 1). Hence when foreigners came to live among the Hebrews they usually put themselves under the protection of some powerful man, agreeing to work for him, if he would protect them. Sometimes they were compelled to become virtual slaves, in order to obtain such protection. Hence the laws referred to in our lesson prohibiting injustice to the foreigner (Ex. 22:21; 23:9; Lev. 19:10; Deut. 24:17).

In all countries where slavery has existed poverty has always been a frequent cause of it. Men found themselves and their families on the verge of starvation, and were willing to sell themselves to some one more fortunate in order to be provided with food, clothing, and shelter. Or a man might be unable to pay his debts, and was sold into slavery by his creditors. Among many ancient peoples, especially among the Romans, slaves were treated with great harshness. Among the Hebrews, on the other hand, a faithful slave was regarded almost as a member of the family. See, for example, the story of Abraham's servant (Gen. ch. 24).

In this lesson we study certain Old Testament laws for the special protection of slaves. Any Hebrew who had been sold into slavery might go free at the end of six years (Ex. 21:2-6). His former master, moreover, was commanded to send him away well stocked with provisions, so that he would not suffer from hunger before he was able to provide for himself (Deut. 15:13, 14). The Hebrew law regarding runaway slaves was also favorable to the slave. In this respect it is very different from the law in ancient Babylonia. According to the code of Hammurabi, king of Babylonia (about 1900 B. C.), any one who protected a runaway slave was to be put to death. According to the Hebrew code, on the other hand, it was not only lawful to protect a runaway slave, but it was unlawful to return him to his master. This made it possible for a slave to escape from a cruel master.

In the early days of Israel there were no hired servants. Poor people did their own work. Those who were richer had slaves. But as the centuries passed, people began to cultivate larger farms and to build larger and better houses. There was more work to be done, and a greater demand for laborers. Thus there came to be people among the Hebrews who went out to work for daily wages. Their condition was often far worse than that of a slave. They were indeed their own masters, and could go where they pleased. But slaves, on the other hand, could always be sure of a dinner, and a place to sleep at night, whereas, if a wage-earner did not have the money to buy these things, he had to go hungry, and sleep on the ground. So the later Hebrew laws contained provisions for the protection of wage-earners (Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:14, 15).

In a state of civilization where one's personal safety depended chiefly upon physical force, woman necessarily occupied a dependent position. Her husband must be her protector. In such a civilization, widows and orphans would be very much at the mercy of wicked and unscrupulous men. For this reason the early Hebrew laws were especially careful to protect them (Ex. 22:22-24; Deut. 24:17-21; 27:19).

Most of the Hebrew laws for the protection of poor debtors were included under Lesson 2. One, however, forbidding the taking of interest, remains to be studied in this connection (Ex 22:25). There was not very much business among

the Hebrews, and men did not frequently borrow money, as they do now, in order to make a profit on it; they only borrowed money when they needed it very badly, for the necessities of life. This is why the Hebrew laws prohibited interest.

Note 3. Modern Laws against Oppression. A complete account of modern progress toward more humane laws would be a thrilling story. Slavery has now been abolished in all civilized countries. Imprisonment for debt has been abolished; there are other modern laws for the protection of poor debtors. For example, although a creditor may in certain cases "attach" the property of a debtor, that is, have it seized by the sheriff, and held until the debt is paid, yet the laws in most states provide that a man's personal clothing, his household goods, and the tools of his trade shall not be attached.

In all civilized countries, homes and asylums are now maintained by law for the poor, for orphans, and for the insane. These institutions are not always conducted in the most Christian manner. But the fact that modern nations thus recognize certain duties to the weak and unfortunate represents a great triumph of Christianity.

There are many other modern laws which might be mentioned, some of them quite recent. For example, in the year 1905, twenty-two states passed laws regulating child labor. In most cases it was made unlawful to employ children under fourteen years of age, at least during school hours. Some countries now have laws compelling both employers and wage-earners to submit to arbitration in case of a strike. Each side must accept the decision of the arbitration board regarding wages, hours of labor, and other disputed points. Such a law protects both parties.

Note 4. Modern Charitable Movements. The laws and state institutions mentioned above form a very small part of what is now being done, under the influence of the teachings of the Bible, to help the weak, the unprotected and the unfortunate. In the spirit of the Hebrew laws, we are doing something for the foreigner. At Ellis Island, in New York harbor, where immigrants are detained for inspection before they are admitted into this country, there are now some thirty missionaries representing the leading Christian denom-

inations. A large room is set aside for their use. Many immigrants who are ill are thus cared for. Many who are homesick are cheered. Thousands are saved from falling into the hands of dishonest men. There are also many homes fitted up by Christian people, to accommodate immigrants while they are looking for work. Night schools are conducted by the Young Men's Christian Association to teach them English. Much more work of this kind is greatly needed. Still, a good beginning has been made.

There is also much being done to help the poor. Social settlements have been established by the hundreds in the poorer sections of our cities, not chiefly to distribute money, but rather to be radiating centers of friendliness. Astonishing as it may seem, leaders in charity work, in the narrower sense, are even looking forward to a time when poverty shall be abolished. Not that the time will ever come when every one will have a surplus of money, but that the time must come when no honest and industrious father will be unable to support his family, and when no little child will have to go hungry to bed. That happy day seems very distant now. There is still a vast amount of needless suffering in the world. "Man's inhumanity to man" still "makes countless thousands mourn." But we are learning the lesson that "to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required"; that the possession of health and strength and education and property involves responsibility toward those who do not have these blessings.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Ex. 21:2. He shall go out free for nothing. Slaves sometimes bought their freedom with money. No money was to be exacted of them for their freedom when this seventh year came around. **Ex. 21:3. He shall go out by himself:** Out from his former master's house, to his new life of freedom. **Ex. 21:6. Bring him unto God:** That is, to the sanctuary, or before the judges. **Ex. 22:21. Sojourner:** A foreigner living among the Hebrews. **Ex. 22:24. Wax hot:** Grow hot. **I will kill you with the sword:** I will bring upon you enemies in war. **Ex. 22:25. Thou shalt not be to him as a creditor:** That is, harsh and exacting. **Ex. 23:9. Ye know the heart of a sojourner:** You know how it feels to be a stranger in a strange land. **Lev. 19:13. The wages of a hired servant**

shall not abide with thee all night until the morning: The rich often forget that a poor man must have his daily wages to buy his daily food. Lev. 19:14. Thou shalt not curse the deaf: The ancients believed that a curse actually had some magical effect on the fortunes of others. The deaf man, of course, not hearing the curse, had no chance to defend himself. Deut. 15:18. To the double of the hire of a hireling: A hired servant would have cost twice as much. Deut. 24:15. In his day thou shalt give him his hire: The same day that he earns it. Deut. 24:17. Thou shalt not wrest the justice due to the sojourner: Thou shalt not do wrong to the sojourner. Deut. 24:20, 21. When thou beatest thine olive-tree, etc.: When the olives are shaken from the tree. The law means, do not strip off all the fruit. Leave a few olives on the tree, and a few grapes on the vine.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“ Man’s inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn.”
—Burns.

“ And earthly power doth then show likest God’s
When mercy seasons justice.”
—Shakespeare.

“ Right wrong, follow the King—
Else, wherefore born? ”
—Tennyson.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. For how long a term of years could a Hebrew be sold into slavery? (Ex. 21:2; Deut. 15:12-15.)

2. If a slave did not wish to be set free, but wished to belong to his master for life, what ceremony was performed? (Ex. 21:5, 6; Deut. 15:16, 17.)

3. What special reason is given in the Old Testament law to show why the Hebrews should not oppress a foreigner living among them? (Ex. 22:21; 23:9.)

4. Why did foreigners need special protection in ancient times? (Note 2.)

5. What punishment did the law say would come upon the Hebrews, if they were unjust to widows or fatherless children? (Ex. 22:22-24.)

6. What was the Hebrew law regarding interest on money? (Ex. 22:25.)

7. What law among the Hebrews regarding the harvesting of fields was intended to help poor people? (Lev. 19:9, 10; Deut. 24:19-22.)

8. What were the Hebrew laws as to the treatment of
(a) Hired servants? (Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:14, 15.)

(b) Deaf and blind people? (Lev. 19:14; Deut. 27:18.)

9. What are some modern laws for the protection of poor debtors? (Note 3.)

10. A young girl came as a freshman to a college for women. Her father was dead, and she was poor. Her clothes were not in the latest style. Some of the upper class students made fun of her clothes. What laws in our lesson did they violate, in spirit?

Note-book Work. (Choose one of the following topics.) In the novel *Ben-Hur*, the character Simonides illustrates one of the laws in this week's lesson (bk. v, ch. vii). Explain.

Look up in an encyclopedia the story of Dorothea Dix, and what she did to reform insane asylums, or what John Howard did for prisoners. Write a brief account in your note-book.

Lesson 10. JUSTICE IN PUNISHMENTS. How Responsibility for Wrong-doing is Determined by Law.

Scripture Lesson, Josh. 7:22-26; Deut. 24:16; 25:1-3; Mt. 7:1-5.

Note 1. The Difficulty of Fixing Responsibility. A college student was acting as a waiter at a summer hotel. One morning, when every one was anxious for breakfast, one of the girls who worked in the kitchen collided with him, breaking a valuable dish, and causing serious delay. Which of them was to blame? Was each of them partly to blame? These are sometimes hard questions to answer? In this case, the young man did the honorable thing, saying to the proprietor, "It was mostly my fault." Our lesson on punishments is a study of the efforts of men of different nations and of different ages to answer these questions: "Who is to blame, and how much?"

Note 2. Old Testament Laws regarding Punishment. In early ages of human history, when persons committed certain crimes, it was the custom to punish not only the offender himself, but also his whole family. This was done because it was thought that the members of the family were so closely bound together by a common life that the guilt of one involved the guilt of all. This was especially the case where the crime had brought suffering or loss upon the entire tribe or nation, as did the theft of Achan, who with his family, his cattle, his tent, and "all that he had" was brought to the valley of Achor, and there stoned and burned (Josh. ch. 7). The time came, however, when the Hebrews realized the injustice of punishing innocent persons simply because they belonged to the criminal's family (Deut. 24:16).

Because the spirit which inspired punishments in early times was usually vindictive, the punishments were cruel. People accepted their own feelings of indignation as the measure of the offender's guilt. It is interesting to compare the laws of the Hebrews in this respect with the code of Hammurabi of Babylon. The Babylonian punishments were much more severe. The death penalty was inflicted for a greater number of crimes. Among the Hebrews, a thief who could not pay his fine was sold into slavery (Ex. 22:3), whereas in Babylon he was put to death. The penalty for burglary was always death. A man who should steal from a burning

house was condemned, according to Hammurabi, to be thrown into the fire. Even a gadding and disrespectful wife might be drowned. The Babylonian laws also contained provisions which seem to us to involve a needless and unjust amount of suffering. A man who had struck his superior was condemned to receive sixty strokes in public with an ox-tail whip. The Hebrew law limited to forty the number of strokes which might be inflicted upon any offender. Thus the Hebrew lawgivers had at least begun seriously to ask the question, "Are not some punishments too severe?"

Note 3. The Increasing Justice of the Punishments Inflicted by Modern Law. Early English laws assumed that when a crime was committed by a peasant, it was far more heinous than when committed by an educated man, or a nobleman. Any criminal who was able to read could receive "benefit of clergy," and in many cases go scot-free. Originally, as a matter of fact, few could read, except the clergy, for whose benefit this law was at first made. But the privilege of receiving "benefit of clergy" continued to be granted to all who could read, even after there were many educated persons besides clergymen. Any nobleman, down to the time of queen Victoria, was allowed to plead "benefit of clergy." In view of the fact that in early days noblemen made all the laws, these facts are not surprising. It is still a common tendency of human nature to regard certain acts as wrong when done by others, but right when done by ourselves.

Punishments in early English laws were very severe. Those of a humiliating nature, such as the stocks, the pillory and the whipping-post, were everyday affairs. Punishments involving extreme suffering were not unusual. Prisoners were boiled alive. Witches and heretics were burned at the stake; and as, in that ignorant age, belief in witches was widespread, and any one who disagreed with the accepted religion was called a "heretic," this punishment was terribly common. As for the death penalty—seventy-two thousand persons were executed by one form or another during the reign of king Henry the Eighth. To kill a deer, to steal a hawk, to steal a handkerchief worth more than thirteen pence, were capital crimes. Men, women, and even children were put to death for offenses now punished by a small fine, or a short imprisonment. As late as 1820 there were more than two hundred

capital crimes in English law. This hideous criminal code was never in full force in any of the English colonies. Under the early laws of Connecticut and Massachusetts, there were only fourteen capital crimes. In practically all civilized countries only treason and murder remain of this list. In some American states the death penalty has been abolished altogether.

There are other changes in the treatment of criminals in modern times. In England, formerly, many persons whom the law would now regard as insane, and therefore not responsible, were put to death. The great number of mental and nervous diseases which may render a person irresponsible is now better recognized by our law courts. Indeed, many attempts are made to take unfair advantage of this recognition. The mere fact that a man was in an extreme passion has been used as a basis for a plea of insanity. But while the law recognizes that in such a mental state a man is no longer responsible for his acts, it holds him responsible for allowing himself to get into such a state. A man is likewise punished for acts committed while drunk, because he is held responsible for getting drunk. More and more, however, men are coming to realize that even in such cases others beside the offender himself are usually in part responsible. The community that licenses saloons is partly responsible for the many crimes which result from the drinking of intoxicating liquor. The factory owners who pay such low wages that the wives of their men are compelled to go out and work every day to support their families, are in part responsible for the neglected children who wander into evil ways. In short, men are trying as never before to answer rightly the old questions, "Who is to blame, and how much?" And they are more ready than formerly to make the confession, "We ourselves are partly to blame." In many states, therefore, when a young person is brought into court for a first offense, the judge is permitted to suspend sentence, and let the accused go out on probation. For the wrong-doer is often not really bad, but simply a victim of evil surroundings. Even those who are sent to prison are now treated more like human beings than like wretches so depraved as to be beyond reformation. In some penitentiaries the prisoners are no longer dressed in stripes.

Crime must be punished, for the protection of society.

A moderate punishment, however, inflicted promptly, is far more effective than a sentence of very severe punishment which will not be inflicted for a long time, and perhaps not at all. Hence great effort is now being put forth so to reform our legal machinery that punishment may be swift and sure, and yet of such character as to lead, if possible, to the reformation of the criminal himself.

Note 4. The Teaching of Jesus as to the Duty of Charitable Judgment. All this is in close harmony with the spirit of Jesus, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." To decide the exact degree of any other person's guilt and to punish accordingly is a problem too difficult for any one but God. What we human beings can do is to recognize and acknowledge our own blameworthiness, wherever it exists. Each of us knows himself, far better than he knows any one else. It is therefore our duty to "cast out the beam out of our own eye" before venturing to "cast out the mote" out of the eye of our brother. We should be severe in judging ourselves and charitable in judging others.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Josh. 7:22. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent: That is, Achan's tent. Read the entire story of Achan's theft of a part of the spoil of Jericho, which had been "devoted" (dedicated) to Jehovah, and how his deed was discovered (Josh. 7:1-21). **Josh. 7:23.** They laid them down before Jehovah: Before the ark, which the Israelites carried with them on their journeys. **Josh. 7:24.** The valley of Achor: A ravine near Jericho. **Deut. 25:2, 3.** Before his face . . . by number. . . . Forty stripes . . . he shall not exceed: Notice the above three precautions against excessive beating. (1) It was to be done in the judge's presence, not in secret; (2) the strokes were to be counted, and (3) not more than forty were allowed to be given. And since it was prescribed that the offender should be beaten "according to his wickedness," it is implied that the judge might order a smaller number than the extreme penalty. **Deut. 25:3.** Lest . . . thy brother should seem vile unto thee: Excessive beating was considered humiliating. **Mt. 7:2.** With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: That is, those who are unmerciful to their fellow men, cut themselves off from the mercy of God.

Mt. 7:3. **The beam that is in thine own eye:** The words mean just what they say; the beam, the saw-log in thine own eye. One of the charms of the sermons of Jesus, from a literary standpoint, is His occasional use of quaint, semi-humorous hyperboles.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“There can be no justice without love.”—*Judge Lindsey.*

“Though justice be thy plea, consider this—
That in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy.”—*Shakespeare.*

“We judge others by results; how else?—not knowing the process by which results are arrived at.”—*George Eliot.*

“Lord, enlighten us to see the beam that is in our own eye, and blind us to the mote that is in our brother’s. Let us be in our own eyes and in all conjunctions, the most guilty.”—*Robert Louis Stevenson.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. How did Joshua find out that some one had stolen a part of the spoils of Jericho, all of which had been dedicated to Jehovah? (Josh. 7:6-12.)

2. How did Joshua find out who was the guilty person? (Josh. 7:16-18.)

3. What other persons and things were made to share Achan’s fate? (Josh, 7:24, 25.)

4. In later times, to what extent did the Hebrew law prohibit punishment of innocent persons with the guilty? (Deut. 24:16.)

5. In what three ways did the Hebrew law protect wrong-doers from excessive punishment? (Deut. 25 :1-3; see "Explanation of Scripture Passages.")

6. In what respects have legal punishments in England and America become more just? (Note 3.)

7. If a man commits crimes while under the influence of liquor, does the law hold him responsible, or not? Give the reasons for the law.

8. Show that other persons beside the criminal may be partly to blame for his crime. How do recent laws recognize this fact?

9. A certain person has a violent temper, and lets cruel words escape his lips. Can you think of facts which would make you very charitable in your judgment of him?

10. A certain young woman who knows that she easily becomes absorbed in an interesting novel is left in charge of the baby, and allows him to fall and hurt himself. Is it a fair excuse if she answers, "I was reading a novel"?

Note-book Work. Write your opinion of the justice of capital punishment. Consider the following points: Has society a right to inflict punishment as an expression of vengeance? If you were a member of a jury, would the fact that in case of error there is no chance to undo the infliction of a death penalty lead you to be lenient toward the accused man? In view of the possibility of executing an innocent person, would it be more just to impose a sentence of imprisonment for life in cases where absolute certainty of guilt cannot be reached? Would life imprisonment be a better protection for society against the crime of murder than the death penalty?

Lesson 11. THE RIGHT OF THE STATE TO HONEST SERVICE. The Prohibition of Bribery.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 23:1-3, 6-8; Lev. 19:15; Deut. 16:18-20; 27:25; Prov. 17:23; 18:5; Amos 5:12.

Note 1. One Kind of Bribery. A certain young man was elected captain of his college base-ball team. It was his duty to select the players for the different positions in the game. From the beginning of the season there was a hot contest for the position of pitcher. There were several men in college who could throw a ball with accuracy and speed, and who were clever in the use of curves. When the time came, however, for the championship game, the captain put in as pitcher a player who was inferior in skill, but who happened to be his personal friend. As a result the game was lost. The students were angry at the captain, as may be imagined. He defended himself, in private conversation, by saying, "I always stand by my friends." He probably would have scorned to accept money for putting a poor player on the team. But was not the misuse of friendship as bad as the misuse of money? Was not his action a form of bribe taking?

Note 2. Old Testament Laws against Bribery. In the early history of the Hebrews, the only public officers in each town were the elders (see "Introduction," page 2). These men performed the duties of mayor, aldermen, sheriff and judge. They punished criminals. To them men came with disputes to be settled. After the days of Saul, the king and his officers also acted as judges in important matters. One of the greatest hindrances to the cause of justice in all these ancient Hebrew courts was bribery in its many forms. Sometimes one of the parties in a dispute would secretly slip a piece of money to the judge. Sometimes the judge was influenced by fear. The elders who condemned Naboth to death doubtless feared the vengeance which Jezebel would take if they refused to do her bidding. More often still, rich men were favored and poor men wronged, because the judge realized that the rich man could benefit him indirectly in many ways (Ex. 23:6). At other times, on the contrary, the judge allowed his sympathy for a poor man to blind his eyes to the facts in the case (Ex. 23:3; Lev. 19:15). All these ways of promoting injustice in legal decisions aroused the indignation of the wise men and the prophets (Prov. 17:23; 18:5; Is. 1:23; 5:23;

Amos 5:12; Micah 3:9-11) and led to the enactment of the laws which come before us in this lesson.

Note 3. Modern Laws against Bribery. According to modern law, any public official who allows himself to be influenced in the performance of his duty by a gift or promise of money is guilty of bribery. A man who gives or even offers a bribe, whether it is accepted or not, is just as guilty as the man who receives one. The law applies to the buying and selling of votes at an election. As voters, all private citizens are to that extent public officials. The punishment for bribery is a fine, or a term of imprisonment, or both.

Modern judges in civilized countries have a very strict code of honor. It is considered improper for a judge even to be present at a discussion of any question which may come before him for settlement. Any judge who attempts to pass judgment on a matter in which he is himself personally interested is usually scorned by all his associates. Even if he should decide against his own interests his connection with the matter would be improper. This high standard is now being accepted more than formerly by all public officials. Legislators are criticised for owning stock in corporations which may be affected by the laws which they are called upon to enact. Any use of public office for private gain is now condemned as "graft," and is regarded as similar in principle to bribery.

Note 4. The Dishonor of Bribery. The reason why it is so dishonorable to give or accept a bribe is because it is dishonorable to violate a trust. Every one recognizes that a trust is something sacred. It is bad enough to steal from persons who are themselves trying to protect their property. But it is far worse to steal from a person who has entrusted his property to our care for its protection. To accept a trust puts one "on his honor." To betray a trust is a dark stain on one's honor. Now "a public office is a public trust." A man who has accepted a public office is in honor bound to use the power of that office for the good of all the people. He is expected, whether he is a senator in Congress, a judge on the bench, or a mere "fence-viewer" in an obscure town, to render equal justice to all. To favor one person, or class of persons, at the expense of another and for the sake of personal gain, promised or received, is to accept a bribe; and to accept

a bribe in any form whatever—money or influence—is a betrayal of trust by a public servant. For a man who has been elected to a high and responsible office to turn out faithful and capable subordinates in order to make places for friends and supporters who may be far less capable is not the kind of honest service which city or state has the right to expect. The same principle holds true in all private business, and in all relations between man and man. To use one's position for one's own gain by giving unjust advantages to another, even though he be a poor man or a personal friend, is not merely to be dishonorable, but to be guilty of a peculiarly mean dishonesty.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Ex. 23:3. Neither shalt thou favor a poor man in his cause: That is, favor him unfairly, just because he is poor. **Ex. 23:6.** Thou shalt not wrest the justice due to thy poor: This would be the opposite kind of unfairness, that is, favoritism to the rich, for personal advantage. **Ex. 23:7.** Keep thee far from a false matter: Have nothing to do with false accusations. **The innocent and righteous slay thou not:** That is, do not unjustly condemn them to death. **For I will not justify the wicked:** Or, by a better translation, "And thou shalt not acquit the wicked." **Ex. 23:8.** Bribe . . . perverteth the words of the righteous: Makes the judge pay no attention to their side of the case. **Lev. 19:15.** Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: That is, in the legal administration of justice. **Deut. 16:19.** Thou shalt not wrest justice: That is, prevent justice from being done in courts. **Doth blind the eyes of the wise:** Of those who could otherwise decide wisely. **Prov. 17:23.** Bribe out of the bosom: The ancients used the loose folds of their garments, as we do our pockets, carrying in them money and small articles. **Prov. 18:5.** To respect the person of the wicked: That is, to show partiality to the wicked. **Amos 5:12.** Turn aside the needy in the gate: Trials were conducted in the open space between the inner and outer gates of the city.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

Said Phocian, the Athenian general, to messengers of Alexander the Great who had been sent, with flattering messages, to bribe him to surrender his army: "If Alexander really esteems me, let him leave me my honesty."

“Better to die ten thousand deaths
Than wound my honor.”—*Addison*.

“Four things belong to a judge: to hear courteously, to answer wisely, to consider soberly, and to decide impartially.—*Socrates*.

“Party honesty is party expediency.”—*Grover Cleveland*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before writing the answers, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of this lesson.

1. What officials acted as judges among the ancient Hebrews? (Note 2.)

2. In what three ways, according to the Hebrew law, was a judge in danger of being influenced to make unfair decisions? (Ex. 23:3, 6, 8.)

3. What particular forms of injustice might be committed through such unfair decisions? (Ex. 23:7; “Explanation of Scripture Passages”; Deut. 27:25; Amos 5:12.)

4. Put into twentieth century language, if you can, Prov. 17:23. (See “Explanation.”)

5. What persons besides judges, according to modern law, can be guilty of the crime of bribery? (Note 3.)

6. What is the modern law regarding those who give or offer bribes?

7. How may the person be punished who is guilty of bribery?

8. Why is bribery dishonorable? (Note 4.)

9. Do you consider the answer of the base-ball captain, referred to in Note 1, a sufficient defense for his action? Give your reasons.

Note-book Work. Read the story of Naboth (1 Ki. 21:1-16). Write a brief account of the incident in your note-book. In your account suggest two possible reasons why the elders of Naboth's town complied so readily with Jezebel's wishes.

Lesson 12. REVIEW OF LESSONS 1-11. Conduct and Law.

Note 1. Is it Ever Right to Disobey the Law? In many cities there is an ordinance requiring automobiles to slow down to eight miles an hour within city limits. A certain man is very skilful in driving his machine. "What's the use of creeping along at this slow pace?" he says; "I can go half again as fast, and not run into anybody." So he frequently breaks the law. Is it right for him to do so? For help in answering this question, let us turn back to the preceding eleven lessons, and, studying them as a whole, see if, taken together, they do not have something to say about the importance of obeying laws.

Note 2. The Benefits which have Come to us through Laws. In many of the lessons of the past quarter, we have studied the reasons which led to the enactment of various laws. Looking back upon them, have they not all been stepping-stones by which humanity has climbed out of barbarism into Christian civilization? In the most primitive ages there was no law, except the command of the father or patriarch (Lesson 7). Those were ages when every man's hand was against his neighbor; when bloodshed and cruelty were everyday affairs. But the law stepped in to strengthen the authority of the father (Ex. 21:15, 17), thus helping to establish order within the family or clan. Different clans still remained almost constantly at war one with another. Injury was repaid by injury. Even accidental homicides led to long and bloody feuds. So the law again stepped in,

to hold private vengeance in check, for the benefit of the whole community (Lesson 1; Ex. 21:12-14). Little by little, property also, as well as life, was protected from violence and trickery; it became possible for men to labor in security for themselves and others (Lessons 2, 3; Ex. 22:1-4; Lev. 19:35-37). In time, the more spiritual needs of men were recognized. Laborers were guaranteed a day of rest and opportunity for worship; religious people were protected from being shocked and grieved by the irreverent speech of bad or thoughtless men (Lessons 4, 6; Ex. 20:7-11). Among savage tribes, the weak, the diseased, and the aged are slain without mercy; but as the centuries have passed, the law has more and more intervened to protect the unprotected (Lessons 8, 9; Deut. 25:4; 27:18, 19). Even the wrong-doer himself finds in the law protection from injustice (Lesson 10; Deut. 25:2, 3). The attainment of an orderly civilization through these laws has been a long and difficult task. It has cost blood and tears. Moreover, just as a man who has spent a whole day climbing the Matterhorn may by a single false step slip back and in a few minutes lose all that he had gained, so, although it has taken centuries for humanity to climb up from barbarism into civilization, it is possible to slip back again in a very short time. We do not need to look back to the French Revolution for a Reign of Terror. Any resort to lynch law is a lapse into barbarism. There are some kinds of wrong-doing which tend more than others to undermine the stability of the state, and the authority of law (Lessons 5, 11; Lev. 19:11, 15). But to violate any law is to remove one stone from the walls which protect society from destruction and which make possible the life of civilized Christian communities. Civilization is still far from the Christian ideal. Our laws are imperfect in many ways. Much remains for future generations to achieve, through better laws, and, more important still, through training every member of the community to be loyal to Christian ideals.

These are the tasks which await the boys and girls of to-day. Let us remember, however, that we cannot build wisely for the future except on the achievements of the past. Even though our laws are as yet imperfect, we must remember how much we owe to them, and give them our whole-hearted respect and obedience.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“ Without law there can be no true liberty.”

“ Our human laws are but the copies, more or less imperfect, of the eternal laws, so far as we can read them.”—*Froude*.

