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SUGGESTIONS FOR A SYLLABUS
IN RELIGIOUS TEACHING

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SUGGESTIONS
FOR A
SYLLABUS IN RELIGIOUS
TEACHING

BY
G. B. AYRE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY M. E. SADLER, LL.D.

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INTRODUCTION.

THIS book is the work of one who has for several years given much thought and time to religious teaching, especially in public elementary schools. It is the outcome of a long experience as well as of a deep interest in this, the most important of all the sides of education. It appears at a time when many teachers, those who teach in the home as well as those who teach in school, feel the need for more guidance in the preparation and arrangement of their lessons in the Christian Faith. Such will, I believe, find in this book, as I have found, very much that is practically useful and educationally valuable. Yet more will they be touched by the spirit of the book, by its insight and candour, and by its sympathy with the needs of those who teach and of those who learn.

M. E. SADLER.

PREFACE.

AN attempt is made in this Syllabus to give a graded course of teaching ; to correlate Scripture with the child's general education ; and to avoid teaching anything that will have to be unlearnt in after life.

There is more put down for the later years than can be given in the time usually allowed ; but some amount of choice is desirable for those who have always to teach children of the same age, since the same part of the Bible, taken year after year, is apt to lose its freshness to the teacher.

The Syllabus owes its inception and part of its framework to that valuable pioneer work on religious education, "Pastors and Teachers," which before reformed Sunday Schools were thought of, first pointed out the need of using the same methods for imparting religious knowledge as obtain in secular education.

I have to thank many friends in the teaching profession and others outside its ranks for much help ; Professor Sadler and Miss Graveson, Vice-Principal of Gold-

smith's College, for helpful criticism ; and Miss Grace Owen, Lecturer in Education, University College, Reading, for ideas embodied in the first and second years.

G. B. AYRE.

EASTLEMES, COLNE,

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST'S DAY, 1910.

P.S.—I am indebted to Mr. Rudyard Kipling and Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., for kindly allowing me to insert "The Children's Song" from "Puck of Pook's Hill" and to Canon Beeching for the poem inserted on page 118.

THE little child learns to realize the character of God through the wonder and beauty of the world, and the love and care of those around him ; they are the means by which he learns to know God, and to feel his relationship to Him.

Next follows the perfect life of Him “ Who went about doing good,” and it will be from His “ doings ” that the child will gain his clearest impressions of the Divine character.

When the difficulty of the struggle to be good is beginning to be felt, then he is ready to learn about the Power which gives him the promise of strength.

These thoughts underlie the course suggested in this syllabus.

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MORAL TEACHING WILL BE FOUND IN THE FOLLOWING POINTS :—

YEAR I. Generosity, industry, perseverance, kindness to animals.

YEAR II. Courage, physical (in bearing pain), moral, patience, honesty, obedience to parents, kindness, unselfishness, truthfulness, patriotism.

YEAR III. Integrity, self-sacrifice, unselfishness, duty to parents, forgiveness, kindness, neighbourliness, humility, industry, patriotism.

YEAR IV. Duties to the community, moral courage, forgiveness, integrity in public service, presence of mind, common sense, patience, obedience, consideration for others, tact.

YEARS V, VI and VII. Friendship, choice of friends, kindness to animals, to cripples, to mentally deficient, politeness, duty to parents, duty to the municipality, responsibility of the vote, dangers to the community of inattention to the laws of health, war, temperance, self-control, purity, the choice of good books, the rights of the community as opposed to the individual, honesty, right use of money, gambling, truthfulness, courage, fairness in games.

Honesty in public life, righteous anger, self-sacrifice, the value of co-operation, patriotism, moral courage, responsibility for the welfare of others, unselfishness, love, the value of forming good habits.

In Year I the stories illustrating the leading thought taken from the Bible will need to be supplemented by others taken from different sources.

The following books will be found useful:—

TITLE.	AUTHOR.	PUBLISHERS.
In the Child's World.	E. Poulsson.	{ Philip & Son, 32 Fleet St., E.C.
Mother Stories.	Maud Lindsay.	{ G. Curwen, 24 Berners St., W.
More Mother Stories.	Maud Lindsay.	{ Gay & Hancock, Ltd., 12 & 13 Henrietta Street, London.
The Story Hour.	K. Douglas Wiggin.	
Longfellow's Hiawatha.		
Month by Month.	{ S. Willis. Florence Farmer, (Killogg).	{ E. L. Kelly & Co., 61 E. 9th Street, New York.
Child Songs.	Carey Bonner.	J. Curwen & Sons.
Bible Manners and Customs. ¹	G. M. Mackie.	A. & C. Black.
Price 6d.		
Parables from Nature.	Mrs. Gatty.	

¹ This invaluable book provides ample material for the Eastern background.

YEAR I.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD REVEALED IN HIS CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN.

The teacher will find that a good deal of the nature teaching and expression work may easily be correlated with the year's course of Religious Instruction (see footnotes). But it should be kept in mind that while there may be parallel courses in Nature Study and Religious Teaching, the aims of the two are distinct. The aim of the religious course is to bring the child into relation with God through His Works.

YEAR I.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD REVEALED IN HIS CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN.

I. EVIDENCES OF DIVINE LOVE WITHIN THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE.

SEPTEMBER.

A.—GOD'S CARE IN PROVIDING FOOD.

Harvest and the approach of winter.¹

¹ Bring out the following ideas :—

(a) All that has gone to produce the harvest.

The ploughing, harrowing, sowing—the sunshine and the rain, the reaping, binding, storing.

(b) Processes of converting wheat into bread.

(c) The harvest of fruit, nuts, vegetables.

(d) Storing of food in bulbs and seeds.

YEAR I.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD REVEALED IN HIS CARE FOR HIS CHILDREN.

I. EVIDENCES OF DIVINE LOVE WITHIN THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE.

SEPTEMBER.

Stories.

The story of Ruth.

„ „ „ the seed growing secretly (Mark iv. 26-29).

„ „ „ the feeding of the five thousand (John vi. 1-15).

„ „ „ bringing the firstfruits. The harvest festival probably the first religious service (Ex. xxiii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 10-14).

Expression Work.

Free drawing, illustrating the story of Ruth.¹

Hymns.

“ We plough the fields and scatter.”

“ The Sower went forth sowing.” (First verse.)

Repetition.

While the earth remaineth seed time and harvest, etc. (Gen. viii. 22).
Thou visitest the earth and waterest it, etc. (Ps. lxxv. 9-11).

¹ Children may fill a large sheet of paper with drawings of fruit, nuts, corn, may plant corn in a large box, and may also have a sheaf of ripe corn in the class-room.

4 *Suggestions for a Syllabus in Religious Teaching.*

OCTOBER.

B.—WARMTH.

1. For the Plant and Animal World.¹
2. For Man. Clothing.

In this connexion lessons may be given on the seasons.

A comparison of the seasons and modes of life in England and Palestine will make many of the Bible stories much more real. This can be worked out by taking typical days in the life of an Eastern child, e.g. Isaac, Esau, and Jacob.

OCTOBER (CONTINUED) AND NOVEMBER.

C.—SHELTER.

1. For the Plant and Animal World.²
2. For Man. The home.

With the home the child associates the idea of his father and mother and their love, he receives food, clothing, shelter, everything through his parents.

¹(a) Seed coverings, buds, scales, falling leaves.

(b) Furs, feathers, etc. e.g. the changes in animals' coats in colour and thickness according to the season.

²(a) The birds—robin, also swallow and other migratory birds.

(b) Hibernating animals, e.g. the squirrel, the bat.

(c) The frog, caterpillar, caddis.

(d) Snow shelter for the plant world.

OCTOBER.

Stories.

David the shepherd boy (1 Sam. xvii. 12-15, 34-36).
Hannah and little Samuel (1 Sam. ii. 18, 19).

Expression Work.

Free drawing in connexion with the stories.

Repetition.

“Father we thank Thee for the night.”—CAREY BONNER, 16.

OCTOBER (CONTINUED) AND NOVEMBER.

Stories.

1. Story of Abraham, a tent-dweller.
2. The children of Israel. Story of the Father's care over a great family of His children, in their journey towards a far-off land. Emphasize the manna, the water, the pillar of cloud, the crossing of the Red Sea, the Jordan and the beautiful home at the end.
3. The tortoise and the robin.—“Parables from Nature”—

Repetition.

“Loving friend, oh hear our prayer,
Take into Thy loving care
All the leaves and flowers that sleep
In their white beds covered deep;
Shelter from the wintry storm
All Thy snow birds; keep them warm.”—ANON.

This is the way the snow comes down.—CAREY BONNER, 17.

Psalm CIV. 16-18.

Expression Work.

Free drawing of the journey of the Israelites.

II. EVIDENCES OF DIVINE LOVE IN THE GIFT OF JESUS CHRIST.

DECEMBER.

Connecting Link.

Food, clothing, shelter, parents' love, are not all that God has given. The children are this month to hear about the best Gift.

- (1) Draw out the children's ideas about Christmas.
- (2) Giving better than receiving.
- (3) Why do we give?

We cannot give to the Child Jesus like the wise men, but when we give to others we are really giving to Christ (Matt. xxv. 40).

Expression Work.

Part of the time devoted to religious instruction should this month be given to preparing Christmas gifts for parents, friends, poorer children.

"The true Christmas tree for the child is the tree hung with gifts made by the child for others. Too often children are made selfish at the time when of all days in the year they should be trained to understand the joy of giving. Giving to others the results of their own labour foreshadows the nobler duty of self-sacrifice for others."

JANUARY.

Jesus Christ is God's gift to all nations. We must share our knowledge.

1. The first missionaries.
2. The coming of missionaries to Britain.
3. Children of other lands. (How this work is still carried on.)

" Our Heavenly Father loves
His little children here,
But little ones in distant lands
Likewise to him are dear.

The babies black and brown,
The yellow babies too."

4. Missions at home.

II. EVIDENCES OF DIVINE LOVE IN THE GIFT OF JESUS CHRIST.

DECEMBER.

Stories.

1. Story of Gretchen (Mother Stories).
2. Hannah giving Samuel (I Sam. I. 20-28, II. 11).
3. The widow's mite (Luke XXI. 1-4).
4. The alabaster box of ointment (John XII. 1-8).
5. "Good King Wenceslas."
6. The first Christmas Day (Luke II. 8-20).
7. The story of the wise men (Matt. II. 1-12).

Repetition.

St. Luke II. 8-14.

St. Matthew XXV. 40.

Acts XX. 35.

Hymns.

Once in Royal David's City.

Shine out oh blessed star.

Away in a manger.—LUTHER.—CAREY BONNER, 97.

Carols.

A Carol of the Star.—CAREY BONNER, 157.

JANUARY.

Stories.

Stories of the Twelve Apostles.

Stories of Indian children, e.g. Ramabai. (Brown.)

Story of a Chinese or Japanese. (Yellow.)

Story of an African child. (Black.)

It is desirable to procure a box of curios illustrating life in China, India, Japan, or Africa.

Expression Work.

Free drawing in connexion with the stories.

III. EVIDENCES OF DIVINE LOVE IN CREATION AND LIFE.

FEBRUARY.

I. INANIMATE NATURE.

The child's interests are, at this age, extending to the life of Nature. Hence this part of the course will aim to help him to think of God as the Creator and Father of the world around him. The idea of development is implied by bringing before him the different orders of life in an ascending scale. The idea in the teacher's mind should be Psalm CIV.

(*a*) Sun, moon and stars.

He appointed the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down (cf. Isa. XL. 26).

(*b*) Air, wind.

“Who maketh winds His messengers.”

(*c*) Clouds, rain.

“Who covereth the heaven with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth.”

(*d*) The rainbow.

“I do set my bow in the cloud.”

III. EVIDENCES OF DIVINE LOVE IN CREATION AND LIFE.

FEBRUARY.

I. INANIMATE NATURE.

Introduce by the story of the creation of light; sun, moon and stars. Genesis I. 1-6, 14-18. Note 2 Peter III. 8.

Stories.

Our Lord stilling the tempest (St. Matt. VIII. 23-27).
The ark and the rainbow (Gen. VIII. 1-13, IX. 13-17).
Elijah and the drought (1 Kings XVIII. 41-46).

Repetition.

1. Lord, when we have not any light,
And mothers are asleep.
—“Child Songs.”—CAREY BONNER, 131.
“Now the day is over.”
2. This is the way the clouds come down.
—“Child Songs,” 17, vv. 2-4.
3. When you watch the big drops splashing
On the pane
And the clouds grow black and heavy
With the rain:

Then you'll see the wondrous rainbow
In the sky
And you look at it and whisper
God is nigh.

God remembers still His promise
To us all
'Tis His care that keeps us safely
Great or small.

—S. B. MACY.

Pss. CIV. 1-4, CXXXVI. 7-9, 26.

Revise Genesis VIII. 22.

Expression Work.

Paper modelling of the Ark. Chalk or crayon the rainbow.

MARCH.

2. PLANT LIFE.

The life of trees, shrubs, and flowers, the inaction and sleep of winter leading up to the Easter thought of the awakening to new life through death.

“There is no death; what seems so is transition.”

Aim.

That the child may look upon spring-time as Nature's Resurrection time; that he may receive impressions of the hidden meaning of the bursting into life of seeds and flowers.

1. Germination of seeds.

2. The plant as a whole; bulbs, roots, leaves, flowers.

“Consider the lilies how they grow.”

“Literally—learn the lesson of the lilies—the varied beauty of the wayside flower, the delicate carving of the tiny moss cup, are teachers for everyone who is allowed to live in their presence. . . . The Vision of God, that is the fulness of human life. He can be seen in the least thing which He has made by the weakest child who calls Him Father.”—WESTCOTT.

3. The spring flowers.

4. Shrubs, willows, etc., catkins.

MARCH.

2. PLANT LIFE.

Stories.

Introduce by the story of the creation of grass, flowers and trees (Gen. I. 11, 12).

The story of the seed growing secretly (Mark iv. 26-9).

„ „ Jairus' daughter (Mark v. 22-4, 35-43).

„ „ Shunamite's son (2 Kings iv. 8-37).

„ „ the triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Matt. xxi. 1-11; Luke xix. 29-40).

Repetition.

Psalm XIX.

Hymns.

1. For air and sunshine, pure and sweet.

2. Wonderful, Lord, are all Thy works

Thy great Name recalling

All their various voices raise

Speaking forth their Maker's praise

Wonderful, Lord, are all Thy works

Thy great Name recalling.

—CAREY BONNER.

Expression Work.

Model winter buds; pussy willows; bulbs, etc.

APRIL.

3. ANIMAL LIFE.

New Life in the Spring.

“The germination of a seed, the growth of a plant, the unfolding of a bud, the song of a bird, the love and mysteries of a bird’s nest, the evolution of a caterpillar into a butterfly—all these Froebel uses to quicken the intellectual and spiritual life of the child.”¹

N.B.—The dates of the Easter holidays being variable, the amount of work covered must be adapted accordingly.

¹1. Insect life—the dragon fly, butterfly, etc.

2. Water animals—frog—spawn development—tadpoles.

3. Bird life—the return of the swallow and migrant birds.

The nest-mending and making. Eggs and young birds.

APRIL.

3. ANIMAL LIFE.

Stories.

Introduce by the story of the creation of animals (Gen. 1. 20-25).

The story of the journey to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-35).

The story of Christ at the Lake of Galilee (John xxi. 1-14).

The story of Francis of Assisi and the birds.

The story of the Ascension (this can be taken in May if preferred) (Luke xxiv. 50-53; Acts 1. 9-12).

“Not lost, but gone before.”—“Parables from Nature”.

Expression Work.

Records in drawing of observations of the life of caterpillars, buds, birds' nests, etc. Drawing birds and their nests.

Let the child draw on a large sheet things that seem dead and yet have life.

Repetition.

Canticles II. (v. 11-12):—

For, lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth,
The time of the singing of birds is come,

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

Oh, to be in England now that April's there.—BROWNING.

MAY.

ANIMAL LIFE.—(*continued*).

Their service to us; our care for them.

“Every beast of the forest is mine.”

1. Lessons to be learned from :—
The bee, the ant, the butterfly.
2. Service rendered by the domestic animals.
The horse, the camel, the donkey.
3. Care of pets.
The dog, the cat, the rabbit,—the duty of regularity in feeding them.

God made all the creatures and gave them our love and our fear.

—BROWNING.

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

MAY.

ANIMAL LIFE—(*continued*).

Stories.

Story of the Good Shepherd (St. John x. 1-18).

Story of Rebecca at the well—camel (Gen. xxiv.).

Story of Black Beauty—horse.

Story of St. Bernard and the dogs.

The Open Gate (Mother Stories).

Story of Androcles and the lion, or any other stories of animals.

“A lesson of Faith.”—Mrs. GATTY’S “Parables from Nature”.

Hymns.

All things bright and beautiful.
(Omitting verse 3.)

Little lamb, who made thee.—BLAKE.

Repetition.

For every beast of the forest is mine,
And the cattle upon a thousand hills.
I know all the fowls of the mountains,
And the wild beasts of the fields are mine.
(Psalm L. 10-11.)

“Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? and not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not: ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Luke xii. 5-7).

Expression Work.

Draw children’s pets; illustrate the stories; model a hive, etc.

JUNE.

4. HUMAN LIFE.

“Each one of us is a child of God, cared for by His infinite love, with a work to do for Him, whatever our work may be: sacred not only in spirit, but in the body of clay which is to be kept pure for Him, with a life, not of this world only, and of a few brief years, but one that is spiritual and immortal.”

—E. S. TALBOT.

1. Conversation bringing out the idea :—

“Ye are of more value than many sparrows.”

Compare the child's powers with those of the animals
—the child can read, write, draw, best of all pray, and
learn about God, etc.

2. God's care for the individual.

JUNE.

4. HUMAN LIFE.

Stories.

- The story of the Creation of Man (Gen. i. 26-30).
God's care for Ishmael (Gen. xxi. 14-20).
" " " Joseph (Gen. xxxvii.).
" " " Moses (Exod. ii. 1-10).
" " " Elijah (the ravens) (1 Kings xvii. 1-7).
" " " St. Paul (the shipwreck) (Acts xxvii.).
" " " St. Peter (in prison) (Acts xii. 1-19).
" " " Elisha at Dotham (2 Kings vi. 8-23).
" " " Jacob and the ladder (Gen. xxvii. 43-xxviii.
5, 10-21).
" " " Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego (Dan. iii.).

Repetition.

Psalms xxiii., cxxi.

And the God that cared for Ishmael
Still looks down
On His children in the country
And the town.

And He hears their faintest whisper
When they pray,
And He gives them all their blessings
Every day.¹

Expression Work.

Free drawing in connexion with the stories.

¹ S. B. Macy, "In the Beginning," p. 134.

IV. THE CHILD'S RESPONSE TO THE FATHER'S
LOVING CARE.

JULY.

“God’s love and man’s response—this is the meaning of our life. ‘We love Him because He first loved us.’”

Let the teacher revise the lessons on the Father’s care in providing food, shelter, home, as a preparation for this month’s work.

1. By thanksgiving and Prayer.

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

—TENNYSON.

2. By helping the Father.

“God’s fellow-workers, working together with Him.”

“We are here to help God; we can love Him and help Him too.”

“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

“All service ranks the same with God.”

IV. THE CHILD'S RESPONSE TO THE FATHER'S
LOVING CARE.

JULY.

Stories.

Prayer.

The story of Daniel (Dan. vi.).

Praise.

The children in the Temple (Matt. xxi. 15, 16).

The angels' praise (Luke ii. 13-15).

The Boy and the Angel.—BROWNING.

Thanksgiving.

The ten lepers (Luke xvii. 11-19).

Service.

Christ in His home at Nazareth (Luke ii. 40, 51, 52).

The child Samuel (1 Sam. iii. 1-19).

Legend of St. Christopher.

The little captive maid (2 Kings v.).

Hymns.

Praise Him, praise Him.—“Child Songs,” 148.

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow.

Revise the repetition for the year.

Expression Work.

Free drawing in connexion with the stories.

YEAR II.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD REVEALED IN THE LIVES OF HIS SERVANTS.

Central Idea.

THE child between eight and nine is at an age when he eagerly absorbs ideals through the influence of personalities. The aim in this year is to illustrate ideals of character through a variety of stories of heroes and saints.

The stories are taken mostly from the Old Testament, for "the relations with God which we find mirrored in the Old Testament are the relations of a child-people with their Heavenly Father. They do appeal to the child; they awaken in him a response, not of the affections only, but of the intellect. They are an adequate and compelling force and lead him while yet a little child into like personal relations with God.

The ethical difficulties of some of the stories are not repugnant to him, the interest of the story does not centre in the indications of a low moral standard, but in that God-consciousness which is so marvellously the essential characteristic of the Old Testament from the first word to the last."

SEPTEMBER.

THE STORY OF JOSEPH.

Central Idea. The Guided Life.

Points to be brought out.

"It was not you that sent me here but God."

His trust in God—courage—patience in trouble—modesty in success—love to his brethren; all these virtues the children

will discover for themselves, if the stories are graphically told. "Temptation brought out in him a moral greatness and strength of piety unsurpassed by any of the patriarchs."

1. His life at home. Discuss tale-bearing (see page 8 App.) (Gen. xxxvii.).

2. His brothers at Dothan. Note Reuben's lack of moral courage. Try to describe the journey into Egypt from Joseph's point of view.

3. Life as a slave in Egypt (Gen. xxxix. 1-6). Contrast with living in tents.

4. His life in prison and the dreams (Gen. xxxix. 20-23, xl.).

5. Pharaoh's dream (Gen. xli.).

6. Joseph's promotion.

7. The famine.

8. Arrival of the brethren (Gen. xlii.).

9. The second visit (Gen. xliii.).

10. The plot (Gen. xliv.).

11. The reconciliation (Gen. xlv.).

12. Jacob's journey into Egypt (Gen. xlvi. 1-7, 28-34.).

13. His life in Egypt and death (Gen. xlvii.).

14. Death of Joseph (Gen. l.).

N.B.—"It is probable that Egypt at the time of Joseph was ruled by the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings. They were an Arab dynasty who invaded the land and ruled it from about 2200 B.C. to 1700 B.C." Cf. the Romans in Britain. Note Exod. i. 8. This king belonged to an Egyptian dynasty.

Expression Work.

Free drawing of incidents in Joseph's life. Egyptian chariots, etc. Models made by the children in paper, clay, and sand to illustrate pastoral life.

Repetition.

Psalm cv. 4, 17-22.

NOVEMBER.

THE STORY OF MOSES.

Connecting Link.

The death of Joseph and the growth of the Israelites into a great tribe.

N.B.—If possible the children should be shown the picture of the statue of Moses in the Vatican by Michael Angelo.

Points to be brought out.

The man who “after leaving all the wisdom Egypt had to offer, spent half a life-time in the silence of the desert: who returned to his enslaved countrymen as a deliverer with a new revelation; who led them in the wilderness, and taught them, and bore with their ignorance and lust and malice; who was so much greater than any of them that they could not understand him, and yet was ready to sacrifice his own life for their sake.”

Emphasize his generosity in refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, his chivalry in defending his oppressed brethren, and his utter unselfishness through all the weary desert journey (Heb. xi. 24-27).

1. The story of the ill-treatment of the Israelites by the new Pharaoh, who belonged to the new race of Kings (see note on Joseph).

(The Pharaoh of the oppression is supposed to be Rameses II; his mummy in the British Museum.)

Describe their work:—

- (i) Brick-making. Discuss with the children how bricks are made; and if possible take them to a brick kiln. Explain the hardships involved in making them in a hot country (Ex. v. 1-19).

N.B.—Excavations have recently been made in Egypt, bringing to light walls, the foundations of which are of bricks made of clay and straw; in the lower part of the walls the clay is mixed with stubble, the top bricks are of clay only.

- (ii) Building, e.g. pyramids.

- (iii) Service in the fields—canals—irrigation.

2. With this picture of the oppression in the children’s minds let them revise the story of the birth of Moses.

3. The education of Moses.

(a) In Egypt.

- (i) From his mother he would learn about Jehovah.

- (ii) From the Egyptians, their “wisdom,” reading, writing, astronomy, arithmetic, grammar and all that would be expected of a royal prince.

(b) In Midian.

There were other things he had to learn, patience, self-control (Exod. II. 11-25).

4. God's call to work (Exod. III.).

5. The Passover (Exod. XII. 21-42).

This lesson may be introduced by telling the children of some of the calamities which befell the Egyptians—the flies, locusts, or the hail, until at last Pharaoh's own son fell ill and died. How Pharaoh became frightened, and urged the Israelites to go (Exod. VIII., IX., X.).

6. The crossing of the Red Sea (Exod. XIII. 17-22, XIV.). (See Year V).

7. Hardships of the journey.

Lack of food (Exod. XVI. 1-4). Lack of water (Exod. XVII. 1-7).

8. The first battle (Exod. XVII.).

9. The story of Mount Sinai and the giving of the law (Exod. XIX., XX.).

Let the children learn the commandments and summarize them in their own words—"Not to put any God before their own God Jehovah"—"Not to worship any image of God"—"Not to use the name of Jehovah lightly in an oath"—"To honour their fathers and their mothers"—"Not to kill, nor steal, nor lie, nor take any one else's wife or husband away, nor want what other people had got".—LEE.

It would be a useful revision lesson for the teacher to tell the children that, hundreds of years afterwards, Christ gave a new commandment (John XIII. 34), and to show how this includes the last six, e.g. If we love people we are not likely to steal from them.

The new commandment "supersedes the old just because it includes them in a wider, deeper and more positive whole".

The more advanced ethical teaching of the commandments will be found on p. 1 App.

Moral teaching might be given at this age on:—

Reverence (Third Commandment).

Obedience (Fifth Commandment). Learn Eph. VI. 1.

"Contrast the home where all the children render willing obedience with the one in which they seek to

please themselves, or render grudging service and try to escape from command. Appeal to the children to take their part in making their home like Christ's home" (cf. Rom. xv. 2).

Kindness (Sixth Commandment).

Kindness to all, to idiots, stammerers: kindness to animals. Politeness. Thoughtfulness. Note the accidents due to scattered orange peel and other carelessness.

Honesty in little things (Eighth Commandment).

Truthfulness (Third and Ninth Commandment).

N.B.—The work of training children to be truthful is a work of peculiar difficulty and urgency, and needs sympathetic observation of the individual child. There seems to be a consensus of opinion among educationists on three points:—

(i) That imaginative children are given to romancing, which is not a moral fault.

(ii) That children can be frightened into lying, often by sudden questions.

(iii) It is generally best to follow Dr. Arnold's principle of always taking a boy's word.

Let the children understand that the truth may be withheld, as well as an untruth told.

10. The golden calf (Exod. xxxii. 1-6, 15-34).

11. The spies (Num. xiii. 1-2, 17-33, xiv. 1-5, 20-25).

12. The smiting of the rock (Num. xx. 1-13).

13. The death of Moses (Deut. xxxi. 1-6, xxxiv.).

Expression Work.

Pyramids in clay.

Pictures of Egypt, in sand.

Free drawing of the stories.

Show hieroglyphic writing.

DECEMBER.

THE STORY OF JOSHUA.

Points to be brought out.

His courage, energy, unselfishness. "Explain that courage is not being without fear but conquering it. St. Paul was very

brave yet see 1 Cor. ii. 5. . . . Courage is not only shown in facing physical danger but in meeting and conquering difficulty. . . . His energy. Note how often it is said 'Joshua rose up early in the morning' (Josh. iii. 1, vi. 12, vi. 15, vii. 16, viii. 10), cf. Mark i. 35.

"His unselfishness. A true soldier thinks of his country first, his comrades second, and of himself last. So Joshua is quite content with an obscure and unimportant village as his reward."—G. H. S. WALPOLE.

1. His plan of campaign (Joshua i. 1-11).
2. The crossing of the Jordan (Joshua iii.).
3. Gilgal (Joshua iv.).
4. The Vision (Joshua v. 13-15).
5. Life in an Eastern town. Describe its walls, gates, streets, people.
6. Capture of Jericho (Joshua vi. 1-21).
7. The defeat of Ai (Joshua vii.).
8. Sin of Achan.
9. Short summary of Joshua's last address. His death (Joshua xxiii. 1-8, xxiv. 14-33).

Expression Work.

Draw or model an Eastern city.
Illustrate the same in brushwork.

Repetition.

Joshua i. 5-9.
Joshua xxiv. 15-18.

JANUARY.

THE STORY OF GIDEON.

Gideon—always ready to obey, continually trusting God.

The time during which the Jews were ruled by Judges was a time of very great unrest. The people were very disorderly, every one doing what seemed good in his own eyes, and from without they were being attacked by the heathen whom they had only very incompletely conquered.

1. His call (Judges vi. 1-24).
2. His throwing down the altar of Baal (25-32).
3. The fleece (33-40).
4. His victory over the Midianites (vii.).

The children, even at this age, can appreciate the fact that the men who were chosen adopted an attitude in which they were much less likely to be surprised by the enemy.

THE STORY OF SAMUEL.

An Example of Obedience.

1. The story of Hannah (revision) (I Sam. i., II. 18-21).
2. Samuel's call. His obedience to God and Eli (I Sam. III.).
3. The battle and the death of Eli (I Sam. iv. 1-18).
4. The Ark (I Sam. v. 1-5).
5. Samuel anointing Saul (I Sam. ix., x.).
6. The rejection of Saul (I Sam. xv.).

Expression Work.

Free drawing in connexion with the stories.
Draw or model the ark.

FEBRUARY.

THE STORY OF DAVID.

An Example of Bravery and of Willingness to Forgive.

1. David, the shepherd boy (revision).
2. The anointing of David (I Sam. xvi. 1-13).
3. David and Goliath (I Sam. xvii.).
4. David's life with Saul and Jonathan (I Sam. xviii. 1-4 ; I Sam. xix. 1-8. Outline of chap. xx.)
5. David sparing Saul's life (I Sam. xxiv.).
6. David the king—his desire to build a temple, and his preparations for it (2 Sam. vii., I Chron. xxii. 1-16).

The following scenes from Solomon's life might be also taken here; they contain descriptions of Eastern life which strongly appeal to children.

1. Solomon's dream (I Kings iii. 5-15). Let the children discuss the requests the King might have made.

The Queen of Sheba (1 Kings x. 1-14).

3. The building of the temple—silently (1 Kings vi. 1-13 and verse 38).

Repetition.

Psalms xv., xxiii. (revision).

Expression Work.

Clay-modelling of sling and pebbles used by David. The sword of Goliath and spears of soldiers in the armies. "The shepherd's sling was made of goat-hair. The part for the stone was of a diamond shape with a small slit in the middle so that when a stone was pressed into it, it closed around like a bag."

MARCH.

THE STORY OF ELIJAH.

An Example of Courage in Standing Up for the Right.

1. The widow of Zarephath (1 Kings xvii. 8-16). Introduce by the story of 1 Kings xvii. 1-7.

2. Elijah and the widow's son (1 Kings xvii. 17-24).

3. Elijah and Ahab (1 Kings xviii. 1-19).

4. Elijah on Mount Carmel (1 Kings xviii. 20-40).

5. Elijah and the rain (revision) (1 Kings xviii. 41-end).

6. Elijah fleeing for his life (1 Kings xix. 1-8). Awaken children's sympathy for Elijah, tired out and ready to give up.

7. The still, small voice (1 Kings xix. 9-21). It would be well for the teacher to prepare by reading a description of Horeb—a wild, rocky desolate region.

8. Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings xxi.). (See page 80.)

9. The Translation of Elijah (2 Kings ii. 1-15).

Expression Work.

Model an Eastern cruse.

APRIL.

THE STORY OF ELISHA.

An Example of Kindness.

1. How Elisha helped the widow (2 Kings iv. 1-7).

2. Elisha and the Shunamite woman (2 Kings iv. 8-37).

3. Elisha and Naaman (2 Kings v. 1-19). Introduce by the story of "The Little Captive Maid".
4. Elisha at Dothan (2 Kings vi. 8-23).

Repetition.

Psalms xxxiv. 6-8.

Expression Work.

