

BOOKS TO READ AND TO KEEP.

MY FAITH.

By VERNON F. STORR, Canon of Westminster. Paper covers 1s., Cloth, 2s. net
Prepared to meet the widely felt need of a popular manual of faith and practice on
Liberal Evangelical lines.

A BONDMAN OF THE LORD.

The Life and Letters of St. Paul. By H.S.C.E. With several illustrations. Limp
cloth 2s. 6d., Cloth boards 4s. 6d. net.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

By A. J. MACDONALD, M.A. 3s. 6d. net.

THE GROUP SPIRIT IN CHURCH LIFE.

By the Rev. E. T. SLATER. Preface by the BISHOP OF MANCHESTER. 2s. 6d. net.

FIFTY-SIX SHORT SERMONS.

FIFTY-TWO SHORT SERMONS.

For the use of Lay Readers By the Right Rev. GILBERT WHITE, M.A., D.D. Each 6s. net.

CHRISTIAN AUTO-SUGGESTION.

By R. E. ROBERTS, M.A., Hon. C.F. 2s. net.

OUR GREAT EXAMPLE.

Being Simple Thoughts on the Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Arranged for reading
on every day of the year by EVELYN VILLIERS. Cloth boards, 3s. 6d. net. Cloth
elegant, gilt top, 5s. net.

CHRISTIAN MORALS.

By ARTHUR JAMES HUMPHREYS, B.A., D.D. 4s. net.

THE LOST APOCRYPHA OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

By M. R. JAMES, Litt.D. 5s. 6d. net.

THE MINOR PROPHETS UNFOLDED.

I. Hosea. II. Joel and Amos. III. Obadiah, Jonah and
Micah. IV. Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah.
By the Rev. A. LUKYN WILLIAMS, D.D. Each 1s. 6d. net.

QUESTION TIME IN HYDE PARK.

By Rev. CLEMENT F. ROGERS, M.A., Lecturer in Pastoral Theology, King's College
London. Series I-V., 6d. each net. In one vol., cloth, 6s. net.
Very useful for those who have to answer questions and objections to Christianity

THE A B C OF CHRISTIAN LIVING.

By CYRIL E. HUDSON, Director of Religious Education in the Diocese of St. Albans.
Limp duodecimo 1s.; Cloth 1s. 6d. net.
What is the purpose and meaning of life? The author has in mind those who are
troubled at times with obstinate and irrepressible questionings.

CHRIST THE KING.

A Study of the Incarnation. By K. D. MACKENZIE, M.A. Limp duodecimo 1s.; Cloth
1s. 6d. net.

A popular Introduction to the greatest of all questions—What think ye of Christ?

CHARLES GEORGE GORDON.

DAVID LIVINGSTONE

JOHN COLERIDGE PATTESON.

By
Mrs. RUNDLE CHARLES
Each 1s. net.

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, LONDON, W.C.2

And of Booksellers. Lists Post Free. Enquiries invited.

A splendid selection of story books which may be safely placed in the hands of any girl
or boy. Illustrated lists post free

THE WORD IN THE WORLD

A SCHEME OF STUDY
FOR THE YEAR 1928
FOR ADULT SCHOOLS

Limp covers. 1s. 6d. net.
Cloth boards. 2s. 6d. net.

NATIONAL ADULT SCHOOL UNION
30, BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON, W.C.1

COMPILATION COMMITTEE

FOR THIS HANDBOOK.

Appointed by the National Adult School Council.

ALICE ROBSON, B.Sc. (HUDDERSFIELD) } *Joint*
W. ARNOLD VICCARS (LEICESTER) } *Conveners.*
M. CATHARINE ALBRIGHT (BROMSGROVE).
ERNEST DODGSHUN, B.A. (LEEDS).
JAMES DUDLEY, M.Sc. (LETCHWORTH).
N. MARY GILLMAN (YORK).
JOHN A. HUGHES, M.A. (YORK).
JOAN M. G. LLOYD (BIRMINGHAM).
G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D. (LONDON).
EDITH MORGAN, B.A. (COLEFORD).
GEORGE PEVERETT (LONDON).
JESSIE M. WETHERED (BRISTOL).
Z. F. WILLIS, M.A. (LONDON).

Note.—Comments and suggestions with reference to this Handbook and subsequent issues will be welcomed, and should be addressed to Miss Alice Robson, Kirk Vale, Kirkheaton, Huddersfield.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY HEADLEY BROTHERS,
15, DEVONSHIRE STREET, E.C.2; AND ASHFORD, KENT

C.b. 1M—L.c. 24M

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| SCHEME OF STUDY FOR 1928 | iv. |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE IN ADULT SCHOOLS. By ANNA L. LITTLEBOY | 3 |
| NOTES ON THE LESSONS : | |
| The Desires of Men and Nations. By JOHN A. HUGHES, M.A. | 11 |
| "One Increasing Purpose." By G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D. | 23 |
| The Divine Word. By JAMES DUDLEY, M.Sc. | 38 |
| Renascence. By G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D., W. ARNOLD VICCARS, JESSIE M. WETHERED, and Z. F. WILLIS, M.A. | 61 |
| Easter. By GEORGE PEVERETT | 77 |
| A Man Re-born. By ERNEST DODGSHUN, B.A., and JOAN M. G. LLOYD | 81 |
| The Wesleys and Their Work. By EDITH MORGAN, B.A. | 96 |
| Whitsuntide. By JESSIE M. WETHERED | 115 |
| Life and its Renewal. By M. CATHARINE ALBRIGHT, ERNEST DODGSHUN, B.A., JESSIE M. WETHERED, and Z. F. WILLIS, M.A. | 120 |
| Shakespeare : "Hamlet." By JOHN A. HUGHES, M.A. | 161 |
| Life's Common Interests. By N. MARY GILLMAN | 175 |
| The Web of Life. By ALICE ROBSON, B.Sc. | 196 |
| The Universal Appeal of Christ (1). By JESSIE M. WETHERED and W. ARNOLD VICCARS | 214 |
| The Web of World Life. By GEORGE PEVERETT | 228 |
| Shakespeare : "The Tempest." By JOHN A. HUGHES, M.A., | 258 |
| The Universal Appeal of Christ (2). By JESSIE M. WETHERED and W. ARNOLD VICCARS | 272 |
| Christmas. By GEORGE PEVERETT | 285 |
| The Fourfold Story of Jesus. By CURRIE G. MARTIN, M.A., B.D. | 289 |

NOTE.—The references to "Suggested Hymns" throughout this book are to those in the **Fellowship Hymn Book and Supplement**.

N.B.—The authors are severally responsible for the statements they make and for the opinions they express. They have no desire nor intention to commit the Adult School Movement to either one or other.

SCHEME OF STUDY FOR 1928.

Summary.

THE WORD IN THE WORLD.

I. DESIRES OF MEN AND NATIONS.

| | PAGE |
|------------------------------|------|
| Jan. 8 THE DESIRES OF MEN | 11 |
| .. 15 THE DESIRES OF NATIONS | 17 |

II. "ONE INCREASING PURPOSE."

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Jan. 22 THE DIVINE WISDOM | 25 |
| .. 29 THE WORD MADE FLESH | 30 |
| Feb. 5 THE PROGRESS OF INSPIRATION | 34 |

III. THE DIVINE WORD.

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Feb. 12 MUSIC | 40 |
| .. 19 ARCHITECTURE | 44 |
| .. 26 POETRY | 48 |
| Mar. 4 PAINTING | 52 |
| .. 11 SCIENCE | 56 |

IV. (a). RENASCENCE.

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Mar. 18 BIRTH AND RE-BIRTH | 61 |
| .. 25 PERSONAL RE-BIRTH | 66 |
| April 1 SOCIAL RE-BIRTH | 72 |
| April 8 EASTER | 77 |

IV. (b) A MAN RE-BORN.

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| April 15 A MAN MEETS A MAN | 81 |
| .. 22 FALLING TO RISE | 87 |
| .. 29 THE FULL-GROWN MAN | 92 |

IV. (c) THE WESLEYS AND THEIR WORK.

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| May 6 EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND | 96 |
| .. 13 THE MESSENGERS | 102 |
| .. 20 EFFECTS OF THE REVIVAL | 110 |
| May 27 WHITSUNTIDE | 115 |

V. LIFE AND ITS RENEWAL.

| | |
|---|-----|
| June 3 ETERNAL LIFE | 120 |
| .. 10 REFRESHMENT AND RENEWAL | 125 |
| .. 17 SPIRITUAL VALUES IN MATERIAL THINGS | 131 |
| .. 24 CLEANSING AND NOURISHMENT | 138 |

| | PAGE |
|----------------------------|------|
| July 1 OUR FATHER | 140 |
| " 8 EVERYDAY NEEDS | 151 |
| " 15 DELIVERANCE FROM EVIL | 156 |

VI. SHAKESPEARE.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| July 22 THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET (1) | 161 |
| " 29 THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET (2) | 169 |

VII. LIFE'S COMMON INTERESTS. 175

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Aug. 5 HOLIDAYS | 176 |
| " 12 THE NEWSPAPER | 181 |
| " 19 THE CINEMA | 186 |
| " 26 OTHER PEOPLE | 191 |

VIII. THE WEB OF LIFE. 196

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Sept. 2 THE WEB OF PLANT LIFE | 197 |
| " 9 LINKS BETWEEN PLANTS AND ANIMALS | 201 |
| " 16 THE WEB OF ANIMAL LIFE | 205 |
| " 23 NEW PATTERNS IN THE WEB | 209 |

IX. THE UNIVERSAL APPEAL OF CHRIST (I.).

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| | 214 |
| Sept. 30 THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD | 216 |
| Oct. 7 LEADERSHIP | 220 |
| " 14 THE COST OF LIFE | 224 |

X. THE WEB OF WORLD LIFE. 228

| | |
|--|-----|
| Oct. 21 OUR COMMONWEALTH : FOUNDATIONS AND CHARACTER | 230 |
| " 28 OUR COMMONWEALTH : ITS LIFE AND LINKS | 238 |
| Nov. 4 EUROPE AND THE FAR EAST | 243 |
| " 11 THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS | 251 |

XI. SHAKESPEARE.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Nov. 18 " THE TEMPEST " (1) | 258 |
| " 25 " THE TEMPEST " (2) | 265 |

XII. THE UNIVERSAL APPEAL OF CHRIST (II.).

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Dec. 2 UNITY IN DIVERSITY | 272 |
| " 9 THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT | 276 |
| " 16 VICTORY OVER THE WORLD | 280 |
| Dec. 23 CHRISTMAS | 285 |

THIS issue is the eighteenth in a series of annual Lesson Handbooks. The first eight issues (1911-1918) were each entitled "The Adult School Lesson Handbook." These are all out of print. Later issues have been as follows:—

- 1919. LIGHT AND FREEDOM. (Out of print.)
- 1920. LIFE'S ADVENTURE. On sale at 1s. net.
- 1921. NEW LIFE. Cloth boards, 2s. 6d. ; paper covers, 1s. 3d. net.
- 1922. PERSONALITY AND POWER. (Out of print.)
- 1923. THE UNFOLDING PURPOSE. Cloth boards, 2s. 6d. ; limp cloth, 1s. 3d. net.
- 1924. EVERYMAN FACES LIFE. Cloth boards, 2s. 6d. net.
- 1925. THE SEARCH. Cloth boards, 2s. 6d. ; limp cloth, 1s. 3d. net.
- 1926. FULFILMENT. Cloth boards, 2s. 6d. ; limp cloth, 1s. 3d. net.
- 1927. THE LIFE WE LIVE: and other studies. Cloth boards, 2s. 6d. net. ; limp cloth, 1s. 6d. net.

(Postage extra)

INTRODUCTION.

WHAT went ye out for to see ? " asked Jesus of his disciples who had gone, like so many of their fellow-countrymen, to see John the Baptist when he was preaching in the desert. Why had they gone ? Some, perhaps, would go anywhere for the sake of novelty—a new sensation, something to talk about to their neighbours ; some because they were tired of their old selves and they heard that their friends had been helped by this wanderer to make a fresh start in life ; others because they longed for the coming of that Deliverer who had been promised to their nation, and this preacher in the wilderness could be no other than the herald of that long-expected one.

What do we want to-day ? Our first lesson this year invites us to consider what are the real aims and longings of ourselves and our fellows ; what do we " go out for to see " ? Is Tennyson right when he says it is " more life, and fuller, that we want " ? Some think to enrich their lives by sampling all possible kinds of experience ; some find the best of life in their work, others in their pleasure ; some turn away from a drab reality to seek the more richly coloured life of the film or the novel.

There is a book in the Bible whose main theme is Life ; not mere bodily existence, but that richer, fuller life which all of us would like to enjoy. " I came that they might have life, and have it more abundantly," says Jesus in the Gospel of John, and it is this Fourth Gospel, so different from the other three, which is to be the centre of our study this year. The Eternal Word, God's purpose for us and for the world, showing itself in many different ways, and then, most clearly, in the human life of Jesus, is the first great note to be sounded. We shall then go on to see that God's Word, the Divine Intention, has been and is still being " made flesh " or translated for us into the music and poetry and pictures and buildings without which our lives would be so much poorer, and into the patient work of the scientific discoverers who have in recent years so greatly enlarged the horizons of our thought.

Another great theme of the Fourth Gospel is that of re-birth as the opening of this new and fuller life. After a brief study of the subject we are to turn to the story of Peter as an illustration of an individual life re-born, and then to see how in the group life of our nation a similar process took place in the Methodist Revival of the eighteenth century.

This re-born life must be nourished if it is to grow and develop, and we are invited to study some of the means whereby it may be refreshed and renewed, including the sacramental rites so dear and necessary to many, and the prayer about whose outward expression we may differ but whose reality we know to be indispensable.

A little holiday course of lessons in August will lead us to ask how far our recreations and our everyday contacts with ordinary people are contributing to this fuller life. For it cannot be lived alone; none of us liveth unto himself and none dieth unto himself, and this is true not of humanity only, but of plants and the lower animals also; a course of four lessons later in the year will show us some of the linkages by which these different forms of life are bound to one another and to mankind. So we are led on to the consideration of the web of world life in which all the nations and peoples are linked ever more closely and intricately.

The more we become conscious of the complexity of the modern world, the more we feel our need of guidance and direction. The Gospel of John reminds us constantly that it is possible for us to have this guidance; that Jesus is the Light of the whole world and that we cannot walk in darkness if we follow where he leads. He is, too, the Shepherd who cares for his flock and guards them from danger, sacrificing his very life for them. He is the Vine, and apart from his life-giving contact we are empty and unsatisfied; he is the Way that leads us to the Father, his Truth makes us free, and his gift is Eternal Life.

A.R.

THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE IN ADULT SCHOOLS.

By ANNA L. LITTLEBOY.

EVER since the beginning of our Movement the study of the Bible has been regarded as one of the basic principles of our work. To-day, however, many of our members are questioning whether we should continue so to regard it, and the change in outlook thus revealed claims our careful consideration. "One good custom," it has been said, may "corrupt the world"; and it is no unwholesome thing to question old methods and conventions to ascertain whether or not they have lost their savour. Surely it is needful for all of us to endeavour to think out what our answer should be to this question.

The present impatience in regard to Bible study is doubtless in part a reaction against unreasoning Bible worship of former days. In some homes, the very book was treated as a sacred thing, placed on a table apart, with a prohibition that no careless hand should lay anything upon it. Not much more reasonable was the almost magical authority attached to every word it contained; so that any text whatever, torn from its context, was held to be the final appeal in matters of conduct, even if it had been discovered by inserting a pin between the leaves, and seeing at what words its point stopped. And many who would not have gone to such extremes as these, yet appeared to treat all the books of the Bible, and all the parts of each book, as of equal value, and as of higher value than the best elsewhere written. "A chapter a day," taken in the existing order, without caring when, or by whom, or for whom, written, or whether the daily portion was a genealogical chapter from the Old Testament or the words of Jesus in the Gospels, has been a weariness to the flesh to many, only endured because of the glow of triumph to be felt when the final chapter of "Revelation" was concluded.

We have mostly, I hope, got away from what may fairly be called Bibliolatry, idolatry of the Bible; but in some cases only to find ourselves landed in a series of difficulties and perplexities. Let us briefly consider some of the most important.

1. *Intellectual Difficulties*, due chiefly to crude methods of exposition, which have made the Bible distasteful to us. We

have been asked to see types and allegories in the Old Testament, instead of the plain sense of the words. We have found discrepancies and contradictions in its history; or we have taken old tradition or snatches of imaginative poetry (such as the story of an axe-head floating, or of the sun standing still in the skies) for sober statements of fact, to which we have found it impossible to give credence.

2. *Moral Difficulties*, such as what to think of a God who is said to have given orders to Israel totally to destroy the tribes they encountered; or how to understand David, with many of the faults of an Eastern despot, being described as a man after God's own heart.

3. A further difficulty that faces us may be stated in the form of a question: *Why spend time in studying the history and the laws of a Semitic people, living far away, under conditions quite other than ours, with no scientific outlook, the latest of whose writings included in the Bible are nearly 2,000 years old? What are their doings to us? Why try to understand their ideas? Many subjects force themselves on our attention to-day which did not even come within the horizon of either Old Testament or New Testament writers, and about which the Bible gives us no direct help. This difficulty is clearly put in the excellent Introduction to the 1920 Lesson Handbook ("Life's Adventure") by Wm. C. Braithwaite:*

"Our vastly increased command of the forces of nature, our advance in knowledge, our complex industrial system, our international problems, the world of art and literature that is open to us, these things seem at first sight to remove us from the past; and we are not sure that even the supreme Life that was lived in Galilee has a message that reaches our need."

4. *Are not modern books inspired no less than the Bible?* There are multitudes that we want to study and ought to study, which deal directly and helpfully with the questions of the day. "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" We have no time to give to back numbers. It is a Bible student—Dr. J. Rendel Harris—who asks: "Suppose I am required to choose between a certain Psalm—say the one about Moab being my wash-pot—and the hymn 'Abide with me,' which ought I to take?"

Of these four difficulties, the first two are met by better understanding of the meaning of Inspiration. We must recognise that in it are two factors: "The God who gives and the man who receives." To speak through men involves the possibility

of misunderstanding and error; God has chosen to take that risk. There is immense interest in trying to disentangle what is transitory from what is permanent in the messages of inspired men, in recognising the difference between poetry and prose, and in learning to understand something of what is meant by "progressive revelation." We might follow out, for example, how men grew to understand what were the sacrifices desired by God, starting from Abraham, to whom it seemed no strange thing if God should demand his dearest; seeing how human sacrifices had become a crime in the Mosaic Law, which substituted sheep and oxen; noting how the prophets had insight to declare that obedience pleased God more than sacrifice; and so coming to Paul's great exhortation to the Roman Christians: "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice . . . which is your reasonable service."

Or we might take Nationalism, and see how men first imagined that it was God's command that they should totally destroy the neighbouring tribes whom they conquered; how, in spite of the better vision of Isaiah (19. 19-25) it seemed necessary to Ezra to separate husband and wife rather than to allow inter-marriage with foreigners; till we come to Jesus and his inclusion of Samaritans among people worth helping, and to Paul's statement that in Christ there was neither Jew nor Greek. We ought to have at least some knowledge of the period at which the various books were written and of Hebrew modes of thought. Information as to these things is very simply and concisely given in such inexpensive and easily accessible books as Dr. Adeney's *The Construction of the Bible*, Dr. Horton's *Inspiration of the Bible*, Dr. Fosdick's *The Modern Use of the Bible*, and the three *Everyman* volumes on the Old and New Testaments, and on the intervening period.

People are, however, unwilling to spend time and study until they are convinced that the object is worth while; unless, that is, we are able to meet the third and fourth difficulties mentioned above: "What concern have we with the Hebrew people?" and "Can we not gain more from modern inspired books than from the Bible?" It is these two questions that chiefly need our consideration to-day.

Our Concern with the Hebrew People.

In an excellent paper on the Bible, Herbert G. Wood, of Woodbrooke, points out that its remoteness from the burning questions of to-day, which looks like a difficulty, appears on reflection to be part of its power to help. "All the writers of the Scriptures move in another intellectual world and in another social world than ours. They all lived before Darwin, and indeed

before Copernicus. They do not know Nature as we know it. Their social, economical and political conditions are other and simpler than our own. Consequently, they do not and cannot directly deal with many of our modern problems. But for that reason, their writings may form a kind of city of refuge for us."

We get into simpler atmosphere, and so can have a clearer vision. Mr. Wood illustrates the point by reminding us that students of philosophy go back to Plato and Aristotle that they may see the freshness and grandeur of the first attempts to solve intellectual difficulties. "So too," he adds, "in the Bible, we are face to face with the first clear apprehension of certain fundamentals about God and His dealings with men. We see what it meant to Amos to realise that God was a god of universal justice, and to Hosea to understand how God yearns over the erring. There is a moving and luminous simplicity in all such prophetic realisations of the truth of God."

Again, the adaptability of the Bible, its elasticity as one might say, comes from the very fact that the writers had no idea of what we call science, and were solely interested in the moral content of their message. Science is always growing and changing from century to century, even from year to year. Should the Bible writers have used the science of Roger Bacon, of Galileo, of Newton, of Darwin, of Einstein, or of some teacher as yet unborn? We have only to ask such a question to be thankful that Bible teaching is not fettered by the science of to-day, or of yesterday, or of to-morrow.

Yet the Hebrew Scriptures do give the same message as Science, when we get to fundamentals. They show us *God in action, God working*, which is the fact at the bottom of all science. The Bible is always concerned with "God's dealings with men and women both as individuals and communities." To pagan thought the gods lived "careless of mankind."

"For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world;
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery
sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying
hands."

The Hebrew writers have for ever delivered us from such an idea of God, and equally from any Pantheistic notion of God being the impersonal sum of the universe. It may be a crude idea that God had to go down and find out if the reports of the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah were true, but it was the seed--God's interest in man--from which came the glorious

flower, "Lo, I am with you always." To the Hebrews, again, religion was *God in life and experience*, not God proved by hypothesis and deduction. Hence the permanence of the Hebrew writings. Methods of argument get out of date. No one can possibly read now the logic of the Schoolmen, and it has been said that the deadest of all dead things is theological controversy. From this the Bible has escaped more completely than any other religious writings in the world.

This fundamental idea of *God at work* saved the Hebrew people, and, through them, the Christian world, from the great danger of those who discard the Bible, namely, *the substitution of morality for religion*, or the reduction of religion to mere morality.

Because it was the special genius of the Hebrew prophets to see God's hand in whatever befell their country, because they realised that "each man had personal moral responsibility and would please or displease God according to his own conduct," the record of Hebrew history is a different thing from the record of English history. Doubtless God is in English history too; but our historians have not so clearly seen Him at work.

Are not Modern Books inspired not less than the Bible?

Coming now to the last point, let us admit at once the great value of many modern books. To some of us God's message has come through such a poet as Browning; and if God speaks now, His voice is not less Divine than it was 2,000 years ago. To quote H. G. Wood once more:

"To speak of the Biblical writers as inspired, and of all other writers as uninspired, is really for a Christian to sign away his birthright. To treat the books of the Bible as all on the same level of inspiration, and to treat all the books of the Bible as on a higher level of inspiration than any other writings, is not only intellectually indefensible, but also spiritually impoverishing. It may well indeed be that there are passages in the Bible like Isaiah 53. or 1 Cor. 13. which are not only unsurpassed but unequalled by any subsequent Christian writings. But if there were not a fuller inspiration and a deeper insight into the truth of God in many a later Christian writing than we find in some of the Old Testament books, we could only conclude that Christ had died for nothing, and that Pentecost was an empty dream. There are ways of honouring the Bible which come near to denying the reality of the Gospel it records and enshrines."

In certain things, nevertheless, the Bible is supreme, and no other writings can be substituted. Let us consider what they are.

1. *It contains the story of the Life and Teaching of Jesus.*

However men would define their beliefs about Jesus Christ, they almost universally admit him to be the pattern of mankind, the standard at which they must aim. "We test our lives by Thine." Such a recent book as *The Christ of the Indian Road* shows his influence over men who say they have no use for Christianity. But that life was "deeply rooted in the religious life of his race." "It is upon this foundation . . . that is to say, faith in one supreme God of righteousness for the whole earth, that Jesus built, and it has become the imperishable heritage of our humanity. The long series of heroes of faith, from Abraham onwards, who slowly won these truths for the world, were great adventurers, again and again staking their all upon the heavenly vision that had dawned in their souls. And the little people, ground down by the oppression of the world-powers, which preserved this faith till it found its universal scope in the message of Christianity, is the greatest monument in history to the indomitable courage of the soul." (W. C. Braithwaite: Introduction to "Life's Adventure.")

Jesus carried to perfection the thoughts and deeds after which his predecessors had striven. He claimed to "fulfil" the Old Testament, and in those books is the record of a thousand years of growing understanding of God which made it possible for Jesus to think of Him as "Father," and to say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." God had spoken to men "at sundry times and in divers manners" before they were fitted to listen to His word through Jesus Christ.

2. But the Bible contains not only the record of God's overtures to men, but also the record of the *response of men to God's overtures*. Hence its immense devotional value. Man's primal needs endure, however greatly forms of speech and fashions of thought change. The words of those who have suffered and sinned and aspired, who have felt uttermost perplexity or deepest sorrow, glad thanksgiving or triumphant joy, rise to our lips as we pass through similar experiences, and help us to draw near to God.

"O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me."

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

"O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me."

"He knoweth the way which I take; when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

"Yea, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

As in our deepest experiences these words rise to our lips, it is not as if no one had uttered them before. Rather, we are drawn by them into a great fellowship of seekers after God of all nations and of all ages. Surely this is what Coleridge meant when he summed up his reasons for believing in the Bible: "Because it *finds* me."

Is the revelation of Jesus Christ, then, a final revelation?

Or have changed conditions and increased knowledge given us reason to look for another teacher? Jesus lived in a small country town, with no pressing social problems and with, apparently, no extreme poverty. How can he solve our perplexities?

In Dr. Cyril Alington's *Elementary Christianity*, two examples are given of the way in which the teaching of Jesus has worked out in connection with subjects to which he did not specifically refer. One is *Slavery*, which existed throughout Palestine, though generally, probably, in a mild form. Jesus never mentions it. Paul thinks it right to send an escaped slave back to his master, though he exhorts that master to receive him as a brother. It was "nearly 2,000 years before the unspoken word of Christ took effect." Yet Wilberforce and those who worked with him never doubted that they were performing the will of Christ in freeing the slaves.

The other is the *Position of Women*. Again, Jesus said nothing on the subject, though he made friendships with women and they take a prominent place in the Gospels. Once, at least, the disciples were somewhat shocked to find him talking to a woman. I do not remember that Dr. Alington refers to Paul in this connection, but it is interesting that, in spite of his markedly Eastern attitude to women, he rises, in the light of his Lord, to the statement that in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, just as he had seen that in him there was neither bond nor free. It has invariably been in Christian countries, and only in them, that women have been allowed to take a respected position, and to develop what it was in them to be.

In relation to modern questions, I quote a striking sentence from Dr. Alington: "It is at least doubtful whether any modern teacher, however plenarily his inspiration, would be able to give clearer advice for the solution of modern industrial difficulties, than to say that it is the duty of every man to love his neighbour as himself, and to realise the right of others to enjoy, as far as may be, the same fulness of opportunity that he claims for himself."

I should like, in conclusion, to quote a few sentences on the same subject from Canon Streeter's recently published book

entitled "Reality." He is speaking of the "master simplification" of the moral and religious ideal effected by Jesus when he selected from the whole range of Jewish literature the two sentences enjoining love to God with the whole being, and love to one's neighbour as to one's self. "It has a quality," he says, "to which the term 'finality' may properly be applied, in that it states a foundation principle which, so far as we can conceive, cannot in the nature of things ever be transcended. . . . As society develops and civilisations change, opinions will and ought to change as to the best way to make real and effective, in the individual heart and in the body corporate, the love of God. Methods of religious discipline, organisation, ceremonial and the like, which are well suited to one age, one nation, one temperament, may be found ill-suited to another. There will be constant change in the ways of education, the codes, the institutions, which attempt to give practical realisation to the principle of the love of man. Development in these ways may be never-ending. But the ideal as apprehended and as defined by Jesus does not admit of improvement or advance. *It is either false or it is final.*"

Section I.
The Desires of Men and
Nations.

NOTES BY JOHN A. HUGHES, M.A.

January 8th.

I.—THE DESIRES OF MEN.

Bible Readings : Matt. 11. 2-19 ; John 1. 1-14.

Other References :

The Prologue to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. (Everyman. Dent. 2s.)

See also, if possible, Blake's description of his painting of the Canterbury Pilgrims, in *Poetical Works of William Blake*. (Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.) From a Library.

"Uxbridge Road." Poem by Evelyn Underhill in *Poems of To-day : Second Series*. (Sidgwick & Jackson. 2s. and 3s. 6d.)

Suggested Hymns : 10, 51, 71, 82.

Aim of the Lesson : To discover, if we can, what it is that people want.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. Manifold Desires.

Let us imagine for a moment what it is we are trying to do in this lesson. It is no less than to get an image before our minds of the manifold desires of mankind, of the fact that they are somehow related to one another, and that by and through them the will of God is worked out. They are desires of all imaginable kinds, fevers and anxieties, hopes and aspirations, woven together into one great web.

What a web they make, my desires and yours, those of the farm labourer, of the philosopher, the Chinese coolie, the London dock labourer, the sharper and the saint ! In some cases they are no more than vague longings, in others they are consciously seen

and accepted, and become the motive and mainspring of conduct. For some they are physical, and may amount to no more (and no less) than the desire for a good meal, while for others they are dreams and desires for the liberty of a group (possibly a religious group) or of a nation.

2. Do we know what we want ?

It was said recently of certain labouring classes of this country that " they don't know what they want, but they won't be happy till they get it ! " How much better off are the majority of us ? How many of us can really say we know what it is we desire, and for what end we desire it ?

(Look carefully at the first reading at this point and note the people who came to Jesus, and those who had gone out to see John ; and the little picture at the end, of the children who would neither play weddings nor funerals ! What did any of them want ?)

We might illustrate by a particular case. It was evening in a London tube at the " rush hour." The people streamed in to fill the compartment, thrown together as Chaucer would have said " by adventure," and a young man was seen to come in, step aside, lean against the doorpost, and immediately become immersed in his evening paper. A number of questions were forced on the observer by this little, apparently insignificant, incident. What, if any, was this young man's relation to the rest of the people in the train ? Still further, how was he related to the vast human hive of London ? He would, of course, have his threads of connection with others, at his work, his home, and with his group of friends. He would have his interests. But chiefly the question arose : What did he want out of life, and what did life want out of him ? If he had a goal in life, did he know at all clearly why he aimed at it ? To what extent did his desires contribute to the purpose of God for the world ?

NOTES.—Only a few typical questions are asked here. Many others may suggest themselves. The object of the illustration is to stimulate discussion of the central question as to how far each of us knows what we want, and how far we are conscious of being related to some wide scheme of things.

An interesting way of treating the question might be to take life as represented by ever widening circles of desires, each successive one containing those of the circle before, and adding something more—or transforming the desires of an earlier stage into something different in the later one. Infancy, childhood, youth, maturity, old age.

Miss Evelyn Underhill pictures for us in her poem, " Uxbridge Road," such a young man as we have glanced at, and others

like him—perhaps ourselves amongst them—in the “rush hours” going home. Out west from the city goes the Uxbridge Road, carrying the folk to their various homes after their toil all day. The “city’s dim desires” the road bears; “a seething tide,” with who knows what “torments.”

“The dreaming few, the slaving crew, the motley caste of life—
The wastrel and artificer, the harlot and the wife.”

Do they know what they want? They are being woven into a fabric. What is the pattern of that fabric? They are all thrown together for the moment into a chance relationship, on a kind of pilgrimage, caught by one great common desire which for most of them is expressed by the word “Home.” That is their goal for the moment. But for no two of them does it mean the same thing.

3. The Canterbury Pilgrimage.

Many years ago an entirely different picture, but with essentially the same set of pilgrims depicted in it, was given to us by Chaucer in his prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. Along the road to Canterbury they go, doctor, lawyer, parson, knight, miller, cook, artisan. They have one common goal, one apparent objective. But think of what different desires and motives take them there! Can anyone say why they go, and what they want to get out of their pilgrimage? We can be quite sure that none of them fully knows the reason. They *want* to go there: they could hardly say why.

4. The Unchanging Pageant.

Blake, in commenting on his picture of the *Canterbury Pilgrimage*, wrote: “The characters of Chaucer’s Pilgrims are the characters which compose all ages and nations” . . . they “live age after age. Every age is a *Canterbury pilgrimage*; we all pass on, each sustaining one of these characters; nor can a child be born who is not one or other of these characters of Chaucer.” Which of the characters are you . . . and what do you desire?

Think of the pageant in connection with your own School. The men or women, as the case may be, who have come in “on the road to Canterbury.” What did they seek?

5. The Individual Characters.

Let us look at one or two of them. Their portraits are sketched in a single pithy phrase in most cases.

The Nun. She spoke French! But it was the French of Stratford-atte-Bowe; she did not know the French of Paris!

What conclusion shall we come to ?

- (a) No desire which men can have but springs from One Source of Power in the Universe—from God.
- (b) Not all our desires as we shape them lead to good, but
- (c) Whatever of good is in them is made use of by God.
- (d) Are we not led to the position of Paul ? " Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure."—(Phil. 2. 12-13.)

8. The Divine Intention.

We are presently to make a study of the Fourth Gospel, in the very first words of which we are led to the thought of a " rational principle," a " Divine Intention," a " Creative Word," without which " was not anything made that was made." The Gospel shows to us the harmonisation of the will of God and the will of Man into one in the Living Word of God, in Christ. " I and the Father are one." Our object in this lesson is to lead up to the point of considering to what extent that is true of us. Our desires are woven into a fabric of " dreary woe," and of " splendour." May the " splendour " not be increased, so that in us too the Word may become flesh as we enter into our " right to become the children of God " ?

9. " Not uncaptured."

It is surely as we learn to lift our desires on to the finest, cleanest levels that the Divine Desire is wrought out through ours. In this task of purifying and ennobling our desires we are aided by the spirit and the power of God. Miss Underhill leads us to the thought of God's directing Will.

Behold ! He lent me as we went, the vision of the seer ;
Behold ! I saw the life of men, the life of God shine clear.
I saw the hidden Spirit's thrust ; I saw the race fulfil
The spiral of its steep ascent, predestined of the Will.
Yet not unled, but shepherded by One they may not see—
The One who walked with starry feet the Western Road by me !

January 15th.

II.—THE DESIRES OF NATIONS.

Bible Readings : Is. 2. 2-4 ; Joel. 3. 9-21.

Other References :

Isaiah 60. and Haggai 2. 7 (R.V.) for ideas of the material wealth and power, mastery over others, which were to come to Judah. Zechariah 8. 22-23, for a picture of universalism, and peace among the nations under the arbitrament of God. See also Micah 4. 1-5.

Saint Joan. Bernard Shaw. (Constable. 6s.) For a study in the nationalist spirit as embodied in Joan, *vide* p. 52, "England for the English," &c.

Young Islam on Trek. Basil Mathews. (Edinburgh House Press. 2s.)

Suggested Hymns : 4, 5, 6, 338.

Aim of the Lesson : To try to discover what the Nations want.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Web of National Desires.

We tried to see last week what an intricate web of many varied threads the desires of individual men and women make, and we are now to glance at the desires of nations, to catch, if we can, their significance, their relation to one another, and the goal or goals to which they are directed.

Keeping the idea of a web before our minds, whereas when we thought of the desires of men it was of multitudes of individual strands woven together, now when we come to deal with the desires of nations it is rather of great bands of colours that we think, and of these bands being woven into a web of international life.

2. The Reality of National Desires.

We may be asked at the outset if nations can be said to have desires at all. The answer we would give is "Yes." We would venture to say that their desires are as clear as their characteristics. The humour of the Scotsman is dry and pawky ; sometimes we call it a little "dour." There is apt to be a flash

and a touch of malice in the wit of an Irishman. We often speak of the Chinaman as subtle, but no one would think of applying that word to an Englishman. The logic of the French is proverbial, and equally the thoroughness of the Teuton. Canon Streeter, in *Reality*, has an interesting footnote on the sense for value which actuates the Jew, and which has led him to pursue value wherever it was to be found—in material things, in art, music, science, politics.

The music of one nation differs from that of another: this has a kind of homesickness about it; that brims over with imagination and has a heartbreak in it; a third indicates powers of mental concentration; and a fourth breathes gaiety and the love of directness.

Just, then, as nations possess widely distinguishing characteristics, even so are their desires distinctive, while yet possessing many points of correspondence one with another.

3. Nations and Leaders.

The desires of nations represent a kind of general average of the desires of the individuals composing them, just as John Bull is a recognisably true generalisation of the qualities of average English people. Not all the desires of all the people are represented in the desires of a nation, but a kind of fusion takes place of many elements, and the result broadly corresponds to the desires of individuals composing the nation or a group. (Do you agree with this or not?)

The problem of the desires of nations is often wrapped up with that of leadership. Prophets, priests, kings (men who "can") win foremost places and give expression to the desires of peoples—sometimes more, sometimes less; sometimes for good, sometimes the opposite. The question as to how far leaders do or can express the desires of nations is a far-reaching one (see section 8). At times leaders are so far in front of the general desire of their people that they fail, because the people cannot go at their pace; at other times men spring to prominence because they are what we might call "herd" men: or they are sensitive to the average desires of a people and do not go much, if at all, beyond them. Now and then commanding personalities are able to initiate great national movements, or persuade nations to follow in the doing of great deeds; but the history of humanitarian policies and the time it takes to bring them into practice show how slow the general desires of peoples are to educate.