“ We see multitudes obeying in opposition to their strongest passions the restraints of a power which they scarcely perceive, and the crimes of a single individual marked and punished at the distance of half the earth.”—*Emerson*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson.

1. How was private vengeance restricted by the Hebrew law? (Ex. 21; 12-14.)
2. Has a man a right to do whatever he pleases with his own property? (Lesson 2, Note 4.)
3. What were some forms of cheating practised among the Hebrews? (Lev. 19:35-37.)
4. How did the Hebrew Sabbath originate? (Lesson 4, Note 2.)
5. What was the punishment for false witness in the Hebrew law? (Deut. 19:16-21.)
6. How did Jesus show a spirit of reverence? (Mt. 6:9; 21:12, 13.)
7. What are the duties of children to parents, according to modern law? (Lesson 7, Note 3.)

8. How did the Hebrew law provide that even animals should share in the joy of the harvest? (Deut. 25:4.)

9. What classes of persons were protected from oppression by the Hebrew laws? (Ex. 21:2-6; 22:21-25; Lev. 19:9, 10, 13, 14.)

10. Name two ways in which modern legal penalties have become more just. (Lesson 10, Note 3.)

11. Why is bribery dishonorable? (Lesson 11, Note 4.)

Note-book Work. A policeman is chasing a thief. As the thief sees his pursuer approaching he darts down a side street and across a frozen river. The policeman, attempting to follow, breaks through the ice and is in danger of drowning, but the thief turns back and saves his life. Should the officer now arrest the thief, or, in gratitude, allow him to escape? Give reasons.

Or, write a statement about the observance of law in your own town. Are there any laws which are frequently broken? In what ways might a more conscientious respect for law be shown?

PART II

LIVING ACCORDING TO THE STANDARDS OF THE SAGES AND PROPHETS

INTRODUCTION.

Were a man to boast of his goodness because he had never been in jail, we should laugh at him. Merely to live up to the requirements of the laws of the state is not in itself a high ideal. Many things are wrong which are not illegal. Laziness, for example, is not illegal. Yet it is a very serious defect in a man's character. Many of the highest and worthiest ideals of what a truly good man should be have come down to us from the wise men, or "sages," and the prophets of ancient Israel.

Before we begin our study of their teachings, let us go back in imagination for a moment to ancient Jerusalem, and see how those great teachers went about their work. We enter the city, we see many people hurrying along the streets in the same direction. Following the crowd, we find ourselves in the temple court where the sacrifices are offered. A man stands on the steps of the temple, beside the massive pillars, and addresses the throng gathered there under the open sky. As his rhythmic sentences fall upon their ears, the people are hushed; after a time tears gather in many eyes; others tremble with fear or rage. Even though we cannot understand the language, about one thing there is no doubt—the man is an orator. He appeals to the intellect, he stirs the emotions. No one in the audience can avoid being influenced by him. We have been listening to one of the great prophets.

After the sermon is finished we return by the way along which we came. As we pass through the open square in front of the city gate, we notice an aged man seated on the ground, and, gathered respectfully around him in a half circle, a little group of listeners. He is a wise man, we are told; and those listeners are his pupils. This was always the method which the wise men followed. They were not orators, speaking to great crowds, but teachers instructing individuals or small groups. In many ways the prophets correspond to our preachers, and the wise men to our school-teachers.

The books of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes came down to us from the wise men. The first seven lessons of this quarter are based chiefly on the Book of Proverbs. The following four lessons present certain of the most inspiring teachings of the prophets.

Lesson 13. NEGLIGENCE AND ITS RESULTS. Ancient Precepts Inculcating Carefulness.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 21:28-36; 22:5, 6; Prov. 26:6; 27:23-27.

Note 1. The Serious Harm of Mere Negligence. A team carrying a load of laboring men to their daily work had to cross an electric railway where a car usually passed before the train reached the crossing. One morning the car was a little late, and the motor-man was anxious to make up lost time. Seeing no passengers at the waiting-room where the rules of the road required him to stop before reaching the crossing, he neglected to do so, and neglected also to sound the warning whistle and the bell as he rushed on. At the same time the driver of the team, supposing that the car had passed, and hearing no warning signal, neglected looking out for the car. The result was a disastrous collision, in which the driver lost his life, and several passengers were badly injured. Our study this week will show the serious harm of negligence, and the great value of carefulness and good order.

Note 2. Old Testament Provisions regarding Negligence. In very early times, the Hebrews lived as shepherds and cattle-herders on the plains east of the Jordan. They lived in villages of tents, and pastured their flocks and herds on the open range. They had small walled-in enclosures, like our western corrals, where they could shut up their animals. But there were no large fields surrounded by fences. In such a community, vicious oxen running loose would naturally be a frequent source of danger to property and life. It was important that each owner should be on the watch for signs of a vicious disposition among the oxen in his herd, and keep such animals shut up in the pen, to be fattened for the butcher. The Hebrews, therefore, provided for the severe punishment of a cattle-owner who through negligence in this matter caused another's death, or even the death of an animal.

Another form of carelessness in those early days was the leaving of cisterns uncovered. At certain seasons of the year in Palestine there is no rain for many months; and the wells, springs and brooks all run dry. In ancient times, therefore, many cisterns or pits were dug in the fields, in which the rain water was stored up during the rainy season, for the

use of the cattle, when the rains ceased. These cisterns were covered with flat stones. The last shepherd, or herder, to water his animals at night was expected to put back the cover. Sometimes the man forgot to do so, and a sheep or cow might easily fall in, and break its neck or be drowned. If such an accident happened, the careless person was made to pay for the loss.

After the Hebrews crossed the Jordan into western Canaan, they gradually took up a settled agricultural life, and raised wheat and barley, grapes and olives, as well as sheep and cattle. They did not live in isolated farm houses, as is the custom of farmers in the United States, but in small villages. Every morning they went out "to the fields," each man going to his own farm. By living in this way, they protected themselves the better from robbers and wild beasts; but on the other hand, if cattle broke into a grain field in the evening, the owner was not on the spot to protect his property, and much damage might be done before morning. It was therefore even more important then than now to keep cattle shut up. Hedges of thorns were indeed built around the fields, and this helped to keep out intruders. But even now, with barbed wire fences, it is hard to keep a hungry cow out of a clover field. And in ancient Israel, the thorn hedges frequently proved insufficient. Hence in Old Testament times the cattle owner had to see to it that his cattle were kept from doing mischief.

Another source of damage to Hebrew farmers was fire. After the harvest it was customary to burn the weeds. The harvest always occurred several weeks after the dry season had begun; and the stubble and the thorn hedges were like tinder to the spark. It was of course easy to burn weeds at this time, but it was also necessary to use great care, lest the fire get beyond control. Any person who neglected doing this was required to pay for the damage caused by his carelessness.

Note 3. Modern Provisions regarding Negligence. Modern society regards many kinds of negligence as criminal. When a railroad employee fails to use reasonable care in the performance of his duty, and thus through his neglect causes death, he may be punished for manslaughter. To allow a vicious beast, as an ox, to run at large, and thus through

negligence to cause death, is, among us as well as among the ancient Hebrews, a "very great misdemeanor."

In certain other less serious cases of negligence, those who have been injured in person or property may bring suit and recover damages; although in such cases the court does not regard the negligence as criminal, it nevertheless compels the negligent man to pay over money to the person or persons injured, in order to make good, so far as possible, the damage which he has caused. Except in certain western states where the open range is still used for pasture, the responsibility for keeping cattle out of the fields rests upon the cattle-owner. In case they injure another man's crops, he must pay damages. So also modern society seeks to protect property from damage from fire by forbidding the building of fires within specified limits, as in the streets of a thickly populated neighborhood; or in requiring hunters and campers to use all possible care in preventing the spreading of such fires as they may have to build.

Note 4. What the Hebrew Sages Thought about Negligence.

These wise men recognized that the negligent, careless person is a dangerous member of society. The word "fool" in our Scripture lesson (Prov. 26:6) appears to be used as a description of that kind of person—energetic enough, perhaps, but careless. He who sends a message by such a person, or, we might well add, trusts him in any responsible position, "drinketh in damage," that is, invites failure and harm.

The sages also show that negligence is ruinous to one's own interests. The richest man in the world, even though he be a king, will sooner or later, if he is negligent, come to poverty. The successful farmer must take care that his hay is mowed, his cattle pastured, his sheep sheared, and his mutton marketed at the proper time, and in the proper way (Prov. 27:23-27). It is only the man who looks out for these details who will be able to support himself and those who depend upon him.

Note 5. The Real Essence of Negligence.

To be careful simply means to have a purpose and to make all things serve our purpose. Negligence, carelessness, disorder, means lack of purpose. The careless man does not mean to injure his neighbor. But society insists that he must have a positive

purpose to keep from injuring his neighbor. "Oh, I forgot," the careless man may say, and think that is a sufficient excuse. But again society says, "You should have taken pains *not* to forget. You could have remembered, if you had formed a resolute purpose to remember." The careless man simply "lets things slide"—his moments and his hours, and the clothes in his bureau and closet. That is what people mean when they say he is unpunctual and disorderly. It is this fundamental lack of purpose which makes him a useless and even dangerous member of society.

In reading the reports sent in by the Japanese officers during the war with Russia, says George Kennan, any one would be struck by their frequent use of the phrase, "as prearranged." Almost all their successful strategies were carried out "as prearranged." Throughout the war, every one, from commander-in-chief down to each private soldier, knew beforehand exactly what to do in every emergency. The Russians, no less brave, trusted more to luck; they were "slack"; too often they merely "guessed it would be all right." The result was that Port Arthur was captured, the Russian fleets were sunk, and the Russian armies hopelessly defeated, as prearranged—by the Japanese.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Ex. 21:28. Its flesh shall not be eaten: The ox that had killed a human being was regarded as "unclean." **Ex. 21:30. If there be laid on him a ransom:** If the relatives of the slain person are willing to accept money from the negligent man, instead of insisting on his death. **Ex. 21:31. Whether it have gored a son, or have gored a daughter:** The same rule was applicable if it were only a child that was killed. The relatives might not always, however, demand so large a ransom. **Ex. 21:35. The dead also they shall divide:** If the owner of the living ox did not know that it was vicious, then the accident was unavoidable, and the two owners were to share the loss equally between them. **Ex. 21:36. He shall surely pay ox for ox:** He shall give a living ox in place of the one his own ox has killed. **Ex. 22:5. If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten:** That is, by carelessly allowing his cattle to run at large. **Ex. 22:6. Catch in thorns:** The thorn hedges; in the dry season, the fire could easily spread over a large territory, running along the hedges. **Prov.**

26:6. Cutteth off his own feet: One might as well be without legs, as try to send messages through heedless fools. **Prov. 27:25. The hay is carried:** That is, should be harvested at a certain time. **The tender grass showeth itself:** Then is the time to turn the cattle out to pasture. The sense of the whole passage is that all these details must be carefully looked after. **Prov. 27:27. Goats' milk:** In most parts of Palestine goats' milk, eggs and bread are the chief articles of food.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"For the world was built in order,
And the atoms march in tune."—*Emerson.*

"Order is heaven's first law."—*Pope.*

"Dost thou love life, then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of."—*Franklin.*

"Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget."—*Kipling.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before writing the answers, read all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of this lesson.

1. Suppose a human being were killed by a vicious ox, in the early days of Israel, what was to be done in the following cases (Ex. 21: 28-32):

- (a) If the ox had never before shown signs of an ugly disposition?
- (b) If the owner knew the ox was dangerous, and the person killed was a free Hebrew, man, woman, or child?
- (c) If the owner knew that the ox was dangerous, and the person killed was a slave?

2. Suppose a man left a pit or cistern uncovered, and another man's domestic animal fell in, how was the negligent man punished?

3. Suppose one ox should kill another, what was done in the following two cases:

- (a) The owner of the live ox knew that it was vicious. (Ex. 22:35.)
- (b) The owner did not know that it was vicious. (Ex. 21:35.)

4. After the Hebrews began to till the soil, and have settled farms, what was required of a man who owned cattle? (Ex. 22:5.)

5. If a Hebrew farmer should find that his grain field had caught fire, and been destroyed through another man's carelessness, how fully was the careless man required to make up this loss? (Ex. 22:5, 6; note especially the last part of vs. 5, which applies also to vs. 6.)

6. How are men dealt with to-day

(a) Who allow vicious animals to run at large? (Note 3.)

(b) Who carelessly start a fire, which spreads and destroys other persons' property?

7. What is the most important quality in a farmer, according to the Hebrew wise man, if he is to be successful? (Prov. 27:23-27 Note 5.)

8. What is the real nature of negligence? (Note 5.)

9. A certain person is very forgetful, and for this reason often causes much annoyance to his friends. Can you think of ways by which he might cure himself?

10. There is a certain man who is very busy, yet he always seems to have time to attend to "the extras." What do you think the explanation is?

Note-book Work. Do you know any one who has no purpose in life, who is always saying, "By-and-by," "Pretty soon," "What's the use in being so particular?" "That's well enough, I guess"? Write a brief imaginary description of a day in such a person's life. How would the morning probably be spent? What would happen in the afternoon? What, in the evening?

Lesson 14. THE CULTIVATION OF HABITS. How they Make for Strength or Weakness.

Scripture Lesson, Prov. 22:6; 27:22; Lu. 4:16; Gal. 6:7-9; Rev. 22:10, 11.

Note 1. The "Force of Habit." A certain young man, after studying one year at Cornell, completed his college course at Yale. He was a powerful athlete, and at both colleges he had a place on the crew. In his senior year at Yale, he was made stroke oar on the "varsity" eight. When the day came for the annual boat race between Yale and Harvard, every one was looking forward to a close race. And a close race it was for the first three miles. But on the last quarter of the fourth mile, something went wrong in the Yale boat; the oarsmen were confused in their movements. Harvard shot ahead and easily won the race. "What was the matter with Yale?" was the question on everybody's lips. And the answer was that Yale's stroke oar had taken his first lessons in rowing at Cornell, where the style of rowing is different, and when he changed his college, he had to change his habits of rowing at the same time. But the old habit had not been entirely uprooted.

The phrase "force of habit" has become proverbial. But there are many people who do not fully realize the significance of it, and as a result make failures which might otherwise have been avoided. The object of this lesson is to bring to the students' attention some facts regarding habits, and thus help them to be successful in the battle of life.

Note 2. What the Bible Teaches about Habits. The word "habit" does not occur in our English Bible. The idea, however, appears in many passages. The advice in Prov. 22:6 was intended for parents. But it is worthy of careful study on the part of young people also, for the truth to which it calls attention is most important, namely, that in childhood and youth character is easily molded, whereas the character of grown men and women is seldom greatly changed. This is just another way of saying that habits are easily formed in youth, and that the habits thus formed are likely to be permanent. If these habits are of the right kind, a lifetime of worthy conduct is made almost certain.

This same truth is expressed in Prov. 27:22, through a figure of speech taken from the kitchen. A favorite dish in Syria to-day, called *kibbeh*, is made by pounding together in a mortar boiled wheat and mutton. The longer it is pounded the better, especially if the meat is naturally tough. It is thought that some such process was in the mind of the author of this proverb, and that his meaning was something as follows: You can improve tough mutton by pounding it in a mortar, but a thoroughly bad man can seldom be reformed, even through the severest discipline. Whatever the figure of speech may be, the general sense is plain: it is almost impossible to uproot bad habits when they are once thoroughly fixed.

The reference in Lu. 4:16 to our Lord's custom of going to the synagogue shows that Jesus Christ was influenced by habits. From earliest childhood He had been accustomed to go to the synagogue every Sabbath. In His mature years, He continued this habit as a matter of course. There are some people nowadays who have a fresh struggle with the question each Sunday morning, "Shall I, or shall I not, go to church?" If the weather is a trifle cloudy, or warm, or cold the problem is all the harder. Jesus was spared all this struggle from week to week, simply because going to the synagogue was His "custom." He did not have to exert any will power in the matter. In fact, it doubtless would have required an effort of will to stay away.

In Gal. 6:7-9 Paul was not referring specifically to the law of habit, but to the general law that every action leads inevitably to certain consequences. Sin brings its own punishment. Goodness brings its own reward. "Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." A habit is a seed from which we reap an important crop of consequences. And these consequences, as Paul says, are absolutely certain. "God is not mocked."

" 'Tis no avail to bargain, sneer and nod,
And shrug the shoulder for reply to God."

The laws of nature, which are the laws of God, are never revoked nor suspended. When they are violated, they lead to penalties, with the certainty of the tides and the sunrise.

In the last chapter of the Book of Revelation, the Bible closes with a vision of the life to come. And in that life,

according to the seer, the same law will hold good which the ancient wise man noticed in our everyday experience, in this world. "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still." If a man has formed righteous habits in this world, he will continue a righteous man in the next. If he is a thoroughly bad man here, he will be a thoroughly bad man there.

Note 3. What is Meant by the Law of Habit? The teachings of the Bible regarding habit have been confirmed and illustrated in a remarkable manner by science. The law of habit is universal. Not only persons but things are subject to it. "Every one knows how a garment, after having been worn a certain time, clings to the shape of the body better than when it was new; there has been a change in the tissue, and this change is a mere habit of cohesion. A lock works better after having been used some time; at the outset more force was required to overcome certain roughness in the mechanism. It costs less trouble to fold a paper when it has been folded already. This saving of trouble is due to the essential nature of habit, which brings it about that, to reproduce the effect, a less amount of the outward cause is required. The tone of a violin improves by use in the hands of an able artist, because the fibres of the wood at last contract habits of vibration conformed to harmonic relations. This is what gives such inestimable value to instruments that have belonged to great masters. Water, in flowing, hollows out for itself a channel, which grows broader and deeper; and, after having ceased to flow, it resumes, when it flows again, the path traced by itself before." Just so, every time we act, or think, in a certain way, a tiny pathway is made in the brain. It becomes easier and easier to perform that action, until finally we do not even have to think about it. In learning to ride a bicycle, for example, or to play the piano, it is very difficult at first to make the necessary movements; and we have to concentrate our whole attention upon our task. But the time comes when we can ride the bicycle or play the piano, and at the same time be thinking almost wholly of something else.

Furthermore, as the wise men pointed out, it is easier to form new habits in youth than in later years. It is very hard for a man in middle life to learn to ride the bicycle, or to

skate, or to play a new instrument. And it is even harder for him to break up old habits than it is to form new ones. He can no more escape from his old habits, says Professor James, than his coat sleeve can fall into a new set of folds. "In most of us, by the age of thirty, the character has set like plaster, and will never soften again." Indeed, the period before twenty is the time when the most important habits are fixed for life. "Hardly ever is a language learned after twenty spoken without a foreign accent." "Hardly ever can a youth unlearn the vices of speech bred in him before twenty. Hardly ever, indeed, no matter how much money there be in his pocket, can he even learn to dress like a gentleman born. The merchants offer their wares as eagerly to him as to the veriest 'swell,' but he simply cannot buy the right things. An invisible law, as strong as gravitation, keeps him within his orbit, arrayed this year as he was the last, and how his better bred acquaintances contrive to get the things they wear will be a mystery to him to his dying day."—*James*.

Note 4. The Application of this Truth to our Lives. Many applications will occur to the student himself, as he ponders this lesson. The two main applications have been set forth by Professor James as the conclusion of his famous chapter on "Habit."

"Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its never so little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, 'I won't count this time!' Well! he may not count it, and a kind heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among his nerve-cells and fibres the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many separate acts and

hours of work. Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working-day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can with perfect certainty count on waking up some fine morning, to find himself one of the competent ones of his generation, in whatever pursuit he may have singled out. Silently, between all the details of his business, the power of judging in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away. Young people should know this truth in advance. The ignorance of it has probably engendered more discouragement and faint-heartedness in youths embarking on arduous careers than all other causes put together."

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Prov. 27:22. Bray a fool: That is, pound him. The word "fool" as used in Proverbs, usually means a person who is bad morally. **Gal. 6:8.** He that soweth unto his own flesh: The crop depends on the field, as well as upon the seed. "Unto" or "into his own flesh," and "unto the Spirit" represents two kinds of fields, in Paul's thought. One's own flesh means selfish desires. The Spirit represents the promptings of the voice of God in our hearts.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"Sow a thought, and reap an act;
Sow an act, and reap a habit;
Sow a habit, and reap a character;
Sow a character, and reap a destiny."

"Habit a second nature! Habit is ten times nature."—*Duke of Wellington.*

"Since custom is the principal magistrate of man's life, let man by all means endeavor to obtain good customs."—*Bacon.*

"The Moving Finger writes, and, having writ,
Moves on; nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

—*Omar Khayyam.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Give illustrations from your experience to show that the principle expressed in Prov. 22:6 holds true of kittens, puppies or colts as well as children.

2. Is it true that it is absolutely impossible for a bad man to be changed into a good man? Do you think this is the meaning of Prov. 27:22?

3. In view of the general principle set forth in Prov. 22:6, at which age would it be the easier for a bad man to reform, at twenty-five, or at forty?

4. According to our English proverb, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," how soon does a puppy become an "old dog"? How soon does a child become so old that it is hard for him to form new habits? (Note 3.)

5. About how many more years than a dog does a human being have, in which to form right habits? What does this show regarding the importance of a human life?

6. Suppose a man tells a lie to a friend; in what two different ways, at least, will he reap a harvest of consequences from that seed?

7. Does it follow from Rev. 22:1 that if a man should repent and turn to God in the future life, God would not receive him? Do you think it probable that a thoroughly bad man will thus repent?

8. A certain young man finds it hard to get down to breakfast on time; he has a real struggle almost every morning, before he can get out of bed. He is often discouraged about himself, and thinks he

must be very weak willed. In view of the experience of Jesus in the matter of going to the synagogue, can you think of any way in which he might make these struggles unnecessary? (See Note 2.)

9. A girl resolves to stop using certain slang expressions. In which period must she watch herself most carefully, the first week, or the second week, or the third week, after she has formed the resolution? Can you think of anything she might do, to make her success more certain?

10. What two applications does Professor James make, of the law of habit, in the paragraph quoted in Note 4?

Note-book Work. Write a short essay, giving illustrations of the force of habit from your own experience.

Lesson 15. THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CONTROL. **Temperance in Good Things, Abstinence from Bad Things.**

Scripture Lesson, Prov. 20:1; 21:17; 22:29-35; 25:16; Gal. 5:22, 23.

Note 1. Does Religion Mean a Long Face? "The Puritans objected to bear-baiting," says the historian Macaulay, "not because the sport was painful to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators." The Puritan movement was one of the grandest in modern history, as Macaulay himself pointed out. The Puritans made a mistake, however, in supposing that religious people ought not to have any amusement. They condemned with equal severity cruel sports like bear-baiting, and innocent recreations like checkers. Many young people have been repelled from religion and the church by this "Puritanical" idea. In this lesson we shall try to find out what is the right attitude toward amusements, fun, and pleasures of every sort.

Note 2. What the Sages Taught regarding Self-control. In ancient Israel, as among all ancient peoples, wine was regarded as one of the chief sources of pleasure; indeed, the word came to be used as a kind of synonym for pleasure. Almost every hillside in Palestine was clothed with grapevines, and the time for gathering the vintage was the merriest season in the year. Connected with each vineyard, or group of vineyards, was a wine-press. This consisted usually of two large troughs, or vats, hollowed out of the natural rock, or built of masonry. One was on a higher level than the other. The grapes were emptied in the upper one, and bare-footed men, women and children "trode the wine-press." The grape juice flowed into the lower vat, through the connecting channels in the rock. The treaders made merry with jokes and laughter, and "vintage songs." After the juice was all pressed out, it was allowed to ferment in large jars, and after a time was stored away in "wine-skins," made of the hides of goats or oxen. The wine thus prepared was an article of everyday use among all classes. It was prized because it made "glad the heart of man" (Ps. 104:15), and caused "the bitter of soul" to "remember his misery no more" (Prov. 31:7). This wine, however, as compared with our modern distilled liquors, was very mild. The ancients were not acquainted with the process of distillation, and powerful spirits like brandy and whiskey were unknown. Moreover, each family, as a rule, produced its own wine, which was used as freely as tea and coffee among us. There were no saloons; there was no organized liquor traffic striving to increase as much as possible the consumption of poisonous liquors, careless of the consequences.

In view of these facts, it is significant that even in that ancient time, the sages recognized so clearly the perils which attended the use of wine. In at least one of the passages in our lesson, the author comes out flatly for total abstinence.

"Look not thou upon the wine when it is red,
When it sparkleth in the cup.

.....
At the last it biteth like a serpent,
And stingeth like an adder."

There are many other enjoyable things less dangerous than wine, but which leave bad results when used in excess. How the Hebrew farmer must have rejoiced when he found a

mass of luscious honey in a hollow tree or a cleft in the rocks, and how tempted he would be to eat of it till it sickened him! What a luxury it must have seemed to the dwellers in that hot climate to soothe the burned and smarting skin with olive oil, especially when it was scented with perfumes from Arabia, as was often the case; and what a temptation it must have been to spend much of their time in the indulgence of such luxury! In all such matters, however, the sages counseled moderation. These are good things, but they are not the things of chief importance. Health and wealth are of more importance than prolonged enjoyment, and there are other things more important still. How foolish, therefore, to sacrifice the really worthy achievements of life through immoderate indulgence in mere pleasures! In short, we may sum up the teaching of the sages in the sub-title of our lesson: "Temperance in good things, abstinence from bad things."

Note 3. New Light on the Effects of Alcohol. There is far more reason now for abstaining entirely from alcoholic beverages than there was in ancient times. Not only are our liquors stronger and more harmful, but we also have greater knowledge regarding the effects of alcohol even in small amounts, upon the human body. Some of the most important discoveries are very recent. Many people, even among total abstainers, still suppose that alcohol is a stimulant. They would admit that in a case of extreme exhaustion, as for example, in the crisis of certain diseases, it may help to sustain heart action, and thus tide the patient over the crisis or that it may in some cases stimulate an orator to flights of eloquence, otherwise impossible. The temperance people have said, however, "We will leave a stimulant so dangerous as this to be used only by competent physicians. As for eloquence, there are other sources of inspiration, not only less dangerous but mightier in effect." This is certainly good logic. But it now appears that the foes of alcohol have been too generous even in these admissions. The majority of investigators now declare that alcohol is not a stimulant. As a drug, it is to be classed with the narcotics and anæsthetics rather than with the stimulants. As an anæsthetic it has a deceptive effect on the feelings. It makes a man feel warm, when he is really cold. It makes a man feel strong, when he is really weak. And as for the ancient notion that wine is a hand-

maid of poetry, eloquence and song, it now appears that even this is a delusion. Long ago Dr. Johnson pointed out that alcohol tended to make a man mistake words for thought, and he was right. It makes a man feel eloquent, in other words, when he is perhaps only making a fool of himself. Alcohol may surely be awarded the prize, as the champion faker of human history.

The movement for total abstinence is stronger to-day than ever before. In Germany, beer has been used for centuries as a daily beverage, as wine was used in ancient Israel. But Kaiser Wilhelm, in a recent address to an audience of naval cadets, came out squarely for total abstinence. He said, "The nation which in the future uses the smallest amount of alcohol will march at the head of the column."

Note 4. Application of the Principle of the Sages to Other Forms of Pleasure. Many important matters to which this principle may be applied, are referred to in the questions. One or two applications may be taken up here. Every man has to face the question, "Shall I, or shall I not, use tobacco?" Now it is universally agreed that while the body is growing, tobacco is exceedingly harmful. On the principle of abstinence from bad things, it is clear that no growing boy should touch tobacco in any form. As for its use in adult life, the truth is that a man who has not as a boy acquired the habit of using tobacco seldom does so later on.

The principle may also be applied to the question of reading. There are some books which are positively harmful. To read them is to live in an atmosphere of low ideals, of secret or open contempt for truth and goodness. Self-control means the avoidance of such books, as mental and moral poison. On the other hand, the shelves of our libraries are filled with good books, with novels, for example, like those of Scott and Dickens, in every way uplifting, and intensely interesting as well. But we should use moderation in reading even them. A good story stirs within us noble emotions that should lead to noble actions. But in a constant novel reader, the emotions are dissipated without reaching expression in real deeds. "There is no more contemptible type of human character," says Professor James, "than that of the nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer who spends his life in a weltering sea of sensibility and emotion, but who

never does a manly, concrete deed. . . . The habit of excessive novel reading and theatre going will produce true monsters in this line. The weeping of a Russian lady over the fictitious personages in the play, while her coachman is freezing to death on his seat, is the sort of thing that everywhere happens on a less glaring scale."