Draw the prophet's chamber. "In summer, booths or arbours of leaves and branches are put up as sleeping places for greater coolness at night. The upper room is the same in a permanent form. The room on the wall built for the man of God was meant to be a place of retirement where he could pray."

MAY.

THE STORY OF DANIEL.

An Example of Courage.

1. Daniel at the court of Babylon (Dan. i.).
2. Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. ii. 1-28, 47-49).
3. The fiery furnace (Dan. iii.).
4. The handwriting on the wall (Dan. v.).
5. Daniel in the lions' den (revision) (Dan. vi.).

Courage in bearing pain may be exemplified by the "Story of a Short Life" by Mrs. Ewing (in two or three lessons).

Note the motto "Laetus sorte mea" and mention the society for crippled children called the Guild of the Brave Poor Things.

THE STORY OF RUTH.

An Example of Unselfishness.

1. The story of Naomi (Ruth i.). In revision Learn Ruth i. 16.
2. The gleaning (Ruth ii.) noting especially verses 11 and 12 (cf. Lev. xxiii. 22; Deut. xxiv. 19).

JUNE.

Other Examples of Self-sacrifice.

The story of Florence Nightingale.

„ „ of Grace Darling.

„ „ of "The Women of Mumbles Head".

The story of Father Damien and the lepers.

„ „ of Wilberforce and the slave trade.

Some who have given up their lives to help little children.

Earl Shaftesbury.

Dr. Barnardo.

Dr. Muller.

Froebel.

N.B.—Other lives may suggest themselves as more appropriate.

Expression Work.

Free drawing in connexion with the stories.

JULY

THE STORY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

The Forerunner.

1. Zacharias and Elizabeth (St. Luke i. 5-23, 57-80).
Learn i. 76.
2. His life and preaching in the wilderness (St. Matt. iii.)
3. His imprisonment and death (St. Mark vi. 14-30); cf. Matt. xiv. 12.

Expression Work.

(a) Simple plan of Temple showing divisions and furniture. "Every morning at nine o'clock, and every afternoon at three, a priest entered the Holy Place to sprinkle the incense offering on the golden altar. One day during his week of attendance in the Temple, the lot fell upon Zacharias. So, in his white robes, with bare feet and covered head, he went slowly up through court after court, to the entrance of the Holy Place. There a bell rang, Zacharias disappeared within the sacred enclosure, separated from the Holy of Holies itself only by the splendid veil of partition."

(b) Free drawing.

(c) Modelling of castle of Machaerus.

NATIONAL SAINTS.

These lessons may be given here, or on the proper days as thought desirable.

30 *Suggestions for a Syllabus in Religious Teaching.*

St. George (legendary) an example of patriotism. The idea of their faults, of selfishness, greediness, laziness, disobedience, bad temper being dragons which they must fight, strongly appeals to young children.

St. Andrew (St. John 1. 35-42).

St. Patrick. The first missionary to Ireland. The legend of the shamrock.

St. David.

YEAR III.

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER.

THE STORY OF ABRAHAM.

An Example of Faith and Obedience.

“By faith Abraham . . . when he was called, obeyed . . . and he went out, not knowing whither he went” (Heb. xi. 8).

1. Abraham leaving home (Gen. XII. 1-9). (Introduce by revising p. 5.)
2. Abraham and Lot (Gen. XIII.).
3. How Abraham rescued Lot (Gen. XIV. 1, 2, 12-16, 21-24).
4. The sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. XXII. 1-19).

Other Men who obeyed the Call.

“By faith . . . they went out.”

Livingstone. ¹	(Africa).
Mackay. ²	(Uganda).
Patteson. ¹	(New Zealand).
Chalmers. ¹	(New Guinea).
Paton. ³	(New Hebrides).
Wilson.	(Fiji Islands).
Grenfell. ⁴	(Congo).
Grenfell. ⁵	(Labrador).
Hudson Taylor	(China).

¹ “Children’s Heroes,” T. C. and E. C. Jack. 1s.

² Hodder and Stoughton. 1s. 6d.

³ Hodder and Stoughton. 6d.

⁴ Pilgrim Press. 1s.

⁵ Partridge. 1s. 6d.

“Through faith . . . they wrought righteousness.”
Abraham Lincoln.¹

“As a lawyer, he never knowingly undertook a case in which justice was on the side of his opponent. That same inconvenient honesty, which prompted him in his storekeeping days to close the shop and go in search of a woman he had innocently defrauded of a few ounces of tea while weighing out her groceries, made it impossible for him to do his best with a poor case.

“He showed us how to love truth and yet be charitable : how to hate wrong and all oppression and yet not treasure one personal injury or insult.”—PHILLIPS BROOKS.

“Others had trial . . . of bonds and imprisonment.”
Bunyan. Judson (Burmah).

Let the children suggest others who have been imprisoned for conscience' sake, e.g. Joseph, Jeremiah, Daniel.

Repetition.

(Heb. XI. 8-10, 32-34, 36-40.)

Hymn.

He who would valiant be
'Gainst all disaster,
Let him in constancy
Follow the Master.
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.

Who so beset him round
With dismal stories,
Do but themselves confound—
His strength the more is.
No foe shall stay his might,
Though he with giants fight :
He will make good his right
To be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, Thou dost defend
Us with Thy Spirit,
We know we at the end
Shall life inherit.

¹“Children's Heroes,” T. C. and E. C. Jack. 18.

Then fancies flee away!
I'll fear not what men say!
I'll labour night and day
To be a pilgrim.—BUNYAN.

DECEMBER.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD AS REVEALED IN JESUS CHRIST.

“He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.”

Central Thought.

Having heard the stories of many lives, each of which exhibited some special beauty and strength of character, but also many weaknesses, the children may now hear the story of the perfect Life of Jesus Christ.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

1. The land where Jesus lived. Note that the Jews had not a king of their own. They were ruled by the Romans.

2. The angel's message (Luke i. 26-33, 38).

3. The visit to Elizabeth (Luke i. 39-56). Eighty miles journey. Let the children recall the story which Elizabeth would have to relate (Luke i.).

4. The story of the shepherds (Luke ii. 8-20).

N.B.—When the Christmas story is taken with older children the narrative of Luke ii. may be given. Note the census ordered by Cæsar Augustus. The children will be interested in a description of Bethlehém, as tourists now describe it. “From Jerusalem the road to the little town is uphill all the way, rising 2500 feet in 40 miles. The place is built on the Eastern slope of a water-shed, a part of Judea's table-land. It is 2700 feet above sea-level and the air is clear and dry. It stretches along the hill-side and from its highest part we can see to the east as far as to the Dead Sea, to the north the hills that hide Jerusalem. The main street is only a long and narrow lane often crowded with people. They wear the turban rather than the fez, and the women have a special local head dress and a peculiar cloak. The children go bare-footed and are in rags. You can never look down a Palestine street without seeing one at least of the half-wild street dogs.

At the east end of the town, there is the village square—filled as in the days of old with camels and donkeys, the latter loaded with firewood. There, is the oldest Greek Church in the world, ‘The Church of the Nativity,’ and there, is the Inn—a bare open place.”

Postcards of the Holy Land are useful as giving the children some idea of the Eastern houses.

Expression Work.

(1) The time will not be wasted if a week is spent in getting a clear picture of the Holy Land into the children’s minds. Let them realize that it is the same land where Joshua and Samuel and David dwelt. A relief map in paper pulp is very desirable and can be made with old copy-books or tissue paper soaked. If this is impossible have a sand model. It should show the hills (Mount Hermon 9000 feet high); the valley of the Jordan; the two lakes (the Dead Sea 1300 feet below sea-level); the sea-coast. The children should know the positions of Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem, and mark them with sticks or labels.

(2) Model an Eastern Inn.

A new Christmas hymn or carol should be learnt, and Christmas cards or mottoes can be illuminated, the idea of giving being still prominent.

Repetition.

St. Matthew 1. 12.

Hymn.

O little town of Bethlehem.

Carols.

JANUARY.

THE INFANCY AND EARLY LIFE OF JESUS.

1. The wise men (Matt. 11. 1-12).
2. The presentation in the temple (Luke 11. 22-39).
3. The flight into Egypt (Matt. 11. 13-23). 250 miles. Trace

the route and picture the journey and the return through Judea to Nazareth—the latter twenty miles from the Sea of Galilee and near the great caravan route from the East.

4. The home at Nazareth (Luke 11. 40).

Describe

(a) Jewish homes and villages.

(b) Jewish children, dress, school, games, of weddings, and funerals (Luke vii. 32).

N.B.—There may have been younger children in Christ's home.

5. The first Passover (Luke 11. 41-51).

Picture the journey.

(a) The early start.

(b) The noontide rest.

(c) Tents pitched at night.

N.B.—“From 12 to 3 p.m. is the time of greatest heat (Matt. xx. 12). The fierce rays strike down from above, the glare flashes up from the stony ground, the air quivers and the mountains have a flattened-down appearance under the heat-haze. Plants hang limp and drooping, birds cease to twitter in the branches, at times the cicadas or tree crickets make the silence startling by a pause in their deafening zee-zee chirping, and the shepherd gathers his flock around him under the shelter of a walnut-tree by the brook, or, under the shadow of a rock, goes to sleep with his reed flute in his hand. It is an hour that gives vividness and reality to many familiar phrases and allusions.”—MACKIE.

The Pilgrim Psalms were sung on this journey (Pss. cxx., cxxxiv.).

Note cxxii. 1, 3 and 4.

(d) Jerusalem in sight.

(e) The scenes in Jerusalem.

Illustrate by the first Passover in Egypt. Let the children tell the story which they will know.

(f) Christ in the Temple (Luke 11. 46). Note “hearing” = “listening”. “It is impossible to interpret this utterance as bearing any other meaning than that the Boy's mind had grasped the truth that He Himself was in a peculiar way related to God, as son to father, and that that

relationship made the house of God His natural 'resort.'—KNIGHT.

Note verse 51, "He lived as an obedient child at Nazareth".

6. The carpenter (St. Mark vi. 3).

(a) Carpenter's work now, e.g. making tables, chairs, etc.

(b) Carpenter's work then, yoke, plough, manger, chests.

"The townsfolk, the farmers, the shepherds, the children all knew him. He was 'the carpenter' to whom they went and whom they always found ready to fix what they brought. They had seen Him at work, bending over His tools from early morning till evening came. They knew that whatever He fixed was fixed well, and whatever He built would be strong."—PALMER.

Repetition.

Ps. cxxv. (one of the songs of Ascent).

Hymn.

In our work and in our play.

Expression Work.

1. Model Jerusalem—the hills and valley.
2. A rough plan of the Temple and its courts.
3. Model of an Eastern house showing door, outside staircase, roof, garden.

The above may be made from old cardboard boxes of suitable shape.

4. Model of Nazareth in sand, showing the hill above, houses, village street.

N.B.—Models of houses made as above may be arranged as a village.

FEBRUARY.

HOW JESUS WAS PREPARED FOR HIS WORK.

"He was nothing then that He is not now. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and neither things past, nor things present, nor things to come can separate us from His Love."—INGE.

1. The Baptism of Jesus.

(a) Introduce by letting the children tell what they already know about John the Baptist.

(b) Describe and picture the news of his preaching reaching Nazareth, Jesus leaving home, and His journey, across the Esdraelon valley, past Scythopolis and along the Jordan valley to near Jericho (the traditional site of His baptism), and finally reaching the outskirts of the crowd of pilgrims, which marked the presence of the Baptist.

(c) The Baptism itself (Matt. III. 13-17; Mark I. 9-11; John I. 29-34).

2. The temptation of Jesus (Mark I. 12-13).

Picture the scene, wild desolate rocky wilderness, where the wild beasts lived. Jesus was without food for a long time.

The stones in the wilderness were like the flat Eastern loaves. The thought came to His mind to make them into real loaves. But Christ refused. He came to live as we do.

He wanted very much to tell the people about His Father in Heaven. They had forgotten that the Father loved them. How was He to get them to listen to Him? If He threw Himself down from the Temple and was unhurt, every one would crowd round Him, but He knew that this was not the way in which He was to win the world.

The people were expecting a grand earthly King to conquer the Romans for them. But Christ's Kingdom was not to be of this world.

So the devil left him *for a time* (Luke IV. 13).

HIS WORK IN GALILEE.

1. How Jesus went back to Galilee and healed the nobleman's son (John IV. 46-54).

2. How Jesus calmed the storm (Mark. IV. 35-41; Luke VIII. 22-25).

3. How Jesus called His first disciples and St. Matthew (Matt. IV. 18-22, IX. 9). Publican = tax-gatherer.

4. How Jesus healed the sick.

38 *Suggestions for a Syllabus in Religious Teaching.*

- (a) Cleansed the leper (Matt. viii. 1-4). It is not advisable that a detailed description of leprosy should be given.
 - (b) Healed the centurion's servant (Matt. viii. 5-13).
 - (c) The man sick of the palsy¹ (Matt. ix. 1-8).
5. How Jesus was rejected at Nazareth (Luke iv. 16-30).

Repetition.

Isaiah LXI. 1-4, XXXV.

Expression Work.

- Draw fishing boats, nets, fish.
,, the centurion's helmet.
,, a plan of an Eastern house showing courtyard.
,, the village of Nazareth.

MARCH.

WHAT JESUS TAUGHT.

1. About God's love for each one.
 - (a) The parable of the lost sheep (Luke xv. 3-7).
 - (b) Parable of the prodigal son (Luke xv. 11-32).
2. About Himself.
 - (a) The story of the Good Shepherd (John x. 1-18).
 - (b) The story of the man born blind (John ix. 1-38).
3. About our duty to our neighbour and who he is.
 - (a) The unmerciful servant (Matt. xviii. 21-35).
 - (b) The good Samaritan (Luke x. 29-37).
4. About ourselves.
 - (a) Parable of the sower or the talents (Mark iv. 1-9; Matt. xxv. 14-28).
 - (b) The Pharisee and the publican (Luke xviii. 9-14).
5. About death.
 - (a) The raising of Lazarus; Christ was sent for whilst He was travelling (John xi. 1-44); or
 - (b) The raising of the widow's son at Nain (Luke vii. 11-17).

¹ The roof was probably that of the verandah, and was tiled. The tiles were taken up and the mud broken through.

N.B.—Children are often brought into contact with death; here they may be taught to look upon it as a sleep from which Christ will wake us.

Repetition.

“I am the Good Shepherd”. (John x. 14-16, 27-29).

Hymns.

There were ninety and nine,
The King of Love my Shepherd is.

Expression Work.

Draw ears of wheat and a cornfield.

Free Drawing of the sower, the good Samaritan and the prodigal son.

Model: a sheep-fold and sheep.

The shepherd's rod and staff.

The personal appearance of the Eastern shepherd has changed but little since Bible times, e.g. :—

(1) *Cloak.* “He still wraps himself in his large cloak of sheep-skin or thick material woven of wool, goat's hair or camel's hair. This protects him from cold and rain by day and is his blanket at night. The inner pouch in the breast is large enough to hold a new-born lamb or kid, when it has to be helped over rough places.”

(2) *Rod.* Hanging by his side or sheathed in a long narrow pouch is his oak club.

APRIL.

ON THE WAY TO JERUSALEM AND THE LAST SCENES.

Briefly describe the journey.

1. At Jericho.

(a) Bartimaeus (Luke XVIII. 35-43).

(b) Zacchaeus (Luke XIX. 1-10).

2. At Bethany.

(a) The home at Bethany (John XII. 1-10).

(b) The Supper.

3. The triumphal entry (Matt. xxi. 1-11 ; Mark xi. 1-10).
4. The preparations for the Supper (Matt. xxvi. 17-20).
5. In the upper room.
The washing of the disciples' feet (John xiii. 1-15).
Note the wearing of sandals. Not one of them was willing to wait on the others.
6. Last scenes.
 - (a) The arrest in the garden (John xviii. 1-9).
 - (b) The trial under Pilate (John xviii. 28-40 ; Mark xv. 1-15).
 - (c) The crucifixion, in outline.

Many think that it weakens the spiritual perception of a child to become too familiar with the details of the Passion when as yet he has no experience which will enable him to apprehend something of its meaning.

Repetition.

1 Peter ii. 21-25.

Hymn.

There is a green hill far away.

MAY.

STORIES OF THE RESURRECTION.

1. The story of the first Easter morning (Matt. xxviii. 1-15 ; Mark xvi. 1-11 ; John xx. 1-18).
 2. The journey to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-35).
 3. The appearance in the evening (Luke xxiv. 36-43).
 4. The appearance to St. Thomas (John xx. 24-29).
 5. The appearance on the Lake of Galilee (John xxi. 1-14).
 6. The story of the Ascension (Luke xxiv. 50-53 ; Acts i. 9-11).
 7. The last command (Matt. xxviii. 16-20 ; Luke xxiv. 47).
- In connexion with this give missionary stories. In these the teacher must guard against giving the children the idea that the loving Father will let any of His children perish through ignorance.

N.B.—In schools where the celebration of Empire Day is observed and during the week following, stories of missions

in our Empire should be chosen, e.g.: India, West Africa, Australia, etc.

[In older classes, questions like the drink traffic in Nigeria, the opium trade in China, may well be discussed.]

“THE CHILDREN’S SONG.”¹

*Land of our Birth, we pledge to thee
Our love and toil in the years to be ;
When we are grown and take our place,
As men and women with our race.*

Father in Heaven who lovest all,
Oh help Thy children when they call ;
That they may build from age to age,
An undefiled heritage.

Teach us to bear the yoke in youth,
With steadfastness and careful truth ;
That, in our time, Thy grace may give
The truth whereby the Nations live.

Teach us to rule ourselves alway,
Controlled and cleanly, night and day ;
That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice.

Teach us to look in all our ends,
On Thee for judge, and not our friends ;
That we, with Thee, may walk uncowed
By fear or favour of the crowd.

Teach us the Strength that cannot seek,
By deed or thought, to hurt the weak ;
That, under Thee, we may possess
Man’s strength to comfort man’s distress.

Teach us Delight in simple things,
And Mirth that has no bitter springs ;
Forgiveness free of evil done,
And Love to all men ’neath the sun !

*Land of our Birth, our faith, our pride,
For whose dear sake our fathers died ;
O Motherland, we pledge to thee
Head, heart, and hand through the years to be !*

—RUDYARD KIPLING.

¹ From “Puck of Pook’s Hill”. Inserted by kind permission of the author and of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.

JUNE.

PRAYER.

The teaching for this month is on prayer. No attempt has been made to divide it into separate lessons. The headings on the left side of the page are for clearness' sake, but in the child's mind the divisions will be found to run into each other. Some of the stories are new to the child, others will only need revising with special emphasis on the point it is desired to bring out.

For special teaching on the Lord's Prayer (see page 19 App.). If thought desirable, that teaching may be simplified for this year.

Introduction.

Talk on the picture of "The Angelus".

- A. *What Prayer is: Speaking to God.* A. The story of Daniel.
Daniel vi. Praying three times a day.
- "By communion with God His child becomes acquainted with Him," e.g. the children get to know others i.e. become friends: by speaking to them.
- B. *What we speak to Him about.* B.
- (1) What we want.
- (a) *For ourselves.* Help in lessons; to be good tempered, kind, and truthful. Forgiveness for faults. (Learn 1 John 1. 9.)
- (b) *For others.* We want to tell Him about other people. Our own families, the children in slums.
- Friends who are ill in body.
Friends who are ill in soul;
those who give way to drink.
For missionaries.
- . . . "More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of."
"Prayer is intrusted power."
"The nearest way to any heart is round by heaven."
- (2) *We thank Him for*
The things that make us happy,
draw suggestions: e.g. their homes.
- (a) Hezekiah. 2 Kings xix. 14-21, 32-37. Christ's example. Luke vi. 12, 13. Livingstone, Gordon, and any heroes.
- (b) St. Peter in prison (Acts xi.).
The paralytic man (Mark 11. 1-12).
Monica and St. Augustine.
Stories from the lives of "Pastor Hsi" and "Pandita Ramabai".
- The story of the sinking of the well in the life of Paton.
- (c) The story of the ten lepers (Luke xvii. 11-19).
- C. *We may speak to Him anywhere.* C. The story of Nehemiah (1-11. 8).

D. *Answers to Prayer.*

God answers *all* our prayers, but an answer may be "Yes" or "No". Illustrate this.

We do not try to change God's Will, but we tell Him what we want, and leave it to His Love and Wisdom to give or to refuse.

N.B.—Failure in teaching this is responsible for much bewilderment and agnosticism in later years.

D. The story of St. Paul's prayer.

- (1) His hard life of preaching (2 Cor. xi. 24-33).
- (2) What seemed to hinder his work (2 Cor. xii. 7).
- (3) His prayer, three times repeated (xii. 8).
- (4) The answer "My Grace is sufficient," etc. (xii. 9).

N.B.—Our Lord in the garden (Luke xxii. 39-46). "The answer to the prayer of God's own Son was not a change of the Father's will but the Son's."

Repetition.

Phil. iv. 4-8; 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

Expression Work.

It is suggested that each child should write down a morning and an evening prayer in his own words. Out of these the teacher may compile two forms of prayer which the children can learn and use at home.

E. *Duty of Prayer.*

"Men ought always to pray".

Discuss the word "Duty" with illustrations. Nelson, Wolfe. We must pray, because Jesus tells us to pray, and we must obey Him.

If we do not feel inclined to say our prayers, we must ask Him to help us.

The reasons for obedience are probably beyond the child of this age but "There is beyond the limits of this life, a destiny fulfilled in fellowship with God. It is the vision and the knowledge of God which is before us, and we are to be prepared for that. That is why so much is made to depend on prayer because one who in this life has not learned to pray must find himself an alien—as in a strange land in a world where the fruition is the Vision of God."—GORE.

JULY.

LIFE OF ST. PETER.

Some of the following incidents have been touched on earlier in the year. They are taken now from the point of view of St. Peter.

1. *The two brothers.*
 - (a) Introduce by reviewing home and school life in an Eastern village.
 - (b) A fisherman's work—mending nets; washing out boats; at night, fishing; the sudden squall.
2. Leaving home to hear the new prophet.
 - (a) The first sight of Jesus
 - (b) The new name
 } (John I. 35-42).
3. Some months later.
The miraculous draught of fishes (Luke v. 1-11).
4. The choosing of the twelve Apostles (Luke vi. 12-16).
5. The raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark v. 22-24, 35-43).
v. 38 (hired mourners, common in the East).
6. The disciples going out to preach by themselves (Mark vi. 7-13).
Note that these directions were temporary (cf. Luke xxii. 35, 36).
 - (a) The return (Luke ix. 10).
 - (b) Christ takes them across the lake to tell their story (Mark vi. 30-32).
7. The feeding of the five thousand (Matt. xiv. 13-21; Mark vi. 32-44; Luke ix. 12-17; John vi. 1-14).
8. The walking on the sea (Matt. xiv. 22-33).
9. At Caesarea Philippi (Mark viii. 27-33).
10. The dispute by the way (Mark ix. 33-37).
11. The question about forgiveness (Matt. xviii. 21-22).
"Seventy times seven" = an Eastern way of saying "always".
12. The incidents in the upper room.
 - (a) The washing of the disciples' feet (revision) (John xiii. 5-10).
 - (b) The betrayal foretold (Matt. xxvi. 20-25; John xiii. 21-30).
 - (c) Christ's warning (Luke xxii. 31-34; John xiii. 36-38).

13. The arrest (John XVIII. 10-11).
14. Peter's denial (John XVIII. 15-18, 25-27).
15. Easter morning (Mark XVI. 7; Luke XXIV. 12, 34; John XX. 1-10).
16. The work entrusted to him again (John XXI. 15-23).

Expression Work.

Draw a boat.

Let the children draw Eastern dress, the high priest's palace, and write the names of the twelve in groups of four.

Repetition.

1. Peter III. 8-14.

YEAR IV.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD AS REVEALED IN AN EARTHLY BROTHERHOOD.

IN presentation to the child of this age, stress to be laid rather on the brothers than the brotherhood. The teacher should compare the notes given here with those on the Acts in Year VII.

Maps to be used during lessons. St. Paul's journeys should be filled in on hectograph maps by each child as the lesson proceeds. The Bible in this year can be read by the children—the stories to be given by the teacher *first*. Suggestions for moral lessons will be found in the margin.

I. YE SHALL BE MY WITNESSES.

(a) The story of the Ascension (revision).

(b) "Go ye therefore into all the world" and make disciples of all the nations. Show a map of the world. Briefly describe the known world then, e.g. :—

(1) Britain (the child's own home).

(2) Rome, the height of civilization, with its beautiful buildings.

Conclusion.—The Acts (which the children are about to read) describes the adventures of the *Witnesses* of Jesus Christ in beginning to build up the Church.

N.B.—Modern scholarship has shown how thoroughly trustworthy a history of the years A.D. 30-60 is the record given in the Acts of the Apostles. "Direct touch with recorded facts alone explains it."—HARNACK.

II. WHO THEY WERE (ACTS 1. 13).

(a) The names and short description of these eleven men may be drawn from the children. "Unlearned and ignorant men." Majority were uneducated fishermen.

(b) How they spent the waiting time till the Power was given them.

(1) In prayer (Acts I. 14).

(2) In the choice of St. Matthias (Acts I. 15-26).

III. HOW THEY WERE EQUIPPED FOR THEIR WORK (ACTS II. 1-13).

(a) "Pentecost" = fifty.

The second of the three great feasts (Deut. XVI. 9, 10, 16).

But to many Jews it had become only a popular holiday.

(b) The COMING OF THE HOLY GHOST.

(c) The effect on the Apostles; they began to praise God.

(d) The effect on the crowd which gathered.

(i) The religious recognize it as a manifestation of God's power.

(ii) The holiday makers say "These men are drunk".

(e) St. Peter's explanation.

(i) Prophecy fulfilled (Acts II. 16).

(ii) Jesus of Nazareth alive (Acts II. 32).

(iii) He has sent this gift to the Apostles (Acts II. 33).

(iv) They must repent and be baptized, and then they too can have the gift (37-40).

IV. A DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW BROTHERHOOD.

(a) Its character.

The members were like one family (Acts II. 41-47).

(i) They loved each other.

(ii) They prayed together.

(iii) They met for the breaking of bread.

(iv) They sold their goods, and put the money into a common fund so that none of the poorer brothers should be in want (iv. 32-35).

(b) Name of brotherhood, the Church.

Child's idea of Church (a building), cf. the two meaning of "school," the building and the people in it.

V. SOME OF THE CHIEF WITNESSES.

ST. PETER.

- (1) Revision lesson on his life as recorded in the Gospels. See Year III.
- (2) Leader of the twelve since the Ascension.
- (3) Story of the healing of a lame man (Acts III. 1-26).

Kindness and Helpfulness.

At the end of the story it should be brought out that the best thing we can give to people is not money but personal service.

Not what we give, but what we share.
For the gift without the giver is bare.

—LOWELL.

- (4) Imprisonment and appearance before the Sanhedrin (Acts IV. 1-21). Note the change in the Apostle's character.
- (5) Second imprisonment and miraculous release (Acts V. 17-41).

Moral Courage.

- (a) We must obey GOD rather than man (29).
- (b) "Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the Name" (41).
- (6) Cornelius and the vision. "To the Christian there is nothing common or unclean."
 - (a) Cornelius (Acts X. 1-8).
 - (b) St. Peter's vision (Acts X. 9-16).
 - (c) Explanation (Acts X. 17-23).

N.B.—He stays with a tanner; tanners were looked down on by Jews. Their houses obliged to be ten cubits away from any others. A tanner was the last person a strict Jew would choose to stay with. But St. Peter is learning that in the Church all men are to be brothers.

- (d) Visit to Cornelius, a Roman officer (Acts X. 23-48). He too to be welcomed in the Church.
- (7) St. Peter in prison (Acts XII.).
- (8) Martyrdom. Legendary.

ST. STEPHEN.

- (1) Revise Lesson IV and note the busy lives of the Apostles (Acts vi. 1-10).
- (2) Choice of the seven—the laying on of hands—their work.
- (3) Arrest and trial before the Sanhedrin.
Charges. He had spoken against the Temple and Moses (11-15, vii. 51-56).

Forgiveness.

- (4) Martyrdom (Acts vii. 57-60).

ST. PHILIP.

- (1) The persecution consequent on Stephen's death and the flight from Jerusalem of all save the leaders (viii. 1-4).
- (2) Philip in Samaria preached to the whole town (Acts viii. 5-13).
- (3) Visit of the Apostles (14-17, 25)—the laying on of hands.
- (4) The desert journey and the Ethiopian (viii. 26-39).
"The spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." Like much else in the Acts, which emanates from the Palestinian Church, the language is cast in an Old Testament mould. Translated into prose the words of St. Luke may be taken to mean that Philip was urged by an impulse which came from the Holy Spirit to leave the Ethiopian directly after Baptism.
- (5) Settled down apparently at Cæsarea (viii. 40), and it is surmised that some twenty years later told all about those early times to the author of the Acts, who put the story into his book (Acts xxi. 8).

ST. PAUL.

(Roman name, Paul; Jewish name, Saul.)

The first and greatest missionary (see Year VII).

1. His boyhood at Tarsus, and education.

Studies religion at Jerusalem, very clever, keen about his own religion (Gal. i. 14), and proud of his own favoured nation.

2. Angry at Stephen's new teaching.

C.

Persecutor "haling men and women to prison, compelling them to blaspheme" (Acts viii. 3).

3. Conversion (Acts ix. 1-30).

4. Baptism and outline of his life for the next twelve years.

(a) Witness and preaching not received.

(b) Alone in Arabia (Gal. i. 17).

(c) At home in Tarsus.

FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY WITH BARNABAS.

Mark goes as their attendant; "he was an extra hand taken by Barnabas, and sent, on their own responsibility".

1. The start. Solemn ordination. Journey to nearest port.

Sail to Salamis, preaching tour (Acts xiii. 1-5).

2. Antioch in Pisidia, now a heap of ruins, was then a military centre in the height of its power; 3600 feet above the sea. There St. Paul stayed from two to six months, probably because he was ill; possibly with ophthalmia or malarial fever (Gal. iv. 13).

Give the story. Acts xiii. 14-16.

(a) Jewish synagogue. Description. Presence of strangers. Sermon.

(b) Next Sabbath. Whole city gathered. Riot. Departure (Acts xiii. 42-52).

3. Lystra in Lycaonia, i.e. wolf-land, separated from the rest of the world by high mountains—the only place where St. Paul could not be understood in Greek (verse 11).

The story of the cripple (Acts xiv. 6-20).

Evidence of the worship of these gods in Lycaonia has been recently given, by the discovery, in the neighbourhood of Lystra, of an altar dedicated to Jupiter and Mercury.

4. Return journey, traced on map (21-28).

5. Picture work done on the way back appointing elders to look after the new converts. Revise the whole journey by picturing the arrival at Antioch and the meeting of the Church, called at to once hear their report. Let the children tell some of the things which St. Paul and St. Barnabas would have to relate.

SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

Date probably the spring of A.D. 50. Picture Acts xv. 35-40.

1. St. Paul starts off again.

Why? No posts to bring him news from his lately made friends of "how they fare". Even those left in charge of churches, had only had a few weeks' training.

Let the children discuss the reason for his new companion (verses 37, 40).

2. Journey by land. On the way Timothy allowed to come too. Let the children trace journey through Syria, Cilicia, to the Galatian Churches of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch; thence by Mysia to Troas. St. Paul "was led across Asia, from the extreme south-east, to the extreme north-west, and yet was prevented from preaching in it". The "Spirit of Jesus" guided them.

(Asia = the Roman province, the boundaries of which varied from year to year.)

3. In the autumn Paul, Silas, and Timothy arrived at the seaport Troas, Paul not knowing where he was to go next. He was probably ill, obliged to consult a doctor. Whom do we find at Troas? St. Luke, a doctor from Philippi. Wonderful results happened from what appeared outwardly a chance meeting (Acts xvi. 6-8). Note "they," verse 8, becomes "we," verse 10.

4. The vision at night (9-12). The missionary call. Paul eager to depart. It must have been a relief to him when Luke possibly said, "I will leave my work and go with you," for "the physician was acquainted with the roads, the cities and the people, and would make it easier to begin the work". So the four, after little more than a day's journey, landed in Europe, at the Roman military station of Philippi in Macedonia.