4. Whither?

In any case, what is true of individuals is often equally true of nations—they lack a sense of direction, and only very

partially realise the consequence of what they desire and seek to obtain.

At the time these notes were written the following quotation was extracted from one of our leading journals. It was a comment on the breaking-off of diplomatic relations with Russia by the British Government.

" It has been said that there are not many persons at any time, and not more than two or three statesmen anywhere, in a generation who really know whither they are going and why. . . . What is our route? What is our goal? Or have we no definite purpose, political or commercial? . . . Have we no conception of what are to be the ultimate relations between the British and Russian peoples? and have we no considered view about the standing problem of Britain, Russia, and the world as affecting the prospects of the League, disarmament and peace?" (J. L. Garvin, *Observer*, Sunday, May 29th, 1927.)

In the same week appeared a pronouncement by a leading European statesman in which he claimed that " national power and prestige " were the aims of the national movement which he led, and that for these purposes the population must be increased by one-third, his plea being that national greatness depended on population. An important question is raised here which might well be discussed: On what does national greatness really depend? In regard to the statesman quoted, we may well ask if he knew whither he was leading his people!

On the other hand it would be well for us to consider examples of policies which were the considered acts of statesmen who looked ahead and who gave, or thought they gave, expression to the desires and the best interests of their people: e.g., the Barons who stood up to King John, Oliver Cromwell, Disraeli and the Suez Canal, Campbell-Bannerman and the giving of full self-government to South Africa, including the Boer Republics which had been conquered and annexed.

5. Ancient Jewish aspirations.

At this point compare the readings and other Old Testament references carefully one with another. They are the utterances of ancient national leaders. See how they vary. There is a deliberate challenge in Joel to the other nations to the arbitration of war, with a call of all to arms, and the belief that under Jahweh's leadership Judah shall triumph over every enemy and Jerusalem be swept clear of strangers. There are prophecies of material wealth that are to come to Judah, with multitudes of aliens in subjection as builders, tenders of flocks, ploughmen, and vinedressers (Isaiah 60.; cf. Haggai 2. 7; Joel 3. 18). Then compare the lofty concept in Isaiah (cf. Zech.

8. 22-23 and Micah 4. 1-5, especially) of a time of universal peace and brotherhood under the supreme guidance of Jahweh, whose directions were to be accepted as final by the nations; war was then to be no more, and the resources of war turned to use in husbandry. (What could we not do if the resources we now spend in war services were turned to purposes of peace!)

A comparison of the various passages shows how the aspirations of a nation flicker and change as they are interpreted by different leaders.

6. Lessons from Islam.

Basil Mathews has drawn a graphic picture in his little book *Young Islam on Trek*, of the forces at work which are changing events in many parts of the world by influencing and shaping the minds of men and women to new desires.

Transport.—Fleets of motor-cars now eat up the distances in the deserts, and journeys which took weeks to accomplish with camels now take only as many days.

Education.—Schools and colleges have been established in very many places (Christian missions have done a great work in that respect), and students of both sexes are receiving education where before there was none, or only that which consisted in learning the Koran by heart. Think of what this is going to mean in time—the importation of Western ideas, e.g., amongst the people of the Middle East. It involves very often the break-up of old religions.

Self-determination.—“Young and old, effendi and fellaheen, Christian and Moslem, united in rebellion. They flew a new flag—a white Cross and Crescent on a red ground. Priests of the ancient Coptic Church preached in mosques, and Moslem mullahs in Christian Churches.” (Basil Mathews on “Egypt at the end of the War,” in *Young Islam on Trek*, pp. 52-53.)

The quotation just given illustrates the strength of the motive of self-determination, and its power in bridging such a gulf as that between the Christian and the Moslem. Think of the strength of the movement in India, and what it has accomplished in Ireland and Turkey, and is now doing in Egypt and in China! Not even religion—no matter how cherished—is allowed to stand in its way. A Syrian schoolmaster wrote of how one of his classes had a song on the theme “If our churches and mosques stand in the way of independence, we will drive them out.”

Think of Turkey and the changes there—the Caliphate abolished, the fez gone, the women’s veil gone, the country

THE DESIRES OF MEN AND NATIONS

deliberately Westernised under Kemal; and try to imagine what these changes indicate in regard to Turkish desires.

Women.—The movement for the enfranchisement of women goes on in country after country. The picture which Basil Mathews gives of the change in Turkey is typical of what is occurring in all civilised countries. Speaking of the girls, he says: "A balanced, all-round life, in which body, mind, spirit, and social relationships are all developed, is making of these girls in their school a new type of citizenship for Turkey."

Note. Consider the influence of films, broadcasting, aeroplanes, and the printing press in bringing about changes in the world.

Question: Can you think of any outstanding changes of desire that have taken place in this country in recent years.

7. What do the Nations want?

Can any one answer be found to this question? Try to get a view of some of the things—why they are desired, and the results which follow the pursuit of them.

(a) The first need of peoples is for the regular and cheap supply of food and other raw materials. With this is associated the need for the sale of their produce. Consider, then, how the life of nations is shaped by these two needs, and how international politics are affected by these desires for food and markets.

(b) As populations increase, the pressure on food resources is increased, and the need for outlets arises. Hence the migrations of national and tribal groups, their clash with other groups, and possible conflict and war.

Question: What do you think of the feasibility of an international organisation of the food supply?

(c) Jingoism. Individuals desire "to be someone": so do nations. This is a legitimate desire, but is pernicious when it leads to pride in power—to the spirit of the bully.

(d) The desire for freedom. This is coupled with the desire to be someone. The refusal of it leads to revolt; the destruction of it to the desire for revenge. We all want to live—our own life, not someone else's. Think of how in Central Europe the refusal of this overmastering desire was one of the causes which led to the Great War. We treasure the ways of our own land. Let the members of your class be led to say how they would feel if obliged to speak a language not their

own, practise strange customs, eat strange food, and so on, at the dictation of others.

Question : Why do you think the ways of your own land are worth preserving ?

(e) Aliens. After the war the Turks turned hosts of Greeks out of old-established homes in Turkey and sent them back to Greece. Thousands of Indians in South Africa produced by their presence the fear on the part of the whites that they would be submerged, and an Act was passed in 1913 excluding Indian immigrants. It is hard for an alien to enter the United States. No country has open doors, but passports are required everywhere.

Why all this fear of aliens ? (Refer to some of the Bible references.) Is it because we do not like their ways, or is it not often because they are clever in ways we are not, or threaten to undermine our trade, or some other thing or another ? We want to live, not merely as individuals but as a group or nation, and we are prone to resent anything which makes this in any way difficult.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. Leaders should get members of their classes to supply further answers to the question, "What do the nations desire ?"

8. The Need for Character.

Basil Mathews returns again and again in his little book to the need of character for the solution of the problems of the nations. "The successful solution of every one of these problems is dependent upon intelligence and character in human personality." Men of fine character will see the way they ought to go; they will frame policies which will conduce not merely to the well-being of their own particular people, but to world peace and co-operation. "We shall never come to the end of these quarrels," declared a Hindu of the quarrels between Hindu and Moslem, "until we all become Christians."

Questions :

- (1) "The soul of England." What do you think is meant by that ?
- (2) What are some of the things that "England" desires ?
- (3) Is it not to the Christian Commonwealth of Nations we must look as the goal that will satisfy many of the highest Desires of Nations ?

Section II.

"One Increasing Purpose."

NOTES BY G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D.

Introductory Note.

WE have been studying the question of human desires and endeavouring to discover those that are permanent and most worthy. When we turn to the records of the Old Testament we find that many in those far-off days considered "Wisdom" to be one of man's chief desires. By this was meant the highest practical guidance in the affairs of life, and this was only to be learned as men applied to conduct the standards of the Divine purpose for the world. They were "fools" if they knew not God. In the process of time men came to identify wisdom with God himself; they would not think of the two as apart from one another. God was perfect wisdom, but this he sought to share with men. Solomon's secret greatness lay in the fact that he desired Divine Wisdom above all other gifts. How was this to be mediated, i.e., passed on, from God, who was its source, to men who were its recipients? This became the great problem of religion. How were men to pass from the night of ignorance to the blazing noontide of Divine knowledge? They agreed with the modern great Italian writer and thinker, Benedetto Croce, who tells us in his autobiography that he never felt any desire strongly, save—"perhaps I may be allowed to say it since it is true—the desire to find my way out of darkness into light."

When Jesus came into the world he described himself as "the Light of the World" and assured his disciples that in as much as they shared his spirit they would become lights also (John 8. 12; Matt. 5. 14). We are to study throughout the year the Gospel in which Jesus so describes himself, and at its outset the author of the book sets forth his explanation of the inner nature of Jesus, identifying him in his eternal nature with that Word of God, which was wisdom and without whom nothing in creation could have existed, nor could any real light have penetrated the clouds of ignorance and sin. As we behold him, we see, so far as man may, the very face of God—the true glory of the Father.

But this is a living and ever extending light, and so we learn to find it flooding the world and, passing through many and varied mediums, leaving no age in darkness, but as more and more men and women yield to its beneficent influence it pervades the whole race and guides masses of men forward and upward towards that Source of all light and truth--who is their Originator and their Goal.

(Refer to and read carefully the appendix, "The Fourfold Story of Jesus," on pp. 289 ff.)

January 22nd.

I.—THE DIVINE WISDOM.

Bible Readings : Prov. 8. 23-36 ; Wisdom 7. 22-8. 1.

Other References and Allied Subjects :

For consultation in a Library :

Articles on *Proverbs*, *Wisdom*, and the various " Wisdom " books of the Old Testament in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* and *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* ; especially the article " Development of Doctrine in the Apocryphal Period " in Hastings' *Dictionary*, Vol. V., pp. 281-5, by Fairweather.

Commentaries on Proverbs in the *Century Bible* and on Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus in the *Cambridge Bible*.

The Wisdom of God and the Word of God. W. Harvey-Jellie. (J. Clark & Co. 3s. 6d.)

Good collections of Proverbs, such as may be found in Benham's *New Book of Quotations* (Ward Locke, 15s.), pp. 717-880.

Proverbs and their Lessons. Trench. (Routledge. 3s.)

The Hebrew Literature of Wisdom. Genung. (Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 15s.)

Bunyan's *Pilgrini's Progress* (for many proverbs) and *Don Quixote* for the proverbs of Sancho Panza.

Good Lecture Topics would be

The Proverbs of some one Nation, e.g., England, Spain, China.

One of the Wisdom Books, e.g., *Ecclesiasticus*.

Wisdom and Knowledge—Contrasts and Resemblances.

What is the meaning of " Common Sense ? "

The Church Porch and A Priest to the Temple. George Herbert. (Everyman Library. Dent. 2s.)

Suggested Hymns : 428, 109, 71, 238.

Aim of the Lesson : To discuss the place of Wisdom in Life.

Notes on the Lesson.

Nature and Origin of Proverbs.

" Acquaint thyself with proverbs," says the author of *Ecclesiasticus*, " for of them thou shalt learn instruction."

Proverbs, like folk-tales and ballads, are generally of unknown authorship. They spring from the heart of the people, and are

the expression of the experience of generations, summed up in pithy phrases that are easily remembered. Thus they are "telling," and awaken a ready response in the minds of the hearers, because they express what others have often felt, but could not put into words. They constitute the people's finest current coin in speech, and are a storehouse of popular wisdom. They are often full of imagination, colour, beauty and humour. Very frequently they are condensed poetry—indeed, quite commonly they take the form of rhymes. This is very common in Spanish proverbs, and sometimes in English ones, especially weather proverbs, for example :

" Evening red and morning grey
Are the sure signs of a fine day."

Proverbs that thus arose out of the life of the common people also took literary form in the hands of conscious artists, as in England in the writings of George Herbert, Martin Tupper, and C. H. Spurgeon. In the Proverbs contained in the Bible we find both types. Many contained in the book of Proverbs are traditional sayings of the Hebrew people, but others are probably the work of Solomon and other writers, to whom they are there assigned. The Jewish writers were very careful to distinguish these sorts from one another. If the proverb were a scripture one the formula of quotation was "the proverb runs"; if a literary one, "the rabbis teach" or "some say"; if popular, "So speak the people," the Judæans, or the Galileans, as the case might be.

Hebrew proverbs had close relations with those of Egypt and Babylon. We have only space here for one specimen of the latter.

" Thou shalt not make large thy mouth, but guard thy lip,
In the time of thine anger thou shalt not speak at once.
If thou speakest quickly thou wilt repent afterward,
And in silence wilt thou sadden thy mind."

The books of *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiasticus* contain examples of Hebrew wisdom at its best. As has been well said :

" In clear-cut vignettes they portray the good man at his various tasks—as workman, citizen, neighbour, friend, husband and father—and unveil the principles by which he conducts his life . . . Only as men follow after righteousness do they reach prosperity. In the emphasis thus laid on righteousness the proverbs of Israel outshine all other prudential literature. And at their higher levels they draw very near to the standard of Christ."—(A. R. GORDON.)

Questions :

- (1) Do you consider that proverbs stimulate or hinder original thought? Give examples.
- (2) Do you think that proverbs lag behind or go in front of current morality?
- (3) What effect have bad proverbs? What are some examples?

The Growth of Higher Wisdom.

With the later growth of Hebrew religious thought there arose a new type of teachers, who replaced the prophets. They are referred to by Isaiah and Jeremiah (see Is. 29. 14 ; Jer. 18. 18) as "the wise." They became travelling teachers, who spoke either in the hearing of the multitude (see Proverbs 1. 8, etc.) or in more private schools or lecture-halls, as described by Ben Sirach :

" Turn in unto me, ye unlearned,
And lodge in my house of instruction."

(Ecclus. 51. 23.)

In such schools probably a more speculative type of wisdom arose, which seems to have been largely influenced by Greek thought, and it is this idea that we meet in the 8th chapter of Proverbs, one of our lesson-passages for the day, where wisdom is described as a foster-child of God. Other writers identify wisdom with "the Law," and the Book of Enoch speaks of wisdom, rejected by men on earth, returning to Heaven, and there awaiting the fulfilment of the Messianic age, when she will become the portion of all who share in it. The second Bible reading of to-day carries us still further along the lines of Hebrew thought, and there we find wisdom described as the life and power of God in creation, and as actually the underlying unity of the whole physical and moral universe.

The Hebrew writers of that time seem certainly to have been influenced by Greek ideas, but did not have a very clear idea of how to express the relation between the Divine Being and wisdom, but the Book of Wisdom does mark an advance in thought and expression. Further, the writer seems to identify wisdom both with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God (Logos). Thus wisdom inspired the prophets and in 9. 17 wisdom and the Holy Spirit are said to be the only means of approach to the Divine counsel. We read in 16. 12 that God executes his will through his Word.

When the author speaks of wisdom as "a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty," "an effulgence from everlasting light," "an unspotted mirror of the working of God," and "an image of his goodness," he means, says Dr. Fairweather, "to

represent it as standing in a relation to God that is not shared by the Divine creations—a relation so close and peculiar as to constitute wisdom the very image or reflexion of his own essential Being, in a sense in which man cannot be said to be so. Here at all events wisdom is no mere personification, but a real essence of purest light, the image of the Godhead, streaming forth as a substance from God before the creation of the world."

These thoughts were carried still further by the famous Jewish writer of Alexandria, Philo (B.C. 20—A.D. 40), who strove to reconcile Jewish and Greek elements in his philosophy. He developed a doctrine of the Divine Powers, which are the eternal forms of the thought of God, the highest among them being the "Logos." Philo preferred this word to the word "wisdom," especially as the latter had been spoken of by earlier writers as feminine, as in the passages we have read from *Proverbs* and *Wisdom*.

Philo does not identify the Logos with God, but regards him as a kind of shadow cast by the Divine Light. He is, as it were, a High Priest, in whom God and the world are reconciled. Philo mingles Hebrew and Greek ideas in his teaching, but in such a way as to render his exact conception very difficult to ascertain. It is clear, however, that he raised the Logos from an impersonal to a kind of personal being, though in what sense he understood that word it is impossible to define. The Logos was Divine, but subordinate to Deity. The "Logos" is the great helper of man in his ascent to God. "To enjoy an innocent and quiet mind," writes Dean Inge, "free from unruly passions; to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit of wisdom within us; to share at last in the peace which passes all understanding, to see God as He is—this is the goal which Philo sets before himself and his readers."

New Testament Ideas of Wisdom.

Scholars are divided in their opinion as to whether or not the writings of Philo were known to the author of the Fourth Gospel, but there can be no question that the ideas of that writer had much in common with his Alexandrian predecessor. Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews were also under similar influences. Paul regards "wisdom" as the highest gift brought to us by Christ (1 Cor. 1. 30), and describes the eternal Christ in terms borrowed from the Book of *Wisdom* as "the image of the invisible God, the first born of the whole creation" (see Col. 1. 15-17; Eph. 1. 8-14). We must remember also that these passages were written a considerable time *before* the Fourth Gospel, and that therefore the ideas would be familiar to the readers of that book. We have thus been able rapidly and in

the barest outline to trace the main thought of wisdom in its development among Hebrew thinkers, so as to pave the way for our next lesson.

Practical Issues.

Before leaving the subject it may be worth while to turn aside from these historical and somewhat difficult matters to ask the question, " What about the place of wisdom in our everyday life ? " What did Tennyson mean by his words :

" Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers " ?

or what is meant by the old English couplet :

" Knowledge, when wisdom is too weak to guide her,
Is like a head-strong horse, that throws his rider " ?

We all know that men may be learned but very foolish, and that cleverness may be an attribute of a rogue more often than it is of a saint. A university education will not necessarily make a man or woman " wise," though it may fit them for positions requiring much technical skill. Very humble and even unlettered people may, on the other hand, be full of wisdom.

Questions :

(1) What constituted the wisdom of Jesus, that made men prefer him to all other teachers ?

(2) Do you agree with the following statement ?

" To Jesus ' wisdom ' was that practical understanding of the mind of God, that entire sympathy with His will and purpose, which enabled men to walk in His ways, and to do His will on earth as in heaven."

January 29th.

II.—THE WORD MADE FLESH.

Bible Reading : John 1. 1-18.

“From the beginning there was with God an Intention, which Intention was divine as the Mind that created it. In accordance with this Intention all things were created, and the Intention was the supporting substance of all things. Yet *things* could not utterly disclose that Intention, because they could not themselves be aware of it. So the Intention became life, and in the mind of man this life became light, that light that lighteth all human reason, rational and moral. Even yet the Intention was not fully disclosed, for human reason worked darkly, and could not comprehend the light. Then at last the Intention became flesh, was disclosed through a human personality, and flashed forth its glory in the activities of a human life. The glory of God is unimaginable, but it was shown forth in human life; no eye hath ever seen it as it is, but at length in flesh it was expressed, and in real life it was disclosed.”—(W. E. Orchard's paraphrase of John 1. 1-4.)

Other References and Allied Subjects.

The best small book is :

E. F. Scott's *Historical and Religious Value of the Fourth Gospel*. (Constable. 1s.)

See also *The Gospel of John : Daily Study Notes*. G. Currie Martin. (N.A.S.U. 3d.); and Appendix to this Handbook, pp. 289 ff.

In a Library may be consulted :

Commentaries in the *Century* and *Cambridge Bibles*, and Wescott's *The Gospel of John*. (Murray. 12s.)

Articles on the Gospel in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible, Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*.

The articles *Gospels* and *Logos* in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* and E. F. Scott's larger book, *The Fourth Gospel*. (Clark. 10s. 6d.)

Good lecture subjects would be

Socrates in Xenophon and Plato.

The "Early Lives" of Francis of Assisi (published in Everyman Library. No. 485. 2s.).

The thought of Christ in John's Gospel, Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Ideas of Pre-existence.

Wordsworth's *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality*.

Browning's *Death in the Desert*.

Suggested Hymns : 204, 205, 218, 202, 393.

Aim of the Lesson : To see Jesus as the most perfect revelation of God.

Notes on the Lesson.

Links with the previous Lesson.

As we have seen, the Old Testament writers presented various lines of approach to the knowledge of God. There were the prophets with their continually varying messages, as the historical situation altered. There was the Law in its permanent statutes, and observances in the Temple worship. There was the growth of the idea of wisdom which we traced in the last lesson. And there was the literature of Devotion, as most perfectly presented in the book of Psalms. This great preface of the Fourth Gospel, which forms our reading for to-day, endeavours to link all these together, and to show how they were perfected and surpassed in the revelation of Jesus. The writer takes Moses as typical of the Law, and John the Baptist as typical of the order of prophets. The prophets had centred all their thoughts on the coming of the Anointed King, whom they called Messiah, and in his glorious Kingdom to be established in the world. The later Jewish writers of Apocalypse had regarded this King as a being of another order from all his predecessors, as a man sent down from Heaven. All these strands of thought are in the writer's mind as he pens these verses. But he has had experience of the person—Jesus of Nazareth. All his life-work, his death, and the certainty of his followers that he still lives, imbued with greater and more universal powers as the outcome of his victory over death—all these are before his mind's eye. He knows also all that has been written about his Lord since the days of his earthly ministry. He is aware what tremendous and significant results have followed from the preaching of his message. He remembers what Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews have written about his heavenly glory. He remembers that many have been so filled with the thought of the risen and glorified Christ that they have begun to neglect the significance of his earthly life, and so he sets himself a new task—to show forth the glory of his Lord in that earthly ministry. He feels that unless men understand that they understand nothing, God might yet remain distant and remote from them. But “ His word is nigh them—even in their mouth and in their heart ” (Deut. 30. 14), as an old writer had said, and it is the meaning and significance of this—the actual drawing near of God to men in the person of Jesus that is to be the theme of his book.

God in Human Personalities.

God had always spoken most clearly through the lips of men. Humanity might miss—had often missed—his message in the marvels of Nature—in the movements of History—in the working of Providence; but again and again it had been arrested and turned from its folly and sin by the voice of some God-filled soul. Thus God had never left himself without a witness. The generations were illumined by the teachings of Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah, Isaiah and a host of others. In Moses he finds this witness in a pre-eminent degree. The "Law" had come by his agency. The writer remembered, doubtless, that Moses had spoken of "a prophet from among their brethren like unto himself," and how God had said, "I will put my word into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Deut. 18. 18). This writer considered that promise had never been perfectly fulfilled until Jesus came among men. Do you consider this a legitimate conclusion? Do you see a Divine purpose in leading men always to look for some "divine event to which the whole creation moves"? How far are men the better and wiser for the belief that "the best is yet to be"? Have men advanced more who have regarded the Golden Age as in the future, not in the past?

Again, he seized hold of a personality much nearer his own time—the dramatic figure of John the Baptist. In his view the great significance of John was that he pointed forward to a greater than himself. Magnificent as John was, he was only a "voice crying in the wilderness." He was an ascetic—one who lived apart. God could not be fully realised thus. Men had too often thought of him as remote and far off. God had to mingle with their daily life before they could truly find him. Let us consider how far this is still true in current conceptions of God. Does God really influence men's lives if they think of him as touching them only in certain places and at certain times? Some only seem to look for him in certain crises of personal or national history—is this possible? John withdrew himself as much as he could from human intercourse—his very food and raiment distinguished him from his fellows. Does such a life present the truest conception of God? The author of this Gospel thinks not. The true glory of Jesus to him was that "he dwelt among us," and so dwelling was full of grace and truth.

The Word of God revealed.

To the author the "Word" of God meant his inner thought and purpose. God might have the highest, most gracious and profound purpose for the human race, but if it could not be understood and grasped by men—if they could not be sharers

in it--then it remained ineffective. He saw how this had been gradually and partially revealed in men like Moses and John the Baptist, but something much more was needed for the enlightenment and renewal of the world. First, we must be sure that this had really been from before all time the original mind and will of God. Of this he is assured. All his people had learned of God in the generations past, had made him certain on that score. He would have assented to all we learned last week about the character of the Divine wisdom. But this required to be brought near to men, so that they might all be sharers in it. It was not only an idea, but a life.

He had looked anew at the whole life of Jesus and he found it there. Not everyone--not the majority--had so realised the truth. But some had, and that was enough to make him sure of his facts.

Is it not so in every great discovery? Galileo, Newton, Pascal, Lodge, make great discoveries in the realms of Nature, and whether or not others accept their message, they "know." They make one or two disciples, and presently the whole world is at their feet. So was it with Jesus. But this writer claims that all should know him. They are his own kith and kin. Just as all true scientists wish the world to share at once the benefits of their discoveries, so God wishes all to share the life, wisdom and ample riches which he has shown and made possible for acquirement in Jesus Christ. That is the theme of this book. "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" (John 20. 31).

What do we consider to be the highest and most worthy things in life? Are they what this writer calls "grace and truth"? The question of chief importance for us all to decide is what is most worth while in life. Will the members of the School try to give answers to this question? When these have been honestly given, then test further whether they are in agreement with the values expressed by Jesus.

If they prove to be so we shall find that to him the thoughts of God and of man were the most important, and of their relation to one another (Mark 12. 28-31; 8. 36-37). He himself was "Son of Man" and "Son of God"--that is, he united in himself the fullest possible presentation in human life of each--the Father *and* the Son. Then--though God may have other words for other worlds--"yet for this world the Word of God is Christ."

February 5th.

III.—THE PROGRESS OF INSPIRATION.

Bible Reading : John 14. 12-18.

Other References :

See books named under Lesson for September 30th, on "The Light of the World."
Inspiration in Men, Books and Movements. G. Currie Martin.
 (Hunter & Longhurst. 1s.)
The Bible : its Nature and Inspiration. Edward Grubb. Especially Chaps. XIV., XV. (Allen & Unwin. 2s. 6d.)

For Lecturettes :

The Progress of Poetry.
 The History of Music.
 The Growth of Hymns.
 The Story of the Y.M.C.A.
 The History of the Adult School Movement.

Suggested Hymns : 238, 243, 405, 413.

Aim of the Lesson : To show that God's spirit is always at work in the hearts of men.

Notes on the Lesson.

God in History.

"The inspiration of the Book of Judges, and of the history of the Kings of Israel and Judah, does not consist in the accuracy with which they record what happened, but in the vividness with which the writers have held and expressed the conviction that the hand of God was with the people of Israel, judging their disloyalty, chastising them for their sins, preparing them for a great future in which through them 'all the families of the earth should be blessed.'" So writes Edward Grubb, and puts a great truth before us in few words. This conception is one of the greatest truths we have to learn and apply as we study the history of the world. Many think of God as a pervasive influence, vague and indefinite, scarcely to be distinguished from the spirit of humanity at work through the ages. Others regard him as a Person aloft

and distant from life's everyday affairs, and when he interferes only doing so at intervals in great crises of judgment or renewal. Neither view is at all adequate to the conception Jesus held of God. To him the idea of Fatherhood included One who worked all the time " without haste, but without rest," as the German poet phrased it. There was nothing too unimportant for his interest, and nothing so great that he could not accomplish it. " With God all things are possible." This idea is a great inspiration and a powerful incentive. It was in the light of this thought of Divine purpose that Jesus accomplished all he did, and in the passage that is given for to-day's reading he passes on this master-thought to his disciples (see vv. 16-18). The message of Jesus only constituted a new beginning—a fresh era in world history.

Questions :

- (1) Consider in what ways new beginnings were made in the world with the advent of Jesus into human life.
- (2) How would you seek to show to others the presence of God in the events of the twentieth century ?

Men as God's fellow-workers.

When some new discovery is made—as, for example, the art of flying with machines heavier than air—it is not only the man who conceives the idea that is of significance. It is not the first inventor and constructor of such a machine, but all the mechanics who helped to build it, and all subsequent developers and improvers of these machines and all their operatives, until the vast fabric of the modern air-way service is built up. So God does not work alone. He desires and requires the aid of us all. As Canon Woods said recently : " The resources of God are not some vague, mystic thing—*you* are the resources of God."

Discussion subject :

Consider (a) the inspiration, (b) the responsibility of the idea, and (c) the loss involved in failing to recognise it.

Even the Old Testament writers recognised that " God fulfils himself in many ways." He inspired workmen and craftsmen (Ex. 31. 1-11), architects (2 Chron. 6. 9, 10), poets (Ps. 149), thinkers and counsellors (Prov. 2. 6-8), even warriors (Ps. 144 ; Judges 6. 16), and athletes (Judges 14. 6). In all great and mighty deeds, in the beauty of art and in the wisdom of literature, they saw the hand of God. But they felt also that this must not be confined to the few—it must eventually be the lot of the people. In a great passage the prophet Joel (2. 28-32) gave

utterance to this idea, and it is significant of the fulfilment of the words seen in the new power given to men by the work of Jesus that Peter quoted and applied the passage to the community gathered in Jerusalem (Acts 2. 16-18). It is this story that will be told and illustrated in the succeeding series of lessons. It is of the utmost importance that we should learn to look for the Divine inspiration everywhere. So we shall find it in artists, musicians, poets, inventors, statesmen, and men and women of letters. Nor must we imagine that the Divine inspiration only comes upon men and women of pure and perfect character. The Old Testament writers did not hesitate to term Samson, David and Solomon "inspired," though, at the same time, their weaknesses and sins were not hidden. So we shall find men like Shelley, Beethoven, and Botticelli far from perfect, but we shall not deny them their share in the Divine gift. Inspiration, like genius, may be difficult to define, but it is real. It may be abused or prostituted as other Divine gifts, at our own peril, but we only confuse issues if we confine the term inspiration to those whose characters are saintly. Further inspiration comes, as Joel said, upon companies of nameless ones. This will be shown us in such examples as folk song, folk music, many of the world's great hymns, and in the story of painting and architecture. That which has been termed inspiration in movements is a very vital concern in interpreting history, wherein a common aim, purpose, and power falls upon numbers of men and women, often at a distance from one another in time, space, or both, and a great movement results, whose roots it may be impossible to trace, unless we boldly assert that they are only to be found in the Divine thought and will. An illustration of this kind ready to our hand, and that should be intimately known by every member of our Schools, is the story of the Adult School Movement (see G. Currie Martin's *The Adult School Movement*. 1s. 6d. and 5s.).

Questions :

- (1) How far are leaders *and* followers requisite for the progress of a great cause?
- (2) In what degrees, if any, do you regard the following movements as "inspired" - the League of Nations, the Tractarian Movement, Christian Science?

God as Spirit.

A special lesson is to be devoted to this aspect of the subject later in the year (see September 30th) so that there is no need to dwell upon it now, but it is impossible to pass from this subject without making it quite clear that, according to the teaching of Jesus, it was God's purpose to move the world in new ways through

his Spirit, and that all that was done by men *along the line of the Divine purpose as Jesus revealed it* was to be looked upon as the work of his Spirit. This is very important as affording us a new standard of values, whereby we may judge men, books, expressions of art, religious, social and political movements, but also, and even of more importance, it is this idea that may awaken in us new efforts and stir flagging zeal in all attempts to improve the lot of human society. The humblest of us may become sharers in this Divine inspiration, if we seek to learn the tasks of God, and to do our share in their fulfilment.

Point for Discussion :

Try to show how Divine inspiration reached masses of men through such books as *Nicholas Nickleby*, *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*, and *Unto this Last*.

Section III.

The Divine Word.

NOTES BY JAMES DUDLEY, M.Sc.

Introduction.

"It is very certain that it is the effect of conversation with the beauty of the soul to beget a desire and need to impart to others the same knowledge and love. If utterance is denied, the thought lies like a burden on the man. Always the seer is a sayer. Somehow his dream is told; somehow he publishes it with solemn joy: sometimes with pencil on canvas, sometimes with chisel on stone, sometimes in towers and aisles of granite his soul's worship is builded, sometimes in anthems of indefinite music, but clearest and most permanent in words. The man enamoured of this excellency becomes its priest or poet."

R. W. EMERSON.

(From an Address delivered before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, U.S.A.)

THE theme running through the following five lessons is the theme of man finding expression in various ways for those gifts with which God has endowed him. The Divine Word was not spoken once and for all in the first century, but, as we have already seen, inspiration has been progressive. There is an urge in man to give expression to the gifts, great or small, with which he is endowed: and as he endeavours truly to use those gifts he is able to make clear to others some aspect of life which is revealed to him; to encourage, to inspire, to comfort, or to assist in some way other lives than his own. Men find freedom, satisfaction, a sense of worth-whileness in life, only as this urge to give expression to their gifts finds an outlet in activity.

We realise this most strikingly, perhaps, in the lives of great men who have found their true vocation in the arts or sciences. But it is not necessary that we should be musicians or artists or scientists in order to find this fulfilment in our own lives. The lessons which follow in this section are intended to help us in two ways:

(1) To search for and to learn to appreciate and understand the Divine Word as it comes to us through the medium of the works of great artists and scientists.

(2) To stimulate us to seek for and give expression to the gifts with which we are ourselves endowed.

The world is fortunately full of variety, and therein lies much of its interest. We each of us have some gift which it is worth while to cultivate and express to the fullest of our powers. We can each be artists in our own degree—i.e., we can each find satisfaction and be a means of help and inspiration to others by doing to the best of our ability the thing for which we have a gift, or even the duty which comes to us in the ordinary routine of life.

It is for each of us to see that our lamps are kept burning and to help, by the aid of our own small light, to the illumination of the life of mankind.

The five lessons which follow cannot be dealt with merely by talking about them. It is no good talking about music or pictures or architecture or poetry unless we hear and see the things themselves. Therefore is it specially important to see that each lesson is illustrated. If, for some reason, you cannot use the illustrations that are given in the notes, use others. If you do this, it will not be necessary to get a specialist in each subject to introduce the lesson.

February 12th.

I.—MUSIC.

Bible Readings : 1 Sam. 16. 14-23; Psalm 150.

Illustrations :

" Londonderry Air " (Irish Folk Song).

Beethoven's " Minuet in G."

Get someone to play the " Londonderry Air " once or twice on the piano and then let the class hum it over together once or twice.

Use a gramophone for the Beethoven Minuet. (H.M.V. Record. Mischa Elman. 6s.)

Other References :

A History of Music in England. Walker. Chap. XII. (Oxford Univ. Press. Out of print.)

The Evolution of the English Hymn. F. J. Gillman. Chap. I. (Allen & Unwin. 10s. 6d.)

Orpheus. W. J. Turner. (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d.)

The Music of Fellowship. F. J. Gillman. (N.A.S.U. 6d.)

Browning's poems, " Saul " and " Abt Vogler."

Suggested Hymns : 142 (2nd tune), 156, 110, 113.

[N.B.—These hymns have been chosen chiefly on account of their tunes.]

Aim of the Lesson : To show that music is one of the ways in which the Divine Word finds expression.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. A Natural Expression of Emotion.

Most of us make music of some kind, or try to do so. Why do we sing or hum tunes to ourselves or whistle as we go about the day's work or pleasure? Why do we sing hymns at our weekly class meetings?

Let us each try to answer these questions for ourselves before we go further with the lesson.

Someone is sure to say, " Because we feel happy, or glad, or sad." Another may say, " To express our feelings, or our emotions."

These answers are all true. Music is one of the most natural and most powerful means of expressing our emotional life. It is

so natural that we often use it quite unthinkingly. And it is almost universal among humankind. There is probably no race of people which has not discovered some form of music with which to express itself.

During recent years we have learnt much about the music that our ancestors played and sang. Many of these songs of the people of former days have the power to move us as we listen to them to-day, and, maybe, we are able to enter to some extent into the spirit of the people who sang them.

2. The Londonderry Air.

"The Londonderry Air," that you have heard and sung, is one of the most beautiful of these folk songs. When it was composed, or who composed it, nobody knows. It was handed down from one generation to another, not in print, but by the human voice, in the same way as poetry was first handed down before the discovery of writing, and it has probably been altered and made more and more perfect until it became the real expression

Emer's Farewell to Cucullain (*Londonderry Air*).

(*Moderately slow.*)



of the spirit of the Irish people who made it. Try it over yourselves again at home. Notice how it begins calmly and rather sadly, how it slowly and gradually works up, higher and higher, until it reaches a note of triumph, then subsides again and ends on a note of calm. Whatever their material conditions, whatever the pettiness of their lives, there must have been something fine and noble about the race that could produce such a tune.

3. Music and Life.

For it is true enough that fine art, whether music, or painting, or poetry, or architecture, is the result of something fine in life. A

composer does not sit down and say to himself, "Now, I am going to compose a beautiful piece"; he writes because he feels that there is something in him that he must express. Beethoven, one of the greatest of musicians, when asked why he wrote music, said, "What I have in my heart must come out; and that is why I compose."

What he had in his heart was the Divine Word, and what came out of his heart was the Divine Word interpreted through the art of music and through his understanding of the spirit of his times. A great artist is a man who sums up in himself the spirit of the age in which he lives and to whom is given the Divine Word in terms of that spirit. If his age expresses something of eternal value to mankind, and if he is a true interpreter of it, then his work will endure as the music of Beethoven endures.

4. Influence of Music.

But music, like the other arts, not only gathers up and expresses the spirit of an age; it produces an influence on those who hear it. We all know how a good rousing tune will cheer us up and help us to overcome weariness. What happens when a group of people, it may be a company of soldiers or it may be an Adult School party, are tired on a long walk? Someone starts up a good marching song; everyone joins in; and the company not only forgets its tiredness but actually feels renewed energy. Other forms of music have the power to soothe and calm and refresh us when we are irritable or tired or depressed. Music may even have powers, which we hardly contemplate yet, of healing certain diseases of the mind.