Note 5. How to Attain Self-control. Said a negro preacher, "When you're lookin' at your neighbor's melon patch, bredderin, you cain't keep your mouf from waterin', but you kin run." The old preacher's advice may be put in another way, as follows: When you are tempted to do wrong, think of something else. To keep saying to yourself, "I won't, I won't," simply holds the tantalizing thought before your mind. It is like lingering beside the melon patch. It is a good thing, therefore, to have a variety of healthful interests, to which we can turn in moments of temptation. Cultivate a taste for good books; learn to play some musical instrument, play tennis, swim, skate, play baseball. But even here remember that amusements are like luxuries, good in moderation but bad in excess. Candy and mince pie are good in small quantities, but not as a steady diet. Above all, have some strong central worthy purpose in life. Such a purpose, like a rudder, will hold you true to your course, in spite of the allurements of self-indulgence.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Prov. 20:1. Whosoever erreth thereby: Better translated in the margin, "reeleth," that is, "is intoxicated" thereby.

Prov. 21:17. He that loveth pleasure: That is, makes pleasure-seeking the chief business of life.

Prov. 23:29. Who hath woe? who hath sorrow: A picture of the misery that comes the morning after a debauch.

Who hath wounds without cause: That is, gets into needless fights.

Redness of eyes: Or dulness of eyes.

Prov. 23:30. Mixed wine: Wine to which spices have been added to make it hotter and stronger.

Prov. 23:33. Thine eyes shall behold strange things: Referring to the crazy notions of the drunken man.

Prov. 23:34. Lieth upon the top of the mast: The translation is not quite certain. Perhaps the line should be rendered, "like a sailor sleeping in a storm." The general idea is plain: the drunkard is heedless in the midst of danger.

Prov. 23:35. They have stricken me, . . . and I was not hurt; . . . I will seek it yet again: The words of the drunkard coming out of his drunken stupor. He finds wounds and bruises on his body, and knows nothing about how he received them, save that it was while he was drunk. Yet he learns nothing from experience. **Gal. 5:23. Self-control:** Paul seems to make this virtue the climax in the long list of virtues which are the "fruit of the Spirit."

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose and left it on its stalk?
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust,
And loved so well a high behavior,
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
Nobility more nobly to repay?
O, be my friend, and teach me to be thine!"

—*Emerson.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Do you think that the words "mocker" and "brawler" in Prov. 20:1 refer to the wine itself, or to the man who drinks it?

2. Do you think the motive appealed to in Prov. 21:17 is a high or a low one? What would be a higher motive?

3. Which lines in Prov. 23:29-35 do you admire most, and why?

4. Put into modern language Prov. 25:16. Remember that the ancients did not have sugar, and therefore used honey a great deal more than we do.

5. Apply the principle of the wise men to the problem, "Is it right to play cards?" Consider
(a) Gambling games.

(b) Games in which actual money is not wagered, but in which the players go through the forms of gambling, for example, with matches.

c) Games chiefly of skill, like whist.

6. Apply the principle to the question of theatre going; consider

(a) Shows which are morally degrading.

(b) High class plays, such as a rendering of Shakespearian dramas, by good actors.

7. Apply the principle to the question of dancing. It is often said that waltzing requires an improper position. This is no doubt true of the waltz as sometimes danced. Consider, as in the above questions

(a) Round dances;

(b) Square dances;

(c) Public dances.

8. Suppose some one should say to you, "Moderate drinking does no harm; I know when to stop." How would you answer him?

9. Suppose a man should say, "I am a traveling salesman; I cannot sell goods without drinking with my customers." How would you reply?

10. What is the best way of resisting temptation (Note 5)? Can you explain, by this principle, how a person is helped to overcome sin, by being an enthusiastic Christian?

Note-book Work. It would be a good idea to secure two worn-out or inexpensive copies of the Bible, and cut out all the passages in our lesson and paste them in your note-book. Thus you will have all together the teachings of the sages regarding self-control. Include in your collection Prov. 31:4-7.

Lesson 16. THE POWER OF THE TONGUE. The Mischief of Inconsiderate Speech.

Scripture Lesson, Prov. 12:18; 15:1, 2, 4; 16:27, 28, 32; 17:9, 27, 28; 25:11; 26:20-22; Mt. 12:36, 37; Jas. 3:1-12.

Note 1. The Habit of Tale Bearing. John Fox gives us a character sketch in one of his stories of Kentucky mountaineer life, which reminds one of what is said in Proverbs about a "whisperer." "Abe tuk to lyin' right naturely, looked like, afore he could talk. Fact is, Abe never could do nothin' but jes' whisper. Still, Abe could manage to send a lie furder with that rattlin' whisper than old Tom could, with that big horn o' hisn. Some feller finds a streak o' ore on old Tom's land, an' tells a furriner in town, an' Tom comes might' nigh sellin' the land fer nothin'. Now Tom raised Abe, but jes' the same, the feller was Abe. Somebody tells Harve Hall up thar at a dance on Christmas night that Rich Harp had said somep'n agin him and Nance Osborn. An' somebody tells Rich that Harve had said somep'n agin Nance and him. Hit was one an' the same feller, stranger, an' that feller was Abe. Hit's purty hard to believe that Abe air gone, but if Abe air gone, why the rest of us air goin' to be saved shore. Fer Abe's gone fust, an' ef thar's only one Judgment Day, the Lawd'll nuyer git to us."—Condensed from *The Passing of Abraham Shivers*.

Note 2. Why the Wise Men Urged Carefulness in Speech. We all know that gossip is one of the besetting sins of village life. This was even more true formerly than now, when the railroad, the telephone and the rural free delivery have brought the village closer to the city and broadened its outlook. But even now, in the genial warmth of the stove down at the store, on a winter's evening, or at the weekly meetings of the "sewing circle," the stream of talk frequently swells to a torrent, and it is easy on such occasions to speak unwisely. The ancient Hebrews were probably not more talkative by nature than other races. Canaan, however, was a land of small villages. There were few large towns. The population of Jerusalem in those days was probably never larger than forty thousand. The great majority of the people lived in villages, the men going out daily to work in the fields, the women attending to the duties

of the home. The "village gate" corresponded to our country store, and not only at the gate, but up and down the narrow street, every day in the year, there was endless opportunity for gossip. Everybody knew everybody else. They had, in fact, little else to think and talk about, besides one another. We cannot wonder that the wise men had so much to say about the importance of carefulness in speech, or even that they should at times have maintained, as does our modern proverb, that silence is "golden."

Note 3. The Teaching and Example of Jesus. In speaking of the early life of Jesus, some one has coined a phrase, "the thirty silent years." The expression sets one to thinking. We cannot doubt that Jesus felt like speaking publicly to His fellow men about God and duty, long before He was thirty years old. Great ideas must have surged within Him. But He kept silent. Even after the call came to Him at the time of His baptism, He went first into the wilderness to be alone for a while, before He began His public ministry. It was in part because He thus took time to think in silence, to brood over the truth, that it could be said of Him, "never man so spake." He could be silent when it was proper to be silent, and, what is just as important, He could say the right word when the occasion called for speech. He realized the extent of the influence which it is possible to wield in the lives of men through speech, and although He insisted that words could not be substituted for deeds (Mt. 7:21), He declared that God holds us rigidly responsible for every idle, that is, every careless word.

Note 4. Application to our Own Lives. "Think before you speak." This is one phase of the teachings of the Bible on this subject. To many people it is the most important phase. Unkind and angry words would seldom be spoken if one would stop for a moment and think how they are likely to affect the person addressed. Friendships may be thereby wrecked and whole lives blasted. The speaker would often give anything in his power to have it unspoken, but it can no more be recalled than can a bullet when it has sped from a gun on its murderous errand. Silence, moreover, is often as eloquent, and may be as cruel and as deceptive as speech. The truly good man must cultivate the art of speaking words which shall be like "apples of

gold in network of silver." Frederick the Great was once ridiculing Christianity in the presence of his generals. Most of them were convulsed with laughter at his coarse jests. One of them, however, Joachim von Zietan, remained silent, and after a time could bear it no longer. "Your Majesty knows well," said he, "that in war I have never feared any danger, and everywhere I have boldly risked my life for you and my country. But there is One above us who is greater than you and I—greater than all men. The Holy One I can never allow to be mocked or insulted; for on Him repose my faith, my comfort, and my hope in life and death. I salute your Majesty." The great emperor looked at the man in astonishment and admiration, and then and there apologized for what he had said. Joachim von Zietan had spoken the right word at the right time, and it has made his name illustrious. The power of the tongue for good or for evil,—that is the thing we need to realize more keenly. Single sentences have changed the course of history for better or for worse. "Here I stand; God help me, I cannot do otherwise," said Luther at Worms, and the Reformation was born. "Remember the Maine," cried some one, and Cuba was destined to be free. "The tongue is a little member; . . . Behold how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!"

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Prov. 15:1. A grievous word: A harsh word. **Prov. 15:4. Perverseness therein:** Violence is perhaps a better translation than perverseness. The line means "violent words wound the soul." **Prov. 16:27. Deviseth mischief:** Literally, "Digs a pit of mischief," as a trap for his fellow men. **Prov. 16:28. A perverse man:** That is, a false man. **Prov. 16:32. He that ruleth his spirit:** This verse may be applied to self-control in all things, but the wise man had in mind chiefly self-restraint in speech, when angry. **Prov. 17:9. He that covereth a transgression:** That is, he who is silent about the faults of his neighbors. **Prov. 17:27. He that spareth his words:** He that is cautious in speech. **Prov. 25:11. Like apples of gold in network of silver:** Or, as others translate, "like graven work of gold and carved work of silver." The phrase certainly refers to some form of artistic metal work. **Prov. 26:21. As coals are to hot embers:** That is, charcoal.

which burns quickly when put on hot embers. **Prov. 26:22.** **The words of a whisperer are as dainty morsels:** The slanderer can almost always find an eager audience. **Mt. 12:36.** **Every idle word that men shall speak:** The Pharisees had accused Jesus of casting out demons through Beelzebub the prince of the demons. It was one of the most wicked sentences ever spoken. It called forth from Jesus His terrific warning against blaspheming the Holy Spirit (Mt. 12:31, 32). This verse about idle speaking was uttered in the same connection. "You probably did not think what you were saying," Jesus means; "but remember, for every careless utterance, men will be held responsible on the day of judgment." **Jas. 3:1.** **Be not many of you teachers:** Be not too eager to get up in prayer meeting and exhort others to do right; for if you yourself do wrong afterwards, the harm caused thereby is all the greater. The early Christians were so eager to speak in their meetings that a perfect babel sometimes resulted (1 Cor. 14:20-33). James goes on to speak of the danger of misusing the tongue in other ways besides that of exhortations with which one's life is inconsistent. **Jas. 3:2.** **If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man:** Anybody who can control his tongue can certainly control himself in other ways. For the tongue is the most "unruly member" of all. **Jas. 3:3.** **If we put the horses' bridles into their mouths, etc.:** Just as you can control the entire body of a horse by putting a bit in his mouth, so it will be easy to control ourselves in other ways if we can control our tongue. **Jas. 3:4.** **The ships also, . . . are yet turned about by a very small rudder:** In this verse James proceeds to speak of the extraordinary influence of the tongue, in spite of the fact that it is "a little member." **Jas. 3:6.** **The world of iniquity among our members is the tongue:** The tongue is the worldly, evil element in human nature. **The wheel of nature:** This phrase perhaps means our natural impulses. **Jas. 3:8.** **The tongue can no man tame:** The tongue is hardest to be tamed. **Jas. 3:10, 11.** **These things ought not so to be, etc.:** These things are unnatural. You can depend upon a fountain to give forth one kind of water, and on a tree to produce one variety of fruit. But the tongue sometimes blesses and sometimes curses. **Jas. 3:12.** **Neither can salt water yield sweet:** A spring of salt water never gives forth fresh water.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“ These clumsy feet, still in the mire,
 Go crushing blossoms without end.
 These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
 Among the heartstrings of a friend.
 The ill-timed truth we might have kept,
 Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung!
 The word we had not sense to say,
 Who knows how grandly it had rung!”

—*Edward Rowland Sil.*

“ Never dare hurt any soul. The most awful consciousness a man can have is that he has hurt a human soul years ago, and now has no power to repair the damage. He may have recovered from the injury to his own being, but the knowledge that he has ever injured the soul of another man or woman, who has gone out of his sight now, so that he cannot know how serious the injury may have been, is a terrible thing for any one to know.”—*Phillips Brooks.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What may have been some personal experience of the wise man who wrote Prov. 12:18? (Note 2 may help to answer this and the following question.)

2. What actual occurrence at the gate of some Hebrew village may have occasioned such proverbs as 16:28 and 26:20-22?

3. Mention, if you can, illustrations from your own experience of the truth that “a soft answer turneth away wrath.”

4. Is it reasonable to infer from Prov. 17:27, 28 that silence is always better than speech?

5. Give an example of an occasion when silence would certainly not be golden.

6. Is it literally true that "the tongue can no man tame" (Jas. 3:8)? How does Jesus show that the tongue may be tamed (Mt. 12:34, 35)?

7. Which of the proverbs in our lesson apply especially to people who pride themselves on being blunt and plain-spoken?

8. Can you think of some word of praise which you could say to some friend, and which it would do him good to hear? Which of the proverbs in our lesson would lead us to say such things oftener than we do?

9. Call to mind some person whom you dislike, and try to think of his good qualities. How many can you name?

10. Name, if you can, some person whom you know, whose words are usually "fitly spoken," "like apples of gold in network of silver."

Note-book Work. Continue the plan of clipping the Scripture references from a worn-out copy of the Bible. Paste them in your note-book, putting those together which are similar in thought. Classify them under the following four heads:

- (1) Necessity for caution in speech.
- (2) Value of kind and tactful words.
- (3) Importance of restraining angry words.
- (4) Evils of gossip.

Lesson 17. THE DIGNITY OF WORK. The Demoralizing Effect of Laziness.

Scripture Lesson, Gen. 2:15; 3:17-19; Prov. 6:6-11; 24:30-34; 26:13-16; Mk. 6:3; Eph. 4:28.

Note 1. The Tendency to Despise Manual Labor. During a recent Christmas season, the daughter of a wealthy society woman carried home a small parcel from a department store. Her mother was horrified. "Why didn't you have it delivered?" she asked. "Every one is overworked at the store, just now, mother," the girl answered. "I wanted to give them as little trouble as possible." "I don't care how hard they have to work," said the mother, "you must never lower yourself in this way again. I think you might consider your family. What do you suppose Mrs. S—— will say?" In all ages, there has been a tendency on the part of certain classes of society to despise all kinds of labor, especially manual labor, as degrading. The ideal life, according to this point of view, is one of idleness. Is there a vestige of truth in this notion? Our lesson should help us to answer this question.

Note 2. Labor Honored among the Hebrews. In the early days of Israel nearly all the people worked with the hands. Boaz winnowed his own barley, tossing the chaff and the grain into the air, so that the wind blew the chaff away (Ruth 3:2). Saul, even after he had been anointed as king by Samuel, plowed in his father's field (1 Sam. 11:5). David was a shepherd until he went to the court of Saul. As the years passed, however, and there were more people who were rich, and therefore were not compelled to work, idleness became fashionable. The prophet Amos describes certain rich nobles who spent the greater part of their time lounging "in the corner of a couch and on the silken cushions in the bed." People of this sort wore garments with long flowing sleeves, in which it was impossible to do manual labor. It was such a long-sleeved robe that Jacob gave to Joseph (Gen. 37:3). It was not because of its gay colors that the brothers were jealous, but because the wearer of that style of coat was supposed not to do work like ordinary people. Among the Arabs to-day, all kinds of work which compel the worker to have his arms bare are looked down

upon. It is not genteel among them to have to roll up one's sleeves. The whole tendency of the Book of Proverbs, as shown by the references in our lesson, is to hold in contempt, not honest toil, but idleness and laziness. The prophets also helped to stem the tide of fashionable idleness. Amos, as we have seen, protested against the luxurious habits of the nobles, who "sang idle songs to the sound of the viol." It is from a historian who wrote in the spirit of the prophets that we have the story of the Garden of Eden. According to this story, when Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden, Jehovah said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." From this, it has sometimes been inferred that work in itself is a curse. The story does not mean this, however. For even in Eden the man was given the task of dressing the garden, and caring for it. The curse pronounced upon Adam was not labor, but unprofitable labor. To toil the long summer through, and reap little besides thorns and thistles at harvest, is indeed a hard and bitter life. And it is a fact that as a result of sin and greed, many human beings are condemned to ceaseless and ill-paid labor. This kind of labor is described by Edwin Markham in *The Man with the Hoe*:

"Bowed by the weight of centuries, he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face."

But the notion that work in itself is degrading seems to have originated among people who desired an excuse for their own idleness.

Largely through the influence of the wise men and the prophets, the Jews through all their later history have honored labor. According to the rabbis, to neglect to teach one's son some trade is to bring him up as a thief. The trade of the tanner was somewhat looked down upon, because of the disagreeable odors connected with it. Yet the rabbis said:

"Better to skin a carcass for pay in the public streets,
Than to lie idly dependent on charity."

Many of the famous rabbis themselves worked at trades. Johanan was a sandal-maker, Hillel was a wood-cutter, and as we all know, Rabbi Saul of Tarsus was a tent-maker.

Note 3. The Teaching and Example of Jesus. It was not necessary for Jesus to preach the virtue of industry. His countrymen had learned that lesson. He took the dignity and value of toil for granted, however, in many of His parables, such as those of the shepherd, the sower, and the laborers in the vineyard. And even though He did not explicitly exhort His disciples to be industrious, the example which He Himself set was more eloquent than words could have been. We are told that He was a carpenter. More exactly, perhaps, we should describe Him as a builder, that is, He probably worked both in wood and in stone. Do we realize clearly enough that until Jesus was thirty years old, He was a laborer; that He was accustomed to lift great heavy beams; that His hands were calloused, that His shoulders were broad and His muscles hard? It was during these years, moreover, that Jesus "grew in wisdom." Culture is not necessarily associated with soft white hands; for the most exquisitely cultured life that has ever been seen among men was the life of an ordinary mechanic, begrimed from day to day by the dust and sweat of toil. Moreover, as His parables show, it was through the homely experiences of that life of toil that He was best able to teach the great truths of God and human life. The sower scattering his seed, the housewife mixing yeast with her flour, or throwing out salt which had lost its savor—in such incidents of daily work Jesus bade His disciples find the sublimest truth revealed.

Note 4. The Dishonesty of Idleness. The wise men taught that laziness is justly punished by poverty. Laziness, therefore, is essentially dishonest. It is an attempt to live on the fruits of the labors of others. Paul, in writing to his Gentile converts, associates idleness with dishonesty. "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor." The truth is that all laziness is dishonest. A man may inherit wealth from his father. He may then say, "I don't *have* to work. I have a right to live in idleness the rest of my life, if I choose." To which we answer, "Tut, tut, young man; how came you to have so large a balance in your account with the world? How came your father by that wealth? Honestly, no doubt; but did he invent the steam engine which transported his goods? Did the wages

he paid suffice to heal the hurt of broken-hearted widows whose husbands risked their lives in his employ?" The truth is that society has already given to us all infinitely more than we can ever repay. The only honest thing for any of us to do is to give society in return a lifetime of enthusiastic labor, not necessarily manual labor, but useful effort, the best there is in us, whatever that may be. The rich man has received far more from society than the poor man. If he lives in idleness, he is therefore even more of a social parasite than the able-bodied beggar; for he is under greater obligation.

Note 5. Labor and Happiness. It is through work that the highest happiness comes to us all. It is not the money that one earns, but the work of earning it that gives us the greatest satisfaction. It is really far harder to be idle than to work. Idle people are always wretched. As a rule, having no work to do, they become disagreeable busybodies in the affairs of others, or they betake themselves to dishonorable ways. A convict was just beginning his term in the penitentiary. "What can you do?" asked the warden. "I never did a day's work in my life," the man answered. "That's probably why you are here," said the warden. Had this convict gone to work as a young man in some useful occupation, he would have kept out of mischief and out of jail. He would have found his work, in the long run, interesting and instructive. Among his fellow workers he would have found true friends. "Blessed is the man," says Carlyle, "who has found his work. Let him ask no other blessedness."

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Gen. 2:15. To dress it: The Hebrew word translated "dress" means to plow, or to till, the soil. **Prov. 6:7. Which having no chief . . . provideth her bread:** The ants do not need a boss to keep them at their work. **Prov. 6:9. How long wilt thou sleep:** The early morning hours were especially valuable to farmers in that hot climate. It was dangerous to work in the heat of the day. This verse and the two following represent a dialogue between the wise man and the sluggard. **Prov. 6:11. So shall thy poverty come as a robber:** Unexpected and terrifying. **Prov. 24:31.**

The face thereof: The surface, or the ground of the vineyard. **Prov. 26:13.** **There is a lion in the way:** Lions were found in some parts of Palestine, for example, the Jordan valley; but few people ever saw them. **Prov. 26:14.** **As a door turneth upon its hinges:** It can be swung to and fro, but it cannot be separated from the door-frame. The sluggard is firmly attached to his bed. **Prov. 26:16.** **Wiser in his own conceit:** No one can persuade him that his idleness is not the best kind of life. **Eph. 4:28.** **Let him that stole steal no more:** Paul was writing this letter to a church made up chiefly of Gentile converts. The morals of the Gentile world of that day were far lower than those of the Jews. For this reason Paul had to insist on the importance of common honesty, even in writing to Christian converts.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“ For I think that the king of that country
Comes out from His tireless host
And walks in the world of the weary,
As if He loved it the most.

“ For here in the dirt and confusion,
With eyes that are heavy and dim,
He meets again the laboring men
Who are looking and longing for Him.

“ This is the gospel of labor,
Ring it, ye bells of the kirk!
The Lord of Love came down from above
To live with the men who work.

“ This is the rose that He planted,
Here in the thorn-cursed soil;
Heaven is blessed with perfect rest,
But the blessing of earth is toil.”

—Henry van Dyke.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What experiences must the wise man have had who wrote Prov 6:9, 10?

2. What had the sluggard probably been doing, while his field grew to weeds, as described in Prov. 24:30, 31?

3. What are some modern excuses of lazy people, like that in Prov. 26:13?

4. What experience might have led the wise man to write Prov. 26:14?

5. What may have been some pieces of work which Jesus did while He was a carpenter at Nazareth?

6. Why is it that self-respecting persons will not accept charity, except as a last resort? (Note 4.)

7. Suppose you have prepared your lessons for school, and you have not been asked to do anything at home; have you a right to idle away the afternoon, if you choose?

8. Who is likely to take the most pleasure in his work, the man who continually shirks, or the man who works with all his might? Why?

9. Who is the more likely to be promoted to more interesting and important work, the man who shirks or the man who really works?

10. Give as many reasons as you can for being industrious.

* **Note-book Work.** Bible clippings, as in previous lessons. Select a picture illustrating industry, and paste it opposite the clippings. Any of the following Brown pictures by Millet would be appropriate: No. 105, The Angelus; No. 705, The Sower; No. 1144, Labor; No. 1372, Going to Work.

Lesson 18. THE VALUE OF CONTENTMENT. The Evil Results of Covetousness.

Scripture Lesson, Ex. 20:17; Prov. 3:13-15; 10:2; 14:30; 16:16; 22:1; 23:4, 5; 30:7-9; Eccl. 5:10-12; Lu. 12:13-21; Phil. 4:10-13.

Note 1. What are the Things Most Worth While? A girl had beautiful dark hair. But she was jealous of the admiration received by another girl, who was a blonde. So she bleached her hair. Was it worth while? A young high school boy wore stylish clothes. A classmate got a position working evenings, and earned the money to buy a dress suit like this first boy. But he neglected his studies; and failed in two of his examinations. Was it worth while? "What *is* worth while?" This is the most important question that men can ask. All through life it confronts us. The reason why people are envious and covetous and discontented is because their desires are foolish and wrong. They do not stop to consider what things are really worth while.

Note 2. The Experience of the Hebrew People. Throughout the history of the Hebrew people this was the question which led to their severest moral struggles: What are the things most worth while? Almost from the beginning there were those who wanted to be "like the nations round about." They thought it was most worth while to be in style. This motive appears in the story of the selection of Saul as king. Under Solomon, these people should have been satisfied, for he did his best to imitate the kings of Egypt and Assyria. He enslaved his people, enriching himself at their expense. He built a beautiful palace, while they lived in hovels. For the sake of material advantages, he formed political and religious alliances with the heathen nations round about, and introduced the worship of heathen gods in Israel. Ahab made precisely the same mistake as Solomon. The later prophets brought the same charge against the men of their day. Their fellow citizens, they said, were spending their lives in the pursuit of unimportant and unworthy ends. "My people," says Jeremiah, "have changed their glory for that which doth not profit." "Shalt thou reign," he says to king Jehoiakim, with biting sarcasm, "because thou strivest to excel in cedar?" According to Jeremiah, to do justice, and to judge the cause of the poor and needy, in

short, to "know Jehovah," was far more important than to build fine cedar palaces. The fundamental sin of the nation, according to the prophets, was this seeking after the things which were of lesser importance. There were many things which the Hebrews as a nation could never attain. They could never gain world-wide dominion, as the Assyrians and Babylonians had done. They could not hope to imitate successfully the glories of Egyptian art. Their language was not fitted to express the fine distinctions of philosophy, as was the language of the Greeks. But they had in their hearts that which the world needed far more than all these other things, namely, the knowledge of the true God. The chief message of the prophets to the nation was to cherish that precious gift which God had committed to their keeping, and if necessary, to let the other things go.

The Hebrew decalogue differs from all other legal codes, in the fact that it forbids wrong desires, as well as wrong acts. It thus recognizes the fundamental importance of desire in the sight of God. What we most earnestly desire, that is what we really are. "Make us desire the best things," prayed a young member of a Christian Endeavor society. She could not have offered a wiser prayer. The decalogue forbids coveting that which belongs to others. Such covetousness is dishonest. But it is also wrong, even though not dishonest, to set our whole hearts on things which are not worth while. All unworthy desires are wrong. Out of this false estimate of the value of things really unimportant sprang many of the evils which the wise men observed. One man had perhaps inherited wealth, or social position; another man found these things out of his reach, and fretted away his life in envy. How much better, thought the wise men, to be content with one's lot!

"A tranquil heart is the life of the flesh,
But envy is rottenness to the bones."

Others devoted their lives to the attainment of wealth, and were successful, but at how great cost! In their worldly prosperity, they forgot God. Thus the wise men echoed the teaching of the prophets, that the knowledge of God was the one thing worth while. The chief evil of covetousness is that it keeps us from knowing God.

Note 3. The Teaching of Jesus. "Seek ye first God's kingdom," Jesus said. On this point He was insistent. To the brothers who came to Him in our lesson story, He pointed out their fatal mistake. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Not what you have, but what you are, is the essential thing. The rich man whose whole life was absorbed in heaping up wealth finally cheated himself. Pitiably fool that he was, he had starved his own soul, in the midst of his great possessions. In another parable, Jesus tells of a man who found buried treasure while digging in a field. "In his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." He sold his cottage, we may imagine; sold all his little trinkets; sold even the bread out of his cupboard, and the coat off his back. People doubtless said, "You must be crazy." But he was only exercising common sense. The hid treasure was worth all these things, and more beside. In the same way, a merchant sold all that he had, to buy an exceedingly valuable pearl. A righteous character, Jesus means. Seek this, and do not waste your life seeking for things of less value. He would have us be contented in the good sense of that word; not contented with our own unworthy characters, but contented with the gifts which God has given us, even though we do not have some of the lesser blessings which others have.

Note 4. Application to our Lives. God has appointed for each one of us a work to do, which no one else can do. This is as true of the humblest individual as it was of the Hebrew people. In doing that work, we shall be expressing a thought of God which otherwise will eternally remain unexpressed. In comparison with so great an honor, how foolish of us to be envious of the gifts and opportunities of others, and how wicked of us to spend our energies in unworthy ways and thus be untrue to God's commission.

