EXPERIMENTAL OBJECT LESSONS

By CHARLOTTE E. GRAY

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Experimental object lessons

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Experimental Object Lessons

Bible Truths Simply Taught

By
CHARLOTTE E. GRAY

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Preface

THE average Sunday-school teacher works under great disadvantages. The majority of Sunday-schools are not provided with separate class rooms, and the teacher has to circle his scholars around him in chairs, or, worse still, have them seated before him in long pews, so that while he is addressing one end of the class those at the other end cannot hear him without an effort. The average Sunday-school scholar does not make the effort. Distractions are numerous and constant. Anything, therefore, which will help to keep the eyes of the pupils upon the teacher and their minds upon the lesson is to be welcomed.

The object lessons given in this volume are written in a very simple manner, as though a teacher were talking with his class. The talks are only given as hints. They can be remodeled by the teacher to suit the lessons being studied and to meet the special needs of the pupils. It is always best to try the experiments first at home so that no awkwardness may mar the effect in the class.

The materials used are very inexpensive and

easy to procure. In some cases the same things are used in several lessons. Most of the objects are of such a nature that they can be taken by the teacher to the regular church service without attracting undue attention.

The only warning necessary is in regard to the strong acids. *The children's faces should be kept well away from these, as the fumes are strong, and care should be taken not to spill any upon the flesh or clothing. Water should never be poured into acids.* When necessary to mix the two (the necessity does not arise in these lessons), always pour the acid slowly into the water.

These lessons are sent forth in the earnest hope that they may prove helpful to many Sunday-school teachers and junior superintendents, and that they may serve to fix firmly some religious truths in the minds of many restless boys and girls.

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Experimental Object Lessons

I

THE NECESSITY OF SALVATION

"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." —*Rom. iii. 23.*

Materials: Two lumps of loaf sugar. A lump of coal. Five cents' worth of the strongest sulphuric acid.

HAS it ever occurred to you that there are some people in the world who are so good that they have no need of a Saviour? There certainly is a great difference in people. Some have so many ugly traits of character, and show them so plainly, that we almost feel that their hearts must be black through and through; as black for instance as this piece of coal. Then there are other people who have so much sweetness about them; who are so sunshiny and lovable that we think they have no faults at all. They seem as sweet and white and pure as this lump of sugar. What a difference we see in these two objects, one so white and one so black! But we must remember that our heavenly

Father does not always look at things exactly as we do. Let us read 1 Samuel xvi. 7: "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart." Now what would you say if I told you that this sugar has blackness in it just like the coal? Yes, you would find it hard to believe that. But I will put a few drops of this liquid on it and we will see. This will not stain the sugar, remember, but it will take all the water out of it and show us what the rest is like. When God looks at people He sees things about them which perhaps even they themselves do not know. He knows that although some hearts are not as bad as others, still all have some impurity; so in His great mercy He sent His Son into the world to die for us, so that we can be saved through His merits since we cannot through our own. Look at our sugar now. It is as black as the coal. Here is another lump which I will place beside it so we can see the contrast. Many of us have dear friends whom we admire and who have really fine characters, but we must remember that no one on earth is good enough to be safe without Jesus.

II

STEADFASTNESS

"Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."—*1 Cor. xv. 58.*

Materials: A piece of dark coloured velvet. A drop of water. A drop of quicksilver. A shot.

IN our Bible lessons we become familiar with the characters of many people who lived long ago. They are described very honestly and accurately so that we can profit by their good examples and take warning from their failures. On this piece of velvet we will place three drops and see if we can think how they might represent three different kinds of people. (Shake out upon the velvet a drop of water, one of quicksilver and a shot.) Yes, we exclaim at once, "How pretty the quicksilver looks!" The water also shines like a diamond, but we do not think the shot very attractive. But let us go more slowly. Appearances are often deceitful. The drop of water is indeed beautiful but as something to represent a character—let us see. Place your finger upon it a moment.

Now where is it? Absolutely gone. What is a character worth that will not stand pressure? Read Ps. xxxvii. 10: "For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place and it shall not be." The water drop, pretty as it is, would hardly be the one we should wish to have represent our character, is it? Now the silver drop is almost more beautiful. How it glistens against the dark velvet! Take it up and examine it. You cannot? No, it slides from under your fingers. It even breaks into little balls and runs around the velvet. Read Jas. i. 8: "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." The quicksilver seems only fitted to represent an unreliable character; one which cannot be depended upon. Surely then we would not choose the beautiful silver drop to represent our character. So all that is left to us is this dingy hard little ball called a shot. While it is not as showy as either of the other drops it will grow more attractive to us the longer we think about it. See how firm it is. You can press with all your might upon it and it will not be crushed (2 Tim. ii. 3). If you wish you can take it up in your fingers or throw it upon the floor without injuring it (Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24). It is solid and sound to

the very centre (Ps. li. 6). As the water drop might well represent the character of Saul, and the quicksilver the character of Absalom, the firm, reliable lead drop might represent the character of David.

III

GOOD AND BAD COMPANY

"Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners."—*1 Cor. xv. 33.*

Materials: A few strips of blue litmus paper. Litmus paper is kept at drug stores and photographic supply houses. Three little shallow dishes, one containing water, one hydrochloric or acetic acid and one strong ammonia.

THE wise king who wrote the book of Proverbs said, "Enter not into the path of the wicked and go not in the way of evil men" (Prov. iv. 14). It is a great privilege to belong to a Christian family. Boys and girls sometimes do not realize how they are absorbing great truths and storing away in their minds beautiful thoughts, which will come to them again in later years, as they live day after day under the influence of a good father and mother. As the little slips of paper in this dish all look alike (drop slips of litmus paper into the dish of water), so the children in a family, while differing in their dispositions, all form the same general principles. But as time passes and the children grow older, usually they become separated, some going to one place and some to another.

Here are two more dishes containing liquid which we will use to represent homes into which a young person might go when leaving his own Christian home. One where evil habits are indulged in, and where the people are so far from God that their sins are like crimson. The other where people are brave and kind, "true blue" as the old saying goes. What would be the effect upon a boy or girl entering these homes? The Bible says, "Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners." Let us put one of these slips into each dish. See, one has turned crimson while the other is, if anything, more blue than before. Do you think it is a sign of weakness for a person to be quickly influenced for wrong when getting into bad company? Would a stronger willed person be more able to hold his own colours true in such a place? (Change the red and blue papers.) How quickly these papers change colour. The red is now blue and the blue red. It is true that a very strong character can longer withstand temptation, but there is a weak spot in every person, and the Bible says, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. x. 12). There is only one time when a Christian should trust himself in evil surroundings and that is when

the direct call of God takes him there. Then he will be upheld so strongly that he cannot fall. What is apt to be the result when young people who have become tainted with sin return to their old home, among their brothers and sisters again? (Put the red paper back into the dish of water. The slips in the dish will turn red wherever they touch the red paper.) Young brothers and sisters are so easily influenced by one who has been away from them for a time and returned again. How sad to bring sin into the home where one is loved and trusted! How much better it would be to go out into the world steadily avoiding evil company; following the Bible rule, "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Prov. i. 10); always seeking to be with those who will lead the way to higher things. So growing stronger and better, until, when returning to the old home, one can exert such a good influence that all will be made better. (Drop the slip from the dish of ammonia into the dish with the others and all, including the red ones, will turn blue.)

IV

DUTY MADE CLEAR

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye."—*Ps. xxxii. 8.*

Materials: A basin or dish. Some water. A dollar.

THERE is nothing like the first glance we get at duty. You see me drop a dollar in this dish. As your eyes light upon it you comprehend at once its true position. But push your chairs back until you lose sight of the dollar. Now I will fill the dish with water, and see—the dollar is in plain view to you again although you know it has not moved. When the water was put into the dish the rays of light were refracted or bent out of their course by the drops of water so that the coin appears to occupy a position which is in reality not its position at all. So it often is when we consider a duty. God has promised to give us plain instruction in the way in which we should go (Prov. xv. 19; Prov. iii. 6). He has said that He would make the way so plain that even a fool could walk in it (Isa. xxxv. 8). When we keep our minds clear for the rays of God's truth to

shine in we can see things in their true position. But when we let our wishes and inclinations come in the way—when we stop to consider and argue and wish that things could be different, the light which God gave us at first becomes distorted and we fail to see things exactly as they are. When the voice of God speaks to our hearts let us keep the way clear between Him and us and not try to explain our duty away.

V

PARDON AND CLEANSING

"Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow."—*Isa. i. 18.*

Materials: Some ammonia. A few drops of hydrochloric acid. A tablet of phenol-phthalein dissolved in a half glass of water. These tablets can be bought at any drug store.

IT is usually a great deal easier to prevent a calamity than to remedy one after it has occurred. It is a great deal pleasanter to live a day rightly than to look back over it at night and wish it had been different. If children and young people could only realize how important it is to keep their lives clean each day as they live it there would be fewer old men and women looking back with sad eyes over their past. Many a young heart is as clean and pure as the liquid in this glass (show glass containing phenol-phthalein) until suddenly overwhelmed by some powerful temptation. Unless a heart is given up to the control of the Holy Spirit what defense has it against the wiles of the evil one? Many an unhappy person suddenly awakens to the fact that his heart, once so pure and

innocent, has become stained with sin. (Pour a few drops of ammonia into the glass and the liquid will become red.) In such a case a person is helpless. He cannot undo what he has done. No human power can make him as he was before. Probably no person lives very long in this world without his heart becoming more or less tainted with sin. Jesus, when He was on earth, passed sinlessly through all the temptations and trials that we have to face (Heb. iv. 15), and feels a loving sympathy for us (Heb. ii. 18), and He holds out a promise of help to us in this verse, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." When a penitent heart comes to Him for pardon He forgives and cleanses. (Pour a few drops of hydrochloric acid in the glass and the liquid will instantly lose its colour.) The miracle is beyond our understanding; it is divine. But we see the effects around us everywhere. People who were deep in sin, after looking to Jesus, become changed creatures. No one is too wicked. No case is too hopeless for the Great Physician.

VI

HELP THE WEAK

"Be thou an example to the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."—*1 Tim. iv. 12.*

Materials: One-half glass of lime-water. This can be bought at any drug store for five cents. A small quantity of acetic acid. A tube such as the stem of a clay pipe or a clean straw.

WE know that there are many different dispositions in the world. Among others are the people who are very easily influenced. We all meet them as we go through life. Sometimes they are the most lovable of people; so yielding and gentle. They fall so easily into our plans and agree so cheerfully to anything we suggest that we take great pleasure in their society. Their hearts are perhaps pure and clear, like this water. What a pity it would be if such a nature should lose any of its purity through our influence. There are some things which a strong Christian can do without hurting himself in the least, but which a weak Christian would be harmed by. Paul said, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities

of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. xv. 1). I will take a tube and blow some of my breath into this clear water. See, it has grown clouded and lost all its clearness. Could we ever forgive ourselves if the faith of any friend of ours became clouded through our influence? Yes, this water can be cleared again. (Drop a little acid in the glass and the water will clear instantly.) There is always a way of salvation for those whose hearts get wrong—but what a risk to run! How can we know that our friend will ever have strength of character to seek Jesus and be purified? Perhaps the harm we do will never be undone. We should all resolve to avoid such pleasures and pursuits as will in any way harm the weakest Christian, so that our example will be one which will tend to make the lives about us purer instead of dimming their clearness in any way.

VII

LOVE, THE MAGNET

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto Me."—*John. xii. 32.*

Materials: A magnet. Several needles.

THERE is a certain kind of stone found in the earth called lodestone, which has great drawing power. All of you who have owned a magnet, even a small one, have seen something of this power. I have here a little magnet which we will use to illustrate our lesson. Now what would you consider the greatest drawing power in the world? What was it that caused Jesus to die on the cross for us? Yes, love. A wonderful love that draws all our hearts to Him. As I pass the magnet above these needles let us watch them. See, they all yield to the drawing power of the magnet just as something in each human heart responds to love. We will rub one of these needles against the magnet until it is well magnetized; now let us see if it has not greater drawing power than its fellows. Yes, it draws the others. Read John xv. 5. Many a person who is without power alone, when filled with the Holy Spirit,

can sway and influence multitudes. One very interesting and curious fact about a magnet is this: A magnet which holds a weight all the time has its power kept up, and in some cases it is apparently increased, while if you give a magnet nothing to do its power will grow weak. It is for this reason that when you go into a place where large magnets are kept you see each with a great bar of steel hanging to it. The same rule holds good in a Christian life. The harder we work for God the more power we have but if we let our talents lie idle they lose their power. The power of a magnet does not seem to have much effect at a distance. (If the teacher can secure some of the little toy ducks and fishes which are made to follow magnets they can be used here; otherwise needles will do, or some steel filings.) If you hold your magnet quite away from the object it will not make a move, but bring it slowly nearer and nearer and all at once away it goes to cling to the magnet. When Jesus was on earth and wanted to heal or help any one He usually laid His hands upon them. He always made them feel His love. So when we wish to draw others to Jesus, we must get close to them and let them feel our love.

VIII

THE MESSAGE OF THE FLOWERS

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."—*Matt. vi. 28.*

Materials: A bouquet composed of roses, lilies, violets, nasturtiums and little wild flowers.

WHAT a beautiful bouquet we have to-day. Roses, lilies, violets, nasturtiums and these tiny wild flowers. How sweet they are and how they brighten up our class room. I wonder what they will say to us. Flowers always seem to have some beautiful thoughts to express if we only can tell what they are. Did you ever think that perhaps as God looks down into this world it looks like a garden to Him, and all the people like human flowers? Perhaps we can learn some lessons from the real flowers that will help us grow sweet and beautiful and please our Great Gardener. See the wee blue violet under these green leaves. Let us lift it out. Do you suppose the little violets, as they grow so lowly in shady places, ever look out into the bright sunshine and envy the beautiful

roses bathed in all the brightness of the sun's rays? Sometimes people who have to live very quiet lives; people who are poor; people who are sick; people who are sad and lonely, look out and envy rich, healthy, happy people who seem to live always in the sunshine. But suppose this violet had grown in the glaring sunlight, what would have happened? It might have lived, but it never would have been so large and beautiful a blossom. Its colour would not have been as rich nor its fragrance as sweet. The Great Gardener knew exactly where to have it grow, just as He knows exactly the best place for each of His human flowers. Many people who may blossom sweetly in shady places are not fitted for the brightness of prosperity. The violet seems to tell us to be modest and content with whatever place in the great garden that God gives us.

And now see this gay nasturtium. Have you ever noticed that nasturtiums often have the poorest ground in the garden to grow in? Not because they grow better in poor ground but because they will grow there if they can get no better place, while most other plants would not blossom at all in such soil. Brave little nasturtiums! Can we not take a lesson from them? If people all around us seem to

be in better circumstances than we; if there seem to be more stones and difficulties in our path than in the paths of others, let us think of the bright nasturtiums and put on the bravest face we can and fill our poor spot in the garden so full of brightness that no one except the Great Gardener will ever know how hard the ground is that we have to grow in.