5. Philippi was a Roman colony. "London was a Roman colony, so was Lincoln, which keeps the trace of this fact in its name; as also Colne."¹

At Philippi, Octavius and Anthony had defeated Brutus and Cassius. Many discharged Roman veterans among the inhabitants of Philippi. Few Jews. No synagogue.

Gathering of women by river-side on Sabbath day (xvi. 13).

Lydia, a "seller of purple," the costliest dye in the world (Acts xvi. 14-15). St. Paul goes to stay with Lydia.

The insane girl healed. } Acts xvi. 16-40.
The story of the jailor. }

¹ "Addresses on the Acts of the Apostles," E. W. Benson, p. 379.

N.B.—"Being Romans." Roman citizenship was obtained:—

By individuals :

- (i) by birth.
- (ii) as a reward for service.
- (iii) by purchase.

Its privileges were :

- (i) The right to appeal to the Emperor.
- (ii) Freedom from punishments such as scourging, and bonds, and crucifixion.

Describe shortly St. Paul and Silas walking for 100 miles on the great Roman Road, the Via Egnatia. St. Paul weakened by what he had gone through. At last he sees a beautiful city backed by snow-clad mountains where he decides to stay.

6. Adventures at Thessalonica and at Berea. The latter a quiet little country place, thirty miles off the main road (Acts xvii. 1-15).

7. Athens (16-34).

(a) Description of the city.

"At this date Athens was still the intellectual and artistic capital of the world. It must have been full of idols and altars and temples, a university town; in it many learned men, professors, students" (21).

(b) St. Paul's speech.

(c) Few converts made.

8. Corinth. Commercial city (for 18 months) (xviii. 1-22).

(a) Alone and no money. Meets Priscilla and Aquila. They work together and he tells them about Christ.

(b) Silas and Timothy come with money from Philippi.

(c) They find St. Paul "wholly absorbed in teaching" on Sabbath days in the synagogue.

(d) Scene in synagogue and results.

(e) The vision.

(f) The return journey.

Route. Discuss the effect of weather on travelling in those days. Let children trace route across Ægean Sea to Ephesus, where his friends are left. Cæsarea and Jerusalem. Antioch.

THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

Following the Acts of the Apostles we usually speak of three missionary journeys but to St. Paul the second and third were all one, though he did return to Antioch for a short visit.

1. Arrival of Timothy.

(a) He brings bad news from the Churches in Galatia (Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, etc.).

(b) St. Paul writes a letter.

It is generally held that "the Epistle to the Galatians was written just as he was starting on his Third Missionary Journey".—RAMSAY.

(c) Decides to follow it up himself.

2. Route on map.

Galatia and Phrygia to Ephesus (Acts xviii. 23).

3. Story of the two years at Ephesus (xix. 8-41).

(a) Capital of the Roman province. Its wonderful temple.

(b) Teaching in the synagogue, then in a lecture room.

(c) The riot and forced departure.

JOURNEY BACK TO JERUSALEM.

1. Object.

(a) To keep the feast of Pentecost there.

(b) To carry there a collection from the Gentile Churches to the poor Jews (Rom xv. 25-26). They were willing to send money to people they had not seen. This was quite a new idea due to Christianity (cf. Mansion House Funds now).

(1) St. Paul's way of raising money. Cf. modern ways—entertainments, etc. (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2).

(2) How the money was to get to Jerusalem. (1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4).

2. Alternative routes to Syria see Map (xx. 1-17).

(a) From Corinth straight by sea. This abandoned on account of plot discovered to murder him; with a shipload of hostile Jews this would have been easy to effect.

(b) Round by Troas where he met the delegates and down the Ægean. "The ship evidently stopped every evening, the reason lies in the wind, which in the

Ægean during the summer generally blows from the north, beginning at a very early hour in the morning, in the afternoon dies away, at sunset there is a dead calm, and thereafter a gentle south wind arises and blows during the night."

3. Stops at Miletus (xx. 17-38).
 - (a) Presbyters summoned hastily.
 - (b) Gathering on the shore.
 - (c) St. Paul's farewell.
 - (1) Reminds them how hard he had worked.
 - (2) Bonds and affliction coming.
 - (3) "He holds" not his life dear.
 - (4) God will take care of them when he is gone.
 - (5) The words of the Lord Jesus (v. 35).
 - (6) The scene on the shore.
4. At Tyre a week.
5. Cæsarea at Philip's house. (See p. 49.)

AT JERUSALEM. (Seven days.)

N.B.—The speeches should be given shortly generally in the teacher's own words.

1. Friendly reception (xxi. 17-19).
2. Seized and beaten by a hostile mob (Trophimus: xxi. 27-31).

Inscription on stone found 1871. "No man of another nation to enter within the fence and enclosure round the Temple and whoever is caught will have himself to blame that his death ensues."

3. Rescued by Roman soldiers who poured down from the castle of Antonio. The mob listened to the speech until the word "Gentiles" mentioned (xxi. 32-xxii. 21).
4. Second riot—threatened with scourging—escaped by pleading Roman citizenship (22-29).
5. Trial before the Sanhedrin; contrast St. Paul's bearing with Our Lord's (xxii. 30, xxiii. 1-10).
6. The departure at midnight; start to Cæsarea, sixty-four miles. Why? Another plot to murder him (11-32).

AT CÆSAREA. (Two years; xxii. 23, xxvi.)

Fine Roman seaport and garrison town (cf. Plymouth).

1. Trial under Felix.
 - (a) Charges (xxiv. 5, 6).
 - (b) Felix and Drusilla hear with interest but will not let him go because :—(24-27).
 - (i) They hope for bribes.
 - (ii) They were anxious to please the Jews.
2. Trial under Festus.
 - (a) Plot to kill St. Paul frustrated (xxv. 1-15).
 - (b) Appeal to Cæsar allowed (xxv. 6-12).
 - (c) Interview with Agrippa and Bernice (xxvi. 24-32).

VOYAGE TO ROME. (August 59 A.D.)

The most detailed account of an ancient voyage which we possess.

St. Luke, who writes it, possibly allowed to go as St. Paul's slave. A convoy of condemned prisoners were on board, probably to take part in gladiatorial shows and to be thrown to the lions; also Julius of the Emperor's bodyguard who was in charge.

1. Cæsarea to Myra—in coasting ship (xxvii. 1-5).
2. Myra to Fairhaven (6-8).
 - (a) Prisoners transferred at Myra to a large corn ship from Egypt (the Canada of the Roman world).
 - (b) Meeting to decide where to winter (9-12).
(N.B.—Navigation impossible from 14 September to 11 November.) St. Paul has already been shipwrecked three times and advises them to stop at Fairhaven, but his advice rejected.
3. The shipwreck (xxvii. 13-44).
 - (a) The rest decide to make for a better harbour. They start and the vessel is struck by a north-east squall and blown out to sea. Only one clumsy sail; they are in great danger of foundering in open sea or of being blown on the quicksands of Africa. St. Luke helps to haul in the boat (v. 16).
 - (b) Round Cauda—calmer sea makes it possible to hold the ship together with ropes. Ship drifts hopelessly, tables, benches, chests, etc., thrown out, all hope given up. St. Paul encourages his fellow-passengers and on the 14th day, they hear the breakers off Malta. All land safely.

- N.B.*—Presence of mind and common-sense; cf. fire panics.
4. The stay at Malta (for three months) (xxviii. 1-10). Note Barbarian means not Roman. Malta now an outpost of the British Empire.
 5. The coming to Rome (11-16).
 - (a) Sailed in February in "The Twin Brothers," another wheat ship; via Syracuse, and Rhegium, through the Straits of Messina (Scylla and Charybdis).
 - (b) Landed at Puteoli, beautiful harbour near Naples. A few miles off were Pompeii and Herculaneum—which were destroyed thirteen years later.

St. Paul's depression:—

 - (i) Reaction after strain of the voyage.
 - (ii) About to reach Rome at last, the great desire of his life, but, as a prisoner.
 - (c) Thence along the Appian Way, one of the great Roman highways; paved, milestones, bordered with cypress trees, statues at intervals. At Forum Appi (forty miles from Rome) a party of Christians met him, and another band ten miles further on (Acts xxviii. 15).
 6. Rome. Describe. Show pictures (postcards) of Colosseum, Forum, etc (17-31).

ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES.

N.B.—If preferred the Epistles can be taken in Year VII, or one or two only here touched on.

In these lessons the teacher's aim should be to leave the impression for future years that these are real and interesting letters written in the first century to real people living in places we can find in the map.

Cf. child's experience of any letters (recent) received at home from relations or friends in Canada, India, Africa, etc. Bring if possible foreign envelopes as specimens. Draw a roll.

Thirteen Letters Divided into Four Groups.

A. First group: 1 and 2 Thessalonians (A.D. 52 or 53).

1. Thessalonians.

Let the teacher prepare by reading Acts xvii. 1-10 and the first Epistle straight through. Revise visit to Thessalonica (see map).

- (a) Picture St. Paul's arrival; 100 miles' walk from Philippi, suffering from the effects of the Roman

beating. The three months' stay—preaching and teaching. Sudden departure—caused by enemies stirring up the people and charging him with disloyalty to the Emperor.

- (b) At Athens he is afraid the Thessalonians will forget his teaching. He cannot go back to them (the magistrates have given their word that he will stay away), but longs to know how they are and sends Timothy, the latter at last returns to him (at Corinth) with good news. They are standing firm and trying to do what he told them. St. Paul writes to them to say how glad he is. Imagine the receipt of St. Paul's letter by the Thessalonians. Dramatize the scene, and let one of the children be the messenger and bring in the letter. Read Chapter I, putting the words in modern language when necessary (II. 1, 2, 9, 17, III. 2, 5, 6, IV. 9-11, V. 15-18, 25-28).

B. Second group of Epistles: Galatians; 1. and II. Corinthians; Romans.

Let the children find the district and towns on the map, and tell them that they will understand these four letters better when they are older. But there are parts they may learn now and find interesting.

1. *Galatians.*

- (a) The central part of Asia Minor is a vast tableland, between 2000 and 4000 feet above the level of the sea. In the north-east part is Galatia; from the south this rude and uninviting province could only be approached by crossing the snowy range of Mount Taurus. The most accessible of its passes, the Cilician Gates, is eighty miles in length and breaks through the range between mountains of 10,000 feet. Its narrow gorges covered with pines and oak. Crouching in these black trackless woods were the wild Isaurian and Pisidian robbers.
- (b) They were a warm-hearted, impressionable people. St. Paul had taken their hearts by storm; there is nothing they would not have given him.
- (c) Later, he hears they have forgotten what he said and have accepted other teaching, so he writes a letter.

(d) Read Gal. i. 1, 2, 6. "My little children, I am perplexed about you" (iv. 20, vi, 17). Explain what St. Paul had gone through for the sake of the Gospel.

2. I. *Corinthians.*

(a) Describe Corinth. What would a tourist now see? A hill behind, 2000 feet high—the rocky shelf beneath desolate. Once there were 400,000 inhabitants, two harbours (see map). The Venice of the then world; sailors, merchants, slaves, passing from harbour to harbour carrying cargoes across or hauling ships. Describe the Isthmian games—the prize—a wreath of laurel leaves.

(b) St. Paul there two years (Acts xviii. 1-17).

The letter is an answer to some questions asked about various difficulties; some members very keen on their rights (1 Cor. ix. 24-26). If thought desirable 1 Cor. xiii. can be read or learnt.

3. II. *Corinthians.*

Some said St. Paul was not really an Apostle. See his answer (2 Cor. xi. 24-27).

4. *Romans.*

(a) Messenger—a woman. Phoebe from Cenchrea, the port of Corinth.

(b) Revise description of Rome and remind the children how St. Paul longed to get there (Rom. i. 7, 8, 13).

(c) Some of the letter might be learnt: Rom. xii. 9-21 is suggested.

C. Third group: Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and Ephesians, all written from prison.

Recall the story of Acts xxviii. "Hired house" = a floor or a portion of a floor in one of those big boarding-houses which have always been a feature of Rome. Here he lived, chained to a soldier, but free to think, to write (mostly dictation) (cf. Col. iv. 18), to speak; his friends might visit him, and those who wished to hear him talk, might assemble.

Cf. "Stone walls do not a prison make," and Bunyan's work in prison.

1. *Philippians.*

(a) Why the letter written.

Picture how one day a visitor, Epaphroditus, ar-

rived, bringing money for the fourth time, from the town of Philippi. See map. Let the children think—who could have sent it?—the jailor, Lydia, etc. Letter of thanks delayed; why? Messenger ill. On his recovery it is sent.

- (b) Letter. The Philippians not to be discouraged.
- (i) He feels happy whenever he thinks of them (i. 3, 4-61).
 - (ii) They need not worry about his not being free; his work is not stopped. He has a great opportunity of preaching through all the vast barracks of the household troops (i. 12-13).
 - (iii) He may be released or he may have his head cut off. If he loses his life, he sometimes thinks how glad he will be to be always with Jesus "for it is very far better". If the former, he will be able to teach them a little longer. He does not know which he would choose; he is happy whatever happens.
 - (iv) Repetition (Phil. iv. 4-10).

2. *Philemon* (a private letter to a friend at Colosse).

- (a) Why the letter was written.

Courtesy.

Onesimus, slave of Philemon, a friend of St. Paul, robbed his master and ran away to Rome; he finds his way to St. Paul with his sad story and turns over a new leaf. St. Paul finds him very useful but feels he must not keep him. Let the children discuss what was the best thing to do. Onesimus must go back (800 miles) and confess his fault. To make things easier St. Paul gives him a letter (a slave in those days could be tortured or beaten to death).

- (b) The letter.
- (1) A request, not a command, though St. Paul was an old man and Philemon owes much to him. Discuss "tact". A right thing may be done in a wrong way.
 - (2) Onesimus is a Christian now and Christians are all brothers.

- (3) He asks Philemon to prepare him a lodging for he hopes to visit him. He asks it as a favour.

3. *Ephesians.*

- (a) Addressed to the saints which are (in Ephesus); early MSS. omit the bracketed words. Probably a circular letter. Ephesus the capital of the Roman province received it first, then it was sent on to smaller towns.
- (b) Central idea of the Epistle. The new family to which all nations might belong.

Obedience, consideration for others.

- (c) Special messages to children and slaves (vi. 1).
- (d) Description of a Christian soldier. Note Paul was chained to one.

D. Fourth group of Epistles: 1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy.

From these we get the only account of the last years of St. Paul's life. According to tradition he was tried, acquitted, and for some two years was a free man; he may have gone to Spain, to see Philemon at Colosse; to Ephesus, to Crete.

1. II. *Timothy.*

Endurance.

- (a) Vivid description of second imprisonment—"a fireless cell, and it can be bitterly cold in Rome in winter"; he asks for his cloak, his garments being threadbare. His case has come on for a first hearing and he has been remanded, he has had no friends to stand by him. He is weary, no new thoughts in his letter. "Do try hard to come to me—come soon, I am very lonely; for Demas hath abandoned me, he clung to the present world. . . . Luke is with me—none beside." (Free translation.)¹ (Cf. Prov. XVII. 17.)
- (b) Knows the end is near. "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith."

According to tradition, he was beheaded three miles from Rome on the Ostian Way. An inscription on the tomb of fourth century date.

¹ "The Letters of St. Paul," A. S. Way, p. 222.

YEARS V, VI, VII.

THE HISTORY OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE.

HINTS TO THE TEACHER.

Reading, etc.—Teachers are strongly recommended to make use of the guides to the Egyptian and Assyrian Collections in the British Museum (see book list). They are full of pictures which can be used to illustrate lessons.

For general reading—Driver's Genesis, or the Century Bible Genesis, Exodus, etc., or Hastings' Dictionary will be useful.

Bird's "Joseph the Dreamer" is valuable for detailed descriptions of Eastern life.

The Plan.—No attempt is made in these three years to cover the whole of the Bible—but to give the pupil a connected, coherent view of the whole; so that the idea of *development* may be grasped. Some parts also have been taken more fully in other years.

The earliest civilized people of whom we have any records are found settled by rivers; e.g. Euphrates, Nile.

We cannot tell how many years of development lie behind the civilization of the Euphrates valley, but from what we may call contemporary documents (*alias* clay tablets), we can study the religious history of these people, "this early chapter in the Divine Revelation; the later culmination of which is recorded in the Old Testament".

Some time before 4000 B.C. a Mongolian race called the *Accadian* (compare Gen. x. 10) inhabited that region. They were not united, but lived in cities and formed a number of small states.

Soon after 4000 B.C. the *Semites*, who were a nomad tribe,

invaded their country, and about 3500 B.C. Sargon founded the first Semitic empire, and made the city of Accad his capital. The conqueror adopted the writing and religious ideas of the Accadians; and it is from them that we get the Assyrian traditions of the Creation and the Flood.

From the first, men believed in Powers outside themselves, with whom they could hold communication (prayer), and to whom they built temples and offered sacrifices (worship).

I. THE CHALDEANS.

(a) *What they were like.*

A people who lived long ago in Asia, near a big river, the Euphrates (see map), could make bricks and houses and lived in cities, divided their time into seven days, taught themselves arithmetic and geometry.

Describe cuneiform writing, and the libraries of clay tablets.

(b) *Their religion.*

They did not realize that there was only one God, they imagined that there were many gods, e.g. the Sun God, who made the harvest flourish, the Moon God, who guided their caravan across the desert by night; those who lived near the sea (Persian Gulf) worshipped the Sea God, and each city state had a different god.

(c) *Their laws.*

When they became united into one nation, laws were needed to regulate transactions with each other.

Give the story of the wonderful king Hammurabi, about 2500 B.C., who compiled a code. A tablet has been dug up on which is drawn a picture of the Sun God giving the laws of Hammurabi, also tablets on which are written their ideas of how the world was made, called Creation tablets.¹ (Pictures to be shown.)

II. THE EGYPTIANS.

(a) *What they were like.*

A people who lived in Africa by another great

¹ See "Simple Guides to Christian Knowledge," "The Early Story of Israel." 1s. net. Longmans.

river (see map). Wonderful builders and painters. Describe and draw the Sphinx, the pyramids. Thousands of men were employed for twenty years to build one pyramid. They wrote on papyrus, not clay, and were not interested in laws like the Chaldeans.

(b) *Their religion.*

They too worshipped many gods and felt they could speak to them. Prayers written on papyrus are extant. But what interested them most was what happened when the soul left this world; they were quite sure that it did not die and that there was another world, also that the other life somehow depended on how a man lived here. The mummies and pyramids were the expression of these ideas. Pictures have been found of the gods weighing a man's heart before he was permitted to enter the doors of the next world.¹ Give the story of Aknaton.

N.B.—The religions of Babylonia and Egypt ceased to grow, that is, they did not seem able to understand any new or higher thoughts about God, and no other great king arose after Hammurabi. From Arabia and Babylonia came another tribe of people who crossed the river (cf. Joshua xxiv. v. 2, 3), and came by slow stages into the land of Canaan. Let the children notice that the land of the Hebrews lay between the great empires of Assyria and Egypt, the great trade route (cf. Gen. xxvii. 28), which had a sea outlet in Phœnicia, crossing the plain of Esdraelon. (See map.)

“Always was God ready to reveal but He could not do so until man could understand. Revelation or discovery is neither in God's giving nor in man's receiving, but in the two together. It comes to pass whenever God's Image within recognizes God's Truth without.” Truth is always there, but is only gradually recognized, e.g. electricity, in the nineteenth century only, have men learnt to use it. “Every truth is new that moment, when any one sees it to be true.”

¹ See “Early Story of Israel”.

III. THE HEBREWS.

(a) *What they were like.*

They were shepherds, had flocks and herds. Draw out children's own knowledge of the characteristics and appearances of Jews.

(b) *Their religion.*

They brought with them many of the Chaldean ideas and stories of how the world was made, the offering of sacrifices, even of their children (cf. the offering of Isaac). But to some individuals of this nation came the wonderful new idea that they must worship one God; Jehovah or Yahve, and that He cared for them; that their God was a good God and wanted more from them than sacrifices; He expected His people to be good too.

At first they thought that other nations were under the care of other gods; e.g. a war between the Israelites and the Philistines was a war between Jehovah and Dagon, and only slowly did their best men realize that there *were* no other gods.

Give illustration of this. Not "There is no other god but Me," but "*Thou* shalt have no other god but Me".

The bulk of the nation never learnt the further truth that Jehovah cared not for them only, but for all the nations of the earth.

It would be well to arouse a feeling of interest and expectation in the minds of the children at the thought that in the Old Testament they are going to study a record of how God gradually trained this wonderful nation through its judges, kings and prophets to be His witness to the world.

MOSES.

N.B.—The book of Exodus is composed of three documents of different ages which accounts for the fact that we get some stories twice over (e.g. ch. XXIV. 9-11; ch. XXIV. 3-8, 12-15).

I. HIS WORK.

1. To make a nation of slaves into a free people. Discuss the character which slavery produced in them. They were:—

- (a) Always grumbling; "nothing but their food interested them."
 - (b) Without initiative, unable to do things for themselves.
 - (c) Without any idea of work for its own sake, or of doing things unless they were obliged.
2. To teach them about God and His will for them. They had no true idea of Him, or knowledge that He really cared for them.
- II. HOW HE WAS FITTED FOR THE WORK (See Exod. II. 11-25).
- 1. In Egypt (Acts VII. 20-30). See p. 22.
 - 2. In Midian. Picture shepherd life in olden times. There he learnt distrust of self; had time to think; and himself learnt to know God. "Forty" is used in the Bible as a round number. Forty years probably = a generation. Dates were not accurately noted as in modern history.
 - 3. By direct call. The burning bush (Exodus III.). "The sense of vocation is the deepest secret of the lives of the greatest leaders, early and late. The call of a need and the call of the crowd are both inspiring, but it is not until there is added to them, or heard through them, the call of God that the leader is fully equipped to achieve."¹

N.B.—We must beware of thinking that Moses necessarily taught the people, or himself received, a full revelation of God's nature and character. To us the words: "Thou shalt have no other gods but Me," of course mean that none other God is possible or conceivable. But it cannot be denied that they might mean "Thou, Israel, shalt have none other gods but Me, whatever other nations may have". "Even if we could suppose that Moses himself was ages in advance of his time, it is in the last degree improbable that the whole nation could have been lifted all at once to the high conception of pure monotheism."—A. H. McNEILE.

III. HOW THE WORK WAS DONE.

- 1. The Exodus (Exod. X., XI.).
 - (a) Pharaoh and the plagues. Take the story in outline giving one lesson or at most two, on the plagues.

¹ Brent, "Leadership," p. 189.

Every time we know the right and fail to do it, it makes it more difficult to do the right next time. Or, in other words, our hearts are hardened. This is one of God's laws, and we could express it, by saying that He hardens our hearts.

(Ps. xcvi. 8.) Moses felt that these natural calamities should be explained as signs of God's power and anger.

"Each of the plagues, except the tenth is an extreme example of some distress which is incidental to Egypt," e.g. sandstorms, locusts, etc.

(b) The Passover (Exod. xii. 21-36).

(c) The crossing of the Red Sea (Exod. xiv. ; Exod. xv. 1-21. (A war song of triumph.)

N.B.—The spring tide aided by the strong east wind would account for the temporary drying up of the sea-floor; impress the point of the courage of Moses in encouraging his people to attempt a crossing when they did not know how soon the waters would return.

2. In the wilderness.

(a) A short outline of the journey to Sinai (Exod. xv. 22-25, xvi. 1-5, 22-31, xvii.).

(b) The giving of the law (Exod. xix.).

(i) The scene—the people below.

(ii) Moses forty days on the Mount "talking with God". When he came down he knew God's will and wrote it down for the people.

(iii) His face shone. Discuss "expression" with children and bring out that a child who is continually looking cross gets a "gloomy" expression, and a happy child gets a "sunny" expression. So the effect of wonderful thoughts of God and talking with (i.e. praying to) Him for a long time showed in Moses' face when he came down. "The soul shows through the body."

(c) The Tabernacle or Tent of meeting—where Moses went to talk with God (Exod. xxxiii. 7-11).

- (d) The calf (Exod. xxxii. 1-6, 15-35). Contrast the characters of Moses and Aaron. Note how Aaron shirked his responsibility. "There came out this calf."
- (e) Incidents on the journey. The appointment of the elders (cf. Num. xii. 3). The quails (Num. xi. 4-17, 23-35). Migratory birds twice a year fly low in vast flocks across Arabia. The plague—the people made themselves ill with over-eating. The children should understand that when the Bible says "God spake" it means that Moses knew what God wanted him to do. Illustrate from children's own experience.

The spies (Num. xiii. 17-33, xiv. 1-11, 19-25, 39-45).

Striking the rock (Num. xx. 1-13).

Death of Moses (Deut. xxxiv.). Deuteronomy, the book in which we find great speeches, which are attributed to Moses. "We have reached the last stage of the action, and the Passing of Moses. The whole people wait to see their leader depart on his mystic journey: heads of the tribes line the route. Moses, with lingering steps, passes along, speaking to each leader words that thrill; old war cries of the tribes, and prophetic picturings, to be treasured up as blessings for the future. . . . Moses lifts his hands in a final blessing:—

"The Eternal God is thy dwelling place,
And underneath are the everlasting arms."

Then Moses turns to resume the journey on which none may accompany him. Like the hush that follows a passionate climax comes a drop to the barest prose, telling of the ascent, the gaze from Pisgah's top over the promised land, the solitary death, the sepulchre that no man knoweth. The mighty personality which has linked the bondmen of Egypt to the con-

querors of the land of promise has passed out of the history of Israel."¹

JOSHUA.

1. His appointment (Josh. i.). (The Greek form of the name Jesus.)

2. The passage of the Jordan (Josh. iii., iv.).

3. The vision and the fall of Jericho (v. 13-15, vi.); verse 20 is generally understood to be a poetical way of expressing the feebleness of the resistance made, or possibly there was an earthquake.

N.B.—The children should understand:—

(1) That the Hebrews did not pour into Canaan, a mighty undivided host, and sweep away all its inhabitants. They secured only a foothold in the land under Joshua, and had to settle down with nations which were for the most part stronger than they: the Canaanites, Moabites, Ammonites. The Philistines and Phœnicians had possession of the strip of land nearest the sea, whilst the former with strong fortress towns had secured the richest inland plain of the Kishon.

(2) These nations were highly civilized, were great traders and had a coinage; they had a wonderful navy and understood pottery, painting. From them, the Israelites learnt agriculture, and to live, not in tents, but in villages and towns. They learnt other things; to worship their gods and to follow their cruel and savage customs (e.g. Judges xi. 31; 2 Kings xxiii.). The Hebrews easily forgot the God about Whom Moses had taught them, and that they were a chosen nation.

In taking the settlement in Canaan with a class, the teacher should constantly remind the pupils that the Israelites were only slowly learning to know God, and that at this stage they were like children in the lower classes, only half understanding or sometimes quite misunderstanding what they were taught. The pupils should not believe that God really willed the massacres of women and children,

¹ Moulton, "The Literature of the Bible," p. 44.

the treachery of Rahab, etc. Whatever conflicts with our present knowledge of God's character we know must be due to man's imperfect understanding.

The Judges were heroes, tribal chiefs, strong, rough men who believed in Jehovah and felt that the constant distress and misery of the Israelites were caused by forgetfulness of Him (Judges II. 11-18). Round these men gathered stories, some authentic, some probably legendary (cf. William Tell, etc.). This oppression from the surrounding nations helped to weld the people from a loose agglomeration of tribes into some semblance of a nation.

DEBORAH.

(Judges IV., v.).

1. The situation.

The highways deserted. Women shot at with arrows as they went to draw water. No weapon to be found in the land (Judges v. 6-8).

2. Men lost heart. It was left for a woman to rouse the tribes (cf. Joan of Arc).

3. There was a thunder or hailstorm. The battle-field, the plain of Esdraelon, became a bog in which the chariots of iron stuck fast, the river Kishon—a torrent (v. 21). See map.

4. Jael and Sisera. The war-song. This is one of the most ancient documents of Hebrew literature and bears every mark of being a contemporary document.

Note.—(a) Love to their enemies not yet learnt. Cruelty, treachery, and massacre not condemned (v. 24).

(b) The first glimmering coming of the thought that God asks not only for sacrifices, but for the love of His people (v. 31). (This verse is probably of a later date.)

JEPHTHAH.

The people were much less civilized east of Jordan. That accounts for making a robber chieftain like Jephthah their ruler, and for his offering a human sacrifice to Jehovah (Judges XI. 1-11, 28-40).

The story of Ruth belongs to this era. If there is time the story could be retold (cf. Ruth and Naomi with David and Jonathan).

SAMUEL.

1. The situation. Two terrible reverses had caused the Israelites to be absolutely helpless before the Philistines (1 Sam. iv. 1-18). In the last the calamity was complete and overwhelming, and involved for Israel nothing less than the loss of honour, country, and freedom. God seemed to have left His people. Who would help?

N.B.—The children can go back with a new interest to the boyhood of him who was to keep alive the knowledge of Jehovah in the land.

2. The call of Samuel (1 Sam. iii. 1-20).

Note (a) "No open vision." None seemed good enough to receive God's messages. Note Eli's weakness of character.

(*b*) "Did not yet know the Lord" (cf. knowing about a person and knowing him personally).

(*c*) The children are old enough to know something of what God speaking to them through their consciences means. Samuel heard the Divine Voice and was brave enough to give the bitter message and to become a prophet, i.e. one who speaks for God and receives messages from God. Learn "Hushed was the evening hymn".

SAUL.

The double and conflicting accounts of Saul's call are accounted for by their being written at different periods. After the exile many of the Hebrews believed their trouble arose largely through their having chosen earthly monarchs in the place of God. "There are two views of the monarchy, which are represented in the Bible, one older and one later. The older view, which is also probably the more historical, regards the monarchy as a great step in advance. And so in truth it was. . . . For a short period all the tribes felt themselves members of a single nation, and the king was the symbol of the national unity. To the older view,

the monarchy was a sign of divine favour, and established by the will of God. The later, less historic view, regarded the monarchy as an act of rebellion against God.”—MONTEFIORE.

1. His anointing (1 Sam. ix., x.).

N.B.—A “High Place” was the top of a hill which was dedicated to worship, and where sacrifices were offered. The Israelites adopted this custom from the Canaanites.

2. His first successes against the Ammonites (1 Sam. xi.)

(a) The Ammonites’ cruelty.

(b) Saul’s fiery message.

(c) The victory.

3. Conflict with the Philistines (1 Sam. xiii. 1-6).

Compare the defenceless state of the Israelites with the armed forces of the Philistines. They “sore oppressed” the Israelites, all Saul’s life. Revise the position of their country, the advanced state of their civilization and trade. Israel tributary to them.

4. Jonathan’s exploit (1 Sam. xiv. 1-23).

5. Saul’s warning and final rejection (1 Sam. xiii. 7-14; 1 Sam. xv.). Repetition (1 Sam. xv. 22).

Let the teacher prepare by reading Browning’s “Saul”.

Note (i) How much good there was in Saul and what a splendid start he had.

(ii) He did not really know God, or wish to do His will; he loved his own way, was wilful. At last the feelings of jealousy and evil temper, to which he more and more gave way led to partial insanity. Let the children feel the disappointment of Samuel, who had hoped so much from Saul.

DAVID.

1. How he came under Saul’s notice.

Different traditions. Either through his musical gifts (1 Sam. xvi. 14-23) or through the Goliath episode (1 Sam. xvii.).

N.B.—If the latter story is taken again, it must be with a relief map showing the positions of the two armies. Repetition (1 Sam. xvi. 7).

2. His friendship with Jonathan.

(a) The two friends (1 Sam. xviii. 1-5; Prov. xvii. 17).

(b) The king's jealousy aroused (1 Sam. xviii. 6-17).

Let the children note Jonathan's difficult position as the natural heir to the throne.

Could he be both loyal to his father, who was plainly going mad, and true to his friend who, as he saw, was the "hope of the nation"?

(c) An attempt to put things right (xix. 1-8).

(d) David an outlaw (xx.).

(e) The parting.

"His love to me was wonderful."