Our lesson shows us how David's music was able to relieve Saul of his morbid fits of gloom and irritability. David must have known not only how to play, but also what sort of music to play, in order to help Saul in his distress of mind. Beethoven, too, knew how powerful music was in this respect. He says in a letter to one of his friends, "He who penetrates the meaning of my music shall be freed from all the misery which afflicts others."

But Beethoven also knew that music had a power which was even greater still. "Music," he says, "ought to create and fan the fire of the spirit of man." And on another occasion he tells us, "There is nothing finer than to approach the Divine and to shed its rays on the human race." He knew that music was one of God's good gifts; that through it man can be moved and influenced and inspired in a way which no words can express; that it may be made one of the channels through which God speaks to men.

5. Good and Bad Music.

If we think of music as one way of expressing thoughts and feelings, just as speech is another way, we shall understand that it is possible to express noble feelings or base feelings in music as well as in speech. If God can speak to us through music he does not speak through all that is said or called music.

There are some books we would not read; some thoughts we should be ashamed of if put into words. It is the same with music, only we don't realise it so readily. If we did we might be ashamed of some of the tunes we sing—even of some of our hymn tunes.

It is worth while to learn to appreciate the good in music by listening to it whenever we can.

We may not know how to distinguish good from bad at first, but we shall be pretty safe if we choose music which has stood the test of time. Things that endure are generally good.

We need not be afraid that good music is necessarily difficult. It is often very simple. The " Londonderry Air " is easy to learn. Folk songs in general are simple. The Beethoven minuet is easy to listen to.

And it is not only the very simple music which can be of help to those of us who think we are not musical. An old, bed-ridden woman, to whom a wireless set has recently been given, has said that when she listens to Wagner's music " she feels as if she were out in a country lane, in rain and thunder, wet through, but knowing she is going home."

The more we listen to the good, the more easily we shall be able to distinguish what is bad and the less we shall want to sing or to hear it.

Questions :

- (1) Give the names of some tunes you like.
- (2) Try to put into words why you like them.
- (3) Which do you think good and which bad of the following tunes in the *Fellowship Hymn Book*—113, 87, 105, 197, 192 ?
- (4) Do you listen to music on the " wireless " ? If so, what kind of music do you like best, and why ?

February 19th.

II.—ARCHITECTURE.

Bible Reading : 1 Kings 8. 12-27.

Illustrations :

Pictures or picture postcards of cathedral, church or other famous building, castle, house, &c., in your neighbourhood. If possible, arrange a class excursion to visit one of these places and find someone to explain it.

Other References :

Architecture. Lethaby. Chapters 12 to 15. (Home Univ. Library. 2s.)

Seven Lamps of Architecture. Ruskin. (Everyman. 2s.)

Wordsworth's sonnet, "King's College Chapel."

The Romance of Building. Allen S. Walker. (G. Philip & Sons. 2s. 6d.)

Suggested Hymns : 2, 12, 14.

Aim of the Lesson : To show how the Divine Word finds expression through the art of building.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Interest of Buildings.

What is it that makes travel interesting? To some of us it is the scenery of nature, the fields, hills, rivers or sea. But when we visit a strange town the interest and the strangeness usually lie in its buildings. The men and women are different, of course, but still not so very different in outward appearance from the people we know at home. The streets, the arrangement of the town, the buildings, all tell us that we are in a strange place. And this difference is even more striking when we go to a foreign country. The separate buildings, the towns as a whole, have a "character." They express something.

If we try to think what they express we shall probably arrive at the conclusion that they express the people or the spirit of the people who have lived in them, just as, when we visit the home of one of our friends, we feel that there is something about the very furniture and its arrangement which expresses the family living there.

The building materials may be very much the same—brick, stone, timber, plaster—but something is added which makes the results different ; the genius of man, his thoughts and his feelings.

2. Development in Architecture.

Architecture, indeed, is one form of the expression of life, and this is so true that people who understand architecture can sometimes tell you when a building was erected by the very style and appearance of it.

If we look at one of our old English castles, the massive walls, the narrow window slits, the strong gateway and portcullis express the spirit of warfare. Comfort and convenience have to give way to defence.

We can read the story of the gradual coming of peace and security in the larger windows, the less forbidding gateways, and the more comfortable rooms of later periods.

Nearly all our beautiful cathedrals and many of our old churches were built between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, at a time when religion was a dominating influence in the life of the people and when there was an active spirit of energy and order. We call them Gothic and we admire their beauty, but were the people who built them thinking of any particular style or trying consciously to create beauty ? They were, at any rate, expressing their spirit of order and energy and their ideals in stone ; and because there was something fine and right in the spirit of the age the results of their work are beautiful.

Lethaby, in his little book on Architecture, says, " A cathedral was not designed but ' revealed,' " and again, " Gothic art is a spirit, the expression of an energy of the soul."

In the days when travel was difficult, when men spent most of their lives in their own town, and when they took a pride in their craft and in their town and its government, the expression of that side of their lives was shown in the town halls and guild halls and market halls, some of which we can still see.

3. Solomon's Temple.

As we read about Solomon's Temple, and as we remember the story of the Hebrew race, we can see that the building of the Temple must have been just as much an expression of the life and aspirations of the people as were our Gothic cathedrals and our guild halls. They had come out of bondage, they had wandered homeless in the wilderness, they had taken possession of a new country, had conquered and subdued its inhabitants, and were now settled down under their own king in their own land. And it was their God, Jehovah, who had been their stay

and support. What could be more natural than that all the energies of the people should be turned to erecting a habitation worthy of such a God, of such a deliverer ?

Of course we shall not expect to find that the workers are always consciously and of their own free will engaged upon this work. At one period of history the work may be done by forced labour, at a later period by hired labour. The workman will only realise the immediate reason for his work—compulsion or the necessity of earning his own living. But behind and below there is the "energy of the soul" of the people at work.

4. Proportion in Life and Art.

And if the greatness of a people is shown in its architecture, what about its littleness, its sordidness, its weakness ? If we look at a row of mean houses built in the middle of last century and compare them with some of the beautiful houses of previous centuries that fortunately still remain, we cannot but feel that there must have been something wrong in an age that produced and allowed such ugliness.

When we try to discover what is wrong with these mean streets it seems to be that the proportions are wrong. Windows, doors, walls, instead of combining together in due proportion to make beauty, are in some way out of harmony with each other. And the proportions in life were wrong, too. The things that are earthly and temporal were in wrong proportion to the things that are spiritual and eternal.

Look, too, at the churches and other large buildings of the same period. Because the age lacked creative force of its own it tried to recreate Gothic architecture. But though we may measure up a work of art and try to make another exactly like it, we can't reproduce the spirit which created the original and so our work is imitation. And there is a world of difference between imitation and reality.

5. A New Age.

Fortunately, to-day there appears to be evidence of a new spirit in architecture. New styles are responding to new needs and to new materials for building. Iron, steel and concrete have raised new problems and provided new opportunities for originality and courage and imagination. Bush House in London, and Liverpool Cathedral, are examples of large modern buildings which have real character and dignity of their own, and in London there are many other examples. To some modern eyes there is beauty—as there is certainly courage and daring—in the sky-scrapers of New York. Town and regional planning are

giving new opportunities and new stimulus. It will be a useful exercise if we will look at new buildings and try to form judgments about them.

6. Ourselves as Architects.

Architecture, then, is a record and an expression of the spirit of a people: the spirit made manifest in stone and brick and timber and glass. A building is even less the work of the one man called the architect than a piece of music is the work of one composer. In some way, we know not how, we are all helping to mould the architecture of our own age and of the immediate future. Whatever it is, whether noble or mean, whether beautiful or ugly, whether fine or gross, will depend on the human beings who are living their everyday lives to-day. If there is a spirit of energy, of generosity, of love, of nobility, of high endeavour abroad among the people, then it is certain that our buildings will express this. If, on the other hand, we are lacking in these qualities, then our buildings will surely tell the tale of our failure to those who come after us.

Lethaby tells us, "In the days when the cathedrals were built, people were as concerned about them as we are about cricket. . . . If ever we are to have a time of architecture again, it must be founded on a love for the city, a worship of home and nation," and, he might well have added, of "whatsoever things are true and lovely and of good report."

Questions :

- (1) What qualities do you want to see expressed in (a) a church, (b) a town hall, (c) a cottage, (d) a bridge ?
- (2) Discuss buildings in your own district of the kinds mentioned in the previous question.

February 26th.

III.—POETRY.

Bible Reading : Isaiah 35.

Illustrations :

Get someone who can read poetry well to read Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind," and his sonnet, "Ozymandias."

Text-book for the Lesson :

Shelley. (Augustan Books of Modern Poetry. Benn. 6d.)

Other References :

Shelley. J. A. Symonds. (English Men of Letters Series. Macmillan. 3s. 6d.)

Shelley, Godwin and Their Circle. (Home Univ. Library. 2s.)

Suggested Hymns : 98, 129, 219, 243, 244.

Aim of the Lesson : To show the Divine Word expressed through the poetry of Shelley.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. Poetry compared with Music.

Percy Bysshe Shelley, whose life and poetry are the subject of our lesson, was born in the year 1792. It is important to note this date, because great men, particularly great artists, owe as much to the age in which they live as they do to their parentage, and we cannot understand the poetry of Shelley unless we know something of what was taking place in the world around him.

2. Shelley and his Age.

The century which was drawing to a close had been, in England, an easy-going and comfortable period on the whole, but in France the nation had been stirred to its very core, first by new thoughts about freedom, liberty and equality, and then by the revolution of 1789, which was the result of these new ideas spreading among a people suffering from the oppression of unjust laws under an absolute monarchy.

Three years before Shelley was born the storm broke and did not die down until the monarchy was swept away and the people were supreme.

In spite of all the horrors of the revolution this struggle for freedom fired the imagination of generous-hearted people, not only

in France but throughout all Europe. Our English poet, Wordsworth, feeling the influence of this new spirit says :

" Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven."

3. His Life and Early Death.

Young Shelley, growing up as a child and as a young man in this atmosphere of new ideas, was very susceptible to it all. He came of a wealthy and aristocratic family, and was educated at Eton and Oxford University. His eager and tender young spirit rebelled against the outworn ideas of his own class. Oppression, cruelty, insincerity were hateful to him, and because he saw them practised by people who professed to be Christian he denounced Christianity and gloried in calling himself an Atheist.

He was dismissed from the University because of his anti-Christian writings, and he was cast off by his father as the black sheep of the family.

His short life was marred by unhappy love affairs, by family quarrels, by lack of money sometimes, and by disappointment from the people he was most anxious to help. His unpractical nature and his burning zeal led him to expect that everyone would be as full of understanding and as eager for the suppression of wrong, as ready to forgive and as full of the love of humanity, as he was himself.

His material life was as restless as his spiritual life. He wandered in England, Scotland and Wales, never spending more than a few months in one place, though constantly making new plans for settling down. His last years were spent in Italy, still full of restless energy, and he was barely thirty years old when he was drowned in the Mediterranean sea, overtaken by a sudden brief storm when sailing in a small boat with a friend ; a tragic but fitting close to a brief and stormy life.

4. The Spirit of his Poetry.

It is impossible to give the message of Shelley by writing about it. His poems must be read ; the spirit is as much in the beauty of the words and their arrangement as it is in the thought.

Two things we cannot help being moved by as we read his verses : his passion for humanity, with all that it implies in love of freedom and hatred of oppression and cruelty ; and his wonderful power of describing natural phenomena, clouds, sunsets, storm and calm.

5. " Ode to the West Wind."

Read his " Ode to the West Wind " over and over again, if you can. The verses carry you along until you feel this cleansing

and purifying wind sweeping away with it the dead and decaying thoughts of a generation that has passed, and leaving the ground and the air clean and sweet for the new thoughts of a new age. Think of this poem speaking to an age that had seen the sweeping away of a decayed civilisation in France and the germination of the young plant of liberty. Read the last stanzas and try to grasp Shelley's burning desire that his own thoughts, scattered among men by such a wind, shall be as a prophecy to awaken them to a new conception of life.

No subject could be more apt to Shelley's own nature than this ode ; a nature "tameless, and swift, and proud," as he likens it to the wind.

6. "Ozymandias" and other Poems.

Read, too, his sonnet "Ozymandias," and notice how perfectly in fourteen brief lines he paints the doom of material power. Nothing needs to be said about the poem or can be said except to ask you to try to grasp something of its beauty, especially the perfect beauty of the last sentence,

"Round the decay,
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

And for an insight into the spirit of nature read his poem, "To Night." It will tell you its own message.

True poets are able to see and to feel more deeply than the rest of us and to express their message in words that interpret something of their own feeling and insight to us.

Shelley was the interpreter of the hopes and desires of his age, but, like all great artists, he was more than this. He had a message which was good for all time.

His so-called Atheism, which was merely the revolt against the narrow conception of Christianity of his own day, is contradicted over and over again by the evidence of his own poems. The true Shelley is revealed above all in the poem, "Adonais," which he wrote on the death of his friend and brother poet, Keats, and of which the following is one stanza :

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move,
That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse
Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love,
Which through the web of being blindly wove
By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
The fire for which all thirst ; now beams on me,
Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

7. Poetry in the Bible.

The Bible is rich in poetry, and we can find many examples of the way in which the poet gives expression to the desires or the joy or the spirit of thankfulness or of praise of his fellow men. The song of Moses (Exodus 15) is a song of thanks to God for deliverance from the Red Sea and from the Egyptians ; Deborah's song (Judges 5) is a poem of rejoicing over victory.

The Book of Psalms is a collection of poems of praise, of lamentation, of wonder, of doubt, of thanks ; in fact, of all those many emotions which the experiences of life give rise to. And to-day's reading has been chosen because, though it appears like a chapter in a prose book, it is really a beautiful poem of prophecy and expectation, giving expression to the longings which were hidden in the hearts and minds of the Hebrew people.

Questions :

- (1) What are the poems you like best ?
- (2) Put into words, if you can, why you like them.
- (3) What is the message of " Ozymandias " to you ?

March 4th.

IV.—PAINTING.

Bible Reading : Psalm 121.

Illustration :

Borrow from someone a reproduction of Millet's picture, "The Angelus," and have it on view during the lesson. If you cannot get this, use some other well-known picture and adapt the lesson accordingly.

Other References :

Millet. ("Little Books on Art." Methuen. 58.)

Lectures on Art. Ruskin. (Everyman. 25.)

Browning's poem, "Fra Lippo Lippi."

Suggested Hymns : 94, 73, 115, 253.

Aim of the Lesson : To show that the art of painting is one means through which the Divine Word finds expression.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Gift of the Artist.

What is an artist's gift? It is a gift for seeing more deeply into things than most of us do, and an ability to represent them so as to enable us to see something that we should not see if we merely looked at the things themselves.

Browning, in his poem, "Fra Lippo Lippi," points this out to us where he says:

"Don't you mark? we're made so that we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
And so they are better, painted—better to us,
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that;
God uses us to help each other so,
Lending our minds out."

2. The Artist an Interpreter.

When we visit a picture gallery we see portraits and landscapes, and they are very much like the actual people and scenes that we can see for ourselves every day. But the pictures are something more than what we ourselves actually see; they are the artist's

interpretation of the people and scenes that he paints. The painter puts something of himself into his work, so that, if we were to see the same landscape or the same portrait painted by two different artists, there would be a difference in the pictures that we should recognise, even though we were not able to say what the difference was. It would be a difference of interpretation: we might call it a difference of spirit. Galsworthy, in *The Forsyte Saga*, speaks of "the spirit of universal beauty, deep, mysterious, which the old painters had known how to capture." The painter takes the things that are "seen and temporal," and helps us to become aware in them of the things that are "unseen and eternal."

3. Art as a Vocation.

If we read the lives of the great men in any of the arts we find that they have devoted themselves to their work in the spirit of what we should describe as a "call" if we were talking of parsons or missionaries. Their work is indeed a "calling" in a sense that most of our daily work is not. Many of them have given up occupations which would have been safe and some have passed lives of poverty in devotion to a passion for expressing what they felt they had in them to express.

4. The Human Artist.

We may sometimes undervalue the spiritual message of art because, in the lives of individual artists, we come across incidents that are unworthy and even sinful. We need not condone the sin, but, at the same time, we can agree with Ruskin on this subject where he says, "If there is indeed sterling value in the thing done, it has come of a sterling worth in the soul that did it, however alloyed or defiled by conditions of sin." The artist, like the rest of us, is made up of human and divine. We can appreciate and learn from the good in him without condoning the bad.

5. The Painter of "The Angelus."

The picture we are using as an illustration of our lesson to-day was chosen, not specially because it deals with a religious subject—any other great picture would have done as well—but because it will be familiar to most members of our Schools and because it illustrates some of the points already mentioned. It was painted in 1859 by a French artist, Jean François Millet, who was himself the son of a peasant, and who, as a boy, lived the life he painted with so much understanding when he was a man. He showed signs of his talent when he was a boy working in his

father's field, and his father did all he could to help him to the career that was evidently his true calling; but most of his life as an artist was passed under great difficulties and in a struggle against poverty such as he would not have known even if he had remained as a tiller of the soil. Honour did indeed come to him late in life, but it is only since his death that he has been recognised as the great artist he really was.

6. The Picture described.

Notice how simple the subject of the picture is. A bare, open field: two figures, very ordinary people in unlovely clothing: the common instruments of daily toil: the church in the background. We see the figures bowed in reverence as they hear the Angelus—the call to prayer—toll out from the distant church. Thousands of people, hundreds of times in their lives, had had such a scene before their eyes, but had not seen any significance in it. Millet fills it with meaning.

We see in it not merely the attitude of reverence and devotion of the two figures. We see the fundamental facts of life: man and woman and the stubborn earth out of which they have to wring a livelihood through hard toil. We see from their attitudes how, though young, that toil has broken them, broken them in body though the spirit lives. We are brought face to face with the fact of our varied civilisation based on such life as this. We see a simple religious exercise, a real emotional outlet in their hard lives. We almost hear that "still, sad music of humanity" which invades us in the calm light of evening. We may see many more things than these. And all these the artist has enabled or even compelled us to see by putting before us his conception of the scene as he knew it—knew it not merely as a sight often before his eyes, but as the expression of the spirit in which he lived and worked.

Look at the picture carefully and ask yourself what it has to say to you. Can you see anything more in it than has been mentioned above?

7. Looking at Pictures.

We should learn much more of what pictures have to teach us if, instead of walking through a picture gallery and looking for a moment each at a great many, we would spend half an hour before one good picture and think about it and ask ourselves questions about it. If we live in a town which has a picture gallery it is worth while to do this.

The aim of the lesson will not be accomplished in this lesson alone. We shall only begin to understand painting as a means

of expression of the spirit if we take the trouble frequently to look at and think about pictures. As we do so we may find that a new source of enjoyment and a new means of inspiration has come into our lives.

Questions :

- (1) What pictures have you in your home ?
- (2) Why did you buy them ?
- (3) Do you ever look at them or think about them ?
- (4) What picture would you like to have, and why ?

March 11th.

V.—SCIENCE.

Bible Readings : Psalm 8.; Proverbs 2. 1-5.

Illustrations :

If you can find someone who will explain to you some of Newton's experiments with prisms this will add interest to the lesson, but it is not essential.

Other References :

Sir Isaac Newton. Brodetsky. (Methuen. 5s.)

Astronomy. Hinks. (Home Univ. Library. 2s.)

The Torchbearers. Alfred Noyes. Vol. I. (Blackwood. 7s. 6d.)

Suggested Hymns : 26, 10, 70, 71, 782.

Aim of the Lesson : To show the search for truth as an expression of the Divine Word.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. Isaac Newton.

Last year was celebrated all over the civilised world the two hundredth anniversary of the death of Sir Isaac Newton, one of the greatest scientists who have ever lived. To-day we are going to think of him as an example of those who find an outlet for their spiritual energies, not through music or poetry or any of the arts, but through a devotion to the search for truth.

2. His Early Life.

Newton was born in the year 1642 in the small village of Woolsthorpe, in Lincolnshire. His father, who died before Isaac was born, owned a small farm and, though not well-to-do, the family was in moderately comfortable circumstances. It was a troublous time in which the child grew up. Parliament and King were engaged in a long struggle which resulted in the defeat and execution of the King and the subsequent leadership of Oliver Cromwell. It was not until Newton was eighteen years of age that Charles II. came to the throne that his father had lost.

Our history books tell us about this struggle, but they tell us nothing about the quiet development of the youth who was going to add so much to our knowledge of the universe in which we live.

3. His Education.

He was educated at the village school and at the neighbouring grammar school at Grantham, and his mother expected that he would then settle down at home to manage the farm estate. It was soon evident, however, that he was much more interested in inventing sundials, windmills, kites and other scientific toys than in learning the business of farming, and in 1661 he went to Cambridge University to continue his studies. There, in due time, he took his degree, but whether he did particularly well or not in his examinations we do not know. He was much more interested in original enquiry and discovery than in examination questions. Even when he was only twenty-three years old he invented a new and very important method in mathematics, and when he was only a year older he discovered the law of gravitation for which he is perhaps most famous.

4. His First Discoveries.

Most of us will have heard the story of how, when he was sitting in the garden of his home at Woolsthorpe, he saw an apple fall. This set him wondering why it went straight to the earth when it left the tree, and the conclusion to which he was led was that the earth must be pulling the apple. From this start he worked out laws which have guided scientific thinking ever since his day. Many people must have wondered why apples and other things fell to the ground, but only a man of genius could have seen in such a common occurrence the explanation of why the moon goes round the earth and why the planets go round the sun.

5. His Passion for Truth.

Of course there was a great deal of hard work and very difficult calculation to be done, which we should not understand, before his discovery was complete. But there is one very interesting thing to us about his discovery. When he had finished his calculations the result was not quite correct. This was not his fault. He had to use a measurement of the earth made by someone else and, as this was not accurate, his result was not quite what he wanted. Now he must have been sure that his great discovery was really true, but, because he could not then give a perfectly accurate proof, and because he valued truth more than praise or honour, he said nothing about his discovery and did not publish it for sixteen years until he was able to give a correct proof.

All his life, along with his great ability, he kept this passion for truth. He cared little for popularity or the praise of other

people. What he did care about was honesty in thought and the integrity of his own mind.

6. Other Discoveries.

There were other things which many people before him had noticed but which he was able to explain for the first time. He noticed that the colours of the rainbow and of soap bubbles and of light falling through a prism or three-cornered piece of glass were alike, and he was able to show how these different colours can be separated from ordinary white light. This, too, enabled him to invent an improved form of telescope. And he went on from this to try to explain what light itself was.

During all this time Newton was living quietly at Cambridge, where he had been given an appointment which was sufficient for his simple needs. For worldly prosperity he cared nothing. His work absorbed his thoughts, and he often forgot his meals and continued his work right through the night.

There came a time when, to retain his post as Cambridge, he would have to take orders as a clergyman. Although he was a deeply religious man he did not feel able to do this, as he felt compelled to retain his complete freedom in theological thought as in scientific. This difficulty was overcome, however, and he was able to keep his position unfettered.

7. His Later Life.

In 1687 was published the first volume of his great book, the "Principia," or Principles of Science, perhaps the greatest scientific work that has ever appeared, full of original discoveries about the motions of the heavenly bodies, about light and many other natural phenomena. It revolutionised the world of science and it would not be untrue to say that every scientific discovery since his day has owed something to Newton and his great book.

Over the mantelpiece of the room in which he was born are these words :

Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night,
God said, "Let Newton be," and all was light.

Although he sought no honour for himself, honours were showered on him. He was made a Fellow and then President of the Royal Society, he received a knighthood and was appointed Master of the Mint, a post which relieved him of all financial worry and brought him to pass his later life in London.

It was characteristic of him that, although this post need not have occupied much of his time and industry, he threw himself into the work with all his usual thoroughness and reorganised the

coinage of the nation's money as ably as he had reorganised the thought of the scientific world.

He lived till his eighty-fifth year, and long before his death he was recognised, not only in England but throughout Europe, as the greatest of the world's scientists.

What lesson does his life hold for us? There are diversities of gifts: not all are prophets, not all are teachers. God has given each of us a contribution to make to the many-sidedness of life. Newton's gift of intellect and his passion for discovery made of him an instrument for revealing the hidden things of nature. His industry, his integrity, his singleness of purpose, show us how even our own humble gifts can be sanctified in use.

8. Other Scientific Discoveries.

Newton is only one instance, though a very remarkable one, of the man of science. But all down the centuries and in many countries men of his type are found—men whose lives are devoted to the search for truth and the solution of the problems presented by nature, and who put the claims of this search before their own ease or comfort or advancement; men who are as surely "called" to do this work as the artist or the musician or the missionary.

Think of the French scientist, Pasteur, who devoted his life to the discovery of the causes of disease; of Lord Lister, who did so much to render surgical operations less dangerous and less painful; or of Darwin, who, through a long life of indifferent health, carried out his patient experiments and observations on plants and animals and who, by his discoveries, has changed the thoughts of the world.

Think of the wonderful discoveries during the last hundred years in the field of locomotion. Stage coaches and sailing ships have given place to railways and steamships, to motors, aeroplanes and airships. These, and the no less wonderful discoveries of the telegraph, telephone and wireless telegraphy, have brought the peoples of the world into closer contact with each other than they have ever been before.

And think of the patient, accurate work of the astronomers and mathematicians, which enabled them to predict last year exactly when the total eclipse of the sun would take place, where it would occur and how long it would last.

All these discoveries are marvellous and we can each think of others for ourselves. But what we are concerned about in our lesson is not so much the discoveries themselves as the spirit of the men engaged in them.

These men have a gift of intellectual ability, a zeal for the pursuit of truth, honesty and integrity of thought, and

patience, which give to their lives a purpose and an aim, and which make life fuller and richer in meaning and in possibilities for the rest of mankind.

9. The Scientific Wonder of the Psalmist.

The writer of the Psalm we have taken as our reading was filled with awe at the contemplation of the heavens. Newton, with all his intellect, confessed that he felt like a child picking up pebbles on the shore of the great ocean of knowledge. Men like him, who take us deeper and deeper into the interpretation of nature, increase our wonder, enlarge our vision, deepen our reverence, help us, if we have any of the grace of humility, to realise our own littleness as the Psalmist did, but show us, too, with the Psalmist, the wonder of man's power over his surroundings.

And in an age like the present, when new discoveries in the realm of thought are showing us that our old views are in some cases inadequate or even erroneous, it is well that we should learn from Newton the importance of a fearless honesty and integrity of thought. We should seek the truth without fear because the truth will indeed make us free.

Questions :

- (1) What improvements has science brought (a) to agriculture (b) to public health, (c) to eyesight, (d) to hearing ?
- (2) Do you know of any problems which scientists are now working at and which may be solved in the near future ?

NOTE.—*It is suggested that this date should be regarded as " Young People's Sunday," and that all Adult Schools should get younger members to take some special responsibility in connection with their meetings.*

Section IV. (a.)

Renascence.

NOTES BY G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D., W. ARNOLD VICCARS,
JESSIE M. WETHERED, AND Z. F. WILLIS, M.A.

March 18th.

I.—BIRTH AND RE-BIRTH.

Bible Reading : Genesis 32. 24-30.

Other References :

Conversion, Christian and Non-Christian. A. C. Underwood.
(George Allen & Unwin. 10s. 6d.)

(The notes of this and the following Lesson are very largely based upon Chapters II.-IX. of this book.)

Suggested Hymns : 45, 132, 190, 402.

Aim of the Lesson : To study some ideas of re-birth which have been held by different peoples.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. Birth and Re-birth.

It is often supposed that the conception of re-birth was one of the original contributions of Jesus to human life and thought. But it was really part of his religious inheritance, and it is not even the case that it was an exclusively Jewish conception, for it is to be found amongst many peoples, and must, therefore, be regarded as expressing a common, if not universal, experience of mankind. In this lesson we shall attempt to study some of the various forms in which the idea of re-birth has been held.

2. Re-birth among Primitive Peoples.

As Dr. Underwood tells us (chapter IX.), we quite commonly find among primitive peoples on the lower cultural levels ceremonies associated with the coming of adolescence, which take the form of pretended death and resurrection and of a kind of initiation into manhood.

“Among the Kikuyu of East Africa ‘the mother stands up with the boy crouching at her feet; she pretends to go through all the labour pains, and the boy, on being re-born, cries like a babe and is washed.’ Among some tribes a pretence is made of killing the lad and bringing him to life again. Thus, in the West of Ceram, the youths who are to be initiated into the Kakian Association are taken blindfolded into a darkened wooden shed in the depths of the forest. Each novice is led by the hand by two men who act as his sponsors. When all are assembled before the shed, the high priest calls on the devils, and immediately a hideous uproar is heard to proceed from the shed. It is made by men secreted within, but the women and children think it is made by the devils, and are greatly terrified. The priests then enter the shed with the boys one at a time. As each boy disappears within the precincts, a sound of chopping is heard. Dreadful cries ring out, and a sword or spear dripping with blood is thrust through the roof. This is a token that the boy’s head has been cut off, and that the devil has taken him away to the other world to regenerate him. The mothers of the lads bewail the murder of their sons, who are kept in the shed for five or nine days, during which time they are taught the secrets and traditions of their tribe. The men who acted as sponsors return to the village and inform the mourning mothers and sisters that the devil, at the intercession of the priests, has restored the lads to life again. The men who bring this glad news come in fainting and daubed with mud like messengers newly arrived from another world. When at last the boys leave the shed and return home, they totter in their walk and enter the house backward as though they had forgotten how to walk. If a plate of food is given to them they hold it upside down. They pretend they cannot speak and indicate their wants by signs. Their sponsors have to teach them all the common arts of life as though they were new-born children.”—(Underwood, pp. 100-101.)

Question : What do you think is the meaning of this ceremony ?

Among more civilised peoples similar rituals are found, but of more developed character.

“The most important moment in the life of the three upper castes of India is their investiture with the sacred thread (Upanayana). Until that has taken place, the boy’s spiritual life has not begun, and he is only a sudra, with no place among the ‘Twice-born’ . . . Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson has given a careful and elaborate account of the ceremony as practised to-day

by the Saivite Brahmans of the Maratha country. The boy spends the night before the day of the actual ceremony in absolute silence, having been previously smeared all over with a yellow substance. In the morning the father and mother take the lad to a booth where the sacrificial fire is burning on an altar, and his head is then shaved. Next, the yellow powder is rubbed off, and his body is bathed in warm water. After that he partakes of a little sweet food with his mother, and for the last time mother and son eat together. Henceforth, the boy will eat with the men and sleep in the men's part of the house. Then follows the solemn investiture with the sacred thread. This is succeeded by the giving of a new name, though curiously enough the new name is used only at this ceremony and is then immediately forgotten. Finally, the boy is taught the famous *Gayatri* mantra, whose life-giving syllables no woman or low-caste person is permitted to hear. To prevent it being overheard, the heads of the boy and the guru (teacher) are covered with a silk shawl, and it is whispered into the boy's right ear. Another feature of the ceremony is of interest. The boy is given a deer-skin, or if in these days a whole skin cannot be managed, a small piece of deer-skin is threaded on a string and hung round the boy's neck. It is noteworthy that the *Salapatha Brahmana* says that the antelope skin represents the womb, and when the young Brahman, in the course of his initiation, sits upon it, he is to assume the attitude of an embryo by closing his hands, 'since embryos have their hands closed.'—(Underwood, pp. 102-103.)

Question : Describe the meaning of this ceremony and compare it with the Kakian ceremony mentioned above.

3. Re-birth among the Jews.

According to Dr. Driver, the story of Jacob's wrestling with the angel at the Brook Jabbok is to be regarded as a re-birth crisis in the life of the Patriarch.

"The struggle at Penuel marks the triumph of the higher over the lower elements in his character. It is the critical moment of his life. . . . memories of the past return upon him; his conscience smites him, and he is 'greatly afraid.' But God is his real antagonist, not Esau; it is God whom his sins have offended, and who here comes to contest his right. These thoughts and tears are, as it were, materialised in his dream. . . . The moment marks a spiritual change in Jacob's character. His carnal weapons are lamed and useless—they fail him in his contest with God. As the result of his struggle, his natural self is left behind; he rises from it an altered man . . . and his new name symbolises his new nature."—(Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. II., p. 533.)

Similar experiences are to be found in the story of the call of Samuel (1 Samuel 3) and in the lives of the prophets, particularly Isaiah. But, as Dr. Underwood points out, in the later stages

of the development of religion in Israel, we find that as the influence of the prophet decreases, and that of the priest and scribe increases, there is less expectation that sudden changes in moral conduct must inevitably accompany them. "In the changed atmosphere sudden and explosive conversions would be replaced by conversions of the cultural type."

Thus, as has already been indicated, we have every reason to regard the conception of re-birth as something with which Jesus would have become familiar in the years preceding his active ministry.

4. Re-birth in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam.

Conceptions of re-birth occupy an important place in these three great religions. Space will not, however, permit of any detailed treatment of this, but those who are anxious for information regarding it should consult Chapters IV., V., and VI. of Dr. Underwood's book, or any standard works regarding these religions.

5. Re-birth among the Greeks and the Romans.

While the teaching of Socrates gave its greatest impetus to speculative enquiry, his method of question and answer was deliberately designed to bring those who came in contact with him to "a clear knowledge of the state of their own souls, and its end was to produce a regeneration of character by means of education. 'He made me feel,' says Alcibiades in the *Symposium*, 'as though I could hardly endure the life which I am now living.'"

In what are known as the Mystery Religions, we find many traces of re-birth conceptions, though "the extant evidence for a higher standard of moral life among the initiated is very scanty" (Underwood, p. 108).

The following description is recorded of the re-birth of Zeno, the Stoic philosopher.

"Having purchased a quantity of purple from Phœnicia, he was shipwrecked close to the Piræus, and when he had made his way along the coast as far as Athens he sat down by a bookseller's stall, being now about thirty years of age. As he took up the second book of Xenophon's *Memorabilia* and began to read it, he was delighted with it and asked where such men as were described in that book lived; and as Crates happened very seasonably to pass at that moment, the bookseller pointed him out and said 'Follow that man.' From that time forth he became a pupil of Crates."

6. Re-birth a Universal Experience.

The material set out above will have made clear that the conception of re-birth has been widely held by mankind, mainly

in connection with the coming of adolescence. At his first birth, the child is born to individual life ; at his second, the child is or should be born to social life—to the service of the race. In the following lesson we shall see how Jesus took up and transformed this common experience of mankind.

Questions :

- (1) What is the value of such ceremonies as Confirmation ?
- (2) Would it be a good thing to introduce an initiation ceremony for our young people when they enter the senior School ?

NOTES FOR LEADERS.

After dealing in an informative way with the matter contained in the first five sections, the latter part of the lesson may well be devoted to a more practical discussion of the changes experienced by members of the group themselves during their own early adolescent years, with the object of arriving at some common mind regarding the intensity and deeper significance of those changes. Passing on from this, attention may be given to the attitude which as adults we ought to take up to the coming of this crisis in the lives of the children with whose welfare we may be concerned.

Additional references :

- The Golden Bough.* J. G. Frazer. Abridged edition in one volume. (Macmillan. 18s.)
- Folk-Lore in the Old Testament.* J. G. Frazer. Abridged edition in one volume. (Macmillan. 18s.) See especially Chapter III.

March 25th.

II.—PERSONAL RE-BIRTH.

Bible Reading : John 3. 1-15.

Other References :

Conversion, Christian and Non-Christian. A. C. Underwood.
(George Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.) Chapters II.-IX.

Why should a Man be Born Again? By "An Adult School President." Published in 1898. (Out of print.)

Suggested Hymns : 70, 82, 94, 106, 404.

Aim of the Lesson : To see what re-birth means in the life of an individual.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Interview with Nicodemus.

As we saw in the last lesson, the conception of re-birth was part of the religious inheritance of Jesus. In the account of his interview with Nicodemus we find definite confirmation of this, for in it he expresses surprise that a religious leader should have so failed to see the teaching of Scripture. In this story we see a leader of the "Jewish" party favourably disposed by what he has seen and heard of the works of Jesus in Jerusalem, coming to make further enquiries about his teaching concerning the Kingdom. (It is significant that the "Kingdom" is mentioned elsewhere in John only in 18. 36). He does not receive much direct encouragement from Jesus, who at once goes to the root of the matter by asserting that a complete change of view comparable to nothing less than a second birth is needed before Nicodemus and his friends can understand the true character of the Kingdom. Nicodemus is reluctant to admit that religious leaders could need so complete a change, and in that respect history could scarcely regard him as an isolated figure.

The most significant verse is probably the seventh, with its direct personal emphasis.

We must note also the association of John's "Baptism of Purification and the Messianic Baptism of the Spirit" as constituting together the necessary preparation for admission to the Kingdom. In the conception of re-birth among primitive peoples,

and very largely in those other conceptions of it which we also had under review in the last lesson, the emphasis is mainly on the natural crisis of the coming of adolescence, involving, as we then saw, re-birth to the service of the race rather than to mere individual living. In the Nicodemus incident, Jesus puts the central importance upon something even higher—re-birth to the service of God.

Re-birth for Jesus is thus not only re-birth to the service of our fellows, to the sonship of Man ; but much more re-birth to the service of God, to the sonship of God.

2. Individual Re-birth.

It has often been said that a person's birth and death are very largely his own affairs ! It is even more true that re-birth in both the senses we have now recognised is an individual concern. To consider the first of these ; before puberty, the child is very much the creature of bit and bridle, even in these days of self-expression. But if adolescence dawns normally he passes gradually from the sphere of other-control into the sphere of self-control. The understanding parent and teacher, no matter how great the feelings of personal regret, know that this should and must be so. And yet how many adults would have to confess that the change was never fully accomplished in their own lives.