And now the rose. A rose is at home everywhere. It is good enough for a king's palace and yet is none too good to grow on a washerwoman's window-sill. At the marriage feast the rose has a prominent place and it always brings sweet comfort at a funeral. Old people, middle-aged people and little children all love a rose, and who can think of an occasion where one would be out of place? In the same way a Christian should be welcome everywhere. We should be able to "rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep." We should be "all things to all men." The rose is called the "Queen of Flowers," but she suggests nothing of haughtiness or arrogance. Nothing but sweetness and love come from her.

See this frail little wild flower. It grew alone in the woods and many like it will

blossom and fade with no human eye to see them. Notice how delicately it is made. Every little detail about it is perfect. Its petals are of a material more exquisite than the most skillful man could manufacture though he were offered thousands of dollars to do it. And yet hundreds of millions of little wild flowers blossom every year unnoticed, and each is as perfect as this one. Does it not encourage those of us who feel humble and insignificant? If God will make such little things as these and make them so perfect in all the tiny details and will care for them and give them power to blossom, will He not take note of our little lives, although we feel that they are of little account to the world? And if He takes notice of us as we grow why should we care for anything else?

And now our beautiful lilies. There are two kinds here. This is a water-lily. How lovely these white beauties are as they rest lightly on the surface of a lake! Whoever gathered this blossom for us secured a good length of the stem but not all of it. Down it went, farther and farther until it entered into the mud at the bottom of the lake. This white flower does not suggest the thought of mud to us. Purity is what it seems to ex-

press; yet it sprang from the blackest mud you can imagine. Many a boy or girl has been kept from beginning a Christian life by the thought that with his evil home life and surroundings it would be impossible. But this is a mistake. No matter how low a person may be in the beginning, let him push upward and upward and upward, always towards the Sun of Righteousness, and finally he will come out on top of his difficulties and may blossom into a pure Christian character.

Here is another kind of lily. It could say many things to us but its loudest message seems to be of the resurrection. Think where this beautiful flower was before it blossomed. In a common looking brown bulb like this. (Show bulb.) There was nothing beautiful about the bulb. But in the fall some one planted it in the earth. How we sorrow when our friends are laid in the ground after what we call death, and how some people dread the day when they too shall be laid away. But the winter passed and in the spring up sprang a green plant from the lily bulb and soon opened this fragrant flower. The bulb was not seen again, but who wanted it when the flower was so much more beautiful? So it will be with us when we die. We will change into something as much more

beautiful than we are now as this lily is more beautiful than the bulb.

Now all the flowers have said something to us. There are many other blossoms also which could tell us things we would like to hear. When you play in your gardens sit down by your flowers sometimes and try to get them to talk to you. Notice the fragrance that comes from them. It floats away and never goes back, and as long as they live they keep giving it out. That fragrance is like a person's influence. We all give out an influence which reaches the people around us all the time, whether we know it or not, and affects them for good or bad. How careful we ought to be to send out a good influence, as the flowers send out a sweet perfume.

IX

THE HEART FOR JESUS

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."—*Prov. iv. 23.*

Materials: A small empty bottle. A little water. A little kerosene oil. Five cents' worth of quicksilver.

WHAT have I in this bottle? Nothing? Think again. We are apt to forget things we cannot see. The bottle is full of air. Air is a mysterious and wonderful thing. We could not live without it, yet we cannot see it and so we seldom think of it. What is wind? Yes, wind is air in motion. Can any one think of a Bible verse which speaks of wind and also of the Holy Spirit? In what ways are the Holy Spirit and air alike? They are both invisible; both everywhere; both life giving. One who is willing to live a pure life may have his heart as full of the Holy Spirit as this bottle is full of air. But how many things there are to crowd the Holy Spirit out of a heart. Take for instance the case of a young boy who has been brought up in a Christian home and trained to love and obey God. His heart might well be represented by this bottle as it is now. But the lad falls into bad company. He is

gradually drawn into a crowd of pleasure-seeking, idle youths, and all too soon some bad habit—let us say that of cigarette smoking—becomes fastened upon him. He knows the unclean practice is in opposition to the Holy Spirit, but he clings to it and consequently a change takes place in his heart, something like this. (Pour the oil into the bottle.) Is there now as much air in our bottle as there was before? Certainly not. Some has been crowded out, just as love for any evil habit will usurp room in the heart which belongs to the Holy Spirit. Perhaps cigarette smoking could not be called a positive sin; but how long is a boy in a cigarette-smoking crowd before the temptation comes to him to indulge in the so-called "temperance drinks," cider, malt, etc. This habit, taking even a deeper place in the boy's heart, produces an effect like this. (Pour in the water which will drop below the oil.) How much less room there is now in this bottle for air. And how much less room in the heart of the boy for the Spirit of God. "Temperance drinks" contain enough alcohol to create a craving for more. The company in which they are enjoyed usually provides the temptation, and soon the boy finds himself drinking whiskey and brandy. The fear-

ful liquor habit strikes its fangs deep into the very bottom of the heart. (Put in quicksilver which will drop below the water.) The air is now nearly gone from this bottle, crowded out by heavier things. There is still a little left, as there is hardly a heart in the world so utterly depraved that there cannot be found at least a spark of the Divine Love in it. Can these things mix together? (Shake the bottle. There will be a great commotion for a minute but soon each liquid will regain its own place.) The Holy Spirit will have no fellowship with wickedness. As far as He is allowed right of way He will purify and keep a heart clean, but if a person loves and clings to evil things He can do little for him. If we want our bottle full of air again what must we do? Pour out all the other things, of course. If the boy we were speaking of wants to have the Holy Spirit rule in his heart again what must he do? Get the evil things out of his heart and life. This is beyond human power, but God is willing to do it for any one who will ask Him. All He waits for is a prayer such as this, "Create in me a clean heart, oh, Lord, and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. li. 10).

NOTE: Any other sins may be substituted for those mentioned here.

X

THE FOLLY OF AFFECTATION

"For godliness with contentment is great gain."—*1 Tim. vi. 6.*

Materials: A dish of ammonia. Some pink roses, red sweet peas, red and pink poppies, blue daisies and pink phlox.

BOYS and girls are great hero worshippers. It is well that this should be so. The noble examples to be found in history and even in the present generation are inspiring and have helped many a young person to rise through discouragements to success. But the tendency to hero worship has its dangers also. It is easier to fix our admiration upon some one living and near to us than to let our imagination dwell upon noble lives that have passed away. And since we are influenced so greatly by external appearances we are in danger of trying more to imitate the manners of people we admire than the beauties of their characters. Imitation at the best is a poor thing. God does not want two people in His world to be alike. He has not created even two leaves alike. We can please Him better by being a success in our individual way than by being a poor imita-

tion of some one else. See this pretty pink rose. Pink roses are common, of course. Probably God has created more roses of pink than of any other colour. But if this rose could feel dissatisfied and wish to turn to a more unusual colour could it make itself any more beautiful than it is now? (Immerse the rose in the ammonia and it will turn light green very quickly.) Its colour could indeed be changed but do you think that the artificial colour is as pretty as the colour in which it was created? Many a little girl wishes she could be as beautiful or as graceful as some other girl, or as elegant in her deportment as some admired woman. But in trying to imitate these people she becomes unnatural and affected in her manner and so makes herself less attractive just as this green rose is unnatural looking and less beautiful than the pink one. We can change the colour of the other flowers also if we wish. (Red sweet peas dipped in ammonia become blue or purple, red poppies dark blue, pink poppies light blue, blue daisies and white phlox bright green. The two last named take a little longer in changing than the rest.) They are more uncommon now certainly and would attract more attention perhaps; but

would the attention be admiration? Are not all flowers more beautiful just as God created them? Many times boys try to imitate men, and often they make the mistake of thinking that if they smoke, chew or swear they are being manly. On the contrary they are destroying their chance of ever becoming truly manly. A rose that is marred in the bud will never develop into a perfect flower. The best way for us all is to remain perfectly natural and unaffected in our manners, only striving to make ourselves the best self it is possible for us to become. If we are plain or homely we can say, "I will show the world how sweet God can make a plain person." If we are deformed or an invalid we can say, "I will show the world what God can do through a cripple." No matter what we are let us say, "I will be the *best* person, with God's help, that a person like myself can be." Then we will be living our own life, and no matter how poor we may think it, it will be our own and not an imitation of another's.

XI

LIFE AFTER DEATH

"To die is gain."—*Phil. i. 21.*

Materials: A cocoon and, if possible, a living butterfly or moth. Cocoons are often found under oak or maple trees in July. If the ground under a tree that has been infested with caterpillars be carefully cleared of leaves in early June, the search during the following weeks, until the middle of July, is almost certain to be rewarded. The beautiful moth may often be found near by. In the winter a certain species of butterfly may be found hanging in crevices between the boards of a shed or beneath loose clapboards or shingles. Or they are sometimes found in tearing away a slab of bark from an old stump. They are difficult to find for even when your eyes are resting upon them you will hardly be able to tell them from faded brown or gray chips. Their wings are folded upon their backs concealing the colour. These butterflies are easily kept in the house during the winter.

LIFE is very pleasant to most of us. We enjoy our pleasures day by day, and even when sorrow comes to us we still cling to life. Do you see this curious cocoon and can you tell what kind of a creature once occupied it? You have all seen caterpillars in the summer, sometimes crawling along the road or wriggling up a tree trunk. You shudder and draw away from them. Little

girls always detest worms and even boys feel a disgust for them I am sure although they do not like to acknowledge it. But it may be that the caterpillar enjoys life very well. He has no knowledge of a higher kind of existence than his own and so he is probably satisfied. For all we know he may dread the day when he must die. But as he lives among the other worms on the tree, eating away upon the foliage, he finally nears the end of his short life, and descending from the tree he burrows into the ground several inches, where he goes into a chrysalis state. Is he dead? No, indeed, he is no more dead than you and I will be when our bodies fail us and are put under the ground for a little while. Caterpillars do not really die although they seem to do so, and people who love Jesus never die although they are called dead. Read John xi. 26: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." By and by the caterpillar, which has been lying in a curious little cocoon like this, stirs himself and comes out of the top, where you see this opening, and oh, how glorious is the change which has come over him! Whereas he once had to wriggle and crawl slowly along, now he has beautiful bright wings with which he can fly wherever he wishes.

How many slow, patient movements he once had to make in crossing a road, in danger every moment of being crushed to death. Now he can float quickly and easily off towards the beautiful gardens. He can visit places he never even thought of in his former state and his life is immeasurably happier and better. If the butterfly could talk and think, and you should ask him whether or not he wished to go back to his caterpillar state, what do you suppose he would answer? Just such a grand experience is coming to you and me some day. We shall go to sleep, and God will take care of us in some wonderful way, just as He made this nice cocoon to keep the worm safe in. Then by and by we will open our eyes and find that some grand, beautiful change has taken place in us, and we will begin to enjoy life as we never dream of enjoying it now. We shall have pleasures that we do not even know the names of yet. We cannot possibly imagine how happy our lives will then be. Jesus says it is impossible for any one in the world to think of the wonderful things which God has prepared for His children who love Him (1 Cor. ii. 9). So let us never be afraid of dying. Having His children die is only a way God takes of changing them into

something as much more beautiful and happy than we are now as this butterfly is more beautiful and happy than the worm which used to be in this cocoon.

XII

GROWING IN GRACE

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, oh, Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."—*Ps. xix. 14.*

Materials: Some white pansies. Some ammonia.

IN one of our lessons we considered the folly of affectation, and by seeing how much less attractive some flowers were after their colours had been changed, we realized that people also would do better to keep their own individuality rather than to imitate the manners of other people. Many young girls spoil themselves by a silly, affected manner, and often the habit becomes so fixed that it remains throughout the whole life. Too much cannot be said against affectation. But we have some flowers which change their colour so beautifully that we did not wish to use them in teaching that lesson but will let them illustrate another truth for us to-day.

We all have traits of character which we wish we did not possess. Some of us are cross and irritable, some jealous, some

envious, some vain, some selfish, and so on and on and on. We also all know of virtues which we wish were characteristic of us. Often in trying to improve ourselves we become discouraged and think we shall never succeed. It certainly is hard to struggle against our natural dispositions. But with such a powerful friend as Jesus ready to help us every day (Ps. xxvii. 14) and to sympathize with us and encourage us to try again whenever we fail (Heb. iv. 15, 16), we ought to be able to accomplish anything. (Drop the pansies into ammonia and they will quickly turn bright yellow.) We have seen the folly of trying to imitate human beings, now let us learn that we can, with God's help, change and improve our characters. Jesus has given us a good rule to follow in Phil. iv. 8. He tells us to think only of things that are good and true, honest, just, pure and lovely. Our words and deeds spring from our hearts. If we are inclined to speak and act wrongly, we should ask God to change the thoughts of our hearts, for there is the seat of the trouble. If we will do that, and then carefully watch our thoughts, our lives will surely change just as this flower has changed. See how perfectly natural this yellow colour is. Now that it is dry and I place it beside a

natural yellow pansy you cannot tell one from the other. So it will be with one who patiently strives, year after year, to grow in grace. In time he will be so completely changed that it will be impossible for his associates to tell whether his virtues were a part of his natural character or were acquired; or to know whether he was always free from certain faults or whether he has learned to master them.

XIII

SEED TIME AND HARVEST

"And let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."—*Gal. vi. 9.*

Materials: Little dishes containing different kinds of seeds.

ARE you wondering why we have all these little seeds before us to-day? Here are tiny things so small that it is hard to believe they amount to anything at all. Here for contrast is an acorn. Then we have white seeds and black seeds, oats and other grains and many kinds of flower seeds. Have you ever stopped to think how wonderful these little seeds are? No one in the world could make anything half so marvellous. If we take one of these seeds and place it in the ground, it soon ceases to be a seed and we have instead a beautiful or a useful plant. The mysterious and wonderful thing we call life is within each of these seeds; and life is something that only God can give. There is a good deal said in the Bible about sowing and reaping. Let some one read Gal. vi. 7. If I were very fond of watermelons and concluded to raise some in my garden, I should first plow up my

ground, and after I had made it fine and mellow, I should sow my seeds. But what would you think of me if I should sow these pumpkin seeds instead of these melon seeds, and then expect a feast of watermelons? It would be very foolish of me, would it not? Some people are fond of saying that boys must "sow their wild oats." If I want a crop of good oats like these in this dish what kind of oats must I sow? Certainly, I must sow good oats because if I sow wild ones I must also reap wild ones (Gal. vi. 8). Spring is the time to sow seeds and youth is the time to form habits. Our days are like gardens and in them we sow deeds and words and thoughts; and the kind we sow determines what we shall reap when we are old. If a child lets seeds of envy, discontent, anger and other evil things take root in his heart, he cannot expect to reap peace, contentment and joy when he is old. To enjoy these blessings he must in his youth sow seeds of loving deeds, kind words, patience and industry. Now here are seeds which, if scattered in a garden, would soon grow and spread until all the flowers were crowded out. These are seeds of weeds and the best thing we can do is to burn them. To keep a garden free from weeds requires constant

care, and to keep a life free from evil requires just as much care, for evil habits grow like weeds while good ones have to be cultivated like flowers. One who will take the same pains with his character that a gardener does with his garden, carefully keeping out the weeds of evil and patiently cultivating the good will be repaid in his old age and in the life to come. We are given the privilege of sowing not only in our own lives but also in the lives of others. If you should take this acorn and go into your neighbour's yard some time and drop it into some soft ground, after a while he would find a sturdy oak growing in his yard. He might never know who planted it there, and you might forget it as time went by, but there would stand the oak, and as it grew it would shade your neighbour's children and bring comfort to many. So as we go through life we can, through our conversations, deeds and influence scatter seeds of truth and beauty into the lives around us. Simply telling the story of Jesus to some one may cause a deep, abiding trust in God to grow up in that heart to comfort it in all its future life. A few kind words, a smile or thoughtful act may greatly brighten up a life that has little love in it.