A youth was approached by his good Genius with two baskets on her arm. One she held out before him. In it were money, athletic achievement, intellectual power, good health, worthy friendships, and, best of all, an upright character intended specially for him. "Help yourself," she said. The youth stood irresolute. Finally he reached toward the other basket. In it were good looks, musical skill, clever wit, and social position. "Oh, but these were not intended

for you," said the Genius. Whereupon the youth fell into a grievous sulk. At last the visitor said, "Make haste and choose, for I must be going." The youth thereupon began to snatch what he could. He would have money, he would have intellectual power, he would have this and that besides. Greedily he filled his arms. Then he saw that there were still in the basket health, friendship, and the upright character which were to have been his. But he had no room for these things.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Prov. 14:30. Rottenness of the bones: Physical weakness and disease. **Prov. 22:1.** A good name: This means a good character with the resulting good reputation. **Prov. 23:4.** Cease from thine own wisdom: A better translation is, "Cease by reason of thine own understanding" (A. R. V. margin); that is, Use your wisdom to see how useless it is to weary yourself in toiling for such a delusive thing as riches. **Prov. 23:5.** That which is not: That which so quickly vanishes, that it might as well not exist. **Prov. 30:9.** Lest I be full, and deny thee: The man who is too prosperous is in danger of forgetting God. It is the sense of need which impels us to seek God. Use profanely the name of my God: That is, bring God's name into disrepute, through stealing. **Eccl. 5:10.** Vanity: Literally, "Emptiness." Riches are not worth the efforts men put forth to gain them. **Eccl. 5:11.** When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: With wealth come increasing demands for expenditure, a larger household, more calls for charity, and the like. **Lu. 12:14.** Who made me a judge or a divider over you: Jesus' mission was not to pronounce on the right and wrong of special cases, but to enable men, through His teachings, to decide such questions for themselves. **Lu. 12:16.** A certain rich man: Jesus does not mean by this parable that it is always wrong to be rich, but that it is wrong to make the selfish enjoyment of riches one's chief aim in life. **Lu. 12:21.** Rich toward God: Rich in character, which is the thing truly valuable in God's sight. **Phil. 4:10.** Your thought for me: Paul was in prison at Rome. In those days prisoners had to buy their own food and clothing, and Paul had suffered because he had little money. But now his friends in Philippi had sent one of their number, a man named Epaphroditus,

with a contribution for Paul. It was partly to thank them that Paul wrote this letter. Phil. 4:11. Not that I speak in respect of want: I am not complaining because I was in want.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“There is a time in every man’s education, when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better or worse as his portion; that, though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till.”—*Emerson*.

“The common problem, yours, mine, every one’s,
Is, not to fancy what were fair in life,
Provided it could be—but finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means; a very different thing!
My business is not to remake myself,
But make the absolute best of what God made.”
—*Browning*.

“I said it in the valley path,
I say it on the mountain stairs:
The best things any mortal hath
Are those which every mortal shares.

“The grass is softer to my tread
For rest it yields unnumbered feet;
Sweeter to me the wild rose red
Because it makes the whole world sweet.”
—*Lucy Larcom*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What are some of the things more valuable than riches, according to the wise men? (Prov. 3:13-15; 10:2; 16:16; 22:1; 30:7-9.)

2. What are some of the disadvantages of riches? (Prov. 23:4, 5; Eccl. 5:10.)

3. What is to be said of the advantages and disadvantages of poverty? (Prov. 30:9; Eccl. 5:12.)

4. Is it reasonable to infer from these proverbs that one should make no effort to acquire money?

5. Did Jesus mean to teach that we are not to protect ourselves from being cheated in money matters? (Lu. 12:13-15.)

6. What experience had the wise man who wrote Prov. 23:4, 5 probably had?

7. In the same way, describe the kind of experience which probably lies back of Prov. 30:7-9.

8. In what order of importance would you place the following things: health, great physical strength, intellectual ability, money sufficient to live in comfort, power to appreciate music, power to win and retain friendship.

9. What would you say is the thing in life of greatest worth?

Note-book Work. Paste in the lesson clippings. Write an essay on money, considering especially whether it may not be a worthy ambition for some persons to become rich. What good could such persons do?

Lesson 19. THE FOLLY OF BOASTFULNESS. Ancient Estimates of Pride.

Scripture Lesson, Prov. 11:2; 16:18; 22:4; 26:12; 27:2; 29:23; Mt. 5:3, 5; Lu. 14:7-11.

Note 1. Is Pride Always Wrong? A school-boy, who ordinarily did good work in his studies, one week brought home a report card with very low marks. His mother reproved him. "I should think you would have a little pride," she said. The following Sunday at church the minister preached a sermon against pride. The boy was confused, and no wonder. We all hear people say things about pride and humility, which seem contradictory. One day we hear a person praised for his modesty; the next day we are exhorted to be self-reliant, to have faith in our own powers; in short, to think more highly of ourselves, or apparently to be more proud. Let us see if we can understand a little more clearly what kind of pride is right and proper, and what kind is wrong and harmful.

Note 2. The Teachings of the Wise Men. "Pride goeth before destruction;" this is the gist of the teachings of the Book of Proverbs on this subject. We can easily imagine the experiences which led the wise men to the conviction that some kinds of pride lead to destruction. A young man undertakes to manage a farm, near Jerusalem or Hebron. His father is dead, and the responsibility falls on his shoulders. An old neighbor stops for a visit one day, and notices that the sheep do not seem healthy. The old man ventures a friendly word of advice regarding the care of sheep. The young man tilts his chin in the air. He guesses he knows how to run this farm. When he needs advice, he will ask for it. So the old man goes away offended. By and by the young man's sheep all die, and he and his family are reduced to poverty. Or perhaps a man sets up a store or bazaar, in Jerusalem. He has silks, or spices, or perfumes to sell. But he is haughty in his bearing. He speaks contemptuously to his fellow tradesmen and even to his customers. He makes enemies. People do not like to buy things at his bazaar. When he gets into business difficulties and needs to borrow money, no one wants to lend him any. So, finally he fails in business. Another young man begins to associate with

wild and drunken companions. He is warned by those who are older and wiser than he. His father and mother plead with him. But he only laughs at their counsel; he thinks "the old man" is foolish; that he himself is old enough now to do as he pleases. By and by the gang with whom he has been associating attempt a robbery, and all connected with it, including this young man, are punished. The wise men must have observed such incidents as these, for besides our lesson references, there are many other passages in the Book of Proverbs which counsel humility and warn against pride.

Note 3. The Teaching and Example of Jesus. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." This seems to have been a favorite saying of Jesus (Mt. 18:4; 23:12; Lu. 18:14). In the parable referred to in our Scripture lesson, he shows one reason why it is wiser to be modest. Through vanity and self-conceit, we lose the good-will of our fellow men. In the first and third of the beatitudes, Jesus tells us that humility is both essential to worldly success and fundamentally necessary in our attitude toward God.

In the personality of Jesus there was a most remarkable blending of self-assertion and humility. He "taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes." With the dignity of this conscious authority, He set aside the traditions of the elders, and even certain injunctions of the law of Moses. "Ye have heard that it was said, . . . but I say unto you." On the other hand, He said of Himself, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." And these adjectives the world has accepted as fitting. "The meek and lowly Nazarene," that is one of the descriptions which is most frequently applied to Him. It would seem, therefore, that we also, if we would live as true disciples of Jesus, must learn to combine in our lives the right kind of humility and the right kind of pride.

Note 4. The Difference between Proper Self-esteem and Harmful Pride. As we saw in the preceding lesson, each person has a unique work to do in the world. He must therefore to his "own self be true." There must be times when he rejects the advice of his friends, however well-meant, and asserts his own individuality. He must recognize the fact

that he has an individuality of his own, and take pride in the honor God has bestowed upon him. On the other hand, notice the expression we have used; the honor which God "has bestowed." All that we have and are comes from God. Furthermore, we are not only absolutely dependent upon God, we are also dependent in countless ways upon our fellow men. We cannot do our work unless they help us. We cannot be developed to the full extent of our powers unless they counsel, encourage and inspire us. The man who loses sight of this dependence upon his fellow men, and upon God, shuts himself off from all good. Furthermore, the man who in any respect is successful in life, must never forget that the part played by his own will-power is very small; God only knows how large, or how small. Other men have helped him to be what he is. For this reason, the very greatest men, such as Milton or Handel or Lincoln, were never puffed up by the praise of their fellow men. Handel, in speaking of the way he composed *The Messiah*, declared that the music of the angels was ringing in his ears, and that he only wrote down the notes. In short, we ought indeed to think very highly of our lives as having each its own place in God's great universe; but we ought to be very humble in our estimate of what we are in ourselves, alone and unaided.

In this, as in all other cases where the first person singular comes into collision with the other persons in the grammar of life, the way to a reconciliation is through the first person plural. I, by myself, am nothing. You, apart from your fellow men, could not amount to a great deal. But you and I and God together—how proud we should be!

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Prov. 22:4. Humility and the fear of Jehovah: The man who is unassuming in his attitude toward other men will be humble and reverent in his attitude toward God. **Prov. 26:12. Wise in his own conceit:** Or, in a single word, conceited. **More hope of a fool:** The word fool is used here of a man intellectually stupid, but not morally wilful. **Mt. 5:3. Poor in spirit:** Not poor-spirited, or mean-spirited, but simply humble. The man who is poor in spirit recognizes his absolute dependence on God. **Lu. 14:7. Unto those that were bidden:** That is, to the "house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees" (14:1). **The chief seats:** The Talmud says that on a couch

holding three, the middle place is the most honorable, the left next, and the right is the least honorable.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

Why gaze they so? And there is in their eyes
 What something seems of wondering amaze.
 And one to-day, as I drew near to raise
 His aching head, choked in their midst his sighs.
 And started as one who, all unwarned, descries
 Some prodigy above, and in a daze,
 Fixed past my bending countenance his gaze:
 I lifted up my look—all smooth the skies.
 Perchance long looking downward upon men
 Has left mine eyes no longer keen and clear
 For signs and portents in the sky—but then,
 The skies gleam far away—men suffer near.
 The weary must be helped, the hungry fed—
 Sir, you mistake! A nimbus 'round *my* head?

—*C. DuFay Robertson.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What were probably some of the reasons why the wise men warned against pride? (Note 2.)

2. What experience had the wise man had who wrote Prov. 27:2?

3. Do you think humility means to be always depreciating oneself? Why not?

4. We sometimes hear the expression "a self-made man"; explain why no one is ever wholly a self-made man.

5. Mention some of the good influences to which most of us are indebted for whatever we may have attained, either intellectually or morally.

6. Which is least unreasonable, to be proud of one's good looks; or of one's musical voice; or one's musical skill; or one's high marks in school?

7. Why is it not only unreasonable but wrong to boast about any natural gift, or even about any of our achievements?

8. Mention, if you can, an example of an occasion when advice should be followed.

9. Mention an example of an occasion when well-meant advice should not be followed.

Note-book Work. Paste in the lesson clippings. Write a brief character sketch of Uriah Heep, in Dickens' *David Copperfield*. Why is it that Uriah's humility is so repulsive?

Lesson 20. THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN. The Growth of an Ideal.

Scripture Lesson, Deut. 10: 19; 23: 19, 20; Jonah ch. 1; 2: 10—4: 11.

Note 1. Are Americans the only People whom God Loves? Two little Italian boys, one Sunday, came to an American Sunday school. The superintendent received them kindly, and assigned them to a class. The pupils, however, did not speak to them; the superintendent found it difficult even to make room for the new-comers in the circle of chairs. The next Sunday, all the American boys stayed away. "We do not want to associate with those dagoes," said one of them. So the superintendent organized the little fellows into a class of two, and after a long search found a teacher for them. But the American boys threw stones at them, as they came and went, and did all they could to frighten them and make them wretched. Finally the Italian boys

left the Sunday school. If they learned anything about the Bible, and what the Bible says of God and Christ, they learned it elsewhere. Did those American boys show the right spirit in their actions?

Note 2. The Attitude of the Hebrews toward Foreigners. All nations are inclined to be suspicious and hostile toward foreigners. The Latin word *hostis*, from which our word hostile comes, originally meant stranger, but later came to mean enemy. Not only among the Romans but among all ancient nations all strangers were regarded as enemies. The early Hebrews were like all other nations in this respect. According to Deut. 23:19, 20, they were permitted to exact interest of a foreigner, although they were forbidden to do so in the case of fellow Israelites. On the other hand, the Hebrews made much of the virtue of hospitality; and there are many laws in the Old Testament, like Deut. 10:19, which forbid injustice toward foreigners (see Lesson 9).

To the Jews, in the later years of their history, the question of a right attitude toward foreigners came to have a deep interest. In the first place, they gradually realized that they were in some sense God's chosen people; that the true God had revealed Himself to them in their religion as He had not revealed Himself to other nations. When they compared their own worship of Jehovah, which they had learned from Moses and the prophets, with the senseless and degrading idolatry of other nations, it was natural that they should despise these idolaters. Furthermore, after having been cruelly oppressed for many centuries by some of these nations, there grew up in the Jew a feeling for all foreigners not only of contempt, but of intense hatred. This feeling is well expressed in Ps. 137:8, 9, where the author in his bitter invective against Babylon, exclaims:

“Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones
Against the rock.”

Note 3. The Message of the Book of Jonah. There were a few noble souls, however, among the Jews after the exile, who believed that Jehovah was too great and good to make a favorite or pet of any tribe or nation. God must care for other nations besides Israel, they said. God revealed Himself to Israel, not for Israel's sake only, but that Israel might be a missionary nation revealing the true God to the whole

world. Among these nobler souls was the author of the Book of Jonah. Most scholars now believe that this book is not to be taken as literal history, but as a story illustrating religious truth. Whether we take it as history or not, the main purpose of the author in writing it was to teach that God loves all men; that just as God sent Jonah to preach to the people of Nineveh, so He has sent His people Israel to tell all nations about Him; that all men everywhere, of whatever race, have in them possibilities for good, and will respond to God's message with heartfelt repentance; that, in short, all men are brothers, children of the one God of love.

Note 4. Application to our Lives. If the Book of Jonah had been written yesterday, it could not have a more practical application to our lives here in America to-day. We share with the Hebrews the common temptation to dislike people of other races and nationalities. Our prejudice is often very strong, even when we realize that there is no ground for it.

" I do not like you, Dr. Fell,
The reason why, I cannot tell."

Furthermore, like the ancient Hebrews, we have an intense national pride. We think that our civilization is the finest the world has ever seen. As Christians we believe that we have inherited from Israel and Israel's Christ the true religion. Like the Jews, we too often despise people of other races as hopelessly inferior. Like the Jews, moreover, we are brought into close contact with other races. The Jews were scattered all over the world. The world has immigrated to America, and settled down just around the corner from us. It is a serious question with us, as it was with the Jews, How shall we feel toward these people, and how shall we treat them? The author of the Book of Jonah says, "Treat them as brothers. God loves them just as He loves you. He has blessed you in order that you may bless them. From the goodness and mercy they see in you, their human brothers, they should learn about the goodness and mercy of God, their heavenly Father."

Two Chinese laundrymen opened a shop down on the lower East Side in New York City. They were much annoyed by young rowdies who lived near by, and who took delight in tormenting these "Chinks," as they called them. One morning a lady came in to leave a bundle of laundry,

and noticed that only one of the two men was in the shop. "Good morning, John," said the lady. "Where is the other John?" "He no come any more," was the reply. "Some Clistian genlmens hit him on the head with a blick." Fortunately, there are many true Christian gentlemen here in America, from whom our Chinese friends get a far better idea of the real meaning of Christianity.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Deut. 23:19. Thou shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother: People seldom borrowed money in those days, except when they needed it badly for the necessities of life. Hence it was regarded as cruel to make them pay interest.

Jonah 1:1. Jonah the son of Amittai: A prophet by that name is mentioned in 2 Ki. 14:25.

Jonah 1:2. Arise, go to Nineveh: At the time of the Jonah mentioned in 2 Kings, Nineveh was the greatest city in the world. See map in your Bible.

Jonah 1:3. Tarshish: Tartessus on the coast of Spain. Jonah had been commanded to go east. Instead, he went as far west as the ships of that day could carry him.

Joppa: See map. **Found a ship:** Doubtless a Phœnician ship. The Phœnicians were the sailors in those days.

From the presence of Jehovah: Jonah seems to have thought that he could hide from the God whom he was unwilling to obey.

Jonah 1:5. Cast forth the wares: That is, the cargo, whatever it was.

To lighten it unto them: So that the ship would be less likely to sink with them.

Jonah 1:10. Then were the men exceedingly afraid: Because of Jonah's description of his God as the God "who made the sea and the dry land."

Jonah 1:14. Thou . . . hast done as it pleased thee: The sailors believed that the lot fell upon Jonah through the divine direction.

Jonah 3:3. An exceeding great city of three days' journey: Requiring three days to walk through it.

Jonah 3:5. Sackcloth: A coarse cloth. Our word "sack" is derived through the Greek from the Hebrew word *saq* here used.

Jonah 3:7. Neither man nor beast: The beasts seem to have been made to share in the rites of mourning in order to express more emphatically the repentance of the people.

Jonah 4:4. Doest thou well to be angry: Many scholars prefer the translation in the margin, "Art thou greatly (or very) angry?" This is the kind of gentle irony that a mother might use with a pouting child.

Jonah 4:5.

Made him a booth: Perhaps a loose arbor of leaves and boughs. **Till he might see what would become of the city:** He thought that perhaps even yet Jehovah would destroy it. **Jonah 4:6.** **A gourd:** The shrub referred to grows in Egypt. It has broad leaves, and grows very rapidly. It is now called *Palma Christi*. **A shade over his head:** Jonah's booth probably did not make a very good shelter from the hot sun. **To deliver him from his evil case:** Through this plant Jehovah hoped to win him out of his selfish narrowness. **Jonah 4:7.** **A worm . . . smote the gourd:** Attacked its roots. **Jonah 4:8.** **Fainted:** Became faint. **Jonah 4:10.** **Regard for the gourd:** Pity for the gourd. **Jonah 4:11.** **Persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand:** This describes, perhaps, little children.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“The crest and crowning of all good,
Life's final star, is Brotherhood,
For it will bring again to earth,
Her long-lost Poesy and Mirth,
Will send new light on every face,
A kingly power upon the race;
And till it come, we men are slaves,
And travel downward to the dust of graves.

“Come, clear the way, then, clear the way!
Blind creeds and kings have had their day.
Break the dead branches from the path;
Our hope is in the aftermath—
Our hope is in heroic men
Star-led to build the world again.
To this event the ages ran;
Make way for Brotherhood—make way for Man!”

—Edwin Markham.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Why did Jonah “rise up to flee unto Tarshish”? (Jonah 4:2.)

2. What lesson should Jonah have learned regarding foreigners, from his experience with the heathen mariners? (Jonah 1:4-16.)

3. What kind of people were the inhabitants of Nineveh? (Jonah 1:2; 3:4-10.)

4. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Do you think that Jehovah meant to have the Ninevites believe that He would destroy Nineveh, whether they repented or not? Do you suppose Jonah told them exactly what Jehovah wanted them to hear?

5. Can you explain why Jonah was angry when Jehovah showed mercy to Nineveh?

6. Do you imagine that there was a selfish reason for Jonah's pity of the gourd? (Jonah 4:6-10.)

7. To how many of God's creatures does His love extend? (Jonah 4:11.)

8. In the light of this book, how would you answer a man who said, "I do not believe in foreign missions"?

9. How would Jonah have treated the Italian boys referred to in Note 1? How would the author of the Book of Jonah have treated them?

10. Suppose these boys had been negroes, instead of Italians, how would the author of the Book of Jonah have treated them?

Note-book Work. Give one or two examples of actions which express the spirit of brotherhood, and about which you yourself have known.

Memory Work. Prov. 3:1-23.

Lesson 21. SUFFERING FOR OTHERS. The Highest Form of Service.

Scripture Lesson, Is. 42:1-4; 52:13—53:12.

Note 1. Was it Fair? "Be careful and spend as little money as you can, George," said a father to his son who was going away to school. "You know I want your sister Marion to continue her violin lessons, and we must all be as economical as possible." But when George began to get acquainted with his schoolmates, he found that there were more ways of spending money than he had supposed. Before three months had passed, he had squandered a sum which should have been sufficient for the expenses of the entire year. "I will have to write George to come home," said the father in the family council at home. "I cannot afford to send him any more money." Then Marion spoke up: "It seems too bad that George cannot finish the year," she said. "Let me give up my violin lessons for the next six months, and send him the money." So George stayed at school, and Marion dropped her music until another year. A few days later Aunt Mary came to the house and was told about the matter. She was inclined to be indignant. "That is not fair," she said. "Marion should not have given up her lessons. She has as much right to her musical education as George has to go away to school. Let George suffer for his own foolishness." Was Aunt Mary right? Suppose you had been in Marion's place; would you have done as she did, or, on the contrary, would you have felt that it was your duty to go on with your music lessons as diligently and as enthusiastically as possible?

Note 2. Undeserved Suffering among the Hebrews. In the year 586 B. C. the city of Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. The temple was destroyed, the walls torn down, and the city left in ruins. Large numbers of the inhabitants were carried away as captives to Babylon. It was a blow from which the Hebrew people were long in recovering. A few refugees soon crept back and began to rebuild the city. After about seventy years, with the help of returned exiles from Babylon, a new temple building was erected on the old site; and at this time there were great hopes that the nation would soon have its own king again, and that prosperity would return. But these hopes were not realized.

The people remained poor and weak. They were unable to throw off the Persian yoke. They were surrounded by bitter enemies like the Edomites and the Moabites, and were unable to protect themselves from their murderous raids since the walls were still in ruins. It was a dark and discouraging period in their history.

These misfortunes were chiefly due to the past sins of the Hebrew people. But not all of them were wicked sinners. Isaiah and Jeremiah had not lived in vain. They had won many converts, and those converts had been active in spreading the truths taught by their great teachers. They probably met together on the Sabbath, as Christians meet in their churches. At their meetings they explained the teachings of the prophets, and worshiped with prayers and hymns. It was a band of upright, loyal men and women. We might call them the Christians of their day. Yet these faithful souls not only shared in the misfortunes which had befallen their nation, but they were bitterly persecuted by their own countrymen. Most of their members were poor. Indeed, they were often referred to as "the poor," or "the poor and needy." They were unable to protect themselves from the cruelty of their more powerful neighbors. The twenty-second psalm expresses the wretchedness which they sometimes felt. Could their whole story be told, it might be almost as thrilling as that of the early Christians under the Roman emperors. Was it just? This was the question which forced itself upon their minds. Their persecutors, who treated God's law with contempt, were the most prosperous men in the city. "How can God be just," they asked, "and yet permit such injustice to go unpunished? Why does God allow us to suffer, while wicked men flourish?"

Note 3. The Message of the Second Isaiah. The last part of the Book of Isaiah (chs. 40-66) was probably written during this period. The author's name we do not know. He is generally referred to as the "Second Isaiah," or "the Great Prophet of the Exile." His purpose in writing these chapters was to comfort the persecuted ones whom we have described. To their question, "Why does God allow us to suffer?" he answered, "God needs you to tell other men about Himself. He has chosen you to be His servant. Through you, He is seeking to teach His truth not only to His people in Israel,

but to the whole world. But you cannot carry out this mission without suffering. You must expect to be misunderstood, to be persecuted, even to be put to death. Is it not worth while to endure these things for the honor of helping God to make the world righteous?" In order to kindle in his hearers a greater enthusiasm for this mission, the prophet painted a word-picture. We have it in the fifty-third chapter. It may be entitled, "The Ideal Israelite." Into this picture the prophet wrought his hopes and his dreams, his most splendid visions of goodness, his noblest inspirations after heroism. He no doubt hoped that many of his hearers might succeed, in some measure, in becoming the kind of Israelite whom he had described. Yet so surpassing was the loveliness of the portrait which he had painted that Christian people, in beholding it, have always felt like bowing the head in worship and saying, "This is none other than our Master, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Note 4. We, too, May Suffer for Others. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life . . . shall save it." This paradox of Jesus sums up the meaning of our lesson. We live in a world which challenges us to be unselfishly heroic. Millions of people have suffered that we might be benefited. Some of the pupils who use this lesson may have passed through Hoosac Tunnel, sitting comfortably in their seats in the car. They probably did not realize what it cost to make their journey possible. One hundred and ninety-five lives were lost in the construction of Hoosac Tunnel. Unselfish suffering for the good of others is not rare. It is splendidly common. Every time you ride on the train, the man in the engine is risking his life for you. Your mother risked her life that you might be born. Unnumbered times since then, she has sacrificed her own comfort and health for your sake. In such a world, to live for self alone is not living, but only existing. Really to live, means to live for others as well as ourselves, to be willing, if necessary, to suffer for others.

Occasions for such unselfishness come to us all. We may not be called upon to endure persecution that others may know the truth, but almost every day we have opportunities to bear cheerfully little disappointments or troubles for the sake of the home or the school to which we belong. Shall we

not feel ourselves honored when such opportunities come, and be glad of the chance to show that we, too, have in our hearts the stuff out of which heroes are made?

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Is. 42:1. Behold, my servant: The prophet represents Jehovah as speaking these words of the righteous people in Israel. Sometimes the prophet speaks of the whole nation as Jehovah's servant, but oftener he means those people who are really trying to be like "the ideal Israelite." **He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles:** That is, he will teach the righteous religion of Israel to Gentile nations. **Is. 42:2. He will not cry, nor lift up his voice:** The earlier prophets used to preach on the streets. But their disciples found that quieter methods of teaching were in the end more successful. **Is. 42:3. A bruised reed . . . a dimly burning wick:** The earlier prophets, like Amos and Isaiah and Jeremiah, had been terribly severe in their denunciations. Their disciples found that it was unwise to imitate them too frequently in this respect. Just as a bruised reed, or cane, is easily broken, just as a dimly burning wick easily flickers out, so it is easy to discourage people through harsh condemnation. This ideal of a teacher was perfectly fulfilled only in the tenderness of Jesus. **Bring forth justice in truth:** Or better, "Faithfully will he teach the way of righteousness." **Is. 42:4. He will not fail:** That is, he will not give up hope. **The isles shall wait for his law:** That is, "Distant lands are waiting for his teaching." The prophet perhaps had in mind the hundreds of islands which dot the Ægean sea. **Is. 52:13. My servant shall deal wisely:** Or, better, as in the margin, shall prosper. Again, Jehovah is speaking. **Is. 52:14, 15.** The Hebrew text of these verses seems to have been damaged through the mistakes of scribes. The passage should probably be translated somewhat as follows:

" Even as many were astonished at him,
 So shall many nations tremble,
 Kings shall be silent before him,
 When what has not been told them they see,
 And what they have not heard they perceive."

This means, just as in the past Jehovah's servant David attained a place of honor in the eyes of the surrounding nations, so the time is coming, much to the surprise of many when

Jehovah's ideal servant shall be highly honored by all men. The passage in parentheses probably belongs between what are now vs. 2 and 3 of chapter 53 (see below). **Is. 53:1. Who hath believed our message:** Or, better, as in margin, "that which we have heard." With these words the prophet brings a new speaker on the stage, namely, a representative of the people to whom Jehovah's servant has been trying to teach the truth of God, and by whom he has been treated so unjustly. **The arm of Jehovah:** That is, Jehovah's power. **Is. 53:2. He grew up before him:** Or better, before us. **As a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground:** This religious movement (the disciples of the prophets) seemed small and insignificant. Who would suppose that it could ever amount to anything? In all these details the prophet was alluding to the experiences of righteous Israelites of his own day. It is not so much the details of the prophet's picture which were fulfilled in the sufferings of Jesus as the spirit and purpose which is expressed in the picture as a whole. **He hath no form nor comeliness:** So, in our day, some people might say of a church which had no beautiful stained glass windows nor pipe organ, it has "no form nor comeliness." After vs. 2 should be inserted the passage now in parentheses in 52:14, "his visage was so marred," etc. It means that the little Jewish church of old was made still poorer and more insignificant through persecution and misfortune. **Is. 53:4. Yet we did esteem him . . . smitten of God:** In those days, most people supposed that all misfortune was a sure sign of God's displeasure. So thoughtless persons said of Jehovah's people, "They are so unfortunate, they must be wicked." **Is. 53:5. The chastisement of our peace:** Or, "the chastisement for our well-being." **Is. 53:6. Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:** See Note 3. **Is. 53:8.** This verse should probably be translated somewhat as follows:

" By an oppressive judgment was he taken away,
 Yet who of his generation considered
 That he had been cut off out of the land of the living;
 For our transgressions had been stricken to death."