Note (i) Jonathan was true to his friend but his friendship did not lead him to disobey his father.

(ii) Jonathan was never envious.

(iii) His self-sacrifice. "Thou shalt be king and I shall be next unto thee."

3. The outlaw days (cf. Robin Hood).

Hiding in a cave (1 Sam. xxii. 1-5).

Saul's vengeance on David's friends (1 Sam. xxii. 6-23).

David spares Saul's life (1 Sam. xxiv.).

To forgive injuries and to make friends, is nobler than to pay people out.

Running due south from Hebron there is a strip of fertile but hilly ground some ten miles by five in extent. Here lay villages from which David could obtain supplies. Eastward the ground slopes down to the Dead Sea. It is a dry rocky wilderness, full of ravines where a band of men who knew the country well could defy pursuit.

Saul's better feelings roused, but only temporarily.

Saul again in David's power (xxvi.).

"What more thrilling episode do we find in

romance than that night walk of David and his cousin Abishai across that wilderness of Ziph to prove to Saul, asleep in his tent, that, though in David's power, he was safe."

4. How David became king.

(a) On his return from a raid he is met by an Amalekite with tidings of Saul's death (1 Sam. xxxi. ; 2 Sam. 1.).

(b) David's lament, or the Song of the Bow. To be read by the teacher.

(c) He is made king first of Judah, and on the death of Saul's son, of all the tribes. David at once sets to work to obtain a capital, the first essential of a strong kingdom (2 Sam. v. 1-10).

(i) Jebuz, built on a hill with steep cliffs on three sides; protected as if by a moat, except where one narrow neck of high land connected the city with the surrounding country. In addition it had a strong wall. The position was so impregnable that the Jebusites manned the walls with cripples.

(ii) David first stormed the protecting fort Zion and then climbed the walls and took the town (cf. Wolfe at Quebec).

N.B.—Jerusalem an ideal capital, central but isolated. (See map.) A good rallying ground; strong because of the cliffs, healthy owing to its height. Relief map.

5. David establishes his kingdom.

(a) Bringing up of the Ark.

The nation was to be united by a religious bond as well as by a civil. Therefore Jerusalem the military stronghold and rallying point was to be the centre of worship, and the Ark, the symbol of God's presence, was brought to Jerusalem (2 Sam. vi. 1-5, 14-15). David desires to build a temple, but is only allowed to make preparations (1 Chron. xxii. 1-16. Learn 1 Chron. xxix. 11-14.)

(b) Extent of the Kingdom.

It includes Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom and one province of Syria. (See map) (2 Sam. VIII. 12-15).

(c) Mephibosheth.

Lame as the result of an accident (2 Sam. iv. 4). David kind to him not as a cripple but because he is Jonathan's son: cf. attitude of ancients towards weak and deformed. Now we feel that cripples have a special claim upon us. Impress this upon children.

6. David's sin.

David, in contrast with Saul, was a man after God's own heart, because he was not wilful, i.e. he really wanted to do God's will, and to do right, but he fell under temptation (cf. child beginning the day with good resolutions and suddenly tempted, telling a lie).

(1) David saw a beautiful woman and wanted to make her his wife and so arranged that her husband should be killed.

(2) The news comes to the prophet Nathan who feels he must rebuke the King. Let Nathan's story be read in the class (2 Sam. XII. 1-7).

(3) David's repentance, forgiveness, punishment (XII. 15-23).

7. Absalom.

(a) Character: handsome, popular, wanted to be king himself (2 Sam. xv. 1-6).

(b) David obliged to leave Jerusalem, his friends desert him (xv. 10-37).

(c) David's victory. Absalom's death and David's bitter grief (xviii.).

8. Character.

Let the children discuss the character of David as to whether they consider him good or bad. Then explain that he was a great leader in an uncivilized age, idealized later as a national hero; with many faults, but possessing very lovable qualities and much personal charm. Note his

sorrow when he had done wrong and readiness to own it, and to bear the punishment. Ps. 111. may have been his words.

Saul loved him at first sight; Jonathan loved him; his three mighty men were ready to risk their lives for him (1 Chron. xi. 19). Remind them of his care for Mephibosheth, and his chivalry towards Saul.

SOLOMON.

I. HIS KINGDOM.

(a) Extent. Egypt to the Euphrates. (See map.)

(b) Difficulties of government.

(i) It was a despotism. Every detail of government passed through the King's hands, e.g. he was not only the King but the Judge of all and sat in the gates (cf. present representative system—Parliament—magistrates).

(ii) The Empire only held together by the King's personality. Revise David's kingdom and note different races, etc.

(c) Solomon asked for wisdom for his great task (2 Kings III. 4-16) and his wisdom became proverbial (2 Kings IV. 29-34). Let the children learn James I. 5. If we listen to the voice of conscience we shall have all necessary wisdom. We shall be enabled both to perceive and know those things which we ought to do, and then should pray for "grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same".

"Even as David became the ideal singer, so Solomon became the ideal sage, and just as Psalms when collected were ascribed to David, so Proverbs when collected were ascribed to Solomon."—MONTEFIORE.

2. The Temple.

(a) Preparations for building (1 Kings v.).

N.B.—Hiram was a great king of Phœnicia, the great trading nation, and the first to build ships and have colonies. Phœnicia had no

corn, but had magnificent forests of cedar-trees and very skilled, artistic workmen. They carried their carved cedar and ivory all over the world exchanging them in Britain for tin, in India Arabia and South Africa for spices and ivory, and in Palestine for corn and oil.

Limestone was procured from the Judean quarries. All unskilled work was done by forced labour. The Israelites being taken from their crops, the skilled work was done by the Phœnicians (note 1 Kings vi. 7).

- (b) Description of the Temple. Must be illustrated by plan and model made by the children.

Dimensions (1 Kings vi. 1-10).

Let the children calculate (1 cubit = 1 ft. 6 in.).

Outside. A stone building with little wooden rooms round it for the priest.

Inside. Lined with sweet-smelling cedar wood, carved and overlaid with gold (1 Kings vi. 14-18).

- (1) The oracle—the Holy of Holies. Describe the ark containing the stone tablets, the cherubim, the doors, the carving (19-32).

- (2) The House or the Holy Place (1 Kings vii. 48-50). In it the altar where incense was burnt (a symbol of prayer) and the golden table on which twelve loaves set weekly (to show that all food came from God).

Lighted by beautiful golden candlesticks (all light from God).

The porch, in front of which were two pillars not supporting anything (vii. 15-22).

- (3) The courts.

- (i) The small court enclosing the big altar where animals were sacrificed and the brass laver where the priests washed.

- (ii) The large outside court planted with trees.
- (c) Consecration of the Temple (1 Kings viii.).
 - (1) Picture the ark and everything being brought up the temple hill and put in their right places, all holy, i.e. set apart.
 - (2) The service—Solomon's sermon and prayer. Read parts of it aloud to the class and notice the refrain.

Solomon did not know about God being our Father. The prayer was for himself and people, for those in trouble, famine, pestilence, etc.

N.B.—The Jewish king was the religious head of the nation.

3. Solomon a world-power.

The beginning of Israel as a trading nation—merchant service established (1 Kings ix. 26-28). "Israelitish caravans traversed the Eastern desert, followed the trade-routes which led southwards into Egypt—merchant ships of Solomon carried wares of Palestine to ports of Arabia, India and possibly Spain."

Note again the fact that the great trade route from Syria and Assyria to Egypt lay through Palestine. This gave Palestine a commercial and strategic importance which was largely the cause of later invasions.

4. His Luxury.

(a) Wealth (x. 14-28).

(b) The Queen of Sheba's visit (x. 1-13). Sheba was probably S. Arabia.

5. His last days characterized by great discontent among the Israelites. Causes—

(a) His luxury and mania for building entailed very heavy taxation and forced labour, which were ruinous for an agricultural people.

(b) He favoured Judah and oppressed the northern tribes.

(c) His foreign wives with their strange religions alienated the patriotic religious section.

(d) Solomon in his dream of a world-empire lost the idea of Israel as a chosen people (xi. 4, 9-13).

- (e) A leader of discontent arose in the person of Jeroboam, an overseer and a clever young workman (1 Kings xi. 26-43).

DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM AFTER SOLOMON'S DEATH.

Rehoboam being brought up in luxury and a selfish ideal of kingship, the ten tribes offered the throne to Jeroboam. Judah and Benjamin remained faithful to the House of David (1 Kings xii.).

N.B.—From this time onwards the children must be reminded that we have to do with two kingdoms—the southern kingdom Judea, with its capital Jerusalem, about the size of Cornwall. (See map for boundaries.) Note its isolation; the Dead Sea and the desert on two sides of it.

The Northern kingdom of Israel was not as large as Yorkshire; more fertile and on the direct route between Damascus and Egypt. Israel was much more in touch with foreign nations so that the religious ideas of the people became more mixed up with those of their neighbours; while the security of Judah lay in her political insignificance and her religious supremacy. Let the children notice that small mountainous countries often keep their nationality and independence longer than others, e.g. Switzerland, Wales. Repetition (Pss. LXII., LXVII.; Joshua i. 5-9; Pss. XXIII., LI., CI.)

THE PROPHETS.

The judges failed, the kings failed. True religion kept alive by prophets—the poets, teachers, and religious statesmen of the age.

“The prophet's power is not in predictions of the future, though he may adventure some; nor in visions of another world, if he have any; but in vivid understanding of his own age. Insight is his work, not foresight, though marvellous foresight may come of true insight. His aim is to see the world of his own time as God sees it . . . God's words are what he strives to speak, and therefore he must needs begin—‘Thus saith the Lord’. It is the insight natural to a pure heart and a truthful mind which is open to us all, and so far as we labour for a pure heart and a truthful mind, there is no reason why we in our measure should not share the gift with them of old.”—GWATKIN.

ELIJAH.

1. *The Situation* (1. Kings xvi. 29-33).

Ahab, the king of Israel, the sixth monarch from Jeroboam, had married a beautiful and masterful princess from Tyre, in accordance with the policy of alliance begun by David and Solomon. She was a strong character, and through her influence altars and temples were erected to Baal.

2. *Sudden appearance of Elijah* (1 Kings xviii. 1-4).

“He appears suddenly from the wild and beautiful highlands of the distant border country beyond the Jordan. There in the solitude of the dark ravines, and the clear mountain heights, his soul had held communion with God and had been trained to the lofty courage which gives his personality such commanding force in the presence of king and people.”¹

He vanishes as suddenly as he appears; efforts to lay hands on him fruitless.

3. *The Contest on Carmel* (1 Kings xviii.).

“That wonderful scene is unsurpassed for grandeur and dramatic power in the whole of the Old Testament.” Elijah probably did not realize the fact that there was only one God. What he did know was “that Jehovah was the God of Israel Who ought to be worshipped by all its inhabitants. Baal was an invader who had no right there.”¹

4. *In the Wilderness.*

(a) Jezebel's fiery message.

(b) “Elijah went for his life” (See map, 1 Kings XIX. 1-8).

(c) Elijah had lost heart and had forgotten that God was caring for him and that it was God's work he was doing. “He thought God could only be served by his success. We must resist the temptation strong often as our very aims are high to worry—as though we must achieve some particular task or His cause would suffer. It is not our achievement He cares for.”

¹ Glazebrook, “Bible Lessons for the Young,” pp. 269, 270.

(d) Tempest and storm had no message for him; he felt out of touch. God seemed far off. Then came the still small voice: Septuagint translation "sound of a gentle breeze" (1 Kings XIX. 9-21).

(e) Elijah comforted because of (1) a new king; (2) a friend to help him; (3) the seven thousand on God's side.

5. *Naboth's Vineyard* (1 Kings XXI.).

"Before he fights for the cause 'Thou shalt have no God but Me'; now he fights for the cause 'The Lord is righteous and loves righteousness'. These two causes taken together . . . are the keynote of Hebrew prophecy."—MONTEFIORE.

Naboth a yeoman farmer; his land had been in the family for generations.

Ahab wants it for a kitchen garden for his palace; tries to force Naboth to sell it and fails; some children will understand his feelings when he sulked and went to bed. Jezebel by a trumped up charge obtains the farm. Ahab is confronted by Elijah when he goes to look at his new possessions.

N.B.—The idea of Jehovah as a God of righteousness, was expressed more completely later by Micah. "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah vi. 8).

6. *Story of Micaiah and Ahab* (1 Kings XXII.).

Elijah's prophecy proved true.

Courage and Truth.

N.B.—False prophets were courtiers who spoke in order to please their hearers. Micaiah spoke as he believed though it meant prison or death.

The story of the "Lying Spirit" represents the imperfect idea of God's character then held (Cf. James i. 13).

(The story of Jezebel's daughter can be found in 2 Kings xi.)

7. *The Translation of Elijah.*

The impression abroad was that Elijah's work was done and that God was taking him away. Picture

the journey of leave-taking. Some violent storm was probably raging when he died. Cf. on map positions of Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, and across the river the wild country of Moab. "There the great leader Moses had died, and there near the undiscovered sepulchre was the scene appointed for the translation of the wonderful prophet whom after ages associated with Moses in veneration and mystery."

Here we have the first thought of death as Ascension.

N.B.—The narrative turns for these stories of Elijah not to the state records, but to the traditions of the people. The existence of legends about the life of a man are almost always a tribute to his greatness and are an expression of his character. The children might be reminded that some of these words have been beautifully set to music by Mendelssohn in "The Elijah".

ELISHA.

- (1) Elisha and the Shunamite woman (2 Kings iv. 8-37).
- (2) Elisha at Dothan (2 Kings vi. 8-23).
- (3) Naaman and Gehazi (2 Kings v.).

Naaman shared the belief of those ages that a god can only be properly worshipped on the soil of his own territory, hence the carrying away of two mules' burden of earth.

AMOS (760-746 B.C.).

1. *Situation.*

Israel, under Jeroboam II, the great-grandson of Jehu, had risen to a height of prosperity which recalls the days of Solomon.

Trade and commerce flourished, and many had grown rich suddenly, there was a wide gulf between rich and poor. Bribery was rampant and the poor could not obtain justice. Baal worship had been abandoned and a sort of religion of Jehovah flourished. He was worshipped under the form of a metal bull, but as long as costly sacrifices were offered there was no realization that He demanded anything else from His people.

Israel had forgotten that she was to bear witness for God and simply wanted to be one of the Empires of the world.

2. *Appearance.*

His home. The little village of Tekoa twelve miles south of Jerusalem. There he made his living,

- (a) As a sycamore dresser, the fruit a sort of fig.
- (b) By herding a little flock of mountain sheep—after shearing he would carry the wool to the markets. In the towns of Israel he saw idle people feasting, lying on couches of ivory, drinking wine out of bowls, others poor, underfed, cheated, over-worked; he would go home and speak to God about it and learn to see things clearly—at last the time came when he felt he must speak “The Lord said unto me” (Amos vii. 14, 15).

3. *Scene.*

His sudden appearance at a festival (cf. Elijah at Bethel (see map)).

- (a) Picture the dismay and astonishment amongst the festal gathering as suddenly in their midst, from an unknown shepherd the gloomy cry is heard:—
 “I hate and despise your feasts” (v. 21).
 “Seek good and not evil that ye may live” (v. 14).
 “Israel shall surely be led away captive out of the land.”
 “Death and captivity coming” (vii.).

- (b) Indignation of Amaziah—“go back home, you have no business here”. Message despatched to the King—this man must be stopped (Amos vii. 10-13).

All the wickedness goes on as before. Amos having delivered his message goes back home, no one touching him. He is not allowed to speak, but he can write. He seems to have written down his prophecies, e.g. the vision of the plumb-line (ch. vii.). (Explain how a wall is tested.) We think of Amos as the first prophet who wrote as well as preached, and the first of whom we know the date.

N.B.—Amos showed Israel “that they were not the only nation over whom the Lord was King” (i. 4, 5).

HOSEA.

1. *Situation.*

Things going from bad to worse. Three kings murdered in succession. The Assyrian army was soon to take advantage of Israel's defenceless state, the natural result of her luxury and revolutions. One last warning given by Hosea.

2. *What we know of him.*

He lived in a good house and married a girl called Gomer. She was very selfish and only cared to enjoy herself, and six years later she ran away from home, leaving her husband with three little children.

3. *His message.*

Draw from the children Hosea's feelings, angry, sad, almost heart-broken because he loved her so much. At last he has news of her—she is in sore trouble—is about to be sold as a slave. He rescues her and looks after her though he cannot have her back till she is really sorry; he loves her still.

Then through his own sorrow some wonderful thoughts come to him about God.

What had God done for Israel?

He wanted His people to be good and loving, and upright and just and he found "nought but swearing and breaking of faith and killing and stealing" (Hosea vi. 4-6). Highway robbery and murder committed even by the priests.

And yet had God given them up? (Hosea xi. 1, 2). Hosea still cared for Gomer—human love but a reflection of the Divine.

"Would I fain in my impotent yearning
Do all for this man,
And dare doubt He alone shall not help him,
Who yet alone can."—BROWNING.

Contrast Amos hurling denunciations with the tender attitude of Hosea xiv. 1-4. It is the difference between anger and sorrow. Note that there is such a thing as righteous anger, and that it is a part of the true love. Nowhere till Jesus Christ came do we have such a picture of the love of God.

N.B.—In a few years Israel with the other surrounding nations became tributary to Assyria. They rebelled and the end soon came. The Assyrian army laid siege to Samaria and after a desperate resistance of three years the city was stormed and taken by Sargon 722 B.C. There was a terrible massacre, and according to

Assyrian inscriptions 27,280 persons were carried away to different districts beyond the Euphrates, and Israel became a province of the Assyrian Empire (2 Kings xvii. 17-23). "The northern kingdom was wiped out. All hope for the future was now centred in Judah."

The origin of the Samaritans may be noted here (2 Kings xvii. 24-29, 33-41).

ISAIAH.

N.B.—Just about the time that Amos and Hosea were finishing their work Isaiah the Great Prophet of the Southern Kingdom began his career. This is the first Isaiah. (Our book of the prophet Isaiah is apparently principally made up of two books, the subjects and dates of which differ by about 150 years. The second Isaiah was a prophet and poet of the captivity and the latter part of the book from Chapter xl-lv. belongs to the middle of the sixth century B.C.)¹

"If the existence of the Kingdom of Judah was prolonged yet another century and a half it was mainly due to the energy with which he directed and controlled its policy."

It has been said "Isaiah was a great statesman . . . he did not bring his politics into his religion, but his religion into his politics."

To elevate statesmanship, to purify justice, to reform religion, to redress social wrongs was the aim which he set himself in life.

1. *Situation.*

Judah (revise extent)—between the two huge empires of Assyria and Egypt (see map).

Its people like those of Israel feasting and drinking. The women idle, thinking only of fine clothes and ornaments.

2. *His Call.*

(Isa. vi. 1-11, i. 1-3, 13-18.)

(a) He felt that he was not fit to be a prophet. Let the children discuss the reason for this.

(b) Impelled to speak and yet knew that the people would not listen.

¹The student who wishes to understand "Isaiah" is strongly recommended to read Glazebrook's "Studies in the Book of Isaiah". It is interesting and illuminating.

3. *Story of the Vineyard* (v. 1-7). (Cf. the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen.)

4. *Hezekiah's succession*. The temple worship is restored, some reformation is accomplished (2 Kings xviii. 1-8).

Note.—The great political question of the day—whether Judah should ally herself with Egypt against Assyria. Isaiah preaches constantly submission to Assyria as Judah's only hope (xxx. 1, 2, 7, xxxi.). His advice not taken and Hezekiah intrigues with Egypt.

5. *Hezekiah and Sennacherib*.

(a) Sennacherib takes a huge Assyrian army to punish his rebellious vassals. Judah overrun with Assyrian soldiers—city after city is taken.

(b) Hezekiah in terror tries to buy him off (2 Kings xviii. 13-16). An Assyrian cylinder gives Sennacherib's own account of the affair:—

“Forty-six of his strong cities; his castles; and the smaller towns of their territory without number; with warlike engines; by assault and by storming; by fire; and by the axe; I captured. . . .

“Himself like a bird in a cage I shut up inside Jerusalem his royal city.”

The Assyrians treated their captives with revolting cruelty.

(c) Parley from the walls (17-37).

(d) Isaiah's words are full of hope though the danger is the direct result of scorning his words (Isa. xxxvii. 1-23, 28-35). Note this chapter is incorporated from 2 Kings xix.

(e) The last scene (36-38).

It is a historical fact that some mysterious disaster overtook the Assyrian army and that Sennacherib returned to his own land.

“Never it has been said had a prophet predicted more boldly—never was a prediction more brilliantly fulfilled.”

“Between these predictions . . . and the fulfilment there is a consistency which . . . is too striking and complete to be reasonably attributed to chance.”

Repetition.

“The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold” (Byron).

JEREMIAH.

(1) *Situation.*

- (a) Internal affairs. Hezekiah followed by his son Manasseh, a wicked king who reigned sixty years. There was a reaction from Isaiah's teaching—horrible idolatry was rampant with bitter persecution of those who remained faithful to Jehovah. According to tradition Isaiah perished by being sawn asunder.
- (b) External affairs. Judah still subject to Assyria but the great Assyrian empire about to collapse. It was weakened by attacks from the Scythians, a horde of wild and savage horsemen who came from the land between the Caspian and Black Seas. They swept down across Asia and through Palestine on their way to attack Egypt (see map). Judah escaped because of its hilly country, but the people were terrified, and the country was prepared to listen to a new reforming King and to a resolute prophet second only to Isaiah—Jeremiah.

(2) *His early life under the good King Josiah.*

- (a) Restoration of the temple and discovery of a Book of the Law (supposed to be parts of Deuteronomy and the work of the faithful few under Manasseh) (2 Kings xxii.).
- (b) The result—drastic reformation—the high places destroyed (xxiii. 1-26).
- (c) Josiah's tragic death owing to his championship of the now weakened Assyrians against Egypt (2 Kings xxiii. 29-30).

N.B.—Nineveh fell in 606 B.C. through a combined attack of Medes and Babylonians, and with it the mighty Assyrian Empire, and as it has been said the whole of Western Asia changed hands—Babylon was now the centre of the world to the Jews and their only hope after the defeat of Egypt at Carchemish, lay in submission to it.

(3) *His noble stand for the unpopular side.*

- (a) Ways in which he tried to bring the truth home to the people, cf. Isaiah.

Wearing of a wooden yoke (Jer. xxvii. 2, 6, 10, xxviii. 10, 11).

Visit to the potter (Jer. xviii. 1-6).

Assembling the elders (Jer. xix. 1-4, 11, 12).

- (b) Arrested and put into stocks for a whole day (Jer. xx. 1-6).
- (c) Barak and the roll (Jer. xxxvi.).

“A fast is being held: with great courage Jeremiah resolves to deliver God’s message to them all. Forbidden to enter the temple himself; he sends Barak his secretary to read his message to the assembled people. The terror-stricken crowd with veiled heads fill the court of the temple, as the smoke of sacrifice goes up they pray for victory over the Babylonian host: and just then Barak reads out the prophet’s words and tells them that the danger is due to their own sin and that unless they repent the foe will come and take Jerusalem.”

N.B.—A Roll. Several skins stitched together and attached to a roll of wood. The writing was arranged in columns parallel to the roller so that as the parchment was gradually unrolled the successive columns could be read.

- (d) Jeremiah’s words came true. The King and the best half of the nation carried away to Babylon (2 Kings xxiv. 12-20). His brother Zedekiah put on the throne.

(4) *During the siege (1½ years).*

- (a) Efforts to influence the King (Jer. xxxvii.).

- (b) Cast into a dungeon (Jer. xxxviii.).

“The gleam of hope caused by the retirement of the enemy; the suspicion and cruelty of the nobles, the fears and doubts of the King; the lack of food; the confusion which made Jeremiah’s rescue possible; all these may be made elements in a vivid picture of what was going on inside the city while the Chaldeans were thundering at its gates.”—GLAZEBROOK.

- (c) The breach in the walls (2 Kings [xxv. 1-21]. Zedekiah’s horrible fate (cf. Jer. xxxix. 1-10). The city deliberately burnt.

(5) *Jeremiah's last days and character* (Jer. xxxix. 11-18, xi. 1-6).

(a) He is well treated by the Chaldeans and chooses to stay with the remnant of the people; the latter rebel and fly into Egypt taking Jeremiah with them, and it is supposed that his long life and suffering came to a close in that far-off land.

(b) Character.

He was not naturally hard and severe.

Affectionate and tender-hearted, and one of the most pathetic figures of the Old Testament.

He hated having to say these hard things to his country.

He hated being laughed at; despised; and called a traitor. He hated being put into the stocks.

It was not easy for him to risk his life by slow starvation in a dungeon and yet he never flinched. What helped him? . . . It was "present communion" with God. It is to God he tells his sorrows. It was God who had given him his work.

God knows what he has to go through. It is God who is his strength and shield. He felt that God cares not only for nations but for each one of us individually; and so he had another message to give that the time would some day come, when obedience would not be so difficult, because God would give His people a new power to obey.

"I will give them a heart to know me that I am the Lord" (Jer. xxiv. 7).

"We learn from this life the lesson of humblest self-surrender; the lesson of willing self-forgetfulness; the lesson of unconquerable resolve; the lesson of patient endurance; the lesson in which the other lessons are included; the lesson of present communion with a living God."—WESTCOTT.

EZEKIEL.

N.B.—This prophet though partially contemporary with Jeremiah was one of the captives deported to Babylon with Jehoiachin eleven years before the fall of Jerusalem in 585.

1. *Situation.*

Picture the exiles journeying to Babylon (700 miles); their sorrow; probable cruel treatment of sick and old (cf. Siberian exiles). Some are settled in Babylon, others in a colony—Chebar (by a river or canal). There was no active persecution they were allowed to do what they liked, to go on with their occupations. But they did not want to build themselves houses—their one idea was to go back, they were desperately home sick (cf. children's feeling when away). They hated the flat plains with their interminable canals bordered by poplars and tamarisks (which they called willows). Read Psalm cxxxvii. —they longed for the mountains of their home.

2. *The Prophet's Warning.*

Five years pass—a call comes to the prophet, but he does not go out and preach (cf. Isaiah and Jeremiah). The people come to his house (Ezek. viii. 1). His message, a sad one, “you must settle down here, the captivity God's punishment for your idolatry and wickedness”. Jerusalem will be destroyed.

They will not believe this—nor attend.

One day a messenger comes with the news “the city is smitten” (xxxiii. 21). The terrible prophecy has come true—they can never go home. Jerusalem burnt to the ground, the Temple gone—their home open to wind and rain (cf. the ruin after a fire).

3. *His Encouragement.*

The Temple is destroyed, but Jehovah lives and cares for them. If they repent there is hope (Ezek. xviii. 27). They must gather together on the Sabbath Day for they can worship Him without a Temple.

(1) He tells them of a wonderful vision, a dream he has had.

Give the story of the vision of the dry bones (Ezek. xxxvii. 1-11). Let the children think what it can mean (v. 14).

(2) A new Temple and a new city—four square with beautiful walls and twelve gates—the name of the city shall be “The Lord is there” (Ezek. xlviii. 35).

“As Jeremiah is the last of the earlier prophets who insisted on righteousness and mercy rather than sacrifice—so Ezekiel is the first of a new school who aimed at making sacrifice a worthy expression of the religion of the heart.”—BURKITT.

THE SECOND ISAIAH OR THE UNKNOWN PROPHET.

1. *Situation.*

Describe Babylon—its size; parks, forests and hanging gardens inside the walls, the latter were forty to sixty miles round and three hundred feet high, and so broad, that a chariot and four horses could turn round on the top—in them were one hundred gates all of bronze.

“Walls were also built on either side of the river which flowed through the centre of the city. . . . There were gates in these walls at the end of each of the wide and straight streets by which the city was intersected and between every gate a ferry boat plied. Besides the ferry boats, there was a draw-bridge which was pulled up every night.”—SAYCE.

In the centre of the city was the temple of Bel, built in stages, each painted a different colour black red, blue, etc., and a golden idol at the top said to be forty feet high—the whole temple being half as high again as St. Paul's Cathedral.

2. *The Prophet.*

Years passed by, the children grew up, some of the Israelites settled down, found work, and acquired possessions—some were forgetful of their own religion, others kept faithful, but they were perplexed. It was hard to go on believing in Jehovah, when He seemed to have forgotten them, but one day, as it has been said, there was heard in the land the thrilling voice of the great unnamed Prophet.

3. *His Message.*

(a) They were to go back, back to their own land. Read Isaiah XL. in sections. Let the children feel the ring of the poetry.

“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people” (vv. 1, 2).

It seems to the Prophet, that he hears voices, they are carrying the glad tidings over the desert urging preparations for the return (v. 3-5).

Illustrate by accounts of royal journeys in olden days, when there were no bridges or roads. Then he listens to what seems like a dialogue:—

The voice of the tidings: "Cry".

A despairing voice: "What shall I cry"?

Voice of the tidings: "All flesh is . . . but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (vv. 7, 8).

Further on the way to Jerusalem the watchmen take up the cry "Oh thou that tellest good tidings" (vv. 9-11).

A final burst of triumph—the prophet *knows* there is no other God—(vv. 28-31).

(b) Israel was not only to go back, but to be the nation through whom the whole world was to be blessed.

"I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (Isa. XLIX. 6).

"Arise, shine, for thy light is come" (Isa. LX. 1).

Then the prophet seems to feel that Israel, even the very best of the nation, will never be able to do this work, and the wonderful thought comes to him that it will be done in the future by some one, and him he calls the servant of Jehovah (Isa. LII. 13).

(c) What does saving and helping others always involve?

Cf. Isaiah and Jeremiah and modern examples.

The prophet's own experience would teach him that this great work could only be accomplished through misunderstanding and suffering.

Let the children read Isaiah LIII. and ask them of Whom the words remind them? And tell them that 500 years later when Jesus was a boy at Nazareth, He used to read and learn these very words; and that when He grew up and could understand them better, He gradually realized that He himself was the suffering Servant of the Lord of whom Isaiah had spoken so many years before;

and that victory would only come to Him through apparent failure (Isa. LIII. 7, 8).

With a map the children will be interested in the rise of the Persian Empire and of Cyrus its great King, of whom it has been said "that he was the only great personality known to the Jews and Greeks alike, figuring both in the Bible and in general history, e.g. David and Solomon were great rulers, but the Greeks knew nothing of them; Pericles and Socrates were great Greeks but unknown to the Jews. Cyrus alone was known to both. He was the first great ruler of the now dominant Aryan race, of that stock of which Greeks and Romans and English are alike branches, all the previous great world rulers had been Semitic or African, e.g. Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian. Starting from his little territory with his Persians who were temperate in all things, trained as unerring archers and disciplined to perfect obedience, he is seen first to unite the great Northern Kingdoms of the Medes and Persians under one rule, then to strike east as far as the Indies, and then west into Asia Minor, where he overthrew the great Lydian Empire of Crœsus at Sardis. Crœsus, one of the few names that have come down through all the centuries as the type of wealth with its uncertainty (give the story). Then he struck south at the great and hitherto unrivalled power of Babylon; the fall of the city was a sort of world convulsion that has had no parallel for its suddenness and completeness."

Cyrus was brought up in comparative obscurity, as a petty chieftain of a tribe, near the Persian Gulf, but was descended from the reigning families of both Medes and Persians. His education was the ideal of the Greeks, and he figures in Greek literature as a sort of King Arthur, a pure and perfect king.

The second Isaiah believed, that the deliverance of God's people should come through him, "I am the Lord that saith of Cyrus, Thou art My shepherd and shall fulfil all My pleasure". Cyrus treated with kindness and consideration the nations he subdued, and possibly he was interested in the God of the Jews. Persia had a higher religion than Babylonia.

The nation *as a whole* never came back from captivity—henceforward we find three settlements of Jews, in Egypt, Babylonia and Palestine. There is very much uncertainty, whether any considerable number of Jews returned to Jerusalem in the time of Cyrus, but in the reign of Darius, a grandson of King Jehoiachin, Zerub-

babel was appointed governor of Judea. The hope of the patriotic party revived and they again had dreams of independence.

HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH.