Whereas in adult life there should be free and conscious self-direction in the fulfilment of duties and purposes recognised by the individual as his own, we too often remain under the control of merely animal or infantile impulses and desires, and willing to submit without question to the dictates of others. But re-birth should mean no less than the conscious assumption by each individual of the direction of the course of his or her own life.

Question : How far under present conditions is it possible for the average individual to exercise any control over the course of his ordinary workaday life ? To what extent is it true that our thinking is controlled by the Press ?

But, as we have seen, the ideas of re-birth held by more civilised peoples have always implied something higher and more spiritual than this. And through it, whether accompanying the re-birth at adolescence or following later, Jesus would have us enter into a relationship with our Father which is at once personal, vital, transforming, and continuous. He would have us become moral men and women, for true morality can only exist where there is knowledge of alternatives and deliberate intention to follow the highest.

3. What Individual Re-birth means.

The whole subject of new birth is treated very simply and clearly in the series of addresses by the "President of an Adult School" mentioned at the beginning of the notes. In the third, he deals with "The Result of the New Birth," and we may well follow his thought in this section of our lesson. As it is unlikely that copies of the addresses will be generally available, the following extracts are quoted in full:

"I think we may consider for a few minutes what effect or result follows this wonderful change. Nor have we far to seek. On every hand are to be found definitions. That there are many and that they differ a little from each other, is in itself an interesting revelation of the variety of ways in which Truth may be correctly expressed to meet the needs of different minds in different times of history. We may here content ourselves with three different expressions of this result. Let me put them like this:—

1. The result expressed in terms of Poetry.
2. The result expressed in terms of Science.
3. The result expressed in terms of Religion.

"1. *The expression of Poetry.* Tennyson, Browning, Whittier, and many other poets, including Matthew Arnold, have given to us many beautiful lines depicting the result of the New Birth upon the soul of man. Even far back in the Middle Ages we have a wonderful tribute to this change in the *Divine Comedy* of the great Italian poet Dante, which is summed up at the end in the eloquent line

A will that rolls in perfect oneness with the will of God.

That records the finest and ripest fruit of the new birth—the last stage in the full growth of the Christian character. The stanza (which I quoted last time) from Dr. Richard Thomas, gives us the first stage of the result, just as Dante's line is the last.

The Word of the Lord is the birth of the soul,
And it opens its eyes to the morning.

"You will observe we are told two things. First, the part of man which is affected by the New Birth is, at the outset, the *soul*. It is not, as a matter of fact, limited to the soul—it will in time influence the mind and body as well. But it is the soul which it affects first and most deeply. Secondly, we are told what happens to the soul when the new power comes. *It opens its eyes to the morning.* To this question, then, of the result of the New Birth, Poetry replies:—It begins by opening a man's eyes to life, and it finishes, as Dante says, by bringing his will

into unity with the will of the Eternal. 'Our wills are ours,' says Tennyson, 'to make them Thine.'

"The commonest mistake men make in their journey through the world is, that they will not open their eyes to behold the greatness of living—to see its beauty, to see its width and splendour. They go muck-raking through life. Rather than be out on the hill-tops in the evening to watch the sun go down in the west, and see its rays make ruddy the stems of the pine-woods and leave the meadows rosy—they prefer to be drinking in the bar of the nearest public-house. Instead of being abroad in the fresh light and cool air of the early morning to hear the birds waking each other, and watch the sparkle on the dew-drops, and the opening of the flowers to the day—they lie in bed and come down to breakfast when the best of the day is over. I admit these things are trifles, but the pity of it is they are straws showing which way the wind blows. Now, when a man allows even but a little of the breath of life to enter his soul, the first change which occurs is in his senses—and the first sense to be affected is that of *sight*. You all recollect the account a plain man once gave when cross-examined upon this very point. His knowledge of ways and means was very limited. 'But one thing I know,' answered he, 'that whereas I was blind, *now I see*.'

"The true poet is a seer. The eye of his imagination sees what others fail to see until he shows them it is there. So it is with everyone born of the spirit. It opens his eyes—to what?—to the morning—to the light and beauty of life, to its rich colour and varied tints, to its opportunities and responsibilities. Though sight is the first affected, the other senses are soon renewed also. For example, a sensitive ear is developed. For the first time it hears:—

Books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones,
Good in everything.

Amid all the tumble and racket of life, amid its storms, and surrounded by many voices claiming to be heard, the new ear hears for the first time, perhaps, 'the still small Voice.' In course of time the senses of Taste, Touch, and Smell—as well as the whole body and mind of the man—also become altered, tuned, and renewed, until he is, in fact, 'a new creature.'

"2. *The expression of Science* often differs according to the Scientist. 'A gradual development upwards from low to high'; 'an evolutionary change in the individual tending to improve the whole species'; 'a new kingdom'; These are some more or less accurate definitions in terms of science. One of the best ever stated will be found in very simple, but extremely precise terms, familiar to us all: 'First the blade, then the ear, then the full

corn in the ear.' Such pregnant words as these, straight from the lips of the Master Himself, require of us, not comment, but thankful acceptance. This definition is probably the most superb account of the new life ever given to the world. Yet it is with the *classification* of the new creature that elementary science has mainly to do. Its declaration respecting this matter would be as follows: The effect of the New Birth is a new creature, higher and better than anything which came before it, and for which all else was but a preparation; it is not mineral, nor is it vegetable, nor yet animal—though all three kingdoms have contributed towards it. It was born, not of flesh and blood, but of spirit; not of the will of man, but of the will of God. Therefore it must be classified in a new order, the spiritual order; in a new kingdom, the Kingdom of God.

"3. *The expression of Religion.* I expect you will have noticed how each of the previous definitions of the result of the New Birth, expressed either by poetry or science, has been really religious in its actual terms of conception. This is right, and to be expected. For the simple reason that the whole question is a religious one, and we only hear of it where religion has penetrated and been the inspiration of poetry or science. Hence you will not be surprised to be told that it is from the Bible, and the religious experience of men who have gone before us, that we obtain the best accounts of the New Birth and its effects.

"*The conversion from sin to righteousness* would briefly express the view of the Bible. It is a change, religion tells us, not of nature but *in* nature—not merely anatomical in man's body, not merely mental in his mind. But it is a *spiritual* change in his heart, at the very centre and mainspring of his life. Nor is it just a passing modification of opinion. It is radical and it is complete. At least, it is that or nothing at all. 'Right about face—quick march' is the way I have heard it described, and such an account of it is supported by the Bible. *Con verto* means to turn altogether round, to turn round from what is wrong to what is right, from sin to righteousness. Don't forget that He who said, 'Except a man be born again he cannot enter the Kingdom of God,' also said, 'Except your *righteousness* exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter the Kingdom of Heaven.' This is the point to which Poetry, Science, and Religion all converge in this vital question:—Where there is no righteousness in life and character, there has been no New Birth. Sensational repentances and 'sudden conversions,' be it noted, are not referred to. The New Birth may have come thus, *but more likely not*, for 'the Kingdom of God cometh *without observation.*' Righteousness of character is the test. Changed life is the only sign of conversion and new life, of New Birth."

Question : Which do you consider the most satisfactory expression of re-birth—that of Poetry, Science, or Religion ?

4. Life a Continual Re-birth.

The world in which we live is a world of constant renewal; evening and morning, old age and childhood, winter and spring; all serve to remind us that re-birth is in truth a process. In a subsequent lesson dealing with "Refreshment and Renewal" (June 10th) we shall be considering this in more detail, but it will be well to bear it in mind at the end of this lesson.

NOTE FOR LEADERS.

After dealing with the subject along some such lines as have been indicated above, the lesson may conclude by an attempt to enumerate the more important indications of re-birth, and to estimate the extent to which members of the group would regard the process as active in their own lives.

Additional References :

- The Varieties of Religious Experience.* W. James. (Longmans. 16s.) Lectures VI., VII., and VIII.
An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion. R. H. Thouless. (Cambridge University Press. 7s.) Chapter XIII.
Grace and Personality. John Oman. (Cambridge University Press. 9s.) Chapter VII.

April 1st.

III.—SOCIAL RE-BIRTH.

Bible Reading : Romans 12.

Other References :

The Living Past. F. S. Marvin. (Oxford University Press, 5s. 6d.) Chapters VII., IX., and X.

Suggested Hymns : 34, 98, 206, 243, 325.

Aim of the Lesson : To see the place of social re-birth in history.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Social Heritage.

Modern emphasis upon the influence of heredity tends to lead us to overlook the importance for individual and social progress of what Professor Graham Wallas has called "Our Social Heritage." While the purpose of this lesson will not be served by any detailed discussion of the relative importance of these two factors, its starting-point may usefully be a brief consideration of the social nature of human personality. For we are indeed "members one of another" (Romans 12. 5), even more mentally and spiritually than physically. The Greek philosopher was right when he said that the man who is not a "political (social) animal" is either a "wild beast or a God." Without an inheritance of social experience and tradition, the child would either perish or become a monster. The course of human civilisation has accordingly depended upon the re-birth of groups as well as upon the re-birth of individuals.

2. The Renaissance.

That period of re-birth in European history known as the Renaissance had its real beginnings in Italy, for the reason that all those agencies which were slowly transforming the mediæval into the modern world were more effective there than anywhere else. The movement consisted of two distinct yet closely related phases, the revival of classical literature and learning, and the revival of classical art. The great forerunner of the Renaissance was Dante, who was born at Florence in 1265, and died at Ravenna in 1321. The first concern of the Italian scholars who followed him was to rescue from threatened oblivion what yet remained of

the ancient classics. Just as the antiquarians of to-day dig over the mounds of Babylonia for relics of the ancient civilisation of the East, so did these scholars—known as the Humanists—ransack the libraries of the monasteries and cathedrals, and search through all the out-of-the-way places of Europe for old manuscripts of the classic writers.

Libraries were founded where the new treasures might be safely restored and made accessible to scholars, and in this movement, supported by Popes such as Nicholas V. (1447-1455) and wealthy patrons, some of the largest libraries in Italy had their beginnings. In 1453 Constantinople was captured by the Ottoman Turks, but for fifty years before that their threatening advance had caused a great migration of Greek scholars, and so many of the exiles found their way to Italy that it was said, "Greece has not fallen; she has migrated to Italy, which in ancient times bore the name of Magna Græcia." These fugitives brought with them many valuable manuscripts, and many of them acted as teachers in the schools and Universities of Italy.

The work of these Italian scholars was greatly furthered by the timely invention of the art of printing from movable letters, regarded by the historian Hallam as the most important discovery in the annals of mankind. The making of impressions by means of engraved and lettered seals or blocks seems to be a device as old as civilisation. The Chinese have practised this form of printing from an early time. The art appears to have sprung up independently in mediæval Europe. During the first half of the fifteenth century many entire books were produced by the block-printing method. But printing from blocks was slow and costly, and the whole art was revolutionised through the invention of movable letters, which we call type, by John Gutenberg (1400-1468), a native of Mainz. The most celebrated of the early printing-houses was that established at Venice by Aldus Manutius (1450-1515) and known as the Aldine Press.

It was not long before the new knowledge crossed the Alps. As early as the middle of the fifteenth century German youths had begun to cross the Alps in order to study Greek, and carried back with them enthusiasm for classical culture, to which was added a supreme interest in Hebrew and Christian antiquity. Thus the Renaissance became one of the causes of the Reformation, but that is a story outside the scope of our lesson to-day.

Nor will there be time to treat in any detail the Artistic Revival which accompanied the re-birth of scholarship briefly described above. It must suffice to point out that the characteristic art of the Italian Renaissance was painting because it is the painting which best expresses the ideas and sentiments

of Christianity, but sculpture was not without its eminent representatives.

But any account of this period of social re-birth would be one-sided and incomplete were there no mention of those geographical, astronomical, and scientific discoveries which accompanied the revival of learning and art. The greatest of the first was the discovery of America in 1492 by Christopher Columbus, of Genoa; of the second the work of Copernicus (for details of which consult Marvin's *Living Past*); and of the third, the discovery of printing by movable type, to which reference has already been made. Nor must the social and political element be overlooked, for in Italy there were certainly many to whom the Renaissance meant the way to revival of the ancient splendours of Rome.

The father of modern experimental science was an English Franciscan, Roger Bacon (about 1210-1293). He wrote: "Cease to be ruled by dogmas and authorities; look at the world. . . . Machines for navigating are possible without rowers, so that great ships suited to river or ocean, guided by one man, may be borne with greater speed than if they were full of men. Likewise cars may be made so that without a draught animal they may be moved with unthinkable speed, as we deem the scythed chariots to have been from which antiquity fought. And flying machines are possible, so that a man may sit in the middle turning some device by which artificial wings may beat the air in the manner of a flying bird."

3. The Renaissance—Revival and Re-birth.

Renaissance, or Revival of Learning. As has often been pointed out, each of these names expresses a great fact which was characteristic of the movement. *There was a revival of learning.* The conditions which prevailed in the earlier Middle Ages and obscured the learning which the ancients had acquired were changing rapidly, and the effects of the various invasions which Western Europe had suffered were passing away. Conquerors and conquered were growing into a single people, and the descendants of the original invaders had reached the point where they could comprehend the highest results of the ancient civilisation. New national languages had come into being, and new literatures were being formed, no longer ecclesiastical in authorship or theme, but close to daily life. The stir of great events and the contagion of new ideas in commerce, exploration, and politics filled the air and the horizon of men's minds, and interests were daily growing wider. It was impossible that many generations of these economic and political changes should go by before men began to realise that there lay behind them a most

significant history, and that the men of the past had many things to teach them. When men became conscious of this the revival of learning began.

But—and this is of more importance for this lesson and the two which have preceded it—there was *more than a revival of learning*, more than mere recovery of what the ancient world had known and the mediæval had forgotten. Had that been all, resurrection might be a more accurate description than renascence. But there was also *a re-birth of emotions and of capacities long dormant*, an awakening of man to a new consciousness of life and of the world in which he lives, and of the problems which life and the world present for the thinking mind to solve, and to a consciousness also of the power of the mind to deal with these problems and to investigate the secrets of nature.

In the Middle Ages man as an individual had been of but little account. He acted only through some corporation—the commune, the guild, the order. He had but little self-confidence and but little consciousness of his ability singlehanded to do great things or to overcome great difficulties. He lived with little sense of the past behind him and little conception of the possibilities of the future. The modern man who is a modern man is the opposite of all this. We are almost too completely a world of individuals. We tend to have a supreme self-confidence. Nearly any one of us is ready to undertake any task with a firm confidence in his ability to carry it through, and few of us are shut out of a full enjoyment of the beauties of this world by too keen a sense of the realities of another. It was the work of the Renascence to change the one sort of man into the other; to awaken in man a consciousness of his powers; and to give him confidence in himself; to show him the beauty of the world and the joy of life; to make him feel his living connection with the past, and the greatness of the future which he might create.

4. Other Periods of Social Re-birth.

While the term Renascence has passed into common usage as the name of the period in European history which has just been under review, it is important to remember that there have been many other periods of re-birth. Brief mention may be made of some of the more important of these, for further details of any of which leaders are referred to any standard historical textbook. Two such periods of extensive duration are those which Mr. Marvin has called "The Millennium of Greece" and the "Roman Millennium." Of these Mr. Marvin tells us "the Millennium of Greece must be regarded as the turning point in Western history, and, through the West, of all the world. . . . The Greeks contributed most to arming man's mind for

the struggle (of human co-operation in subduing the world), the Romans did most to enable men to work in an orderly sequence and harmoniously one with another."

Other such periods of briefer duration are to be found in the Industrial Revolution ; the Social and Political Revolution in France and elsewhere on the continent in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries ; the political and educational emancipation which has conditioned the rise of modern democracy ; the permeation of life and thought by the methods and the findings of Science ; the emancipation of women ; and the coming of the League of Nations.

Question : Is it really true to regard the coming of the League of Nations as a period of re-birth ?

5. Some Conditions of Social Re-birth To-day.

Students of Carlyle will be familiar with the view that the mainspring of human progress is to be found in the insight and initiative of a comparatively few men and women of supreme genius. However true this may be of the past—and many students of history would not accept it without considerable reserve—there seems ample reason to doubt whether in this regard history is likely to repeat itself. The increasing emancipation and education of the ordinary citizen inevitably means that in the modern age the re-birth of our social groupings—of our nation, of our town, of our home, of our school—is dependent upon the attitude and activity of Everyman and his wife.

The chapter chosen as our reading for to-day is a challenge to true citizenship, and the lesson may well conclude by its consideration in this light.

Questions :

- (1) Is it true that in the past progress has been dependent upon the insight and activity of a few individuals ?
- (2) To what extent do you think it is the case that Fascism has brought about the re-birth of Italy ?
- (3) Which do you regard as more important in the life of your School : good leadership or good membership ?

Additional References :

- Any standard European History.
A Short History of the World. H. G. Wells. (The Labour Publishing Company. 1s. 6d.) Chapters XLIX., LII., LVIII., and LXVII.
Our Social Heritage. Graham Wallas. (Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.)
Landmarks in Industrial History. Townsend Warner. (Blackie 7s. 6d.) Chapter XV.
The New State. M. P. Follett. (Longmans. 14s.)

April 8th.

EASTER.

Bible Reading : John 20.

Other References :

The Jesus of History. T. R. Glover. (Student Christian Movement. 4s. 6d.) Chap. VIII. : "The Choice of the Cross."

Suggested Hymns : 443, 445, 216, 217.

Aim of the Lesson : To consider afresh the meaning of Easter to the world and to ourselves.

Notes on the Lesson.

We have reached the time of the greatest *festival* of the Christian Church. It follows immediately on the Church's greatest *fast*. We may note with interest that the varying dates for the celebration are fixed about the time of the vernal equinox, the time when, in our northern hemisphere, the days begin to lengthen, and the sun achieves mastery over night. But it is, perhaps, not very profitable to dwell on Easter details which exercised the minds of the Council of Nicea in the fourth century A. D.

If we are to understand Easter we must read and think over a good deal more than the twentieth chapter of the Gospel of John, and all the other gospel stories of the Resurrection. *What went before* and *what came after* that "first day of the week" are matters of the greatest importance. Dr. T. R. Glover writes : "The resurrection is, to a historian, not very clear in its details." Standing apart from its context, that sentence may not be acceptable to many Christians. Read in the middle of Dr. Glover's chapter on "The Choice of the Cross" it links up the writer's vivid story of *what went before* and *what came after* that first Easter morning, and is seen in its truth and its significance.

The Way of the Cross.

Dwell in thought on all that was involved when Jesus "went up to Jerusalem." There could have been no doubt in his mind of what was to be the end of that journey.

" He, with open eyes, chose physical pain, heightened to torture, not escaping any of the suffering which anticipation gives,—that physical horror of death, that instinctive fear of annihilation, which nature suggests of itself. He took the course of action which would most severely test his disciples ; one at least revolted—and we have to ask what it meant to Jesus to live with Judas, to watch his face, to recognise his influence in the little group—yes, and to try to win him again and to be repelled. . . . Do we feel what he felt in the so-called trials,—or was he dull and numbed by the catastrophe ? How did he bear the beating of triumphant hatred upon a forsaken spirit ? How did the horrible cry, ' Crucify him ! Crucify him ! ' break on his ears—on his mind ? . . . What is the value of the Agony in the Garden, of the cry, ' *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani* ' (Mark 15. 34) ? When we have answered, each for himself, these questions, and others like them that will suggest themselves—answered them by the most earnest efforts of which our natures are capable—and remembered at the end how far our natures fall short of his, and told ourselves that our answers are insufficient—then let us recall, once more, that he chose all this. He chose the cross and all that it meant."

* * * * *

" The cross is the outcome of his deepest mind, of his prayer life. It is more like him than anything else he ever did. It has in it more of him. Whoever he was, whoever he is, whatever our Christology, one fact stands out. It was his love of men and women and his faith in God that took him there.

" Was he justified ? Was he right ? or was it a delusion ? "

That is Dr. Glover writing about *The Jesus of History*. He dwells at length on *what went before the resurrection*. He does not discuss the various gospel accounts of the resurrection, nor try to estimate their historical value.

We may note that those accounts were written long after the event, as part of loving attempts to make vividly real for new generations the story of the life and death of Jesus : " that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

" The new fact which alters everything."

" Is it the detail or the central fact that matters ? " asks Dr. Glover. Let us see what he has to say on that question, putting the emphasis of italics on certain of his sentences. He writes :

" Let us go back to a historic event. The resurrection is, to a historian, not very clear in its details. But is it the detail or the central fact that matters ? *Take away the resurrection, however it happened, whatever it was, and the history of the Church is unintelligible.* We live in a rational world—a world, that is, where, however much remains as yet unexplained, everything has a

promise of being lucid, everything has reason in it. Great results have great causes. We have to find, somewhere or other, between the crucifixion and the first preaching of the disciples in Jerusalem, something that entirely changed the character of that group of men.

"Something happened, so tremendous and so vital, that it changed not only the character of the movement and the men—but with them the whole history of the world. The evidence for the Resurrection is not so much what we read in the Gospels as what we find in the rest of the New Testament—the new life of the disciples. They are a new group. When it came to the cross, his cross, they ran away. A few weeks later we find them rejoicing to be beaten, imprisoned and put to death (Acts 5. 41). What had happened? What we have to explain is a new life—a new life of prayer and joy and power, a new indifference to physical death, in a new relation to God. That is one outcome of the cross and of what followed; and as historians we have to explain it. We have also to explain how the disciples came to conceive of another Galilean,—a carpenter whom they might have seen sawing and sweating in his shop, with whom they tramped the roads of Palestine, whom they saw done to death in ignominy and derision,—sitting at the right hand of God. Taken by itself, we might call such a belief mere folly; but too much goes with it for so easy an explanation. The cross was not the end. As Mr. Neville Talbot has recently pointed out in his book, *The Mind of the Disciples*, if the story stopped with the cross, God remains unexplained, and the story ends in unrelieved tragedy. But it does not end in tragedy; it ends—if we can use the word as yet—in joy and faith and victory; and these—how should we have seen them but for the cross? They are bound up with his choice of the cross and his triumph over it all. . . . For, as we survey the centuries, we find that the Lamb of God has taken away the sin of the world,—to a degree that no one can imagine who has not studied the ancient world. Those who know the heathen world intimately will know best the difference he has made. All this new life, this new joy, this new victory over death and sin is attached to the living and victorious Son of God. The task of Paul and the others is, as Dr. Cairns says, re-thinking everything in the terms of the resurrection. It is the new factor in the problem of God, so to speak—the new fact which alters everything that relates to God. That is saying a great deal, but when we look at Christian history, is it saying too much?"*

How far do we find it necessary to "re-think everything in the terms of the resurrection"? If death is not "the last line of all"—how shall we live? how shall we die? How shall we mourn the loss of those we love—as loss for them, or only loss for ourselves, to be borne with courage and high hope? If "life and immortality have been brought to light," how shall we live so significant a life? How do our everyday thoughts and actions,

* Now Bishop of Pretoria.

our happiness and our sorrow, our sensory satisfactions and our poignant longings, our fears and our adventures, our work, our play, our use of time—how do these appear in this new light on life and immortality?

“He is risen!” That great conception so took possession of the lives of a handful of men and women that it changed the whole history of the world. How far are we allowing it to change the whole course of our lives?

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOK REFERENCES.

The Poets' Life of Christ. Compiled by Norman Ault. (Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.). Section entitled “Not Here, but Risen.”

By an Unknown Disciple. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.) Section XXI.

The Mind of the Disciples. Neville Talbot. (Macmillan. 5s.)

Section IV. (b)

A Man Re-born.

NOTES BY ERNEST DODGSHUN, B.A., AND JOAN M. G. LLOYD.

April 15th.

I.—A MAN MEETS A MAN.

Bible Readings : Matt. 14. 22-33 ; Mark 1. 16-20 ; Luke 5. 1-11 ;
John 13. 1-17.

Other References :

St. Peter and His Training. John Davidson. (Dent. 1s.) This little book will be found particularly useful for this series of lessons.*The Representative Men of the New Testament.* Chapter 5. George Matheson. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d.)*Saturday Papers.* T. R. Glover. (S.C.M. 5s.) P. 71, etc.*The Boy Jesus and His Companions.* Rufus M. Jones. Chapter 8. (Macmillan. 5s.)*Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible.* (From a Library.) Article on "Peter."

Keynote of Thought :

"Most of us can recall, I dare say, the teacher or the friend who put a new interest into our lives, and changed in some degree the colour of those lives, and made them richer and more various. The great revealing experiences are constantly connected with persons."
T. R. GLOVER.

Suggested Hymns : 69, 114, 230.

Aim of the Lesson : To realise how the friendship of Jesus calls forth a man's highest impulses, and unveils the reality within him.

Notes on the Lesson.

(It will be found better to read the Bible passages separately at the point where each fits best in the lesson, as indicated in the notes).

This lesson follows most helpfully after that of March 25th, when we discussed how an individual may experience a change of life so radical and creative that it is possible to speak of him as having been "re-born." It is found in Christian experience that just as the sun and the rain bring to a second birth the seeds that were once born in the heart of the flower, so the influence of the Divine Spirit is able to quicken human beings into that abundant life for which they were intended. It is not sufficient, however, to know this in theory alone; the wonder and greatness of it are grasped only when it has been experienced for one's self, or observed in the life of another.

This series of lessons is intended to help us to follow some of the changes that took place in a common man, who, upon meeting Jesus, recognised him as the Captain of his soul.

We begin with him as Simon the fisherman, son of Jonas, whom we must try to understand, and we accompany him in some of his mental and spiritual adventures until, in the end, we find him justifying the new name given to him by our Lord—Peter, the "man of rock."

As we see Simon at first there is little of the rock-like character about him, and it is open to wonder if Jesus gave him this name in a kindly irony to remind his affectionate but vacillating friend where his chief weakness lay. Quite a number of writers suggest that it was a playful nick-name which came to symbolise a real fact.

The readings to-day show some of the early contacts with Jesus, and the beginnings of a remarkable influence. There is the lovely story of how Andrew arranged a meeting between his brother Simon and the new Rabbi who had appeared in their midst; there are little pen-pictures of life on the sea, with incidents that show Simon in the process of change; and there is the dramatic spectacle of the boisterous fisherman learning the startling lesson of humility and service.

(At this point read the passages from Matthew and Mark, and refer also to John i. 40-42).

Can you not try to invest all these with imagination and endeavour not only to hear them as stories, but to *see* them as events with your inward eye? They are all so very human and appeal as dramas of real life.

The Setting of the Picture.

What about the background of these events? Do you realise the kind of man he was, the sort of life he lived, and something of his outlook on the world? It is not easy to do so, and indeed most of what we do know is but a *part* of his life, so that, for the filling in of the picture, we have to rely on careful

conjecture. Apart from the reading in John 13 the scenes are laid in Galilee, where so much of the good comradeship between Jesus and his disciples took place in the early days. Whilst it was largely an agricultural district, many parts of it were crowded industrial areas. Its population was approximately three million people, and their occupations included dyeing, tanning, fish-curing, ship-building, pottery-making, etc. In addition to this, it was a Roman military centre, a place of fashionable health and pleasure resorts, and on the direct caravan trade route between North and South. The folk who lived here were not ignorant rustics in a smiling land, but right in the midst of hard realities. Simon had therefore received a wide education in the school of life, and, in common with those of his day, was keenly expectant of a coming Messiah. This may explain why his first meeting with Jesus was so far from his own home. It was in Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where he and some of his comrades had been drawn by the preaching of John the Baptist. (Look at reference in John 1. 35-42.)

A man who was sufficiently eager to leave business and home to hear a new prophet like John was obviously a seeker and ready to respond when his personality was touched. Perhaps this spirit of expectancy made the recognition of Jesus as his Master the more easy.

What value do you attach to the attitude of vigilance and expectancy? Does it add hope, alertness and buoyancy to life? Comment on that old Rabbinical saying: "Blessed are they that dwell in expectancy, for their eyes shall see the Hope of Israel."

Break off for a moment here and try to imagine what a Jew like Simon would be hoping for when the new Messiah came—what dreams had been his, what castles in the air had he built? If you can get at this, it may help you to understand some of the surprises later in his career. It seems very likely that in the earlier stages of his friendship with Jesus he began to realise that changes were in store for him, but he can hardly have forecasted the nature of those changes. May he not have had visions of himself as a leader in the new kingdom, sharing in the material prosperity that was confidently expected from the Messiah's reign? Much later in his experience he still seemed to expect rewards for his loyalty, and to interpret his discipleship in terms of getting rather than of giving (Matt. 19. 27). Yet *this* Messiah seemed to have no idea at all of becoming a worldly king or claiming any kind of material success. He set no store by pomp, and was ready to take upon himself the lowliest duties; his time and strength were at the disposal of everyone and he thought little of himself.

The Character of Simon.

As to Simon's character in general, what do you make of it? There appear to be at least two views commonly held. One is that Simon was a rugged and courageous man, genuine-hearted and impulsive, well accustomed to the chances and changes of sea-life which had made him resourceful and hazardous, but that, in the face of difficulties, his courage occasionally forsook him and an instinctive fear took possession of him—in other words, he was a brave man who had moments of cowardice. Another view, put forward by Dr. Matheson, is just the reverse, and suggests that he was essentially a highly-strung and timid man who had moments of fitful heroism. What do *you* think from your study of him? Can you estimate the value of impulsiveness in character, with its advantages and disadvantages?

Hidden Possibilities.

When Jesus met Simon first, he seems to have had an intuitive vision of the inward man. We say there is love at first sight, but may there be understanding also at first sight? When Jesus so soon gave Simon a name that forecasted greatness, it looks to have been a sort of magnificent gamble, but perhaps it was just this kind of sympathetic confidence that was needed to draw forth the hidden resources and release the best that was in him.

Do you not know of cases where some friend, with sympathy and tact, has believed in another in spite of appearances, and loved him into a new way of life? Try for a moment to bring Simon up to date and think of some modern parallel cases. Surely there are men to-day after the type of Simon—hasty and impetuous, "diamonds in the rough," perhaps masking a sensitive spirit under a very rough exterior—who need just that "gracious somewhat" and firm friendship to liberate their imprisoned manhood. Matthew Arnold says somewhere:

"Strong is the soul, and wise, and beautiful;
The seeds of godlike power are in us still;"

but what is needed to bring those seeds to their second birth, and to make them blossom into what they were meant to be? In Simon's case we know from his own admission who and what it was, but how did it work? What exactly was it in Jesus that appealed to Simon and compelled his homage?

One answer is that here we have one brave man meeting with another, although in the one case the courage was fitful and insecure, and in the other it was constant and unwavering. Simon, an amateur in heroism, sees Jesus facing hostile crowds unperturbed, clearing out traffickers from the Temple, asleep in a

storm that terrified the seamen themselves, or calming dangerous lunatics; and one can imagine his saying, "This is the man for me," for when a brave man meets one who is braver than himself, his soul does homage.

Or shall we say that it was the element of sheer high surprise that captured Simon? Here was a teacher who was always upsetting cherished prejudices, and yet seemed to be right in spite of tradition. Look at his unconventional views about forgiveness (Matt. 18. 21-22), about healing and Sabbath observance (Mark 2. 27), about toleration (Mark 9. 38-39), and about consorting with publicans and sinners. Directness and religious honesty like this would suggest to Simon that Jesus was a man's friend and worth following, and one can understand how his affections were knit to Jesus.

(At this point read the passages from John and Luke.)

Simon makes discoveries.

These astonishing revelations of life and new standards of value must have been constant tests for Simon's cruder views, and nothing but a deep and intimate friendship could have helped him to re-adjust his whole outlook as he did. Consider the bond of love between these two; how that which was on the side of Simon was a kind of hero-worship, whilst on the part of Jesus it seemed to be that outpouring of affection and tender care that we call the grace of God.

Perhaps the incident recorded in our last reading was the most dramatic of all, for, at the moment, it almost drove Simon into revolt. It was the new disclosure of humility linked with service, and he began to see that only true greatness can stoop to conquer.

Consider the significance of the event in Luke 5. 8, from the point of view of a man like Simon. Remember that he was not introspectively pious, or easily convinced of wrong; rather was he accustomed to oaths and a rough life. Yet in the presence of Jesus he was conscious of a new and higher standard, and felt himself judged by the moral standing of his friend. It is certain that Simon was already discovering himself, partly in realising his own weaknesses, and partly in glimpsing great possibilities ahead. The re-birth was beginning, and in the next lesson we must see the struggle that was involved, and find that God entrusts the work of building his Kingdom, not to the saints alone, but to ordinary men, if only he has their loyalty.

Do you think that similar things take place to-day—that men feel a sense of imperfection in the presence of goodness, and often "rise on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things"?

It has been said that in Christianity there is the belief in the "recoverability of a man at his worst." How do you explain this? Is there something within every man that is worth the cultivating and that can be touched into greatness? Is it not universally true, as it was in Simon's case, that the spirit of Jesus, by whatever name it may be known, is the influence that works this inward transformation? Think it out, and be ready next week to follow this man's career till he is no longer Simon, but Peter, beginning to show his true quality of rock-like character—or, as we might say in English metaphor, the true heart of oak.

April 22nd.

II. —FALLING TO RISE.

Bible Readings : Mark 8. 27-33 ; Luke 22. 31-34 ; 54-62 ; John 21. 15-19.

Other References :

- St. Peter and His Training.* John Davidson. (Dent. 1s.)
The Boy Jesus and His Companions. Rufus M. Jones. Chapters 11 and 15. (Macmillan. 5s.)
The Poets' Life of Christ. (Oxford Univ. Press. 7s. 6d.) An anthology including—
 "In the Servants' Quarters," by Thomas Hardy.
 "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter," by E. B. Browning.
 "I go a-fishing," by W. C. Smith.

Keynote of Thought :

"The measure of a man's power to help his brother is the measure of the love in the heart of him, and of the faith he has that in the end the good will win. With this love, which seeks not its own, and with this faith which probes the heart of things, he goes out to meet many fortunes, but not that of defeat."—RALPH CONNOR.

Suggested Hymns : 19, 28, 62, 386, 416.

Aim of the Lesson : To understand how men sometimes "fall to rise, are baffled to fight better."

Notes on the Lesson.

This lesson invites us to follow the career of Simon as he keeps company with Jesus, to enter into some of his experiences, and to see how much he was the creature of both his strength and his weakness, to watch the nobler elements gaining ground until he acquires the stability of character which justifies his new name of Peter. That saying of Jesus had been a true word of prophecy, although it may have been half in jest at the time.

Try to think of this man as one who had like passions with ourselves, facing life's chequered fortunes, a man curiously compounded of exaltation and of baseness, of insight and of blindness, one with whom we may feel a kinship across the centuries, and "who is truly human to us and not merely the shadow of a name." It has been said that we mortals find touch with one another largely on the level of our weaknesses;

and if this be true, then Peter and we are able to share much of a common experience. Does anything in Peter remind you somewhat of the traditional figure of John Bull, with his mixture of pride and modesty, his sturdy aggressiveness and his hefty kindness, his suspicion of new ideas, his bursts of sentiment and his desire for action rather than thought?

Learning by Mistakes.

What do you think is the effect on the ordinary man of the mistakes that he makes? Some are so painfully conscious of their blunders that they become dispirited and moody, whilst others profit by the experience and make their errors into a ladder of success. One great thinker regards the making of mistakes, when recognised, as of great educational value, and speaks of the "sacrament of failure." This lesson is illustrative of how one man at least turned mistakes into occasions of discipline, and refused to be utterly discouraged by them. The short scraps of Peter's history recorded in the Bible are, at first, almost a catalogue of blunders—one remembers his lack of faith at critical moments, his blindness to the true meaning of Jesus' teaching, his pride which went before so terrible a fall, his defence of Jesus with force against which he had been warned by his Master. But the later records tell of how Jesus stood by him, and at the end specially sought him out to prove his need of him. When you are struck by that significant verse, "tell his disciples and Peter," even though these be not the words of Jesus, remember that they are recorded by Mark only, and thus are probably Peter's own recollection of a deep impression he had received. It looks as though quite simple folk, with all their faults, are needed for the high work of the world. Is it possibly just because of our own mistakes that we can feel real sympathy and be a help to others?

This idea seems to come out in the reading of Peter's Epistles, where encouragement is given out of a full experience.

"Man, what is this, and why art thou despairing?
God shall forgive thee all but thy despair."

What was behind it all? Remember how Simon had been plunged into a new region of thought by his association with Jesus; new ideas had been presented to him that did not fit with his philosophy of life, and he was somewhat "at sea" in the midst of it all as he tried to accommodate himself. Wordsworth has some lines that describe the kind of condition:

"Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised."

In such circumstances one is almost prepared to find contradictions in a man's character, and especially when we remember that there is a certain exuberance about love that outruns itself, that leads to extravagances and cross-purposes, that makes for spasmodic action and quick remorse. Do you ever find this in yourselves or in those you know? If so, let it throw light on the readings for to-day which illustrate that very point.

(Here read the passage from Mark.)

The Ebb and Flow of Loyalty.

Think of the setting of this scene. It is near Cæsarea Philippi, a great city which was an international centre, and a meeting-place for all sorts and conditions of men. A temple stood there for the worship of the god Pan, and another dedicated to Cæsar Augustus, whilst on all hands there was evidence of luxury and worldly standards. Jesus seems to have chosen the most challenging conditions in which to test the thought of his followers, for it was here that he asked for their judgment of himself and his mission.