Many of those early disciples doubtless suffered martyrdom. **Is. 53:9. With a rich man in his death:** Or, "With evil-doers in his death." The prophet may have learned to regard "rich man" as a synonym for "evil-doer." Many of the rich men of his day were evil-doers. **Is. 53:10. When thou**

shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed: Or, better, "Because he made himself an offering for sin, he shall see posterity." Jehovah's people shall be rewarded; Jehovah will give to them children and long life. **The pleasure of Jehovah:** Jehovah's purposes. **Is. 53:11.** In this verse also the Hebrew text has probably been changed by scribes. It should read somewhat as follows:

"Out of his own suffering shall he see light,
He shall be satisfied with his knowledge.
My righteous servant shall make many righteous,
And himself will bear the burden of their iniquities."

That is, Jehovah's people will come to understand the reason why He allowed them to suffer, namely, in order to save others. This knowledge will comfort them. With the beginning, or perhaps the middle of this verse, Jehovah again becomes the speaker. **Is. 53:12.** **Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great:** This does not mean that Jehovah's people will be, literally, conquerors in war, but that they will be honored by all men as heroes. **Made intercession for the transgressors:** Prayed for the men who were persecuting them.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

A Jew to Jesus.

"O Man of my own people, I alone
Among these alien ones can know thy face,
I who have felt the kinship of our race
Burn in me, as I sit where these intone
Thy praises,—those who striving to make known
A God for sacrifice, have missed the grace
Of thy sweet human meaning in its place,
Thou who art of our blood-bond and our own.
Are we not sharers of thy Passion? Yea,
In spirit anguish closely by thy side
We have drained the bitter cup, and tortured, felt
With thee the bruising of each heavy welt.
In every land is our Gethsemane,
A thousand times have we been crucified."

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before writing the answers, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of this lesson.

1. To whom does the Second Isaiah apply the title "servant of Jehovah"?

2. What great idea do we find both in the Book of Jonah and in the writings of the Second Isaiah?

3. As we all know, the characteristic of Hebrew poetry is parallelism in thought, as in Ps. 24:7:

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors.”

Are the writings of the Second Isaiah prose or poetry? See if you can arrange Is. 42:1 in parallel lines of this kind.

4. Suppose you could change the chapter divisions in the Bible, where would you put the beginning of ch. 53?

5. What experiences probably led the prophet to write such sentences as those in Is. 53:3 and 53:8? (See Note 2; also Is. 42:22; 50:4-6; 51:7; 52:5.)

6. What do you think the prophet meant to show by putting so much of his description of the “Servant” into the mouth of the very people who had been persecuting him? What led those cruel persecutors to confess, “All we like sheep have gone astray; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all”?

7. In the light of this, what good did the sufferings of those faithful Hebrews do?

8. Is it wrong to be unselfish in the hope of a future reward? (Before answering this question, notice how in Is. 52:13 and 53:12 the prophet seeks to persuade the righteous people of his day to keep on being unselfish.)

9. What verses in this lesson would you select as the most beautiful?

Note-book Work. In the teacher's book, this lesson is printed in full, in poetical form, and in a translation which, in some places, is probably more correct than the translation in our Bibles. Ask your teacher to write a part of it, for example, 42:1-4, on the board, so that you can copy it into your note-book.

Memory Work. Prov. 3:1-26 (continued).

Lesson 22. FALSE AND TRUE WORSHIP. Ceremony vs. Righteousness.

Scripture Lesson, Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6:6-8.

Note 1. Seeking after God.

“ My golden spurs now bring to me,
 And bring to me my richest mail,
 For to-morrow I go over land and sea
 In search of the Holy Grail.”

So cried Sir Launfal, in Lowell's poem. But why were Sir Launfal and Sir Galahad and their fellow knights so eager to find the cup out of which Jesus drank? Why did the people in the Middle Ages so love those legends of the quest of the Holy Grail? Was it not because they longed to touch something which Jesus had touched? God seemed to them so far away! Perhaps they thought of Him as sitting upon a material throne up in the sky, and the sky is a long way from the earth. Even if they believed that God is everywhere, still everywhere did not seem very near to them. For they could not see Him or hear Him or feel Him, at least not with their physical senses. When they needed something, how could they be sure that God heard their prayers? When they were thankful, and wanted to express their love for Him, how could they do anything that would really make any difference to a Being so far away? Hence people used to dream of finding the Holy Grail—something which they could actually touch and handle. It would seem almost like touching the Master Himself. Except in legend, however, no one was ever successful in this quest. Even if the wondrous cup had been found, the majority of men could never see it. Is there any possible way in which you and I can come near to God, and in some sense really see Him and touch Him? Can we, for example, come near to Him in church? Is this

the only way to come near to Him? How does God wish us to worship Him?

Note 2. How the Early Israelites Tried to Find God. The ancient Canaanites, who lived in Palestine before the Israelites came, believed that their gods lived in certain special rocks or trees. And although they could not see the god himself, they could see and touch the rock or tree in which they believed that he lived, and it was almost like touching the god. They also believed that when they burned incense near these trees or rocks, the god actually smelled the sweet odor of the smoke. Whenever they killed an animal to eat, such as a sheep or cow, they would burn certain portions on these rocks, or under these trees, and would eat the rest themselves. They believed that the god of the place somehow actually ate the portion burned for him; and it seemed as though they were really eating dinner with their god. They had several great religious feasts every year, when all the people in each village or city would come to the holy place for a great banquet with their god. Whenever they were in trouble of any kind, and thought their god might help them, they would bring him special gifts of wine or food.

When the Israelites settled in Canaan, they learned to think and act in much the same way. They came to believe that Jehovah lived in these special places, and that it pleased Him when they burned incense and slain animals on these sacred rocks. Moreover, some of the people seemed to think that as long as Jehovah had plenty of sacrifices, He did not care at all how men treated one another. Rich wheat merchants, for example, would come up to the Holy Place every new moon, and burn a fat sheep on Jehovah's altar, and then go back home and use false measures in selling their wheat, and treat unjustly and cruelly the poor people who worked for them, or who had to buy wheat from them.

Note 3. How to Please God according to the Prophets. Amos, the earliest prophet whose writings have come down to us, lived about 750 B. C. He was born in Tekoa, a little village of southern Judah. The most of his life he spent as a humble shepherd and day-laborer. His anger was stirred by the wrongs which he saw inflicted on the poor by the rich men and the nobles of his time. So one year Amos went up to a great religious feast at Bethel, which was near the border

between Judah and the northern kingdom. Many of the rich people of the land were there. Even king Jeroboam of the northern kingdom used to come there often, to offer sacrifices.

But the prophet did not ask himself whether these powerful men would be pleased by what he had to say. He simply walked in on their banquet, in his coarse peasant clothes, and told them what he believed was true. God, he said, did not care for their burnt offerings; He would be far better pleased if they would give Him fewer sacrifices and treat poor people more justly and live more uprightly; and unless they repented of their wrong-doings, God would punish them by bringing down upon them the armies of the great empire of Assyria.

The prophet Micah lived about a half a century later, and preached this same truth to the people of Judah. He lived in the little village of Moresheth, near the Philistine city of Gath. Like Amos, he was indignant because of the wrongs which were inflicted upon the poor people of Judah by the rich people and the rulers of the nation. Like Amos he told his countrymen bluntly that unless they repented of their sins, God would bring the armies of Assyria against them. His hearers did not at first pay much attention to him. But when in 701 B. C. the Assyrian emperor invaded the land, and shut up king Hezekiah "like a bird in his cage," then the evil-doers were startled, at least for a time, into repentance (Jer. 26:18, 19). But even then, many of them did not seem to understand what to do in order to please Jehovah. They seemed to think that what He chiefly wanted was more burnt offerings. They were even ready to kill their own little children, as sacrifices to Jehovah. According to the superstition of that cruel age, they thought that God would be especially pleased by such precious burnt offerings. It was probably at this time that Micah patiently explained to them in the words of the passage in our lesson, that these were not the things which Jehovah wished them to do for Him. "What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Note 4. Where to Look for God. This sentence from Micah bids us look for God not so much in trees and rocks as in men. God is in our own hearts, and we will find Him there if we are

humble. God is in our fellow men. If we treat them justly and kindly, we shall truly be serving God. When we hurt them, we hurt God. When we are kind to them, we are kind to God. Not by pouring libations upon a rock, but by giving a cup of cold water to a little child, do we really give drink to God. So Sir Launfal found:

“ The Holy Supper is kept indeed,
In whatso we share with another’s need.”

This was the teaching of our Lord Jesus. A certain man, He said, lay bruised and bleeding on the rocky road which led up from Jericho to Jerusalem. A priest went by, and then a Levite, on their way to offer sacrifices at the temple. But though they saw the poor wounded traveler, they did not stop and help him. Then a Samaritan came along. He was a heretic, according to the Jews. He never went up to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices, but to Mount Gerizim instead; and God did not dwell on the top of that mountain, so the Jews said. Nevertheless, it was this Samaritan who took pity on the dying man by the roadside. Which of the three men who passed by that day came nearest to God, and really served God, the priest and the Levite, who stood before the altar in their long white vestments, and watched the smoke of their sacrifices curl heavenward, or the Samaritan who bound up the wounds of a fellow man?

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Amos 5:21. Feasts . . . solemn assemblies: The religious banquets spoken of in Note 2. **Amos 5:22. Meal-offerings:** Or cereal offerings. At the harvest festivals some of the wheat and barley was given to Jehovah. **Peace-offerings:** Or thank offerings; fat beasts burned on the altar, in gratitude for the increase in flocks and herds. **Amos 5:23. Songs . . . viols:** The playing of musical instruments and dancing were regular features of these ancient religious feasts. **Amos 5:24. Let justice roll down as waters:** The music of the instruments flowed on like a full stream. But Amos says, what God wants is a stream of right living, rolling on unceasingly from day to day. **Micah 6:7. Rivers of oil:** Of the oil harvest, as of all the products of the ground, a portion was offered to
renov.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“ Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.”

—*Tennyson.*

“ I cried aloud, there is no Christ
In all this world, unparadised;
No Christ to go to, in my need;
No Christ to comfort me, and feed;
He passed in glory out of sight;
The angels drew Him into light.
Now in the lonesome earth and air
I cannot find Him, anywhere.
Would God that heaven were not so far,
And I were where the white ones are.

“ Then from the gray stones of a street
Where passed an ocean drift of feet,
I heard a child’s cry tremble up,
And turned to share my scanty cup;
When lo, the Christ I thought was dead,
Was in the little one I fed.
At this I drew my aching eyes
From the far-watching of the skies,
And now whichever way I turn,
I see my Lord’s white halo burn.

“ Wherever now a sorrow stands
’Tis mine to heal His nail-torn hands;
In every lonely lane and street
’Tis mine to wash His wounded feet.
’Tis mine to roll away the stone
And warm His heart against my own.
Here, here on earth I find it all;
The young archangels, white and tall;
The Golden City, and the doors,
And all the shining of the floors.”

—*Edwin Markham.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. What were some of the wicked deeds done by the men of the time of Amos? (Amos 4:1; 5:11, 12; 6:3-6; 8:4-6.)

2. Do you think Amos meant to imply, in 5:21-24, that assemblies for public worship are never pleasing to God, or only that he hates the hypocrisy of men who worship Him in public, and at other times are unjust to their fellow men?

3. Judging from Micah 6:8, what one additional thing does God desire from us, besides those things mentioned by Amos in 5:24?

4. Was Micah indignant at the people, or sorry for them, when he wrote 6:6-8?

5. What did the foolish people think were some of the characteristics of Jehovah? (Study carefully both of the passages in our lesson.)

6. What were some of the characteristics of Jehovah, as the prophets thought of Him?

7. Which of the two passages in our lesson do you admire most, for force and beauty of language?

8. Which of the following common acts are or may be religious acts: going to Sunday school; reading the Bible; studying arithmetic; giving money to poor people; playing ball; helping mother about the house; working on the farm, or in the shop, or store?

Note-book Work. One of the sermons of Micah is found in Micah ch. 3. Write a brief summary of it in your note-book. Which of the verses in this sermon made a deep impression on Micah's hearers (see Jer. 26:18, 19 for answer)?

Memory Work. Prov. 3:1-26 (continued).

**Lesson 23. THE WILL OF GOD A RULE FOR LIVING.
Ancient Conceptions of God's Character.**

Scripture Lesson, Ps. 103; Mt. 5:43-48.

Note 1. What's the Use? Agnes was the older sister in the family. She was the one to whom every one came when in trouble. If little Tom cut his finger, Agnes tied it up. If Mary tore her dress just before the party, Agnes was the one to mend it. If mother was in difficulties with the family burdens, it was always Agnes who could be depended upon to give up her own plans, and help mother. The family were so accustomed to this unfailing unselfishness that they had come to take it for granted. No doubt they were grateful, but they did not tell Agnes so as often as they might have done; and a good many times she could not help asking herself, "What's the use?" Her brother Sidney often asked himself the same question, for a different reason. He had a peculiar disposition, and no one understood him very well. He really tried hard to be a good boy, but he did not seem successful in his efforts. Often he would be most severely criticised when he had tried hardest to do right. "What's the use of trying, any way," he would oftentimes say. Some of us perhaps have had similar thoughts. Human beings, even the best of them, are imperfect, and sometimes seem ungrateful and unsympathetic. There are times when we do not love them very much, and are tempted to give up our efforts to be unselfish. Such feelings are mean and unworthy. As we shall see in this lesson, however, besides the love we feel for human beings, there is an even stronger and sweeter motive for right living. No matter how much others may disappoint us, yet for the sake of pleasing our loving heavenly Father it is worth while to keep on struggling for a noble character.

Note 2. Ancient Misconceptions of God's Character. Whether we desire to please God depends upon the kind of God we believe in. Different men and different nations have held the most conflicting ideas regarding God's character. We all are familiar with the stories the Greeks and Romans told about their gods; how they were selfish and cruel, and even guilty of heinous crimes, or what would be considered such if perpetrated by human beings. Among the nations

who were neighbors of the Israelites, people believed in the same kind of gods, capricious, greedy, and cruel. "Chemosh was angry with his land." So runs an inscription written by a king of Moab in the time of Ahab. Why this god Chemosh was angry the king did not know. Perhaps he was not pleased with the burnt offerings which he had received. "The gods gathered like flies above the sacrifice," so runs one of the stories written on the clay tablets recently dug up in Babylonia. In the preceding lesson we saw that even in Israel, in the time of Micah, the people believed that Jehovah desired them to offer up little children on their altars. Finally, we recall that when the Book of Jonah was written (see Lesson 20), there were still many Jews who believed that their God loved His own people Israel, and did not love, but hated, Gentile nations. If we thought of God as being that kind of person, our religion certainly could bring us no new motive for living rightly; for we should not love such a God at all. Our fellow human beings, imperfect as they are, would seem far worthier of our love.

Note 3. The Character of God, according to the Prophets and Jesus. The writer of the one hundred and third psalm had had, we may be sure, a good father. To his father he had gone as a little boy, when he fell and bruised himself, and his father had taken him into his arms and comforted him. When he had done wrong, he went to his father and confessed. And although he was sometimes punished, and justly too, still, even then, he had felt that his father loved him and pitied him, realizing how hard it is always to do right. As he grew older, he still went to his father with his perplexities, his ambitions and his disappointments; and his love and reverence for the man's faithfulness and gentleness of character grew stronger and deeper every day. From these experiences with his father, there came to this Psalmist, as to other prophets of Israel, a great and inspiring thought: God is like my father, only even nobler than he—ininitely more just, infinitely more merciful; His sympathy for us is infinitely more tender.

"Like as a father pitieth his children,
So Jehovah pitieth them that fear him.
For he knoweth our frame;
He remembereth that we are dust."

The Jewish people accepted this teaching in part. They came to believe that Jehovah loved Israel as a father loves his son. The greatest of their prophets went further, and declared that God loves all men, as a father loves his children (Jcnah 4:11; Is. 56:6, 7).

When Jesus came, the main theme of His preaching was the fatherhood of God. Like the prophets before Him, He declared that God loves not merely Jews but Gentiles also, as a father loves his children. God loves even sinful men and women, Jesus said. More tenderly and persuasively than it has ever been portrayed by others, Jesus dwelt upon the sorrowing love of the heavenly Father for His erring children—His children still, though in another sense they are no longer His children, having sadly marred His image in their hearts. In what is generally considered the greatest of His parables, He compared God to a father whose younger son went away to a far country to waste his substance in riotous living, but who welcomed that son when he came home again, and freely forgave him. In the passage chosen for our Scripture lesson, He suggests as a rule for living that we try to imitate God; as God sends His rain upon the unjust as well as upon the just, so Jesus would have us treat kindly those who do wrong to us. In all things, Jesus would have us become like God by making His will our will; He would have us aim at being perfect in our life, even as our heavenly Father is in His.

Note 4. The Supreme Motive for Noble Living. At first thought, such a rule of living as this which Jesus gives us, may seem so difficult as to be discouraging. It is certainly true that eternity will not be long enough to enable us to reach the divine perfection, and yet, just because our heavenly Father is so good, we ought to try as hard as we can to please Him by being at least a little more like Him every day. Human friends may misunderstand us; our heavenly Father never does. Human friends may lose patience with us, may sometimes lose faith in us; our heavenly Father, never. "Like as a father," He pities us, loves us, believes in us still. For His sake we will keep right on trying to be true and loving and good.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Ps. 103:1. Bless Jehovah: Reverence and love Jehovah.
Ps. 103:3. Who forgiveth . . . who healeth: The parallel

lines of Hebrew poetry are always similar in thought. Hence "forgiveth" in this verse must be similar in meaning to "healeth." In other words, God does not merely overlook our iniquities, but he cures them. He takes away the "stony heart," and gives us a "heart of flesh." Ps. 103:5. **So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle:** Just as the eagle comes out with a new coat of feathers every year, so those who trust in God "renew their youth," continually receive new strength and hope from Him. Ps. 103:7. **He made known his ways unto Moses:** That is, revealed to Moses that He was a righteous God. Ps. 103:9. **Neither will he keep his anger for ever:** God is like a loving human father, who in the midst of his righteous indignation at his child, feels a sudden wave of pity for him. In the thought of the Psalmist, God is infinitely more patient than any human father; human fathers lose their patience, and afterward feel pity. — God never loses His patience. No matter how indignant He may be at our wrong-doing, He never ceases to pity us. Ps. 103:10. **After our sins:** That is, as we deserve. Ps. 103:14. **He remembereth that we are dust:** He remembers the weakness of these physical bodies of ours. Ps. 103:15. **As for man, his days are as grass:** The Psalmist did not know what the New Testament afterward taught, that the human soul is immortal. But even though we do look forward to a glorious immortality, the Psalmist's point still holds good, that God is infinitely greater than any human being. Ps. 103:19. **His kingdom ruleth over all:** This simply means, Jehovah ruleth over all. Ps. 103:21. **Ye ministers of his:** All Jehovah's servants throughout the universe. Mt. 5:43. **Hate thine enemy:** The Old Testament nowhere contains this injunction. Jesus is probably referring to the teachings of certain of the rabbis. Mt. 5:45. **That ye may be sons of your Father:** That is, true sons, like the Father in character. Mt. 5:47. **If ye salute your brethren only:** Treat them courteously and kindly.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

" I see the wrong that round me lies,
 I feel the guilt within;
 I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
 The world confess its sin.

" Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
 And tossed by storm and flood,

To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
I know that God is good!"

—*Whittier.*

"O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in Thee;
I give Thee back the life I owe,
That in Thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be."

—*Matheson.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Analyze the one hundred and third psalm into an introduction and four parts. What is the main thought in each part?

2. What experiences can you imagine the Psalmist had had, which led him to write the third verse of this psalm?

3. How did Jehovah reveal to Moses that He was a righteous God?

4. Does God hate wicked men? Look up Ps. 5:5, and compare with Ps. 103:10.

5. Compare Ps. 103:17, 18 with Mt. 5:45. Would Jesus have limited God's loving-kindness to "such as keep his covenant"? How about those who do not keep His covenant, according to Jesus?

6. Does God love us before we repent of our wrong-doing, or only after we have repented?

7. If God will love us anyhow, whether we do wrong or not, why should we not keep on doing wrong whenever we please?

8. When God forgives us, does that mean He will not punish us?

9. Which is your favorite passage in the one hundred and third psalm?

Note-book Work. Who is the best man or the best woman you have ever known? How do you account for the existence of such a person? Write a brief answer to this question.

Lesson 24. REVIEW. Who is the Wise Man?

Scripture, to be read or recited: Prov. 3:1-26.

Note 1. The Object of the Review Lesson. When a painter is at work on a picture, it is necessary for him once in a while to stand back from his canvas a little way. From this greater distance he cannot see the minute details so well, but he can form a better judgment of the picture as a whole. We have been studying various qualities which, according to the wise men and the prophets of Israel, the good man should possess. In this review lesson, let us stand back a little way, and try to picture to ourselves what kind of man he would be who united in himself all these splendid qualities.

Note 2. How the Various Teachers of Israel Supplemented Each Other. The ideal character must be balanced. Virtues often become vices, when carried to extremes. A man should be thrifty but not stingy; temperate in his habits, yet able to enjoy innocent pleasures; contented with his lot, but not satisfied with himself. The Bible is supreme among the books of morals and religion, because it presents such a well-rounded ideal. The earlier lessons in this Part of our course lay em-

phasis upon what might be called the virtues that have primarily to do with one's own interests. . Even from the standpoint of a person's own interests, it is perfectly clear that he ought not to be negligent, that he should be careful to form right habits as early as possible; that he should be diligent in work. Many a man, to be sure, has all these virtues, but is far from being an ideal character. Yet these things are important. No matter how genuinely unselfish one may be, he is of little use to his fellow men if he is careless, inefficient and tactless. The wise men of Israel insisted on these elementary virtues because they were practical teachers; because they were so closely in touch with the hard facts of everyday life.

The prophets, on the other hand, had on the whole the broader vision. They laid stress also on the virtues primarily shown in our dealings with others. They summoned their countrymen to a more brotherly attitude toward all men, and to a willingness to sacrifice private interests for the larger good. In the last two lessons, they emphasized the necessity of a right attitude toward God, as the tap-root of all right living. The man, therefore, who lives according to the standards of the sages and prophets will be an "all-round man," deeply spiritual, and yet very practical; a man to be relied upon in great emergencies, and at the same time the kind of man we like to live with, day by day.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"The kind of a man for you and me!
 He faces the world unflinchingly,
 And smites as long as the wrong resists,
 With a knuckled faith and force like fists;
 He lives the life he is preaching of,
 And loves where most is need of love;
 His voice is clear to the deaf man's ears,
 And his face sublime through the blind man's tears;
 The light shines out where the clouds were dim,
 And the widow's prayer goes up for him;
 The latch is clicked at the hovel's door,
 And the sick man sees the sun once more,
 And out o'er the barren fields he sees
 Springing blooms and waving trees,
 Feeling as only the dying may,
 That God's own servant has come that way,
 Smoothing the path as it still winds on,
 Through the golden gate where his loved ones have gone

" The kind of a man for me and you !
 However little of worth we do,
 He credits full, and abides in trust
 That time will teach us how more is just.
 He walks abroad, and he meets all kinds
 Of querulous and uneasy minds,
 And, sympathizing, he shares the pain,
 Of the doubts that rack us, heart and brain;
 And knowing this, as we grasp his hand,
 We are surely coming to understand !
 He looks on sin with pitying eyes—
 E'en as the Lord, since Paradise,—
 Else, should we read, though our sins should glow
 As scarlet, they shall be white as snow!—
 And feeling still, with a grief half glad,
 That the bad are as good, as the good are bad,
 He strikes straight out for the Right—and he
 Is the kind of a man for you and me !"

—James Whitcomb Riley.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson.

1. Give one reason why the good man, purely for his own welfare, should cultivate each of the following qualities. Where none is stated in the Bible, see if you can think of one.

(1) Why should the good man not be negligent? (Prov. 27:23, 26, 27.)

(2) Why should he form right habits early in life? (Prov. 22:6.)

(3) Why should he be temperate in his pleasures? (Prov. 21:17.)

(4) Why should he be considerate in speech? (Prov. 17:27, 28; Prov. 21:23.)

(5) Why should he not be lazy? (Prov. 6:11.)

(6) Why should he avoid covetousness and envy? (Prov. 14:30.)

(7) Why should he be humble? (Prov. 16:18.)

(8) Why should he have sympathy for foreigners? (See especially Jonah 4:1-4.)

(9) Why should he treat others unselfishly? (Is. 53:12.)

(10) Why should he seek to please God by being just to his fellow-men? (Amos 5:21-24.)

2. Give one reason why each of the three virtues (1), (2), and (5) above, should be cultivated for its own sake.

3. What qualities discussed in this part of the course were notably exemplified in the following men:

(1) Benjamin Franklin.

(2) David Livingstone.

(3) Abraham Lincoln.

4. Of the eleven preceding lessons, which sets forth the most fundamental and important element in the good man's character?

PART III

LIVING ACCORDING TO THE STANDARDS OF JESUS

INTRODUCTION.

In the preceding lessons of this course, we have referred, many times, to sayings of Jesus regarding various moral questions. We have found that the wisdom of the law-givers, sages and prophets is wonderfully supplemented by the wisdom of Jesus. Somehow, Jesus always says the crowning word. This last part of our course, therefore, "Living According to the Standards of Jesus," should be the best part. In these lessons we take up certain ideals of conduct which Jesus made prominent in His teaching.

Lesson 25. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS LEADER. How to be a Follower of Jesus.

Scripture Lesson, Mt. 11:28-30; Lu. 14:25-35.

Note 1. Some Erroneous Ideas. At the teacher-training class one evening a young girl heard the leader explaining the statistics of conversion. "The majority of Christian people," he said, "are converted or experience some religious awakening before they are seventeen." After the meeting, the girl stopped to talk with the speaker. "I've never been converted," she said, "for I have not had the feelings that the other girls had. And now probably I never shall be for I'm eighteen years old." She was a good girl, and with all her love of mischief, was sincere in her desire to do God's will. Yet she was afraid that it might not be possible for her ever to become a disciple of Jesus.

"Why don't you become a follower of Jesus, Warren," said a pastor to one of his boys. "I should be so glad to see you join the church this winter, with the other young people." "I haven't enough faith, I'm afraid," replied Warren. What he meant was that he could not honestly say that he believed all that some people had told him he must believe before he could be a Christian. But when Jesus was on earth, were people hindered from becoming His followers because they did not have certain feelings, or because on minor points they

had wrong beliefs? What were the causes which really kept men from Jesus, in those days?

Note 2. Two Classes of People who did not Become Followers of Jesus. There was a class of people who were hindered from becoming disciples of Jesus through lack of purpose. They realized that He was a great Teacher, and were glad to listen to Him. They called themselves His disciples, and seemed enthusiastic supporters of His cause. But they were not in earnest. They were half-hearted; their purposes were divided. During a certain period in the ministry of Jesus, multitudes of such superficial disciples thronged about Him. They praised His wisdom, they marveled at His power, and they were attracted to Him, but they loved other things more. For example, they loved to be on the popular side. When, therefore, it began to be unpopular and even dangerous to be associated with Jesus, "they went back, and walked no more with him."

The second class were kept from becoming followers of Jesus through pride. They looked upon the new teacher as an ignorant peasant. He had never studied in the rabbinical schools. As we would put it now, He was not a "college graduate." So men said in scorn, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" that is, having never been through the schools? They did not believe that Jesus could teach them anything, and so they refused to listen to Him. To the man who stops his ears, no music is sweet. To the man who shuts his eyes, the sun itself is dark.

Note 3. The Message of Jesus to these Two Types of People. The two passages in our Scripture lesson show us the attitude of Jesus toward each of these two classes. Superficial popularity was distasteful to Him. Instead of welcoming the multitudes who claimed to be His disciples, He sternly repelled them. You do not know what you are doing, He said, in substance. Just as a builder should count the cost before he begins to build a tower; just as a king should count the cost before he engages in war, so you should count the cost before you undertake to be my disciples. For this is the costliest of all undertakings. To be my disciple will cost you—everything. All that you have and are must be consecrated to the cause for which I stand. Your discipleship must be the one supreme, controlling motive of your life,

or it is nothing. Half-hearted disciples are not disciples at all. Better an out-and-out enemy than a half-hearted disciple. Salt which has lost its savor—salt which is not salt,—how insipid! and luke-warm disciples are equally worthless. The gospels contain many sayings of this kind: “No man can serve two masters; . . . ye cannot serve God and mammon.” “No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.” In other words, if you are going to plow,—plow. Do not try to keep one eye on your work, and the other on the cool, shady fence corner behind you. If you are going to seek God’s kingdom, give your whole soul to it. Otherwise you will fail.