(1) A strong appeal was made to the people (August 520 B.C.) to renew their efforts to restore the Temple.

Their excuse was the bad times; the people were desperately poor, nevertheless they had managed to build their own houses and to panel them with cedar.

(2) Another message comes seven weeks later when the work was well begun.

They were not to feel depressed.

It was but a rough stone building (cf. Solomon's Temple).

"The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former" (Haggai II. 1-4, 7-9).

The efforts of their enemies to interfere were fruitless (see Ezra v. vi. 1-14). There were great rejoicings; good times were coming (vi. 19-22). A vision is recorded by Zechariah the younger prophet, of a new Jerusalem "a city of truth".

It shall be so safe, there shall be no famine nor wars nor sieges, but "the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof" (Zec. VIII. 3-6).

Its king is not to ride on a horse, the symbol of war, but "upon an ass even upon a colt the foal of an ass," the symbol of peace (Zec. IX. 9).

Zerubbabel and those with him now wished to fortify Jerusalem by means of a wall, but the prophet Zechariah opposed this, doubtless realizing that it would be an offence to their neighbours, the Samaritans. Revise note on p. 84.

This project however, was never finally abandoned, and therefore the relations between the Jews and the Samaritans were far from friendly; and probably because of the representations made by the latter to the Persian Government, building operations in Jerusalem were stopped, till help came through the arrival of a great leader—Nehemiah.

NEHEMIAH.

1. *Situation.*

Nehemiah (445 B.C.) not strictly a prophet. Let the children recall.

- (a) Why he had come } (Neh. I.-II. 1-12).
 (b) His journey }
 Artaxerxes, the Persian king, gives him
 (i) Leave of absence from the Persian court ;
 (ii) Appoints him the governor of Judea ; and
 (iii) Supplies him with a troop of Persian soldiers as
 escort.
- (c) The midnight ride round the city (Neh. II. 12).

2. *His Work.*(a) *The Building of the Walls.*

(i) *A Great Undertaking.*—Let the children get some idea of the enormous work it would entail ; no exact dimensions are recorded, but these cannot have been less than 30 feet high, 8 feet thick, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles round (cf. length of wall round the school-yard).

(ii) *What was Essential for Success.*—Let the children consider—

A leader ; one who was able to inspire others (cf. good captain for games) and who was at the same time a good organizer.

Workers, who would co-operate. Note the value of co-operation. Each did his own work ; there was no failure, “they had a mind to work”.

(iii) *The Difficulties to be Surmounted.*—The opposition of the Samaritans, they try ridicule (Neh. IV. 1-6). They plan a surprise attack (Neh. IV. 7-16), but Nehemiah’s precautions are successful (Neh. IV. 17-23, cf. Neh. VI.).

(b) *Religious and Moral Reforms* (Neh. V.).

(i) The poverty of the people, they complain that they have not enough to eat ; that they have a heavy land tax to pay to the Persians ; that they have mortgaged their farms and cannot pay the interest. Nehemiah calls a meeting of the harsh creditors and upbraids them. How can they treat their brothers so cruelly ? They had charged 12 per cent (1 per cent a month) and when the debtors could not pay, they had taken

their children as slaves, and sold them up. The creditors promise to restore the land (Neh. v. 12).

Perhaps Nehemiah's own example made them ashamed of themselves, for he had not even taken the salary as Persian Governor to which he was entitled and had entertained 150 persons at his table every day. Point out that what we do avails more than what we say.

N.B.—In the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah we have a series of documents which were put together 150 years afterwards, not always connectedly. Authorities differ as to the order of events, but two things are certain: (1) that Nehemiah's leave of absence having expired, he had to go back to Babylon for a time; and (2) that Ezra, priest and scribe, with a large caravan of Jews came to Jerusalem. The reason for Ezra's coming may have been that Nehemiah, having come from a community where their religion kept the Jews absolutely distinct, was horrified to find the Jews in Palestine very much mixed up with nations and tribes who, if they did worship Jehovah, worshipped other gods too; and that he felt one of the first needs of Jerusalem was a clear statement of the law. In the compilation of this, he may have felt that Ezra was the best man to help him.

The Book of Malachi, which is thought to have been written between Nehemiah's first and second visit, shows the state of the priesthood at the time (Mal. i. 6-8, ii. 7-8).

Malachi "My Messenger," an anonymous prophet. He gives a vivid picture of the prevailing depression, discontent, and poverty. The people bring as sacrifices to God animals which would not be considered good enough for the Persian Governor. Some complain that they got nothing by worshipping Jehovah, and some have lost their faith in Him altogether.

On Nehemiah's return, he attacked these evils.

(ii) The people were summoned to hear the law on their New Year's Day (in our September).

Their conscience is awakened, and they are comforted (Neh. viii. 1-11). (Cf. Matt. v. 4.) "Send portions" (verse 12). This custom is still observed, special gifts in money and kind are given to the poor at the feasts, especially the Passover.

(iii) The feast of Tabernacles kept (Neh. viii. 13-18).

N.B.—The harvest festival of the Jews. The children will be interested in the idea of the people making themselves huts of the boughs of trees, and living in them for a week in remembrance of the days when they were a wandering nation in the wilderness.

- (iv) A day of humiliation and sorrow (Neh. ix. 1-3). They promise to keep the law.

The following points are specially emphasized :—

Not to buy and sell on the Sabbath day.
To keep themselves separate from other nations.

To pay a fixed annual subscription for the upkeep of the Temple (cf. the giving of the tenth, Gen. xxviii. 22).

A document was drawn up, and signatures affixed and sealed. Nehemiah heading the list (Neh. ix. 38).

- (v) Solemn dedication of the walls and great thanksgiving service.

Picture the two processions, led by Ezra and Nehemiah respectively, going round the walls in opposite directions, accompanied by bands of singers, and finally meeting at the valley gate. "And the women and the children rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off" (Neh. xii. 27-43).

N.B.—There is no authentic information as to the date of Nehemiah's death, but from papyri recently discovered in Egypt (a letter from Egyptian Jews) we learn that he was no longer Governor of Judea in 408 B.C.

The Character of Nehemiah.—Let the children sum up. Generous, enthusiastic, unselfish, energetic, and patriotic. He sacrificed a good appointment and took endless trouble to help his country.

N.B.—Point out ways in which ordinary citizens can serve their town, and through it their country; e.g. to be willing to give time to further municipal undertakings, and to serve on councils; to pay rates cheerfully and to sacrifice private interests for the good of the community. The teacher must adapt the suggestions here to local conditions.

It is doubtful whether Nehemiah was as tactful as he might have been in the matter of the Samaritans (cf. XIII. 8). He apparently took no pains to understand their point of view. He might have turned enemies into allies, thus helping his own cause, and at the same time leading them to a purer faith.

Repetition.

Psalm XCI.

ANOTHER TRADITION OF THE RETURN.

Cyrus conquered Babylon 538 B.C.

1. *The King's Proclamation* (2 Chron. XXXVI. 22-23).

Picture heralds taking the news. We can read the words on a cylinder of baked clay in the British Museum.

2. *The Journey.*

Picture the departure and the journey, 42,000 of all ranks of people, priests, artisans, slaves, the rejoicing, the singing. Learn Psalm CXXVI. Trace the route on the map along the Tigris, across the river Euphrates, through Hamath, Emesa and Riblah, following the caravan route to Damascus, 600 miles—four or five months would elapse before the snow-capped mountains of Hermon appeared, it would be the first time some of them would have seen hills—then on the east side of the Lake of Galilee across Jordan—the Hill of Zion at last (cf. the Crusaders) (Psalm CXXI.).
Revision.

3. *The Arrival.*

A city of ruins—they would feel depressed and sad. Discuss what would have to be done. Houses to build; altar of burnt offering to be set up. Foundations of temple to be laid (Ezra III. 6-13).

Offer of help from Samaritans refused. Let the children discuss if it should have been accepted? As it was the Samaritans made mischief, and it was the beginning of a bitter feud (St. John IV. 9). The work at a standstill for sixteen years. Two earnest prophets rouse the people. (See p. 93.)

THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The Persian Empire continued till 333 B.C., when its last King was conquered by Alexander the Great. At his death in 322 B.C., there was much fighting for his possessions and two of his generals got respectively Egypt and Syria. Between these two countries lay Palestine (see map) which was often their battle-ground.

The Jews were first ruled by the Ptolemies, the great Kings of Egypt, and, as a whole, they prospered under them; to this period we owe the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament. Greek was the language of the educated world.

After the exile Hebrew was a dead language. The Palestinian Jews spoke Syriac (Aramaic).

In 216 B.C. Egypt was conquered by Syria, Palestine became a province of the Syrian Empire, and troublous times began.

Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria, wished to make all his subjects adopt the Greek religion, but the inhabitants of the small province of Judea refused. He sacked Jerusalem, drove a herd of pigs into the Temple Courts (these animals were ceremonially unclean and were regarded by the Jews with the greatest abhorrence), and set up there an altar to Zeus (Jupiter). The Jews made a nobler stand for their religion than in any previous time in their history. Before the exile it was only the prophets with an insignificant minority who really believed in Jehovah. Now hundreds of the people endured the most terrible tortures rather than do what they considered wrong. It is thought that Psalm LXXIX. belongs to this period. About 164 B.C. to encourage the people in this time of awful persecution, the Book of Daniel is supposed to have been written.

At last the Jews made a heroic resistance under Judas Maccabeus and his brothers, of whom we find stirring stories in the Apocrypha. Judas successfully defeated Antiochus in three pitched battles and the Temple was cleansed and rededicated on 25 December, 168 B.C. The Feast of the Dedication was instituted in commemoration (cf. John x. 22). Judas Maccabeus was killed but his brother secured the independence of Judea, and their descendants governed it as High Priests till 67 B.C., when, owing to internal dissensions, it was placed under the protection of Rome.

The first of the Herods, a descendant of the Maccabees, got himself nominated King of the Jews by the Roman Senate. He began to rebuild the Temple to conciliate his subjects, but he

was hated by them, and the murder of the Innocents was only a small matter compared with the catalogue of horrors we find attributed to him in secular history.

On the death of Herod, shortly after the birth of Christ, his dominions were divided between his three sons. Herod Antipas became Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, Philip, Tetrarch of the territory beyond Jordan, and Archelaus, ruler of Judea.

Archelaus was removed for misconduct and a Roman Procurator put in his place. Pontius Pilate held this office from A.D. 26-36.

The very slightest outline of all the above should be given to the children. It may be divided roughly into three periods of about 100 years each, Persian, Greek, and Maccabean—the latter merges into the Roman.

N.B.—A chart made by the children will be found very useful. It could be made for the whole biblical history, it being clearly shown that much of the earlier part cannot be dated. The chart at the end of Bennett's Primer will be suggestive, though the attempt to assign periods for the composition of the books of the Bible is too difficult for children.

THE WORLD INTO WHICH JESUS CAME.

1. *The Roman Empire* at this time was the one great power of the world. "It included everything between the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, the Atlantic, and the northern edge of the African desert. The Mediterranean was a Roman lake. . . . The Roman eagles glittered on the walls of Trebizond, by the cataracts of the Nile, and on the shores of Boulogne, and a few years later in the defiles of the Carpathians and on the towers of Carlisle. It was no vain boast of Roman pride, that the Empire was the world. 'There went forth a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed'."—GWATKIN.

(The children should draw a map of the Roman Empire.)

The splendid system of Roman roads, which spread like a network over their vast Empire, made travelling easier than it had ever been before, while the numerous military outposts made it comparatively safe. (Refer to any Roman road the children know, and instance Roman military centres in Britain.)

"It is not too much to say that travelling was more highly developed, and the dividing power of distance was weaker under

the Empire than at any time before or since, until we come down to the nineteenth century."

The Greek Language.—What is the first difficulty of a missionary to-day? This difficulty, Christ's disciples did not have. Through the conquests of Alexander the Great, of Macedonia, the Greek language was understood all over the civilized world. (See map above.) Only in one district (refer p. 50) did St. Paul's hearers not understand Greek. The most commonly read version of the Old Testament at this time (from which Christ often quoted) was the Greek translation of it (the Septuagint).

"This wonderful language, the dialect of a brilliant people inhabiting a small country, had become the world-speech of civilization. . . . Exhausted by generations of bloodshed, the world rested in peace, under one firm government, and spoke one tongue, current even in Imperial Rome. . . . It was no blind chance that ordained the time of the Birth at Bethlehem. The ages had long been preparing for that royal visitation. The world was ready to understand those who came to speak in its own tongue the mighty works of God."—J. H. MOULTON.

3. *The Dispersion of the Jews.*—Throughout this Empire with its common language, were scattered settlements of Jews (see Acts 11. 9-11) a people, who, through long discipline, had come to believe in the One True God, a God of righteousness.

The children will readily see that in preaching to Jews, Christ did not need to begin at the very beginning, as He would have had to do with idol worshippers.

Wherever there were Jews, there was a synagogue. "The rule required a synagogue to be built wherever there were ten Jews who could attend it." The synagogue was almost always the starting place for St. Paul's preaching.

4. *The Moral State of the Jews.*—Many of the Jews had lost the idea of true religion. They thought it meant the keeping of all kinds of little rules, as to what they might not eat, what they were to wear, and exactly how far they were allowed to walk on the Sabbath; and they forgot that what God cared for most, was whether they were kind and forgiving to each other, truthful and obedient to Him (see Matt. xxiii. 23). So that they did not so much want a King who would help them to be good, as a great Conqueror who would free them from paying tribute to the Romans.

5. *The Moral State of the World.*—All over the world people were very selfish and wicked. "The old civic virtues were extinct,

the old religions were dissolving, and there was nothing that could take their place. . . . Custom was weakened, force and selfishness remained."

And yet there were some who were looking for a different sort of King, and who longed to live until He came. Simeon and Anna, the Virgin Mary, Nathaniel, the Wise Men.

"Perhaps at no other time either before or since, has there been so much aspiration, so much ardent longing for a future in which God should reign more visibly and triumphantly than ever in the past. To this attitude of intense expectation culminated the preparation in history for the coming of Christ; it was in the midst of it that He came, and to it that He appealed."—SANDAY.

"IN THE FULNESS OF TIME GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON."

THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

The Preparatory Ministry of John the Baptist (Mark I. 1-8).

The last and greatest of the prophets.

1. Revise the call of Isaiah, Jeremiah or any of the Old Testament prophets. Four hundred years had elapsed since any prophet had spoken.
2. Scene. The wilderness of Judea.
3. Appearance. Cf. Elijah. Sheepskins; probably the ordinary garment of sackcloth, woven from the rough hair of the animal.
4. His Message.

N.B.—"His soul was possessed with a strong conviction wrought in him in precisely the same way as in the Old Testament prophets that a great crisis was at hand. What lay beyond was dim, but he saw that a judge was needed and that preparation was required, a moral reformation, not merely a stricter observance of the law, but a deep inward change. . . . Like the older prophets he clothed his leading idea in an expressive symbolical act."¹

In the desert he became sure that something wonderful was going to happen, and it gradually came to him that the Messiah was at hand. So he begins to speak plainly :—

¹ Sanday, Hastings' "Dictionary of the Bible," adapted.

“There cometh One after me, who is preferred before me.” The people must get ready for Him. How? By the giving up of their sins (cf. Luke III. 11-14).

Describe how they showed their willingness to do this. The scenes at the Jordan and the meaning to the people.

The Baptism (Mark I. 9-11).

1. The appearance of Christ. John may or may not have recognized Him. “Jesus follows the crowd to the place of baptism, and is baptized in the Jordan, perhaps last of all, or when the crowd had dispersed.” —SWETE.
2. “As He went up, He prayed, and while He prayed there came to Him a vision.” With the vision there came a voice. This, like the temptation, was probably related and interpreted to the disciples by Christ.
 “The perfect Servant of the Lord, neither deaf nor blind, saw sights hidden from less perfect servants and heard accents inaudible and inarticulate to them.”
3. “The Baptism of Jesus undoubtedly marks the beginning of His public ministry.”

The Temptation (Mark I. 12, 13).

Verse 12. “A pressure exerted upon His spirit, a strong lead given to His mind and will.”

“The strength by which He resisted was not other than that by which we ourselves may conquer.”

N.B.—“One remarkable glimpse is afforded us into the state of the inner consciousness of the Son of Man after His Baptism. . . . The disclosure must have been made by the Lord Himself during His lifetime: and the extent to which it has found its way into all the Synoptics shows that it must have had a somewhat wide diffusion among the main body of the disciples. . . . The narratives of the Temptation are upon the face of them symbolical. Only in the form of symbols was it possible to present to

the men of that day a struggle so fought out in the deepest recesses of the soul."—SANDAY, *H.D.B.*

THE GALILEAN MINISTRY (Mark i. 14, ix. 50).

The First Preaching in Galilee (Mark i. 14, 15).

"The Spirit is with Him still, but in a new way. . . . The Word of the Lord did not come to Him at intervals, as it came to the prophets of old; all that He said was said in the Spirit."

The Call of the First Disciples (Mark i. 16-20).

Introduce by picturing these four men, who had learnt to know Christ when He was in Judea (revise pp. 37, 44), back at their fishing. How they would talk about the new Teacher and wonder when they should see Him again. Now He is reported to have returned.

Let the teacher read straight through Mark i. 21-111. 6, and then try and picture to the children Jesus as Peter saw Him in those early days when he was at the height of His popularity. "A vast throng surrounds the Prophet of Nazareth, all day long, and day after day, friendly and enthusiastic, intent on getting its sick healed, but also attracted by a teaching wonderfully unlike what they have heard before."

A Day and a Night in Christ's Life.

1. In the synagogue at Capernaum (i. 21-28).
2. The healing of Simon's wife's mother (i. 29-31).
3. Miracles at sunset; the whole city at the door (i. 32-34).
4. Getting up a long time before day to pray (i. 35-38).
"Sunrise would bring fresh crowds, new wonders, increasing popularity. Was all this consistent with His mission? Guidance must be sought by prayer. . . . Simon and the others started in pursuit of Him. His intention at least was good. The Master seemed to be losing precious opportunities."

—SWETE.

First Journey in Galilee (i. 39).

Let the children make another map of Palestine, noting its three divisions: Judea, stony and rocky (cf. Luke iii. 2). Samaria, fertile; Galilee, mountain-

ous. The Lake of Galilee formed part of the eastern boundary of the province. It lay in the valley of the Jordan, 500 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. It was thirteen miles long by six broad, on its eastern shore ran a fringe of green, a quarter of a mile broad, and above towered high and steep hills. The western side was very fertile with luxuriant groves of olives, oranges, and figs; and the mountains were not so steep. At the northern end is the beautiful plain of Gennesaret which contained the chief cities of the Lake, Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin. The lake was full of fish, giving employment to thousands of fishermen. The great highways from Egypt to Damascus, and from Phœnicia to the Euphrates passed here, and made this district a great centre of traffic. Nine cities stood on the very edge of the lake.

The province of Galilee was sixty miles long by thirty broad, and was as thickly peopled as Lancashire, or the West Riding of Yorkshire. Josephus speaks of 204 Galilean towns, each of them over 15,000.

The Cleansing of a Leper (l. 40-45).

Return to Capernaum and Healing of the Paralytic (ll. 1-12).¹

The Call of Levi (St. Matthew) and the feast in his house (ll. 13-17). The publicans were despised because they collected taxes for the Romans.

¹ For those teachers to whom the miracles of Christ present difficulties Professor Sanday's words may be helpful: "A miracle is an apparent breach of a law that we know, in obedience to other and higher laws, that we do not know" (see "Life of Christ in Recent Research"). And as another has said: "We must remember that the tendency of the progress of science of late years is to diminish the degree of certainty with which we can fix limits to the action of mind on body . . . while in the present instance the personality, always an important factor in such matters, is confessedly of a wholly exceptional order and power. On such a view many of the miracles cease to be miracles in the strict sense of the word, passing into the range of phenomena unexplained to-day, to be naturally explained to-morrow, but they do not therefore cease to be signs" (John II. 11, R.V.). Yet a third writer: "It may be that in this generation to patient seekers after truth fresh light may be given as to the place of miracles in the natural world".

Break with the Religious Leaders.

1. *The Cornfield Incident* (11. 23-28).
2. *Healing of the Withered Hand on the Sabbath* (111. 1-6).

St. Mark may have grouped these incidents. Let the teacher note the growing opposition of the scribes and Pharisees. At first they do not make up their minds what attitude to adopt towards the new Teacher (note Mark 11. 6-16, 24). Evidently in Mark 111. 5 there was a scene of great excitement. "Jesus looked round about on them with anger" and they "took counsel . . . how they might destroy Him". "Jesus withdrew from the town to the seaside because He was aware of the plots against Him (111. 6). He and His would be safer on the open beach, surrounded by crowds of followers, than in the narrow streets of Capernaum. His friends would prevent an arrest; in case of danger, a boat was at hand."—SWETE.

The Choosing of the Twelve (111. 13-19).

"A great crisis had been reached for which special preparation was to be made. The Lord takes counsel with the Father alone. When the morning comes His resolve is distinct; and it is forthwith carried out" (Luke vi. 12, 13).

"He appointed twelve that they might be with Him and that He might send them forth to preach."

From this Christ's aim was not the gathering in of the multitudes, but the instruction and training of those who should carry on His work. His time was short. It was important that *some* should really understand His teaching.

They were all from Galilee, except Judas.

Here St. Luke inserts the discourse which seems to correspond to the Sermon on the Mount. (See section Sermon on the Mount in Appendix which can be taken here or by itself.)

Teaching by Parables.

N.B.—This method of teaching aroused thought; for the Great Teacher knew that He could not teach His hearers unless

He made them teach themselves. He must reach their own minds and get *them* to work with His.

The idea that the story hid the truth from the careless is beyond the children, but they will understand something of "to him that hath, etc." (iv. 25), e.g. the children who take most pains at school get most out of the lessons, and those who take no interest will soon forget the little they already know. Those who will not learn lose the power to do so. (Illustrate from Zoology.)

To those who listened carelessly a parable was just a story and nothing more than a story; but those who wanted to know more went on thinking about it until they began to understand the meaning.

1. *The Parable of the Sower* (iv. 1-9, 14-20).

(a) Picture Christ sitting in the boat; around Him the blue waters of the lake; before Him on the fringe of bright yellow sand a crowd of Eastern peasants in their many-coloured garments, all eager to hear the new Teacher.

(b) He had come with a message from their Father in Heaven. How could He make them understand? Perhaps as He looks up, He sees on the hillside above, some countryman sowing his seed, the birds flying around and behind. Tell the story.—C. G. LANG, adapted.

(c) Let the children discuss the meaning; and they will see how it was, that though the Son of God Himself was the Teacher, yet so few became His followers during His lifetime.

The four kinds of hearers:—

(i) Those who only came to listen.

(ii) Those who listened and began to follow, but when they found following Him was difficult, gave up, e.g. the young ruler, Judas Iscariot.

(iii) Those who were so much taken up with their fishing and vineyards, that their minds were too full to think about Christ's teaching.

(iv) Those who listened and followed (cf. Matt. vii. 24), e.g. the eleven, Mary Magdalene, etc.

2. *The Parable of the Seed Growing Secretly* (iv. 26-29).

The inward growth of the Kingdom.

3. *The Parable of the Mustard Seed* (iv. 30-32).

The outward growth of the Kingdom.

The Stilling of the Tempest (iv. 35-41).

This lake, like most others, was subject to sudden storms.

"The Lord was already on board (see iv. 1). He now put to sea without going on shore . . . (verse 38). Christ's work for the day was done; the navigation belonged to others, and He took the opportunity of repose. He was in the stern on a head rest, where He would not interfere with the working of the ship."—SWETE.

The Raising of Jairus' Daughter (v. 21-43).

Departure from Capernaum, and Preaching at Nazareth (vi. 1-6a).

Second Circuit of Galilee (vi. 6b).

The Mission of the Twelve (vi. 7-13).

"The time had now come for testing the results of their preparatory warning." They were to have responsibility, and though definite instructions are given them as to the journey they were left to teach in their own way, they were probably away about a month.

Episode of John the Baptist's Imprisonment and Death (vi. 14-29).

For Herod Antipas see p. 99.

Probably John had been in prison since the beginning of Christ's ministry in Galilee. In connexion with Herod's promise to Salome let the children discuss the keeping of promises (cf. Jephthah).

The Return of the Twelve (vi. 30-32).

Christ calls them apart for (1) the death of John would perplex and sadden them. (2) They would have a great deal to tell Him.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand (vi. 33-44).

On the north-east shore of the lake. This is one of the incidents in Christ's life which we can date, for this

miracle is recorded by all the four evangelists, and is said to be "nigh unto the Passover" (April). Tell the children that Christ's earthly life ended at the Passover following, so that now we are beginning the last year.

Great enthusiasm is aroused. The people are about to seize Christ and proclaim Him King.

The Walking on the Sea (vi. 45-52).

The disciples are sent back again.

When all were gone, He returned to the higher ground. Another crisis had come; the way to further usefulness in Galilee seemed to be blocked, partly by the attitude of Herod, partly by the unreasoning enthusiasm of the people; He needed counsel and strength for the immediate future. . . . The Paschal moon gave light enough to reveal the boat struggling with the waves and well out to sea."

Scenes on the Plain of Gennesaret.

(a) Healing the sick (vi. 53-56).

(b) Discussion with Pharisees and scribes, who had come down from Jerusalem (vii. 1-9). Their antagonism is more open and declared.

Journey to the Regions of Tyre and Sidon, and back by the Decapolis (i.e. region of the ten cities).

It is not safe for Jesus to remain in Galilee in the dominions of Herod Antipas.

This journey seems to have occupied many months of the last year of Christ's ministry. Let the children trace it on the map, and picture what it must have been to the disciples to have Christ all to themselves, walking along under the summer sun, probably camping out at night. "They must have got to know so well the inflexions of His voice, His step in the darkness, His characteristic movements. What did they talk about as they sat at their evening meal? Nothing would fail to interest Him. What a great deal we should like to know that is not told us."

Hardly had they crossed the border into

Phœnicia (which like Decapolis, was a heathen country) when a poor woman implores His help.

1. *The Syrophenician Woman* (vii. 24-30).

They go from the neighbourhood of Tyre to Sidon, twenty miles north. Probably the sea would be in sight the whole way. Picture the disciples first view of it; and of the big seaport town with its high-masted ships and streets full of foreign merchants, possibly Spaniards, Moors, and Egyptians. They passed through, and climbed the road leading to the hills of Lebanon, through flower-gardens and orchards of pears, peaches, and lemons. Thence, through the woods and mountains north of Hermon with its snow-capped peak, and back through Decapolis.

2. *The Healing of the Deaf Man* (vii. 31-37).

Journey to Caesarea Philippi (viii. 27-38). (Cf. Luke ix. 18.)

This journey and the preceding one were not preaching tours. Christ used them to instruct and train the Twelve.

Peter's Confession. "Thou art the Christ."

All Christ's teaching had been leading up to this. Not till the Galilean ministry was drawing to a close did they grasp the truth. The first lesson had been learnt by the disciples. They had come to feel sure that Jesus was the long-expected King. This they now knew, not because they had been told, but because of what He was. (Note that "Christ"—a Greek word—means the same as the Hebrew "Messiah," i.e. "The Anointed One").

Now Christ begins to teach them the more difficult lesson that "the Christ should suffer". From this time the teaching about sacrifice, suffering, and death was continually repeated, but the Twelve simply did not take it in; their minds were full of an earthly Kingdom and high places for themselves in it.

Peter's Rebuke.

The children should understand that it was a *real* temptation which came to Christ through the words of Peter; one which He had had to struggle against ever since the beginning of His ministry—a temp-

tation not to go on with the teaching which would mean terrible suffering, and death in the end.

Teaching on Self-sacrifice.

The prediction of the Passion was for the Twelve alone, but the crowd needed the warning too. The sight of victims for crucifixion "bearing their cross" was not an uncommon sight, and these words must have stopped many from following a Leader who used such words.

The Transfiguration (ix. 1-8).

"An exceeding high mountain," probably Hermon (9200 ft.). "Once again the Apostles hear words which seem to come from heaven, confirming the Mission of their Master."

Cf. St. John's words years after "We beheld His glory".

The Scene at the Foot of the Mountains (ix. 14-29).

"The man had brought his boy that morning under the impression that Jesus was there, and on discovering that the Lord was on the mountain, had applied to the disciples."

"It was very usual with the Jews to attribute the more grievous diseases—such as epilepsy—to evil spirits."—LIGHTFOOT.

Dispute on the Way (ix. 30-37).

He teaches them again about His death, but they do not understand.

"Little ones" (v. 42)—not necessarily children.

"We may picture them journeying on with Our Lord a little in front, close enough to hear high words. He does not interrupt. He does not turn on them and chide. The Apostles would not have grown to what they did if they had been checked at every turn. . . . The dispute has died away; they are in the house at Capernaum. . . . Our Lord sat down and called the Twelve. From this they might be sure He had something of moment to say."—LATHAM, adapted.

N.B.—"The gentleness of Christ in rebuking awakens compunction in those to whom it is shown. A child who by severity is set on its defence or drawn

into falsehood is often melted into full confession by being loved and trusted more than it deserves."¹

THE MINISTRY IN PEREA AND JUDEA.

(Mark x. 1.) This verse covers the whole interval until the final visit to Jerusalem. It would seem as if it was the Galilean ministry which the writer had set himself to relate. For this, Capernaum was the centre, there it began and ended.

N.B.—"The time was spent partly in Judea, partly beyond Jordan. It seems to have included a journey to Jerusalem in September for the Feast of Tabernacles (John vii. 14) and another in December for the Feast of Dedication; a visit to Bethany (John xi.) and a retreat to Ephraim."

Christ Blesses Little Children (x. 13-16).

N.B.—"Only a few great souls carry over into their conscious life the undimmed insight, the untiring alertness, and the ever-increasing assimilating power of their spiritual natures in unconscious childhood."

The Young Ruler (x. 17-22, 28-31).

Some of the parables peculiar to St. Luke can be taken here. They are of a different type from those related by St. Mark, most of which refer to the Kingdom of God.

The Great Supper	Luke xiv. 15-24.
The Lost Sheep	„ xv. 3-7.
The Lost Coin	„ xv. 8-10.
The Prodigal Son	„ xv. 11-32.
The Good Samaritan	„ x. 30-37.
The Pharisee and the Publican	„ xviii. 9-14.

These are taken as a whole from recollections of His private conversation with the Twelve or with others who were about Him, and often in answer to a question, e.g. "Who is my neighbour?" Many were spoken while He walked along the high road with His disciples or stood for a while in a village street surrounded by a crowd; and two at supper where Christ was an invited guest.—Adapted from SWETE.

On the Way to Jerusalem (x. 32-34).

Christ's manner struck awe into the minds of the Twelve; and the crowd who always hung on His footsteps

¹ Latham, "Pastor Pastorum," p 357.

was conscious of a vague fear. He checks His course until the Twelve had come up to Him, and then He tells them again about the Cross.

1. *The Request of James and John* (x. 35-45).

“If the rest of the Twelve were not present, the report naturally reached them and at once revived the spirit of jealousy Christ had checked before.

“Christ called the Ten to Him and pointed out that neither ambition nor jealousy had any place in the Brotherhood of the Son of Man.

“The tone of His words is singularly gentle; for there had been great provocation.”—SWETE.

“He who is the true man serves and waits upon others instead of seeking that others should wait upon him. The highest right of the individual is the right to serve with all his powers for the welfare of the whole.”

(Verse 45.) We see here that Christ regards His death as the climax of a life of service.

“Others had conquered by force. He was the first to set Himself to conquer by weakness, patience, non-resistance; and the natural inevitable consummation of this new method of conquest was death.”

2. *The Healing of Bartimaeus* (x. 46-52).

At Jericho, the “City of Palm Trees”.

“Christ must have been past the town before; now however He enters with a crowd of followers as a great Rabbi on His way to the Passover.”

3. *The Anointing at Bethany.*

From Jericho to Bethany was eighteen miles up-hill on a road which was usually lonely, but now would be crowded with bands of pilgrims going to Jerusalem for the Passover. Christ apparently spends the Sabbath at the home at Bethany. In the evening, after the Sabbath was ended, there was a feast (cf. John xii.).