But while it is pleasant to think how we

can scatter good seed we must also remember that if weeds grow in our lives their seeds are apt to blow into some neighbouring life where they will do much harm. See these light airy seeds with the white feathery tips. Who has not patiently dug the dandelions from his lawn one year only to find it full the next year because of seeds brought by the wind from a neighbouring lawn where dandelions were allowed to go to seed? The only way to be sure that seeds from our bad habits, careless words and unkind thoughts will not harm any one else is to get them thoroughly taken out of our own hearts and lives. Now I am sure we will all go home determined to sow seeds of beautiful and good things in our own lives and the lives of others. Let us be generous with our seeds so that we may reap a large harvest. If you will read Luke viii. 5 to 16, you will see what Jesus said about sowing seed. God gives every plant a large amount of seed because some is sure to fall on rocky soil or in some place where it cannot grow. So we should scatter loving seed generously and constantly if we want a good harvest, because we cannot be sure how much of it will take root. "If we sow sparingly we shall reap also sparingly, but if we sow abundantly

we shall reap also abundantly" (2 Cor. ix. 6). Seed which is kept in granaries year after year, never increases, and in time it will mildew and mould away; while if it were sown broadcast over the ground it would feed thousands of people. So let us not keep our good thoughts and impulses locked in our own breasts but give them expression in words and deeds that they may benefit others.

XIV

POWER

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."—*Phil. iv. 13.*

Materials: A small piece of paper. Some water. A smooth piece of marble or stone. A piece of leather on a string. With a darning-needle thread a piece of twine through the leather, making the knot very flat and small.

WE all like to read the wonderful Bible stories. It is thrilling to think of men performing feats of strength like Samson and of winning battles against great odds like Gideon, while the story of the boy David slaying the mighty Goliath with a pebble always interests us afresh. We also read wonderful accounts of men who are naturally timid becoming suddenly bold and fearless, of men who were simple and uneducated becoming great preachers, and of people enduring intense suffering without a murmur. We sometimes wonder how we would appear under like circumstances. Why could Peter stand up before an immense multitude and fearlessly preach Christ one day when but a short time before he had

denied his Lord before a servant girl? Something had happened to Peter. He was the same man only with more power. A simple thing can change many ordinary articles. Look at this piece of paper. A baby could pick it up between his thumb and finger. But let us wet it thoroughly and put it on the table here, carefully pressing the edges down all around, and now who can lift it without destroying it? It is the same paper but the addition of a little water has given it great sticking power. Just like this piece of leather. I will drop it on the floor and step on it to press it down, but see, it comes up again easily enough. But let it lie in this water a minute. Now we will drop it to the floor and press it down a little with the foot. How hard it is to lift it! It is the same leather only the water has increased its power. We will drop it on this heavy weight and press the foot upon it a moment. Now see, I can lift the weight and carry it all about by the string. The same leather only with so much more power. Read Acts i. 8: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you." Peter became courageous instead of cowardly when he was baptized with the Holy Ghost. It was the same Holy Spirit who made heroes of all the noble char-

acters we read about in the Old Testament. The Holy Ghost can give you and me power to stick to the right and to lift others up with us as we climb to higher things.

XV

THE HOLY SPIRIT

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—*John iii. 8.*

Materials : A bottle. A funnel. Some moistened paper and some water.

THE most common things are the hardest to understand. It is difficult to tell in words what life is. Few of us can explain air or water. We can tell what they are composed of, perhaps, but we cannot comprehend them, much less explain them to others. Yet some people are foolish enough to say that they will not believe anything they cannot understand. The idea of the Holy Spirit is hard for many of our minds to grasp. He is likened to the mysterious wind which we feel but cannot see. Wind is air in motion. The person who will not believe in anything he cannot understand gladly breathes in the air and benefits from it without thinking whether he understands it or not. Let us never refuse to believe in the Holy Spirit because He is mysterious like the air. As we breathe in

the air and live this earthly life so we should take in the Spirit of God and live the spiritual life. We do not have to understand all the mysteries of air to have vigorous physical life nor to know all the mysteries of God to live the Christian life. Air is colourless and transparent, therefore we do not always remember that it fills every space commonly called empty. Had I not been speaking of air and suddenly asked you what this bottle contained, you would have answered quickly, "nothing." But this invisible something is strong enough to hold its own against something that is visible. (Wrap the moistened paper around the funnel so that it will fit exactly into the mouth of the bottle. Fill the funnel with water and the fluid will not run into the bottle as the air will not allow it to enter.) A heart which is filled with the Spirit of God is safe against the attacks of the evil one. He cannot enter as long as we are filled to the brim with the Spirit. But the half-hearted Christian is in danger. (Raise the funnel enough to let the air escape and the water will rush in.)

XVI

THE BURDEN BEARER

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."—*Ps. lv. 22.*

Materials: A sheet of heavy writing paper. A basin of water. Twelve or fifteen spools.

HERE is a piece of writing paper. Is it strong looking? Would you choose it if you wanted something on which to place a number of articles, all more or less heavy? (Place a spool on the paper as you hold it extended in one hand.) No, it has no firmness at all and sinks under even a slight weight. This paper reminds me of some people fair to look upon, but so frail appearing that no one would think of putting burdens or responsibilities upon them. God, however, often lays heavy burdens upon frail shoulders. Little children and weak, tender women are often called upon to bear trials and troubles that seem far out of proportion to their strength. Some sink under the burdens, but others surprise people by the strength with which they bear their heavy loads of trouble. Let us see now if there is

not a way by which this paper can be made to hold a spool. (Lay paper on the water, being very careful to drop it on in such a way that no water creeps over the edge. Place a spool on it.) It bears it easily now, does it not? If I take the spool off and place a card on the paper I can spin a top on it without an accident. And see, I can place spool after spool upon it. (Be careful that no water creeps over the edge of the paper and from twelve to fifteen spools can be laid upon it.) If many a weak person, sinking under heavy burdens, only knew that by casting himself upon the love and mercy of God he could be borne up and enabled to carry his load easily, how much less sorrow there would be in the world. We must all have trials and troubles. God in His loving kindness knows what is best for us, and to each and all He fits a burden. Some sink under their load, but it is not because the load is too great for them, but because they insist upon trying to bear it alone. If they would throw themselves upon the mercy and love of God He would bear both them and their burden. He has promised never to allow us to be burdened above that which we are able to bear (1 Cor. x. 13).

XVII

THE WEB OF LIFE

"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle."—*Job vii. 6.*

Materials: Weave in some simple fashion a small web of wool, silk or cotton threads. Also start a web for each pupil. Provide a liberal number of threads of different colours for their use.

SEE what a pretty little web I have woven. Here is one I have started for each of you. You may take them home with you when you go to remember our lesson by. Our lives are like webs. Each day we weave into them threads of different kinds of deeds, and so the web grows and keeps on growing until we die. We are at liberty to try to weave in just the kind of threads we wish to. You may each put some threads in your webs now. Take any you wish from this pile. Now let us see. Each web is different, I notice. You all have different tastes and so have chosen different colours and have woven them in in your own individual way. Just so our lives are all different. As God looks into His world He does not see two lives alike. You have naturally chosen more

bright than plain threads, and yet see how many more plain ones there are than bright ones in the pile. The plain threads represent the common every-day deeds which we often consider of no consequence, and the bright ones represent grand, heroic actions. How we should like to fill our life webs entirely with bright threads! In our dreams we are all heroes. But if that could be; if we all had every day some grand, heroic deed to perform, what would become of the homely every-day duties which are so necessary? Who would work in the office or store to earn the living? Who would cook the meals and care for the babies? Who would run on errands and bring in wood, and who would study the lessons? Some poet has truthfully said:

"He is a hero who will stand for right
Amid a crowd afraid the wrong to face.
He also who will stand just out of sight
And do his duty in a lowly place."

Sometimes our duty seems to lie where we can reach only the dull gray and brown threads. In order that a few may weave bright webs successfully many must weave only dull ones. But as God looks at the webs He understands exactly why each

thread was woven, and perhaps some of the dullest appearing webs look the most beautiful to Him. Have any of you woven in one of the black threads? They represent sin, and it is very hard to keep them out of a life web. Sometimes they get tangled in among the other threads, and before we realize it a long thread of black is woven in, spoiling our web. Can we get it out? It may be possible to ravel these webs we have in our hands and pull out the black threads, but who can go back into his past and take out sin? There is only one thing to do if sin has been woven into a life web. That is to take the web to God and ask Him to blot the blackness out of it. How much better it is to watch our web each day as we weave it, and carefully keep out all black threads. We should put in as many bright ones as we can without neglecting the dull ones. And if it be our fortune to find almost all the bright ones beyond our reach, let us weave as well as we can with the plain ones. Our heavenly Father has a way of seeing not only what we do but what we would like to do also. Sometimes our work becomes tangled and we despair of ever straightening it. At such times it is best to let everything drop from our hands into

the wise hands of God, and then take, one by one, the threads as He gives them to us, weaving on patiently until all becomes straight again. God never makes a mistake, and if we weave only the threads He gives us we will never be ashamed of our life web whether it be bright or plain.

XVIII

ENVIRONMENT

"Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God."—*Ps. xcii. 13.*

Materials: Bulbs and blossoms of tulips, hyacinths, crocus, or gladiolus, dahlias, lilies, etc.

WHERE did these beautiful flowers come from? The garden? Certainly. But how did they happen to be in the garden? Yes, they were planted there. These bulbs hold safely tucked away within them the germs of more flowers like these beautiful ones. It does not seem possible, does it? It is so wonderful to think that all we have to do is to surround these plain looking bulbs with the right conditions and beautiful flowers will result. What are the proper conditions? Earth, water and sunshine. That is all. But suppose we keep them dry and out of the earth, what then? They will remain as they are, of course. No fragrant flowers will come from them and until the time comes when they dry up or decay they will amount to nothing. Did you ever stop to think that boys and girls are like these bulbs in a cer-

tain way? There are great possibilities wrapped up in every child, and it only takes the right conditions to bring out happy results. Each of these bulbs produces a different kind of flower, you see. So there are germs of different things lying dormant in the natures of children all around us. Love, ambition, patriotism, eloquence, music, even genius. We never can tell when we look at a bulb exactly what kind of a flower it will produce, and we never can tell when we look at a child just what he is capable of becoming. What are the proper conditions with which to surround a child if we wish to bring out the best that is within him? Surround any child with love and intelligent sympathy and see how he will respond. Then make him feel and know the smile of the great Sun of Righteousness (Mal. iv. 2) and the results will come. Love and sympathy are due to every child from his parents, but as we know, many children do not receive them, and many, too, are orphans. Therefore the duty of giving out a helpful influence falls upon all of us. No one is too young to help in this way if he is old enough to understand it. You who are blessed with loving parents can share their sympathy with your less favoured companions. Invite your young friends to your

home. Give them of your own love and try to point them to Jesus.

A bulb is very helpless. Unless it is taken and planted by some kind hand it must perish without fulfilling its mission. A child is more fortunate. If one sees that he is not in the best of surroundings; sees that he is not growing mentally and spiritually, he has the power to change his circumstances. If still too young to separate himself entirely from his surroundings, he can at least form friendships and frequent places which will stimulate him and help him to grow.

XIX

ALCOHOL AND THE BRAIN

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."—*Prov. xx. 1.*

Materials: One-fourth glass of alcohol. An egg, or merely the white of an egg if preferred. A little alcohol in a saucer.

WHAT is this which I have in a saucer? Water? Well, let us see. (Apply lighted match to it and it will burn.) Did you ever see water burn? No? Then what is this liquid which looks so much like water but which burns? Read Prov. xxiii. 31 and Prov. xx. 1. Why are we warned against wine and all strong drink? It is only because it contains this innocent looking fluid which is called alcohol. There is from forty to fifty per cent. of alcohol in brandy and whiskey. Six or eight per cent. in ale and porter and seven to seventeen per cent. in wine. When alcohol is taken into the system it affects all parts of the body harmfully. The delicate lining of the stomach is reddened and every tiny vein inflamed just as the drunkard's nose is swollen and discoloured. From the stomach the alcohol passes into the blood and in a few minutes is swept through

the entire system. Since it has a special greed for water, it absorbs moisture from the red corpuscles of the blood, causing them to shrink, change their form, harden, and lose some of their ability to carry oxygen. Alcohol causes the lungs to retain their carbonic acid gas to poison the system; it increases the heart beats six thousand in twenty-four hours, thus overworking that organ so that after a time it loses its old power to drive the blood. But while alcohol hurts every part of the body, it seems to have a special affinity for the brain. The brain is composed of eighty per cent. water, sever per cent. albumen, some fat and a few minor substances. It is the most delicate organ of the body, and is correspondingly affected. The tiny vessels become clogged with blood that it is unfitted to nourish because loaded with carbonic acid and deprived of the usual quantity of life-giving oxygen. Some authorities hold that "a once thoroughly intoxicated brain never fully becomes what it was before." It is easy to realize this when we remember that our brain is composed mostly of water and albumen. We have some alcohol in this glass, and will drop into it an egg, the white of which is composed of albumen very similar to that of our brains. (Drop in the egg; stir it a little and it will cook.)

XX

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

"Then spake Jesus unto them, saying, I am the light of the world."—*John viii. 12.*

Materials: Half a dozen or more small candles of different colours. One large candle. A cup large enough to cover a small candle. Cut holes in a pasteboard box cover and insert the candles or use candlesticks.