But the other class of people, those who made no pretence of being friendly to Jesus,—what was His attitude toward them? Strangely enough, we find Him stretching out His hands to them, in eager, tender, invitation: “Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest.” They have ignored Him; they have rejected Him; but with utter self-forgetfulness He pleads with them. “You need me,” He seems to say, “even though you are too proud to confess your need. Poor weary, heavy-laden souls, you are missing life’s supreme blessings. Come unto me, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart. And ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Note 4. The Conditions of Discipleship to Jesus. From these two passages, and many others like them, we may learn how to become followers of Jesus. Certain beliefs and emotions are not the principal thing. The pupil who enters a school is not expected to be able at the start to answer the questions which will be put to him after he has studied for months and years, nor to feel the same emotions which will stir his heart when he is a senior. Two things are expected of him, however. He must be humble-minded and willing to learn, and he must be heartily in earnest. The same things are required of those who would be Jesus’ disciples, that is, learners in His school. First, we must come to him with receptive minds and hearts. If we are proudly satisfied with ourselves as we are, Jesus cannot help us. He tells us that except we “become as little children,” humble, teachable, open-minded, we cannot “enter the kingdom of God.” Secondly, we must throw ourselves into our discipleship to Jesus with our whole heart. To learn of Him, and to practise

His teachings must be our main purpose in life. After Leonardo da Vinci had finished his great picture of the Last Supper, he called his truest friend to see it before it was publicly exhibited. As that friend stood before the picture, his first exclamation was, "O what a wonderful goblet in the hands of the Christ!" With one stroke of the brush da Vinci blotted out the goblet from the picture. "I would have you see nothing," he said, "except the face of the Christ." As disciples of Jesus, we too are painting pictures of Him. The world is to see in our faces His face. But if we are to succeed in so glorious a purpose, we must blot out from our lives relentlessly whatever keeps Jesus from having the central place.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Lu. 14:25. Now there went with him great multitudes: This was during the period of popularity, the middle period in the three years of Jesus' ministry. **Lu. 14:26.** If any man . . . hateth not his own father: This passage must be interpreted in the light of Mk. 7:10-13, where Jesus rebukes the Pharisees because they had "rejected the commandment of God," to honor father and mother. Jesus means that His disciples must love Him even more than father or mother, that God's kingdom must be dearer to them than any individual. Jesus frequently emphasized His statements by hyperboles of this kind. **Lu. 14:29.** Lest haply: Lest it happen that. **Lu. 14:33.** Renounceth not all that he hath: This does not mean that we must give away all our possessions and go without all the comforts and pleasures of life, but that we must use these things for the cause of Christ and be ready to give them up, if necessary, rather than be disloyal to Jesus. **Lu. 14:34.** If even the salt have lost its savor: In Oriental countries the tax on salt is sometimes very high, hence it is liable to be mixed with mineral impurities. Salt that has lost its savor is the tasteless white powder from which the genuine salt has been washed out.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"If Jesus Christ be man and only a man, I say
That of all mankind I will follow Him, and will follow Him always.
If Jesus Christ be God, and the only God, I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell, the earth and sea and air."

—*Richard Watson Gilder.*

“ Christ, I am Christ's, and let that name suffice you;
Yea, and for me too, He greatly hath sufficed.
Lo, with no winning words would I entice you,
Paul has no honor and no friend but Christ.”

—From F. W. H. Myers' *St. Paul*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before answering these questions, read carefully the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Does the rest which Jesus offers mean idleness? (Read Mt. 11:28-30.)

2. “ My yoke is easy ” (Mt. 11:30); “ whosoever doth not bear his own cross . . . he cannot be my disciple ” (Lu. 14:27). These passages seem contradictory; show, if you can, how they may be reconciled.

3. Give an example of an occasion when love for father and mother would seem to conflict with love for Jesus.

4. Suppose a man in your town should begin to build a fine house and then leave it half finished, what are some of the things that people would say?

5. What is the point of Jesus' parable about “ salt which has lost its savor ”? (See Note 3.)

6. What would you have said to the young girl described in Note 1, had you been talking with her?

7. How would you have answered Warren (in the same paragraph), if you had been in that pastor's place?

8. Which of the two conditions mentioned in Note 4 is lacking in each of the following cases:

(1) "I am good to my family, and I pay my debts," said a man who was being urged to become a Christian; "what need have I for religion?"

(2) A woman was explaining why she had never joined the church. "There are so many inconsistent church members," she said.

(3) A young man, a member of the church, was asked to teach a class of boys in Sunday school. "I can't possibly do it," said he. "I am very busy in my office; besides that, I have too many other things to do."

Note-book Work. Clip from an old Bible the lesson passages, as suggested in the early lessons of Part II. Paste them in your note-book, under the lesson heading. Insert also the following clippings, which bear on the question how to be a follower of Jesus: Mt. 6:24; 7:21; 12:46-50; Mk. 10:13-15; Lu. 9:61, 62. Arrange these passages in two groups, according as they illustrate the one or the other of the two conditions mentioned in Note 4.

Lesson 26. THE CHRISTIAN IN THE FAMILY. How Love is Expressed through Courtesy.

Scripture Lesson, 1 Cor. ch. 13.

Note 1. Why do we often Treat Unkindly those whom we Love Most? *The Mill on the Floss*, by George Eliot, is a story of Tom and Maggie Tulliver, brother and sister. They loved each other so dearly that at last they died for each other. Yet from their childhood they were always making each other wretched with bitter quarrels. Once they were playing with their cousin Lucy. Tom called Maggie a stupid. "Don't laugh at me, Tom," Maggie burst out angrily. "I'm not a stupid. I know a great many things you don't." "Oh, I dare say, Miss Spitfire," replied Tom; "I'd never be such a cross thing as you are, making faces like that. Lucy doesn't do so. I like Lucy better than you. I wish Lucy were my sister." Many a boy besides Tom Tulliver has found it easier to treat guests kindly than to be kind and courteous to his own brothers and sisters. There are many people who

show their most disagreeable side just at home, to the people whom they really love best. Let us ask ourselves, What is the explanation of this strange state of affairs? More important still, What is the remedy for it?

Note 2. Quarrels in the Church at Corinth. To answer our question, we turn in this lesson to Paul's first letter to his converts at Corinth. These Christians were bound together by many close ties. They were the only followers of Jesus in all that great heathen city. They had been persecuted. They were liable to persecution at any time. Moreover, they were drawn together as a family of Christians by their common love to Christ, just as a family of brothers and sisters is drawn together by their common love for mother and father. Yet strange to say, they seem to have been continually quarreling. Paul takes up this matter immediately after his courteous opening words. He had just heard that there were divisions among them. "Each one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos," one of Paul's fellow missionaries, "and I of Cephas," that is, Peter (1 Cor. 1:12). Paul pleads with them to lay aside these foolish jealousies. What mattered it, if Apollos were a little more eloquent than Paul, or Paul a little wiser than Apollos. "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6). Another matter about which they quarreled was the question of "spiritual gifts." Some of their members were able to speak very eloquently at their prayer meetings. This they called the gift of prophecy. Others had the gift of tongues; that is, they were so carried away from time to time by the force of their religious feelings that they uttered, as in a trance, strange sounds, unintelligible to their hearers. It was believed that at such times they were speaking in the language of the angels. Those who had this gift were proud of it. Those, on the other hand, who could speak eloquently in the language of their hearers insisted that theirs was the more useful and honorable gift. It seems that the dispute became bitter. At last they decided to appeal to Paul. So they sent messengers, asking his opinion in regard to this and certain other matters. It was to answer their questions that Paul wrote his letter.

Note 3. Paul's Message to the Corinthians. Paul begins his discussion of this question of spiritual gifts with the

twelfth chapter, and continues it through the thirteenth and fourteenth. Each of these two gifts, prophecy and "speaking with tongues," Paul says, has its place in the church. Other gifts, also, such as skill in teaching and tact in helping the poor, are useful and necessary. The church, according to Paul, is like a living body. If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where were the smelling? So there is need of many different gifts in the church. Some, indeed, are more valuable than others. To speak helpfully, in ordinary human words, is better, Paul says, than to speak "in a tongue." But there is something more to be desired than any of these gifts. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal." If your hearts are filled with jealousy and bitterness, if you treat one another unkindly and discourteously, all your eloquence, all your wisdom, amounts to nothing.

Note 4. The Remedy for Family Quarrels. If we study carefully these words of Paul, we may discover the secret of sweet and happy family life. We ordinarily take it for granted that brothers and sisters will treat one another justly and kindly, because of their natural affection one for another. But persons who live together day after day, year after year, are sure to clash one with another now and then. No matter how great their natural affection one for another, it is sure to "wear thin," in spots, owing to the friction of constant daily contact. There will come mornings when the dining room is cold, and the baby cries, and the oatmeal is scorched, and father is cross; the kind of morning, in short, when all things show their raw edges. We need a stronger motive than natural affection to enable us at such times to control our tempers and keep sweet, no matter how irritating things and people may be. Such a motive Paul offers us in this great chapter. For he means by love, something more than natural affection; he means reverence also. The same Greek word which is translated love is used throughout the New Testament to designate the reverent love which the Christian should feel toward God. That Paul had in mind this kind of love is shown by his description of it (13:4-7). He lays stress upon courtesy. Love, he says, "doth not behave

itself unseemly." To behave in an unseemly way may not necessarily cause other persons to suffer, but it does show a lack of consideration for them. In other words, unseemly conduct is discourteous. The essence of courtesy is respect and reverence. It meant originally the reverence which courtiers owe to their king. According to Paul's noble thought, the attitude of the Christian toward each fellow Christian, no matter how humble, should be an attitude of reverent love. For he is more than a mere separate human being, he is a member of the church, "the body of Christ." In all their relations one with another, Christians should be prompted by this motive, and should treat one another not only with kindness, but with courteous respect.

This new motive should be doubly powerful as an uplifting force in family life. For our brothers and sisters are not only fellow members with us of our heavenly Father's larger family, they are also fellow members of our own home, whose sacredness we ought surely to appreciate. There is a story, often told, of a little girl who was carrying her baby brother across the muddy street. The youngster was heavy. "Isn't he too heavy for you to carry?" asked a sympathetic bystander. "Oh, no," was the answer, "he's my brother, you know." That baby was something else to her than merely some twenty pounds. He was a member of the home, and because she revered her home, she revered that little child. It was this feeling which helped her, in spite of weariness, to be so loyal to him.

This, then, is the answer to the question with which we began. It is not enough just to be fond of our brothers and sisters. We need also to realize the sacredness of brotherhood and sisterhood, the sacredness of all family relationships. Then we shall indeed love one another with the love that "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

The tongues of men and of angels: See Note 2, on the gift of tongues. **Love:** In the Authorized Version, the word charity was used, throughout this chapter, instead of love. This was because, as we have seen, the Greek word (*agape*) meant reverent and deliberate love rather than mere fondness. Just because of the influence of Christianity, however,

the popular conception of love has grown nobler. The word charity, on the other hand, as now used, denotes only one or two of the forms in which love manifests itself, as, for example, charity towards the poor, or towards wrong-doers. **If I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned:** That is, for pride's sake, desiring to be praised for my generosity, or my saintliness. **Love suffereth long, and is kind:** In this and the two following verses, we have what Drummond called the spectrum of love. As a beam of white light may be broken up into its component colors, "so Paul passes this thing love through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements." **Is not provoked:** "We are inclined to look upon bad temper as a very harmless weakness. We speak of it as a mere infirmity of nature, a family failing, a matter of temperament, not a thing to be taken into very serious account in estimating a man's character. Yet the Bible again and again returns to condemn it as one of the most destructive elements in human nature."—*Drummond*. **Taketh not account of evil:** Has faith in other people, despite their faults. "I think the crier-up has a good trade; but I like less and less every year the berth of runner-down; I hate to see my friends in it."—*Robert Louis Stevenson*. **Rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth:** Rejoice to see the truth prevail, even though it seem to be against one's own interests. **Believeth all things:** This also means, to have boundless faith in other people, in spite of their wrong-doing. **Whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away:** "A schoolboy to-day knows more than Sir Isaac Newton knew. His knowledge has vanished away. You put yesterday's newspaper in the fire. Its knowledge had vanished away. You buy the old editions of the great encyclopedias for a few pence. Their knowledge has vanished away."—*Drummond*. **Now we see in a mirror, darkly:** In Paul's day men used metal mirrors. The image was blurred and dim. How much better to see "face to face"! **Now abideth faith, hope, love:** "Some think the time may come when two of these three things will also pass away—faith into sight, hope into fruition. Paul does not say so. We know but little now about the conditions of the life that is to come. But what is certain is, that love must last."—*Drummond*.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

"The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

"The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of the whole life dies
When love is done."

"Lord, behold our family here assembled. Let peace abound in our small company. Purge out of every heart the lurking grudge. Give us grace and strength to forbear and to persevere. Offenders, give us the grace to accept and forgive offense. Give us courage and gayety and the quiet mind. Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies. As clay to the potter, as the windmill to the wind, as children to their sire, we beseech thee this help and mercy for Christ's sake."—From the prayers written by Robert Louis Stevenson, for family worship at his home in the Samoan Islands.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully the Scripture passage referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Fill out the blanks in the following sentences as you think Paul would have done:

(1) Though I live in the midst of luxury, and have a splendid house, fine clothes, rich food, yet _____ it profiteth me nothing.

(2) Though, as a child, I obey my parents in everything, yet _____ it profiteth nothing.

(3) Though, as a parent, I give my child food, clothes, and medical care, all that he needs for his physical well-being, yet _____ it profiteth nothing.

2. Compare the following cases with Paul's analysis of love, in vs. 4-7; what elements are exemplified, or fail to be exemplified in each case?

(1) John always says "Please" and "Thank you" to father and mother, but gruffly gives orders to his younger brothers and sisters.

(2) Cousin Ellen has come to visit the family for a few weeks; her mother has broken down mentally, and has been taken to an asylum. Young Tom forgets about his cousin one day, and at suppertime talks about some crazy folks of whom he has heard. Ellen bursts out crying and leaves the table.

3. Judging from vss. 8-13, which of the following characters would you say are most likely to live on forever: Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Abraham Lincoln.

4. Mention several good ways in which each of us may show his family pride and a sense of loyalty to the family honor.

Note-book Work. Write at the head of the page the verse which you like best in this chapter. State below why you like it best.

Lesson 27. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS FRIENDS. The Friendships of Jesus.

Scripture Lesson, Mk. 1:16-20; 2:13-15; Lu. 10:38-42.

Note 1. The Misuse of Friendly Organizations. A young boy entered a high school in which there were several fraternities. His father and mother were poor and uneducated, and the boy had never been in a position to associate with educated people. It was natural that at first he should feel out of place among young people who had enjoyed greater advantages than he. His language was inelegant, and his manners were awkward. Because of these deficiencies he was not taken into any of the fraternities. His classmates looked down upon him and ridiculed him. They had their good times together; he was left out. He had brains and ambition, and made a fine record as a student. But after he graduated, he looked back upon his years at school as a period of heart-breaking loneliness. He had formed no friendships. Worse still, he had grown bitter and uncharitable in his attitude toward his fellow men. This spirit had taken complete possession of him and threatened to spoil his whole life.

Suppose there had been no fraternities in that school; is it not possible that this boy's classmates would have treated him more kindly? Is it true, as many people think, that fraternities and sororities do more harm than good? Or should we say that such organizations are harmless and innocent in themselves, but that they may be misused? Before answering these questions, we must first answer a deeper one. Our circle of friends—how large should it be and whom should it include?

Note 2. Social Exclusiveness in the Time of Jesus. Human society is often compared to an enormous pie or cake with an "upper crust," and with various other layers underneath. This was the view people took of it in the time of Jesus. Men differed, to be sure, regarding the position of the layers. The proud Romans, of course, considered themselves at the top. In their eyes the Jews were beneath contempt. To the Jews, all Gentiles were "heathen dogs," and their kinsmen the Samaritans, who had become heretics in religion, were more despicable than the heathen. Amongst the Jews themselves, the Pharisees and the Sadducees were the aristocracy. Below them were the common people. Even among these there were class distinctions. The Judeans, for example, looked down on the Galileans. At the bottom of the social scale were the publicans, who collected taxes for the hated Romans. They were despised by everybody. All these various classes of persons, even when they hated one another, were nevertheless agreed on one point, namely, that a man ought not to make friends in the class beneath him. The Pharisees were especially exclusive. They held themselves grandly aloof from ordinary men and women. The touch and conversation of a woman they regarded as especially defiling.

Note 3. The Friendships of Jesus. One of the most remarkable characteristics of Jesus was His absolute indifference to these social barriers. He had, indeed, a little circle of friends, Galilean workingmen, like Himself, with whom He was most intimate. These were Peter and Andrew and James and John. They were the men who most easily understood Him and sympathized with Him. He spent much time alone with them, in seasons of great joy or trouble, especially during the last few days of His life (Mk. 13:3). It was Peter

and James and John whom He chose to be with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17:1) and in the garden of Gethsemane (Mk. 14:33).

Outside of this circle, however, Jesus sought to be friendly with everybody. The prophets had protested against the narrow prejudice of the Jews against foreigners and had taught the brotherhood of man (Lesson 20). Jesus put their teachings into practice. He lived brotherhood. Although a rabbi, He numbered many women among His friends. He loved to visit at the home of Mary and Martha. He was friendly toward foreigners (Mt. 8:5-13). He made friends among the Samaritans (Jo. 4:1-42), and passed back and forth many times through their territory. He chose a publican, Levi, or Matthew, to be one of His twelve Apostles, and sat down to dinner with a company of Levi's publican friends. This friendliness on the part of Jesus toward all classes won for Him a remarkable welcome. As the leaves come out in the spring sunshine, so human lives, forgetting their prejudices, grew friendly and kind in the sunshine of the presence of Jesus. Once, indeed, in a certain Samaritan village, His disciples met with a rebuff, and came back to Jesus very angry. But Jesus said to them, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Lu. 9:55 margin). If Jesus Himself had gone first to that village, the Samaritans would probably have welcomed Him, just as they did when He was at the village of Sychar, earlier in His ministry (Jo. 4:40). As for the publicans, they made a feast for Him (Lu. 5:29). Their hearts were hungry for what He gave them. They thronged about Him eagerly whenever there was an opportunity (Lu. 15:1; 19:1-10).

Note 4. Whom to Include among our Friends. In our friendships, as in all other things, we should imitate Jesus. Just as He had an inner circle of friends, with whom He was more intimate than with any others, so we need an intimate friend, or friends, in whom we can confide, whose counsel and encouragement shall be one of the great inspirations of our lives. To such close friends we should be devotedly loyal. We should be patient with their faults. We should keep faithfully their secrets. To betray a friend's confidence is to show oneself unworthy of intimate friendship.

It is impossible for any one to have many such friends.

Many persons find them in fraternal organizations. On the other hand, we may have multitudes of real, though less intimate, friends. The world is full of lonely hearts, hungering and thirsting for friendliness. Ships do not pass one another on the sea without signaling, "Ahoy!" But countless human beings rub elbows day after day, month after month, as workers in the same office, or factory, or as students in the same school, without even a single "Ahoy, there, brother!" If we imitate Jesus, we shall be more generous with our friendliness. The latch-string of our heart should always be out. There should always be room for one friend more. Nor should we stop to ask whether a person belongs to our grade of society before we extend the friendly hand. If we thus try to be friendly to everybody, we shall receive a great reward. One of the greatest stepping-stones toward success is the disposition to be friendly with all persons. Moreover, a friendship in itself is one of life's greatest blessings. Call that man richest who has the largest number of real friends. Some people, indeed, seem at first sight uninteresting and unattractive. How can it be possible, we say, that any one can enjoy being a friend to such persons? But the friendly man is continually coming upon delightful surprises, finding jewels of character hidden under strange disguises. Friendliness itself is a kind of magic; it causes unsuspected mental and spiritual powers to leap into life. A visitor was being shown through Tiffany's store in New York City. In its great collection of precious stones was a large opal, which, according to the attendant, was one of the most valuable opals in the world. "It certainly is a large one," said the visitor, "but it seems to me that I have seen others more beautiful." "Hold it in the warmth of your hand," was the reply, and the stone was given him for a moment. When the visitor opened his hand, there did indeed shine out from the mysterious depths of the jewel gleams of almost unearthly beauty. Many a human being also, who seems dull and lacking in charm, might thus be transfigured, could he but feel the warmth of some friendly hand, the sympathy of some friendly heart.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Mk. 1:16. *Passing along by the sea of Galilee:* Probably not far from Capernaum, where Peter lived. **Mk. 1:17.** *Jesus*

said . . . **Come ye after me:** As we are told in John's gospel, Peter and his friends had already known Jesus, and were more or less prepared to receive this summons. **Mk. 2:14.** **Levi the son of Alphæus:** Elsewhere called "Matthew the publican" (Mt. 10:3). **The place of toll:** A road from Damascus ran along the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. At Capernaum, it passed into the territory of Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee. In this town, therefore, were stationed tax-gatherers, who collected customs on all goods brought into the province. The place of toll was the office where these customs were paid. **He saith . . . Follow me:** Levi also must have become acquainted with Jesus before this occasion. Otherwise he would not have known what Jesus meant by the words "Follow me." **Mk. 2:15.** **Sitting at meat:** Sitting down to dinner. Luke tells us that Levi made Him a great feast (Lu. 5:29). **Publicans and sinners:** Besides the publicans, there were others who were ostracized by respectable society. **Lu. 10:38.** **A certain village:** Bethany, according to Jo. 11:1. **Lu. 10:42.** **But one thing is needful:** Or, as in margin, "but few things are needful, or one." Martha was trying to prepare a big dinner. Jesus says, in substance, "Martha, we do not need all those things; just get us a little bread and milk. I would rather have a chance to talk with you than have you spend all the time of my visit in elaborate preparations for dinner. Mary understands better than you what those things are which are most worth while, and what things it is well to neglect."

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

The House by the Side of the Road.

By Sam Walter Foss, in *Dreams in Homespun*.

These verses were suggested to Mr. Foss by a passage in Homer:
 "He was a friend to man and he lived by the side of the road."

"There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
 In the place of their self-content;
 There are souls, like stars, that dwell apart,
 In a fellowless firmament;
 There are pioneer souls that blaze their paths
 Where highways never ran—
 But let me live by the side of the road
 And be a friend to man.

"Let me live in a house by the side of the road,
 Where the race of men go by—

The men who are good and the men who are bad,
 As good and as bad as I.
 I would not sit in the scorner's seat,
 Or hurl the cynic's ban—
 Let me live in a house by the side of the road
 And be a friend to man.

“ I see from my house by the side of the road
 By the side of the highway of life,
 The men who press with the ardor of hope,
 The men who are faint with the strife.
 But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears—
 Both parts of an infinite plan—
 Let me live in my house by the side of the road
 And be a friend to man.

“ I know there are brook-gladdened meadows ahead
 And mountains of wearisome height;
 That the road passes on through the long afternoon
 And stretches away to the night.
 But still I rejoice when the travelers rejoice,
 And weep with the strangers that moan,
 Nor live in my house by the side of the road
 Like a man who dwells alone.

“ Let me live in my house by the side of the road
 Where the race of men go by—
 They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong,
 Wise, foolish—so am I.
 Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat
 Or hurl the cynic's ban?
 Let me live in my house by the side of the road
 And be a friend to man.”

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DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Describe briefly Peter and his friends, as Jesus saw them by the Sea of Galilee. What kind of clothes did they probably wear? How must their outdoor life have affected their complexions? Were their hands soft and white? What kind of muscles do you suppose they had?

2. Suppose you and I could be transported back nineteen centuries and could see those Galilean fishermen at their work, what would we probably say about them at first sight?

3. How did most people treat the publican, Levi, as he passed along the street?

4. What did the publicans probably say about Jesus when they were going home from the dinner at Levi's house?

5. Judging from the story of Mary and Martha, what did Jesus think of the mental capacity of women?

6. Suppose that Jesus, as a young man, had gone to school. What would He have said to those who refused to associate with a certain classmate because of his disagreeable manners?

7. Shakespeare makes Polonius say to Laertes: "But do not dull thy palm with entertainment of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade." Is this consistent with the principle that we ought to be friendly with everybody? Give reasons for your answer.

Note-book Work. In some places, laws have been passed abolishing fraternities and sororities in high schools. Write in parallel columns *What good they might do* and *What harm they might do*.

Lesson 28. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS ENEMIES. The Power of Forgiveness.

Scripture Lesson, Mt. 5:38-48; 6:14, 15; 18:21, 22; Rom. 12:19-21.

Note 1. Can we and Should we Love our Enemies? "But I say unto you, Love your enemies." "How perfectly absurd!" exclaim some persons when they read these words in the Sermon on the Mount. "It is too much to expect of human nature," they say, "to ask us really to love our enemies. Furthermore, would it ever be right for a person always to love his enemies? The man who wrongs me usually wrongs others also. Have I any right to love, and treat as a friend the man who has treated unjustly my dear ones or the community in which I live? In so doing would I not simply be lowering myself to the level of the wrong-doer?" How can we answer these objections? Or must we admit that the Sermon on the Mount is "beautiful but impracticable"?

Note 2. The Attitude of the Jews toward their Enemies in the Time of Jesus. The ancient Hebrews passed laws which restrained to some extent the evils of private vengeance (see Lesson 1). The wise men also urged their pupils to learn to control the angry temper and warned them against the spirit of hatred and vengeance. In the time of Jesus the best men and women endeavored to live up to these rules. But as for actually loving their enemies and being friendly toward them, no one dreamed of doing that. On the contrary, they felt it their duty to get just as far away as possible from evil-doers, lest they themselves should be contaminated. Their attitude is well expressed by the words of the Psalmist:

"Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God:
Depart from me therefore, ye bloodthirsty men.
Do not I hate them, O Jehovah, that hate thee?
I hate them with perfect hatred." Ps. 139:19-22.

Note 3. The Teaching and Example of Jesus regarding Treatment of Enemies. It has been said that forgiveness was "Christ's most striking innovation in morality." He did not merely say, "Control your temper," or, "Let your enemy alone, and God will punish him" (see Prov. 20:22); He went

further and said, "Love your enemies." His meaning is, in substance, Your enemy is your brother in disguise; save him from his hatred and his sin by being kind to him. Our heavenly Father is kind even to those who sin against Him, and thus wins them back to Himself. He is at all times ready to forgive them. And we should strive to be sons of God, that is, to be like God, and to have His spirit of forgiveness in our hearts.

Jesus practiced these principles in His own life. He treated kindly not only offenders against society but also His personal enemies. To Jesus, forgiving sin did not mean condoning sin, or excusing it. To Him, the spirit of forgiveness was a means of conquering sin. Thus at one time, when he was passing through Jericho, He spent the night at the house of Zacchæus, a despised and perhaps dishonest tax-collector. The good people of the city were horrified. "He is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner," they cried. But Zacchæus was so touched by this kindness that he said to Jesus, "Behold, Lord, . . . if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore [that is, I will restore] fourfold" (Lu. 19:8). This friendliness of Jesus toward sinners brought upon Him severe condemnation. Many good people were shocked. They said of Him, He is a "friend of sinners." They meant what we would mean now if we should say, "He associates with low down people." Yet it was true; Jesus was indeed a friend of sinners. Through His friendliness, He saved them from their sins. Nor was He any the less compassionate and forgiving in His attitude toward those who injured Him personally. Even on Calvary, He prayed for the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Little wonder that the Roman centurion was moved to say of Him, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" He was indeed the Son of God; He was and is the world's Redeemer; and it is through the wondrous power of His forgiveness that He wins sinful men to lives of righteousness and love.