Surrounded by heathen multitudes, marble deities, and sensuous worship, Peter recognised the true God—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Generally Peter was the one most ready with impulsive speech, but he was not the first this time, for apparently the others had answered the earlier questions. With Peter, however, a great idea was coming to explosion-point, and he flashed ahead of all the rest with the great word "Messiah;" and, having put his cards on the table as it were, there is no evidence that he ever wanted to withdraw or moderate his judgment. How can one describe this except by saying that he was being born into a new discovery? His vision was yet limited to what it implied, he was still moving about in an idea not realised, for immediately afterwards he rebuked the one whom he had just hailed as divine.

Had he, do you think, allowed his enthusiasm to get the better of him, and perhaps admitted with his heart what his head would not affirm? If so, how like he was to men of all time, who spring to noble impulses and then want the course of events to follow their own preconceived plans! Jesus must have felt that Peter's admission betokened a high-water mark of conviction in spite of the lack of faith that accompanied it and followed it, for he continued, by patient training, to establish him in the belief and in what it all meant.

(Here read the passages from Luke.)

The next scene shows that Peter's progress was one of many risings and fallings rather than of steady advance. If we tried to represent this in graph form, we might draw on the blackboard

an ascending but zig-zag line, one peak of which would be the incident at Cæsarea Philippi, and one terrible drop would be that recorded in our second reading. Peter's denial must have been less than twelve months after his confession, and it is obvious that it took place through sheer panic. What are we to think of it? It looks as though a man, essentially sound at heart, may make terms with baseness under the pressure of momentary terror, and yet have a fund of repentance that will prevent him from selling his soul irrevocably. Honour, for the time at least, was gone, and, whatever it was for Peter, this must have been one of the tragic moments in the life of Jesus. The Luke narrative (Luke 22. 54-62) suggests that Peter was the only disciple who ventured into the "court of the High Priest," but note that John 18. 15-16 mentions another disciple, who was "known unto the High Priest," and who "brought in Peter." When he was questioned as to his association with Jesus, Peter's courage failed him, and in the midst of all the ribaldry this man who was to be a rock is found to be more like shifting sand.

Read these Luke passages, not to condemn or to acquit, but to reflect how near human nature lies to the possibility of betraying its best; how easily a woman's laugh or a man's sneer may blunt moral courage. What was in question here was not so much Peter's deep conviction, but the steadfastness of his faith, and failure here was what our Lord had specially warned him against. As one reads the first Epistle of Peter, which is generally agreed to be the work of the Apostle, traces of softening and tenderness appear which may well spring from the memory of a great fall and a great forgiveness.

(Here read the passage from John.)

Of the great fall we know, but of the great forgiveness we are not quite assured until we have given attention to our next reading. One of the first things that will strike the reader is that Jesus does not use his own chosen name of Peter when he asks his three questions. Possibly it would have sounded sarcastic to call this man of the three-fold denial by a name signifying strength, but it is as if he had said to Simon, "Let us begin all over again from the beginning and see how you really stand in this matter. What about your love for me? It has suffered a bad shock, but can I really count on it?" The conversation is well treated in our first text-book, *St. Peter and His Training*, by Davidson, and a study of that will help in understanding.

Struggling into Greatness.

As you try to interpret Peter in this scene, do you feel that his error, when coupled with his repentance, was helping in his development? It had produced at least the lesson of humility,

and, as we shall see in our third lesson, it gave him a new start and a new confidence from which he did not again fall away. It was the last conversation that Jesus had with Peter, and the very fact that he was entrusted with the feeding and guidance of the flock of Christ meant that he was now established in the new life and born into a permanent strength.

In this lesson, do not limit your thoughts to Peter alone. We have taken him as a good example of how men become transformed into new creatures through the influence of another life. Can you not remember modern examples, or indeed bear testimony out of your own experience of the same thing? You may be able to point to a time, like Peter in his first Epistle 1. 23, when a new birth came by contact with the living Word of God.

Do you think there is anything of the "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" in Peter? How do you account for it that so often different traits exist side by side in the same person?

There is a New Testament writer who speaks of our Lord as having been "tempted in all points like as we are." Does this help us to understand how well he may have known what was taking place in the heart of Peter?

"Nay but Thou knowest us, Lord Christ, Thou knowest,
Well Thou rememberest our feeble frame,
Thou canst conceive our highest and our lowest
Pulses of nobleness and aches of shame."

April 29th.

III.—THE FULL-GROWN MAN.

Bible Readings : Acts 4. 5-22 ; II. 1-18 ; I Peter 5. 1-11.

Other References :

St. Peter and His Training. John Davidson. (Dent. 1s.)

Outlines of Early Church History. In series edited by Principal Salmond. (T. & T. Clark. 1s.)

Poem, " Domine, quo vadis ? " by Sir William Watson, in volume *Odes and Other Poems* (John Lane. 4s. 6d.), or in first volume of collected works. This makes an excellent dramatic reading.

Keynote of Thought :

" If Jesus can win anyone to love Him, even if it begin on the lowest possible plane, it is likely to lift that person very high, for it is re-weaving together a human and divine love. . . . It means a complete surrender of one's feelings, that is to say, an enthusiasm that will carry us to any extent. Where we really love, no restrictions will be placed upon what love is willing to do ; it adventures it's all. It so submits to the person it loves that it is willing to make that other person the very centre of its life."

W. E. ORCHARD.

Suggested Hymns : 249, 234, 348, 361, 413.

Aim of the Lesson: To see how a common man who has battled through to victory may become a strength to others.

Notes on the Lesson.

In this study we have to bear in mind that Peter is no longer able to count on the bodily presence of Jesus. Our scene is changed to those early days when the small Christian community was fighting for its life and bearing its testimony in a world that was partly apathetic and partly hostile. Opinion differs as to the date of the Crucifixion, some say it was in A.D. 29, whilst one recent authority puts it as late as A.D. 33, but this lesson covers the years from the departure of Jesus till the death of Peter, possibly in Rome, about A.D. 65. He has taken his place as the leader of the group by the goodwill of the members, and all the records we have of him (except the one referred to in Gal. 2. 11-16), testify to his courage and his statesmanship in the

early Church. Would you say that Peter's leadership had any other authority than the wish of his fellow Christians?

"A Rock in a Weary Land."

It is not our business to treat of church history at this time, but rather to concentrate upon the change that had come in the life of Peter, and to show that the man who had been so much of a "wobbler" was now regarded by his fellows as a supporting bulwark of their faith, and as one who united a stability of character with the tender energies of love. It appears quite evident that those who were in doubt or fear were in the habit of appealing to him often, as is represented in Sir William Watson's poem. The readings for to-day present examples of his boldness before the authorities of church and state, his openness of vision, and the shepherding care which he gave to the flock of Christ.

How far do you think the departure or death of a leader puts his followers on their mettle to assume responsibilities?

It is difficult to find an alternative phrase for "born again", and one does not like to use it too often, but any student of this lesson must see that Peter, as we are getting to know him now, is a very different man from the Simon of old times. He is willing to accept new ideas, he is humble in spirit, his timidity has been replaced by courage, he sees more clearly the true nature of Christ's redeeming work, and is no longer perplexed by non-essentials, but probes to the heart of things.

Do you find any encouragement in the fact that Peter and John were "unlearned and ignorant men"? Few of us can lay claim to be much different from them in this respect, and perhaps their witness carries a silent rebuke for some of us who decline service because we are "not sufficiently qualified." Can you enquire, in the light of Peter's experience, what are the main gifts one should possess for helpful service? Follow also, if you can, the influence of his change upon the lives of those with whom he was associated. He seems to have commended his new faith and love in the circle of his own home, for Clement of Alexandria tells us that "Peter's wife acted as his assistant, ministering to women in their own homes."

As you read the reply that was given by Peter and John in verses 19-20 of the first passage, and notice the subtle nature of it—where they appealed to the same authority as their judges professed—can you speculate what *you* would have done in the same circumstances? If you were ordered by someone in authority to commit an act of disloyalty to a leader, would it not stir up in you, too, the spirit of resistance? Do you think that persecution is sometimes of value to a cause in putting its adherents on their mettle, and stimulating courage on its behalf?

The Kingdom for All Men.

A new phase opened after the martyrdom of Stephen, for many of the followers of the new faith were scattered and molested. Converts were gained among the Gentile peoples, and it was inevitable that controversy should arise as to the terms of their inclusion within the church. Hitherto they had been admitted only after they had conformed to certain Jewish rites, or, in other words, they came into Christianity through the gateway of Judaism. One aspect of Peter's greatness appears in the stand he took against this limiting condition. Subject as he was to Jewish conceptions, he broke away from his fellow-leaders in the church on this point, and showed them the universal nature of Christ's kingdom. It was part of his birth into fresh discoveries when he learned that God is no respecter of persons, and that alliance with Christ is conditioned, not by nationalism, but by integrity of desire and of life.

The story is related in some detail of how Peter was the first to admit a Gentile into Christian fellowship. The account given by him to the Council in Jerusalem has been chosen, for it is more concentrated than the long story in the previous chapter; moreover, it is Peter's own evidence of what took place, and it shows the effect of his witness on those who were none too ready to be convinced. Later on (in Acts 15) we see how this was followed up by a formal letter welcoming the Gentiles into the church and refraining from laying upon them any grievous burdens or rules.

Although Peter was the pioneer in this movement for Christian liberty, it was greatly due to the support of Paul later on that it became a settled policy of the church. During the fifteen days when Paul visited Peter (Gal. 1, 18) this great question must have been under review, and we know that on one occasion later, at Antioch, when Peter was inclined to waver on this principle, Paul "withstood him to the face," and prevented a relapse from the new freedom (Gal. 2, 11).

Towards the end of Peter's life the infamous Nero was on the throne of the Roman Empire, and severe persecutions among the Christians tested their faith. In the midst of this trial Peter stood by them and counselled them out of his own experience. The first Epistle needs this background for an intelligent understanding of it, and those who bear this in mind will find references that are strongly suggestive of the lessons Peter had learned in former years. See the opening verses in the first chapter, and also chapter 4, verse 12 to the end. Compare these great sayings with those of Simon at the beginning of his discipleship, and you cannot resist the conclusion that this was a man who had undergone a tremendous change in response to a great inspiration.

Historically we are not absolutely certain about Peter's end, but there seems little reason to doubt tradition, and that he suffered martyrdom under Nero and was crucified head downwards, since he did not deem himself worthy to bear the same death as his Lord.

Out of Weakness made Strong.

A great deal of what we may learn from the life of Peter is of vital moment for all time, for there are few of us who do not need to find more clearly the secret of moral courage. The very strength of our convictions sometimes leads to the harbouring of narrow views and much intolerance, and to a lack of charity which is alien to the spirit of Christ. We are not brave enough to reject old views and embrace better ones, and we also are suspicious of those whom we call "outsiders." Or again, we feel that something of our best escapes us at the very moment of test and trial, and we need some influence that will give us nerve, some voice that may whisper, "Be of good cheer, be not afraid." Coleridge has preserved for us an anecdote of an officer in the British navy, who told him that when he was a midshipman in his fourteenth year, he was in his first boat expedition, accompanying Sir Robert Ball. "As we were rowing up to the vessel we were to attack, amid a discharge of musketry, I was overpowered with fear, my knees shook, and I was ready to faint away. Lieutenant Ball, seeing me, placed himself close beside me, took hold of my hand and whispered, 'Courage, my boy, you will recover in a moment or two; I was just the same when I first went out in this way.' It was as if an angel spoke to me. From that moment I was as fearless and as forward as the oldest of the boat's crew. But I dare not think what would have become of me if, at that moment, he had scoffed and exposed me."

An examination of the life and experience of Peter, such as we have had in these three lessons, may be useful to some in showing that very often the great changes in spiritual outlook are not the result of momentary illumination or of sudden conversion, but rather of slow, fitful and painful growth, involving a struggle of the kind that makes all earnest men kin. Though beginnings are small, yet, if achievement be worthily gained, may we not judge by the end attained rather than by the poor point of departure? Thus it is true of many besides Peter—

"Not ours to gauge the more or less
The will's defect, the blood's excess,
The earthy humours that oppress
The radiant mind.
His greatness, not his littleness
Concerns mankind."

Section IV. (c.)

The Wesleys and Their Work.

NOTES BY EDITH MORGAN, B.A.

May 6th.

**I.—EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
ENGLAND.****Bible Readings :** Isaiah 29. 10-14 ; Rev. 3. 1-6.**Text-books :***Methodism.* H. B. Workman. Cambridge Manuals of Science and Literature. (Cambridge Univ. Press. 3s.)*Tillage, Trade and Invention.* G. Townsend Warner. (Blackie. 3s.)**Suggested Hymns :** 377, 90, 71.**Aim of the Lesson :** To picture the state of England when the Wesleys began their work.**Notes on the Lesson.****Early Years of the Century.**

The eighteenth century witnessed so many and such great changes in the life of England that it is well to look back to its beginning and form some idea of what the country was like in 1703, the year of John Wesley's birth. Conditions of life had not changed very much in some respects since mediæval times. England was still an agricultural country, depending upon her own crops for feeding her people, and her population, less in number than those living in London to-day, was mainly rural. Only a few towns had more than 10,000 inhabitants. Bristol ranked next to London as a seaport; Norwich was the largest manufacturing town.

Methods of agriculture were primitive and wasteful; not more than half the land was cultivated, great areas being left as moor, forest or undrained bog.

The mineral wealth of the country was still untapped, for where coal was known to exist (e.g., round Newcastle) it could only be got out near the surface and by the clumsiest methods. Wood was still the common fuel. Roads were atrocious; canals were not made; there were no factories, very few banks, hardly any newspapers.

Some Types of Village Life.

The country squire of those days is a familiar figure in contemporary novels and essays. Addison paints him as the lovable Sir Roger de Coverley, but probably Fielding's Squire Western is nearer the general level. Bluff, honest, good-natured, but a bit peppery; coarse in conversation and manners, a gross eater, drunk as a matter of course after dinner, ignorant of books but full of knowledge about guns, dogs, horses, and wine; a staunch upholder of the Church though possibly contemptuous of the clergyman actually dependent on him. Such a man might have his good points, but among them there would not be a fine sense of spiritual values.

The villagers employed by the squire or by other farmers received a small money wage, supplemented by contributions in kind. Their condition might vary a little from village to village according to the interest taken in them by squire or parson, but generally speaking they were illiterate and superstitious and lived on a very low level.

Between ignorant squire who despised or patronised him, and illiterate peasantry who resented his efforts to teach them morals, the country clergyman had a hard time. He might in his turn sink to be the squire's companion in fox-hunting and drinking, or he might struggle, as John Wesley's father did at Epworth, to raise his "almost heathen" people to a more Christian way of life. Fielding's Parson Adams is a good type of eighteenth century priest, yet note his social standing—

"Mr. Abraham Adams [the curate] was an excellent scholar. He was a perfect master of the Greek and Latin languages; to which he added a general share of knowledge in the Oriental tongues, and could read and translate French, Italian and Spanish. He had applied many years to the most severe study, and had treasured up a fund of learning rarely to be met with in a university. He was, besides, a man of good sense, good parts, and good nature, but was at the same time as entirely ignorant of the ways of this world as an infant. . . . He was generous, friendly, and brave to an excess; but simplicity was his characteristic. . . . His virtue and other qualifications, as they

rendered him equal to his office, so they made him an agreeable and valuable companion, and had so much endeared and well recommended him to a bishop that, at the age of fifty, he was provided with a handsome income of £23 a year; which, however, he could not make any great figure with, because he lived in a dear country, and was a little encumbered with a wife and six children. . . . Adams had no nearer access to Sir Thomas or my lady than through the waiting-gentleman. . . . They both regarded the curate as a kind of domestic only, belonging to the parson of the parish."

Manufactures.

At this time the manufacture of woollen and linen goods was carried on at home, not in factories. Wool was the most important industry (cottons were not yet known) and it was widely distributed over the country, different districts being noted for different kinds of cloth. If the artisan worked for himself he had his little stone or brick house with the workshop inside, where the wool was carded and spun by his wife and daughters, and the cloth was woven by himself and his sons. He had, in nearly all cases, his plot of land near the house, which provided him with food and recreation. There were also many small manufacturers who lived on their own land and worked with their workpeople in their own houses. Defoe, travelling in 1724, describes such a manufactory near Halifax:—

"The land was divided into small enclosures from two acres to six or seven each, seldom more, every three or four pieces of land having a house belonging to them; hardly a house standing out of speaking distance from another. We could see at every house a tenter (or frame), and on almost every tenter a piece of cloth. At every considerable house there was a manufactory. Every clothier keeps one horse at least to carry his manufactures to the market; and every one generally keeps a cow or two or more for his family. . . . The houses are full of lusty fellows, some at the dye-vat, some at the looms, others dressing the cloths; the women and children carding or spinning; being all employed, from the youngest to the oldest." And he concludes—"not a beggar to be seen, or an idle person."

Trade.

A new set of trades had been brought to England by the Huguenots expelled from France after 1685. They were skilled artisans and manufacturers of such things as silks of all kinds, ribbons, watches and clocks, paper, and glass.

From the very beginning of the century trade was brisk. There was a steady demand at home for all homespun as fast as they could be produced by the methods then used, and export trade began to develop. The commercial class was comfortably

off, and through their money began to gain the power that had formerly gone with the possession of land. Defoe discovered the amazing and revolutionary fact that a tradesman's son might be a gentleman.

Town Life and Amusements.

In London the social life of a man about town centred in the coffee-houses or clubs that he frequented. There he would hear the news of the day, gossip with his friends, perhaps glance at a copy of Mr. Addison's "Spectator" or Mr. Steele's "Tatler," or even see those worthies themselves in long curly wig, full-bottomed square-cut coat with ruffles, waistcoat almost as long as their knee breeches, silk stockings and buckled shoes. For lighter amusement he would go to watch a bear-baiting or a cock-fight or to see some wretch hanged at Tyburn. Any of his recreations would give an opportunity for betting. Gambling was indulged in to excess by all classes of society. Lotteries and speculative schemes of all kinds absorbed the money that was plentiful after Marlborough's wars. The biggest of these schemes, the South Sea Bubble, brought many to ruin when it collapsed in 1721.

Politics.

The political world of Anne's reign was a sorry mess of intrigue, corruption and interest. But at her death the Whigs secured the Hanoverian succession without opposition, and for a long period maintained themselves in power by unscrupulous bribery. Their methods were objectionable, but as a party they stood for the principles of the Revolution of 1688, for liberty of opinion and of the press, for the impartial administration of justice and for parliamentary rule; and before they fell from power these principles had been established as the working basis of the English constitution.

Formal Religion.

The religious thought of the day was characterised by formalism and externalism. New discoveries in physical science were adding ever new realms to the domain of law; so in religion, too, there was a general tendency to bring everything to the test of reasonableness and practicability, and to ignore any mystical element. Some thinkers were open sceptics, others reached the position that Christianity was untrue but essential to society and on this ground alone should be retained. The preachers for their part taught morality. They "laboured to infuse a higher tone into the social and domestic sphere, to make men energetic in

business, moderate in pleasure, charitable to the poor, upright, honourable and dutiful in every relation of life. While acknowledging the imperfection, they sincerely respected the essential goodness of human nature, dwelt much upon the infallible authority of the moral sense, and explained away or simply neglected all doctrines that conflicted with it. Sobriety, moderation and good sense were their cardinal virtues, and they looked with great disfavour upon appeals to the feelings and upon every form of enthusiasm." (Lecky.)

Question: Was there anything lacking in this view of Christianity? If the morality they preached had been attained as a result of their preaching, would there have been anything wrong with it?

An Inner Life.

There was another side to the religious life of the times which should not be ignored. Since 1678 small groups of orthodox Churchmen had met together to "quicken each other's affections towards spiritual things" by intimate religious converse. These societies died out before the middle of the next century, but were, while they lasted, an active religious force. The inner life of many earnest souls was helped and deepened by such a book as William Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*.

Changes.

Into the kind of world that has been sketched came the Industrial Revolution, that series of changes which, dating from about the middle of the eighteenth century, transformed England in a few years into a manufacturing country, the workshop of the world. By the end of George III.'s reign machinery was used in all the textile trades; the great cotton industry had leapt into life; coal mines were busy providing fuel for furnaces as well as hearths; transport was made easy by a network of canals and then by excellent roads; factories had sprung up at first where water power could be had, then, near coalfields; England was supplying the world with iron and steel.

The mechanical inventions which made these developments possible came all together in a short period, beginning with Kay's shuttle in 1733. Hargreave's spinning jenny (1770), which spun many threads at once, was followed by Arkwright's water-frame in 1771. Both were combined in Crompton's mule (1779). Cartwright's power-loom (1785) did away with the hand-weaver as the others had superseded the hand-spinner. The application of steam to industry through James Watt's perfection of the steam-engine completed this silent revolution in the nation's life.

Human Results.

The new age of iron and steel that now began meant a wider and wider conquest of the means to live, increasing the country's wealth ten-fold and giving her half a century's start of the other nations of Europe.

It also meant a great increase of population, which doubled itself by the end of the century. Above all it meant a crowding of country-bred people into towns, particularly into the industrial towns of the North; it meant all the evils of the factory system with its maiming and brutalising of human life.

As always, man's power of mechanical invention and his greed for gain, outran the development of his moral sense. In an age of unchecked individualism it was not thought wrong for a man to make what he could for himself, heedless of the sufferings of others.

"The religious and social condition of the masses under the two Georges is the severest condemnation of the religious life of the period."—H. V. TEMPERLEY.

Other References :

- Cambridge Modern History.* Vol. VI., Chap. II. (From a Library.)
History of England in the Eighteenth Century. Lecky. Vol. II., Chap. IX. (From a Library.)
A New History of Methodism. Townsend, Workman, and Eayrs. Vol. I., Chap. I. (From a Library.)
Industrial History of England. H. de B. Gibbins. (Methuen. 5s.)
Industry in England: Historical Outlines. H. de B. Gibbins. (Methuen. 12s. 6d.) From a library.
De Coverley Papers. Addison. (Dent's King's Treasuries. 1s. 4d.)
Tom Jones. Henry Fielding. (Jarrold. 2s. 6d.)
Joseph Andrews. Henry Fielding. (Hutchinson. 2s. 6d.)

May 13th.

II.—THE MESSENGERS.

Bible Readings : Acts 9. 1-22 ; Romans 8. 1-17, 35-39.

Text-Books :

Life of John Wesley. Southey. (Hutchinson. 2s.)

John Wesley's Journal. Abridged edition. (Epworth Press. 2s.)

Methodism. H. B. Workman. (Cambridge Univ. Press. 3s.)

Quotation :

"If you want to get into the century, to feel its pulse throb beneath your finger . . . ride up and down the country with the greatest force of the eighteenth century in England. No man ever lived nearer the centre than John Wesley. . . . You cannot cut him out of our national life. No single figure influenced so many minds, no single voice touched so many hearts. No other man did such a life work for England."

AUGUSTINE BIRRELL.

Suggested Hymns : 148, 193, 204, 246, 381.

Aim of the Lesson : To learn how "enthusiasm" created a new religious life.

Notes on the Lesson.

Ancestry.

John and Charles Wesley, sons of the Rector of Epworth, had behind them two or three generations of men who had suffered for conscience sake. Their great-grandfather was ejected from his living in 1662, supporting himself afterwards by his skill in medicine; their grandfather bore imprisonment and cruel persecution for his Nonconformist principles. His son, Samuel, as a young man, saw reason to renounce Dissent and, being very poor but very keen on getting a University education, tramped to Oxford and entered himself as a servitor at Exeter College. We are told he began his University career with £2 5s. in his pocket, and left after five years with £10, the result of indomitable industry. After ordination and a couple of London curacies he married Susanna Annesley, and in 1697 became Rector of Epworth in Lincolnshire. His life there was for years

full of trouble, hampered by debt and by struggles with an unruly people. In 1709 the parsonage was burnt down, possibly through the malice of his parishioners.

The Mother of Methodism.

Susanna also came of Nonconformist stock, for her father, Dr. Annesley, after being ejected in 1662, became a prominent Nonconformist divine. But at the age of thirteen his daughter, like her future husband, weighed up the points at issue between Church and Dissent, and decided in favour of the former. Hers was a strong personality, marked by sound common-sense, rare judgment and deep piety. She needed strength of character to support her husband in all his troubles, to bear him nineteen children, and to make ends meet on an income of £50 a year.

She trained her children in habits of regularity and obedience, and was herself their schoolmistress. We are told that "she had the happy talent of imbuing a child's mind with every kind of useful knowledge in such a way as to stamp it indelibly on the memory. She began her work as soon as her children were five years old. The day before the little scholar was initiated all household matters were carefully arranged, and every one was strictly charged not to enter the schoolroom from nine to twelve or from two to five. . . . Except Kezzy, all the children learned their letters the first day save two of the girls, who took a day and a half. For this Mrs. Wesley thought them very dull, but when she knew other children better she altered her opinion. After the alphabet was mastered the children were taught to spell and read first a line, then a verse. No lesson was left till it was perfect."

[While the Parsonage was being rebuilt the children lived in other families and, mixing with other children, learnt some bad ways. They grew careless about the Sabbath, they lost their good manners and acquired "a clownish accent and many rude ways." So that greater strictness was necessary when their mother had them round her once more.]

John, who was six years old at the time of the fire, was the last to be saved from the flames, and that as by a miracle. His mother from that time felt a particular zeal for this one of her children, noting in her book of private meditations, "I do intend to be more particularly careful of the soul of this child, that Thou hast so mercifully provided for, than ever I have been, that I may do my endeavour to instil into his mind the principles of Thy true religion and virtue. Lord, give me grace to do it sincerely and prudently, and bless my attempts with good success." In her husband's absences from home, Mrs. Wesley held services in her kitchen on a Sunday evening for her family

and servants. Some of the villagers, hearing of it, asked to be allowed to attend, until there was at times a congregation of 200.

In later years her sons could rely on her understanding sympathy in their spiritual difficulties, and at more than one crisis of affairs her advice was sought and followed, with the best results.

"The Wesleys' mother was the mother of Methodism in a religious and moral sense; for her courage, her submissiveness to authority, the high tone of her mind, its independence, and its self-control, the warmth of her devotional feelings, and the practical direction given to them, came up and were visibly repeated in the character and conduct of her sons."

ISAAC TAYLOR.

"The Holy Club."

John Wesley was born in 1703, his brother Charles four years later. After six years at Charterhouse School, John entered the University of Oxford, at seventeen, as scholar of Christ Church. He was described at the age of twenty-one as a very sensible and acute logician; a young fellow of the finest classical taste, gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humour. His mind was set on serious things and he still kept the habits of outward piety which he had learnt at home. In preparing to enter the Church he read "The Imitation of Christ," and though he thought à Kempis too strict he could not shake off the impression made. He learnt that true religion sprang from the heart and that God's law must rule all thought as well as action. The impression was deepened by his study of William Law's "Serious Call," a book which profoundly influenced his life. Thenceforth, as we know from his own words, by careful observance of all outward forms, by prayer, fasting and watchfulness against all known sin, he aimed at inward holiness.

He was ordained in 1725 and in the following year was elected a Fellow of Lincoln College. After a two years' absence as curate of Wroote (to help his father) he returned to Oxford in 1729 to take up tutorial work. He lectured in Greek and logic, the latter being his favourite subject.

On his return he found that Charles, the gay young undergraduate of Christ Church, had become more serious-minded and was the leader of a small group of students already nicknamed Methodists because they had "agreed together to observe with strict formality the method of study and practice laid down in the Statutes."

"In November, 1729," John Wesley writes in his Journal, "four young gentlemen of Oxford . . . began to spend some evenings a week in reading, chiefly the New Testament."

They also kept to regular seasons for prayer, observed rigorously the fasts of the Church, used the confessional, and lived under strict self-discipline. Nor were their activities self-confined; they systematically visited the sick and poor and the prisoners in Bocardo, the Oxford gaol. These habits exposed them to great ridicule, insomuch that when George Whitefield, a servitor of Pembroke College, wished to visit them, he was obliged to do so secretly. When he joined the Wesleys, there came together the three men who were to shake England.

Mission to Georgia.

In 1735 John and Charles Wesley were moved by a missionary impulse to go and preach to the Indians and settlers in the colony of Georgia. Their mission was not a great success, but the journey gave them valuable experience. On the voyage they associated with a company of Moravians whom Wesley found to be in possession of that secret of inward religion which had for so long been the object of his search. In great distress of mind he wrote in his Journal, February, 1738 :

“. . . what have I learned ?” [from the visit to Georgia]
 “ Why (what I the least of all suspected) that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God.”

Question.: In later years he was not so sure of this. Why not ?

Conversion.

It was not long before this spiritual unrest was ended. Charles first “ found peace.” A few days later John wrote :

“ I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.”

When the brothers met that night they sang together the hymn Charles had written to express his own deliverance :

“ Oh how shall I the goodness tell
 Father, which Thou to me hast showed ?
 That I, a child of wrath and hell
 I should be called a child of God,
 Should know, should feel, my sins forgiven,
 Blest with this antepast of Heaven !”

Questions :

- (1) In what modern terms can we express the kind of experience through which Wesley and other great religious leaders passed ?
- (2) Is the *consciousness* of some such experience essential to a religious life ?
- (3) Can such changes occur more than once in a man's life ?

The Messengers.

Filled with the sense of new-found freedom the Wesleys longed to proclaim their good news to all men. Whitefield, who had followed them to Georgia, was in London again, and he, too, was possessed by a burning desire to save souls. The next fifty years were filled with their journeyings through the length and breadth of the land. Instinct led them to where men were massed together in the coal-fields of Bristol and Newcastle, in the dens of London, and the mining districts of Cornwall. Sometimes they preached to as many as 20,000 in Gwennap Pit or on Kingswood Hill, but as they passed to and fro the smallest towns and villages also heard the message. Travelling 5,000 miles a year, preaching perhaps twenty times a week, they must have reached uncounted multitudes.

At first they sought to preach in churches, but when incumbents, fearful of enthusiasm, refused permission, they took to the open, speaking on a bare hillside or in the back street of a crowded city, from a tombstone in a churchyard or even from the roof of a pigstye.

Their preaching roused most passionate emotions in their hearers, which found vent in sobbings, groanings, convulsions, fits of insensibility and vehement outcries. Violent hostility was provoked, too. The preachers were stoned, ducked, covered with filth, crushed by the crowd, bruised and battered—but nothing daunted them. Time and again an angry mob was awed into silence by the calm demeanour of the man they had come to attack; more than once the ring-leader of the mob became an earnest disciple of the new teaching.

When all the excitement had died away, there remained for many thousands a new light, a new vision, a new way of life.

" The flood of emotion, deep and strong,
 Troubled the land as it flowed along,
 But left a result of holier lives."

WHITTIER : *The Preacher.*

George Whitefield.

Of the three leaders of the new movement, Whitefield was pre-eminently the orator. At the age of twenty-two the success

of his first sermon was so phenomenal that he was reported to his bishop for driving fifteen people mad. Before he went to America the first time he had experienced a spiritual conversion and was already drawing great crowds to listen to his sermons. He it was who in February, 1739, first took the bold step of preaching out of doors, a departure from convention which roused the bitterest opposition. From that time on Whitefield was a clerical free-lance whose irrepressible enthusiasm needed a whole world for its expression. Flashing meteor-like from side to side of the Atlantic, he kindled the fires of revival wherever he went.

J. R. Green says :

"Whitefield's preaching was such as England had never heard before, theatrical, extravagant, often common-place, but hushing all criticism by its intense reality, its earnestness of belief, its deep tremulous sympathy with the sin and sorrow of mankind."

It must have been the personal magnetism of the man that so deeply affected his hearers of all classes, for his published writings give us no clue to the secret of his power.

Whitefield's adoption early in his career of Calvinistic theology led to a controversy with the Wesleys not untinged with bitterness. A reconciliation was effected and their personal friendship was not again interrupted, but the difference in doctrine remained complete and the two branches of Methodism developed along distinct lines.

Whitefield's Calvinism gave him an influence in Presbyterian Scotland far greater than that of John Wesley, and in Wales he was welcomed as the natural leader of a people already Calvinist.

The serious doctrinal differences between himself and the Church of England made separation inevitable, though it was with great sorrow that he saw himself cut off from the church of his ordination.

He died in 1770, preaching to the last, and leaving behind a memory of overwhelming passion and eloquence.

Charles Wesley's Gift of Song.

If Whitefield was the orator of Methodism, Charles Wesley was its singer. There was a tradition of poetry in the Wesley family and the home circle at Epworth has been described as a nest of singing-birds. The Rector himself wrote verse, as did his gifted daughter, Hetty. In Charles song welled up spontaneously and no other hymn writer has equalled him in the combination of range of experience, sweetness of expression and variety of metre.

In next week's lesson we shall see something more of his influence.

John Wesley.

The full story of John Wesley's life should be read in his Journal, that wonderful record of fifty years' activity. A summary of his character is given by J. R. Green :

" In power as a preacher he stood next to Whitefield ; as a hymn-writer he stood second to his brother Charles. But while combining in some degree the excellencies of either, he possessed qualities in which both were utterly deficient ; an indefatigable industry, a cool judgment, a command over others, a faculty of organisation, a singular union of patience and moderation with an imperious ambition, which marked him as a ruler of men. He had besides a learning and skill in writing which none of the other Methodists possessed ; he was older than any of his colleagues at the start of the movement, and he outlived them all."

Withal he was sufficiently the child of his age to be very superstitious—e.g., in the way he let himself be guided in great events and small by the first words his eye caught as he opened his Bible. But perhaps this sharing in the follies of his times gave him the greater power over his fellows.

His personal life was ascetic. He lived sparsely, slept little, often on bare boards, and gave away the bulk of his income, whatever that might be. W. T. Stead speaks of " that marvellous body, with muscles of whipcord and bones of steel, with lungs of leather, and the heart of a lion," which enabled him to accomplish marvels of physical endurance. But it is well to remember that it was an indomitable spirit that made a somewhat frail body such an instrument of power.

He read even as he travelled on horseback (and over such roads !) and in the short pauses for rest he was busy with his pen, writing tracts, editing the best literature for his people to read, drawing up rules for their guidance, attending to all the numberless details which the affairs of a growing society involved.

Wesley's love of order and dislike of innovations were subordinate in the end to his sense of practical values. If he saw that a new way was good, its newness did not deter him from using it to the full. Thus he who could not at first reconcile himself to Whitefield's " strange way of preaching in the fields " became himself the most unwearied of field preachers; he who refused to admit laymen as preachers in the end made lay preachers an integral part of his new organisation. So, too, he adopted from another source the class-meeting and made it the very heart and core of each of his new societies.

But all this great organisation—class-meetings, love-feasts, government by a Conference of ministers, and the rest—was but a means to an end, the " one point in view " which he spoke of

after his conversion as "to promote, so far as I am able, vital, practical religion, and by the gift of God to beget, increase, and preserve the life of God in the souls of men."

Other References :

- Cambridge Modern History.* Vol. VI., Chap. II. (From a Library.)
History of England in the Eighteenth Century. Lecky. (From a Library.)
A New History of Methodism. Townsend, Workman and Eayrs. Vol. I., Chaps. II., III., IV. (From a Library.)
A Short History of the English People. J. R. Green. Chap. X., Section I. (Everyman. 2 vols. 2s. each; or large illustrated edition from a Library.)
Hetty Wesley. A. Quiller-Couch. (Out of print.)
The Diary of Mrs. Kitty Trevelyan. By the Author of *The Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family.* (Out of print.)
Varieties of Religious Experience. William James. Lecture IX. (From a Library.)
John Wesley. The Little Library of Biography. (Religious Tract Society. 1d.)

May 20th.

III.—EFFECTS OF THE REVIVAL.

Scriptures : Acts 2, 14-21 ; 41-47 ; Numbers 23, 23.

Bible-Book :

Methodism. H. B. Workman. (Cambridge Univ. Press. 3s.)

Quotation : "Methodism is Christianity in action."

Suggested Hymns : 25, 192, 58, 284.

Aim of the Lesson : To become aware of the far-reaching effects of the Methodist Revival.

Notes on the Lesson.

A New Church.

The spectacular and obvious result of Wesley's work was the establishment of a separate Protestant Church, numbering, in England and America, many millions of members. Wesley to the day of his death looked upon Methodism as a lay society in full communion with the Church of England and denied that there was any separation. The real point of difference was that Wesley's experience had led him to regard forms and rules as unimportant in comparison with direct spiritual appeals. He had seen such marvellous changes in men's lives brought about by simple appeals to faith that he was forced to think the Church was not necessary to salvation. This conviction appeared in his Journal as early as 1767. The logical point of separation came in 1784, when, after fruitless appeals to a bishop to perform the office, John Wesley ordained five ministers in order to provide for the church organisation of the Methodists in America.

Before the American War of Independence the English Church had neglected the colonies; that war wrecked the Established Church in America, for nearly all the clergy fled from their parishes. Thus Methodism found a vast field open to her preachers, and, using her opportunities, secured the position she now holds.

Growth at Home.

Similar circumstances favoured the growth of Methodism at home. The rapid crowding of people into towns as a result of

the Industrial Revolution found the Church of kings ; and to the sovereign, new churches and schools would have been no colonists in their built with niggard hand but here and there." As followers the new populations. So at home as in the colonies the Church were lost her opportunity, and when years later she awoke to the call she found that older Dissenters and newer Methodists had taken the place that might have been hers.

The Secret of Success.