JESUS, our Saviour, has been called by a great many names. He is very often referred to as "the light of the world." He Himself calls His followers lights (Matt. v. 14). We want to talk about light to-day and to make it interesting we need some light here to look at. What can we use? Yes, we could use lamps, gas, electricity, sunlight, etc., but these are what we will use to-day. (Set out candles.) We are apt to consider the light of a candle too small to amount to much. But suppose it were night, and by some mistake one of you had been shut into this church alone. All would be dark around you; the chandeliers so high you could not reach them, and you would have no matches with which to light the gas-jets or lamps. Then suppose you should see a little candle

burning like this. (Light a small candle.) Would you not be glad to see it? And which would you like best, the little lighted candle, or the great electric chandelier which was unlighted? Sometimes a little Christian boy or girl does more good in the world than a grown-up person who does not live for God. But the little candle would do no good if it were like this. (Extinguish it.) And can it light itself? Can boys and girls make themselves into Christians? How then shall we become lighted? (Read Ps. xviii. 28.) God is the only one who has power to make us shine. If one of you should go home to-day with a desire to become a Christian light in the world all you would have to do would be to ask God to light you, and then leave the rest to Him and just commence to shine. (Light a candle.) But now suppose that a boy is timid, and so decides that he will be a Christian but will not tell any one about it. What about his light then? (Read Matt. v. 15.) We will put this cover over the candle. (Cover with cup.) How much good is that light doing in the world? (Uncover it.) And see, the light has gone out. The only way to be a Christian is to let your light shine. If you try to hide it it will not only fail to light others, but it will

go out itself. (Light a candle.) Now we will let this candle represent a Christian girl. If she looks around and sees her friends all unlighted what will she wish to do? Light them, yes. Well, if she stays where she is and wishes all her life, will it do any good? No, she must go to them. (Light another candle with the first.) Which will it be the most sensible for her to try to light, the one farthest from her? No, the nearest, of course. We have more opportunity to help our brothers and sisters and intimate friends than those miles away from us; but these in turn can carry the light to others. (Light all the small candles.) Now do any of these give a fainter light because they lighted others from their own flames? No, and Christians never grow weaker by helping other people. Do all these candles look alike to you? No, they are of different colours. So there are many kinds of people in the world. Can you mention some? Yes; sick, well, rich, poor, pretty, plain, bright, dull—all kinds of people can shine for Jesus, and the light is as beautiful from one as from another, because it all comes from God. Now, I know you all want the large candle lighted. What shall we have it represent? It is larger than the others, so should it not represent a grown

person? A father or mother of one of the little ones perhaps. How can it be lighted? Do you think one of the little ones could light so large a candle? (Light it with a small one.) Yes, often, very often, little children lead their parents to Christ. This is the most beautiful work that a little Christian can do. Now we have the lights all shining together. How much more light they seem to give than they would if they were far apart, each shining alone. Sometimes people say that there is no use in belonging to a church; that people can be just as good Christians by themselves. It is true that one can be a Christian and not a church-member, but the light of a great many Christians all shining together makes a large beam of light shining through a dark world, and it is a great privilege to be able to mingle our light with others, and so help to send brightness out to help those whom we might never reach alone.

XXI

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—*1 John i. 9.*

Materials: Half a glass of water. Three cents' worth of tincture of iodine. Two cents' worth of hyposulphite of soda. Make a strong solution of the soda by putting into a small bottle of water as much of it as the water will dissolve.

WHAT have we in this glass? Yes, water. Does it not look clear and sparkling and pure? We will use it to-day to represent a pure heart. I wonder if any of us can feel that it truly represents *our* hearts? Temptations come to children so early in life, and are so hard to resist, that it is difficult to keep the heart pure. As one little temptation after another is yielded to, a change, something like this, takes place in the heart. (Pour iodine into the water, a few drops at a time.) See, the water has lost its clearness and become stained and impure. No one becomes a great sinner suddenly. It is one little sin leading to another, and another, and another, that finally changes a heart from purity to blackness. (Make the water as dark as possi-

ble with iodine.) I am sure that no heart in this class is black enough to be represented by this water as it is now. But let us turn to Matt. v. 8, and see what Jesus says; and we will also look up Rev. xxi. 27. You see, it is only the pure in heart who shall see God and inherit the kingdom of heaven. Although we may not feel that our hearts are entirely black, still we cannot feel either that they are as pure as the water we saw in the first place. So unless we can find some more encouraging words in the Bible, we might feel discouraged and hopeless. But now look up 1 John i. 9. This certainly brings us good news. We cannot understand it. We cannot see how Jesus can take a heart that is stained with sin and make it pure again. But since He promises to do so, we need have no fear. Many things are hard to understand. I will drop some of this clear liquid into this black water and we shall see what will happen. (Put in a few drops of the hyposulphite of soda solution and the water will clear instantly.) All we have to do is to confess our sins and trust Him for the rest.

XXII

THE WATER OF LIFE

"I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."—*Ps. cxvi. 13.*

Materials: A telescope cup, a beautiful and costly cup, a tin cup, a soiled cup and a cracked cup.

IN the fourth chapter of John, Jesus alludes to Himself as "the Water of Life." Water is an absolute necessity to life. One can live longer without food than without water. As a person walking on a very hot day soon becomes thirsty, so many people are thirsting for the Water of Life. Most of them do not know what it is that they yearn for, and try to satisfy their craving with different things. They strive for wealth or fame, or they run after excitement and pleasure; but even when they succeed in gratifying their ambitions they still find themselves unsatisfied. Nothing but water will quench physical thirst and nothing but Jesus can satisfy a human soul.

What are cups for? Yes, to hold liquid and to drink from. Here is a very odd one. It is called a telescope cup, and people often take such cups with them when travelling, as they can be folded up and put in a little box.

When I unfold only one section of this cup, it holds water (fill it) but what a small amount. A thirsty person would not be satisfied with such a drink. That is like the people who open their hearts only a little way for the refreshing Water of Life. As far as they will let Him Jesus will come in. But how foolish a thirsty traveller would be not to open his cup to the full extent, like this (open and fill the cup), and take a satisfying drink. And how much better it is to throw the heart's door wide open to Jesus and let Him come in and satisfy all cravings. Now here are two cups which are very unlike. One is of fine and beautiful china and the other of common tin. Does the water taste differently when drunk from these cups? (Let the children taste.) No indeed. Well, perhaps some of you think that the water from the beautiful cup was the best, but that is only your imagination. If your eyes had been closed you could not have told the difference. The Water of Life is the same everywhere, although some people think they can only enjoy it in a fine and beautiful house, while others find it easier to take it from a more humble place. For this reason there are all sorts of churches in the world, from the grand cathedral to the Salva-

tion Army hall. But it is the same Water of Life that refreshes people in all these places. There is only one cup here from which you could not get a good drink of water. Which is that? Yes, the soiled cup. This is unfit to drink from. A person who is not clean in his own heart and life cannot be the means of giving the pure Water of Life to others. It is necessary for us to ask Christ to both make and keep us clean if we desire to help relieve the thirst of a sin-sick world. What lesson can we learn from this cracked cup? It can be filled with water, can it not? What then is the trouble? The water leaks out, and in a short time the cup will be as empty as before it was filled. To our sorrow we must acknowledge that most of us greatly resemble this cracked cup. We are often filled to the very brim with the Water of Life. After a good sermon or meeting, or after reading a good book or spending a time in prayer we are full of love and good resolutions. But after a short time where have they all gone? We are empty again, and in order to be of any use to our fellow beings we must again be filled with the Water of Life. Happily for us our Lord has told us to come to Him freely whenever we are athirst (Rev. xxii. 17) and partake of the Water of Life (Isa. lv. 1).

XXIII

GOD'S WAY OF FORGIVING

"I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."—*Isa. xliii. 25.*

Materials: A piece of thin silk. Five cents' worth of the strongest nitric acid. The fumes of nitric acid are strong and strangling. No teacher should use this object lesson unless he is sure of being able to keep his own and the children's faces well away from it.

In disposing of strong acids after a lesson, do not throw them into a sink as they will eat into the lead pipes. The best way is to bury them in the ground. Never put water into acids.

THERE is a beautiful old legend which tells of some one meeting Love as she returned from burying a wrong. Upon being asked, "Where did you bury it?" she replied, with a bright smile, "I forget." This is the ideal way of forgiving, but it is hard for most of us to attain to it.

It is almost impossible for us not to consider God from a human standpoint, and attribute to Him the same kind of feelings which we ourselves possess. We are told over and over in the Bible that after God forgives our sins He remembers them no more, and yet we often worry ourselves over faults committed and repented of weeks,

months and even years ago. They were real sins and it is hard for us to realize that any real thing can ever be entirely done away with. Here is a piece of silk. It is a real thing which we can see and handle, yet it can be entirely destroyed. (Drop the silk into the nitric acid and within a few seconds it will entirely vanish.) It is the same way with a sin that has been truly repented of. When God forgives He does it wholly and generously. He utterly destroys the sin and makes it as though it never had been, and then He remembers it no more. We can look up into His face with clear eyes and not torment ourselves by thinking that a sin is between us and Him and that perhaps at that moment He is thinking of it. The instant He forgives it, the sin is gone; it has utterly vanished leaving no trace behind to mar our communion with God.

XXIV

AFFLICTION

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—*2 Cor. iv. 17.*

Materials: A little common sand or earth of any kind. Some lead or iron filings. The filings may be gotten from a blacksmith shop, or by simply using a good file on any old piece of lead pipe. Lycopodium powder may be used in place of the filings if desired. A candle.

FOR some good reason, it is a part of God's great plan to allow us all to suffer more or less pain as we go through life. Knowing, as we do, the wonderful love and tenderness of God, the question comes to us, "Why does God allow people to suffer?" We can see that some bring their troubles upon themselves, but many innocent and good people have to suffer; little children as well as grown people. It is not wrong for us to ask questions about God's dealings with us. Since He gave us a mind to think with, He is willing we should use it, as far as we are able. It would be very, very foolish of us, however, to expect to understand God. A little child cannot understand all the things which his

earthly father knows, and the most intellectual man in the world is far less capable of understanding God than a child is of understanding a man. The problem of human suffering is, and probably always will be, something of a mystery to us. But we can observe some of its effects and perhaps that will help us. If we had the proper things here to use, we could show that the same fire which softens and melts gold, hardens clay. Affliction never leaves a person as it finds him. He is either better or worse for it. If he has a fine Christian character, like gold, he will be softened and purified by pain; if he is earthly minded he will be hardened (Job xxiii. 10). I will light this candle and drop two different materials through the flame and you will see how differently they act under fire. (Light the candle and sprinkle some of the lead or iron through the flame.) How beautifully this shines and gives out brightness as it passes through the fire which consumes it! Now see, I will sprinkle this earth through. Does it give light? No, it is as dull and dark as ever. Until the lead was tried by fire, it also was dull and gave out no brightness. Paul tells us (Rom. v. 3, 4) that we ought to glory when we pass through tribulation because it gives us an opportunity

to show forth patience, hope and other virtues. Many people shine more for God when on beds of pain than at any other time in their lives. Such sweet influences have gone out from the couches of some chronic invalids that whole neighbourhoods or villages have been uplifted. The one who suffers seldom realizes that his patient bearing of pain and submission to God's will are accomplishing anything for God. There will be sweet surprises awaiting many a soul in heaven. When our time comes to bear pain let us do it in the manner represented by the lead and not by the sand. It will be easier for us to do this if we can remember that God will never allow anything to happen to us which we would not be perfectly willing to have happen if we were wise enough to see things as He sees them.

XXV

CHARACTER FORMING

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—*2 Peter iii. 18.*

Materials: A few sheets of photographic printing-paper and a printing-frame. Two negatives, one of a beautiful scene or person and the other of an unpleasant or repulsive object. If the printing-frame and negatives are not procurable, a piece of window glass as large as the sheets of paper may be substituted for the frame, and instead of the negatives may be used two pieces of lace, one new and of a graceful pattern and the other torn and disfigured as much as possible. This lesson must be given in a sunny location. If there is not sufficient sunshine in the class room it might be well to have the children gather on the church lawn for one Sunday.

HAVE you ever seen printing-paper such as photographers use? Perhaps some of you own cameras and know how to take and print pictures for yourselves. I have some printing-paper here to-day. It is very sensitive and commences to change colour as soon as it is exposed to the light. In this respect it is a good symbol of the human mind. A little child's mind is blank when he enters life, but it is very sensitive, like this paper, and as soon as the child is old enough to understand some things that are going on

around him, his mind begins to take on colour, as we might say, and his character commences to form. I have two negatives here (or two pieces of lace) which I am going to lay against the sensitive side of two of these sheets of paper. Now we will place these glasses over them and lay them where the sun will shine on them for a few minutes. Have any of you got baby brothers or sisters at home? Yes, nearly all of you have. Well, then, have you ever noticed how quickly baby learns to do as those around him are doing? If he sees the older children quarreling how quickly his little hand learns to strike, but if he sees every one in the family treating each other with gentle kindness he soon learns to be sweet and well-mannered himself. Let us look at our papers now. Is not this a beautiful picture? Yes, we all admire it. How do you like this one? Not at all? It is unpleasant—hideous—horrid? Why, what is the matter? Why should it not be as attractive as the first picture? It was printed on as good a piece of paper, and stayed as long a time in the sunshine, and occupied as good a place as the other. Oh, the negatives were different? Yes, that is the point. The sensitive side of one piece of paper was pressed closely against a beau-

tiful object while that of the other was in close touch with something unlovely. So it is that our characters are formed. Unconsciously to ourselves we take colour from our surroundings and associates. If we keep close to truth and honour these qualities will print themselves indelibly upon our characters, while if we keep ourselves in close touch with things that are impure or low, the characters we form must of necessity be lacking in all that is noble and good. After a picture is printed can it be changed? Well, let us see. We will put a piece of paper against this ugly negative again, but will remove it before it has been there long enough to receive much of an impression, and will place it against this good negative. A little child cannot help his environment; he is helpless until he reaches the age where he is capable of choosing his own associates. If as soon as that time arrives he exerts his power to remove himself from evil, and places himself in touch with good, there is hope for him. Let us look at our picture now. We find that the imprint of the beautiful negative is clear and plain upon the paper. Perhaps by looking closely we can see traces of the first negative, but they are too faint to interfere materially with the beauty of the picture.

Cannot God help a person who has allowed evil instead of good to become deeply imprinted upon his character? God is always merciful, and no matter how unlovely a soul presents itself for forgiveness, He will blot out its sins and remember them no more, but more than this He cannot do. We will put this ugly print in the strong sunshine for a few moments and you will soon lose sight of all outlines. The picture will be blotted out entirely and the paper will be all of one colour. It is a happy thing for the world that God will blot out sins, but after all, when we compare the print that is all of one colour with this beautiful picture, a thought of sadness comes to us. Although God in His goodness forgives the sins He cannot make the ill-spent lives show beautiful pictures of good deeds and thoughts. These can only be printed in the character by the one who lives the life. I am sure you and I all want our characters to show good and not evil. The Bible tells us that "there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. xviii. 24). Do you know who that friend is? Yes, it is the Lord Jesus. It is our privilege to live so close to that friend that we shall grow like Him, and as His was the only perfect life which was ever lived it is the highest

ideal that we can set before ourselves. To keep close to our Divine Friend, and to see to it that the human friends whom we choose are of the right kind, should be our effort if we wish to form characters which will be beautiful in the sight of God.