The anointing by Mary (Mark xiv. 3-9) is generally thought to have occurred now, but Mark probably transposes it to bring it into closer connexion with the treachery of Judas. “The story of Mary’s

understanding love is yet being told from China in the East to California in the West."

4. *The Triumphal Entry* (XI. 1-11).

The chief priests had determined after the raising of Lazarus that Our Lord's teaching could not be tolerated any longer. It was recognized by the disciples that if He went to Jerusalem He was putting Himself into the power of those who had determined to kill Him (John XI. 8). The chief priests wondered whether He would come to the feast or whether He would be intimidated and stay away. "Will He come to the Feast?" Christ came and in the most public way possible. The people thought this meant that He was going to lead an insurrection, therefore they welcomed Him. When they realized that their hopes were disappointed, they crucified Him.

Describe the procession.

Each night during the last week, Christ left the crowded city for prayer and quiet. He went either (1) to Bethany, or (2) to the Garden of Gethsemane (XI. 19).

The Cleansing of the Temple (XI. 15-18).

The buyers and sellers had been placed there by the chief priests who managed the Temple. Christ showed by His action that He claimed a higher authority than that of the chief priests. The priests dare do nothing yet because the people were at present on Christ's side.

The Day of Questions.

They tried to catch Christ by questioning Him, but did not succeed.

1. The question of Christ's authority (XI. 27-33).
2. The question of the tribute money (XII. 13-17).
3. The question of the greatest Commandment (XII. 28-34).

The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (XII. 1-12).

The Widow's Mite (XII. 41-44).

The Betrayal (XIV. 10, 11).

"To entrust a man possessing more than ordinary busi-

ness gifts with the common cash-box is to provide him with an opportunity of honourable service.”—TASKER, *H.D.B.*

“Temptation commonly comes to us through that for which we are naturally fitted. Judas had gifts of management . . . and so also the trial which comes through that habit of mind. The work gave him the opportunity of self-conquest.”—WESTCOTT.

Preparation for the Feast (xiv. 12-16).

“Where wilt Thou that we make ready?” “For they might anywhere; since the houses at Jerusalem were not to be hired, but during the time of the feast they were of common right.”—LIGHTFOOT.

In the Upper Room (xiv. 17-25).

On the Way to the Garden (xiv. 26-31).

Desertion and denial foretold.

In the Garden of Gethsemane (xiv. 32-42).

The Arrest (xiv. 43-52).

“All fled. Yet two at least recovered themselves, so far as to follow afterwards, if at a safe distance” (verse 51).

The young man may have been Mark himself.

Trial before the High Priest (xiv. 53-65) (the ecclesiastical trial) i.e. before the Sanhedrin, the supreme council of the Jews. Many members of this council were up, awaiting the result of Judas' mission.

St. Peter's Denial (xiv. 54, 66-72).

Peter remained with the servants of the High Priest in the courtyard, under the open sky. A charcoal fire was lighted in a brazier and Peter was warming himself with the others “forgetful that the blaze lit up his features”. The trial was being held in one of the rooms opening off the courtyard so that probably he could hear all that took place.

Verse 68. Peter was taken off his guard and before he knew what he was doing, he had told the lie.

Verse 70. The Galilean dialect was distinct from the Judean.

The Trial before Pilate (xv. 1-15) (the civil trial).

“The Roman Procurator of Judea (ref. p. 99). The Roman Governor resided generally at Cæsarea, but came to Jerusalem at Passover time to keep order.”

The Sanhedrin had not the power of life and death, and therefore they could not lawfully execute Jesus without the consent of Pilate (John xviii. 31), and Pilate was not likely to regard seriously the purely religious charge upon which Jesus had been condemned. They therefore altered the charge to one of treason (v. 2, 12).

With the Soldiers (xv. 16-20).

“When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not” (1 Pet. ii. 23).

The Crucifixion (xv. 21-41).

“This life of extraordinary power, of unremitting helpfulness, of entire sinlessness was closed by a death of peculiar suffering and extreme humiliation.

“How came this to be so?

“St. Mark tells us of:—

- (1) The gradual disappointment of the populace.
- (2) The growing antagonism of the religious leaders whose jealousy ended by handing over the true King of the Jews as a dangerous revolutionary to Pilate for a traitor's death.

But a deeper question remains. Why did He die thus? Why with His mighty powers did He not confound His enemies? Why again did a good God allow the best of men to perish in shameful agony on the Cross?

Scattered hints enshrined in difficult sayings of Christ Himself are found even in this, the earliest Gospel, e.g. (Mark x. 45, xiv. 24). From them we gather that this incomprehensible death was in some sense a sacrifice, that by it man was made “at one with God”.

Metaphors and analogies—like ransom, propitiation, sacrifice, are but partial interpretations and can only give us aspects of the truth, the full truth lies ever beyond them.

“The contrast between the intellectual difficulty which we experience when we try to think how the Atonement was accomplished; and the fact that it

is the death of Christ which has touched the heart of man in all ages of the world, and met his need, this contrast the whole world has felt."

We must remember the necessity for reserve when we tell the story of the death of Christ and that the child ordinarily has no experience yet of the ever-increasing debt of sin—things done and left undone. We want so to teach it that when the time comes when he does feel the burden of guilt and the impossibility of ever undoing one wrong deed, the truth may also come to him that,

Between our sins and their reward
We set the passion of Thy Son our Lord.

We should also try to teach it so that though always beyond the child's comprehension, it may never conflict with his moral sense. "We must be careful, scrupulously careful, to avoid language which would imply that Jesus is more loving and merciful than the Father."

"The idea of injustice could never have arisen if it had been remembered :—

(1) "The sacrifice was self-sacrifice."

"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

"The atoning work of Christ takes its rise in the Divine Fatherhood, it is the means which the Father has Himself devised that His banished may return."

(2) The sacrifice is not apart from us, it is only in union with Christ that it avails for our pardon.

St. Paul did not say that Christ died that we might not die ; he says, "we thus judge that One died for all, therefore all died".

The sacrifice of the Head avails for the members.

(3) What God does for us He then does in us.
Forgiveness does not mean being let off the punishment. It is not to escape from punishment that we want, but to be free

from the love of evil, from the liking to do what is wrong. This He gives. His power over sin becomes ours.

The Burial (xv. 42-47).

The Resurrection (xvi. 1-8).

“The Resurrection was not a return to bodily life under the old conditions but rather a rising from death into glorious spiritual life with power to manifest Himself at will to men in this world. He did not dwell with His friends as before, but appeared to them and talked with them from time to time.” “Our senses can only grasp that which is kindred to themselves.”
—WESTCOTT.

“What are the laws of nature? To me perhaps the rising of One from the dead were no violation of these laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper law, now first penetrated into, and by spiritual force brought to bear on us with its material force.”
—CARLYLE.

Summary of the Events after the Resurrection, written by another hand (see St. Mark, Appendix, xvi. 9-20). For the details we must turn to the other Gospels.

1. *Appearances after the Resurrection* (xvi. 9-14, cf. St. John).
2. *The Last Command* (xvi. 15-18).
3. *The Ascension* (xvi. 19, 20; Heb. x. 12).

“Up into heaven”—not to be taken literally. Cf. the phrase to move up into a higher class.

“The Resurrection of Christ was followed by His Ascension, or withdrawal from life on earth to life in the unseen spiritual world. . . . It was followed, after a very brief interval, by the great outburst of spiritual power that occurred on the Day of Pentecost. That event consisted in a fresh movement of the Holy Spirit, who then entered upon a

larger and more effective work in men, not temporary, but continuous. So far as it concerns the world, the present activity of Christ is represented by the activity of the Holy Spirit.”—CLARKE.

“‘Sat down at the right hand of God.’ This primitive sentence describes as nearly and as simply as human language can describe the double truth that Christ still is, and His work is.”—SANDAY, *H.D.B.*

“But the one thing that has to be realized is that, just as in one of us the conscious self is but a small portion of the true self, and such imperfect description as we can give of the history of the conscious self most inadequately represents the real fortunes of a soul travelling between two immensities, so *a fortiori* does the written record that has come down to us utterly come short of the real history of the Son of Man. We must bear this in mind and never allow ourselves to forget it, but carefully adapt both our language and our judgments to these conditions.”¹

Repetition.

Hymn.

“God who created me
Nimble and light of limb,
In three elements free,
To run, to ride, to swim:
Not when the sense is dim,
But now from the heart of joy
I would remember Him:
Take the thanks of a boy.

Jesu, King and Lord,
Whose are my foes to fight,
Gird me with Thy sword
Swift and sharp and bright.
Thee would I serve if I might—
And conquer if I can,
From day dawn till night:
Take the strength of a man.”—H. C. BEECHING.

Luke XXII. 24-27, XI. 9-13, XII. 22-35, X. 25-28; Matt. XVIII. 21-22.

¹ Sanday, “Christologies, Ancient and Modern”.

SCENES FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

N.B.—Probably some of the work of Year IV can be taken or revised here.

The Acts of the Apostles or, as it has been termed, “The Gospel of the Holy Spirit,” is a record of what Jesus continued to do through His Spirit, or the beginning of the History of the Church.

“The History of the Church of God is the spiritual side of universal history since man’s appearance on the earth, just as Economic History is its economic side. It is not to be limited to the outward fortunes of sects and churches, or the growth of institutions and forms of thought. . . . It is the working out in time of God’s eternal thought of mercy. . . . Nevertheless, it is usually convenient to narrow again the meaning of Church History by leaving out of its direct purview everything that took place before the coming of our Lord, or outside the visible societies which trace their origin to Him; and this is the common use of the term.”

1. *The Apostles or Leaders* (Acts III. 1-12, IV., V. 17-42).

“Here were these men who before seemed a quite impracticable regiment for a crusade and now how do we find them? They are magnetic with a new power and draw strong men and wise about them; elders and scribes and high priests we read, ‘took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus’.”

2. *The Rank and File.*

All felt they were brothers and sisters. None must be without food or clothes. How were the means to be found? “They sold their goods.” Though this way of expressing their brotherliness was only temporary, the spirit was one of the essential elements in the new organisation, e.g. St. Paul’s collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem. See p. 53 and the story of Onesimus (Philem. 16).

N.B.—If Christians really cared for their brothers and sisters under the poverty line, it would surely not be beyond the power of the present generation to think out remedies for unemployment, drink, poverty, and disease. It is this development in

children of the spirit of brotherhood, of caring for others, that is needed.

“It is the spirit of the men who care that makes the upward movement of mankind.”

3. *The Seven* (Acts vi. 1-7).

(a) Reasons for appointment. Dispute between the Jews who spoke Aramaic and those who spoke Greek and probably came from foreign parts.

(b) Their duties—“to serve tables,” provide for the daily meals of the needy members of the community, leaving the Apostles free for the work of prayer and the service of the Word; some suggest it meant the keeping of accounts.

(c) Qualifications. Let the children discuss what would be needed. Practical ability, fairness, and good judgment. All these were wanted, but something more too. This qualification is needed still by all workers in the Church, however humble (see Acts vi. 3).

STEPHEN.

1. *His Characteristics and Teaching* (vi. 8-10).

He was a wonderful speaker. “Men were powerless to withstand the wisdom and spirit with which he spake.” He felt:—

(a) That the Church would not always be limited to the Jewish people.

(b) That the Temple was not always to be the special dwelling-place of God.

2. *His Trial* (vi. 11-15).

“His face as the face of an angel,” tried before the same Court as his Master and probably before the same men.

3. *His Martyrdom* (vii. 57-60).

“As one man they fell upon him, dragging him beyond the gates of the city to the place where he was to be stoned as a blasphemer. In that raging sea of human passions, Stephen alone remained unmoved. The vision of the Divine Master was still upon him, and as the stones flew he spoke only to Him: “Lord

Jesus receive my spirit, Lord lay not this sin to their charge”.

N.B.—The murder of St. Stephen was followed by a general persecution. In a few days the Apostles were the only Christians left at Jerusalem. Have a map and let children revise and tell by whom the Church was extended to (a) Samaria, (b) Joppa, (c) Cæsarea. There must have been many others preaching, but St. Luke does not tell us about them; perhaps he had no authentic records. He gives us a short account of the work of St. Peter and St. Philip and of the greatest missionary of all.

ST. PAUL.¹

1. *His Education.*—Boyhood spent at Tarsus. His father probably a man of some wealth. The province of Cilicia consisted of a fertile plain, and produced wool suitable for tent-hangings.

(a) St. Paul, like all Jewish boys, learnt a trade—in his case, that of tent-making.

(b) He would study Greek philosophy. “Tarsus was a town well provided with the means of culture, which surpassed even Athens and Alexandria in its zealous pursuit of philosophy and all sciences.”—DELITZSCH.

(c) His religious education. (1) By his parents, e.g. stories of Abraham, David, etc.; (2) By the teaching in the synagogue; (3) In Jerusalem at the great schools of the Rabbis (Acts xxii. 3). Here he could live with his married sister.

“His Hebrew parentage enabled him to understand what it was to be a member of a chosen people. His Greek training equipped him for the task of presenting an Eastern revelation in the language of the West. His Roman citizenship taught him the power of a vast imperialism, and could never let him stop short of the conception of a world unity and a universal Kingdom of God. Paul the Hebrew, Paul the Greek, Paul the Roman—all these went to the making of Paul the Apostle of Unity in Christ.”

Note that St. Paul had probably left Jerusalem

¹ If possible, let the teacher prepare by reading Frederick Myer's “St. Paul”.

before Christ's ministry began. But we find him there at the martyrdom of Stephen, and he is soon known as the leader of the persecution against the new sect (Acts VIII. 3, XXII. 4, 5, XXVI. 9-11).

2. *His Conversion and Baptism* (Acts IX. 1-19, XXII. 6-21, XXVI. 12-19).

N.B.—"Of the three accounts of this momentous event, one is by the author of the book, the other two are attributed by him to St. Paul. The second, which is found in St. Paul's defence of himself before a Jewish mob, agrees closely with the first, only amplifying it here and there as one would be likely to do who told the story under circumstances of strong excitement. The third shows every sign of careful preparation and is part of the defence before Agrippa. It is practically certain that St. Luke would have opportunities of submitting to St. Paul his drafts of both speeches before they were used for his book."¹

The straight street still crosses the city from east to west.

"In Damascus he entered on the new life of witness to Christ which ended thirty years afterwards at Rome. Not for an hour during those years of unremitting toil did St. Paul doubt the truth of the vision which turned him right round, or hesitate to accept the consequences of his belief in it."—SWETE.

3. *His Preparation for the Work* (twelve years). Cf. training necessary for professions: ministers, doctors, etc.

Let the children give other examples of long preparation, e.g. Moses.

(a) He began to preach at once in Damascus (Acts IX. 20-22). After this his life was attempted, both at Damascus and in Jerusalem (Acts IX. 23-30).

(b) He goes into Arabia to be quiet by himself (Gal. I. 17).

Let the children realize what a shock it must have been to him to find that it was he who had been in the wrong and not the Christians.

(c) Then home to Tarsus, where several years later, Barnabas comes for him.

¹ Dr. Swete, adapted.

HIS WORK.

1. *Its Beginning* (Acts XIII. 1-3). Antioch, a magnificent and wealthy city, a centre of world-wide commerce. Probably the Church here was started by some Greek-speaking members, who were dispersed after the death of Stephen; and it became second only to the Jerusalem Church in numbers and importance. Barnabas is sent to look after it. He thinks Paul is the man to teach there, so he fetches him from Tarsus.

“In the spring of A.D. 47 a solemn meeting was being conducted in the congregation at Antioch by a group of prophets and teachers; it may be they were seeking light as to the next step which was to be taken.”

During the service the Spirit spoke by one of the prophets. There was a further service of fasting and prayer and the two were separated by the laying on of hands and so dismissed. The Holy Spirit sent them forth and led the way.

2. *Its Progress* (see Year IV).

(a) *First Missionary Journey* (Acts XIII. 4-XIV. 28). Let the children trace it on the map and revise one or two typical stories, e.g. Lystra, Antioch.

This was a rapid preaching tour in Asia Minor: always to the Jew first.

(b) *Second and Third Missionary Journeys* (Acts xv. 36-xxi. 17). Through Asia Minor to Troas. Note the meeting there with a doctor who became Paul's closest friend and the historian of the Early Church. Then his plan of campaign was altered; he went to large cities and stayed a long time at most of them, Philippi, Corinth (two and a half years), and Ephesus (three years).

3. *Its Aim*.

To make Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire (see map).

“Never was there a preacher more earnest and enthusiastic than St. Paul. Himself he had long ago forgotten. He had sunk his very being in the Lord he loved. So utterly engrossed indeed was he in the work of Christ's Kingdom that no other interest seems to have dwelt for a moment in his soul. He

passes through the grandest scenery in the world without even an allusion to it. War and politics might not exist for any notice he takes of them. His heart is with his Saviour, his interests are in heaven and the one work to which he bends the whole energies of his mighty spirit is the work of making men love Christ and of delivering them from the slavery of sin."

His Martyrdom (2 Tim. iv.). His martyrdom is not recorded in the Bible. Tradition marks the spot three miles from the city gate of Rome.

N.B.—Before leaving the early times, it would be well for the children to have a lesson on Jerusalem and its destruction. See Appendix.

Stories of Modern Christian heroes might be given here. Sir John Nicholson, Sir H. Havelock and other heroes of the Indian mutiny. Henry Martyn, Pastor Hsi,¹ John Wesley, etc.

THE BIBLE.

It would be well for the teacher, to make constant use of a time line or chart as the children will find it difficult to realize such great stretches of time.

"THE DIVINE LIBRARY."

Derivation, *Biblia*, originally plural noun = books.

1. "*Two Shelves of Books by many Writers.*"

One shelf by Hebrew writers, the other in Greek. It might be well to copy some of the Hebrew and Greek letters of the alphabet on the blackboard for the children to see.

2. *When Written.*

(a) The writers of the Hebrew shelf lived, roughly speaking, during the period 1100 B.C. to 100 B.C.

(b) The writers of the Greek shelf lived during the period A.D. 50 to A.D. 100.

¹ Taylor, "Life of Pastor Hsi," Morgan Scott, 1s. 6d.; "John Nicholson," 1s. Nelson.

3. *Contents of the Shelves.*

(a) Hebrew shelf. Stories of national heroes, state records, codes of law, poetry, proverbs, drama.

(b) Greek shelf. History, correspondence, Apocalypse.

“It took about 800 years for the Bible (the Old Testament) to grow up. Think what a long time this is. In 1066 the battle of Hastings was fought and William the Conqueror was King of England. Imagine a book begun while William the Conqueror was King of England and finished when Victoria was Queen and you have an idea of how long it took before the Bible was finished . . . the oldest bit is not on the first page and the latest bit on the last—the ages are jumbled up together and most of the many books are themselves growths with old bits in them and new bits and in between bits as well.”—MONTEFIORE.

THE UNITY OF THE BIBLE.

The Bible is a record of the Revelation of God to man through man. This is the thread which binds all these different books into one whole.

How was this Revelation made? By inspiration, i.e. in-breathing (*spiro* = I breathe).

“The inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.”

“Man spoke from God being moved by the Holy Ghost.”

“The revelation of God is not made by a miraculous dictation of words and sentences: it is made through human lives and human thoughts. You may take your little sister’s hand in your stronger hand and squeeze her fingers against a pen and make her write what you choose. That was not God’s way.”—ARMITAGE ROBINSON.

The writers of the books of the Bible lived near God and became able to understand truths about Him, and then wrote them down in their own words (see Isaiah, Amos, etc.). They were, “God’s penmen, not His pens”.

“Inspiration is not defined in Scripture . . . but no Christian who makes the prophetic and apostolic writings his guide . . . will doubt that there is a true sense in which these books stand alone as a Divine Library.”

THE BOOKS ON THE HEBREW SHELF.

1. *Early Songs and Stories.*

“The literature of every people begins with legends or

tales. . . . These recite the deeds of their national heroes, and formed the elementary education of the young before writing and reading were invented," e.g. Norwegian Saga, the stories of Homer, the Arthurian Legends.

Picture the early days of the Jews. A pastoral people, living in black goatskin tents, always on the move with their flocks and herds, sometimes fighting. At night round the camp fire stirring deeds of old-time heroes would be told to the growing children. In order to remember them better, they were often turned into poetry.

The oldest song in the Bible is supposed to be the Song of Deborah (11th century B.C., Judges v.). Let the children read it and find others:—

The song of Moses (Exod. xv. 1-22).

The song of the Bow (2 Sam. 1. 17-27).

The song of the Battle of Beth-horon (Josh. x. 12-14); the two last taken from the "Book of Jasher".

It would be well to spend some time here on the point that poetry is not necessarily true in a literal sense. Figures of speech are essential to it. Let the children give instances from the recitations they know, e.g. "Footprints on the sands of Time" (Longfellow's "Psalm of Life"). Note that Eastern peoples are very fond of imagery and use it in everyday conversation, e.g. "the sun stood still" (Josh. x. 12, 13), "the floods clap their hands" (Ps. xcvi. 9, cf. Aladdin).

Some stories were handed down in prose, e.g. the Flood, Gideon, Cain and Abel.

2. *Written Records.*

(a) *Before the Exile.*

Gradually these songs and stories were written down and put together in such books as "The Book of the Wars of the Lord" (Num. xxi. 14), "The Book of Jasher". Copies may have been made in the schools of the prophets as early as the days of Samuel, written probably on skins of animals and later on papyrus.

"Perhaps the commonest ancient method was to

take such skins and make a length, sometimes as great as 50 yards by about $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards wide, and keep it rolled up on a stick. This was called a volume. 'volume' = 'rolled-up' (*rolvo* = a roll). . . . All sorts of things have been used, plates of lead and copper, the bark of trees, bricks, stone, wood, the leaves of palm and other trees, the Egyptian papyrus, the skins of goats and sheep, linen, silk and horn. The verses of Hesiod, the earliest Greek poet, were written on tables of lead, the laws of Solon on wooden planks."

"*Biblos* in Greek means 'book,' so-called from '*byblos*,' the inner bark of the papyrus reed."

(b) *During the Exile.*

It is thought that the Jews had very few written records up to this time.

Review the story of the exile, reminding the children of the contrast between Jerusalem and Babylon. The people were strangers in a strange land, "a forlorn handful among a teeming population". There was no temple; no sacrifices were offered. The children will realize how any records of their own national life would be treasured, and how they would want to write down:—

- (1) Stories which hitherto may only have been handed down by word of mouth, e.g. Elijah, David;
- (2) The words of some of the prophets, e.g. Amos and Hosea.

"It is perhaps the case that Isaiah's words were not committed to writing in his lifetime, but were sealed up among his disciples; they preserved *orally* the tradition of Isaiah's teaching, only committing it to writing during the exile."—KENNETT.

Tell the children that Eastern peoples have a remarkable power of memorizing. Many Mohammedans learn the Koran by heart, and Chinese the words of Confucius; and it is not an uncommon thing for an Indian student nowadays to learn some of his textbooks by heart.

(c) After the Exile.

It is thought that Ezekiel edited much of the old Law during the exile, which work was continued by Ezra afterwards. This is apparently the Law which the leaders signed in 433 B.C. (see p. 96).

Let the children picture :—

- (1) How busy Ezra and the scribes must have been beforehand, putting together all the old documents they had collected from the Jews in Babylonia, Judah, and Samaria, and adding to them.
- (2) The scene of the reading. Ezra in a pulpit of wood ;
- (3) The affixing of the seals. Illustrate this point by the use of seals in ancient and modern history (cf. the signing of the Magna Charta).

At this point in the lesson the children should be told that they have the very books to which the signatures were affixed. Let them turn to their Bibles and find the five books of the Pentateuch (= fivefold volume). This is what is referred to in the New Testament as the Law (Matt. xxii. 40). It was called the Law of Moses and came to be thought of as written by him (Luke xvi. 29).

During the century that followed, the writings of the prophets were collected, and, with the earlier historical books (Joshua to Kings) formed the Canon of the Prophets (Canon, a Greek word = a measured space, hence a division).

The children have now heard about two of the three main divisions of the Old Testament, e.g. :—

A. *The Canon of the Law.*

B. *The Canon of the Prophets.*

N.B.—Let the children compile a table of the books under the above headings.

What books are still left out? Let the children turn to their Bibles and find out. Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah and Chroniclès. These formed the Third Canon of the Hebrew

Scriptures. "It is a heterogeneous group of histories, prophecies, stories, and wisdom books." This Canon came to be called, from the title of its chief book :—

C. The Canon of the Psalms.

"All things . . . which are written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning me" (Luke xxiv. 44).

"The Revelation of God is the whole purpose of the Bible; and this should be our reward too in our use of the Bible. The books of the Bible represent an age-long struggle of the men of old days to know of God, until at last the perfect Revelation came in Jesus Christ."

Repetition.

Micah vi. 6-8; Isa. lx. 1-11, 18-20.

SOME BOOKS ON THE HEBREW SHELF.¹

A. GENESIS I.-XI.

Introduce by letting the children tell what they know of the contents of Genesis—Lives of Abraham, Joseph, etc.

1. *The Creation Story.*

Genesis = beginnings. The first eleven chapters tell us what was thought in very early times about the beginnings of the world.

Compare ancient and modern methods of writing.

(1) An English History Book—the writer has perhaps recourse to reference libraries; consults authorities, makes extracts and acknowledges them (teach the use of inverted commas), but most of it is in his own words, and his name appears on the title page.

In the compilation of Genesis (first volume of the Pentateuch) no author's names are affixed. Learned men who understand Hebrew explain to us that the final editor had two documents to work from—one written during the exile (called the priestly one), the other a combination of Deuteronomy and some very old ones of the ninth and eighth centuries B.C. In some cases he found two accounts of the same thing, and often inserted both in his

¹ See Driver, "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament": Genesis (Westminster Commentaries); and "Century Bible": Genesis.

compilation. Thus the account of the Creation in Gen. 1. to 11. 4a is from the later (priestly) document, and that in Genesis 11. 4b to 25 is from the earlier documents.

N.B.—The two accounts of the Creation represent two different stages of religious thought—separated by 300 years. Evidently the editor realized that the later account was a truer conception; and he put it first.

Sometimes it is evident that the old narratives have been rewritten and sometimes we may have woven into one chapter, words and short accounts, from writers who lived centuries apart with nothing to show one, who cannot read it in the original tongue, that it is not all by one hand.

The writers to whom we owe these chapters report faithfully what was currently believed among the Hebrews 2000 to 2800 years ago (and probably what had been believed among the Babylonians thousands of years before the book was written) respecting the early history of mankind. But there was much that they did not and could not know. The Hebrews were quite sure that the world was created by God; but they thought He had made it all at once—in six days perhaps. We know now from God's other book of Science that it took thousands and thousands of years. Relics of man have been found in company with mammals now extinct which go to prove his high antiquity.

“God could make a mighty oak all at once, but it is no less wonderful that He should make it gradually, causing it to grow out of a little acorn of which we can carry a dozen in our hands; yet everyone of which contains a germ endued with power to carry on a succession of mighty oaks in the ages to come.”

N.B.—It would be well to tell the children that all the peoples of the world have their stories of how the world was made, that there is a very old Assyrian story which is very like the Jewish story and yet very different. The other nations told the tale of gods good and gods evil striving with one another, and the gods themselves were created. All is confusion and disorder. But the Hebrew poet opens with the simple words “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”. He put in the true ideas about the one God, the Creator of Heaven and earth, and the Father of the souls of men.

2. *The Creation of Man.*

After how many myriads of years we know not, man came forth, the summit of the whole creation.

Man—like the animals, but with something which the animals have not, “Man became a living soul” (Gen. ii. 7).

“Endowed with the faculty of Divine Communion.”¹ There is something in us which cannot be satisfied without God.

N.B.—“Science is as emphatic as ever Scripture was in declaring that man is the final issue of the whole—on his physical side he hardly differs more from the gorilla than the gorilla from the gibbon. So far he is simply an animal, like the rest, with substantially the same structure, and the same instincts and passions. He is really very little better than some of the other beasts, till we take him on the side of spirit, in mind and conscience, but there the difference is enormous. If this be taken into account, he hardly differs less from the gorilla than the gorilla differs from a stone.”²

“The general trend of modern science is to regard man as being developed gradually out of humbler ancestors, but at what moment and with what feelings man first awoke to consciousness of himself we know as little as we know of an infant child.”³

“It may be that whole cycles of existence are summarized in the phrase ‘God created man in His own image’. It may be that whole cycles of progressive probation are gathered up in the Fall.”

N.B.—Truth is apprehended and expressed differently in different ages of the world.

“All down the centuries, almost as far back as thought can go, there has been throughout the various races of mankind the persistent belief that God reveals Himself to man. The metaphor that has been most commonly used to describe this revelation has been the metaphor of ‘speaking’. One of the most primitive forms of it may be seen in the Hebrew tradition which relates how our first parents ‘heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day’ (Gen. iii. 8). The writer doubtless thought of a real voice, actually and literally heard. The Old Testament is full of stories of revelation conveyed directly through the senses of sight and hearing. . . . The men of that age really saw sights and heard sounds which they took to be, and which were for them, divine revelations.

¹ Westcott.

² Gwatkin, “The Knowledge of God,” p. 88.

³ Driver, “Genesis”.

The centuries pass, and not very long after the beginning of the Christian era we again open our Bibles and read: 'God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds' (Heb. 1. 1, 2). There is a world of theology, a broad comprehensive view of religious history, compressed in those brief clauses. And the view embodied in them lasted on with very little change of expression all across the Middle Ages. . . .

Then we are told that Luther, when asked whether God in person spoke with the prophets or not, replied, "God spake with them in their consciences, which the prophets held as sure and certain revelations".

That is exactly the right way to put it. When the prophets claimed that God spoke with them, it was the nearest way they had of describing the process that went on in their minds. Luther only describes the same process in a way that was better suited to his own age.

A modern writer expresses it thus, "How does divine inspiration act upon a writer? In two ways: first by strengthening and intensifying his natural powers, and second, by producing in him what W. James has called an uprush of the sub-conscious. I should prefer to call the last an inrush of the super-conscious. —Adapted.

"This is to place the belief in divine revelation, communicated through human media, on the reasoned basis of modern psychology.

The point that I would ask you to notice is the absolute continuity that runs through the process. . . . We might say that the most advanced conception of modern philosophy was all contained in germ in the simple primitive belief of the writer of the early document incorporated in the Book of Genesis. At no point in the series is there anything of the nature of contradiction: there is only a fuller and more exact explication of meanings already pre-supposed."¹

3. *The Story of the Garden of Eden.*

"This dramatizes, so to speak, the awakening of the sense of sin in the race and in the individual. It helps us

¹ Sanday, "Christologies, Ancient and Modern",

to interpret the distrust and fear which hinder our fellowship with God."

"It pictures a time when man's faculties were sufficiently developed for him to become conscious of a moral law, and that having become conscious of it, he broke it. It seems as if however immature in intellect and culture he may have been at the time, man failed in the trial to which he was exposed; and that consequently the subsequent development of the race was not simply what God intended it to be; it has been marred, perverted or thrown back."

"He had eaten of the tree of knowledge and so the idea is that he passed, as we all pass, from the innocence of childhood into the knowledge which belongs to adult age. . . . The power of distinguishing good and evil implies the power of estimating each at its proper worth—a capacity not possessed by little children."

"Every individual amongst us has emerged by gradual steps from the state of unconsciousness first into a state of sensitive consciousness; secondly into a state of moral consciousness."

"The serpent is not in the narrative identified with the Evil One. The O.T. does not mention the being whom we call "Satan" till the period of the Exile, and even then he is not the Tempter of the N.T. It was only later, when it had become usual to connect the power of evil with a person that those who looked back upon this narrative saw in the serpent the Evil One."

Verse 15 "lays down a great ethical principle. There is to be a continual spiritual struggle between man and the manifold temptations by which he is beset. Evil promptings and suggestions are ever assailing the sons of men and they must ever be exerting themselves to repel them. It is of course true, that the great and crowning defeat of man's spiritual adversary was accomplished by Him Who was in a special sense the seed of the woman—the representative of humanity Who overcame once and for all the power of the Evil One."—DRIVER.