The fact was that the Church had long neglected the religious doctrines which Methodism revived. Lecky says,

"The secret of the success of Methodism was that it satisfied some of the strongest and most enduring wants of our nature which found no gratification in popular theology. . . . The utter depravity of human nature, the lost condition of every man born into the world, the vicarious atonement of Christ, the necessity to salvation of a new birth, of faith, of the constant and sustaining action of the Divine Spirit upon the believer's soul, are doctrines which in the eyes of the modern Evangelical constitute at once the most vital and the most influential portions of Christianity, but they are doctrines which during the greater part of the eighteenth century were seldom heard from a Church of England pulpit."

Question : How many of these doctrines do we still hold to be "vital parts of Christianity" ?

Hymns.

We saw last week how Charles Wesley had a special gift for writing hymns. John Wesley had learned the devotional value of hymns from the Moravians and made full use of song in his services. So he encouraged his brother to write, limiting his own share in the hymn-books he issued to a few translations from the German.

Hymns had not been much used in public worship before this time. Their introduction into Methodist meetings served at once a useful purpose in providing an outlet for emotion, and the hysterical excesses which marked the first years of the revival died away.

The hymns of Charles Wesley should be related to the inner experiences or outward events which called them forth. Almost the whole history of Methodism can be traced in them and not a little of her theological doctrine.

one hymn already mentioned as written with a heart full of the wonder of his own faith casts forth into the universal appeal—

May 20th.

“ Outcasts of men, to you I call,
Harlots and publicans and thieves !
He spreads His arms to embrace you all.
Sinners alone His grace receive,
No need of Him the righteous have,
He came the lost to seek and save.”

In this we see already the anti-Calvinist doctrine of free grace for all, expressed again in such lines as

“ Amazing love, immense and free
For, oh, my God, it found out me.”

Such hymns as “ Ye servants of God, your master proclaim,” and “ Ye neighbours and friends of Jesus draw near,” gain new meaning for us when we know that they were written, the one “ to be sung in a tumult,” and the second on a cold winter’s day in the streets of Newcastle after Charles Wesley had been preaching to the colliers.

Many of these hymns can no longer be sung with sincerity by us because we do not accept Charles Wesley’s view of human nature nor think of the “ plan of salvation ” in the terms that were full of meaning to him; but can we imagine the effect they had upon the people who first heard and sang them ? Whitefield’s oratory might move his hearers, but they could not reproduce it. These hymns they could make their own, singing or repeating them over and over as expressing their own deepest experiences, using them as the vehicle of devotion, private as well as public, and find their souls lifted on wings of song to the very gate of heaven.

Naturally the habit of singing hymns spread and became one of the regular features of public worship. Services became brighter and had a greater emotional appeal.

Political Effects.

Before the end of the eighteenth century the wrongs suffered by the lower classes in France caused them to rise in revolt against their tyrants. That the lower classes in England, similarly oppressed, did not similarly revolt, was due, historians say, to the steady influence of the Methodist Revival. At any rate it seems clear that, if John Wesley had been a revolutionary, the tide of revolution would have swept over England as it did over France. But his influence went all the other way. He was a Tory, though

no Jacobite, and believed in the divine right of kings; he always denounced all disobedience to the law and to the sovereign, even to the extent of condemning the American colonists in their fight for independence.

This temper of his was faithfully reflected in his followers and accounts for the fact that, while their fellow Dissenters were inclined to favour the French Revolution, Wesleyans met it with rigid hostility.

Indirect Effects.

The influence of Methodism made itself felt before long in a newly-awakened religious consciousness all through the nation. True, in the Church of England the effect was not immediate, because the first result was an even greater formality by way of reaction against Methodist emotionalism. Even Bishop Butler told Whitefield that to pretend to be inspired by the Holy Ghost was "a horrid thing, a very horrid thing." Nevertheless, from it sprang the Evangelical movement of the early nineteenth century. The fox-hunting parson and the absentee rector were no longer possible, and the English clergy, from being "the idlest and most lifeless in the world," became unsurpassed for piety and philanthropic energy.

The old Puritan spirit made itself felt once more in the national life; gambling was checked by law; foulness disappeared from literature; there was greater strictness of Sunday observance; plays and dancing were regarded as immoral; duelling was suppressed.

The awakened religious consciousness of the nation found expression in practical sympathy with the wronged and the afflicted. Sunday Schools, begun by Robert Raikes of Gloucester, marked the beginnings of a new interest in education; hospitals were built, charities endowed, missionaries were sent to the heathen.

It may be claimed that Adult Schools sprang out of Methodism, since William Singleton, of Nottingham, was an enthusiastic member of the Methodist New Connexion when, in 1798, he founded the first Adult School of which we have record. And it was William Smith, the door-keeper of a Wesleyan Chapel in Bristol, who started Adult Schools in that city in 1812.

Wesley was the forerunner of the abolitionists in his feeling against the slave-trade, which he called "that execrable sum of all villainies"; his life-long visitation of prisons made him the friend and supporter of John Howard in his heroic work for the debtor, the felon, the murderer; in a later age Lord Shaftesbury's reforms were inspired directly by the influence of Wesley upon that statesman's mind.

Industrial, Universal, Social Gospel.

In *The Song of the Plow* Maurice Hewlett, linking up John Wesley with Francis of Assisi, says,

" No less
Did Wesley
Than bring Christ back to be our Brother."

In his poem, the humble labourer receiving the new message and responding to it, finds in the love of Christ a power great enough to transform his life by inward joy, though outward conditions remain mean and poor.

" He holds by Christ the Crucified,
Who found him serf and left him man."

Question : What are the implications of such a gospel ?

Other References :

- History of England in the Eighteenth Century.* Lecky. Vol. II., Chap. IX. (From a Library.)
Cambridge Modern History. Vol. VI., Chap. II. (From a Library.)
A Short History of the English People. J. R. Green. Chap. X. Sec. 1.
The Evolution of the English Hymn. F. J. Gillman. (Allen & Unwin. 10s. 6d.)
The Adult School Movement. G. Currie Martin. Chaps. I. and II. (N.A.S.U. 1s. 6d. and 5s.)
The Song of the Plow. Maurice Hewlett. (Heinemann. 3s. 6d.)

May 27th.

WHITSUNTIDE.

NOTES BY JESSIE M. WETHERED.

Bible Readings : Joel 2. 28-29; 1 Tim. 6. 10-12; 2 Tim. 1. 5-9; Hebrews 12. 1-2.

Other References :

Heroes and Hero Worship. Carlyle. (Everyman. 2s.)

The Dark Mile. Dr. J. Hutton. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d.)

See essay on "Man lives upon a Slope."

The Pilgrim. T. R. Glover. (S.C.M., 6s.) Essays on "The Talents" and "The Early Training at Nazareth."

"Copec News" for May, 1927. (92, St. George's Square, London, S.W.1. Post free, 3d.)

Peer Gynt. Henrik Ibsen. (Dent. 2s.)

Poems "To Christiana at Nightfall," "I am the Way," and "The New Ghost," in *A Modern Anthology of Verse.* (Methuen's English Classics. 2s. 6d. and 3s.)

Keynote of Thought :

"Life develops just by living it faithfully and vigorously. It proceeds from strength to strength by continuous loyalty to the ideal."—*The Times.*

Suggested Hymns : 90, 92, 202, 203, 290, 361.

Aim of the Lesson : To examine the outlook of youth on life and religion.

Notes on the Lesson.

This Sunday has been called Whit or White Sunday because, in the Early Church, the Day of Pentecost was a favourite day for Baptisms. As the newly-baptized emerged from the water, they were clothed in white garments symbolic of a cleansed and renewed life. Hence they were called "Candidates," from the Latin "Candidus" (white).

The name of this Sunday is also appropriate to the season of the year, as white largely predominates at this time in nature—in white daisies, white "may," and fruit blossom. So the day speaks to us of renewed life, of beauty, and of promise of fruit to

come, and leads us to think of Youth—its beauty, vigour, and its promise for the future.

(Read the first Bible passage.)

The candidates of the Early Church boldly made their confession of faith, gave up the easy and pleasant path and, having pledged their lives to the Master's service, placed them at his disposal. Do we not feel that many young lives would welcome a similar opportunity; that, owing to present conditions, a great proportion of our youth never have the need of such a choice and dedication pressed upon them and, at the most important period of their life, have no directing purpose or aim for the future?

Tests are common to-day in games, scholarship and many other things. In some ways these test character, but, considering that, in the long run, character is the one important thing in life, it is significant how little attention comparatively is paid to the formation and tests of character.

Evelyn Underhill says: "The spiritual life has its roots in the heart, not in the head, and will never be brought about by merely academic knowledge. Yet its beginnings in adolescence are often lost because young people are completely ignorant of the meaning of their own experiences. This infant mortality in the spiritual realm ought not to be possible." (*The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day*, p. 192.)

Is this rate of "Infant mortality" a high one? Of what value is infant welfare work if the infant mortality rate of the soul is not considered?

Let the class discuss the value of committing oneself, its advantages and possible disadvantages, and the reasons which make people unwilling to commit themselves.

The Outlook of Youth on Life.

Question: What is the outlook of youth on life as far as we can observe it?

The best way of answering this is for those of us who have passed our youth to recall our own youth. We shall remember how we disliked restraint and longed for freedom and to earn money, so that we might obtain the material things we so urgently desired. How anxious we were to express ourselves and prove ourselves the equals (and even the superiors!) of the "grown-ups." How we sought to associate with others of our own age to get new experiences and to discuss the wrongs of life and how they could be put right. How we loved beauty, nature and art, and were intensely interested in people and had our own heroes whom we delighted to worship; and at the same time how sensitive

we were to the painful side of life. "We can never suffer as we did when young." (Kipling.)

We can also see how great temptations surrounded us, and how little we realised our dangers. So we know that youth is a time of seething contradiction, of restless desires and inexpressible sensation; and the youth of to-day differs little from the youth of yesterday. He is as lovable, amusing, interesting and irritating to his elders as he has always been. New circumstances, however, arise in each generation, causing a different outlook on life on the part of youth.

At present, the difficulty of finding employment makes life hard for many young people, and they are often compelled to choose a career not for the love of it, but because it offers a chance of livelihood; and though in all work there is a certain amount of drudgery, when the work is not a means of expression but an irksome necessity, a large part of the joy of living is lost. New wonders of science have appeared so quickly of late that they get taken for granted by the youth of to-day, and the sense of wonder (so important as the gateway to reverence and worship) is lost very early. Every part of life is now so much more organised than formerly that less personal effort and initiative are called for, producing a state of mind in which youth is willing and eager to accept anything offered, but unwilling to make any great effort or sacrifice to attain what he wants.

The class will be able to suggest other characteristics of the outlook of the youth of to-day. Have the manners of youth deteriorated? If so, how do you account for it?

Youth and Religion.

Question : What is the outlook of youth on religion?

Here we must guard against pessimism, because one of the most observed signs of the attitude of youth to religion is that he is not attracted by the numerous religious fellowships, and few young people seem to desire to attach themselves to any religious body. In considering the reasons for this, we must remember that young people in the past had often no choice in this matter but were almost forced to join their parents' religious body.

The class will probably, amongst other reasons, suggest the following :

- (1) Many religious bodies appear hedged in with dogma and are chiefly associated by the young with religious controversy, while youth is longing to show devotion to a person.
- (2) The conduct and characters of the adherents of the religious body may be unattractive to youth.

(3) Youth wants to question and discuss and does not find such opportunity offered.

(4) No demands are made on the particular qualities to which youth wishes to give expression—i.e., courage, self-sacrifice, hero-worship; the tendency being to make church membership as easy and effortless as possible.

(5) Youth does not feel any need of religion and is unawakened to the understanding of the true value and meaning of life.

The last reason brings us to the crux of the whole question, i.e., that youth seems to be missing the one important link in life, which is—a personal experience of God. This it should be the earnest effort of parents, from the child's earliest years, to secure, and the way this duty has been neglected accounts very largely for the symptoms we have noticed. "Belief or unbelief bears upon life, determines its whole course, begins at its beginning" (Dr. Horton).

(Read the other Bible passages.)

What we can do for Youth.

Question : How can youth be helped to this experience of God ?

We must try to give him a true view of the meaning of life—i.e., that each individual born into the world is meant to take part in the evolutionary ascent from the animal to the divine; and that, in this process, sin, if not resisted, results in decline and depravation, and, ultimately, in the rejection of the unfit. In this ascent only constant effort keeps man from backsliding and his eye must always be fixed on the one perfect Man who shows the upward way. Though the way is sometimes painful and often difficult, it is the only way which gives real satisfaction and happiness, while all downward steps bring trouble and regret.

Reaching up towards this perfect One becomes the object of all work and of all human relationships. Life has a purpose, a meaning and a goal so great and wonderful that the whole being yields to it and becomes unified in the effort to attain. Once the individual is thus brought to the feet of Jesus Christ, his future is safe.

There are abundant signs in the Youth Movements all over the world that youth is everywhere attracted to the person of Jesus Christ. He is casting his spell over youth, and when youth yields to his demands there will be a world-wide Renaissance.

Is not the danger of the moment that youth is content, and we are content, "with an un-thought-out life," unrealised spiritual gifts which amount to an unrealised carelessness in things of eternal moment—an "un-thought-out Christ" ? (See Glover, "The Talents.")

So we need

(a) Parents who can and will help their children to a right view of life.

(b) Leaders who understand youth and have patient sympathy and understanding and can draw them into spiritual fellowship.

(c) People living the Christ-life and so attracting and infecting youth.

(d) Practical tests and means of service opened out for youth.

(e) That the teaching profession should be considered as a piece of Christian service.

All the needs of youth are met by holding up Jesus Christ, his demands, his example, his service, his glory, "till He meets the face of the young as a rising dawn."

Questions (from Copeck) :

(1) Is it a fact that most young people (after 14) leave Church and Sunday Schools? Does this mean that knowledge of the Bible and all religious influence goes out of their life?

(2) Are Adult Schools getting hold of these young people? If not, why not?

(3) Is comradeship between parents and children greater than in the past?

(4) Have religious observances practically died out of the home?

Section V.

Life and its Renewal.

NOTES BY M. CATHARINE ALBRIGHT, ERNEST DODGSHUN, B.A.,
JESSIE M. WETHERED, AND Z. F. WILLIS, M.A.

June 3rd.

I.—ETERNAL LIFE.

Bible Readings : John 5. 24-27; 10. 10.

Other Reference :

Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels. Edited by J. Hastings. (T. and T. Clark). Article on "Eternal Life." (The first part of the following notes is largely drawn from this source.)
From a library.

Suggested Hymns : 277, 302, 413, 416.

Aim of the Lesson : To consider the nature of Eternal Life.

Notes on the Lesson.

The phrase "Eternal Life" occurs more than forty times in the New Testament. In many passages it denotes primarily a present possession or actual experience of the Christian believer, while in others it clearly contemplates a blessed life to come conceived as a promised inheritance. From this it is evident that the conception of Eternal Life underwent a gradual development from more crude ideas of a temporal and physical character, and that these came to be replaced by a more spiritual conception in which the main emphasis was upon quality of life. But, as we shall see, the two conceptions existed side by side and were often intermingled with each other.

1. Eternal Life in the Teaching of Jesus.

There are passages in the first three Gospels in which the term "Eternal Life" is used interchangeably with the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of Heaven and Eternal Life are very closely associated together in the teaching of Jesus. But it is particularly in the Fourth Gospel that Eternal Life is presented

as something which may become the actual possession of believers in their present life. God himself is the source of all life, and "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the son to have life in himself." In the Word which "became flesh and dwelt among us" there was a visible manifestation of the life eternal: "In him was life; and the life was the light of men"; so that Jesus himself declares, "I am the way and the truth and the life." In accord with these statements we are led to understand that the very life of God is begotten in the believer so that he is "born anew." Thus it follows that the believer "hath eternal life" as an actual possession.

In John 17, 3 the writer of the Gospel has given us something in the nature of a definition: "And this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." These words seem clearly to imply that "Eternal Life" consists in such a knowledge of God and of Christ as involves a personal experience of vital fellowship. But while the essence of this Divine life consists in the knowledge of the only true God and his Son, such knowledge is not the whole of Eternal Life, for other ideals of it are also set before us in the New Testament.

This heavenly kind of life in Christ, conceived as a present experience of salvation, is further confirmed and illustrated by what Jesus said of himself as "The Bread of Life" and the giver of the water which springs up into Eternal Life.

The exact meaning of the word "Eternal," when used to qualify "the Life," is best understood when the Life is conceived as issuing from the Eternal Father and so partaking of his Divine nature. In the Johannine writings, life and death are not to be understood as meaning the same as existence and non-existence. To pass from death into life does not mean in these writings to pass from non-existence into existence, because they assume that men and women can exist in a state of death, that is, in isolation from God, and that if they do not enter into Eternal Life, that estrangement from God may be perpetuated in an eternal destruction.

We must note also, however, that in all the Gospels we find Eternal Life contemplated as a future glorious inheritance of the saints. In the Fourth Gospel, the "Eternal Life" which the believer now "hath" is destined to attain a glorious consummation in the resurrection "at the last day." Such a life must needs abide in eternal permanence.

2. Eternal Life in the Writings of St. Paul.

It is most important to observe that in the writings of St. Paul we also find the conception of Eternal Life as a present

possession. The believer is "alive from the dead" and "walks in newness of life" (Romans 6. 1-13). And so in Pauline thought, the spiritual life of faith enjoyed in fellowship with God and Christ is a "life hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3. 3) and "the free gift of God." (Romans 6. 23). It is a present possession, a glorious reality, a steadfastness of conscious living fellowship with the Eternal Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. But in the Epistles, as in the Gospels, the idea of Eternal Life as a future inheritance also finds frequent expression. Those who "by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality" shall receive Eternal Life as a reward of the righteous judgment of God. (Romans 2. 7.)

3. Eternal Life in Time and Eternity.

Many reasons have led the spirit of man to seek after immortality. Two of the more important may be briefly considered here. In the first place, the three-score years and ten of earthly life seem far too few when considered side by side with the Universe which exists as their stage and to give them meaning. In the second place, the urge inborn within each of us to self-expression and self-preservation makes it very difficult for us to assume our own annihilation. Human egoism has had its way in theology and philosophy as in every other realm of human life and thought, and is the foundation of much belief in immortality. Nor can it be denied that one of the greatest contributions of Christianity to the human race is the assurance that it has brought to man that physical death is not the end.

But supremely important as belief in immortality may be, sufficient has been said in the earlier part of these notes to indicate that in the minds of Jesus and the founders of the Christian Church *quality* occupied an equally important place with *time* in their conception of Eternal Life. It is, of course, true that the latter believed that the end of the world was at hand, and that this belief naturally led them to ignore temporal considerations; but this by itself does not explain the marked emphasis they placed upon quality. The latter was largely due to insight gained from their Master into the real character of Eternal Life.

In this connection we may discuss with considerable profit the following sentences which occur in the last chapter of Dr. Oman's stimulating book, *Grace and Personality*: "*While blessedness in another life cannot be either a direct gift from God or a direct object for our own attainment, without corrupting morals by religion or religion by morals, the possession of eternal life, which we have by reconciliation to God's eternal purpose, gives us a right relation to ourselves, to our neighbours, and to God, and, therefore, an adequate*

moral subject, an adequate moral sphere, and an adequate moral order. Only as we see how religion provides these for us, do we understand the true dependence of morals on religion, and are no more tempted to make morals wrongly and selfishly dependent on religious motive, or to make religion a mere appendage to morality, or to keep religion and morality in separate compartments."

Emphasis on time to the exclusion of quality in our conception of Eternal Life tends to obscure the fact that the first object of religion is to reconcile us to God in this life here and now and not to demonstrate the reality of a future existence. But as has already been hinted above, the yearning of man for immortality has part of its origin in another truth—that it is impossible for him to find satisfaction in life if there be nothing beyond it.

The whole point of this section may well be summed up in the phrase, "*Nothing should be done for religion, but everything with religion.*"

4. Living the Life.

If, then, we would be seekers after Eternal Life, our search must be by living. As he is "the way, the truth, and the life," so we shall come to experience that life only as more and more we endeavour to make its quality the temper of our every feeling, thought, and action.

"The World is unknown, till the Value and Glory of it is seen; till the Beauty and Serviceableness of its parts is considered. When you enter into it, it is an illimited field of Variety and Beauty; where you may lose yourself in the multitude of Wonders and Delights. But it is an happy loss to lose oneself in admiration at one's own felicity; and to find God in exchange for oneself. Which we then do when we see Him in His Gifts and adore His Glory. . . .

"So that the World shall be a grand Jewel of Delight unto you: a very Paradise and the Gate of Heaven. It is indeed the very frontispiece of Eternity: the temple of God, and Palace of His Children. . . .

"Your enjoyment of the world is never right, till every morning you awake in Heaven: see yourself in your Father's palace: and look upon the skies, the earth and the air as Celestial Joys. . . . You never enjoy the world aright till the Sea itself floweth up your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars; and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. . . . till you love men so as to desire their happiness, with a thirst equal to the zeal of your own; till you delight in God for being good to all: you never enjoy the world. . . . Yet further, you never enjoy the world aright, till you so love the beauty of enjoying it, that you are covetous

and earnest to persuade others to enjoy it. . . . The world is a mirror of infinite beauty, yet no man sees it. . . . You must want like a God that you may be satisfied like God." (From *Centuries of Meditations*, by Thomas Traherne.)

Questions :

- (1) In what ways may an individual's conduct be affected if he believes that death is the end of human personality ?
- (2) Christians have sometimes been accused of being too "other-worldly." Would it be a good thing if Christians to-day were more "other-worldly" than most of us are, in terms of quality rather than time ; or, in other words, if they were more interested in life as it might be than in life as it is ?

Additional References :

- Grace and Personality.* J. Oman. (Cambridge University Press. 9s.) Chapter VIII.
- The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day.* E. Underhill. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.) Chapters II., IV., and VI.
- Eternal Life.* Baron F. von Hugel. (T. and T. Clark. 12s.)
- The Spirit.* Edited by B. H. Streeter. (Macmillan. 10s.)

June 10th.

II.—REFRESHMENT AND RENEWAL.

Bible Readings : John 4. 1-14.

Other References :

The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day. E. Underhill.
(Methuen. 7s. 6d.) Chapter VI.

Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship. W. Temple. (Longmans. 2s. 6d.) Chapters IV. and VIII.

Suggested Hymns : 243, 244, 245, 403, 404.

Aim of the Lesson : To show how the new life can be maintained.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Perils of Infancy.

Even a brief study of the facts regarding infantile mortality is enough to make clear that infancy is indeed a perilous business, but that the risks attending it can be very greatly reduced by intelligent and adequate care. Furthermore, the measure of development in any form of civilisation may very well be estimated by the importance which it attaches to childhood. One of the essential differences between the animals and man is to be found in the respective extent of animal and human childhood, and gradual lengthening of the latter as civilisation has progressed. The discovery of adolescence and its reclamation for the purposes of growth and education constitute a landmark in the evolution of the race.

So it is with the process of re-birth. To regard re-birth as a thing of a moment, occurring suddenly and unaccountably and calling for little before-care and after-care, is but to dishonour the nature and methods of divine grace. The whole of our life should be one continuous process of refreshment and renewal. That is the story of Nature and of our physical being ; such should be the story of our mental and spiritual life.

2. Mankind's Long Trek.

" Let no man," said Bacon, " trust his victory over his nature too far, for nature will lay buried a great time, and yet revive upon the occasion of temptation." Most of us would readily admit that in our own experience we have found again and again

that Bacon was right in giving us this warning. Surely it was of such experience that Paul wrote, "I find a law that when I would do good evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind. . . . With the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." Modern psychology has increasingly emphasised this Pauline distinction, "demonstrating that the profound disharmony existing in most civilised men between the impulsive and rational life, the many conflicts which sap his energy, arise from the persistence within us of the archaic and primitive alongside the modern mind. . . . The history of primitive man covers millions of years: the history of civilised man a few thousand at the most." (Underhill.) It is indeed a long handicap.

But while our modern knowledge of human nature and personality reinforces Bacon's warning, it should not lead us to regard our spiritual life as something entirely distinct from our racial past, but rather as the final stage of that age-long process of "growing up into the stature of Christ."

So often, when a good man "goes wrong," is it not the case that the source of the trouble is to be found in some old desire or old habit which has suddenly—in many cases the suddenness is only apparent and not real—demanded satisfaction? Many little faults of jealousy, ill-temper, and pique are due to our failure to grow up completely and uniformly. In our periods of refreshment and renewal we should strive to overtake these, by recognising them for what they are and bringing them under the influence of our personality as a whole.

3. The Danger of Skeletons.

While too much self-examination and any approach to morbidity is to be avoided in all our endeavours towards refreshment and renewal, we should certainly claim what Prof. J. A. Thomson has described as "the prerogative of a normally constituted man to be continually summoning his *motives* before the tribunal of his higher self, his reason, his ideals, his life purposes." The danger of keeping skeletons in the hidden cupboards of our lives, long recognised by common sense, has been greatly reinforced and much illuminated by recent psychological investigation, which bids us face reality and be candid and fearless in our self-knowledge. In *The Cloud of Unknowing* we read, "Meekness in itself is naught else but a true knowing and feeling of a man's self as he is. . . . Therefore swink and sweat all that thou canst and mayst for to get thee a true knowing and feeling of thyself as thou art; and then I trow that soon after thou shalt have a true knowing and feeling of God as He is."

Surely there is nothing new under the sun, not even in the New Psychology !!

4. The Conditions of the Spiritual Life.

In Chapter VI. of *The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day*, Miss Underhill sets out the following as the chief characteristics of the personal spiritual life. Its refreshment and renewal will largely depend upon our willingness to fulfil the conditions implied in them.

"(1) Rightful contact with the Particular and Fleeting. That is, a willing acceptance of all this-world tasks, obligations, relations, and joys; in fact, the Active Life of Becoming in its completeness.

"(2) But also, a certain renunciation of that Particular and Fleeting. A refusal to get everything out of it that we can for ourselves, to be possessive, or to attribute to it absolute worth. This involves a sense of detachment or asceticism; of further destiny and obligation for the soul than complete earthly happiness or here-and-now success.

"(3) And with this ever—not merely in hours of devotion—to seek and find the Eternal; penetrating our wholesome this-world action through and through with the very spirit of contemplation.

"(4) Thus deepening and incarnating—bringing in, giving body to, and in some sense exhibiting by means of our own growing and changing experience—that transcendent Otherness, the fact of the Life of the Spirit in the here-and-now."

5. Some Means of Refreshment and Renewal.

There are few things about which it is more difficult to generalise than regarding the means by which an individual may find the refreshment and renewal of his life, but in turning to the more practical side of the matter, an interchange of experience about the following should be of some help:

(a) *Our Physical Life*. While we must not forget the important cases of those who have achieved spiritual strength through the neglect of the body, it remains true for the large majority of men and women that unless care is taken to provide for the refreshment and renewal of the physical life, difficulties will arise in regard to mental and spiritual health. We are sometimes apt to look for the source of the trouble in the waste products of our minds and spirits when it is really to be found in the waste products of our bodies.

(b) *Communion with Nature*. Without entering into any discussion of the thread-bare issue of the relative merits of

country and town life, we do well to remember how much we may gain from seeking regular opportunities of communion with Nature. It was partly of this that the late William Charles Braithwaite wrote in the following lines :

“ Oh, might I 'scape the sordid city-air,
 This moaning human hive's unresting hum,
 Then would my soul that pinioned is and dumb
 Shake free her wings and all her life declare.

I will away by secret winding stair
 To my closed garden whither angels come,
 Where the marred spirit, now unmanned and numb,
 May be recovered from her dark despair,
 Peace giving healing light for pitiless glare,
 Faith bringing vision to the downcast eyes.
 Love heaping up the heart's spent treasures,
 Till, by God's angels tended and made fair,
 I mount again into life's hurrying street,
 Strengthened to serve my Lord with shining feet.”

(*Red Letter Days* : “ My Closed Garden.”)

(c) *Communion with Friends*. It was of this that Matthew Arnold wrote in “ The Buried Life ” :

“ . . . Only—but this is rare—
 When a beloved hand is laid in ours.
 When, jaded with the rush and glare
 Of the interminable hours,
 Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear.
 When our world-deafen'd ear
 Is by the tones of a loved voice caress'd,
 A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast
 And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again :
 The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
 And what we mean, we say, and what we would, we know.
 A man becomes aware of his life's flow
 And hears its winding murmur, and he sees
 The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze.
 And there arrives a lull in the hot race
 Wherein he doth for ever chase
 That flying and elusive shadow, Rest.
 An air of coolness plays upon his face,
 And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.
 And then he thinks he knows
 The Hills where his life rose,
 And the Sea where it goes.”

And in this matter of human friendship and comradeship we need to remember not only what we may gain from others, but even more what others may gain from us, if we will but let them.

(d) *Literature, Music, and Art.* The influence of these in the renewal of life may for many be very great, touching, as they do, those deeper aspects of our being which are so much neglected in the everyday life of many of us. Nor need our acquaintanceship be with the difficult; the good in Literature, Music, and Art is quite often the simple.

(e) *Contact with God.* As Dr. Emerson Fosdick has told us in *The Meaning of Prayer*, "When Jesus goes up into the mountain alone to commune with God, He does so with absolute assurance that the strength and peace and vision which He needs will come. Personal relationship is the unique realm of prayer. As one reads the great prayers of the church he sees that in this realm supremely the people of God have prayed with confidence, have expected answer and have not been disappointed."

"Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take;
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all the distant and the near
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear!
We kneel, how weak! we rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care:
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?"

(Archbishop Trench.)

(f) *The Life of our School.* In the first five headings of this section of the lesson, we have only been touching upon a few of the more important aspects of the refreshment and renewal of our lives. We have not mentioned home, or work, or church, though each of these has an importance beyond exaggeration. But we may well think of them also, and of other means as well, as we draw our thoughts together in the consideration of the life of our School from this point of view. How much has it not meant to each of us? How much more might it not come to mean in the future? And here we shall discover that, as in the wider ranges of human fellowship, "Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."

NOTES FOR LEADERS.

Perhaps the most important thing in regard to this lesson will be the stimulation of the right atmosphere. The Leader should remember that at many points it touches just those aspects of

individual life in which any other person must hesitate to intrude. But, given the right atmosphere, there is much to be gained by an interchange of experience in regard to the all-important matter with which the lesson is concerned. A good proportion of the time may well be devoted to the last sub-heading—The Life of our School. This might be held under review in the light of the principles discussed in the earlier part.

Questions :

- (1) What have you found of most help in the renewal of your own inner life ?
- (2) What have we to learn from those who have practised the neglect of their physical life in the interests of their spiritual life ?
- (3) In what ways could we extend the influence of our friendship to others, if we took some thought about the matter ?
- (4) To what extent is it true that our School is a means of refreshment and renewal to all its members ? In what ways can we help to improve it from this point of view ?

Additional References :

- Eternal Life.* Baron F. von Hugel. (T. and T. Clark. 12s.)
The Spirit. Edited by B. H. Streeter. (Macmillan. 10s.)
The Adult School Movement. G. Currie Martin. (N.A.S.U. 1s. 6d. and 5s.)

June 17th.

III.—SPIRITUAL VALUES IN MATERIAL THINGS.

Bible Readings : John 5. 39-47 (in Revised Version) ; 2 Cor. 4. 15-18.

Other References :

Christian Character. J. R. Illingworth. Especially chapter 8 on "Sacraments." (Macmillan. 3s.)

The Ephesian Gospel. Percy Gardner. Especially chapter 9 on "The Sacraments." (Williams & Norgate. 6s.)

Wordsworth's poem, "The Reverie of Poor Susan." This makes a very good illustrative reading.

[It should be noted that, in this and succeeding lessons, additional references are to be found at the end of the notes].

Keystone of Thought :

And Nature, the old nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying, "Here is a story-book
Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," she said,
"Into regions yet untrod ;
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

And he wandered away and away
With Nature, the dear old nurse,
Who sang to him night and day
The rhymes of the universe.

And whenever the way seemed long,
Or his heart began to fail,
She would sing a more wonderful song,
Or tell a more marvellous tale.

(LONGFELLOW.)

Suggested Hymns : 91, 117, 244, 258, 403.

Aim of the Lesson : To show how the inward life may be renewed from day to day by the revelation of God through common things.

Notes on the Lesson.

It may appear to many Adult School members, at first sight, that a lesson on the Sacraments is remote from their usual line of study, and verges too closely, perhaps, on controversial theology, to be of general interest. If, however, they will call to

mind what they know as "the Adult School spirit," and will try to understand what this implies, they will realise that a sacramental idea runs through all the teaching and thought of this Movement at its best. We constantly emphasise the belief in a spiritual interpretation of life; that behind the things that are seen there are invisible realities; that God dwells in man; and that religion is an appeal to the whole man, and not to any one part of him to the exclusion of the rest. All this is a large part of the sacramental idea, whether we use that term for it or not, and we ought to recognise that devout souls in all ages have expressed this principle in specialised forms and ceremonies, finding in them strength, comfort, and renewal of spirit in a way which, they declare, has been possible nowhere else. A thorough grasp of our own Adult School spirit and teaching might indeed lead some of us beyond our present practice, and although this need not involve us in conventional rites and ceremonies, it would inspire us to see more clearly that life can be lived consciously in the presence of the unseen and eternal.

But in addition to this, since we are engaged on a study of the teaching of Jesus as recorded by the author of the Fourth Gospel, and since he emphasised the Incarnation and showed Christianity as the religion of a Word made Flesh—that is to say, of the divine manifested in material form—we must consider the sacramental idea if we are to deal with this study seriously.

Look carefully at the first of our readings and notice how Jesus warned those who revered their scriptures that they must look further than the mere printed page, or scroll, to that of which it testified, implying that it is easy to miss the real by paying attention to that which is apparent.

The Spiritual revealed through the Material.

We are familiar with the principle that we are often able to comprehend many spiritual and abstract truths by means of material things, and we are also aware that much of our joy and satisfaction in life comes to us through the medium of the things of sense, which, of themselves alone, would not suffice to make us happy or contented. Why is this? Is it not because they sometimes express, and possibly explain, our innermost feelings? But there is more than joy and satisfaction that comes to us in this way, for when we find that our highest inspiration and incentive is ministered through the outward, then we are aware of spiritual thrill. For instance, try to put into words for yourselves what the lilies and birds meant to Jesus, and what they ministered to him. (Matt. 6. 26-30).

Members might try to name some few of those objects or experiences which always mean more than their outward appearance

suggests, such as the natural chan in a morass, more in the
 What impression does it make upon you of a tiger. A flower
 like Peter Bell (in Wordsworth's poem), its grace and scent and
only a primrose, and to him "it was words of a book; and yet
 you truthfully say:

memories of the past,
 "To me the meanest flower that blows can bring
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears" ?

Is it not possible to think of Jesus as surrounded by the
 Peter Bells of his day, who could not discern the inward meaning
 of things? Notice that in John's record, the Jews, and even the
 disciples, are ridiculed because they took too literally the words
 about eating the flesh and drinking the blood. (John 6. 52 and 60.)

Again, think of the significance of the human face. You do
 not see the physical only, but those outward features speak to
 you at once of the inward character. The eyes, the mouth, the
 whole face tell of the spirit and temper that are behind and within.
 Can you explain why a mother sees much more in the face of her
 child than any ordinary stranger can? Is it not because love
 sees farther than the exterior, and perceives the hidden quality
 within? The sacramental principle is therefore that by which
 we find that certain outward sights, sounds or objects convey
 to us something other than and better than themselves, and, with
 this in mind, you might try to see how Wordsworth works this
 out in his poem "The Reverie of Poor Susan."

Man Needs the Sacramental Principle.

Our bodies, no less than our spirits, are parts of human
 personality. In some ages the body has been despised and
 deemed unworthy, as though it were almost a necessary evil of
 our present life. Indeed, Paul speaks of "our vile body" (or,
 as Dr. Moffat translates it, "the body that belongs to our low
 estate"); yet the doctrine of the Incarnation is witness that
 Christianity is quite opposed to this contempt of the flesh, for it
 was human flesh and bone and blood that were deemed a fit
 dwelling-place for the Son of God. A proper understanding of
 the Incarnation therefore brings with it a nobler estimate of the
 physical. Seeing, then, that man is compact of body and soul,
 each must assist the other, and the connection between them is
 the most intimate that we can imagine. The body needs the
 soul to animate it, and the soul needs the body as an organ of its
 expression. Remember that it is through the body that food is
 taken to give capacity for service to God and man; it is the body
 that provides the instruments for our social intercourse; it is
 through the nerves and brain of the body that we think and plan,
 aspire and pray. All this means that we do make the material a
 channel for the spiritual, and, as Dr. Illingworth says, "so long

mind what they know as "the set with hands, and are tempted by to understand what this ^{by} melody and song, so long, in a word, mental idea runs through ^{al} part of our personality, sacraments Movement at its best. . . of our spiritual life, a medium of our union

Try ^{interpretatic} examples in the class of how great ideas come to us, and of how dependent we are on our physical functions. If any of our senses fail, are we not at once cut off from a whole world of enjoyment? Think of Milton in his blindness, and how he speaks of himself as being

" from the cheerful ways of men,
Cut off, and for the Book of Knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of Nature's works, to me expunged and used,
And Wisdom at one entrance quite shut out."

God's Nature needs the Sacramental Principle.