XXVI

HELPFUL CHRISTIANITY

"Ye are the salt of the earth."—*Matt. v. 13.*

Materials: Two tall glasses, one containing clear water and one very strong salt water. An egg.

IN His sermon on the mount Jesus called His followers "the salt of the earth." Has it ever seemed strange to you that He should use such a symbol as salt to represent holy lives? You know that salt has an unpleasant taste, and you do not care for it at all except as a seasoning in your food, so at first it is somewhat puzzling. However, there must be some spiritual lesson to be learned from salt or else Jesus would not have spoken in this way, so let us think about it for a moment. Palestine has salt in abundance. The Dead Sea is saturated with it and great lumps are found on the shores where the sea has overflowed in the rainy season. At the southwestern end of the Dead Sea there is a plain of considerable extent, the soil of which is entirely covered with salt. On account of this, Jesus knew that His hearers were all well accustomed to the appearance of salt

and knew its usefulness. Jesus always used very familiar and common objects to draw His lessons from. Can you tell me one way in which salt is used? Yes, to season our food. Do you know of still another use it has? Yes, to preserve and keep things from spoiling. Meat and other things can be kept in good condition for a long time by the proper use of salt. It is for these reasons that Jesus likens His disciples to salt. As salt makes food savoury, so Christians improve a community by their good instruction and example. What would your town be without its Christian churches, hospitals and faithful, earnest Christian people? And as salt keeps things from spoiling so Christians in a neighbourhood keep many tempted people from being lost in sin. Suppose a young person leaves home and goes away among strangers. If he enters a certain class of society he is almost sure to fall into sin, while if he is fortunate enough to find himself thrown among Christian influences he will be upheld in his good intentions and efforts. Let us illustrate. Here are two glasses of water. One contains salt and the other does not. We will drop an egg into the fresh water. What happens? It sinks to the bottom. Now take it out and put it into the

other glass. See, it floats on top and does not sink. The salt in this water buoys it up and enables it to float, just as the helpful sympathy and loving interest of Christians in a community buoy up a tempted soul and enable it to keep on top of its trials and not sink into a life of sin. The salt in order to do this must be genuine. There are substances which so closely resemble salt that it is hard to tell them apart. If anything except salt had been dissolved in this water the egg would have sunk to the bottom of the glass just as it did in the other tumbler. Nothing but genuine Christianity has the power to uplift humanity. Let us see to it that our religion is true and sincere so that we may be numbered among "the salt of the earth."

XXVII

OUR SPECTACLES

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."—*1 Cor. xiii. 12.*

Materials: A magnifying glass. Enough small pieces to supply all your scholars of common window glass, blue, red and frosted glass, also pieces of window glass smoked. The glass can be bought and cut into the desired sizes at a hardware store.

How many bright eyes I see before me! Blue, gray, brown and black. Do any look through glasses? Yes, a few. What a blessing glasses are! In the old days no one but grandpa and grandma wore them, but now many little children's eyes are strengthened and often cured of incipient diseases by the wise use of glasses. I have here some pieces of glass of different kinds which we will look through and talk about. Then when we have finished you will each have a little collection to carry home with you to remember our lesson by. First come these blue glasses. How do things look through them? Pretty? Well, yes, the novelty makes it seem so, but are things as bright and clear as when viewed with the natural eye? No. Have you ever

heard people say that they have "the blues"? What do they mean? Yes, they mean that things seem dark and gloomy to them. How sad it is to be afflicted with "the blues." Not only the sufferer is to be pitied but all associated with him must feel the depressing effects of the disease—if we may call it a disease. Is there any good reason for people looking at the world through blue spectacles? Oh, no indeed! It is true that many have grave sorrows and troubles to bear, but with the burdens also comes strength with which to bear them, if one is willing to accept it. It is not usually the heavily afflicted people who are subject to the blues. It is more apt to be idle people who fall into the habit of brooding over small ills. When God has created for us so beautiful a world, and has showered upon each one of us more blessings than we can possibly number, how ungrateful it is for us to look gloomily through blue glasses, thus destroying our own joy and marring that of others.

Here are some different coloured glasses. Yes, they make you exclaim in delight. Everything looks rosy red, and in such brilliant colouring even dark objects are transfigured. Some people are apt to look at the world through rosy spectacles. Everything

to them promises great things. Even dark and dangerous projects look safe and easy. Such people are delightful to meet, and have anything but a depressing effect upon one; but after all there is a danger in looking at things in so brilliant a light. A person looking through rosy spectacles takes risks over which another person would hesitate, and often loses money and time in speculations which a more reasonable person would see the folly of. One wearing rosy spectacles often chooses paths in life which lead into temptation and end in sorrow. Here are some other glasses. How do things appear now? Yes, perfectly natural. One might as well take them away and use only their own eyes, you say? Well, what could be better than the natural eye? Solomon said, "The hearing ear, the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them" (Prov. xx. 12), and who knows better than God how we should look at things? Surely it would be bad for us to be constantly wearing the blue spectacles, and the rosy ones might be even worse. So let us try to look at everything in the natural way that God intended us to, taking the dark with the bright, and not inclining too much to either one. Now here is another kind of glass. How do you like

it? Foggy? You can scarcely see? Well, that is frosted glass. Were you ever out on a foggy morning when you could hardly see your hand before your face? Perhaps you have walked within a few steps of a large building and yet been unable to see it. In Second Kings, eighth chapter there is an interesting story. Elisha, the prophet, and his servant awoke one morning to find a host of enemies surrounding them. The servant was much alarmed and asked his master what they should do. For answer Elisha prayed God to open the servant's eyes, and instantly the man was amazed to discover all about them a glittering company of fiery horses and chariots. So we are all the time looking through foggy spectacles. Probably if we could see clearly we should know ourselves to be surrounded by angels of love and beauty. Certainly we know that God Himself is ever close beside us.

Here are some smoked glasses. You have probably all looked at eclipses through smoked glasses. Turn to the window now and look straight at the sun. Does it dazzle your eyes? No, with the aid of smoked glasses we can gaze straight into the brightness of the splendid sun, but with the unaided eye we cannot look at it for a second.

We often long to see God. Perhaps some of you have wondered why we cannot do so. But if our eyes cannot stand even the brightness of the sun, which God made, how could we expect to live through the sight of the wonderful Creator of the universe? Until the grand time comes when we shall be changed so that we can look upon God's glory and bear it, we must be content to see Him with our spiritual eyes. There are two kinds of glasses which will help the eyes of our mind and heart. One kind may be represented by this glass, which you may pass from one to another. Look at the print of your Bibles through it. Does it not enlarge the letters wonderfully? It is a magnifying glass, and through it one can see much more plainly than with the naked eye. So when we long to see God if we will bring a prayerful study of the Scriptures to our aid we may catch a glimpse of our heavenly Father through His word. The other glass through which our spiritual eyes must look if we would see God cannot be brought into this room for you to see. It is the great telescope through which people look at the moon, stars and planets. By its aid the heavenly bodies are seemingly brought close before our eyes so that we can examine them

at will. Just so the great glass of Faith brings God in all His beauty and grandeur before us. All things are possible to him who has faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. It is indeed a happy thought for us that God stands ready to reveal Himself to all who will look to Him through the glasses of study, prayer and faith.

XXVIII

TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD

"The truth of the Lord endureth forever."—*Ps. cxvii. 2.*

Materials: Several small squares of paraffine. Several balls of sugar. Loaf sugar can be carefully filed into round balls. Two small dishes, some water and a little sulphuric acid, chemically pure.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, in his "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," gives us a good illustration of truth and falsehood. He says that while we are yet small children an angel comes to us holding in his right hand cubes and in his left hand spheres, or balls; something like these perhaps. (Place the paraffine and sugar before the children.) The writer goes on to say, "The child to whom they are offered very probably clutches at both. The spheres are the most convenient things in the world; they roll with the least possible impulse just where the child would have them. The cubes will not roll at all; they have a great talent for standing still, and always keep right side up. But very soon the young philosopher finds that things which roll so easily are apt to roll into

the wrong places, and to get out of his way when he most wants them, while he always knows where to find the others, which stay where they are left." Jesus says that He Himself is the truth (John xiv. 6) and that the devil is the father of all lies (John viii. 44). We want to be sure that the material out of which we build our lives is such that it will stand all tests. Let us test these objects which represent truth and falsehood for us to-day. (Drop a square and a ball into water.) At first they both seem to stand this test equally well, do they not? But see, gradually the ball is falling away. Finally it has dissolved completely while the square representing truth is still solid and whole. We will try a more severe test now by placing a square and a ball in a dish and dropping some of this acid upon them. Oh, now the difference between the two is plainly seen! Our representative of falsehood casts off its white garments of deceit and is revealed in all its blackness while the representative of truth still keeps its form and beauty. The twenty-first chapter of Revelation gives us a description of heaven, and in the twenty-seventh verse we are told that nothing which defileth or maketh a lie shall enter that glorious home. The fifteenth

Psalm asks the question, "Lord, who shall abide in Thy holy hill?" And the answer is given, "He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness and speaketh the truth in his heart."

XXIX

PROTECTION

"What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee."—*Ps. lvi. 3.*

Materials: A few pennies' worth of lycopodium. A glass of water. Several small coins. A few pens, wires or hairpins.

CHRISTIANS often have to stand in dangerous places. In calling people to become His followers Christ does not hold out promises of earthly prosperity or of ease. On the contrary He says plainly that those wishing to follow Him must take up their crosses and prepare to struggle against dangers, temptations and trials of many kinds. He does, however, promise that they shall be so tenderly guarded during these trials that no harm shall befall them (Ps. xxxiv. 7) as, for instance, were Daniel and his companions in the fiery furnace. I have here a glass of water. If I hold these dimes and pennies over the glass and let them fall they immediately drop to the bottom, and I take them out wet. Christians are not the only people who have to suffer, but they are the only ones who can pass dry shod through the waters of affliction

(Ps. cxxiv. 1–7). I will sprinkle some of this yellow powder upon the water and now you may drop the coins into the glass again. They sink as before? Certainly they do. A Christian enduring a trial goes to the very depths of suffering, just as one who is not a Christian does. But you will see that after all there is a difference. Put your finger into the glass of water. Now draw it out again and shake off the powder. Is your finger wet? No, it is as perfectly dry as though it had not been in water. Put it in again and draw out your coins. Are they wet? No, nor has a particle of water moistened them. They were so enveloped in the fine lycopodium powder as they fell, that the water could not touch them although they were in the bottom of the tumbler. So it is with those who love and trust God. While they live in this world they must take their share of its sorrows and temptations, but they may be at all times so closely enfolded by the protection of God that nothing evil can harm them (Ps. xxxiv. 19). For instance a converted drunkard can enter a saloon in the endeavour to save his old companions, and be so protected by God that the smell and sight of liquor will have no power over him. So, also, a Christian

can go through heart sorrows which would harden and ruin the disposition of one who did not know Christ, and can come out of them as sweet as he went in. Now drop some of these pens and a wire or hairpin upon the water. Why do they not sink? They are borne up by this fine powder. Sprinkle some drops of water in the glass. They do not reach the water below but form in little yellow balls and roll around on top. Christians, it is true, have to pass under the waters of affliction at times, but they may be saved from many small trials which others sink under. They float safely over the waters of life upborne by the protection of God. What fear have they of death? (1 Cor. xv. 55). What need have they for worry? (Phil. iv. 6). They may cast their cares upon the Lord and ride triumphantly over all the smaller ills and worries that perplex and annoy those who have no God to rest upon.

XXX

BAPTISM

"And now why tarryest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."—*Acts xxii. 16.*

Materials: A thin tumbler and a spoon. A small quantity of pounded ice. One-third as much salt as ice.

BEFORE Jesus began to preach, while He was still living quietly in Nazareth, a man called John the Baptist was living in the wilderness of Judea. I should like to have you tell me all you know about John the Baptist. Yes, he dressed in camel's hair and wore a leather girdle and ate locusts and wild honey. Did he always stay in the wilderness? No, God commanded him to go and preach to the people, telling them to make ready for the Saviour by repenting of their sins. So he went into the lonely country by the river Jordan, and a great multitude came there to hear him, and he baptized all who repented of their sins. Then Jesus came from His home in Nazareth for John to baptize Him also. During the three years which followed, Jesus baptized many people, and

just before He ascended into heaven He instructed His apostles to go into all the world preaching and baptizing people (Matt. xxviii. 19). They did so; and down through the ages baptism has been used by all preachers of Christ. Probably you have all sat in church and witnessed a baptismal service. Perhaps some of you have stood on a river bank and watched people go down into the water to be baptized in the same manner that Jesus was. Should you wish to join the church, the minister would ask whether or not you had ever been baptized. If you answered "no," he would say that you must be baptized in order to join the church.

Since this ceremony is so important, one ought to understand it fully. It has been defined as "an outward sign of an inward grace," and the definition is a good one. Being sprinkled or immersed does not change one's heart, but it represents to one's self and to the people around, the change which took place in the heart when the Holy Spirit cleansed it. I will put into this tumbler some ice and salt and stir it well. Now you see rapidly appearing on the outside of the glass a heavy coating of frost. It is so thick that you can scrape it off in flakes, and you can see graceful and pretty patterns traced upon

it, as upon a window pane on a frosty morning. The frost is an outward sign of the condition of coldness inside the glass, just as the water applied in baptism is an outward sign of the cleansed condition of the heart. Jesus never committed sin and so had no personal need of baptism, but He had come on earth to obey all of God's commandments for us, and in our place, so that if we believe in Him we may be rewarded for His obedience. I hope all in this class will come to feel the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost in their hearts, and will manifest it to the world by being baptized and joining the church of Christ.

XXXI

RAYS OF LOVE

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield."—*Ps. lxxxiv. 11.*

Material: A prism.

IN searching our minds for suitable terms in which to clothe our ideas of the Almighty, we naturally select the highest symbols with which we are familiar. The Psalmist likens God to a sun. Our sun is indeed the best friend we have in the material universe. Without his light and heat we should not only lose our own lives, but our earth would become dark, barren and frozen. We have a prism here to-day. It is a little transparent, three-sided object which has the power of resolving a ray of light into its seven primary colours. We will place it on the table here where the sunlight can strike it. Now you see that the ray of white light that enters the glass at one side comes out in a band of bright colours on the other side. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. You have all seen the same colours in the form of a rainbow after a storm. The drops of falling water bend and turn the rays of sunlight

so that they are reflected into our eyes in these same beautiful colours. Each ray that comes from the sun contains all of these colours but we do not usually discern them because all of the colours mixed together give a white effect, and it is only when we see rays broken up by passing through a medium denser than air that we are able to distinguish the colours of which they are composed.

As the rays of the sun are passed through this prism with such beautiful effect, let us pass a ray of God's love through the prism of our mind and see it resolve itself into different parts. We are so accustomed to the every-day light of the sun that we take it as a matter of course, and the rays of God's love are also seen so constantly that we hardly realize their beauty. Sometimes when a very hardened sinner sees the light in such a manner that he is converted we look up and take interest just as we do when we see a rainbow, but, as a rule, we give the wonderful love far too little thought.