Note 4. The Meaning of the Command, Love your Enemies. This command does not mean that we are to have affectionate emotions in thinking of our enemies. Nor does it mean that we are to "let people run over us." We are doing no kindness to a man when we permit him to cheat us, or otherwise

to do us an injustice. Nor, furthermore, does it mean that we are to condone wrong-doing. We may be loving our enemies most truly when we are sternest with them, because of their evil deeds. The command means that we must never lose faith in those who do wrong. When people injure us, instead of trying to "pay them back," we should seek to show them, through our kindness, that we still believe in their better natures, in spite of their evil deeds. The revengeful spirit helps nobody. It blinds us to the good in other men, and leads on to unjust deeds. Furthermore, the man who nurses a grudge poisons his own life, and makes himself continually more wretched and unhappy. On the other hand, if we put this teaching of Jesus into practice, we shall find that people respond to our faith in them. We shall see our enemies becoming our friends. We shall see selfishness giving place to love. These are facts of everyday experience. Those who consider this command of Jesus, "Love your enemies," as contrary to human nature have never really tried to obey it. No more practicable command was ever uttered. Merely from the standpoint of good sense, what better method could there be for disposing of our enemies than to make friends of them; and instead of being contrary to human nature, does not this idea appeal to our deepest and noblest impulses?

Judge Lindsey has adopted this principle of Jesus in his Juvenile Court, in Denver. A certain boy, about seventeen or eighteen years old, whom we will call Harry, had already served thirteen terms in jail. Young as he was, he already had the face and manner of a hardened criminal. Nevertheless, the judge was kind to him. At first the boy repaid these kind words with surly and discourteous answers; but after a time he began to show a better spirit. One evening when the judge was in his office on an upper floor of the same building with the county jail, he sent a message to the warden of the jail, asking him to bring Harry up for a short conference. In a few minutes the officer came in, bringing the prisoner, who was securely handcuffed. "Take off those irons," said Judge Lindsey. The officer shook his head, then went over and whispered to the judge. Finally, however, he took off the handcuffs and left the room. Then Judge Lindsey turned to the boy and spoke to him somewhat as follows: "Harry, the officer says you are going to try to get through

that open window and climb down the fire escape. Now, then, I have been trying to help you to become a good man. But if you aren't going to help me to help you, you may as well go back on me first as last. There's the window. Go ahead, climb out, if you want to. I won't report to the jailer till midnight." The boy looked for a moment at the judge, then at the window. Then he went over and closed the window with a bang. "Nobody ever talked to me like you do, Judge," said he. An hour or two later, the warden of the jail was called to the door of his office, and received the surprise of his life. Harry was waiting to be locked in his cell.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Mt. 5:38. An eye for an eye: See Lesson 1. **Mt. 5:39. Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also:** This is another illustration of the use of hyperbole by Jesus. He simply means, when persons injure you, do not try to "pay them back," but seek to win them by kindness. **Mt. 5:41. Whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile:** Roman soldiers, in marching through the country, were frequently in need of guides and burden-bearers. They were accustomed to press into service any one whom they met. **Mt. 5:43. Hate thine enemy:** The Old Testament nowhere contains this injunction; but many passages seem to point in this direction. **Mt. 5:47. Salute your brethren:** Treat them courteously and kindly. **Mt. 6:15. Neither will your Father forgive your trespasses:** God is always eager to forgive us, but He cannot do so if we are cherishing in our own hearts an unforgiving spirit toward others. **Mt. 18:22. Until seventy times seven:** Or, in other words, do not ever cease to forgive him. **Rom. 12:19. Give place unto the wrath of God:** God will punish men for their unjust deeds. **Rom. 12:20. Thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head:** That is, make him blush with shame because of his unkindness to you. **Rom. 12:21. Overcome evil with good:** Especially overcome hatred and anger with kindness and love.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"Be noble! and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."

—Lowell.

“ Let a man overcome anger by kindness, evil by good ; let him conquer the stingy by a gift, the liar by truth. For never in this world does hatred cease by hatred ; hatred ceases by love. This is always its nature.”—*Buddha*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Does nursing a grudge against some one else do one any harm? If so, what harm?

2. Mention other things, beside sunshine and rain, that God gives to bad men as well as good.

3. Many persons wonder how it is that a just God can allow the wicked to prosper. How would you answer them, in the light of Mt. 5:45?

4. Some say that to love an enemy is the virtue of weak and cowardly persons. How would you answer them?

5. Think of some one who really does keep on forgiving, as Jesus commanded (Mt. 18:22), no matter how many times the injury is repeated. Can you think of anybody who has many times forgiven you?

6. How can you reconcile the advice to “ shun evil companions,” with Jesus’ command to love our enemies and be kind to them?

7. A certain boy behaved in an ungentlemanly way. A girl acquaintance, the next time she met him, refused to speak to him. In the

light of the teaching and example of Jesus, do you think there are occasions when it is right to ostracize, or "cut," persons in this way? If so, give an example of such an occasion.

Note-book Work. Write a story (from your own experience, if possible) illustrating Paul's words, "In so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head."

Lesson 29. THE CHRISTIAN AND LITTLE CHILDREN. The New Chivalry of Jesus.

Scripture Lesson, Mt. 18:5, 6; Mk. 9:36, 37; 10:13-16.

Note 1. The Morality of a Torch Race. Among the favorite games of the ancient Greeks was the relay race. They frequently ran such races after nightfall, and in that case the event was called a torch race. Each runner received a torch from the man before him, and after running with it a certain distance, delivered it to the next man, who stood waiting for it at the mark assigned to him. The team that succeeded in getting the torch first to the goal was accounted the winning team. Now imagine yourself a runner in such a race; suppose the man before you had come, all breathless, to where you were waiting, and had put the torch in your hand; would you consider that it had been given you as a toy to play with, or as a personal decoration? Would you not consider it your first business to run with that torch and deliver it into the hands of the next runner?

Now turn to another picture, a scene on a modern playground. A group of boys are resting after their game. Among them is a lad of fifteen and his younger brother, who is about seven or eight. As they sit there on the grass, some of the other boys use profane language and tell vile stories. The two brothers come of an upright family. The little fellow has never heard such language before; now, however, he listens in astonishment and wonder. The older boy has been taught to be clean in his speech, and he does not join in the dirty talk of the other boys. Nevertheless, he sits there quietly, and allows his younger brother to hear what they say.

Was he doing his duty? His father and mother had passed on to him, faithfully and lovingly, the torch of the knowledge of the right. Was he doing all that he might have done to pass it on to the next runner?

Note 2. The Attitude of the Disciples toward Children. In ancient times, most fathers and mothers were kind to their children. Yet almost everybody seemed to take it for granted that children were in the world chiefly for the benefit of older persons. The ancient Hebrew desired many children, not that through them he might serve mankind, but that after his own death he might have many descendants to honor his memory. The attitude of the disciples of Jesus in one of the passages in our lesson is a good illustration of the general attitude toward children in ancient times. When the mothers brought their little ones to Jesus, "the disciples rebuked them." Children were to be petted when there was nothing better to do. But men who were engaged in the serious business of life had no time to concern themselves with children. This attitude is still very common. There are even now some fathers and mothers who seem to forget that they owe a duty to their children. This is one reason why we have so many divorces. As for older brothers and sisters, there are far too many who look upon the little ones in their own family as being "in the way," and who do not seem to realize at all the special obligations and the inspiring opportunities of brotherhood and sisterhood.

Note 3. What Jesus Taught about Children. Jesus insisted, as no one before Him had ever done, that all older persons are under sacred obligations toward children. When His disciples rebuked the mothers for bringing children to Him, He was indignant. "Let the little children come to me," He said, and "taking them in his arms, he blessed them." At another time, He took a little child in his arms, and said to His disciples, in substance, "Whoever treats kindly such little children does a kindness to me, and to my Father in heaven. On the other hand, to harm a little child is the greatest of all sins." With especial sternness did Jesus condemn those who hindered little children from coming to know God, the heavenly Father, and from learning to live a life of goodness such as is pleasing to the Father. "Whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to

stumble," He said, "it were better for him if a great millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

Note 4. The Torch Race of Human Life. Ages ago, men dwelt in caves and slew one another for a few morsels of food. They cared little for anything save self-gratification. Since that distant day, humanity has been toiling painfully along

"the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God."

Wonderful progress has been made in knowledge, in self-control, and in the power to appreciate the beautiful and the good. This achievement has been made possible by the blood and the agony of innumerable brave and loyal hearts,

"Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back."

After us, countless other generations will live upon the earth. They, surely, should come far closer than we to the great goal of human progress, the triumph of righteousness and truth and God. The men who live in the year 3000 A. D. ought to be able to look back on this present generation as we look back on the Dark Ages. But if future generations are to achieve this wonderful victory, we in this generation must do our part to help them forward. The torch of human progress is in our hands. In the brief span of a single generation we cannot carry it forward very far. We owe it both to the heroes and heroines of the past, and also to the generations who shall come after us, to hand on this torch to the children, and to speed them on their way. This is why it is so grievous a sin to injure a little child. In so doing we wrong our own father and mother who at such pains have striven and are striving to hand on to us the torch of life and love and duty, and we also wrong the torch-bearers of the future. There are ways in which boys and girls may strike a direct blow not only at living children, but also at the children of the next generation. Of course, whatever we do that is wrong injures not only people now living but also those who will come after them. There are some sins, however, which injure, even more directly, the children of the future. Discourtesy to girls or women is such a sin. It is the God-given mission of women, even more than of men, to be directly responsible for the care of children. Only at the cost of the mother's suffering can the child be born. Surely the

least that a boy or a man can do is to reverence all mothers and all women for motherhood's sake. He who is discourteous to a woman is aiming a blow at all little children. Girls, on the other hand, should remember that it is possible through unseemly manners to invite discourtesy or undue familiarity (which is the worst form of discourtesy). They should cherish their own self-respect, and demand respect and courtesy on the part of their boy friends.

Furthermore, anything which injures the home injures future generations. Christianity's greatest gift to children has been the Christian home, composed of one husband and one wife, who take each other "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, honor, and cherish, till death us do part." Such a home, when it is truly a Christian home, is indeed a heaven on earth. From the love of such a father and mother, the little child can most easily come to understand and appreciate the love of the Father in heaven. Boys and girls in their teens should look forward to founding such a home some day, and should begin even now to be loyal to the possible future wife or future husband, and to the children that may some time be born.

The late Governor Hogg of Texas was asked, the evening before he died, what kind of monument he wished. He replied, "I want no monument of stone; but let my children plant at the head of my grave a pecan tree, and at the foot of my grave a walnut tree, and when these trees bear, let the pecans and the walnuts be given out among the plain people of Texas, so that they may plant them and make Texas a land of trees." In that same spirit we, too, may do our little share towards helping future generations. We may not plant trees, but we may do something better—we can be good to little children; we can so live that if we have children of our own, they may carry the torch of life higher and burning brighter than in our hands; and so we can help to make the world of the future a world of brave and loving and loyal men and women.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Mt. 18:6. A great millstone: Literally, a millstone turned by an ass; not the small millstone that eastern women turn by the hand in grinding grain. **Mk. 10:15.** Whosoever shall

not receive the kingdom of God as a little child: That is, in a teachable spirit. See Lesson 25, Note 4.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“ We are at the beginning of the greatest change that humanity has ever undergone. We are creatures of twilight; but out of our minds will spring minds that will reach forward fearlessly. A day will come—one day in the unending succession of days—when the beings now latent in our thoughts shall stand on this earth, and shall reach out their hands starward. After all, nothing is so far from completion as humanity.”

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. How did Jesus show His love for children?
2. What indications are there that children were attracted to Jesus, and loved Him?
3. Did Jesus have brothers and sisters? (Mk. 6:3.)
4. If you had been a younger brother or sister of Jesus, how would He have treated you?
5. There are some games which are sure to lead to a rough and tumble scuffle. Is it a good thing to play these games at parties attended by boys and girls? Give reasons for your answer.
6. Some musical comedies are full of coarse jokes. Yet boys and girls often attend such shows, in order to be able to sing or whistle the latest popular song. What do you think about the wisdom of going to them?

7. In what ways can girls prepare to be good mothers, when they are older?

8. In what ways can boys prepare to be good fathers?

Note-book Work. Clip from an old Bible the various passages of our lesson, and paste them in your note-book. Select from the Brown or Perry collection some picture illustrating motherhood, or parenthood, or chivalrous manhood, and paste it on the opposite page. Any of the Madonna pictures would be appropriate; also the following Brown pictures: Nos. 361, 729, 1068.

Lesson 30. THE AMBITION OF A CHRISTIAN. A New Kind of Greatness.

Scripture Lesson, Mt. 25:14-29; Mk. 10:35-45.

Note 1. Is it Right to be Ambitious? Sometimes we hear ambition condemned as sinful. Shakespeare makes Lord Wolsey say to his fellow officer:

“Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition;
By that sin fell the angels; how can man, then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?”

In Lesson 18 we considered the duty of contentment, and contentment seems at first sight inconsistent with ambition. On the other hand, ambition is frequently praised as a virtue. “He has no ambition!” When persons speak thus of a man, they usually mean that his life will never be worth very much to his fellow men. Is ambition right or wrong? Or, are there different kinds of ambition, some of which are right and some wrong? These are the questions before us in this lesson.

Note 2. The Ambition of the Disciples of Jesus. The Jews have always been an ambitious race. This was true of them in the time of Jesus. Oppressed and despised by their Roman rulers, they looked forward with passionate longing

to the time when God should send the Messiah and deliver His people. The Messiah, they believed, would be a "son of David," that is, like David, he would be an actual world ruler. He would drive out the Romans from Palestine, conquer the whole world, and make Jerusalem the world's capital instead of Rome. When the disciples of Jesus came to believe in Him as the promised Messiah, they naturally supposed that eventually He would enter upon this victorious career and sit upon a material throne. They themselves hoped for high offices in the new government. As time went on, they became more and more absorbed in these dreams of the future. Jesus explained to them, again and again, that He was not that kind of Messiah; that His kingdom was not of this world; that He was seeking to establish His throne, not in some royal palace at Jerusalem, but in the hearts and lives of men. But the disciples failed to understand Him. They kept on dreaming of future power and fame. Worse yet, they began to quarrel over the question, "Who shall be the greatest?" James and John wanted Jesus to promise them the two chief offices. The other disciples were naturally very indignant. They felt that the two brothers had "stolen a march on them." All twelve, however, were actuated by the same spirit; each of them hoped for the highest possible place in the new kingdom.

Note 3. The Testimony of Jesus regarding Ambition. Jesus did not rebuke the disciples for being ambitious. Indeed, if we study His teachings as a whole, we find that He had little use for a man who was lacking in ambition. This is the meaning of the parable of the talents. The servant who was not content with his five talents was finally successful in gaining "other five talents"; in the same way, the servant with two talents gained "other two talents." But the servant who was perfectly satisfied with his one talent, and made no effort to increase it, finally lost even that one. So Jesus taught that His disciples should be ambitious—but ambitious for what? For fame, for selfish advantages, for ease and pleasure? No; these things indeed are what most men strive after, but, "It is not so among you," says Jesus. A new idea has come into the world regarding what things are really great: "Whosoever would become great among you shall be your servant; and whosoever would be first among

you shall be servant of all." The servant, in Cæsar's palace, who really seeks to be useful to his fellow men through his so-called menial labors, is really greater than Cæsar himself, the selfish despot, at whose slightest nod the whole world trembles. In other words, Jesus took the ordinary ideas of greatness and turned them upside down.

Note 4. The Ambition of a Christian. Looking back over human history it is easy to see that Jesus was right in His conception of true greatness. The greatest men have been those who were ambitious, not merely for themselves, but for the common welfare, as, for example, Alfred the Great, Columbus, George Washington, and Abraham Lincoln. Selfishness makes men shrivel; love calls out the best and noblest in them, and makes them truly great. Suppose Nehemiah had never been visited by that delegation from Jerusalem, and had spent the rest of his life as the king's cupbearer, surrounded by an atmosphere of selfish luxury! Probably he would have yielded to these evil influences, at least in a measure, and would have become selfish like all his associates. He might have been promoted to high office in the Persian empire. But would his life have been truly great, or would it have become more and more petty and mean? How fortunate it was for him and for the world that there came a summons from the city of his fathers knocking at the door of his heart, and calling to the real Nehemiah to awake and come forth, to serve God and country, to struggle, to fight, to hope, to despair, to persevere, to be great! The greatness of service is, indeed, the only true greatness.

We can now see why Jesus was so insistent that men should be ambitious, even though not selfish in their ambition. He sets before us an ideal of greatness which is infinitely high. There are always nobler ways of helping others. Finer, more splendid achievements in the service of humanity are always possible. The unambitious man, however, is content with what he has already accomplished. He does not have the larger vision, or, if he does, he does not care. Such an attitude is most dangerous; it is a kind of spiritual suicide. Just as the man in the parable who had no desire for further gains finally lost even what money he had, so the man who desires no further gains in nobility of character is sure to lose those moral and spiritual treasures which he already possesses.

“If I cease becoming better,” wrote Oliver Cromwell in the fly-leaf of his Bible, “I shall soon cease to be good.” On certain old Spanish coins there was a picture of the Pillars of Hercules, and underneath it, the inscription *Ne plus ultra*, “No more beyond.” After Columbus discovered America, however, the Strait of Gibraltar was no longer the westernmost limit of human navigation. The authorities therefore, erased the first word of the inscription. On these later coins one sees the Pillars of Hercules as before, but underneath are the words, *Plus ultra*, “More beyond.” This is typical of the experience of the Christian. We lift our eyes toward our fairest and noblest aspirations, and perhaps we say, “Surely, there is no more beyond; if I can ever be as good, as true, as unselfish as that, I shall be content.” When, however, we have begun to realize these aspirations in some measure, we find that we made a mistake; there is more beyond. New and brighter visions beckon us. There is now and then, indeed, a man who refuses to follow these new beckonings. “Then let the clock stand still; his time is o’er.” To the true Christian, however, the great pursuit never loses its zest. He never ceases to look forward to the future with all the enthusiastic ambition of youth. This is, indeed, the secret of eternal youth,—never to lose ambition; and the Christian never grows old.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Mt. 25:14. For it is as when a man . . . delivered unto them his goods: In the Greek, the sentence is incomplete. Jesus means, “This story which I am about to tell illustrates a law of the spiritual world.” **Mt. 25:15.** Five talents: A talent of silver was worth about two thousand dollars, and a talent of gold about thirty thousand. **To each according to his several ability:** That is, according to his own ability. **Mt. 25:24, 25.** Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man . . . and I was afraid: The servant was afraid to risk the money in trade, lest if he should not be successful his master would punish him. **Mt. 25:27.** Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers: That is, even if you were afraid to invest it in business you might have put it in a bank. But the servant had been afraid that even the bank might fail. **Mt. 25:29.** From him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away: The man who has ceased to make progress

is already in the same class with the man who "hath not." He is sure to lose even that which he seems to have. **Mk. 10:38.** **Ye know not what ye ask:** Notice that Jesus does not rebuke James and John for their ambitious request. He only tells them that to sit on either hand of Him in His kingdom is an honor very different from what they supposed. The pathway to honors in His kingdom led down through sorrow and persecution and death.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"Speak, history! Who are life's victors?

Unroll thy long annals and say.

Are they those whom the world called the victors

Who won the success of a day?

The martyrs or Nero?

The Spartans who fell at Thermopylæ's tryst,

Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges or Socrates?

Pilate or Christ?"

"Glory of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,

Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea—

Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong—

Nay, but she aimed not at glory, no lover of glory she;

Give her the glory of going on, and still to be."—*Tennyson.*

"A glorious gift is Prudence,

And they are useful friends

Who never make beginnings

Till they can see the ends;

But give us now and then a man,

That we may make him king,

Just to scorn the consequence,

And just to do the thing."

"Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;

Do noble deeds, not dream them all day long;

And so make life, death, and that vast forever

One grand, sweet song."—*Kingsley.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. When did the disciples suppose that Jesus' glory was to begin?

2. In the light of His own teachings, was His career on earth a part of His "glory"? Why?

3. Why was it hard for the disciples to understand Jesus when He explained that He was not the kind of Messiah that the Jews were expecting?

4. How do you suppose the ten disciples happened to know about the interview of James and John with Jesus? Who must have told them?

5. What are some things which the ten disciples probably said to the two brothers after this interview?

6. Which is likely to be the greater physician, the one whose chief motive is the desire for fees, or the one whose chief desire is to cure disease?

Note-book Work. Show how a man could be great, according to Jesus' definition of greatness, as a doctor, as a business man, as a lawyer, or as a minister. Give your reasons.

Or, choose some favorite historical character, and show how he was great, in this sense.

Lesson 31. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS THOUGHTS. "Whatsoever Things are Lovely."

Scripture Lesson, Mt. 12:33-35; Mk. 7:1-23; Phil. 4:8, 9.

Note 1. The Difficulty of Controlling One's Impulses. "If to do," says Portia in the *Merchant of Venice*, "were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions; I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teachings." In this passage, Shakespeare put his finger on the supreme problem of human life: how to control our impulses, keeping them in harmony with our own better judgment; how to conquer the "sin that doth so easily beset us." We shall be chiefly occupied with this question

in the remainder of our course. We shall find a partial answer in this lesson on the Christian and his thoughts.

Note 2. The Evil Surroundings of the Early Christians. The Christian converts of Paul's day certainly knew what it was to be surrounded by temptations. In the large Greco-Roman cities, such as Antioch, Philippi and Corinth, there were sights and sounds on every hand which were intended as allurements to evil. It was almost impossible to escape from them. Wickedness, in our day, usually keeps itself hidden. Then it flaunted itself everywhere in men's faces. Moreover, the beauties of art were used far more than now to tempt people into sin. How difficult it must have been for Christians in those days to keep themselves unspotted from evil, and to live clean, upright lives!

Note 3. Paul's Advice to his Converts. In order to help his Philippian converts to resist these ever-present enticements into wrong-doing, Paul gives them the advice which is before us in this lesson. He says, in substance, "There is indeed much evil in the world about you, but there is goodness also. You can find men and women, if you look for them, who are striving to be just and honorable and pure in all their actions. Think on these things. Form the habit of looking for these things, and these things only. As for the evil, pay no attention to it." In giving this advice, Paul was following a principle set forth by Jesus. Thoughts, Jesus taught, are the roots from which deeds grow. A good tree brings forth good fruit, and a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Evil thoughts are, therefore, the real sources of defilement. Evil comes from within. Things outside cannot defile us unless we choose to be defiled. If we control our thoughts and keep them righteous in God's sight our actions will be righteous also.

Note 4. Self-control Means Thought-control. If we are guided by this principle of Jesus and Paul, we will fill our minds with thoughts of worthy and noble deeds. It is true that we cannot always avoid thinking about things that are evil. We have to think about our own faults in order to conquer them. But when we must think about evil, we can at least think about it so as to see its real nature. Paul puts

this first in his list: "Whatsoever things are true," he says, "think on these things." Too often when we think of wrong actions, we refuse to think of them as wrong. We close our eyes to the evil in them. As Professor James says, when a drunkard wants to take a drink, he tries to find an excuse for it that will make it seem less evil. It is a new brand of liquor which he really ought to test; "moreover, it is poured out and it is a sin to waste it; or, others are drinking and it would be churlishness to refuse; or, it is but to enable him to sleep, or just to get through this job of work; or, it isn't drinking, it is because he feels cold; or, it is Christmas day; or, it is a means of stimulating him to make a more powerful resolution in favor of abstinence than any he has hitherto made; or, it is just this once, and once doesn't count, etc., etc.—it is, in fact, anything you like except *being a drunkard*. That is the conception that will not stay before the poor soul's attention. But if he once gets that way of looking at the matter, that this continual drinking is being a drunkard and is nothing else, he is not likely to remain one long." Said a young girl, "My mother always taught me that when sweeping I should first sweep the dust out of the corners of the room into the center. Then I would not be tempted to neglect it." That is good advice to follow when we are in doubt regarding a matter of right and wrong. If it is wrong, we will find the real ugliness of it hidden away in the corners of our mind. Let us always sweep the corners first.

When, however, we have dragged a thought out of its hiding-place and branded it as evil, the next thing is to banish it forever; to fill our minds so full of thoughts of good that there will be no room for evil. Evil thoughts will indeed suggest themselves sometimes; we cannot help that. It has often been said that we cannot prevent the birds flying above our heads, but we can prevent them from building their nests in our hair. If we pay no attention to evil thoughts, they will not trouble us long. On the other hand, we will become more and more deeply absorbed in thoughts of the things that are just and lovely and of good report, and will find ourselves doing just and beautiful deeds. Just as the best way to keep weeds out of a garden is to fill it with vigorous growing plants, so the best way to keep evil thoughts out of the mind is to fill it with thoughts of things which are lovely and of good report.

A tiny white flower is said to grow near the openings of some coal mines. Clouds of black coal dust may sweep over it, but not the slightest particle ever clings to its petals. It has no affinity for coal dust. So the man whose thoughts are pure and wholesome and worthy may live in the midst of corruption, but he will scarcely be aware of its presence. He has no inward affinity for it, and he remains undefiled.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Mt. 12:34. Ye offspring of vipers: Jesus is addressing the evil-minded scribes and Pharisees who had declared that Jesus cast out demons "by Beelzebub the prince of the demons." **Mk. 7:2. With defiled, that is, unwashed hands:** The disciples, of course, washed their hands, so far as was needful for cleanliness. The scribes were referring to ceremonial defilement. According to the Mosaic law, after a man had touched certain objects (which might not have seemed to us unclean) he was thereby made unfit for sharing in the worship of God. Before entering the temple, therefore, he was required to wash himself in a certain prescribed way. **Mk. 7:3. Holding the tradition of the elders:** The Mosaic law did not require ceremonial washings before each meal. This rule had been added by later scribes, and handed on to succeeding generations as a "tradition of the elders." **Mk. 7:11. Corban, . . . Given to God:** According to one of these "traditions," a man might vow to give his money to the temple at some distant time, and meanwhile keep it for his own use, thus relieving himself of all duty to support his aged parents (see Lesson 7). **Mk. 7:15. There is nothing from without the man, that going into him can defile him:** Jesus was thinking of the ceremonial defilements which the scribes so carefully avoided. He says, in substance, that these so-called defilements do not really defile; that the ceremonial requirements of the Levitical law were based on a mistaken idea of religion. The principle which Jesus sets forth applies also to things which are in themselves really evil, such as foul language. Such things cannot defile us if we do not think about them. **The things which proceed out of the man:** Evil thoughts proceed out of the man in the form of words and deeds. **Phil. 4:8. If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise:** That is, think on whatever things are virtuous and worthy of praise.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”—*Pope.*

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. In the light of Paul's advice, is ignorance always an evil? Regarding what kind of things should one strive to keep himself ignorant?

2. What light does Paul's advice shed on the best method of reading newspapers? What sort of news should we skip? What should we read thoroughly?

3. Three men go on a journey, a farmer, an architect, and a merchant. What things will each of the three be most likely to see, as they travel through the country?

4. A bad man and a good man go on journeys. What kind of things will each see?

5. A girl has promised her mother to come home promptly from school; but as she is on her way home, she is met by some attractive friends who urge her to come with them and have some fun. Her first impulse is to keep her promise with her mother, and refuse to go with her friends. Would she be more likely to do right if she tried at once to follow that impulse, or if she stopped to reason with herself about it? Why?

6. It sometimes happens that a man who has been respected by everybody in the community commits some shocking crime. In the light of the teachings of Jesus, can you explain such apparently sudden falls into sin?

7. Mention some pure and lovely things that are good to think about.

Note-book Work. Paste in your note-book the following passages besides the regular lesson clippings: Prov. 4:23; Jer. 4:17, 18; Ps. 51:10; 51:17; 139:23, 24.

Lesson 32. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS OWN WRONG-DOING. What to Do after One has Yielded to Temptation.

Scripture Lesson, Mk. 16:7; Lu. 15:11-24.

Note 1. The Temptation to be a Quitter in the Battle of Life. Occasionally we hear of a baseball team whose players are described as "quitters." They can play a fine game so long as they are in the lead. But if the other side can score two or three runs at the very outset, that side is sure to win, for in such a case these quitters "lose their nerve," and become demoralized. There are other players, however, who are never beaten until the last ball is pitched. When they make errors, when the other side scores many points against them, they pull themselves together and fight all the harder. In the end, teams composed of such players are winning teams.

The temptation to be a quitter is far stronger in the war against sin than in any other kind of struggle. We enlist as soldiers of Christ. We are full of hope and enthusiasm. It seems to us as though we had left all our old faults and weaknesses far behind. Then suddenly we fall into wrongdoing. We are discouraged; more than that, we are bitterly ashamed of ourselves. To turn at once to God and ask Him to forgive us would be an insult to Him, we think. But because we do not go at once to God, we are almost certain to be overcome by other temptations. Thus, for very shame, we drift further and further into wrong.