Interpret it how we will, it is a fact that spirit is nowhere seen or discerned except by and through the material—even our thinking and imagining need the grey matter of the brain. God chooses such things as the means of his revelation. He has communicated himself in the work of his hands, the heavens declaring his glory and the sunshine and showers proving the universality of his love, for he has not left himself without a witness in all ages. Look at Dr. Moffatt's translation of Romans 1. 19: "For whatever is to be known of God is plain to them, God Himself has made it plain, for ever since the world was created, His invisible nature, His everlasting power and Divine Being have been quite perceptible in what He has made." May not this mean that if we refuse to use material things as sacraments we run the risk of obstructing the message of God to our hearts, and perhaps make void his agencies of grace? Hymn 244 has been suggested for to-day because it brings to mind the many channels by which God speaks to us. In so far as they mediate God to us, all these are sacramental. It need not be denied that God can speak to the heart by direct intuitions, "for spirit with spirit can meet," but it would certainly appear that for the majority of us, he has chosen to appeal through the works of his hands, as we properly interpret them.

Is all Life Sacramental?

This will largely depend on yourselves and your interpretation of it, but the answer is generally "Yes." Yet are you content to be quite satisfied with that? Are there not things, times, and places that have for you some special and peculiarly tender significance? God is, no doubt, mediated through nature, but

we see more of him in a sunset than in a morass, more in the faithfulness of a dog than in the rapacity of a tiger. A flower growing in a field or in your garden, with its grace and scent and colour, is far fairer than one dried in the folds of a book; and yet if that dried flower be linked with certain memories of the past, it may arouse greater emotion in you than the living one. A cathedral may bring a sense of wonder and worship, and yet the little chapel of early associations may be more powerful to touch your heart for good. "Always we find special associations of spiritual import gathered round particular material things." Thus mankind has singled out certain places, or things, or ceremonies, which have had the power of arousing sacred emotions and quickening spiritual vision.

Question : Do you not think that, in doing this, man has been responding to a true inward leading? (It may be interesting to turn up Exodus 12. 21-28, and see all the wealth of meaning in the institution of the Passover with its symbolism and ceremony.)

When this general principle is applied to Christian experience, it is seen that, since the death of Jesus, two chief rites have acquired an ever-increasing depth of meaning from the faith and devotion which they have inspired, expressed and strengthened; these are the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Much unhappy controversy has surrounded these, and there is considerable difference of opinion still as to whether Jesus really wished to bind upon his people any ceremonies at all; but into this we cannot enter now, as much scholarship and much time would be needed. Their importance consists in their use and not in their explanation. We reserve for our next lesson a rather more detailed treatment of these special forms of devotion which have come to us hallowed by long years and by the affections of Christian men.

How we make Sacraments in daily life.

Whatever we may think of these observances as *ecclesiastical rites*, we are nevertheless constantly using and making little sacraments of our own, just because we want to show by outward signs certain inward sympathies or emotions. "Say it with flowers." Do you think this is a true and graceful human impulse? Are flowers not symbols, or, as some would say, sacraments? A poet says:

"We are nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth."

Of course he is not strictly correct, but he is dwelling on the sacramental view of nature. God must be a lover, for he is always "saying it with flowers."

m. Our manners are very closely related to sacramental observances of an informal kind. We doff our hats, we shake hands, we bow, we wave handkerchiefs for departing friends, and engage in other signs of inner feeling. It is easy thus for us to understand the usual definition of a sacrament—namely, that it is “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace,” but it is when we add to this definition the second part which belongs to it—namely, “given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself,” that we see the full significance of the *Christian* sacraments.

Social application of this principle.

All forms and rituals may be reduced to nothingness by the apathy or insincerity of those who practise them, but a true spiritual insight (which is of the very essence of the sacramental idea), may use the outward forms with wide results both in the sweetening of life and in better human relationships. Try to think of some of these results of this principle :

- (a) It will quicken the reverence for man's personality when his body is recognised as a tabernacle of the divine spirit. Does not this really lie very deep in our best interpretation of democracy and of the rights of man? On what other basis does all our desire and hope for social reform rest?
- (b) It will help us to realise that material things are not to be considered in a utilitarian way only; they are not merely ends in themselves, but for the betterment of human life. It will show us why persons are always better than things. It suggests to us that the Christian view of industry is that it is a method of serving the community and of advancing the spiritual welfare of men as well as their material welfare. It will reveal to us that much of our social trouble arises from the fact that men do not adopt what we may call the sacramental view of industry.
- (c) It will bring a new sense of responsibility into all our engagements—the disposal of our time, the spending of our money, the outlook of our lives, the integrity of our dealings, and the use that we make of beauty.
- (d) It should heighten the sense of fellowship especially when, in common with others, we have stood “in wonder, love and praise” in the presence of the highest and found the joyous solemnities of life ministered to us through material things.

Will you not try to see if these four results do not flow legitimately from the central principle? If you find that the whole universe is to you a “manuscript of God,” then it is to you

a sacrament, and your experience is a happy one, but next lesson we must concentrate on the fact that millions of serious men and women have found this focussed for them in certain specific and ordained rites which have been hallowed by "the tears and blessings of their kind."

Questions :

Does this lesson help to make more clear our Lord's meaning in the first reading (revised version), and what do you think it teaches with regard to the Bible ?

Do you see the force of the paradox in our second reading ? How can one look at things that are not seen ? For instance, does a man see only stone when he looks at the Cenotaph, or wood when he gazes at a crucifix, or silk when he sees his country's flag ?

Additional References :

- The Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments.* Percy Dearmer. (Heffer & Sons. 4s.) See Vol. 5, Lesson 138, etc.
- Christ, the Lord of all Life.* (Industrial Christian Fellowship. 1s.) See especially chapter on The Sacramental Principle.
- The Hardest Part.* G. A. Studdert Kennedy. (Hodder & Stoughton. Out of print.) See especially chapter 7, on "God and the Sacrament."
- The Ideal Life.* Henry Drummond. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.) See especially address on "Clairvoyance."
- The Catholic Faith.* W. H. Griffith Thomas. (Longmans. 1s. 6d. to 3s. 6d.) See chapter 27.
- The Faith and Practice of the Quakers.* Rufus M. Jones. (Friends' Book Centre. 5s.) See chapter 5.
- Sacramental Christianity.* Edward Grubb. (Friends' Book Centre. 1s.)

June 24th.

IV.—CLEANSING AND NOURISHMENT.

Bible Readings : John 1. 29-34 ; 3. 22-30 ; 6. 28-38.

Other References :

Christian Character. J. R. Illingworth, especially chapter 8 on "Sacraments." (Macmillan. 3s.)

The Ephesian Gospel. Percy Gardner. Especially chapter 9 on "The Sacraments." (Williams & Norgate. 6s.)

The Sacraments. A. Kemp Brown. (Friends' Book Centre. 6d).
Matthew Arnold's Sonnet, "East London." This makes a good illustrative reading.

The Sacraments. John Oxenham. (Methuen 2d.) Especially "The Sacrament of Food." This makes a good reading.

Keynote of Thought :

"By sacraments men are to be taken out of the narrowness and isolation of their own lives, out of all engrossing preoccupation with their own state, into the ample air, the generous gladness, the unselfish hope of the City of God : they are to escape from all daily pettyness, all morbid self-interest, all preposterous conviction of their own importance, into a fellowship which spans all ages and all lands."

(FRANCIS PAGEY in *Lux Mundi*.)

Suggested Hymns : 185, 249, 252, 396.

Aim of the Lesson : To see how the grace of God can bring refreshment and renewal to men through special solemn observances and hallowed associations.

Notes on the Lesson.

It is not easy to get exact and definite teaching from the Gospel of John on the Sacraments, because there seem to be two strains of thought running through his treatment of the subject. It is the general purpose and practice of this author to take up some historical fact or event, and make it into a starting-place for spiritual interpretations. He draws upon his memory, but allows it to be enriched by the association of a developing experience. He has been considered, in all ages of the church, to be the inspired guide in this matter, although he falls short of dogmatic teaching, for it appears to be his usual plan, when he has said anything that tends to confirm ritualism, to supply it with

an antidote. For example, in his third chapter, it is shown that a man is brought into the redeemed society not only by spiritual awakening, but by a baptism of water; in the sixth chapter there is the wonderful teaching of our Lord as to the Bread of Life which has always been supposed to refer to the Lord's Supper. Yet strangely, he goes out of his way to tell us that Jesus himself did not baptise, and he does not mention any institution of a permanent observance of ceremonial, unless it be that of the feet-washing. It would appear that the author realised the need, or the desirability, of certain outward acts, but as soon as he has expressed this, he goes on to show that it is the motive behind them that gives value to the rite. In reading this gospel we are made conscious that man is not only spirit but body also, and that spiritual teaching, to have its full effect, must be combined with the visible and the material.

Can you compare verses 53 and 63 in the sixth chapter, and try to find in them, not so much a contradiction, as complementary views of the same doctrine?

Sacraments in the Christian Society.

It is a matter of considerable difference of view among devout scholars as to whether Jesus really did institute definite sacraments in the sense of rules or ordinances which he wished to bind as obligations upon his followers down the ages. Some point to certain words which are recorded as being his, and affirm that they are commands to his church, whilst others feel that the very passages in support of this are of doubtful authenticity. Moreover many who would not claim to be scholars think that it is not in accordance with the character of Jesus, as they understand it, that he should have imposed forms and ceremonies as means of grace. It is impossible for us to enter into this difference of view with justice in the limited space that is possible here.

The Roman Catholic Church is the strongest in insistence upon the obligatory character of these rites, whilst on the other hand the Society of Friends represents the main thought as to the unessential use of outward symbols if the attitude of heart and soul be right. No one can interpret the Quaker attitude more faithfully than Rufus Jones, and he points out that Friends have disassociated themselves from the use of external symbols because they wished "to shake themselves free from the implications of magic." He says, "They came to feel that the only essential communion was the experience of partaking through Christ of the life of God revealed in their souls. They sought to find the reality which could be only *symbolised* in bread and wine, and, having found the reality, they dispensed with the symbol. . . . The result is that throughout their history they have preferred

to seek for the baptism of the Spirit without the use of water, and to experience a communion of soul with the living Christ without the use of bread and wine." Many of us will agree with R.W. Corbet when he says: "We should try to realise that no one organisation can witness to the whole of truth, but, taken all together, they help to render the witness more perfect."

Surely there is no need for us to be governed exclusively by the question of origin or of spoken words, for "whatever has been found helpful and suggestive in the past, so long as it serves to express important truth, should be regarded as of equally divine ordinance," and it is the age-long testimony of seeking souls that these sacraments have been used by God as channels of his grace. Even if it be true that some of our sacraments were taken over from pagan custom, that may be a matter for thankfulness rather than regret, for it shows that Christianity can save the world by taking up the old things and baptising them into a new significance.

There are two sacraments that are acknowledged by the vast majority of Christian folk, namely that of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper. A third, namely that of Penance (with its three steps, contrition, confession, and amendment—absolution aiding in the latter), has been widely used and found helpful.

The Sacrament of Penance.

This is not an age when much emphasis is laid on the evil of sin, and indeed Sir Oliver Lodge is reported as having said that "the modern man is not worried about sin," which has brought forth the reply that this is perhaps the reason why the modern man is worried about almost everything else under the sun. If sin, both social and individual, could be faced and overcome, our troubles would begin to disappear. However this may be, sin has lain as a burden on many thousands and they have felt the need for release. Confession of the sin and the sense of forgiveness can alone bring peace, and it has been a common experience to seek human help for an assurance of pardon.

There are three kinds of confession—private personal confession to God alone; public contrition in the presence of fellow Christians and in unity with them, as in the "General Confession" of the Anglican Church; and confession in the presence of some wise, trained and sympathetic friend who can, with the human voice, convey the assurance of God's forgiveness, and also advise as to means of self-discipline.

The general idea of the confessional (so far as it is understood by us), is probably not acceptable to most who are in our Schools, but the human need that it attempts to satisfy is a deep-seated one, and practices that are somewhat parallel are to be found

in other religious bodies. There are many who feel that they need to unburden their grief and sin to a fellow mortal; they find encouragement in his sharing of it, they find support in his guidance as to methods of conquering it, and it helps greatly in their being honest with themselves and facing the worst of their hidden lives. Their confessor, or confidant, is for them the outward assistance they need, and so the act of confession becomes to them a sacrament of blessing. Remember that, with many a man who has sinned, there is an experience of spiritual isolation, he is "out of the herd," and a spoken declaration that the barriers which his sin has caused are swept away by forgiveness, helps him to recover his sense of honour and of fellowship.

Questions :

Do you think the common saying is true, that "Open confession is good for the soul"? If so, why?

They say that when joy is shared, it becomes doubled, and when sorrow is shared, it is halved. Do you not think that, in like manner, it may be helpful to share the sense of sin?

One sometimes hears the argument that it is sufficient to confess one's sins to God alone, since it is his forgiveness we seek, and him that we have mainly wronged. One has to remember that it is to God that we confess, but that it is sometimes helpful to do so in the presence of another person, since our sins are often against our fellows as well as against God. Even if you do not feel the force of this argument, consider what Mr. Studdert Kennedy says: "'No one must come between me and my God,' a common saying of pious people, is a definitely anti-Christian saying, which regards brother man as a barrier to, and not a means of grace, and that is in itself a sin."

Baptism.

Whether our Lord distinctly ordained this rite of Baptism or not, there is no doubt that it was well-known and valued in the early church. With regard to this—as well as to the Lord's Supper—there are some who emphasise the purely symbolical value in the setting forth of spiritual truth, and there are those who judge the rite to be almost magical in its operation. This kind of controversy has, more than perhaps any other, sharply divided Christian thought, but we cannot argue it now.

When converts entered into the new experience of Christ's gospel, it was thought good that some outward and visible sign should accompany the change of life. It signified the open avowal of loyalty to Christ, it was an initiation into the new society, and it symbolised the cleansing from the old nature. As such it had, and still has, great advantages, for we must not measure its value

only among our own people, but must estimate its influence on those of other temperament or race. In the mission field, for example, the change from paganism—or from another religion—is so great, that it is a help to a convert if he signalises it by a distinct act of self-committal. He has then testified his new faith before his fellows, and the rite brings a real strength.

Question :

Is it not a real weakness to many of us that we are so rarely asked to make any public avowal of principles that we have espoused, and might it not help us to "nail our colours to the mast" if we committed ourselves by some outward act?

One has to remember this fact in studying John's evidence, that he was writing with a special mission to Ephesian converts, who would carry into Christianity many memories of pagan ceremonies. John wished to show the value of outward rites, and yet he points to that truer baptism which was of the Holy Spirit. Look again at the first two readings and note this emphasis.

The Eucharist.

The Lord's Supper is the greatest sacrament of the Church, and demands much more space for treatment than this lesson will afford. Possibly it is more generally understood than the others, at least in its outward observance, and it makes an appeal that is more universal. There is indeed conflict of view as to its exact interpretation, and as to what takes place during its observance, but none will deny—or wish to deny—the solemn, moving and powerful influence of a corporate act of remembrance inspired by love. When, however, the Friend who is commemorated is held to be God in human form, the very Word made Flesh, then the act becomes a religious observance of the highest order. Some hold the service to be one purely of remembrance, others treat it as being symbolic of the self-giving of our Lord to his people, and others regard it as a positive channel of grace to the recipients. The teaching of the Roman Church is that "the Holy Eucharist is the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the outward appearances of bread and wine," and that He is to be worshipped and adored in the Host. (From "Catholic Belief," by Fra di Bruno.)

In any case think carefully upon the fact that a ritual is often more generous and comprehensive than a dogma. The truth of God's love may come home far more powerfully through an act of affectionate remembrance than by a verbal pronouncement. This sacrament does "bring the fact of Christ's sacrifice to mind and leaves the interpretation to one's self." Those who

could never give a satisfactory explanation of the doctrine of the Atonement *in words*, may find a better way by this act of fellowship and love. Many will fall back upon Tennyson's words, "I cannot understand—I love."

Psychological Influence.

There are many powerful influences that have reached the human soul, and many suggestions of grace that have been made to it, through the medium of this sacrament, and these are not easy to explain or to tabulate, but they are attested by generations of Christian folk.

Let us try to indicate something of what is felt by many, and treat it, not for argument, but for meditation.

- (a) The power of spiritual suggestion is very great, and this is conveyed by the outward rite. The truth thus realised stimulates, quickens and nourishes the soul.
- (b) The will and resolution are builded up by the positive act of partaking. There is an effort of intention, of response, of imagination and of decision. Scattered spiritual emotions are focussed in a supreme moment. In many cases communicants find that the practices of early rising and self-examination beforehand make them more receptive of the grace conveyed by the outward observance.
- (c) Each act of re-consecration to Christ helps to fix our love in its holiest abiding place. This love is redeemed from mere emotionalism by the memory of his suffering and death, and by the desire to be worthy of a love "so amazing, so divine."
- (d) A sense of unity with Christ, and with the faithful of mankind, is not only realised, but somehow brought vividly to mind—one is helped to see mankind in the light of Christ, for all have "drunk of one cup."
- (e) With very many there is a realisation that they stand in a great succession, for they are linked with those who, since the death of Jesus, have never failed to keep this observance. They feel that they become, in some measure, inheritors of a transmitted spiritual experience which exceeds their own, and makes them one with the company of heaven.

Social Implications.

There is a wealth of social meaning in this act which is far-reaching. It is not always perceived by those who partake, but it is true nevertheless that this sacrament signifies that consecration of earth's common things which, if it were carried out, would sweeten and make righteous the whole of human relationships.

It is, firstly, an act which ratifies and strengthens fellowship in a solemn presence, and it should mean that the fellowship of the Lord's table hallows the engagements of daily life. Again, it definitely connects together the common necessities of life with the highest spiritual significance, for it chooses bread and wine as its symbols, nature's products on which human labour has been expended. This service should therefore symbolise the dedication of labour. This business of bread-getting is where quarrels begin and where inhumanity is practised, in a word, "we have turned that which was meant to be Holy Communion into unholy competition."

As Christians we come to this table, "not because we must but because we may," partly to offer grateful thanks (that is the meaning of the word *Eucharist*), and partly to feed the hunger of the soul. Surely it follows that this table of the Lord, where simple things are shared in the spirit of love, is a standing protest against the extremes both of vulgar luxury and grinding poverty, and it should be the trysting-place of vows for those who look for an earth—not to say a heaven—in which righteousness shall dwell. With regard to sacraments, Canon Raven, in his latest book, says :

"Few of us, if any, can dispense with means so hallowed, so productive. But that for the Christian they are wholly secondary is clear both from the prophets of the Old Testament and from the evangelists and prophets of the New. 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' said Jesus: and it is probable that He left no other necessary test. 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God,' and 'the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance': a religion thus defined ought to be able to keep creed and cultus in their proper places, to see them as means not ends, and to insist that when they are given value apart from their spiritual purpose, the result is not merely damage but disaster."

It is clearly recognised that we do not often touch upon these subjects in our Schools, but if we claim to be interested in those forces that play upon human life, and especially those which touch it to finer issues, then we must try to understand observances that have stood the test of ages, observances which, to so many men, have been nothing less than definite transactions with God. There is no desire to persuade our members to accept or to adopt rites and ceremonies as parts of their spiritual life, excepting as their own hearts shall dictate, instructed by the inward guidance of the highest they know. Some are quite clear as to the views they hold, and some are not yet ready for decisions on this point, but those who do not join in outward rites may nevertheless

experience, if they choose, something of the joy and power and sacredness of that which the sacraments manifest. We realise that we have in our Schools some keen members of Christian churches, who are regular communicants, and it is to be hoped that they will share their experience as to the value of sacraments with their fellow-members.

Question :

Seeing that, in Adult School life, we do not observe any of the usual sacraments of Christian life, have we anything which satisfactorily takes their place, and helps us to concentrate our highest thought upon communion with God or fellowship with men? If not, do you think we need it?

“Morally speaking, Baptism—the Sacrament of personality—signifies: ‘Thou art the child of God . . . become it!’

“Morally speaking, the Holy Supper signifies: ‘Thou art the brother of Jesus Christ and of the Brothers—behave accordingly!’

“So the Sacrament of Regeneration and the Sacrament of Communion fundamentally unite all the disciples of our Saviour and establish the catholic basis of a true Christendom.”

Additional references :

The Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments. Percy Dearmer. (Heffer & Sons. 4s.) See volume 5, Lesson 138, etc.

The Wicket Gate. G. A. Studdert Kennedy. (Hodder & Stoughton. 2s. 6d.) Especially chapter 7.

The Catholic Faith. W. H. Griffith Thomas. Chapters 28 and 29.

July 1st.

V.—OUR FATHER.

In the notes on this and the two following lessons the writer wishes specially to acknowledge her indebtedness to the writers of two books, viz., the Rev. Studdert Kennedy, whose *The Wicket Gate* deals in strong and direct manner with the problems raised in "The Lord's Prayer," and Dr. Natanael Beskow, of Stockholm, whose volume of sermons, entitled *Our Father*, she has drawn upon largely, and from which she has ventured to translate various short passages and prayers. The Lesson Notes in the Handbook for 1914 on "The Lord's Prayer," by Ernest H. C. Wethered, will also be found very helpful by those who can refer back to them.

Bible Readings : Matt. 6. 1-13 ; Rom. 8. 12-21.

Other References :

The Wicket Gate. Studdert Kennedy. (Hodder and Stoughton. 2s. 6d.)

The Double Search. Rufus M. Jones. Prayer : pp. 95-106. (Obtainable from Friends' Book Centre. 7s. 6d.)

The Sermon on the Mount. Bishop Gore. Chapter VII. (John Murray. 1s. 6d.)

Lesson Handbook for 1914. "The School of Christ: The Master's Lesson in Prayer." (Out of print.)

A Book of Prayers for use in an Indian College. p. 27. (Challenge Book Store. 1s. 6d.)

Keynote of Thought :

"It is easy to commit the Lord's Prayer to memory but difficult to learn it by heart."—FOSDICK.

Suggested Hymns : 451, 16, 357, 349, 383.

Aim of the Lesson : To see what is implied in using the words "Our Father."

Notes on the Lesson.

The Secret of Power.

When you see a powerful machine working, you naturally ask, "What drives it, petrol, gas, steam, electricity?" So when you watch a great personality wielding a far-reaching influence you inquire, "What inner impulse urges him on, what are his motives and ideals?" We ask this about the outstanding figures in the life of the world to-day, e.g., such contrasted personalities

as Gandhi and Mussolini and about our own thinkers and statesmen nearer home. We ask it about the great figures in past history, e.g., Cromwell, Napoleon, Abraham Lincoln, Gladstone, etc. We look for some answer to our question in their journals or private letters, to find a clue to the guiding principles of their lives. We ask it about the great religious leaders of the world—Buddha, Mahomet, Confucius, etc., and above all we ask it about Jesus. We want to know how it was that, beginning as a carpenter in Nazareth, his influence is now felt over the whole civilised world? (See *Wicket Gate*, p. 94.)

What was the secret of the power of Jesus?

"As I watch Him I cannot but ask myself 'What was the secret of the amazingly sustained effort of His life?' His serenity and His energy never seem to have failed. What I know of life makes that to my mind the supreme miracle of His life. I ask myself, 'How did He achieve it?' And He answers, not by saying that He was divine and I am not, but by telling me that in prayer lies the real secret of strong living."—A. HERBERT GRAY.

The Answer of Jesus.

There is no question that he himself felt his power was derived from actual communion with his "heavenly Father" (Mark i. 35, 9. 28, 29). In prayer his whole being renewed its life. His disciples felt that something wonderful took place when Jesus prayed (Luke II. 1, 2). They wanted to be initiated and share the experience, they desired to be "taught to pray." We all know how Jesus answered their request. "When ye pray say, Our Father," etc. The words are simple enough but the thought is deeper and more mysterious than can ever be fathomed or exhausted. It is a tremendous step to take to say these two words with sincerity. Madame Guyon, in her little book, *Method of Prayer*, advises us "to begin with a profound act of adoration and self-abasement before God and therewith shutting our bodily eyes, endeavour to open those of the soul. Then in this attitude let us say the Lord's Prayer, understanding in some measure what we say and believing that God, who is within our soul, is very willing to be our Father. Having pronounced the word *Father* let us continue some moments in silence with much reverence, waiting that our Heavenly Father may be pleased to discover unto us His will."

Testing by Experience.

But some will say, "I cannot pray this prayer or any prayer, I am not sure that there is a Father-God at all." How can we find out? Either there *is* or there is *not*. There is no *perhaps* in such a matter as this. In ordinary life if we desire to know

about anything we make some experiment to test it; e.g., if we want to know the nature of some chemical substance or some new remedy for disease, if we want to know what soil suits a certain plant or what oil suits a machine, we test them. Similarly we may ask, "What ideas and principles help man's highest life? Does it *work* to think of God as our Father and to think of ourselves and conduct ourselves as His children?" If we ask this question about the life of Jesus we see at once the effect of his confidence:

His fearlessness (see Mark 4. 37-39).

His patience and serenity in face of opposition and hatred (Mark 14. 61).

His courage in facing death and shame (Luke 9. 51).

His selflessness in mortal agony (Luke 23. 34, 43).

His urgent love for his fellow-men (Matt. 23. 37).

The same is true in degree in the life of his followers, e.g., Paul. Consider his attitude to danger, anxiety, disappointment and suffering (2 Cor. 6. 1-10). Think of others who have been a moral and spiritual force in the world and what it is that has sustained their life, e.g., Wesley, Dr. Arnold, Lord Shaftesbury, Livingstone, Mary Slessor, etc. Tolstoy, in his "Confessions," describes his agony and despair when God is nothing to him but an illusion; on the other hand when he could say "*God is*," even for an instant, "life re-rose in me and the possibility of existing and the joy of it."

"Prayer is not an illusion to take refuge in for our own comfort—it is the going forth of the spirit of Life towards the Fountain of Life for fullness and satisfaction: The natural tendency of the poor, rent, derived spirit, towards the Fountain of Spirits."—ISAAC PENNINGTON.

There is a striking passage in a letter from Abraham Lincoln to one of his friends: "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go; my own wisdom and that of all around me seemed insufficient for the day." Those who practise prayer most ardently and sincerely are those who testify most strongly to the reality of its power in their lives.

The Prayer of Fellowship.

If then we attempt to enter into the prayer of Jesus, that the Father's name may be hallowed, his will be done, and his kingdom come, what is involved? To say "Father" to God involves saying "brother" to one's fellows. There is no *I* or *me* or *mine* in the whole prayer. It is in every line a prayer of fellowship and co-operation. Whom must we include in this fellowship?

Which of our neighbours, which of those . . .
 by day, which of those on whose work our comfort . . .
 which of our co-religionists, which of our political opponents . . .
 which of our national rivals? This is a question, not to be
 answered in a wholesale manner, but by each of us for ourselves.
 We are only gradually coming to see what is really involved in
 this prayer. "They come from all sides, these individuals who
 demand the right of brotherhood. . . . No one must be
 despised, no one must be hated. I cannot desire to injure anyone
 or to oppress them. I cannot use them as tools of my own
 selfishness or see them go under and look on coolly and indifferently.
 If we 'pass by on the other side,' we are not hallowing the
 Father's name."

The Coming Kingdom.

What do we mean by praying for it? Is it some far-off
 divine event? or something that we can actually bring to pass, in
 degree at any rate. We have no right to pray for it unless we
 mean also to work for it. "This prayer involves the most
 strenuous life that was ever lived."

What changes would come about in our own neighbourhood
 if God's Kingdom came?

"Thy Will be done."

Is this just a prayer of submission, of bowing to the inevitable?
 Sometimes it has been supposed to be so, and when tragic events
 have happened as the result of man's ignorance and blindness and
 carelessness men have said, "Thy will be done," instead of
 bending every effort to cure or to remedy or to abolish the evil.
 "It is not resignation in this prayer but, on the contrary, the
 greatest effort of man's will which one can imagine."

"I can remember sitting by the bedside of a child, painfully
 dying of rickets and general debility; and the mother—a
 large, fat woman—copiously weeping the tears of sentimentality
 which are easily shed and easily dried, kept on saying, 'It is
 God's Will.' But I never knew anything which was less God's
 Will than that. The whole business was just smothered in sin,
 and denial of God's Will. The cottage in which the child lay
 was an abominable and shameful place, in which no decent
 animal ought to have been asked to live; the whole district was
 an outrage on humanity. The father of the child was syphilitic,
 and I knew the mother had suckled the child in drink. It was
 typical modern poverty; and that is not God's Will—it is the
 devil's will."—STUDDERT KENNEDY.

If we pray, "Thy will be done," we must be prepared to
 find it out and co-operate with it. "As men seek to bring their

lives into accord with the Father's will, the cities of the world will be transformed into cities of God—the kingdoms of the earth into kingdoms of God."

"On Earth as it is in Heaven."

Where is heaven? We have grown beyond our childish conception of it as a *place* somewhere above the skies, and we now think of it more as a *condition*, a realm where truth, goodness, and righteousness prevail. Even in our ordinary talk we describe some experience we have had as "like being in heaven," or we recall some special place of peace and goodness as "a little heaven on earth." It is evident that there is no sharp dividing line between earth and heaven; heaven is all around us if we have eyes to see and the will to enter into it.

When Moses was about to make the holy tabernacle to be the centre of worship for his people, it was said to him: "See that thou make everything after the pattern shown thee in the mount." We also have glimpses of a divine pattern, shown to our inner vision, which has to be worked out into actual life. The *ideal* has got to be made *real* and incarnated in everyday conditions.

"Father, hallow us by Thy name, write it on our foreheads, burn away our selfishness and pride, give us a glimpse of Thy kingdom, teach us what Thy will is and help us to do it."

N. BESKOW.

Questions :

- (1) When Jesus thought of God as *Father*, what was the *character* of that Father in his mind?
- (2) Are there any signs in the world that God's kingdom is gradually coming?
- (3) What are some of the next things to work for if the Father's will is to be done?

July 8th.

VI.—EVERYDAY NEEDS.

Bible Readings : Matt. 6. 25-34; Ps. 65. 9-13.

Other References :

The Wicket Gate. Studdert Kennedy. Chapter VII.

The Double Search. Rufus M. Jones. pp. 99-100.

Lesson Handbook for 1914. pp. 52-55. "Sustenance for the Body."

Suggested Hymns : 24, 364, 19.

Aim of the Lesson : To see that we depend for our daily bread on God and on one another as well as on our own efforts.

Notes on the Lesson.

We are to study now the phrase, "Give us this day our daily bread," or "our bread for the day's needs." We notice that it follows directly after "Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Does this mean that Jesus felt that if the Father's will were done on earth, we might confidently ask and expect the daily bread we need? At any rate

Jesus recognised the needs of the body.

We have various instances of this in the gospels, e.g., Luke 8. 55. after he healed Jairus' daughter, and Mark 6. 37, when he had compassion on the multitude. Yet he himself had experienced what it was to fast for forty days. He had faced, in his temptation, the pangs of hunger. Is it possible that his realisation of what the world around him, men, women and children, were suffering in their struggle for bread, made the temptation all the harder? He was tempted to show that he could satisfy, not his own hunger alone, but the world's hunger. (See *The Wicket Gate*, pp. 149, 150.) But "he perceived the truth that to feed man is to starve him." Bread is essential to life but it is wonderful how little a man can live on. Others besides Jesus have at various times fasted as much as forty days and many can and do live on very little food. We are told that Mahatma Gandhi takes nothing but a little fruit, bread and goats' milk. Much depends on the mental state. "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a

stalled ox and hatred therewith" (Prov. 15. 17). Beyond a certain point, however, the mind cannot hold out against the claims of the body. Though Captain Scott and his companions at the South Pole maintained their courage and loyalty to the last, they succumbed to starvation one by one. The last entry in Scott's diary, written after seven days without any food, and after a long period of semi-starvation and exhausting exposure, ran as follows: "We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far. It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more." Body, mind and soul are interdependent. Man does not live by bread alone, but he does *need* bread if he is to live. So Jesus included a prayer for daily bread in his "model prayer."

The Mystery of Food.

This fundamental need of bread brings us up against a great mystery—how can it be that meat and bread and fruit can produce an effect upon the *mind*? We cannot give any clear explanation, but we know it is a fact. What we are depends much upon what we eat. Our thoughts and feelings, our hopes and fears, are affected by our food. The life of the spirit appears to be nourished by the life-force that is contained in our daily bread. We take in what the earth provides, and, by some wonderful process that goes on in the tissues of the body, we are thereby provided with energy which we can in turn express and give out in various ways. Thus our everyday meals may become sacramental and a part of that "give and take" which is the root principle of the world. As we receive so we must give; we have no right to receive unless we give. "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat." (2 Thess. 3. 10.)

"Give me this day my daily bread,"
But let it be food well-earned
By the sweat of my brow, and the toil of my hands,
And a life of idleness spurned.

W. E. HUTCHINSON.

The Co-operation of God and Man.

Perhaps someone asks, "Why should we pray to God for daily bread, when we have to work for it ourselves?" Because with all our work, we cannot provide it for ourselves *without* God. Before we pluck an ear of corn, think what God's part has been. Look again at Ps. 65. Unless he gives the soil, the water, the plants and the *life* going on in them, the labourer labours in vain. Man can get no bread unless the ancient promise holds good, "While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease" (Gen. 8. 22).

We must take the Father's part into account and receive it thankfully. (See Lesson Handbook, 1914, p. 54.) It is a gift, but it requires our part to be contributed also before the bread can be ours.

Think what man has to bring to the production of Bread.

1. Selection of seed. The corn of to-day is the result of the gradual improvement of the wild variety. (Wheat was not known in England till the sixteenth century.)
2. Cultivation and improvement of soil.
3. Harvesting, threshing, milling, baking.
4. Co-operation.

Before we can buy a loaf, think how many hands have toiled. The production of daily bread in this country and in other countries is a co-operative affair. When we realise this we could not, if we would, pray "Give *me*." We pray "Give *us*," and try to realise whom the word *us* should include. Even the farmer and the labourer must think of each other and the share that each has had in the work. Those of us who have had no share in such work must think what we are giving in exchange for their work, not in money, but in service. "Everything you use for which you do not, as far as in you lies, give an equivalent in value of some kind, is a theft. Everything you crave as your daily necessity and demand as a right, has been toiled for by somebody. What are you giving in exchange? The more you require, the more you use, the more service are you bound to give in return. When we pray "Give *us*," etc., *us* does not mean just me and my family, nor me and my nation, but me and the whole of mankind; for we are building up—and that more and more as the years go on and the links between nations are drawn closer—one great comradeship for production and consumption." Consider how far this comradeship in production is complete. Do the great food-producing countries, America, Russia, Egypt, India, etc., give out their surplus stores with a generous mind or keep them back to exact high prices?

The Problem of Distribution.

We are here confronted with a hard matter. If the Father's will is to be done concerning his children's bread, it will have to be rightly distributed as well as rightly produced. He does not give us a hard and fast rule, we have to discover it and act on it for ourselves. There are many conflicting schemes on trial. All governments, beside their other duties, have responsibility for seeing that people's needs are supplied. We have to-day the Soviet experiment, the Fascist experiment; in our own country

we have such regulations as we find in the Poor-law, in Old-age Pensions, in Unemployment Insurance, to equalise conditions and prevent distress. None of these various schemes can claim to have fully succeeded. In every country there are those who have a superfluity and those who have not enough. Is it because we do not yet *want* to share with one another as if we were members of one family? We have not thought of each other in that light, or shouldered the responsibility for each other's need of bread.

During the Russian famine of 1921-22, something like 30,000,000 people were starving and dying; while at the same time in America there was such an abundance of maize that the farmers did not know how to get rid of it and so it was burnt as fuel in their railway engines. At the same time the ships in Europe were laid up, for there were no cargoes, and thousands of people in various countries were suffering from unemployment. Yet the politicians excused themselves from organising the needful help by laying the blame for the famine on the Russian Government, of which they disapproved.

What does "daily bread" include?

St. Augustine said "Whatever is needful for body or soul in this life is included in daily bread." Luther said "Everything that affects the maintenance and necessities of life, such as food and drink, clothes, house and home, land and furniture, cattle, property and money, good wife and good children, good government, peace, health, virtue and honour, friends and neighbours." Is this the kind of list we should make out to-day? What we do need first and foremost, what must we think of first? The answer of Jesus to this question is startling: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you." Perhaps we can see a little what he means if we think of "the kingdom of God" not as some vague good time in the far future but as a time when everybody here and now tries to do the will of God in ordinary life. If we can imagine this happening we can see that it would make the production of daily bread and the right distribution of it a comparatively easy matter. There is enough for all our needs if we will all take a hand in the work and all share as brothers in what we produce.

"Help us all to work together as good comrades and give Thy blessing to our common labour, give us each our share in the sphere of work and in the happiness of it; help us all to share as brothers, that each may receive what he requires, that none may suffer need, that none may be deprived of his just share in the store he has helped to produce. Give us also good will and a clear understanding so that we may discover the best means of justly distributing the fruits of our labour."—N. BESKOW.

LIFE AND ITS RENEWAL

Questions :

- (1) What is the difference between the "daily bread" needed by an Esquimaux and a man in Tropical Africa, and how does it account for this difference?
- (2) Why should fasting have been so much practised as a religious duty?
- (3) By what means—public or private—do you think we in this country can do more to ensure that everyone has daily bread?

Note to Leaders: It is important that members should be induced to read Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in advance of the two studies of that play due in a fortnight's time.

tempted him to this false step the owner will keep the whole transaction secret, and will gladly put him in the way of obtaining money by means more likely to bring him peace of mind." The outcome of this advertisement was that the thief returned the hides under cover of night, was kindly received, fed and encouraged, and next day entered the tanner's employ and became a faithful worker. (See L. V. Hodgkin's *Quaker Saints*, "The Thief in the Tanyard.")