This lovely band of colour is called the spectrum of the sunbeam. Now tell me the first colour you see in the spectrum. Red. Well, the first thing a sinner sees in a ray of God's love is pardon. Our pardon was

bought by the red blood of Christ. No one is good enough to be saved by his own merits, but the Son of God shed His blood for us that we might be saved from our sins. So write pardon for the first colour in our spectrum. What is the next colour? Orange. A brighter, lighter colour than red and may well signify cleansing. How glad we ought to be that God does not turn with loathing from us when we are sinful but enfolds us in His arms of love and pardon even before He cleanses us. After pardon always comes cleansing. What colour comes next? Yellow. This is the colour which reflects the most light of any. It may well represent the beautiful peace which fills the pardoned and cleansed heart. The next colour? Green. Green is the colour of growing things. Trees, grass and plants which push themselves upward, pulsing with life and power. Yes, power is what this colour should represent in our spectrum. The power to grow and to accomplish things. What colour comes next? Blue. The colour of the beautiful sky above us. The colour usually reflected from a calm, pure lake. Purity should be written next. And now what colour? Indigo. A dark, deep blue representing the deep abiding joy that fills a Christian's heart when living in

God's sunlight of love. Now what is the last colour? Violet. Violet is the colour which has the least travelling power of any, just as yellow has the most. That is why so much of it stays high above us, mingling with the blue and giving us such beautiful depths to gaze up through. So the violet colour draws our thoughts above and reminds us of eternal life. We do not have to wait until we are physically dead to enjoy eternal life. Jesus said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but *is passed* from death unto life" (John v. 24). We begin to live the everlasting life as soon as we come into the sunlight of God's love, and the moving from this present body into the new one which God is preparing for us will only be a beautiful incident in our life which will go on through all eternity. The only way to die is to get out of the range of God's rays of love.

Now what have we in our spectrum? Pardon, cleansing, peace, power, purity, joy and eternal life. Sometimes the sun is hidden from us by clouds, but God never hides His love from us, and unless we ourselves put something between Him and us we can always dwell in the sunlight of His love,

every ray of which is composed of such wonderfully beautiful things. Pardon and cleansing no matter how often we need them. Peace in our hearts, and power to grow and to help others. Purity and joy and, best of all, eternal life to spend with God and our loved ones.

XXXII

THE CHANGELESS ONE

"For I am the Lord, I change not."—*Mal. iii. 6.*

Materials: Some mercury. A few fragments of iodine. A sheet of paper and a knife.

IN your photograph albums at home are there any pictures of yourselves when you were babies? Yes? Well, do you look like those pictures now? Oh, that makes you laugh, does it? Well, then you have changed, have you not? Every person and everything on earth changes. Even the great mountains which look so strong and solid are constantly, though slowly, being altered in shape by the wear of the elements upon them. Rivers change their courses as the ceaseless friction of their waters against the banks wears away the earth. The waves of the great oceans are constantly changing the outlines of the coast. The sky above us is always changing. Beautiful clouds form and reform, sink, disappear and are replaced by others. Even in the universe of the stars and planets change is constantly taking place. All vegetation on the earth changes and de-

cays. Metals and precious stones, even gold, "the royal metal," and diamonds, the hardest of all substances, can suffer change and even destruction. To illustrate how completely some things can change, we will put some mercury on a piece of paper, and beside it place these fragments of iodine; a liquid and a solid. With a knife we will rub them together, crushing the iodine into the mercury, and see, before our eyes they have changed and become a powder. They are so utterly unlike what they were a few minutes ago that we are amazed at the change. (If the proportion of iodine is large the powder will be red, if but little is used it will be a dull green.) Some changes are for better and some for worse. Changes caused by physical growth are natural and right. A mother holds in her arms a baby. Almost before she knows it her baby is lost and she has instead a little boy or girl, walking, talking and laughing. Soon this little child also is gone and in its place is a sturdy schoolboy or girl. This child also vanishes, giving place to a young man or woman, and so on through the years until the final change takes place. The changes we have discussed so far have all been physical, but in the mental and spiritual world change is just as surely taking

place constantly. No one goes to rest at night, after a day's living, exactly as he was in mind and heart when he arose in the morning. Changes usually come so gradually and silently that they attract little notice; nevertheless they are constantly occurring around us in every person and every thing. Amid all these earthly changes it is restful to let our minds turn to the Unchanging One. Do you know who that is? Yes, God. It is possible for our earthly fathers and mothers to change in many ways, but our heavenly Father never changes (Ps. xxvii. 10). Sometimes brothers, sisters and friends change, but our elder brother (Mark iii. 35) and the friend who is closer to us than all other friends is always the same (Prov. xviii. 24). Our good old earth may change, but God is preparing for us a home which will never change, "eternal in the heavens" (Rev. xxi. 1). So in all the changes which we know must come to us, let us keep close to our unchanging friend, trusting Him to keep us safe and to make all things work together for our good (Rom. viii. 28).

XXXIII

THE IMAGE OF GOD

"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them."—*Gen. i. 27.*

Materials: Several new silver dollars on which the engraving is clear and distinct. Some wax candles of different colours. A pen-knife. Some earth. A little water in a dish.

AFTER God had made this beautiful world, with all its vegetable and animal life, He created the people who were to enjoy and profit by it. And in His wonderful goodness, He made them like Himself, giving them minds capable of thinking and inventing, and wills to choose between right and wrong. An image of anything is a likeness of it. I will put a dollar on the table here (put a paper beneath it to protect the table) and one of you may light a match and hold the end of one of these candles in the flame so that the wax will melt and flow over the dollar. Now leave it a moment to dry, and then, with this pen-knife gently loosen the wax around the edge and lift it off. What have you now? Yes, an exact likeness of the dollar. You can see the eagle and read

the lettering around the edge. That is an image of the dollar. Is it as strong as the coin itself? No, it is frail and would break easily. Is the engraving upon it as clear and distinct as that upon the dollar? No, it is faint, and in some places hard to see. We are but frail and indistinct images of God. In some people it is hard to see the likeness at all, so degraded are they and unlike Him. Some poor little children are never taught about the Great Father in whose likeness they were created, and they grow up in ignorance and sin until, when they are men and women, the image of the Creator is lost sight of, like this. (Gently sift and rub earth over the wax impression of the dollar until it is very soiled.) Is this ruined now? It certainly looks so. If a strange child should enter the class at this moment and look at it he would not know that there had ever been any likeness to a dollar about it. But you who made it know. So, although our eyes fail to see any likeness to God in some people, their Creator knows what is underneath the sin. Let us try to get this clean again. (Wash it carefully in water.) Now it shows again the image of the dollar. So any sinner, no matter how vile, can be washed clean in the blood of Christ, and regain the dignity

suitable to one created in the image of God. Here are several dollars and a number of different coloured candles. Some of you may take them and make impressions. Now we have images of the dollar in different colours. Why do you suppose I asked you to do that? I think you can tell me. Are the people in all parts of the world alike? Now you have the idea. As we have here many different coloured impressions of the dollar, so in the world there are many different races of people —with different coloured skins, different manners and customs, different ideas of right and wrong, but all made in the image of God as much as we white people are. Does God love these heathen people as much as He loves us? Oh, yes, indeed He does. Every person whom He has created in His own image He loves and wants to save and uplift. Since Adam and Eve exercised their power to choose between right and wrong in the Garden of Eden by choosing wrong, there has been only one person who has ever walked through this life without defiling in the slightest degree the image of God. Can you tell me who that person was? Yes, Jesus our Saviour. He always remained the exact and perfect image of God (Col. i. 15 and Heb. i. 3). The last command of Jesus was

that the gospel of salvation should be carried to every soul on earth, regardless of the colour of their skins or the depths of their wickedness. So let us try not only to keep the image of God undefiled in our own selves, but help to send the good news to all who have not heard it, so that they may learn how they were created, and why, and share the joy which we possess.

XXXIV

"SERMONS IN STONES"

"And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels."—*Mal. iii. 17.*

Materials: Several small, smooth pebbles, a carnelian, a ruby, a pearl and a diamond. Jewels which are set in rings or brooches may be used.

IT is natural for a boy to like stones. As he walks along a country road, or when he finds a gravel walk in the city, his eyes are usually bent upon the ground and his bare toes are busy turning over the pebbles seeking for curious or pretty stones. Girls, too, like stones, but they generally prefer the valuable kind which they like set in rings or brooches. Shakespeare says there are "sermons in stones and good in everything" ("As You Like It," Act II, Scene 1). How odd to think that a stone can hold a sermon! Let us see if the ones we have here can preach to us. Many, many years ago boy nature was the same as it is to-day, and it is easy to imagine the boy David stooping over the brook choosing his five smooth stones, which probably looked very much like these we have here. Do you suppose

he wondered in that hour why the stones were so smooth? Probably not, because he had too much on his mind at the time. But perhaps some of you can tell me why these stones are so smooth, with no sharp angles or rough edges. Were they always so? No, probably they were once a part of some great stone, and became broken off in some way, falling into a stream of water. There they were tossed to and fro among other broken pieces of rock, rubbing against something hard on every side, until gradually, as time passed, they became smoother and smoother until their angles and rough edges were all gone, and they were perfectly smooth, as we see them now. While David probably did not think of these things at that time, the same process was used with his character. During his life he was thrown among many enemies, and tossed to and fro with trouble; often dashed with terrific force against hard places, until gradually the angles and rough places in his character were worn smooth and it became beautiful and symmetrical. It is the same way with us to-day, so let us not complain when we are jostled and rubbed and pushed here and there by the force of circumstances in this somewhat hard world. We all have angles and rough places in our

characters which would better be smoothed away, although the process is a painful one. How beautiful this carnelian is! It is always delightful to find such a pretty stone, just as it is a pleasure to find a rarely beautiful character among our friends. The beauty of this carnelian is that if we should cut or break it open we should find it exactly as beautiful at its very centre as it is on the outside. The best characters in the world are the ones who are just as sweet and true in their inmost hearts as they are in their outward characteristics.

How lovely this ruby is! It glows as though it had a fire at its heart. Rubies are second only to diamonds in hardness and have always been valued very highly as jewels. The wise Solomon, however, tells us in Prov. iii. 15 and viii. 11 that there is one thing still more valuable. That is wisdom, which the great king had himself in such abundance. Our Heavenly Father says that if any of us lack wisdom we can come to Him and receive it fully and freely (James i. 5). Solomon also compares good women to rubies in such a way that all the girls who will look up Prov. xxxi. 10 when they go home will be pleased and encouraged to be virtuous.

Although the carnelian and the ruby are beautiful, this pure-looking pearl suits my

fancy best. Whether it could properly be called a stone or not I am unable to say; but it is a precious jewel and I hope it has a sermon for us. Pearls are produced by a shell-fish of the oyster species and require seven years to grow. The shells are secured by diving, and contain from eight to twelve pearls each. The largest are the size of a walnut, but they are rarely as large as a cherry-stone. Jesus likened the kingdom of heaven to a pearl of great price (Matt. xiii. 45, 46), and in a parable told us that it is worth while for us to give up everything we have in the world in order to secure it. A pearl is so pure and lovely that a person would not feel like wearing one upon stained or soiled hands, or on a dress that was untidy or out of harmony with it in any way. If the kingdom of heaven is ours it is within the heart, and to make the heart a fit abode for a pearl of so great a price we must see that no impure thoughts linger there.

The last stone left is a diamond. Diamonds are the most costly stones in the world. When found they are rough and covered with a layer of partially decomposed rock. One not accustomed to precious stones would never dream when seeing a diamond in the rough what wonderful possibilities lay

hidden in that common looking pebble. So it often is with people. Some of the greatest men in our country were, in their youth, uncouth, unpromising looking boys. Abraham Lincoln is a good example of this. The diamond is the hardest of any known substance and can be cut and polished only by its own dust. So in polishing His human diamonds God uses other human beings. A brilliant mind is the best sharpener of another fine intellect, and as a mind is associated with another mind of equal or superior strength it is cut and polished into brilliancy. Books are so plenty and inexpensive in these days that all who will may have the privilege of coming in touch with the master minds of the centuries. However, it is not the hardness and brilliancy of the diamond that appeal to us most. It is the beautiful transparency of it and the ever changing colours reflected in it. So a truly great mind has a noble simplicity and sincerity about it and the heart it accompanies reflects the beauties it catches from the God it loves. Oh, that we might feel and know God in His greatness and beauty and have the power to reflect Him in ever so slight a measure, so that those around us might catch a gleam of His light and glory!

XXXV

THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings."—*Mal. iv. 2.*

Materials: A healthy plant in a pot. A plant that has been growing in a cellar.

WHAT a difference there is in these two plants! One so healthy and green and the other so pale and sickly looking! Who can tell me what has made the difference? Oh, yes, some of you have been in your cellars in the spring time, and have seen potatoes and onions which have so wanted to grow that they have sent forth long white sprouts which look like these poor pale branches. Yes, this plant has been growing in a cellar until it has nearly lost its life. What is it that gives life and colour to a plant? Yes, the sun, that great beautiful orb which sends its waves of light and heat to the earth. No plant can grow in health or beauty unless the sun's heat waves beat against it, and enter the earth at its roots warming and invigorating them; unless the swift light waves bathe it in their radiance and give it

colours to reflect into our eyes. Even in the cellar where this poor plant has been standing for some weeks the benefits of the sun were felt in a slight degree or else the plant would now be entirely dead, for all plants owe their lives to the sun. But the thick obstructions which were between the plant and the life-giving light and heat waves weakened their powers to such an extent that the plant was slowly dying for want of them. This healthy blooming plant is a pleasant contrast, and shows what the power of the sun can do. Christians are like plants in needing the sun but it is the glorious Sun of righteousness that they need. Do you know who is called the Sun of righteousness? Yes, Jesus our Saviour. As the plant grows and thrives and reflects beautiful colours from the sun's rays, so Christians grow in grace and become happy and useful as they feel the warmth and light of Jesus' love. And as the plant becomes sickly and pale and finally dies when shut away from the sun, so Christians lose their happiness and power to be useful and gradually approach spiritual death if they get far away from Christ; if they put themselves into such an attitude of mind that they cannot pray; if they fail to study the word of God and to listen to His

voice as it speaks through their consciences. When I take this plant home I intend to put it in the bright sunshine again, and hope to see it gradually regain its life and strength. So when a Christian awakens to the fact that he is losing his spiritual strength ; when he feels cold and lifeless, he should hasten to put himself once again where the rays of God's love can fall full upon him, and then his happiness and spiritual health will surely return to him.

XXXVI

LITTLE THINGS

"For who hath despised the day of small things?"—*Zech. iv. 10.*

Materials: A screw, a grain of sand, a drop of water, two glasses of water, a few drops of ink, a few drops of sulphate of copper solution, a dish of water, a small pebble.