Note 2. How the Younger Son, in the Parable of Jesus, Fell into Sin. We may be sure that when the younger son left home, he had no intention of "wasting his substance in riotous living." In all probability, when he said good-bye to his father, he promised him not to forget the religion or the

moral principles which he had learned at his mother's knee. Nor did he mean to break that promise. He was simply tired of the old home village. He wanted to have some fun. He wanted to see the world and its wonders. But, alas! when he reached the far country, having plenty of money, he soon had plenty of false friends, who were eager to "show him a good time." By and by came the first misstep, the first drunken debauch, the first visit to a gambling den. We can easily imagine the waves of shame that swept over him then, as he thought of his kind old father, and of all the pure associations of his home. "How can I ever look them in the face again?" he asked himself. Made desperate by these thoughts, he plunged deeper and deeper into sin.

Note 3. How the Younger Son Escaped from his Sin.

Trouble and misfortune were at last his teachers, as they have been for many others. The shock of actual poverty and the pinch of hunger stimulated his mind and will. All at once it occurred to him as he stood by the pig pens of his employer, that the door of hope was not yet closed, that it had never been closed. It was still possible to go back to his father and make a clean breast of it; and he had faith enough in his father's goodness to believe that he would not be allowed to starve. He would at least be received as one of his father's hired servants; and how much better to work for his father than to feed swine in this accursed land! So "he arose and came to his father"; and he did indeed confess his sin to his father. "I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." But instead of being received as a hired servant, he was treated with a kindness far beyond his dreams; a kindness which must have fairly broken his heart in contrite love. He was taken back into the family again, and was given the chance to begin life anew.

Note 4. What to Do after we have Yielded to Temptation.

This parable teaches us that when we have fallen into sin, God is always ready to give us another chance. The past is indeed shameful, and it cannot be wiped out. But the future is God's and ours, and its possibilities are almost limitless. We have but to turn our back upon our sin, and confess our wrong-doing to God and, as far as possible, to those human beings whom we have injured. Peter had been a

leader among the disciples of Jesus, but on the night when Jesus was arrested, in a moment of weakness, Peter denied his Lord, and then "went out and wept bitterly." Yet afterwards, when there came a message from the loving Master to the scattered and heart-broken disciples, it was Peter who was singled out by name. "Go, tell his disciples, *and Peter.*" Peter was to have another chance.

We may also learn from the parable of the prodigal son that we ought to avail ourselves of God's goodness at once. The boy in the far country need not have waited until he was ready to devour "the husks which the swine did eat." The shame of that first wrong-doing should have driven him home to his father, instead of further in his evil way. Suppose Peter had said to the messenger, "I will not go to Galilee to meet the Lord. I would be ashamed to have Him see me. I could not lift up my head in His presence." How foolish, how wrong that would have been! If God is ready to give us another chance, surely our first duty is to respond with eagerness to His kind offer, to spring forward gladly and seize the splendid opportunity.

Many centuries ago, a young sculptor began working on a piece of beautiful Carrara marble, seeking to carve a statue. He was unskilful, however, and after hacking at the marble for a few hours, threw it away as spoiled. A few days later Michael Angelo came down the street, and saw the discarded marble lying in a pile of stone chips in the gutter. He took it home with him, and carved out of it his wonderful statue of David. Many a man has considered his own life spoiled, and has proceeded to fling himself into the gutter of sin. Afterwards, however, God has said to that man, "If you will help me, your life can even yet be molded into a noble and beautiful character." Surely, when God Himself appeals thus to a man, only a "quitter" will fail to respond.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Lu. 15:12. **Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me:** This would be one-third (Deut. 21:17). In modern times he would have no right to it until his father's death. In ancient times, however, such requests as this were by no means unheard of. **Lu. 15:16.** **The husks that the swine did eat:** The pods of the carob or locust tree, still common in Palestine. Poor people eat them occasionally.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
To dry one’s eyes and laugh at a fall,
And baffled, get up and begin again—
So the chase takes up one’s life, that’s all.”—*Browning*.

“One who never turned his back, but marched breast-forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.”—*Browning*.

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Of what distant land or city might Jesus have been thinking when He described the younger son as going “into a far country”?

2. Was the young man prompted by low or high motives when he resolved to go back home? (Lu. 15:17.)

3. Describe his probable appearance when his father saw him coming.

4. What might the father have said to him?

5. When the women went to give to the disciples their message from the risen Master, do you suppose they found Peter with the others, or alone?

6. What did Peter probably answer when the women said to him, “The Master sent this message especially to you, Peter”?

7. When we decide to follow Christ, do we take into the Christian life any of our faults and weaknesses?

8. When we have done wrong, to whom should we confess our sin?

9. When a person covers up his wrong-doing, what harm does he do to his own moral character?

Note-book Work. Write a brief essay, showing that to apologize for wrong-doing is a sign of strength rather than weakness of character.

Lesson 33. THE CHRISTIAN'S LIBERTY. The Harmony between Freedom and Law.

Scripture Lesson, Mt. 5:41; Gal. 5:1, 13-15; Jas. 1:25.

Note 1. The Slavery of Mere Duty-doing. A young girl was talking about a certain course of action. "I know it is my duty," she said, "because I hate it so." That girl doubtless recognized that the requirements of duty were reasonable and necessary. Nevertheless, in her experience, duty had very often seemed to mean something hard and disagreeable. Her life had therefore been a kind of slavery in which duty was the task-master. She had been accustomed to say to herself, "I suppose I must do this, because it is my duty; but I do not want to do it." We frequently hear persons speak of the "thorny path of duty." Indeed, Jesus Himself tells us, "Narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life." Is it necessary, however, that we should go forever along that straight and narrow way, like cattle past a clover field, looking longingly over the fence at pleasures which are forbidden? Is the Christian life a cheerless slavery?

Note 2. The Duty-doing of the Pharisees. Religion as taught by the Pharisees was indeed just such a burdensome slavery. They thought of religion as merely obedience to the law of Moses, and the traditions of the elders. They sought, as it were, to give men an exact list of the things which they were required to perform for God; at the same time, they said very little about the things which God in His goodness does for men. As a result, their hearts were seldom stirred with love for God, and they spent their lives in the effort to keep all those laws and traditions, just for the sake of the reward which they hoped to gain, or just because those things were commanded, and they felt that it was their duty to obey. They were slaves to the law. Paul tells us that he himself, before his conversion, had lived just this kind of life, a life of slavery. "I consent unto the law that it is good," he says, speaking of his former experiences (Rom. 7:16-24). But, "the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise." In other words, he had tried to keep the law, but he had been unable to put his whole heart into it. As a result, he had constantly found himself disobeying this injunction or that; and even when he was most successful in keeping the whole law, his life had been a weary, joyless slavery.

Note 3. Paul's Gospel of Christian Liberty. When Paul became a Christian, however, he passed from bondage into freedom. "For freedom did Christ set us free," he says. When he came to know Christ as his Saviour, a new motive entered into his heart, the motive of love for Christ, and for the infinitely loving Father, whom Christ revealed to men. Because of this new love, he was eager to do God's will. Duty to him was no longer something he *had* to do, but something he *wanted* to do. He was no longer God's slave, but one of God's free sons. We see the same kind of change, sometimes, in the attitude of a son toward his human father. For a time, he does not appreciate his father's goodness. He obeys, grudgingly, his father's commands, just as a slave might obey them. After a time, however, he comes to know his father better, and his heart is filled with a new love for his father. From that time on, father and son are like friends and partners, working enthusiastically together, with common desires and purposes. So Paul says, when we become Christians, "God sent forth

the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art no longer a bondservant, but a son" (Gal. 4:6, 7). God's law had become to him, as Jesus puts it, "a law of liberty"; that is, a law which, as a Christian, he was eager to obey of his own free will.

Paul wrote this letter to his Christian converts in Galatia, because their Christianity was in danger of becoming nothing but a kind of Judaism. They were not Jews by race, and as Christians they had never kept the ceremonial requirements of the Jewish law. But certain Jewish Christians visited them in Paul's absence, and told them that they could not be Christians unless they kept all the minute details of the Mosaic law. As soon as Paul heard about it, he sent them this letter: "If you listen to these men," he said in substance, "and spend your energies in the effort to conform to all these Jewish regulations, your religion will sink into a mere slavery, with no love in it at all. The Christian life," he said, "is a life of love. If you have love in your hearts you will indeed obey all that is really essential in the Jewish law; for the whole law is fulfilled in one word, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. You will not obey, however, just because you feel that the law compels you to obey, but because you really want to do the things which the law requires. You will be free men, not slaves. Stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage."

Note 4. How to Live a Life of Freedom. Many good people now, as in ancient times, never rise to a higher form of religion than that of the Pharisees. Life to them is one long slavery to duty. Moreover, it is still possible for a Christian to slip back into that lower kind of religion, like Paul's Galatian converts. We have felt the new motive of love, and yet sometimes that motive seems to lose its power; the thought of God's goodness fails to stir our hearts; duty seems hard; and life seems to have become once more a slavery. What shall we do at such times, in order to be free men once more?

Jesus has an answer to that question, very wise, and yet very simple. He expresses the gist of it in the verse referred to in our lesson, "Whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two." This is a figure of speech drawn

from life in Palestine. Roman soldiers marching through the country frequently compelled the native Jews to go with them as burden-bearers. A Jew could hardly imagine a more hateful task. Yet Jesus says, When the Roman oppressor orders you to go with him one mile, instead of doing only that and then throwing the burden down and parting with him as an enemy, go with him two, surprise him by your cheerful spirit, and win him for a friend. In other words, when duty seems to you hateful and bitter, you can sweeten the bitterness of it by saying, I will do more than my duty. If the rules in school seem hard, try to do more than merely to obey the rules. Use your influence among your classmates to promote the spirit of loyalty to the school. If work seems disagreeable, do not stop when the whistle blows, but work over time a little while. A small boy was once sent to a blackberry patch to pick two quarts of berries. It was a hot day, and he did not relish the task. But the thought came to him, "What fun! I'll surprise the family by picking four quarts instead of two." So he worked busily away, whistling a cheery tune; and he was surprised when his four quarts were picked, so quickly had the minutes flown. This is what Jesus means by going the second mile. To go one mile in a hateful spirit is bondage; but to go two miles willingly and cheerfully transforms the bondage into freedom. "Nothing is hard," as the old adage says, "that is done willingly."

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Gal. 5:13. Use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh: Christian freedom does not mean license. **Through love be servants one to another:** The life of love may be called a life of service or slavery. Paul calls himself the bond-slave of Christ. But this slavery is a voluntary slavery, and is sweet, not bitter. **Gal. 5:15:** If ye bite and devour one another: The Jewish teachers who had come among them had stirred up angry strife. **Take heed that ye be not consumed:** That is, as a Christian community.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

"It is not doing the thing we like to do, but liking to do the thing we have to do, that makes life blessed."—*Goethe*.

"Duty nor lifts her veil nor looks behind;
But as she spoke, a loosened lock of hair

Slipped from beneath her hood, and I who looked
To see it gray and thin, saw amplest gold;
Not that dull metal dug from sordid earth,
But such as the retiring sunset flood
Leaves heaped on bays and capes of island cloud."

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before answering these questions read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. When Paul insisted that his Gentile converts need not keep the Jewish ceremonial law, some persons called him a "men-pleaser," meaning that he tried to make the Christian life easy, although Jesus had taught that it was hard. How would you have answered these persons?

2. Is it probable that the Galatians desired to keep the ceremonial law because of their love for Jesus, or because they were afraid of not going to heaven?

3. Is it sometimes easier to do hard things than easy things? Why? Give an illustration.

4. Imagine two musicians; one is absorbed in his desire to play all his notes correctly, but his playing is mechanical; the other is equally careful to be correct in his playing, and in addition he loves his music. To which of these two would you rather listen?

5. Sometimes persons excuse themselves for not doing more for some associate in the way of unselfish kindness by saying, "Well, I did my duty by that person, anyhow." What do you think Jesus would have said, in such a case?

6. Suppose some one had said to Jesus, "A certain person keeps injuring me, and then coming and begging my pardon. How many times is it my duty to forgive him?" What do you think Jesus would have answered?

7. In a certain home, the members of the family are always standing up for their rights, and never do any more for one another than their bare duty. In another home, almost every day, little unexpected courtesies and kindnesses are being done. To which of these two families would you rather belong? Why?

8. A man had an illness which kept him an invalid for many months. At first he did nothing but worry and fret, because of the good times he was missing. What would you advise such a person, in the light of Jesus' teaching about "the second mile"?

Note-book Work. The gist of Paul's letter to the Galatians is contained in the following passages: chs. 1, 2: 3:1-6; 3:23—4:7; chs. 5, 6. Cut these out and paste them in your note-book.

Lesson 34. THE LIFE OF FAITH. Strength from God, and how we may Have it.

Scripture Lesson, Mt. 7:24-27.

Note 1. Are we Prepared to Meet Temptation? A young clerk, in a moment of unusual temptation, stole money from his employer's till. A few days later, in his prison cell, he said to a friend, "I never supposed that I could do such a thing. It all seems to me like an unreal dream." If you and I should be suddenly assailed with just such an overpowering temptation, are we sure that we would come out of it victoriously? Is it not possible that many a man who considers himself respectable and honorable is really no better and no worse at heart than some who are branded by society as criminals? Mr. Spurgeon once remarked that the human heart is a powder magazine. If there has never been a terrible explosion in our lives, it is probably because God has kept away the sparks. Surely we need to ask ourselves with all earnestness this question: Are we preparing ourselves as well as we can to meet life's hard tests, whenever they may come?

Note 2. House-building in Palestine. The most fertile land in all countries is usually found in river valleys. Many villages, therefore, in Palestine, as everywhere, were built along the sides of brooks and rivers. Palestine has a dry season and a rainy season. Many brooks, or "wadies," run entirely dry in the hot months. The summer visitor would never suppose that the inhabitants of a village near one of these dry brook-beds could ever be in serious danger from floods. Jesus, however, pictures two men building their houses in such a village. One of them realized that although there was at that time not a drop of water in the brook, nevertheless, a rainy season was coming by and by; so he dug down to bed-rock and laid his foundation upon it. The other man, however, took no such precautions, and built his house on the surface of the ground. For months, perhaps even for years, all went well. But there came a year when there was an unusually heavy fall of rain in the springtime. A flood came sweeping down from the hills. The brook overflowed its banks and rose into the streets of the village. The foaming yellow torrent swept past the houses, eating away great quantities of the loose sandy soil. As a result, the house of the foolish builder was undermined and fell in ruins, a mere heap of stones and mortar. The house of the wise builder, however, stood firm through wind and flood, "for it was founded on a rock."

Note 3. The Meaning of the Parable of Jesus. This parable was spoken as the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus had been calling upon His followers to live as children of the heavenly Father, humbly looking to Him for strength. Now He adds a final appeal, urging them not to ignore His message, but to act upon it without delay. For a time, He means, you may get along very well in your own strength, apart from God. "But life is not all fair weather. Storms of temptation are sure to come, when the rains descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow; at such times, one's character needs to be founded on the Rock of Ages, otherwise, "great will be the fall thereof." In short, the parable warns us against self-sufficiency, and bids us live the life of faith, not trusting in our own feeble wills, but looking for help to the power of God.

Note 4. How we may have Strength from God. God is

giving us strength all the time. Our physical strength comes from Him, and is a valuable help in resisting temptation. Many a fall into sin is due, in part, to physical exhaustion. Statistics show that a larger number of crimes are committed on Saturday nights than at any other time in the week. Men are tired after their week of labor, and, with their week's wages in hand, yield more easily to the forces of evil. If we would win moral victories, let us not waste the physical strength which God gives us. The gospels indicate that Jesus was a perfect specimen of physical manhood. The follower of Jesus, likewise, should aim at physical perfection. This does not necessarily mean great muscular strength; it does mean, however, good health; not passable health, but abounding health. To this end, we should be careful to get sufficient sleep, and at regular hours; we should be judicious in matters of food and exercise. So far as possible, we should be at all times full of physical energy and vitality. In this way we shall avoid many a disastrous defeat in our warfare against sin.

God is giving us spiritual strength, also, every day. All our aspirations after goodness, all our purposes to do right, are from Him.

“ And every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness,
Are his, alone.”

Through prayer we may make it possible for God to send us more of this inner strength.

God has also provided external sources of spiritual strength. Among the most important are the weekly services of the church for public worship, and the Bible. Through attendance at church and through Bible study we gain fresh inspiration. Enthusiasm is contagious. From the minister and from the worshiping congregation we catch new enthusiasm for the Christian life. When we read the Bible, we come under the influence of the great leaders and teachers of the Hebrews and the early Christians; above all, we are brought in touch with the divine personality of Jesus Christ. To attempt to live the Christian life apart from these sources of divine power is to build our house upon the sand. A small steamer was once overtaken by a terrible storm in the Bay of Biscay, just off the northern shore of Spain. Being unable

For faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

“ The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.”

—Whittier.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Which of the two builders described by Jesus probably finished his house first?

2. Why was it harder to build on the rock than on the sand?

3. What did the foolish builder probably say to the wise builder while they were at their work?

4. When the big flood came, what might the wise builder have said to the foolish builder?

5. Mention examples of great achievements which men have accomplished by using the forces of nature.

6. Mention some influences which have helped you to be good.

7. Do you think that the forces of evil are able to exert a stronger influence upon us than the forces of goodness? Or are the forces of goodness the stronger?

8. What parts of the Bible have influenced you the most?

Note-book Work. Make a collection of clippings from the Bible which promise help from God. Begin with the following : Phil. 4:13; Is. 40:29-31.

Lesson 35. THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS HEAVENLY FATHER. Learning how to Pray.

Scripture Lesson, Mt. 6:5-15; 7:7-11.

Note 1. What is the Value of Prayer? A small boy once prayed to God to send him a bicycle. For many days he included this petition in his daily prayer, but he never possessed a bicycle until he earned the money by his own labor to buy one. As a result of this experience he said to himself, "What is the use of praying for things? What does prayer amount to, any way?" This is the question which we are to consider in this lesson. What is the real value of prayer?

Note 2. The Vain Repetitions of Heathen Prayers. In ancient times, when men found that their prayers were not answered, they tried to attract God's attention by repeating over and over the words of their petitions. They were like children who seek to wear out their parents by constant teasing, and think that thus they will get what they want. Certain words and certain forms of petition were supposed to have a kind of magical influence on God, so that if these expressions were employed often enough He could not help granting their requests. These ideas of prayer are common in heathen lands to-day. In China, gongs are sounded and firecrackers are exploded, in order to attract the attention of the deity. In Thibet petitions are written on slips of paper and attached to "prayer-wheels," as they are called, and the wheels are revolved by hand, or by the wind, or by water-power. Each revolution is considered equivalent to a repetition of the prayer. Even in Christian lands, many persons seem to think that if they pray loud enough or long enough, God will grant them benefits which He could not otherwise be persuaded to give.

Note 3. The New Teaching of Jesus regarding Prayer. Even if no words of Jesus had been handed down to us regarding prayer, we could infer from a study of His other teachings what He would have said regarding it. He taught that God is our wise and loving Father; surely, then, He knows better than we ourselves what is good for us; and to try to force Him to gratify our desires, just as children try to over-ride their parents' better judgment by much teasing, is not only foolish but wrong. And, indeed, we find that Jesus did condemn that kind of prayer. "In praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do. . . . For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." The question then arises, If God knows what is good for us, and in His love provides for all our needs, why trouble Him with our petitions?

Jesus answered that question by giving His disciples a concrete example of prayer. After this manner pray ye: "Our Father, . . . thy kingdom come." This is the keynote of the Lord's Prayer. The sentence which follows simply explains what is meant by the coming of God's kingdom, namely, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The petition for bread, in this context, must be interpreted as meaning, "We trust Thee to give us our needful food, that we may do Thy will." The petition for forgiveness and for deliverance from sin, is clearly a petition that God's kingdom may come in our own hearts. The whole prayer may be summed up in the single sentence, "Thy kingdom come." The Lord's Prayer is therefore a prayer of consecration as well as petition. For we know that God is more eager to establish the kingdom of righteousness than any of us can ever be. We come as children to the Father, and we say, "Father, we too are longing for the coming of Thy kingdom more than for anything else." In short, Jesus taught His disciples a new kind of prayer: not a form of magic, through which we may invoke the power of the Almighty in order to gain our own selfish ends, but a means of comradeship between the heavenly Father and His human children. Just as human parents and their sons and daughters talk over together their common plans and purposes, so Jesus would have His disciples talk with their heavenly Father in prayer regarding that glorious kingdom of beauty and truth and goodness which all true children of God are seeking.

Note 4. Prayer as a Source of Spiritual Strength. We may now see the answer to our question, What is the value of prayer? Just as it is an inspiration to talk with a human friend, so it is an inspiration to talk with God. The sense of His nearness and His love fills us with new hope and strength and courage as we go out to fight life's battles. Our prayer should be far more than a series of requests. We may indeed ask God for things which we desire, and God will grant our requests, if it is His will. There are indeed some good gifts which He longs to give to us but cannot until we ask for them. Our petitions, however, should not be selfish. The motive which inspires them should be that expressed in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come." The chief value of prayer, however, is not as a means of getting things from God, but rather as in itself a form of social fellowship with God, our nearest and dearest friend. Jesus Himself has given us the sublimest possible illustration of the real value of prayer. In the midst of the agony of the Garden of Gethsemane, when He was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," He sought strength and comfort in prayer. "Father," He said, "all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me." Three times Jesus thus prayed the Father to take from His lips, if possible, the cup of anguish which, on the morrow, Calvary was to bring. Each time, however, He added the words, "Howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt." The cup was not destined to pass until the Master had tasted its uttermost bitterness. Nevertheless, that lonely midnight prayer was not in vain. For afterwards, as Luke tells us, an angel strengthened Him (Lu. 22:43). Our petitions, also, may not be granted as we hope and dream. But if we can but frame our lips to utter that great prayer of Jesus, "Not what I will, but what thou wilt," we, too, will find that we have not prayed in vain.

EXPLANATION OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES.

Mt. 6:12. Forgive us our debts: Sins are debts, shortcomings in the service of God. **Mt. 7:8. For every one that asketh receiveth:** Not always all that they ask for, however. The point is that in the spiritual world, as in the temporal world, those who want things eagerly enough to ask for them are the persons who receive.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

“ Lord, what a change within us one short hour
 Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make !
 What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
 What parched grounds refresh as with a shower.
 We kneel and all around us seems to lower,
 We rise and all the distant and the near
 Stands forth in sunny outline brave and clear.
 We kneel how weak, we rise how full of power !
 Why therefore do we do ourselves this wrong,
 Or others—that we are not always strong,
 That we are ever overborne with care,
 That we should ever weak and heartless be ;
 Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
 And joy, and strength, and courage are with Thee ? ”

DIRECTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

Questions on the Lesson. Before attempting to answer these questions, read carefully all the Scripture passages referred to at the beginning of the lesson.

1. Why do you think Jesus advised His disciples to be absolutely alone when praying?

2. Does this mean that Jesus would disapprove of such public prayer as is offered in church services? Give reasons.

3. What reward did Jesus probably have in mind, when He said “ Thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee ”? (Mt. 6:6; see Note 4.)

4. Give an example of the kind of prayer which consists merely in “ vain repetitions.”

5. Do we necessarily pray as Jesus would have us pray, when we say the words of the Lord’s Prayer? What else is essential?

6. Did Jesus approve of prayers of thanksgiving? (See Mt. 11:25.)

7. Two boys prayed for a bicycle, as below; which of them prayed more nearly in the spirit of Jesus? Why?

(a) Father, please send me a bicycle so that I may have a good time with it.

(b) Father, I need a bicycle in order to earn money for my mother selling papers. If it be Thy will, show me how to earn money to buy one.

8. A meeting was called one very dry summer to pray for rain. After a few days, there was indeed a refreshing rain. A small boy inquired, "When will they hold the thank-you meeting?" Which prayer was probably the more pleasing to God, the petition for rain, or the thanksgiving for the rain?

Note-book Work. Make a collection of prayers which seem to you beautiful. There are many beautiful prayers in the Psalms, for example, 42:1; 51:10; 131:1, 2; 139:23, 24. Paste in your note-book those which you like best. Add others, from other sources, if possible. Your teacher may be able to help you in this.

Lesson 36. REVIEW. The Two Great Commandments, as Illustrated in the Lessons of this Course.

Scripture Lesson, Mk. 12:28-34.

Note 1. What is the Fundamental Principle of the Christian Life? In the preceding thirty-five lessons, we have made a study of Christian life and conduct. As we come to the close of the course, there may be pupils who are somewhat bewildered. Must we remember all the details of these thirty-five lessons, in order to be Christians? Is there not some short and simple statement of the Christian way of living, in which all these details are, in principle, included?

Note 2. What Commandment is First of All? The scribe who came to Jesus with the above question was probably actuated by this same desire for some short and simple formula for right living. The Mosaic law was long and complex; page after page, it stretches out, through Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Furthermore, each generation of scribes had added its "traditions," until in the time of Jesus only those who could spend their lives in a special study of these matters might hope to understand them. We can easily sympathize, therefore, with the earnest-minded scribe who asked Jesus, "What commandment is first of all?" "Surely," he means, "not all of these laws are of equal importance. Is there not one which is more essential than all the others, so that if a man obey this one commandment he will be not far from the kingdom of God?"

Note 3. The Two Great Commandments. In response to the scribe's question, Jesus answered that there was one commandment greater than all others. It was the commandment found in Deut. 6: 5, "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." To this "first commandment" Jesus immediately added a second commandment, taken from Lev. 19:18, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "There is none other commandment," Jesus says, "greater than these." "On these two commandments the whole law hangeth" (Mt. 22:40). In other words, if you keep these two commandments, you will keep all that is essential in the whole Mosaic code. Other religious teachers before

Jesus had emphasized the importance of one or another of these two commandments. The first of them was in fact repeated twice a day by every loyal Jew, as a kind of confession of faith. The great rabbi Hillel had declared that love for one's neighbor is the kernel of the law. The greatness of Jesus, however, consists in this, that He took these two commandments, which are widely separated in the books of the Pentateuch, and put them together as had not hitherto been done. In so doing He taught that they belong together. He means that God dwells in all human lives. Love for God must therefore express itself not merely in ritual observances, but in love for one's neighbor, and in deeds of neighborly kindness. Love for one's neighbor should likewise be inspired by love for God.

Note 4. The Unity of All Human Lives in God. These two commandments, as Jesus has associated them together, imply that God's life, my life, and my neighbor's life, are all bound up together in a living unity. Certainly, therefore, he who would be a Christian must not live for self. On the other hand, it is not right to say that he should live for others, that is, disregarding entirely his individual interests. The commandment does not bid us to love our neighbor more than ourselves. To be a Christian does mean, however, to live for the common welfare, to seek first the interests of that kingdom which includes both myself and my fellow men, and not us faulty human beings alone, but also the heavenly Father, "in whom we live and move and have our being." This is the meaning of the two great commandments, and the essence of the Christian life.

THOUGHTS FROM OTHER SOURCES.

A Chicago University professor lately presented to his class in college the following list of questions that he declared ought to be answered satisfactorily by every student before graduation :

Do you see anything to love in a little child?

Have you sympathy with all good causes?

Can you look straight in the eye of an honest man or a pure woman?

Will a lonely dog follow you?

Do you believe in lending a helping hand to weaker men?

Do you believe in taking advantage of the law when you can do so?

Can you be high-minded and happy in drudgery?

Can you see as much beauty in washing dishes and hoeing corn as in playing golf and playing the piano?

Do you know the value of time and money?

Are you good friends with yourself?

Do you see anything in life besides dollars and cents?

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY.

1. Choose six of the lessons in this course, and show that the man who keeps the two great commandments will perform the duties that are discussed in these lessons.

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

2. In the following lessons show what neighbor, or what class of neighbors, is benefited or injured by each of the virtues, and each of the wrongs that are studied. (For example, in the case of murder, the injury is not merely to the neighbor who is murdered, but also to his relatives, and finally to all men.)

(1) Lesson 2.

(2) Lesson 6.

(3) Lesson 13.

(4) Lesson 16.

(5) Lesson 28.

(6) Lesson 29.