A great educationist reminds us that the point to be kept in mind is not whether the stories are true, but the truth in the stories. The children should be taught the difference between historical truth and spiritual truth. They will soon feel the spiritual truth of the story of the Garden of Eden and think out its meaning for themselves.

4. *Cain and Abel.*

This narrative belongs to the cycle of popular stories current in ancient Israel—if we remember this we shall no longer be perplexed at the immense ages of the patriarchs, or marvel as to where Cain got his wife. In this story are wonderful spiritual truths, “the consequences to which an unsubdued temper may lead a man; the gradual steps by which in the end a deadly crime can be committed; God’s care for the guilty sinner, the interdependence upon one another of members of the human race, and the duties and obligations which we all owe to each other”. It would be well to point out “that the story speaks first of God’s interest in the man and only after that of His interest in the offering. The question was not which gift was most pleasing to God, but which soul,” and it is always the character and never the circumstances that measure the worth of man or woman. It is well sometimes to explain the Bible idioms. “Sin lying like a baby lion at the door of Cain’s heart. If Cain chose he could tame it, but if he did not do so at once, the lion would soon grow strong enough to spring upon him and destroy him. The child will understand the meaning easily.”

5. *The Flood.*

Stories of the flood are found amongst nearly every people. This fact does not argue that the flood actually covered the whole world. Rather the memory of some awful catastrophe occurring in the early home of mankind was carried with them by the people in their wide migrations. As with most other legends, we find in Babylonia the one which most nearly resembles the story of the

flood in Genesis. This fact makes it very profitable for the children to read the Babylonian account and to observe the differences, that they may again see how the inspired mind of the Genesis writer turned to deep religious teaching a legend which was the common property of all men.

The Babylonian story, as related in the cuneiform tablets is to be found in the British Museum Guide (see book list). The Hebrew writer has woven together two stories. It would be an interesting exercise for the children (if time permit) to try to separate the two stories and discover the differences. Thus they will gain their first and absolutely safe introduction to that Biblical criticism which has so often unsettled the faith of those who have first met it in some less natural way.—Adapted from L. S. HOUGHTON.

THE PSALMS.

Some of this teaching may be taken when the psalms are given for repetition. Let the children be encouraged to repeat any psalms they know.

(1) *By Whom Written.*

A hymn-book has many authors, e.g. modern hymns:—

“God moves in a mysterious way.”—COWPER.

“Awake, my Soul.”—BISHOP KEN.

“Glory to Thee.”—

“Jesus, Lover of my Soul.”—C. WESLEY.

In this old hymn-book the names of the authors are not given.

(a) Some were written by men who were feeling very happy and wanted to praise God (e.g. Ps. ciii.).

Children may suggest others.

(b) Some by men who were in great difficulties and felt that God was the only One who could help them (Ps. xlv.).

(c) Others by men who had done wrong and who were miserable till God forgave them (Ps. xxxii.).

“While the Prophets walked the streets of Jerusalem and visited the High Place of Bethel; and their names were coupled with those of the Kings, the Psalmists communed with their own hearts in their chambers, and were still, living unnoticed by the annalists of Israel and Judah.”—BARNES.

(2) *When Written.*

- (a) This collection of collections grew for some 800 years. Think of an English hymn-book begun at the Norman Conquest and continued to the present day. David probably wrote some (Pss. XXI., XXIII. ; 2 Sam. XXIII.).
- (b) Others seem to have been composed during the Exile (Ps. CXXXVII.).
- (c) Others when the Temple was desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes.

“A psalm may be the growth of more than one mind, of more than one age, and may have more than a single reference. A psalm which originally referred to domestic oppression (XIV.) is adapted, it seems, by a later age to refer to the repulse of foreign foes (LIII.). Thus the historical background may not be single but double.”—BARNES.

Note on the Imprecatory Psalms.

Amongst all these beautiful prayers we find some verses in which the writers wish ill to their enemies and ask God to take vengeance upon them (e.g. Ps. CXXXVII.).

Picture

- (a) The Hebrews carried away from their own country, and obliged to live in a foreign land far away.
- (b) Their captors request—“Sing us one of the songs of Zion” (in other words—of the Homeland).
- (c) Their passionate love for their country and their Temple—a good side of their character.
- “How can we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land?”
- (d) The brooding over past wrongs and hatred of their enemies—a bad side of their character.

They think,

- (i) of the Edomites, descendants of Abraham’s other son Ishmael, and curse them, for they perhaps were at the root of their trouble.
- (ii) of the Babylonians, in whose power they were, and whose babes they would gladly take and dash on the rocks.

This was before Christ came. It was Christ who taught: "Love your enemies," Who prayed when the Roman soldiers were nailing Him to the Cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do".

Who gives to His servants the power to return good for evil.

3. *By whom Used.*

(a) By the Jews.

(1) Some were sung when they were having their happy journeys to the feasts at Jerusalem. The Pilgrim Psalms (cxx.-cxxxviii.).

(2) Some on the evening of the Passover (Pss. cxiv.-cxviii.).

(3) Some in the services of the second Temple.

(b) By Christians. No book has been such a comfort to thousands of men and women in all the varied scenes of life.

(1) Livingstone. Menaced with death by savages, sickened by the atrocities of the slave trade—often prostrated by fever—tormented by poisonous insects, Ps. xxxvii. 5 was the text, he says, which sustained him at every turn of his course.¹

(2) Hannington in a miserable prison says, "I can hear no news, but was held up by Ps. xxx., which came with great power. A hyena howled near me last night, smelling a sick man, but I hope it is not to have me yet. This is his last entry. That day, at the age of thirty-seven, he was killed."

(3) Havelock. Psalm XLVI. was read by him one Sunday morning to encourage his garrison when they were in desperate extremities.

Many others in the terrible days of the Mutiny recall similar experiences.

¹ Prothero, "The Psalms in Human Life".

- (4) Hooper in the Fleet prison was comforted by Ps. LXXVII.
 (5) Ridley: CI. was his favourite psalm. His last words the night before his execution were Ps. IV. 9.

(c) By Christ Himself.

As a boy He must have learnt numbers of these psalms, and His last recorded words on the cross are, "Into Thy Hands I commend my Spirit" (Ps. XXXI. 5; see also St. Luke XXIV. 44).

N.B.—"There is one book of sacred poetry which is unique in its kind; which has nothing like it or second to it. Whenever the Book of Psalms began to be put together, and whenever it was completed; from that time in the history of the world the religious affections and the religious emotions, the object of which was the One Living God of all, found their final, their deepest, their unsurpassed expression. What is the idea of religion which appears on the face of every single psalm? It is the idea of the unfailing tenderness of God; the certainty that in the vastness and the catastrophes of the world the soul in its own singleness has a refuge; is held by the hand, is guided by the eye, of One who cares for the weakest, as much as He is greater than the greatest of His creatures."¹

Repetition.

Pss. CXXI. 3, CXXXIX. 23, 24, CXLIII. 10 can be used as prayers.

JOB.

The children will be interested in the story which is told us in the Prologue (ch. I. and II.) and the Epilogue (ch. XLII.).

The wonderful poem in the middle has been called the greatest masterpiece of the human mind.

It gives no certain answer to the difficulty which even children feel as to why troubles and pain and suffering are allowed, but it points to God's wonders of creation and preservation which are also very far beyond our comprehension and it has been said in the vision of God Job enters into peace.

In the New Testament we get nearer the solution for "Christ

¹ R. W. Church, "The Gifts of Civilization," p. 312.

has taught us that freedom from outward ills is not the greatest good”.

“Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity that of the New.”—BACON.

“Though He were a son yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, we feel that loss and suffering have a power which success and prosperity miss—a power to refine and strengthen character—and that some of the noblest work in the world is done by sufferers and through suffering.”—Adapted from ILLINGWORTH.

Repetition.

Job XXVIII. 12-18, 28

JONAH.

To many readers the whole book suggests inevitably that we are in a world of parable as surely as does the Pilgrim's Progress. Jeremiah compares the Babylonian captivity to the swallowing of the nation by a large dragon and the deliverance from the exile to being cast alive (Jer. LI. 34).

Our Lord's reference to the story of Jonah need not militate against this view. The illustration is equally forcible whether it is drawn from fact or allegory.

The book was probably written in the period following the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah.

The author is unknown, but he must have lived very near to God, for he realized, as few of his countrymen did, that God cared for all nations. He recognized that the Jews wanted the triumphs and goodness of their God *for themselves*, they did not wish other nations to share.

“The truth which the story conveys is of priceless value, and in it we reach the high-water mark of Old Testament teaching.”

Central Thought.

“The yearning love of God which gathers up in its infinite compassion, not only the most alien of nations, but even the beasts of the field.”

Give the story.

Jonah did not wish Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, to have any warning. The Assyrians had killed his people and burnt their homes.

When they repented, "it displeased him exceedingly"; he sulked alone (iv. 3). He feared for his own reputation as a prophet.

Jonah felt compassion for the gourd; he never thought of what God must feel for the thousands of "persons that cannot discern between their right and their left hand," i.e. little children and the "much cattle".

It has been said that there is no finer clause in all literature than the last verse.

THE GROWTH OF THE BOOKS ON THE GREEK SHELF.

"The second shelf of holy literature tells us who the Lord Jesus Christ was as men looked upon Him as He walked on earth, and who He was as thoughtful Christians interpreted the meaning of the life which had been lived, after He had passed back into the unseen world."—ARMITAGE ROBINSON.

INTRODUCTION.

Let the children read the contents of the Greek shelf. Ask them which books they think were written first.

The Epistles were written before the Gospels (with the exception of St. John). Let them think why? Explain that as long as St. Peter and St. John and the other disciples could tell the people about Jesus, no need for written records was felt. But when many of the men who had been friends of Jesus had fallen asleep, the Christians began to feel that it was important that some account of what He did, as well as what He said, should be written down (cf. Luke i. 1).

Of course they could not remember nearly everything, and did not write down even all they could remember. (See John xxi. 25, note Eastern hyperbole.)

"At the beginning of Christianity there stands neither book nor letter, but spirit and personality. The Infant Church had indeed what it deemed its all-sufficient 'Bible' in that great storehouse of devotion, of divine rules of life and conduct, of religious truth, which it had inherited from Judaism, the Old Testament; but Jesus Himself had not left a line behind Him, and as for the Gospel message, it was proclaimed exclusively by word of mouth."—LATIMER JACKSON.

I. THE EPISTLES.

It is thought that the earliest of St. Paul's Epistles to be written was 1 Thessalonians. (See p. 56.)

There are some letters also from other writers and one which is unsigned—to the Hebrews. Let the children find these.

II. THE GOSPELS.

A. *The Synoptic Gospels.*

“Of the four Gospels the first three (differing in class from the fourth) so often agree in subject, order and language that they are regarded as taking a common view of the facts and are hence called ‘synoptic’ seen together.” (Greek *syn* = with, *opsis* = view.)

When the events of Christ's life and teaching came to be written down there emerged two authoritative documents, one a narrative which is probably St. Mark's Gospel, the other a collection of sayings, called the Logia. (Greek *logos* = word, reasoned account.) Tradition ascribes the authorship of the latter to St. Matthew. This may have been circulated before any of the Epistles. St. Matthew's and St. Luke's Gospels are probably compiled from (1) St. Mark's Gospel, (2) the collection of sayings above mentioned, (3) other sources, probably oral.

1. *St. Mark's Gospel.*

That St. Mark's is the earliest of the four Gospels is universally allowed. It was probably written before A.D. 70.

Tell the children that the writers of the Gospels did not put their names to them. This was done later.

“The direct authorship of the Second Gospel by St. Mark has never been disputed in the Church.”

1. *The Story of St. Mark and how he Wrote His Gospel.*

(a) His home. His mother, the aunt of Barnabas, must have been a person of some importance in the Jerusalem Church. Her house was big enough for

a large prayer-meeting (Acts xii. 12). St. Mark may have seen Christ, but he was not one of the Twelve. St. Peter probably lodged at his house, and had taught John Mark about Christ.

- (b) He accompanies Paul and Barnabas on their first journey, his work probably lay in making "arrangements for travel, the provision of food and lodging, conveying messages, negotiating interviews and the like".

He turns back; the reason is unknown; he was not necessarily a coward, for he may not have agreed with St. Paul's welcome of Gentile converts.

- (c) He helps St. Paul again in after years (Philem. 24; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11).
- (d) St. Peter possibly did not speak Greek well; he would preach in Aramaic. Mark probably interpreted for him and wrote his letters (1. Pet. v. 13).

"One of the oldest and most trustworthy of Christian traditions represents Mark as St. Peter's interpreter, and as the author of a collection of memoirs which gave the substance of St. Peter's teaching."

- (e) Picture St. Peter's last days, in the time of the persecution under Nero. St. Paul may have already suffered martyrdom, and St. Peter would be anxious to tell all he could remember to St. Mark, before the end came.

2. *St. Matthew's Gospel.*

- (a) Its length—twenty-eight chapters.
- (b) Reason for this. Let the children discover. There are long accounts of what Jesus said, e.g. the Sermon on the Mount. The author likes to put all Christ's teaching on one subject together. The children can find other examples of his love of arrangement (e.g. ch. xiii.).
- (c) The author has copied St. Mark and added to it another document, which was probably the Logia.
- (d) For what people was this Gospel written? (see Matt. i. 1).

3. *St. Luke's Gospel.*

Draw from the children what they already know about St. Luke (see p. 51).

- (a) St. Paul's great friend.
- (b) A doctor.
- (c) A historian.
- (d) The Acts not his first book (see Acts i. 1 ; Luke i. 3).
- (e) The contents. St. Mark's Gospel was used. Let the children find out what he put in that St. Mark has not. Parables, e.g. The Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the Pharisee and the Publican. These and many others are peculiar to St. Luke.
- (f) St. Luke tells us about Christ as a boy.
- (g) His plan was chronological. Contrast with St. Matthew's Gospel. If St. Matthew is primarily for the Jews, and St. Mark for the Gentiles, St. Luke is for everybody.

“In this Gospel Christ reveals Himself as the Physician, the Redeemer, and the supreme Master of mankind.”

B. *St. John's Gospel.*

“The fourth Gospel has a character of its own. The other three tell the story of our Lord's life. The fourth tells the story too, but it interprets it, and with reference to the interpretation the material is selected and arranged. The three picture our Lord as He lived among men and show Him as they, who were His companions, saw Him. The fourth sprang from like companionship, but companionship transfigured by the light of what He is.”

1. Let the children look at it and find out how they think it differs from the synoptic Gospels.

- (a) It is “rich in conversation”. Many talks ; e.g. St. John iv., vi., x., xiv., xv.
- (b) Many incidents are left out.
- (c) Some stories are given which the others have not told us, e.g. :—

The man born blind (St. John ix. 1-41).

N.B.—A lesson may be given on this story here.

- (d) Let them compare the Gospels of St. Mark and St. John, and find out that the latter tells us specially about the Judean ministry (cf. p. 44).

He fills in the gap of several months between St. Mark i. 13, and i. 14 (St. John i. 6-v. 47).

Most of the talks he records took place in Jerusalem, e.g. at the Feast of Tabernacles (St. John vii. 37-44).

2. This Gospel was written much later than the others; after the destruction of Jerusalem; perhaps as long as seventy years after Our Lord's life on earth was ended.
3. The author felt the time had come in the history of the Church when another account of Our Lord's teaching was needed. He wants the Christians to know Christ as he knows Him now.

"The old disciple needs no documents. . . . The whole is present in his memory, shaped by years of reflection, illuminated by the experience of a lifetime. He knows the Christ far better now than He knew Him in Galilee or Jerusalem half a century before."—*ARMITAGE ROBINSON.*

4. For the purpose of the Gospel see St. John xx. 31 (cf. St. Luke i. 3, 4). The phrase "Eternal Life" occurs seventeen times in this Gospel.

"Death," in this Gospel is not the separation of soul and body. That incident does not interrupt or change life. . . . Life begins when we are born from above; death, when we turn our eyes quite away from Christ and love (1 John iii. 14).—*INGE.*

All teachers will feel that large portions of St. John are outside the child's mental and spiritual experience—the more concrete details of Christ's life and direct teaching are more suitable for them. At the same time portions of the Gospel appeal strongly to them, e.g. St. John xiv. : "In My Father's house, are many mansions".

THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

“Lastly, we have the strange form of composition called Apocalypse or “Revelation,” where the truth is expressed in the form of visions. The second half of Daniel in the O.T., and St. John’s Revelation in the N.T., are the chief instances of this, but the principle is found working all through the Bible period. Many of the prophets received their message through a vision and spoke accordingly. St. Paul had his visions as well as St. John, but he left us no book containing them.”—FRERE.

The Book of the Revelation.

1. Probable date A.D., 90-96 the last years of the Emperor Domitian.
2. A book of visions. Truth embodied in symbolic form. An Apocalypse = unveiling.

Note, white is the emblem of purity, joy and victory; seven the symbol of completeness.

3. “The letter of an exiled prophet to the Christian congregations to whom he had ministered.”

The age of persecution was beginning (give the children some idea of what persecution meant during the reigns of Nero and Domitian). St. John writes to comfort the Christians. He tells them of “a triumphant and returning Christ”.

“It is impossible to doubt that the roll which contained St. John’s great letter to the parent churches in Asia was often in the hands of the daughter churches, and perhaps accompanied the confessors to the prisons where they awaited the martyr’s crown.”

4. Read to the children (Rev. XXI. 10-XXII. 5).

Let them imagine what it must have meant to these persecuted Christians to realize that the arena, with its wild beasts, was only a rough pathway to the Glory of the Eternal City (2 Cor. iv. 18).

Note the imagery; the writer’s ideal of beauty.

Streets of gold, each gate a single pearl, foundations of precious stones. The gates of the city are never shut—emblem of safety. Not only beautiful and safe, but happy because every one will not only

do what they like to do, but will like what they ought to do.

And they will be with Some one whom they love.

“His servants shall do Him service and they shall see His face.”

No tears, no sorrow, no pain, no unkindness, no sin, only those who are loving can enter. Therefore here we are to learn to love.

N.B.—“The elements in this wonderful picture—Paradise, the tree of life, the river of life date from the beginnings of Jewish literature. Much is taken from Ezekiel or Isaiah, but all these images are spiritualized by St. John and welded into one great vision of light and beauty of life. Even here when there is fullness of life and abundance of blessing for all, there is room for a ministry of mercy to the imperfect. There is the tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nation—not only the works of the perfected saints are to be found in the new Jerusalem, but everything worthily done, every fruit of human effort ‘all we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist not’ as ‘the broken arc’ but as ‘the perfect round’ . . . the issue of the conflict has really been decided and that now in part and ultimately in full completeness good will triumph over evil.”—C. GORE.

The child's view is at first bounded by the earthly home, the earthly city, and no Scripture teaching can be on right lines which does not help him to become an unselfish and capable citizen of this present world. “The Christian longs to see the social life of to-day healthier and happier, to enlarge its opportunities, and to make them available for all; on the other hand he believes that this life is only introductory to that which is to follow.” Therefore he cannot consent that men should live and train their children and his to live as if their lives could be rounded and realized here.

Repetition.

Revelations XXI. 22-27.

THE POWER OF THE BIBLE.

Let the children discuss the books they like. Point out how they get tired and grow out of some books, but that the Bible is good for the whole of our life. Illustrate by questioning the children as to the Bible

stories they learnt in Year I. They can understand much more now. In years to come they will know more still, but they will never thoroughly understand all it has to teach.

It is good for all sorts and conditions of men; from children at school to statesmen. Let the teacher give instances of the power of the Bible to change and inspire men's lives. The following stories are suggested:—

- (1) Luther's finding the dusty Bible in the library of the monastery and reading it. This afterwards affected the whole history of Europe.
- (2) The conversion of St. Augustine, who heard a voice saying "Take and read". He opened at Romans XIII. 13, 14.
- (3) General Gordon, who, even on active service, set aside a special time each day for the Bible.
- (4) Mr. Gladstone often worked sixteen hours a day and yet he found time for "the daily reading of some portion of Scripture. On most occasions of very sharp pressure or trial, some word of Scripture has come home to me."¹
- (5) Examples from the mission field.

THE USE OF THE BIBLE.

Let the teacher talk to the children about:—

- (1) The importance of possessing a Bible of their own.
- (2) Of using it.

Let him tell them that:—

In this book God still speaks to His children.
In it they too may learn to know Jesus Christ.
Whom to know is Life Eternal.

"These are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His Name."

¹ Morley, "Life of Gladstone," Vol. I, p. 201.

APPENDICES.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

These Commandments of the Jews did not mean more than they actually said. We interpret them in the light of the teaching of Christ, who said "I came not to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matt. v. 17).

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF THE ONE TRUE GOD.

"Deep down in every child's heart there is a mysterious yearning for union with a Being infinitely greater and holier than man, and this craving can only be satisfied by union with God."

"Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee."—AUGUSTINE.

Introduction.—The Story of Abram. Emphasize the point that a man living in the midst of a people worshipping many gods, distinguished the One True God, and obeyed (Gen. xii. 1-10; Heb. xi. 8-10).

1. *Our Duty to the One True God.*

(a) Fear Him, i.e. Be afraid of grieving Him.

(b) Love Him. "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments" (John xiv. 15).

If we knew what God was like, we could not help loving Him.

"We needs must love the highest when we see it."

2. Things that we sometimes put before God (cf. the common use of the word "idolize").

Money. The young ruler (Matt. xix. 16-23).

Work (cf. Wolsey, "If I had served my God as well as I have served my King, He would not have cast me off in my grey hairs").

Play.

Companions.

Clothes.

Our own way.

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THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF SPIRITUAL WORSHIP.

Introduction.—The story of the golden calf. Emphasize the difficulty the Children of Israel felt in not being allowed to make representations of God, when all the surrounding nations did so. Note that some non-Christian races have the same difficulty to-day.

N.B.—*Idolatry* was forbidden to the Jews. "We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man" (Acts xvii. 29).

1. *Worship a Duty.*

2. *What Worship is.*

Worship includes prayer and thanksgiving, but is greater than both. It is giving not asking (Ps. L. 23).

"Thanksgiving is an essential element of worship."—WESTCOTT.

3. *How are we to Worship.*

The story of the woman of Samaria. "In spirit and in truth" (John iv.). This is difficult. Some One has come into the world to show us what God is like.

"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (cf. John xiv. 9).

The Water under the Earth.—Referred to the old belief that the earth rested on the waters. "In those days not the Hebrews only but all thinkers believed there was a firmament, a solid arch between the earth and the sky, keeping the waters that were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. The writer of the story of Noah evidently pictured it full of windows which God opened when He sent the rain."

Jealousy.—Not necessarily an evil feeling; "it is but the anger and pain of insulted love".¹

Visit the Sins, etc.—Character, like features, inherited; but nevertheless each individual has a certain amount of responsibility for his own character. Cf. a child trained to steal.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF REVERENCE.

"God's Name stands for God."—DALE.

(Ps. xx. 1; Matt. xxviii. 19.)

1. *Swearing Forbidden.*—(Note the exception of oaths in a Court of Justice.) "This limited prohibition of perjury becomes the positive and universal injunction of truthfulness, i.e. the injunction to live and therefore to speak as in God's presence."

¹ Dale, "The Ten Commandments," p. 59.

Therefore many may prefer to include the lessons on truthfulness, found on page 7, in the teaching of this commandment.

2. *Irreverent Jokes.*

3. *Reverence for all that is specially set apart as God's, i.e. "holy".* His house (John 11. 13-17). His day. His book. Reverence in prayer.

4. *Reverence for all God's Handiwork.*—Care for flowers and trees; avoid wilful destruction. "The flower torn up and thrown upon the ground, the sea-bird shot upon the wing in the wantonness of skill—such actions, trivial as they seem, profoundly affect the character of the doers. When we violate the reverence due to God's creatures, we grow insensible to the joy which they can bring; we lose also the capacity for interpreting it."—WESTCOTT.

"Reverence = Fear with Respect and Affection—a combination of motives which should produce right conduct."

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF WORK AND REST.

1. Everyone ought to work either with his hands or with his head (2 Thess. 111. 10). The dignity of labour. "Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening."

"All true work is sacred: in all true work there is something of divineness."

"Who sweeps a room as to Thy laws
Makes that and the action fine."—HERBERT.

2. *Rest.*—Sabbath=rest. Emphasize the point: one day's rest in seven is a physical necessity. The children should remember not to make other people work on Sunday, e.g. buying sweets, unnecessary travelling.

3. *Difference between the Jewish Observance and Ours.*

(a) The Jews kept the seventh day holy: they still keep Saturday. Christians keep Sunday, the first day, because Christ rose from the dead on that day.

(b) To the Jews the Sabbath was primarily a day of rest, secondarily a day of worship. To the Christian, worship comes first, rest second.

4. *Discuss the best way of keeping Sunday.*—Treat it from the point of view of God's gift to man.

(a) Public worship.

(b) "Laying by in store" (1 Cor. xvi. 2).

(c) Works of mercy and necessity.

"Our Sunday—our rest day—has brought to us and to our country more than we can know. It has fixed a barrier against the rising flood of industrial tyranny. It has kept strong in us the sense of allegiance to an unseen power. It has been to every one of us an open gate of heaven, through which, if but for a moment, we have

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caught a glimpse of Him Who has made it a promise, a beginning, a rest, not from labour, but for labour."¹

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF OBEDIENCE.

Introduction.—Story of authority and obedience. (Gatty's Parables from Nature.)

To Whom Rendered.—To those of greater age, greater experience, greater knowledge and of superior character to ourselves.

Hence to:—

1. *Parents* (Eph. vi. 1).—We should love, honour, and help them, care for them and work for them.

e.g. The example of Christ (Luke 11. 51).

“For each of us, at the outset of our lives, all earthly authority is represented by the authority of the parent; and it is by a dutiful subjection to this that we are best prepared for our after-life as patriots and citizens.”

(2) *Those in Public Authority* (Rom. xiii. 1).—“Fear God; honour the King” (Matt. xxii. 15-22). The King, Parliament, Mayor, Town and County Councils, and all officials who carry on the government of the country. These should be worthy. If not, whose fault is it? The vote is a trust from God.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF LOVE.

Introduction.—The elementary ideas of justice which prevailed amongst the Jews, and are found to-day amongst uncivilized peoples (Matt. v. 38).

Note the development of humane laws in our own country; e.g. men used to be hung for sheep-stealing.

1. *The Sacredness of Human Life.*—We are made in the image of God (Gen. 1. 26).

The question of war comes under this head. Let the teacher be prepared to discuss this (see p. 13). With reference to the wars in the Old Testament, to judge the Children of Israel by Christian standards is like judging infants by twelve year old standards of right and wrong.

Emphasize that the careless spreading of infection is a breach of this law.

2. *Seeds of Murder.*—Hatred, malice, envy, temper (Matt. v. 21, 22; 1 John iii. 15). Illustrate by the story of Cain and Abel (Gen. iv.).

3. *These can only be Conquered by Love* (1 John iv. 8).

(a) Love expresses itself in small things as well as great;

¹ Westcott, “Christian Aspects of Life,” p. 138.

i.e. by unselfishness, thoughtfulness, courtesy, e.g. the story of Philemon.

“Politeness, though a minor duty, is a duty still” (cf. the motto of Winchester School: “Manners makyth man”).

“Life would be much more humane and attractive if the masses of the people were trained into consideration for others, i.e. making way for people in the street, throwing about orange-peel, etc.”¹

- (b) Kindness to animals. Love to animals and the lower creation; care in keeping pets; the cruelty of keeping wild birds in cages; ospreys; bearing reins; overloading horses.

“Our life with all it yields of joy and woe,
Of hope and fear,
Is just our chance o’ the prize of learning love.”—BROWNING.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF SELF-CONTROL.

This commandment teaches the sacredness of the whole man.

“He who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires and fears, is more a king.”—MILTON.

It is advisable that instruction on this head should be given to boys and girls separately.

Adultery is the sin of husband and wife not being faithful to each other, but under the Mosaic Law it also included all sins of impurity.

I. *Care of the Body* (1 Cor. vi. 15, 19).

- (a) General bodily cleanliness. Importance of sanitation and ventilation. Sleeping with bedroom windows open. Open-air treatment of consumptives. Disappearance of disease as cleanliness spreads.

- (b) More illness caused by over-eating and improper feeding than by want of food.

- (c) The dangers of alcohol. The children might be told that alcohol is a poison, that experiments prove that it impairs accuracy of vision and delicacy of touch; that total abstainers are accepted at lower premiums by life assurances; that in Arctic and tropical regions and in forced marches in war they are proved to have the most endurance.

Note that the country expends annually £160,000,000 on drink. This results directly in loss of employment; and indirectly in an enormous expenditure—

¹ Address at a conference on Moral Instruction in Training Colleges, by Sir Oliver Lodge.

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nearly double the drink bill—upon hospitals, asylums, prisons, workhouses, and inebriate homes.

2. *Purity of Thought.*—The story of the Holy Grail.

“His strength is as the strength of ten
Because his heart is pure.”—TENNYSON.

Two natures, higher and lower: Which is to govern? Cf. St. Paul, “I keep under my body”.

The children should be taught to avoid dirty thoughts, talk, books, pictures; for purity is seriously endangered by impure feelings and thoughts habitually indulged in.

“What a man *thinks*, that he is” (The Vedanta Philosophy).

Boys should be encouraged to have hobbies with which to occupy their spare time.

The expulsive power of a new affection. “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God” (Matt. v. 8).

3. *Control of the Tongue.*—“The tongue is a fire” (Jas. III. 6).

(a) Temper, quarrelling.

(b) “Answering back.”

(c) Saying what we think, irrespective of the feelings of others.

Illustrate by the story of Sir Isaac Newton and his dog. Let the children learn “He that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city”.

The teaching under this head is thought by some to belong to the Ninth Commandment.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF JUSTICE—FAIRNESS.

The beginnings of the sense of justice in a child are found in others' treatment of him, not in his treatment of others.

1. *As Applied to Ourselves.*—Appeal to the child's own sense of injustice if his knife, his books, are taken without his leave.

2. *As Applied to Others.*—The Golden Rule.

(a) Pilfering.

(b) Theft.

The children should be reminded that “finding” is not “keeping,” that articles should be taken to the police station, and should be warned against the receiving of stolen goods, buying things for which they cannot pay, and debt. (There are special temptations to dishonesty of this kind in domestic and other service.)

(c) The theft of time. A workman's time and energies, during his working hours, belong to his employer. Scamped

work. Note the serious results of such work, both to the character of the workman, and to the safety of the public, e.g. gas explosion through the carelessness of a plumber (Eph. vi. 5-7).

(d) "Copying" is stealing another child's work.

(e) Fairness in games. It is not fair to the other side to refuse to play out a losing game.

3. *As Applied to the Community.*—The British nation enjoys a world-wide reputation for fairness and justice.

"To none will we sell, delay, or deny justice."—"Magna Carta."

The rights of the community are not easily defined. There are cases in which the rights of the individual must be sacrificed to those of the community, e.g. example of private land wanted for a railway needed by the community.

Note the claims of the community as applied to the private expenditure of the individual. The right and wrong use of money. We are stewards, not owners. Sweating. "The fundamental Christian principle of the remuneration of labour—that the first charge upon any industry must be the proper maintenance of the labourer i.e. a 'living wage'."

"No Christian has a right to demand commodities at a price which he knows, or can ascertain, to be incompatible with the adequate remuneration of the worker and proper conditions of industry."

Gambling.—This point requires a lesson to itself. Let the children discuss it.

(a) "It seeks to gain by another's loss.

(b) It adds nothing to the common wealth.

(c) It destroys the spirit of brotherhood by emphasizing selfishness."—PAUL BULL.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF TRUTH.

See p. 24 for notes for teachers.

Introduction. The Story of Jacob.

(a) His deception (Gen. xxvii.). The acted lie, then the spoken lie.

(b) Tell the children shortly how Jacob was deceived by Laban, and had to serve fourteen years, and pass on to Gen. xxxii.

(c) The return. His fear of meeting Esau.

(d) The wonderful night (omit v. 32). "God worked a change in Jacob, and made him different."