So much of the happiness and unhappiness of our lives depends upon little things that we are naturally led to ask ourselves whether they are really little or not. A thing is little or big according to what we compare it with. Certain faults are little in the sense of being easily acquired and easily corrected, but their results are often serious. Here is a small screw. It looks unimportant, but should such a screw slip out of its place in an engine or some such machine its loss would render the machinery useless until it could be replaced. So many a person loses a good position by lacking self-control, or by some little habit like unpunctuality or carelessness. Here is a grain of sand. It is so little that I had to bring a handful of sand with me in order to be sure of showing you

one grain. Such a tiny thing seems incapable of doing any harm. But if a grain of sand becomes lodged in a person's eye, all work, no matter how important, must cease until it is removed. Here is a drop of water. Another harmless looking little thing. But should such a drop fall into your watch it would utterly ruin the delicate works. Little faults often spoil fine characters. We sometimes hear such remarks as these: "He is a great man but ——" or "How charming she would be if ——" The defect is usually a small one but it mars the character. However, as little defects are harmful, little virtues are correspondingly helpful. A screw like this, when well fitted into place, plays its little but important part in carrying a train load of people safely over the rails. So a faithful boy can do his part in making the wheels of a great business concern revolve smoothly. This grain of sand lying on the ground or lifted into the air by a breeze, serves its tiny part in breaking up a sunbeam and creating colour and beauty in our atmosphere. So the cheerful obedience of a boy or girl can brighten up the atmosphere of the schoolroom or home. A drop of water or dew can in its little way as perfectly reflect the great sun as can the beautiful evening

star, which, after all, is only our sister planet Venus, dark in herself, but reflecting the sun in such beauty that she is loved everywhere as the Morning and Evening Star. And a little child can, in his small way, reflect the light of God as perfectly as can the greatest man in the world. When you go home if you will read what the wise Solomon says in Prov. xxx. 24 to 29 about four little things you will be greatly interested. I have here two glasses of water, and in these small vials a few drops of liquid. I pour from the first little bottle into one glass, and see, how much beauty these few drops add to the water! I put the other drops into the second glass, and instantly the water grows black. The so-called little things of life are much more important than we usually deem them. A life is beautified or marred by them. Here is a dish of water. I will drop this little pebble in the middle of it. Tiny waves start at once in every direction, going on and on and never ceasing until they reach the edge of the dish. So a small act or word, even a thought sometimes, sends out waves of influence which never cease until the end of time. Michael Angelo said, "Trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle," and our poet Longfellow said:

"True worth is in being, not seeming,
In doing each day that goes by
Some little good, not in dreaming
Of great things to do by and by."

XXXVII

CONVERSION

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."—*2 Cor. v. 17.*

Materials: A saturated solution of copper, made by dissolving in hot water as much sulphate of copper as the water will dissolve. A knife having an iron blade.

YOU have often heard people talk about being "converted." Do you find it hard to understand what conversion is? Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 3). Since it is so necessary for every one to be converted, it is best for us all to understand as soon as possible exactly what conversion is. Very little children are the purest beings on earth. Can you tell me why? Yes, because they have never sinned. Since Jesus says that we must become as little children, we understand that we must become pure, as we were before we ever committed a sin. A person who wishes to be converted has only three things to do about the matter himself, and then God at-

tends to all the rest. The first thing is to repent of sin; that is, to feel very sorry for ever having been sinful; so sorry that one is willing to turn completely away from all evil and determine never to seek sinful things again. The next thing is to ask God for forgiveness, and the third and last thing is to believe that He does forgive. We cannot see into our own souls and watch the process which takes place. Perhaps after we finish praying for conversion we find that we feel very much the same as we did before the prayer, and we are a little tempted to doubt whether anything has happened to us at all or not. But see what I am going to do now. I will put the blade of my knife into this blue water for a moment. Now look at it. Is it just as it was before? No, the blade which before was black iron is now bright copper. This coloured water had power to draw the iron from the blade and replace it with copper. It was done so quietly and quickly that if we could not see the colour of the copper on the blade we would find it hard to believe that it had been done at all. Conversions of boys and girls are usually quiet and quick, but they are none the less real. Simply because some older people, who have wandered very far away from God, have to suffer

a great deal and struggle for a long time before they are converted, and then perhaps have a wonderful experience to relate, do not allow yourselves to think that your own quiet conversion was not fully as real as theirs. In order to be converted and enter the kingdom of God, one needs only to repent of his sins, ask God to forgive them, then believe that He has done so, and the work is done for all eternity. Sin will come into the lives again many times after that and have to be washed away by Christ, but after being converted one is never in the old unredeemed state of sin again unless he deliberately chooses to withdraw himself from God completely.

XXXVIII

THE LEVER OF FAITH

"All things are possible to him that believeth."—*Mark ix. 23.*

Materials: A book, a ruler and several dollars, or weights of some kind.

"MORE things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of." People are often confronted by tasks which look gigantic to them, and which are in reality far too great for their strength. Sometimes one looks at a heavy burden which must be lifted and carried through life, and the very soul shrinks at the thought of the dreadful weight to be borne. Two hundred and eighty-seven years before our Saviour came to the earth, a wise man by the name of Archimedes discovered the principle of the lever. Let us see what that is. We will place this book upright on the table or a chair, and lay a ruler across it. We find that there is one point at which the ruler will balance. This point is called the fulcrum. Now we will put a dollar on each end of the ruler and it will still balance at the same point. But if we put two dollars

on one end, that end will sink at once, and to make it balance we must shift the ruler and make the light end twice as long as the heavy one, because the heavy end has twice the weight on it. If we put three dollars on the heavy end, we must again lengthen the light end until it is three times the length of the heavy one. And so we may go on adding dollars and lengthening the light end of the ruler until the heavy end is quite close to the fulcrum, or resting point of the ruler, and still the one weight will balance all the others. The principle of the lever is of great use in building. A heavy stone or block of marble which no set of men could lift by their own strength, may be easily raised by fastening it to the short end of the lever, and then the weight of the men at the other end will balance it, as the one dollar balances all the others on our ruler. Archimedes indeed did a great thing for the world when he gave to it the principle of the lever, but Jesus gave a grander and more valuable revelation when He told His disciples about the mighty lever of faith. Great mountains, He said, can be removed by one having even a tiny grain of faith (Matt. xvii. 20; Luke xvii. 6; Matt. xxi. 22). People who see before them in the path of duty tasks which are beyond their

own strength have only to make use of the great lever of faith in God and they will find that their dreaded tasks can be accomplished easily and even pleasantly. People who have heavy burdens of sickness or trouble to bear through life need only to put the lever of faith beneath the trials and they will find not only the burden but their own souls carried happily through the years. This lever of faith is free to all, and those who have tried it testify triumphantly of its power, as does Paul, for instance, when he says, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13). James warns us that unless we use this lever we need not expect to receive anything from God (James i. 6, 7), and Paul also tells us that "without faith it is impossible to please Him" (Heb. xi. 6). Since, then, this lever of faith is such a desirable thing to have, and since it is free to all, let us go boldly to the Throne of Grace and ask that it may be given to us (Heb. iv. 16).

XXXIX

OUR FAITHFUL TIMEKEEPER

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."—*2 Peter iii. 8.*

Material: A watch.

WOULD you like to see my watch? Yes, it is pretty, with its gold case and dainty little face. Perhaps you would be surprised if you knew how many lessons we can learn from a watch. As you pass it around let us talk about it.

In looking at a watch what is the first thing one notices? Yes, the case. The merits of a watch are sometimes judged by its case. Probably most of you have gazed eagerly into a jeweller's show-window, as I did when I was a little girl, and imagined you were buying a watch for yourself. If you were like me, you chose the one with the prettiest case. It is often the same way in judging people. We imagine that the fine looking, beautifully dressed folks must be the best. But should we think only of the case in choosing a watch? Certainly not.

The most beautiful case may contain inferior works while good works are sometimes enclosed in plain cases. So it is with people. Some of the most beautiful characters in the world dwell in plain and even unlovely bodies, and we cannot always be sure that a handsome person's mind and heart correspond to his outward appearance. It is a great pity that all fine appearing people cannot be truly noble through and through. One so blessed in his body should honour the giver of it by making it a fit abode for the Holy Spirit (Rom. xii. 1).

Open the case now and tell me what you see. Yes, the face. Every one loves a pretty face. Some girls, whose looking-glasses reflect beauty, become vain ; while others fret themselves because they are dissatisfied with the image that looks back at them from the mirror. It is natural to love beauty. I think that God Himself delights in it because He has made such marvellously beautiful things in this world, and has told us of such glories to come in the next. So I think He likes to see His children beautiful. At any rate He gives us all a chance to mould our own faces. Are you surprised to hear that? Oh, yes, we have a large share in making our faces either beautiful or ugly as we grow. The

girl who frets and becomes discontented as she sees her plain face in the glass is lessening her chance of ever becoming beautiful, just as the girl who allows vanity to stamp itself upon her features is destroying her beauty. Our emotions impress themselves upon our faces. The most beautiful face in the world will be marred if its owner allows selfishness, ill-temper and pride to reign in her heart; while a plain face may be sweetened into positive beauty as it reflects the kindness and gentleness of a loving heart. The cultivation of the mind also lends beauty to a face. The gift of beauty should be appreciated when possessed, and the possessor should pray earnestly to be delivered from the temptations which always attack beauty, and strive to be as sweet within as without (Prov. xxxi. 30).

Now what else do you notice on the watch? The hands, of course. How useless a watch would be without hands! And how useless you and I would be without our hands. Most girls like to keep their hands soft and white, and some are afraid of brooms, dishpans and such useful articles with which they can do so much to lighten mother's burdens. Some boys are afraid that handling snow-shovels, coal-scuttles and water pails will

coarsen their hands so that they cannot play well upon their violins, guitars and mandolins or work well at their delicate wood-carving and such things. The hands on our watch are fine and beautiful, but of how much value would they be to the watch if they performed no work but existed only as ornaments? Let us take a lesson from these busy hands as they unceasingly perform their work, and let us do with our hands heartily all that we ought to do (Eccl. ix. 10).

Is there not another hand on the watch? Yes, the second hand. How rapidly it flies around! Sixty times as fast as the minute hand and three thousand six hundred times as fast as the hour hand. Just so our days fly past us; and if our months and years are to be successful we must keep our days full of activity (Eccl. xii. 1).

Since we can see the face and hands so plainly why can we not touch them? Yes, they are covered by a crystal. That glass reminds us of the providence of God. We may sometimes look wistfully out of our own corner, away from our own work, into farther fields. We may stretch out our hands and long to be away, but an invisible something shuts us in. We can see through it but when we try to pass we are restrained and

kept in our own place, at our own work. The providence of God, while it seems to restrict us, yet protects us. This crystal keeps dust and other harmful things away from the face of the watch and protects the hands from accidents. So there is an invisible Presence before the Christian, protecting him from evil. As long as he is content to remain behind it he is safe (Ps. v. 12).

Now let us open the back of the watch. Here are kept the works. Neither you nor I know much about these curious little wheels. We only know that as long as they are all right our watch keeps good time, but if they are out of order our watch goes wrong. Neither do we understand the inner workings of our own minds and hearts. But we can see that if they are right our lives follow truth while if they are wrong our actions are correspondingly wrong. When anything is the matter with my watch what do I do? Mend it? Oh, no, I cannot do that because I do not know how watches are made. I must take it to a watchmaker who understands such things. So when anything goes wrong with our spiritual life we should not try to help ourselves nor to get help from other human beings. The only one who perfectly understands us is He who made us

—God. Let us go to Him with our troubles and He will set us right (Prov. xx. 24).

Every watch, even when it is in good running condition, needs to be taken often to a good jeweller for a thorough cleaning. In the same way we need to go often to our Maker to have the dust of worldliness cleaned away from our hearts (Ps. xix. 12).

Now is there anything else which you notice particularly about the watch? Why, certainly, the ticking. One becomes so accustomed to the ticking of a watch or clock that he seldom notices it unless it stops. So, often, children become so accustomed to hearing words of love and good advice from their parents and teachers that they make little, if any, impression upon their minds. But how sad would be the silence if the voices should suddenly cease. Instead of letting these voices fall upon deaf ears let us take example from them, and begin, in our turn, to use our own voices for good (Prov. iv. 1).

What is a watch for? Yes, to tell us the time. Are watches always perfectly true in this respect? No, sometimes they are too fast and sometimes too slow. What must be done then? They must be regulated. Some of us are by nature inclined to be too slow. How aggravating is the person who

is always late in keeping an appointment, always late to school, always late for breakfast and who usually takes twice the time necessary for doing a piece of work (Heb. vi. 11, 12). On the other hand how annoying is the person who rushes headlong into every enterprise without waiting to count the cost. Who hurries over his work so that it is not well done, and who does a thing first and stops to think about it afterwards (Prov. xix. 2). It is best to be neither too fast nor too slow but to be regulated according to common sense.

Now our watch has told us many things and we will close it and put it away, where it will go on ticking away the time. It seems to warn us not to waste the precious minutes for we can never regain them after they have once passed from us. As the watch ticks, the seconds fly, and so go on the days, months and years until finally time will cease and eternity will begin.

XL

GETTING VS. GIVING

"Freely ye have received, freely give."—*Matt. x. 8.*

Materials: A sponge. Some water in a basin. A candle.

AWAY down in the deep waters of the oceans and of some great lakes are found certain curious things clinging to rocks and shells. These are torn off and brought to the surface where they are cleaned and dried and sent to stores for sale. Certainly you have all seen some of them and probably used one. Can you guess what they are? Yes, you have it; they are sponges. We have one here. Let us put it in this basin of water and see how much it will absorb. How fast the water disappears. It would probably take up still more if we had it here to give. Have you ever heard people called "sponges"? I should not like to be called a sponge, would you? It seems to indicate something so greedy; like the people who take all the good things of life for themselves and never give to others. Always taking in and taking in and never giving anything out unless forced to do so. Some boys and girls

go to school and learn all they can but are never willing to help little brother and sister with their lessons. Some take all the musical instruction they can get but are always too busy to play and sing for father and mother. Some enjoy a pleasure trip but bring no interesting descriptions back to the home circle. Some attend Sunday-school and children's or young people's meetings but never help out by using their voices in song or in giving a helpful illustration or thought on the lesson. Always receiving but never giving out, like a sponge. I think we would all prefer to resemble something else rather than a sponge. Now what do you think we could put before us to-day that would teach us of better things than the sponge suggests? Well, how will this do? (Set out the candle and light it.) Oh, yes, you see the point at once. A candle is always giving out something. With all its little might it is pouring forth light and heat. Neither reach very far because the candle is so small, but we do not think of that but only see the motive. We would far rather be like the little candle as it gives out its light and heat than like the big fat sponge sitting there holding all it has received and ready to take in more as soon as it is offered. Can we make the sponge give up anything? (Squeeze

it.) Oh, certainly, if we force it to do so, just as most people can be coaxed and urged and pressed until finally they respond. Some one says that our candle is burning itself all away. That is true. A minister, teacher or any earnest Christian worker will tell you that his work leaves him exhausted; that he really gives a part of his very life as he shines for Jesus. But Christians are different from candles in one way. God makes up to them all they give out, building them up again and making them stronger than they were before. Even if this were not so, would we not still prefer to resemble the candle rather than the sponge, and to give out good instead of only absorbing it? It is better to live a few years usefully than many years selfishly.

XLI

TALENTS

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."—*1 Cor. xii. 4.*

Materials: Purchase a few cents' worth each of perchloride of iron, sulphate of copper and sulphate of zinc, also a few grains of ferrocyanide of potassium. Make weak solutions of the three first mentioned chemicals and put them in small bottles. Dissolve some of the ferrocyanide of potassium in a glass cream pitcher of water. Have with you three small wine glasses.

WHAT is your particular talent? Oh, now don't shake your heads and say that you have none. Perhaps you and I do not possess exactly the kind of talents we should like best, but our heavenly Father has given all His children some gift by which they can glorify Him. Sometimes it takes a long time for one to make up his mind what his talents are, and some people never take the trouble to do so. If we can see no decided sign of brilliancy in ourselves we are too apt to conclude that we are not talented at all. But, as some writer has said,

"God gives us each some small sweet way
To set the world rejoicing."

Do you see these little glasses? They all look alike, do they not? I am going to make them differ a little now to remind us that no two people in all the world are alike. (Rinse out the three glasses, one with the iron, one with the copper, and one with the zinc, so that a few drops of each remain in the glasses.) I will pour some water from this pitcher into each glass. Now how does the water look, all the same colour? No, one glass contains blue water, one reddish-brown and the other milky white. Yet the water from the pitcher was all clear white. Into every heart which will receive Him, God pours the Holy Spirit. It is the same Spirit in every case, but in each life He is manifested in a different way, just as the water from the pitcher was all clear white, but in each glass it showed a different colour. As soon as some people are converted they show a decided talent for testimony; some are specially gifted in prayer, others are enabled to preach and some are very successful in teaching. Some use their voices to sing God's praise, and some show great artistic talent. Which glass of water do you think the prettiest? The blue? Yes, the others are not nearly so attractive. If we were to choose one glass it would surely be the blue. So, often, when we see people

in possession of brilliant talents we think that if we only had such gifts as they we should be only too glad to use them for God, and our own homely talents seem poor and common to us, and we are tempted to neglect using them. Where did the blue water come from? Yes, from the pitcher. And where did we get the brown and milky white water from? From the same source. So the commonplace talent one young girl has for influencing in a good way her little brothers and sisters, and of brightening up her home, comes from the same source that the talent for music came with which some other girl can hold and sway an audience. The talent for patient, earnest work which some boys exhibit in forming a literary club or mission class, or which some fatherless boys show in caring for their widowed mothers, is as truly from God as the talent which enables another young man to paint a picture which brings to him fame and honour. Did you notice as we made our experiment that it was the glass which was rinsed out with the blue liquid which contained the brown water when filled from the pitcher, and the glass which had been rinsed with the brown liquid, and which we would naturally expect to show a brown colour when filled, was the one which gave

us the blue water? (If all did not observe this, perform the experiment again.) I cannot explain it; I only know that people often surprise us in the same way. A rough-looking man, of whom one would almost feel afraid, often has one of the softest, tenderest hearts in the world. Sometimes a person who has been credited with but few natural gifts, when inspired by the Holy Spirit, exhibits talents of surprising brilliancy, while others, of whom much is expected, sometimes disappoint their friends.

How can you tell what your talents are? The best way to do when undecided as to this, is to try faithfully and heartily whatever work you find to do, and when you find some particular thing in which you take a deep interest and which you can do exceptionally well, it is usually safe to conclude that you have a talent for that particular kind of work. It may not be what you expected to do, nor the kind of work your friends look for from you, but with God for your guide you cannot make many great mistakes in choosing your work.

XLII

INFLUENCE

"Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died."—*Rom. xiv. 15.*

Materials: Two corks. A dish of water. A penknife. A candle. A pasteboard box having a tight cover. Remove one end of the box and sew in its place a stout piece of canvas. Cut a round hole in the opposite end.

SOON after the Christian church was started disputes arose concerning the use of meats which had been offered to idols. Some of the Christians believed that by eating these meats they were, in a way, partaking in the worship of idols themselves, while others were able to realize that they were neither better nor worse for the eating, and so took no particular care in the matter. Paul wrote wisely and kindly to these careless people, explaining to them that although some things were perfectly right they were not always best, and that since eating meat which had been offered to idols might cause some people to sin, it would be better for them to deny themselves so they might be perfectly sure that their influence would not

harm any one else. Opinions differ among Christians to-day just as they did in those days, and it is as necessary for us to consider our influence as it was for the people to whom Paul wrote. You have no influence? Oh, indeed you have. No one is without it. Look at these two corks. Would you think that one of them could lead the other around as though it were a magnet? We will drop them in the water, and when they are approached within a certain distance of each other they rush together. Now I will fix the blade of my knife in one, and see, I can lead the other all around through the water. So people are influenced and led by one another. It is often hard for a broad-minded, strong Christian to restrain himself from doing something which he knows would not hurt him but which might harm a weaker person. The weaker person would not have to follow his example, you say? That is very true, but the power of influence is very strong, and since it is invisible one never can tell in what direction it will travel or whom it will reach. We will light this candle. (Place the candle in front of the round opening of the box, at a little distance from it.) Now it is burning brightly. (Press on the canvas back of the box and a puff of air will ex-

tinguish the flame.) Why did our candle go out? Yes, I pushed the back of this box, but did you see anything touch the candle? No, the light was affected by an unseen influence from the box just as the hope and faith of many a soul has been affected by the unseen influence of some other person. The air from the box was pure and good in itself but it had a disastrous effect upon the candle's light. So certain actions may be right in themselves and yet cast a bad influence. For instance, one person may be so constituted that he can worship God better by spending a Sunday morning alone in the woods, among the birds and flowers, than he can by listening to a sermon in church. For him to do this would be perfectly right, except for the fact that his influence might keep away from the house of God some person who was not in close harmony with nature, which would probably result in such a one losing interest in the things of the kingdom. We can't be expected to give up doing things we like to do just because it might be bad for some one else to do those things? I know it is hard, but are you perfectly sure that God does not expect it of us? The Bible says, "Let no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in a

brother's way" (Rom. xiv. 13), and "Let not your good be evil spoken of" (Rom. xiv. 16). We are told that "even Christ pleased not Himself" (Rom. xv. 3), and since God has bestowed upon us the wonderful power of influencing our fellow men, how careful we ought to be that our influence should be for good and not for evil.

NOTE. By putting inside of the box some pieces of a joss-stick, or anything which will cause a smoke without setting the box on fire, smoke rings may be sent from the opening of the box. The smoke rings will put out the candle as the invisible air rings do. Smoke rings sent along a beam of sunlight or electric light are beautiful, and may be used to represent the beauty of a good influence.

XLIII

A WORD FOR JESUS

"A word spoken in due season, how good is it."—*Prov. xv. 23.*

Materials: A crystal of hyposulphite of soda tied to a thread. A glass containing a solution made by dissolving six tablespoons of hyposulphite of soda crystals in two tablespoons of boiling water. Hyposulphite of soda will not remain in a solution more than an hour or two, so this liquid must not be prepared long before it is to be used.

ONE of the hardest things for most young Christians to do is to speak to their friends about the things of God. This reticence is often laid to cowardice and sometimes one is accused of being ashamed of the Lord Jesus. This, however, is not usually the case. One's religious feelings and experiences are the most sacred things in life, and it is for this reason that it is so hard to express them in ordinary words and on ordinary occasions. They are deep in the heart and it requires a great effort to bring them forward. If, however, one could be perfectly certain that his words would be helpful the speaking would be easier. People are too apt to think that their words are useless. They may be par-

ticularly anxious for the conversion of some special friend, but if they see no indications of spiritual longings in that friend they conclude that so small a thing as a word from them would be useless, and so refrain from speaking that word. But one can never foreknow the effect of a little word for Jesus. Here is a clear liquid. I will drop into it this crystal, holding it by the thread. The crystal is a little thing, but see the effect it is instantly having upon the water. Beautiful crystals are forming and clinging to the one on the thread. They rapidly increase until now we see all the water in the glass crystallized into a solid mass. So, often, it needs only one word from a friend to crystallize the good resolutions which are in a heart, and for the lack of one word of help and encouragement many a soul remains forever out of Christ. But sometimes, you say, words are spoken for Jesus which have no effect whatever? Nothing is without its effect. Many, many crystals such as the one on the thread had to be dissolved in this water before it reached such a condition that the last crystal would solidify it, and there must be many and many a word for Jesus received into a soul before the last one comes which crystallizes all into a firm decision. When our

words seemingly fail to make any impression whatever, let us remember that they may at least help to bring the soul to whom they are spoken into such a condition that a word from some one else will bring the desired result.

XLIV

FRUIT BEARING

"Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples."—*John xv. 8.*

Materials: A fruit basket containing an orange, an apple, a handful of figs and a bunch of grapes. A fruit-knife.

JUDGING from the looks of this fruit basket, we are going to have a delightful lesson to-day. Do you think it will spoil your appetites for dinner if you taste this fruit? I hardly think it will; at any rate, we will risk it. Yes, indeed, the fruit looks pretty. How good it is of God to make everything that grows for us to eat so beautiful. Everything? Why, certainly. Can you think of anything from the garden or orchard that is not beautiful? The next time you help mother get dinner, notice the cabbage she cuts apart, the colour of the beets and radishes, the pretty way the pearly ears of corn are wrapped in softest silk and covered with pale green leaves; and notice the tomatoes and onions as they are sliced. If you find anything growing for us to eat which is not beautiful, tell me next Sunday. The Bible says, "He

hath made everything beautiful in His time" (Eccl. iii. 11).

See this bright golden orange. We will open it and see how wonderfully it is arranged inside. Now let us each take one of these little sections and admire as we taste it. Our bodies are so constituted that in order to be kept alive and healthy they must be fed. How thankful we ought to be that the things provided for our use are made beautiful and pleasant to both eyes and palate. God might have made all things taste and look alike to us, and then how much pleasure we should have missed.

Let us cut this apple. Can you tell me what kind of fruit it was that God forbade Adam and Eve to eat in the Garden of Eden? Ah, I knew you would all say apples. Now suppose you turn to the third chapter of Genesis and see if you are right. No, apples are not mentioned at all. Well, your mistake is one that is made by most people, but you will know better now. The apple tree is very rare in the East, and apples are mentioned only twice, I think, in the Bible, and in both cases it is thought that the citron is the fruit meant.

Here is a kind of fruit (figs) which is often mentioned in the Scriptures. Jesus some-

times used natural objects to impress great moral truths on the minds of His disciples. He wished them to understand that the life of every Christian ought to be like a tree or vine and bear fruits of love, joy, peace, gentleness, faith and other virtues (Gal. v. 22), just as a tree or vine bears fruit. He said that in order to bear good fruit we must be good people because good trees always bear good fruit and bad trees cannot bear anything but bad fruit (Matt. vii. 16 to 19), and people are like trees in that respect. One day when Jesus was hungry and tired He came to a fig tree, but found no fruit on it; nothing but leaves. A fig tree is peculiar in one way. The fruit shoots forth from it without the appearance of a blossom and even before the leaves appear. So when one sees a fig tree with leaves, but without fruit, he may know that it is barren for that season. Jesus said to the tree, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever," and presently the fig tree withered away. Jesus expects His followers to bear fruit just as He expects trees to do so and will be as much displeased when they fail as He was when the fig tree failed. Of course He knows how hard it is for us to bear such fruits as meekness, long suffering, patience, etc., and so He helps us. See this

beautiful bunch of grapes? If the gardener who raised them had not taken great pains with his vines we should not have been able to enjoy such delicious fruit. The land where Jesus lived was excellent for vineyards, and the grapes grown there are much larger and finer than those we have here. One day Jesus was having an earnest talk with His disciples and He used a grape vine for an illustration (John xv. 1 to 9). He said that He was like the vine and His followers like the branches. Suppose that when this bunch of grapes had just commenced to grow the branch upon which it was growing had become broken off from the vine, what would have happened? Yes, the branch would have died and the grapes with it. Where must a branch be if it is to bear fruit? Yes, on the vine. It needs the sap that flows upward from the root and circulates all through the vine and its branches. So if a Christian wants to bear fruit he must be so close to Christ that he is really a part of Him, and can feel the life and love of God flowing through his heart. Jesus says, "Without Me ye can do nothing" (John xv. 5). When one does abide in Christ, God the Father helps in a way which is sometimes painful, but which, if endured well, makes one capable

of bearing much fruit. Did you ever hear of pruning? Perhaps you have sometimes pruned your rose-bushes. People who raise grapes have to prune their vines often if they want them to bear well. Yes, pruning is trimming or cutting. If a gardener allowed his vines to grow as they liked their strength would be spent in the growth of long, useless shoots, so he trims, and cuts, and keeps them in order, and his care is rewarded by a fine crop of fruit. So God prunes His human branches, trimming and restraining them according to His divine wisdom. He knows that even though the process is a painful one, it is only for a short time, as He counts time, that we must endure the pain and He wants us to make a strong, sturdy growth here before He transplants us to His heavenly land. He wants us to bear the "fruit of righteousness," and pruning is often necessary in order to bring forth that fruit (Heb. xii. 11). Never think when pain and trouble come to you that God is angry or does not love you. He loves you more than ever at such times and is only cultivating your character. The pain which you suffer from His training will not last long, and will result in making you stronger and better and capable of bearing fruit for eternal life.

XLV

INVISIBLE WRITING

IN teaching a lesson interest may often be heightened by the use of invisible ink. Have a large piece of white paper and before coming to the class write the words which you wish to have invisible with a clean pen dipped in a solution of ferrocyanide of potassium. In the class, as the lesson proceeds, write whatever you wish with a pencil or pen and at the proper time brush over the invisible writing with a soft cloth dipped in a solution of perchloride of iron and it will appear in blue with a yellow background. Or brush it over with a solution of sulphate of copper and it will be developed in a reddish chocolate colour. Should you write with a solution of iodide of potassium and develop with a solution of corrosive sublimate your writing would appear in scarlet. Pictures can be drawn effectively in this way. For instance, a group of shepherds watching their sheep may be drawn in the ordinary way and the Christmas star and vision of angels with invisible ink. Or Jacob sleeping with a stone

for his pillow in pencil work, and the ladder and angels in invisible ink. Sometimes it is interesting to write, as the lesson proceeds, a list of the persecutions or trials endured by the hero of the lesson story, and on the opposite half of the paper develop a list, prepared beforehand in invisible writing, of his compensations. Many such ways of using invisible ink will occur to the teacher, suggested by the Sunday-school lessons.

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