(e) His deception by his sons (Gen. xxxvii.).

The story shows that deceit brings unhappiness; but the children should be led to look at the subject from a higher standpoint.

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"There shall in no wise enter into it . . . he that maketh . . . a lie" (Rev. xxi. 27). Why? Because God is Truth (John xiv. 6), and only the truthful can dwell with Him.

The weakest point in a character can be made the strongest.

1. *Untruthfulness Forbidden.*—A lie is the intention to deceive.

(a) The telling of half-truths.

(b) Prevarication.

(c) Exaggeration (Lat. *ex*=out of; *agger*=a mound; literally a heaping up).

(d) Deceiving by action (see above).

(e) Keeping back what we ought to tell. Note "the shirking of a difficulty by a pretence of understanding".

2. *Truthfulness Commanded.*—(Eph. iv. 25; John xviii. 37).

"Follow the Christ, the King,
Live pure, right wrong, speak true, else wherefore born."

—TENNYSON.

The beauty of truthfulness, as opposed to the horror of lying, which is an injury to the body corporate. Show how Society could not exist, except on a basis of truth-speaking and mutual confidence. Illustrate from the child's own experience. Explain what is meant by "keeping one's word". The children should be taught that confidences are sacred, and warned against gossip.

3. *Perjury and Slander Forbidden.*—Show the solemnity of oaths in a Court of Justice. Tell the old story of the three sieves of different meshes through which all talk about others should be sifted. (a) Is it true? (b) Is it kind? (c) Is it necessary? (cf. the rule for King Arthur's Knights "To speak no slander, no nor listen to it"). Note the few occasions on which tale-bearing is justified; e.g. to clear the innocent and to protect the defenceless.

4. *Truth is Wider than our Conception of it.*—This may be explained to the children by the story of the two knights who fought over the question as to whether a shield was gold or silver. It was both. Each had only seen one side of it.

"There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—SHAKESPEARE.

The scientific temper ought to permeate all educational work.

What is the scientific temper?

"The alertness of the mind to see things seen, quickness of observation, the power to see things as they really are; and the most difficult thing of all, the habit of exactitude in observation; accuracy, truth, thoroughness and sincerity of mind. . . . These are the fundamentals of all real knowledge, just as they are the fundamentals of all true art—truth in seeing, truth in thinking, and a certain reverent thoroughness in drawing truthful conclusions. This is the state of mind which a school should foster, and as it spreads throughout the nation, it would do more than anything else to deepen and increase what was strong and hopeful in the national life."¹

¹ Professor Michael Sadler, Address given at Colne, 12 Jan. 1910.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

THE LAW OF CONTENTMENT.

Introduction.—The story of Judas, showing that covetousness leads to worse sins.

Covetousness the sin of desiring *wrongfully* that which belongs to others.

“It is by no means intended to discourage effort after self-improvement, nor the desire to acquire a competency. . . . What is forbidden is that eager restless longing, or empty idle wishing, for a change of circumstance, which quickly breeds ill-will towards others and wastes time and strength in useless dreams and selfish repinings. It is this temper which is fatal to any right discharge of present duty.”

Note that at the time when the commandments were given the ox and the ass, and not silver and gold, were the recognized forms of wealth.

1. *Right Contentment.*—With our own surroundings, home, school, food, clothing; e.g. not wanting other children’s pleasures. Grumbling forbidden. Let the children learn Heb. xiii. 5, and give instances of the harm done by love of money.

2. *The Reason for Contentment.*—God’s Fatherhood.

Matt. vi. 25-34; Rom. viii. 28.

“There’s a Divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them as we will.”—SHAKESPEARE.

“I know not where His islands lift
Their froned palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.”—WHITTIER.

3. *Wrong Contentment.*—“Divine discontent.”

(a) With ourselves (cf. St. Paul, Phil. iii. 13, 14).

“The true ethical teacher is he who communicates to his pupil the contagion of striving.”—ADLER.

“You are not guilty because you are ignorant, but you are guilty when you resign yourselves to ignorance.”—MAZZINI.

(b) With wrong things and conditions. A low moral tone; the amount spent by the nation on drink and gambling; the liquor traffic in Nigeria, the opium trade in China; infant mortality; high death rate; epidemics; dirty bodies; dirty homes; ugly houses; ugly cities (cf. garden cities); waste of educational opportunities and readiness to swell the army of unskilled workmen—show that unskilled labour leads to unemployment because unemployable.

N.B.—“Our aim should be equality of opportunity for all.”

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.¹

(St. Matt. v. vi. vii.).

N.B.—There is some intimation that not all of this teaching was delivered at the same time, for some of it is as clearly addressed to the Apostles as other parts are to a larger circle of disciples. The Lord's Prayer may have been given on a different occasion and parts of the sermon are found in St. Luke in quite a different setting.

We must remember (1) that Christ's disciples would not write down what He said at once; and (2) they would not remember it all; (3) Christ may have repeated His teaching.

Let the children (1) picture the scene.

A mountain—high ground in the neighbourhood of the Lake. Perhaps there were such crowds that the shore was no longer a convenient place for giving instruction, and Christ goes up to one of the terraces on the hills above the Lake, perhaps one place where He so often taught that they commonly spoke of it as "the mountain". "Sat down" (cf. the method of Jewish speakers and our own).

(2) Think what the word "kingdom" must have meant to those who first listened. A grand earthly kingdom was what the Jews expected, but it was to be a kingdom for the Jews. The Samaritans would have no part in it, and certainly not the Romans. But who did this wonderful Rabbi (whom some said was the Messiah) say should belong to it?

The character of the citizens of the Kingdom (Matt. v. 1-13).

"The discourse opens with the Beatitudes about which it has often been remarked that the speaker goes clean contrary to the maxims and ideas of life and happiness which prevail and always have prevailed among mankind." It might be well to encourage the children to express their own ideas of what happiness consists in. They will not at first realize that it lies in what a man is, not in what he has.

"*The poor in spirit.*"¹ Explained by some as meaning "detached" (see Job i. 21) e.g. (Phil. ii. 6-8), by others "as absence of self-

¹ See Lyttleton, "Studies in the Sermon on the Mount," from which most of the quotations on the Beatitudes are taken.

assertion, a lowly idea of what one has to start with, hence a readiness to feel dependence. . . . We may conceive of Christ as sojourning amongst mankind and yearning to impart the Divine gift which we call spiritual life. . . . Only those can receive it who know themselves to have nothing."

Cf. "Blessed be ye poor" (Luke vi. 20). The children can understand the tendency to feel satisfied and independent engendered by possessing much of this world's goods.

"*They that mourn.*" The children will associate the idea of mourning with bereavement. In early days mourning was primarily connected with sorrow for sin, e.g. the story of Nineveh (Jonah 111.).

(i) Penitence as expressed in Psalm LI. is not as yet required of them; on the other hand, remembering that the time is approaching when childish faults become serious sins, they must not think that little faults do not matter, and they can already appreciate the contrast between St. Peter and Judas; one was truly sorry whilst the other had lost the power to be sorry.

(ii) Mourning for the sorrows of others means, for children, a call for active help, e.g. the giving up of time and pleasure to amuse a sick playmate, or an old person; cf. "all seek their own" with St. Paul's description of Timothy and Epaphroditus (Phil. 11. 19-30). Whether children grow up with sympathies developed or blind to the opportunities of service which lie around them is very much a matter of early training.

"*The meek.*" "Jesus does not say blessed are the weak, or those held under or despised, but the meek." This is the term He uses to describe Himself, "I am meek" (Matt. xi. 29). Later the prophet Zechariah is quoted as bidding the daughter of Zion "Behold thy King cometh unto the meek". "The term stands opposed to pride, not to majesty or strength, indeed no moral quality so taxes our courage or implies a more utter conquest of weakness by will." Let the children note what it is *not*. It is not what is called easy-going, it is not being easily led, it is not indifference to wrongdoing. It means self-conquest, self-restraint. Anger is no proof of strength. "It lies not in the power of letting oneself go, but in the power of holding oneself in."

"The meek—the gentle in the old and best sense, as in the poet Dekker's words:—

'The best of men
That e'er wore earth about Him was a sufferer,
A soft, "meek," patient, humble, tranquil spirit,
The first true gentleman that ever breathed.'

"We find gentleness exhibited in perfection by Our Lord during the stormy scenes of the Passion (see John xviii. 23). The gentleness that bears with provocation and controls irritation and refuses to resent personal injury."

N.B.—We feel above all in dealing with children the strength of meekness. “There is a sovereignty which belongs to an iron will; we all know it, and we all hate it. There is another sovereignty which belongs to mere violent temper; we hate that still more.” “But sooner or later we all come to believe the French writer’s aphorism ‘*La douceur est une force*,’ though the strength of our belief is very often insufficient to influence our conduct.”

“*They that hunger and thirst after righteousness.*” “The righteousness towards which we yearn is noted for one great characteristic. It discerns the nobleness of all honest imperfect endeavour, it feels the loveableness of soiled and stunted characters, and believes in boundless possibilities after a whole history of woeful collapse. . . . ‘For they shall be filled.’ When? The promise is certainly not limited to the life hereafter. . . . While grace may be conceived of as a guiding or an uplifting power giving light or bravery or self-command—the figure here employed is the truest, grace is a nourishment and it will be given to us in the measure of our desire.” This Beatitude may be paraphrased very simply. Those who want very much to be good, will one day be good.

“*The merciful.*” “The word ‘merciful’ may be taken to include something of the idea of compassion, and something of readiness to forgive; cf. the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant. ‘Mercy implies sensibility to all suffering. It covers every kind of degree of loving help. It is the echo in every human heart of the feeling of the Son of Man, when he took the children in His arms, when He had compassion on the multitude or when by His whole attitude towards pain he justified the prophecy ‘Himself bare our sins and carried our sorrows.’”

N.B.—“It has been said that we often demand self-expression from children on moral questions, in some cases where self-expression is impossible. The things that our experience make so vivid and real to us are not yet to them. We ask them for strong expressions of pity and love, for which the power is not in them.”

The teacher should remind the children of the duty of being merciful to all animals.

Note.—(1) They are given for our use; (2) they are entrusted to our care.

“*The pure in heart.*” Something might be said to the children of what the word “pure” means, as used in ordinary conversation, of a flower, water, snow, etc.—and then it may come home to them in connexion with themselves, how easily “purity” may be tarnished by careless words, or by foolish books, so that like the people at Nazareth of old, they cannot see goodness. They saw no “beauty in Him,” that they should desire Him.

“They shall see God.” “The unclouded vision of the truth itself

is the reward of those who have grown in obedience to the broken lights vouchsafed to them in this life."

"*The peacemakers.*" "The power of making peace is so wonderful a thing that we see in it something almost of a creative endowment."

However far this power may be seen to be beyond the average experience of the ordinary person, the children can see how very easy it is to do the opposite, and to help on quarrels by repeating careless remarks and hasty judgments. On a larger scale unfriendliness is stirred up in the same way amongst nations.

"The final responsibility of war may seem to rest with rulers or statesmen, but the motive power is generally due to the spirit of the people. War may seem to break out with the suddenness of a volcanic eruption, but the spirit which causes it is not the growth of a day or a year, neither is the peaceful temper which is the best of all safeguards against it."

"May the nations be poor in spirit—may Thy sons be true mourners for the sins and disorders of the world. Help us to make up quarrels between nations and kingdoms, and rich and poor, and everybody to be peacemakers."

"These Beatitudes give us the conditions upon which happiness is to be realized:—

They are poverty of spirit, or the sacrifice of independence; mourning, or the sacrifice of easy cheerfulness; meekness, or the sacrifice of self-will; hunger or thirst for righteousness, or the sacrifice of contentment; mercy, or the sacrifice of selfish comfort; purity, or the sacrifice of the desires of the flesh; eagerness to spread peace, or the sacrifice of self-assertion.

These measure the cost which must be faced by him who dares to be a disciple.

"*The persecuted.*" "The last Beatitude recalls the first, 'poor' or 'poor in spirit,' well describing the state of those who have suffered persecution." Let the children recall the stories of Jeremiah (Jer. xxxviii. 1-13), or Michaiah (1 Kings xxii.), and think in what sense could these men be considered happy and what effect may the enduring of persecution have on mind and character. Telling illustrations can be found in the History of Indian mission work.

"For My Sake." "This is the earliest recorded instance of the lofty claims which Jesus advances on His own behalf. The accumulated testimony of saints and Christian heroes, to the power of the personal relation with Christ, makes it hard for us to imagine the wholly unexpected character of such a saying as this. The Galilean carpenter begins His great discourse by affirming that the most vexatious and depressing of life's trials is pregnant with blessing, but that the blessing depends on it being borne for His sake."

The place of this character in the world.

"Ye are the salt of the earth" (v. 13-16).

“ Even after the lapse of centuries the intense vividness and abrupt challenge of these words arrests the attention in a striking way. It was the first instance of Our Lord’s unapproachable power of using as telling images the commonest objects of ordinary life. Salt is preservative, the salt we use cannot lose its savour. The Jews used a kind of rock salt from which they extracted the salt by means of water, leaving the clay as mud; it was possible for the salt to lose its savour in Palestine, where the word denoted the earthy mixture, and when it happened there was left simply a mass of mud or clay.”

In verse 15 a lamp placed on a stand in the middle of the courtyard would literally “give light unto all that were in the house”; e.g. to the rooms opening off the courtyard.

(d) *Bushel*.—“The one that is kept for measuring the corn” for the daily baking. One of these turned upside down over a lamp would effectually prevent its light from spreading.

The disciples must have been perplexed. How could they be like salt to the people around them? How could they be lights to the dark world? After the Day of Pentecost they knew what the words meant, and that they could reflect Him who said “I am the Light of the World” (John VIII. 12). See also 2 Corinthians iv. 4-6. Let the children learn vv. 13-16.

N.B.—It is suggested that a lesson might be given here on St. Stephen and St. Paul at Philippi, or a missionary story to illustrate the point and to show that there was some power, some light in these people which was not of earth.

Some laws of the new Kingdom (v. 17-26, and 33-48).

The crowd was beginning to wonder that Christ said nothing about the long list of laws of which their Rabbis were accustomed to speak.

“ The Master stood upon the Mount and taught;
He saw the fire in His disciples eyes.
‘ The Old Law,’ they said ‘ is wholly come to naught;
Behold a new world rise.’”—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Let the children note the contrast.

The old law says, I must not kill; the new law, I must not have angry thoughts.

The old law, I must not forswear myself; the new, all I say must be true.

To “pay people out” is the natural impulse. In the Old Testament times they did not know any better (cf. Imprecatory Psalms cix., cxxxvii.).

v. 41. The Jews had to help in the public transport system of the Empire as part of their taxation. They were not to grumble at this, but even do more than was imposed.

The Law of Love (v. 43-48).

The supreme Law of the Kingdom.

Picture again the listening crowd of Jews, strong in their pride of race, hating the Roman, the Samaritan, the Gentile. What astounding teaching was this which fell on their ears and who was He who dared to assume a greater authority than that of Moses! "But I say unto you, Love your enemies . . . that ye may be the sons of your Father which is in heaven." It must have seemed a quite impossible command.

It is easy to love those who are kind to us; but it is hard to be kind to those who are disagreeable to us.

"Not of course that we can feel alike towards all people; but we can set our will, or what the Bible calls our heart, to do them good."—GORE.

"To return evil for good is devilish; to return good for good is human; to return good for evil is divine."

The Religious Duties of the Citizens of the Kingdom.

Let the children read vi. 1. As Christ spoke these words, of whom would the listeners at once think? Of the Pharisees.

The Pharisees (Pharisee = separate) were thought to be the most religious people among the Jews.

- (a) Their appearance. They wore the two garments of the Jews, an under tunic coming to the knees, and an outer cloak, like a square shawl with tassels at the four corners. The Pharisees wore larger tassels, and big phylacteries (see Matt. xxiii. 5). These were two curious little leather boxes which at prayer times they fastened one on their forehead, and the other on the left arm. They contained verses from the Old Testament.
- (b) At prayer they liked to pray where people could see them.
- (c) Eastern people usually anoint their heads with oil (which is a protection against the sun); but when they fast they go unanointed and unwashed, and with unkempt hair; sometimes men put ashes on their head. These things the Pharisees did, so that people should think how good they were.
- (d) In a Jewish community men went round with a basket three times a day collecting alms for the poor, and on the Sabbath day collections were taken in the synagogue. The Pharisees liked to have the amounts they gave published.

The crowd is impressed with two words which the speaker is constantly using—"Your Father". Let the children find how many times this word "Father" is mentioned in the Sermon (chaps. v. to vii.). Revise the names by which God was known in the Old Testament. Jehovah (Exod. vi. 2). The Almighty (Ps. xci.). The Lord of Hosts (Ps. xxiv. 10). Only the prophets sometimes used the word "Father". These Jews knew how they took care of their own

children ; they loved them, and were proud of them. But it was quite a new idea that God felt to them like they felt to their children.

Christ's disciples were to practise the great religious duties of Almsgiving, Prayer, and Fasting ; they were to do it not in order to be seen of men, but in order to please their Father in heaven.

- (a) *Almsgiving* (our duty to our neighbour).—Their Father had other children who might be in want ; if they themselves had more than enough, they must share it. But they were not to do so in order that other people should think how kind they were. Perhaps no one else would know when they gave away something they really needed themselves, but the Father knew and He cared.
- (b) *Prayer* (our duty to God).—Prayer is talking to the heavenly Father. They could do this best alone ; somewhere where they would not be interrupted by other people, e.g. Christ (Luke vi. 12) ; Peter (Acts x. 9). "Saying prayers" not necessarily praying (Matt. vi. 7). Instance praying-wheels as used in Tibet.
- (c) *Fasting* (our duty to ourselves).—They were not to let other people know when they fasted.

N.B.—The duty of fasting to-day. Emphasize the need of self-control in eating, and show how often illness is caused by the lack of it. Self-indulgence leads to worse sins and unfits us for the work of life. Illustrate by a man in training for a race, soldiers on active service, explorers, etc. The body should be the perfect expression of the spirit.

The Lesson of Trust (Matt. vi. 19-34).

"They sat in the hollow between two peaks, seeing only the blue sky, with the birds hovering above them, and the stony hill-tops which, if it were spring, would be carpeted with anemones and lilies." Let the children learn or revise if learnt vi. 25-34 R.V.

(a) "Behold the birds of heaven" (Luke xii. 6, 7, 24).

Two nature lessons should be given ; one on birds (migration, nesting, etc.) ; the other on flowers.

Christ was brought up in the country ; there was no beauty or wonder of nature that would not appeal to Him.

"The birds of Palestine have feathers tinted like the rainbow, and strange names, hoopoe, roller, bulbul, sun-bird ; but your eyes would soon discover a gray lark in the sky, a blackbird on the hedge, and the dusty-breasted English sparrow on the path. There are also the wren, and the nightingale, the thrush and the swallow, the eagle, crow and partridge."

(b) "*Consider the lilies.*"

Some flower should be chosen, which is out at the time, if possible, with bright colouring. Each child should have a specimen.

The flowers in Palestine in April are particularly beautiful. There are "white daisies, crimson poppies, yellow marigolds, blue lupins, roses, geraniums, lilies and thousands of red anemones that hide the grass with their open flowers".

v. 30. Dried grass is burnt in the ovens in Palestine to heat them.

v. 18. Eastern wealth often consisted in costly stuffs which were very liable to be moth-eaten.

"Break through" refers to mud walls of Oriental houses.

v. 24. Mammon = a Syriac word for wealth.

v. 22. "Single" = simple, straightforward, healthy.

v. 25. "God gave the life, and the body; will He not also give the smaller gifts of food and clothing."

The Uncritical Temper (vii. 1-5).

The Pharisees often "judged" others. Judging is criticizing other people, talking about their faults. Christ's followers were to "make the best of people," as He Himself did. It is easy enough to see people's faults. If the disciples constantly did this, it showed that there was something very wrong in their own hearts.

N.B.—Always before we judge a man we should feel certain that we clearly see his goodness, though it may be only that possibility of goodness which belongs to him as a creature of God.—BIGG.

"For this true nobleness I seek in vain,
Thou find'st it not? I pray thee look again,
How is it with thee? Art thou sound and whole?
Doth narrow search show thee no earthly stain?
Be noble; and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping but never dead
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."—LOWELL.

The Golden Rule (vii. 12).

All this is summed up in the Golden Rule which the children should learn.

The Two Ways (vii. 13-14).

"How very hard it is to be a Christian,
Hard for you and me."—BROWNING.

Christ's listeners were now beginning to realize that the commands of this new teacher were very hard to fulfil. To obey them, He said, was like going in at a very narrow door, and climbing a steep path. It was much easier only to listen, and go on doing as they did before—like going in at a wide door, and walking down-hill along a smooth road.

So the crowds which surrounded the Son of Man gradually melted away, until, a few months later, only a few disciples were left, and the Master sadly said to them "Will ye also go away?"

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders (vii. 24-27).

Read or tell the story. Christ's listeners would understand it much better than we do. The rains in the East (which come all at one season in the year) are very violent.

Let the children think what was the house which all those people were building? Character. This could only be built up by repeated acts. Christ said that those who *did* what He told them were building up a character on a strong foundation, but those who only listened had a character which they would easily lose altogether when storms of temptation came.

N.B.—The teacher might well spend some time here on discussing the importance of character. The word literally means that which is cut or engraven, so it comes to signify that which is most marked in a man's life, what he is repeatedly doing or saying. "Repeated acts make character as repeated strokes of the engraver's tool make an outline on the steel or wood." So it is said "Acts form habits; habits form character; character determines destiny". Hence the importance of what may seem to be little isolated acts of disobedience, inattention, etc.

"We may be quite sure that countless little acts of cowardice and self-seeking had hardened the priest and Levite against the claim which was at last suddenly made upon their devotion—we may be quite sure that countless tender services of generous love had prepared the Samaritan to imperil himself without hesitation in the hope of saving a stranger and an alien. When the trial came it showed the men as they had grown to be."

(vii. 28 and 29.) The crowds that hung upon Christ's teaching felt, as the soldiers said later "Never man spake like this man". "No other discourse that ever was delivered has been so powerful a lever on human life as the Sermon on the Mount."

Repetition (v. 43-48; vi. 25-34, R.V.).

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Picture the Lord alone praying. At first His disciples did not understand His spending so much time in prayer (St. Mark i. 35). He stayed up very late, and got up early to pray and sometimes He spent the whole night in prayer; gradually they began to feel that they needed to learn to pray as He did. Picture them watching Him one day; when He had finished one of them said "Lord teach us to pray". This is the prayer He taught them:—

- i. Our Father Which art in Heaven.
- ii. (a) Hallowed be Thy name
(b) Thy kingdom come
(c) Thy will be done
As in heaven, so on earth.
- iii. (a) Our daily bread,
Give us this day.
(b) And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive them that trespass against us.
(c) And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil.

The prayer might be written on the blackboard as above, getting each clause from the children. They will then see that, after the address, it falls into two parts, three prayers for God's glory, three prayers for the needs of men. Note the order, and that part of the ending "For Thine is the Kingdom . . . ever" is found in an early document of Christian teaching dating from about A.D. 100.

As this prayer is used for collective worship in the school, some idea should be given to the children here that prayer is—

- (1) A duty which requires their best powers.

"Compare an examination room where men are competing for scholarships; eyes and ears and hands and brain are all held in complete subservience to the one master purpose of conquering a difficult task, and a congregation worshipping God; eyes, ears open to any sounds or sight which may affect them."

- (2) The power of prayer, like other powers, should grow, they should be able to pray better now than they did in the infant class, and they should be able to pray better still when they are grown up, e.g. great things have been done by men of prayer (St. Mark xi. 23).

“*Our Father.*”

“In one sense it is untrue, in another it is true to say Christ first revealed to men the Fatherhood of God. What was an occasional flash of intuition for the greater prophets was with Him an abiding vision of which His whole life was one continuous utterance.”

- (1) Every father is particularly interested in his own children, he understands them, cares for them. God is the Father of everyone, all equally dear to Him.
- (2) “God’s Fatherhood means His individual love. With God every man counts for one, nobody counts for more than one. . . . God knows you and me and acts upon you and me, as if there were none other in the world for Him to know and act on.”
- (3) “Everyone wishes to be understood. . . . I go to talk to God because He understands me.”—CREIGHTON.

N.B.—Sometimes it will be felt that to the majority of the class the word father does not bring these associations, and to bring home to them the idea wanted, the illustration of the mother, or the teacher, or any one to whom the child knows that he is dear, may be useful.

“*Our*”—not “*my*”. We are to begin this prayer thinking of all God’s children, rich or poor, black and white, not only of ourselves.

N.B.—It would be helpful sometimes for the children to be taught to say the Lord’s Prayer thinking specially of

- (1) Missionaries in whom the children are interested;
- (2) Their own town and school;
- (3) People who are out of work, etc.

“*Which art in Heaven.*”

Yet One “to whom the slightest motion of the heart and will is audible”.

The child’s first idea of Heaven above the sky should be gradually extended to Ps. cxxxix. 8-12: “If I ascend up into Heaven thou art there”. God is, where goodness is, where love is.

“*Hallowed be Thy Name.*”

- (a) By our lips, the duty of worship and reverence in worship. See page 3 Appendix.
- (b) In our lives, e.g. :—
 - (1) Christ’s life.

“The petitions of the Lord’s Prayer are justly considered as a summary of the principal aims of Christ’s life and work on earth, and of these the hallowing of His Father’s Name was among the first. ‘I have glorified thee on the

earth . . . I have manifested Thy Name ' ' (St. John xvii. 4, 6).

- (2) In the lives of the early Christians.

“The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.” What sort of reputation, had they among their neighbours. “See how these Christians love one another, cried the heathen.” “God is love,” and these people showed they were His children by their likeness to Him (St. Matt. v. 16).

- (3) The prophets of old were filled with indignation when they began to understand God’s character and saw how His chosen people brought dishonour on His Name amongst the heathen nations by their wicked lives.

Christian nations sometimes now do the same thing, and when Christians do not pay their debts or are selfish and hard on others, they dishonour the Name of God amongst those who do not profess to serve Him.

“Thy Kingdom come.”

The Kingdom is where love is. We are taught to pray that this Kingdom may be realized here in this world; that every one may serve Christ as King.

- (1) It is a prayer for Foreign Missions (cf. St. Luke x. 2). Not half the people in the world yet have heard of Christ.
- (2) It is a prayer for our own school, country, and town—that drinking, gambling, cheating, disease, bad housing, “all wrong and evil in religion, in politics, in trade, in art, in literature, in games” may be done away with.
“From crime, oppression, and despair God save the people.”
- (3) It is a prayer for ourselves (St. Luke xvii. 21). “Every time you say a kind word or do an unselfish deed, you help on the coming of this Kingdom.” “For what is the Kingdom of God? It means the absolute supremacy of Justice, Brotherhood, and Love, and all that God wills.”

“Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven.”

“Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done”—these two petitions stand together. “Each time we do His will, we bring His Kingdom nearer.”

The call of vocation may be emphasized here, not primarily resignation. “His call that caused us to be. His call that sent us to school. His call that gave us those aptitudes, tastes as we call them, which seemed

to determine the direction of our after life. The wishes of parents or friends, circumstances as we call them, were also included in it. . . .

“Life, then, apart from the sense of the responsibility and privilege of living at all, acquires a fresh dignity—as we take up our position in it, not merely as a place where we can hope to get on or succeed, but as a post where we can do a real and effectual work for God.”

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

Food for our bodies.

Revise teaching in Year I (see p. 2) on the food supply coming through many helpers. Though the food of Britain depends on a variety of causes, natural and political (e.g. good harvests, friendly co-operation with the colonies and other nations, open seas, etc.) yet still for the ultimate cause, see St. James i. 17.

“All things that are needful for our souls.”

We have a higher nature than the animal, there is strength needed for it, and as in obtaining food for the body, we have our part to do, so with the spiritual food.

What are the means which God has provided which we must use.

(a) Prayer.

(b) The daily reading of the Bible, in which God gives us guidance.

“Enable with perpetual light
The dulness of our blinded sight.”

The child's life is widening and he has now to face new temptations; this is the time when habits of Bible reading and morning prayer may be consciously formed. Difficulties as to each, of time, etc., should be thought out by the teacher with special reference to his own class and the child's probable work.

(c) Public worship.

“Forgive us our Trespases, etc.”

(1) Trespases: sins need forgiveness—the wrong words we say, the unloving acts, whatever we have said or thought or done that was not quite right we must tell to God (1 John i. 9).

(2) Forgiveness does not mean being let off the punishment. Sin separates us from God. When God forgives us He restores us and trusts us with our work again (St. John xxi. 17).

“Sin is the violation, forgiveness the restoration of that will union with God and His Saints in which the spirit life consists.”

- (3) There was the glimmering of the idea that it is noble to forgive even in the O.T. ; e.g. David and Saul.

St. Peter was aware of the necessity but only to a certain extent (St. Matt. xviii. 21).

Give the story of the two debtors, it teaches us that to forgive others is absolutely essential if we would be forgiven. God cannot forgive us one sin when we are deliberately giving way to another.

“It is by no arbitrary feat of God’s Will but by the very necessities of our spiritual nature that we cannot forgive and not be forgiven, that when we pray to be forgiven, we are praying for grace and strength to forgive.”

“*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*”

- (1) The words “to tempt” have two meanings:—

(i) To entice into sin.

(ii) To try the strength of—to test—from Latin, *temptare*. It is in the second sense that the Bible speaks of God tempting us.

- (2) We pray “Lead us not into temptation” because of our weakness, we must not be like St. Peter in his early days. Give the story (St John xiii. 36-38).

- (3) But sometimes our Heavenly Father may see fit to prove us by giving us temptation or trials; e.g. picture the people to whom St. Peter wrote in his old age, perhaps during Nero’s persecution, who were blamed and punished and tortured for things which they had not done (1 Peter ii. 19-20). Yet see 1 Peter i. 6-7; St. James i. 2-3.

Through temptation our characters grow; e.g. we cannot call a man patient until he is tried.

“The proof of your faith worketh patience.”

- (4) There is a close connexion between the two clauses, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” “Lead us not into temptation,” but when the temptation, the trial comes, keep us from falling. We must not run into danger unnecessarily, but if we are in the path of duty God will always keep us safe if we ask Him (1 Cor. x. 13).

E.g. cf. A boy whose work lies among bad companions and one who deliberately chooses to go amongst them.

JERUSALEM.

Preparation.

- (1) Conversation about cities which the children know. Compare coming by train into Birmingham, Leeds, London—with beautiful cities. Show pictures, if possible, of Durham, Edinburgh, Lincoln.
- (2) Position. "A highland fortress bounded on three sides by deep ravines and surrounded on all sides by hills." "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about His people." "Beautiful in elevation" "Jerusalem is built as a city which is compact together". Show pictures of the "city of the Great King" (Ps. XLVIII 2, CXXII. 3).
- (3) Its beauty. Describe an imaginary bird's eye view of the city, as seen from the Mount of Olives. Massive walls, palaces, flat roofs. Its crowning glory the Temple—shimmering marble, golden roofs, constant flow of people through the gates. Above all the blue of an Eastern sky.
"The city that men called the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth."
- (4) Its history.
 - (a) Captured by David.
 - (b) Beautified by Solomon.
 - (c) Destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (593-592 B.C.) The Jews grief: "If I forget thee . . ."
 - (d) Rebuilt by Nehemiah.
 - (e) After a siege, the horrors of which are almost without a parallel in history, laid in the dust once more by the legions of Titus in the late summer. A.D. 70.
- (5) The Jews' love for their city. Every Jew regarded Jerusalem as his true home. Cf. our love for our homes, even though far away.
- (6) Why so dear to us?
"On the hills around, along its streets, in the courts of the great sanctuary, there walked in visible form One who had already lived from everlasting.

Just outside its walls, He condescended to die in agony and shame."

Let the children repeat verse 1 of "There is a green hill far away".

- (7) Our heavenly home, likened to a new Jerusalem (Rev. xxi.) Learn Ps. cxxii. "Jerusalem my happy home."

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¹See for this section Paterson Smyth's "How we got our Bible". Baxter 18.

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