So far we have treated sin and forgiveness as if they were matters between man and man. If this was the whole of the case there would be no need to go to God for forgiveness; we could just settle things among ourselves.

Why go to God for Forgiveness?

Before answering this question we must ask another: Are we to go to God for forgiveness *instead of* to each other? The answer of Jesus on this point is clear (see Matt. 5, 23). We cannot make any approach to God while we are at cross-purposes with our fellow men. Forgiveness between man and man comes first, but it is not enough by itself, and the reason is plain: every wrong we do to ourselves or to another injures some member of the divine family, and concerns the Divine Father; and we need the divine help if the evil we have set going is to be turned into good in any way and so really forgiven. In this prayer we face up to facts, we acknowledge things we have *actually done*, and ask for help from beyond ourselves to meet those facts in the right way.

So much for the past—what about the future? Dare we face it with any confidence? Certainly not with any *self-confidence*. So we go on to pray

"Lead us not into Temptation."

"Lead us, so that we do not fall into temptation" and go under in it, but deliver us from evil. We should all agree that there is plenty of temptation all around us. We may do well to stop and think for a moment what are some of the hardest temptations in our modern life—e.g., for school children, for young men and women, for men in industrial life, for working women at home, for professional men and women, for men in high places in government, etc. Can you imagine any day of any one's life when they are not exposed to some kind of temptation? In solitude or in company it is still the same. Often those who are most confident they are safe are in the most danger, while

"Those who fain would serve Thee best
Are conscious most of wrong within."

The Necessity of Temptation.

"Temptation is not sin. Being attacked is not being defeated." On the contrary, in a certain sense temptation is necessary to our spiritual growth. A child or a man for whom everything is made easy, out of whose path all temptations are removed, will never become a strong character.

Think of some of the finest characters you have known and the temptations they have resisted and overcome. It is the same in the spiritual life as in the physical, some hard exercises must be gone through and risks must be run if there is to be good development. Jesus himself felt the strain of temptation, not once only in the desert but many times during his short and strenuous life. He speaks himself of "my temptations." He knew what it was to feel the spirit willing and the flesh weak. Yet he knew what it was also to be able to be of "good cheer" because he had "overcome the world."

We see therefore that this prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," does not mean we are to escape temptation, but to win our way through it by the help of God. There is no question but that Jesus won his way through by the path of prayer and obedience. "We must rise from our knees and go out into the world, but we must not go out into the world without rising from our knees." Coming then to this prayer with sincere desire,

What answer do we expect to our prayer?**1. *Help and guidance in our personal lives.***

Looking back over our lives can we not see how guidance has come to us? Perhaps we remember it specially in times of crisis and decision, but we know it has come to us also in small things and unexpected little happenings. The lives of the saints are full of instances of wonderful guidance and help in the stress of life. There is evidently a great Source available if we would resort to it more earnestly.

To the man who keeps God before him day and night, every outward circumstance, the ordinary daily duty, and pure accident, contain something which God sends and carries a message from God. There is always *something* in it through which he can receive a blessing, a gift from God, and there is something also which is a demand for service. These are outward leadings. But there is possibility of receiving a look from God which guides, which gives certainty, which warns or gives comfort, or casts a clear light over the path which before lay in darkness. When a man prays, "Father, lead me," it does not mean, "Control the circumstances of my life so well, so favourably, so comfortably as may be," but it means, "Let me go, wherever I go, through whatever Thou leadest, through whatever fearful darkness or

doubt, let me go, led by Thy hand, not thoughtlessly, not selfishly, blind to my fellows around me and to their longing and need, not proud, but humbly, careful of my steps, stern with myself and ever listening for Thy voice." (N. Beskow.)

2. *Readiness to help others who are in need.*

There is no such thing as selfishness in the Lord's Prayer. There is no *me* or *mine*, but *we* and *us*. So when we come to think of the temptations all around us and the need for deliverance from evil, we put ourselves alongside of our fellows and ask for what we *all* need. But prayer is not only asking; it is co-operating with God. We have no right to ask for anything if we are not prepared to work for it also. If we pray, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil," we must see to it that we do our share in the leading of those who are weaker than ourselves, the young, the undeveloped, the weak, the erring; and we must take our share also in the cleansing of the world in which we all live, so that there are fewer poisonous germs for us all to breathe.

"If there be some weaker one
Give me strength to help him on;
If a blinder soul there be,
Let me guide him nearer Thee."

"This prayer rises up to God in heaven but He sends it back to us. . . . We are those who have to lead them: we have the responsibility if they are led astray. It is through us that God desires to lead them, instead of their too often being through us the victims of evil. . . ."

"Always and ever we must be making an effort, so to order our world that our people be not led into temptation; and so to educate them, that, in such temptations as they must meet, they will have God to deliver them from evil."—(*The Wicket Gate*, p. 228.)

"Father, deliver us from evil. Have compassion on the down-trodden and suffering, and waken in our hearts, in all our hearts, a longing not only to be set free from suffering but from the evil of sin and selfishness, hate, lies and impurity."—N. BESKOW.

Questions :

- (1) Which is harder, to forgive or to be forgiven?
- (2) Is it the whole truth when the writer of Ps. 51. 4. says: "Against Thee and Thee only have I sinned."
- (3) In what ways does the *leading* of God which we pray for often come to us?
- (4) In our own neighbourhood and community, who are those most likely to be led into temptation. What can we do to prevent it?

Section VI.
Shakespeare.

NOTES BY JOHN A. HUGHES, M.A.

July 22nd.

I.—THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET (I).

Bible Reading : Psalm 8.

Book References :

- Shakespearean Tragedy.* A. C. Bradley. (Macmillan. 12s. 6d.)
Especially Lecture I. From a library.
Amongst the many authorities on Shakespeare which may be
studied, the following are recommended :
Characters of Shakespeare's Plays. Hazlitt. (Everyman. Dent.
2s.)
Essays and Lectures on Shakespeare, etc. Coleridge. (Everyman.
Dent. 2s.)
Shakespeare: A Survey. E. K. Chambers. (Sidgwick &
Jackson. 7s. 6d.)
Shakespeare's Workmanship. A. Quiller-Couch. (Benn. 9s.) This
contains some interesting and very helpful studies of Hamlet.
Shakespeare. Walter Raleigh. (Macmillan's "English Men of
Letters" Series. 3s. 6d.) A delightful study of Shakespeare
and his works, which is well worth getting.
Shakespeare. G. B. Harrison. (Ernest Benn. 6d.) A capital
little booklet which can be heartily recommended.

Illustrative Quotation : " What a piece of work is a man ! " (*Hamlet.*)

Suggested Hymns : 70, 129, 157, 363.

Aim of the Lesson : To discover something of the meaning of Tragedy,
and the worth of man as revealed in Tragedy.

Notes on the Lesson.

The success of this and the following lesson will depend very largely on members of the class having some knowledge of the play that is being dealt with. Leaders might consider the value and desirability of telling the story of *Hamlet* as simply and graphically as possible right at the outset of the lesson.

1. Our Purpose.

In taking as our subject for two lessons the tragedy of *Hamlet*, we are not only dealing with one of the world's masterpieces in dramatic art, and therefore for this reason worth our study. (*Hamlet*, as a play, has held a foremost place on the stage and in the study in every generation since it was written, both in this and in other countries.) But there is the further fact that in it we are brought face to face with the problems raised by tragedy, and in this lesson we shall try to get to grips with one or two of those problems.

Note.—It has been felt better to confine the discussion in this lesson to the question of the nature and value of Tragedy in itself, without any particular reference to or treatment of *Hamlet*. Every point raised, however, may be illustrated by references to the play, if desired. Examples: the conflict between Hamlet on the one hand and King Claudius on the other, or between Hamlet and his party against the King and his party, and, still more important, the conflict in Hamlet's own soul; the something short of perfection in all the characters which led up to the tragic conclusion; the indecision and the fierce revengeful pride of Hamlet; the weakness of Ophelia; the easy-going nature of the Queen, and her moral insensitiveness; the prating of the worn-out Polonius, whose "plentiful lack of wit" and unstraightforward methods contribute no little to the calamity; the ungenerous revengefulness of Laertes.

2. What is Tragedy?

The words "tragedy" and "tragic" have commonly come to be used in reference to any particularly sad or calamitous event. The death of a child by falling into a fire, the murder of a family by father or mother in a fit of madness, the destruction of cities by earthquake, the death of a mountain climber by avalanche, are described by our newspapers as "tragic events." But however sad, sensational, calamitous or terrible an event may be, it does not strictly rise to the level of being tragic (in the sense in which that term is applied to a particular form of dramatic art) unless there is the element of conflict in it—generally, if not always, of a spiritual nature, and involving issues which touch the soul of man.

"All drama ultimately arises out of conflict." There is a conflict in nature, between Light and Darkness, Life and Death, as witnessed year by year in the case of the sun and of the corn. This struggle was dramatised by the Greeks, and in the form of the mythical history of Dionysus, a Corn-god, in his life-and-death conflict with the Titans, the powers of darkness,

it became the central theme of the earliest form of Greek Tragedy. In course of time other figures occupied the stage, but the conflict still remained the central fact of Tragedy.

In the first instance the "situation is nearly always one of outward struggle: struggle of a man with some force outside himself, as with Orestes and the Furies, or struggle of man with man as with Agamemnon and Clytemnestra" (*Introduction to Dramatic Theory*, Allardyce Nicoll). In the later development of Tragedy, as in the Elizabethan age, there appears "for the first time the conception of an inner struggle moving alongside of an outer conflict, the one mingling with the other" "Thus in *Othello* we have the outward conflict between Othello and Iago, which takes up the attention of the eye; but beyond that there is Othello's own mind, and it is the battle that rages there which has made Othello into a masterpiece of the world's art. In *Hamlet*, similarly, there is the outward conflict between Hamlet and the Ghost, between Hamlet and Claudius, but the real essence of the tragedy lies within the mind of Hamlet himself."—(Allardyce Nicoll.)

Notes (i.) The discussion of this topic is not remote from us, for we ourselves know what it is to have a conflict in our own souls, or between ourselves and others, which, while the issue seems not to be one of life and death, is yet often tragic enough. Can you think of any such conflicts?

(ii.) The value of a stage play lies in bringing the events of ordinary life, and the conflicts involved in them, before our eyes in a graphic and arresting way, so as to move our deepest emotions, stirring and cleansing them, and to make us aware of the "values" of life and enable us to distinguish between things of less and of greater value. We are led to see the workings of the minds of others, and so to see better the workings of our own minds. Life is something that we too readily tend to get used to, so that we miss its beauty, its grandeur and its terror. A great play helps us to correct this tendency. Can you instance this point by any plays you have seen?

Points for Discussion:

- (i.) Illustrate what has been said by reference to some well-known play, e.g., *Saint Joan*.
- (ii.) Imagine, if you can, the factors which would be necessary to turn some merely sad or terrible event into a true tragedy.
- (iii.) Note with reference to what has been said, and discuss: "The play must show the spiritual tumult which in private life we so anxiously conceal."
- (iv.) Are there any events of recent history which seem to you to be tragic in the proper sense of the word? If so, use them to illustrate this section.

3. The Tragic View of the World.

There is a very common misapprehension that tragedy is gloomy ; that it arises out of a gloomy view of life, and that it deals with a gloomy subject in a gloomy way. Therefore many tell us that they " don't like Tragedy." That is very nearly as much as to say that they " don't like Life," for life, in itself, has a tragic quality about it which cannot very readily be denied. Indeed, the whole of what we call evolution may quite truly be described as a series of tragedies (if conflict is of the essence of tragedy). Only an easy optimism—an optimism which maintains itself with difficulty by shutting its eyes to the daily and hourly tragic happenings of life ; which finds too readily that all's well with the world, and which has surely never comprehended the real significance of the tragic death of Christ—only, in short, a superficial view of life, can explain why we " don't like Tragedy."

The following quotation from A. C. Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* raises some of the main problems contained in Tragedy, and may serve to help us, not without a sense of awe, even to delight in Tragedy.

" With Shakespeare, at any rate, the pity and fear which are stirred by the tragic story seem to unite with, and even to merge in, a profound sense of sadness and mystery, which is due to the impression of waste. ' What a piece of work is man,' we cry ; ' so much more beautiful and so much more terrible than we knew ! Why should he be so if this beauty and greatness only tortures itself and throws itself away ? ' We seem to have before us a type of the mystery of the whole world, the tragic fact which extends far beyond the limits of tragedy."

He proceeds to draw attention to the " power, intelligence, life and glory " in the world, and then to the fact that they perish ; and that there is a conflict in the world, " from the crushed rock beneath our feet to the soul of man " ; between things " which astound us and seem to call for our worship " ; a conflict accompanied by pain, and in which things destroy themselves and one another. " Tragedy," he then goes on to say, " is the typical form of this mystery, because that greatness of soul which it exhibits—oppressed, conflicting and destroyed—is the highest existence in our view." His conclusion counts for more to us than even his wonderful statement of the facts, and it is this that we wish chiefly to stress. Tragedy " forces the mystery on us," he says, " and it makes us realise so vividly the worth of that which is wasted that we cannot possibly seek comfort in the reflection that all is vanity."

Do not be dismayed by what Professor Bradley says about the destruction and waste that goes on in the world, and is typified in Tragedy. Rather do what he does : dwell on the worth of what

is wasted—if, that is to say, you agree that it is wasted. But you may disagree, and conclude that there is no such thing as waste in the universe. A very important point crops up there which, perhaps, you may wish to discuss.

4. Tragedy exalting.

We must not confuse Tragedy with a mere tale of horror. Horror in itself can never be exalting, whereas Tragedy is. The reason is that in Tragedy there is always, as we have stated, a conflict, sometimes between the good and the evil, at other times between the good and the less good. (The Tragedy of Christ might be studied as an instance of that.) And because of the issues involved in the conflict, and still further because the issues are embodied in personalities in whom beauty, dignity and courage are displayed, the result upon us is one of exaltation.

We may rise from reading or seeing a Tragedy with our feelings positively harrowed; with our emotions of fear and pity deeply stirred and cleansed; but, as it were embracing and enveloping us, there is a sense of exaltation, of sheer exhilaration maybe, because of the worth of the being or beings engaged in the conflict, and of the whole universe to which these things belong.

Pascal gave expression to this sense of the worth of human nature when he said that even if the whole material forces of the Universe were to crush him, he would nevertheless be superior to them, for he would *know* that he was being crushed, whereas they would not know that they were crushing him. This thought is central to our lesson, and the similarity between it and the main idea of Psalm 8 should be carefully noted. There man's insignificance in comparison with the majesty of God and the magnificence of the heavens is dwelt upon, but then follows the thought of his true nature and quality—he is but little lower than God (R.V.), crowned with glory and honour, and lord over the rest of the living world!

The attitude is similar to that of the Tragedian. Though man be crushed by the powers of fate or circumstance in Tragedy, his worth and dignity only become the more apparent as he is crushed, and we who watch this are made to cry with Hamlet, "What a piece of work is a man!"

Tragedy does not, then, encourage pessimism, but rather the opposite.

- (a) It may paint the universe black; there can be no doubt of the blackness of the background, e.g., in *Leary*. But the blackness is lit up by the magnificent light that shines in the hero and other characters. Or the tragic world may seem to be one of hopelessness, of malignant or careless

Fate. Or again it may seem to our eyes to be a blank. But there is a thrilling fact at the heart of the blank—Hamlet, Lear, Cordelia, Othello—and a blank which has such a fact at the heart of it must be called something other than a blank!

Point for discussion:

The fact of Personality and its value is the basis of religion.

A graphic way in which we can put this point so as to make it comprehensible both to ourselves and to others is to say that in Tragedy the *minus* quantity of the universe (i.e., the pain, suffering and loss) is expressed for us in absolutely stark terms and without any finching; and then with equal honesty and plainness the *plus* quantity of human nature at its grandest is placed there for us to see. (Consider how many of us go wrong in our thinking by not being honest enough to recognise and take account of the *plus* in existence as well as the *minus*; by emphasising, for example, the ugliness of the world at the expense of the beauty, the loss rather than the gain. Any philosophy of life which is going to be worth anything, and which is going to help us, must take account of both. That was Shakespeare's way.)

On this point consider the following beautiful expression (Bradley, p. 38): "Sometimes from the very furnace of affliction a conviction seems borne to us that somehow, if we could see it, this agony counts as nothing against the heroism and love which appear in it and thrill our hearts."

- (b) A second reason why Tragedy may be said to be exalting lies in the fact that it presents us with a world order and an "ultimate power" which are essentially moral in their nature and intention, and which react against anything in the nature of evil. Thus "the main source" (of Shakespearean Tragedy), says Bradley, "is in every case evil . . . not mere imperfection, but plain moral evil." And so, although we find in the characters of Hamlet, Lear, and Othello, much of sheer loveliness, yet the calamity in which each of them is concerned is directly due to some imperfection in them.

Two suggestions arise from this:—

- (i) The "reaction" of the "ultimate power" against evil, says Bradley, "is so vehement and relentless that it would seem to be bent on *nothing short of good in perfection*" (The italics are ours) "and to be ruthless in its demand for it." Test this doctrine by reference to

life as you know it, and to events in history, especially of your own time. Is it true? Or do not many that are not "good" seem to prosper? But perhaps they *are* "good" in some way or other that we fail to recognize.

- (ii.) Evil is presented to us as "something negative, barren, weakening, destructive, a principle of death" and tending "to annihilate itself." Is there no exaltation in that idea? But for this fact there would surely be no order, beauty, health or goodness anywhere; in the course of a generation or two the splendour of the evolutionary process, all the wonderful gains of creation, would be swamped under the growth of something monstrous.

Note: A correspondent writes: "My feeling is that the deaths of these great souls is, in some sort of way, the price which the evil exacts from the good." This is a very important consideration and might be discussed in reference to the "supremest of this world's tragedies—the Crucifixion of Jesus." This is in line with Bradley's remark that evil not only tends to annihilate itself but its opposite—good. Therein surely lies the secret of Tragedy. There would be nothing in it to move us if it were not for the fact that the good is destroyed by the evil. No matter how brightly the light of the human soul shines amid the darkness of Tragedy, yet we cannot forget the fact of the darkness and its cost.

5. Excessive Circumstances : Magnitude.

Dr. Jacks has stated: "In middling circumstances man shows only his middling virtues, and often not even these." (*The Challenge of Life*.) It is with this idea that the Tragedians have always placed their characters in excessive circumstances. (Perhaps "exceptional" circumstances is a term we would prefer.) By this means, using the biggest canvas possible both in regard to the worldly position of the characters involved, the action, the emotions of the characters and their fate, they are able to show in startling contrast what indeed happens daily and hourly in the human soul, but is apt to be lost sight of in smoother and narrower circumstances.

Reference has already been made in the note to Section 2 to the conflicts and tragedies in our own lives. They are frequently on such a small scale that we do not realise their importance. Yet each of these struggles is in its measure one between life and death, darkness and light, and is tragic in its nature and result. Paul spoke of "crucifying Christ afresh." Nothing less than this may be the outcome of some struggle of ours which we, perhaps, think of as petty and negligible. The effect, then, of Tragedy is to thrust the individual back on himself with two questions: "How do I stand in regard to the ability

to face excessive circumstances?" and "How do I stand in regard to the small conflicts and tragedies of my daily life?"

Aristotle used the word "magnitude" to describe the method of painting on a big canvas of life which the tragedians use. Discuss its value.

Note.—The following quotation from H. G. Wells's *Mr. Britling Sees it Through*, bears on the lesson and may help in its elucidation.

"It is so plain to me," said Mr. Britling, "If there was nothing else in all the world but our kindness for each other, or the love that made you weep in this kind October sunshine, or the love I bear Hugh—if there was nothing else at all—if everything else was cruelty and mockery and filthiness and bitterness, it would still be certain that there was a God of love and righteousness."

This will help to make it clear what is meant by the *plus* and the *minus* in the Universe, and the ground which Tragedy gives us for a belief in God.

July 29th.

II.—THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET (2).

Bible Reading : Psalm 8.

Book References :

Shakespearean Tragedy. A. C. Bradley. (Macmillan. 12s. 6d.)

See especially Lectures III. and IV. for a magnificent study of the play, and of the character of Hamlet in particular.

Shakespeare's Workmanship. A. Quiller-Couch. (Benn. 9s.)

Chaps. VIII., IX. and X. A popular treatment of the subject, easily read.

See also Coleridge, Hazlitt and Raleigh (referred to in book list of previous lesson).

Shakespeare. G. B. Harrison. (Benn. 6d.) A brief but good little study will be found on pp. 62-65.

"The Statue and the Bust," Robert Browning's poem.

Illustrative Quotations :

"Hamlet, revenge!"—Old Play of *Hamlet*.

"It is *we* who are Hamlet."—WILLIAM HAZLITT.

Suggested Hymns : 71, 82, 96, 365.

Aim of the Lesson : To understand the character of Hamlet, and the causes of his failure.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Nobility of Hamlet.

We pointed out in the last lesson that what makes Tragedy not only bearable, but actually exalting, is the positive worth, the "value," of the Tragic Hero, destroyed though he may be. It is our purpose in this lesson to see the worth of Hamlet at closer range, and in greater detail.

It might be observed at this point that Tragedy is not concerned with the problem of the *eternal* worth of human personality, but does no more than say to us in effect, "This is what happens, so far as our observation goes, on this side of the Veil. Our concern is not with what may lie in the Beyond." It may quite likely happen—and does happen—that the worth of man as revealed in Tragedy leads us on to speculations

as to his eternal value. But it is not the first concern of Tragedy to prove the truth of immortality to us. If it helps to do that it may be said to be one of its by-products.

Shakespeare's growing concern was with human character, and this concern had two effects. In the first place it led him—as in the present case of *Hamlet*—to concentrate far more on character than on plot. And in the second place it led him to discover, as any loving and inspired student of human nature must do, how much nobility there is in man; and in consequence to give us scarcely a character of which it cannot be said that there is not some element of nobility in it. (It is interesting to compare Iago, for example, with the villain in, say, one of the plays of Webster, a contemporary of Shakespeare. There is a humanity and even greatness about Iago which are not to be found in Webster's villains. (Vide *The Duchess of Malfi*. World's Classics. 2s.)

Let it be stated at the outset that Shakespeare sees nobility where some of us might not so readily see or admit it, and that his idea of nobility might not be ours. On this point Hazlitt says what is true. The "ethical delineations" of Shakespeare are no drab-coloured pictures of morality. "His plays are not copied either from The Whole Duty of Man, or from the Academy of Compliments." Shakespeare, one imagines, would have had little use for that priggish perfection which passes with some of us for the ideal of manhood, and in approaching one of his studies in Man we must be prepared to meet men and women essentially noble, but scarred with imperfections even as we ourselves. In fact, we shall see *Man* in them, and if we have the vision of Shakespeare we shall see them as he saw them and exclaim with him through Hamlet's mouth:

"What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form, in moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!" (Act II., Scene 2.)

Then let us remember that this is written of ourselves! For what Hazlitt wrote is surely most true:

"Hamlet is a name; his speeches and sayings but the idle coinage of the poet's brain. What, then, are they not real? They are as real as our own thoughts. Their reality is in the reader's mind. It is *we* who are Hamlet."

2. What kind of man was Hamlet?

(a) *A lover of the beautiful.* He did habitually what many of us would be the better for doing—let his imagination soar, and filled his mind with a sense of wonder and admiration at what he

saw in the world. We have heard what he thought of man. Let us listen also to what he says of the world in the same passage (Act II., Scene 2).

"This goodly frame, the earth . . . this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire."

As Bradley says, "He had the soul of the youthful poet as Shelley and Tennyson have described it, an unbounded delight and faith in everything good and beautiful." "It is the language of a heart thrilled with wonder and swelling with ecstasy."

(b) *A lover of sincerity.* The play abounds in examples of this. Consider his advice to the players, for example, in Act III., Scene 2, which is a great and splendid plea for sincerity in acting. His bitter and fierce wrath with his "schoolfellows," Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, is largely due to the fact that they are "sponges." He becomes pitiless towards Polonius, and has scarcely a regret for him when he kills him, for he was "too busy" with spying, underground, *diplomatic* ways. Here is Coleridge's description of him: "Poring, maudlin, cunning—slyness blinking through the watery eye of superannuation."

Hamlet himself was of a "free and open nature." His enemy the King, even when plotting for his death, must confess to that, and, to further his plot, actually makes use of Hamlet's known character—"generous and free from all contriving."

(c) *Loving and charming.* Nothing expresses these qualities in him better than a couple of little touches quite at the beginning of the play (Act I., Scene 2, lines 162-3 and 252-3). In the first Horatio speaks:

"Your poor servant ever."

HAMLET: "Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you."

And at the end of the scene:

ALL: "Our duty to your honour."

HAMLET: "Your loves, as mine to you."

Hark how he greets those two "schoolfellows" of his, though with his genius of a mind he instantly afterwards suspects them to be tools of the King: "My excellent good friends."

Or was ever a welcome more charmingly given than his to the Players in Act II., Scene 2? How instantly and frankly he shows his appreciation of them and gives them welcome to Denmark. (The whole passage might well be read.) And then note how he sends Polonius—a statesman, no less—to see them "well

bestowed ; " and when Polonius says he will treat them after their deserts, Hamlet instantly gives this answer :

" God's bodikins, man, much better ; use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping ? Use them after your own honour and dignity : the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty."

Such loving charm issues only from character, and could only be found in one who, like Hamlet, was filled with the sense of the worth of man. " A king and a beggar were all one to him. He cares for nothing but human worth." (Bradley.)

(d) *Much beloved*. Note how the King hesitates to move against him, though he is convinced Hamlet means harm to him. It

" is the great love the general gender bear him "

which holds him back.

There is no friend in Shakespeare's plays quite like Horatio, a man

" that is not passion's slave,"

who had knit himself to Hamlet, as Hamlet to him since his

" . . . dear soul was mistress of her choice."

How tenderly Ophelia loved him, with how complete a knowledge of his graces !

(e) *A man of intellect*. Without entering much into particulars, let it be noted how he towers over all the other characters in the play. For example, note especially his terrific and biting irony, which is coupled with a clear-sighted knowledge of all those about him. Hark to this on the King (Act III., Scene 4, lines 96ff):

HAMLET : " A murderer and a villain ;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithes
Of your precedent lord ; a vice of kings ;
A cut-purse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket ! "

QUEEN : " No more ! "

HAMLET : " A king of shreds and patches. "

Or look at the passage between him and his schoolfellows (Act III., Scene 2), especially the famous passage about the recorders (a kind of flute). Or for irony and insolence combined, showing his utter contempt, look at his passage with the King (Act IV., Scene 3), beginning :

KING : " Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius ? "

3. The man as a whole.

To what does all this amount? Hamlet is sometimes played as a gentle, sensitive youth, "a kind of neurotic undergraduate," one that "shrinks from everything gross and earthly." All that can be said about this is that there is no warrant in the play for it. Hamlet is, as Bradley says, "a heroic, terrible figure." "This shrinking, flower-like youth—how could he have possibly done what we see Hamlet do?"

"His obvious and insolent contempt for the King, his impetuosity when he first sees the ghost, his slaying of Polonius . . . his ruthlessness in disposing of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern . . . his ferocity when he kills Claudius, stabbing him first and then forcing the poisoned cup between his lips . . ." (HARRISON).

These are not the doings of a man who thinks too much to act, as Coleridge would try to persuade us. He is a man who, by the force of his mind and the manifold graces of his genius, has won for himself a splendid place amongst his fellows. Remember how Ophelia describes him:

"The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers." (Act III., Scene 1.)

4. What made Hamlet hesitate?

Why then, did such a man—athletic and master of fence to boot—hesitate to put into effect the behest of the Ghost? "Hamlet, revenge!" cried the ghost in the old play of Hamlet which Shakespeare knew and on which he worked (probably the work of Kyd, the author of the *Spanish Tragedy*). Why did he hesitate then to revenge in Shakespeare's play?

This question still occupies the commentators, and we cannot hope to find a full answer. One or two points, however, may be noticed:

(a) Hamlet is suffering from a sickness of the world. He who loved man so much, delights not in man when the play opens. And all because "within a month" (note the number of times he repeats the phrase in his first soliloquy in Act I., Scene 2; and note also that this repetition of words and phrases is a kind of fascinating habit of his) his mother had married the brother of his dead father. To one who loved man so much it was a shock that went to the roots of his nature to find his own mother so frail and fickle. Imagine ourselves in the same situation, called to an act requiring force and initiative, overborne by such a world sickness from a similar cause; and say whether we might not have found ourselves with the same kind of subconscious loathing and revulsion from the

task laid on us—apart altogether from any question as to the right or wrong of it.

(b) The history of the drama of this period shows a gradual change of mind in regard to the question of the rightfulness of revenge. It took time for men to learn that there was something nobler. Was there, behind all the self-questionings and self-spurrings of Hamlet, an unconscious revulsion against the very idea of revenge? A careful examination of the play would show whether this idea holds good or not.

(c) Whether because of his world-sickness, or his unconscious turning away from the idea of revenge as a sacred duty, it should be noted that, after the appearance of the Ghost in Act I., Hamlet breaks out:

" The time is out of joint ; O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right."

Goethe found the clue to the problem of Hamlet in these words, and Bradley says: " Hamlet, I venture to affirm, was a man who at any *other* time, and in any *other* circumstances, than those presented, would have been perfectly equal to his task." Such is fate, he says, bringing us the one problem fatal to us, and just when we are least fitted to face it.

The bearing of Browning's poem, " The Statue and the Bust," is too clear on this point not to be noted. Or, as it is put by some one else in more homely language, " Do *summat*. Do good if you can, but do *summat!*"

" You are Hamlet."

Section VII.**Life's Common Interests.**

NOTES BY N. MARY GILLMAN.

Introductory Note.

THE following lessons deal with subjects on which every member of our Schools will have opinions. They therefore afford an opportunity for getting as many as possible to take part and for this reason the questions suggested for discussion are simple and straightforward, and related to individual knowledge and experience. It is hoped that the series will help people to give more thought to the commonest actions, including pleasures, which occupy so much of our time. If we can realise the wonder of the world around us, in the natural creation, in man himself, and in the work of his hand and brain, life will become infinitely richer in meaning than we had ever imagined.

August 5th.

I.—HOLIDAYS.

Bible Reading : Psalm 104. 1-34.

Book References :

- The Open Road.* E. V. Lucas. (Methuen. 6s.)
The Lore of the Wanderer. A collection of essays and sketches on out-of-door life by many writers. (King's Treasuries Series. Dent. 1s. 4d.)
Essays of Travel. R. L. Stevenson. (Chatto & Windus. 1s. 6d.)
The Open Air. Richard Jefferies. (Wayfarer's Library. Dent. 1s. 6d.)
 Essay, "On Coming Home," in *Many Furrows*, by "Alpha of the Plough." (Wayfarer's Library. Dent. 1s. 6d.)
 Essay on "Walking," in *Clio, a Muse, and other Essays*, by G. M. Trevelyan. (Longmans. Out of print.)
 Poem by H. van Dyke, "God of the Open Air," in *Music and other Poems*. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)
 Poems by W. C. Braithwaite: "Bank Holiday" and "I have escaped," in *Verses*. (Limited number of copies on sale from N.A.S.U. 2s. 6d.)

Suggested Hymns : 258, 259, 352, 410.

Aim of the Lesson : To appreciate the full value of a holiday.

Notes on the Lesson.

Why have a Holiday ?

This lesson might start by getting one or two members to describe :

- (1) "The best holiday I have ever had."
- (2) "How I should most like to spend Bank Holiday."

Answers to these questions might tell us something about the kind of holiday we enjoy most. Generally it is one that provides us with the greatest contrast to our ordinary life. We think of a holiday as a time of relaxation and enjoyment, and we find this desire rooted in a fundamental need of our natures—the need for change. Nature soon protests if we try to keep on doing the same thing for more than a certain length of time, and people who do not take sufficient rest from their daily work soon become both physical and nervous wrecks. The story of the Creation in

Genesis suggests that even God required rest after his great work of Creation.

Industrialists have discovered that a man cannot do one job for more than a certain period without becoming tired, and therefore less efficient. So modern methods in industry seek to eliminate fatigue by providing rest-periods at regular intervals, and have found that people can produce more in eight hours than in ten, and in a five-and-a-half day week than in one of six or seven days.

Times have changed since Scrooge grudgingly granted Christmas Day to poor Bob Cratchit as his only day's holiday in the whole year, and holidays are very different from when they were confined, as the word still implies, to "holy-days," i.e., religious festivals such as are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, and which were features in this country until the Reformation. Now it is not uncommon for factories to close for a week in the summer, and to work only five days a week. Lord Avebury (Sir John Lubbock) bequeathed a lasting blessing to his fellow-countrymen when he induced Parliament to fix Bank Holidays; while the advent of the bicycle, the motor, cheap week-end railway fares, etc., have made the week-end a regularly recurring holiday during a great part of the year for many people. Whatever we may feel about "Sunday trippers," we shall at least agree that the health of the nation has greatly benefited by the opportunity of more fresh air, and easier access to the open country.

Question : What do you think is the best way of spending the weekly half-holiday ?

The Essentials of a Holiday.

Question : What do you think are the essentials of a good holiday ?
(A list of suggestions might be made on the blackboard in answer to this question.)

We shall all agree that the first essential of a holiday is a real change from our ordinary lives. That is why we go away from home, and seek a change of air and scene. But other changes are needed as well. We ought to mix with people we do not meet every day, or we tend to become narrow-minded, limited in ideas, and irritable with each other. If we sometimes spend our holidays away from the people we live with the rest of the year, we find we learn to appreciate each other all the more for our separation. On the other hand, family holidays provide leisure for busy parents to join in their children's games and other interests, and so to get to know them in a way often impossible at home.

Questions :

- (1) Do you agree that it is a good thing for husbands and wives, and parents and children, sometimes to spend their holidays apart?
 (2) Why is a co-operative holiday often so specially enjoyable?

There are also, however, times when we need to be alone—a fact too often forgotten in the rush of our crowded cities. To be alone in the vastness of the hills, or by the sea, with no distracting voices to call us from our dreams, is a tonic we all need, and only an empty mind is bored with its own company. In solitude, among the eternal things of the universe, the cares and worries that often loom so large assume their rightful places, and we attain a saner, calmer outlook on life. Some great essayists who have written on walking—Hazlitt, Stevenson, Trevelyan—say that a walking holiday, to be really appreciated, must be spent alone, and, whether we agree with this or not, we should all do well to see that our holidays provide us with some leisure for ourselves, as well as with the uplift of good fellowship with others.

“ Away, away, from men and towns,
 To the wild wood and the downs—
 To the silent wilderness
 Where the soul need not repress
 Its music lest it should not find
 An echo in another's mind,
 While the touch of Nature's art
 Harmonises heart to heart.”

(From "The Invitation," by Shelley.)

Change of Occupation.

Holidays imply cessation of work, to which we look forward eagerly, and yet many people (if they would only admit it!) are bored on their holidays. "Alpha of the Plough," in an entertaining essay, "On Coming Home," suggests that the "main purpose of a holiday is to make us home-sick," returning the more content to our homes and work. How far do you agree with this idea?

Some do not enjoy their holidays as much as they might because they have not learned the art of leaving their cares behind them, and others because they have never learned how to occupy their spare time. Those who have a hobby such as photography, or an interest in old churches, welcome a holiday as a chance of pursuing it. But those who have no time or inclination for hobbies in the ordinary course of events, may find an unexpected delight in attempting, however badly, to do something new—*e.g.*, to sketch, or to collect wild flowers. Even a change of amusement is a good thing on a holiday.

Holiday reading should also provide some variety. We may then spend less time with the newspaper, and more with authors

we love, and in making fresh acquaintances in the world of books. We all have differing tastes in reading, but one suggestion may be made to those who never read poetry, that they may find it appeal to them as never before if they read some simple Nature poetry where it should be read—out of doors. A collection such as "The Open Road" is admirable for this purpose. Some of R. L. Stevenson's or Stephen Graham's travel sketches, or Richard Jefferies' beautiful descriptions of the teeming life of the countryside, may enhance our enjoyment of the beauties of Nature.

Question : What three books would you recommend to a friend just starting on a holiday to take with him ?

G. M. Trevelyan says of walking, "There is no orthodoxy in walking. It is a land of many paths and no-paths, where every one goes his own way and is right," and this might equally well be applied to holidays in general. We can only offer suggestions to each other. Our needs and tastes vary, and the primary thing is to enjoy our holidays, or they will do us little good. A tired mother does not want long tramps, and she certainly should have freedom for a few days from constantly planning meals. Many young men and women, cooped up in an office or factory all the year round, long for the freedom of camp-life. Some have found the most lasting refreshment at a summer school, where fresh ideas have been gained, and friendships with kindred spirits formed.

The Lasting Benefits of a Holiday.

Sometimes we say that the best parts of a holiday are planning it beforehand, and talking about it afterwards. Certainly a holiday should provide us with a wealth of happy memories, and then, if ever, we ought to have time to impress beautiful sights on our minds. Photos, sketches, collections of wild flowers, etc., all help in keeping these memories alive.

We expect to gain renewed vigour on our holidays, and our minds should be re-invigorated, too. It has been a poor affair if we do not do our work more thoroughly and cheerfully because of it. We should return home with a wider outlook on life, and a keener interest in it, through having seen fresh places and met different people.

The inspiration of Beauty, whether in Nature or old buildings or works of art, and the joys of comradeship, should re-invigorate our whole beings and make our lives of greater inspiration to others.

Question : In what measure can these benefits be attained in a day's holiday ? (All that many people get.)

Holiday-makers and the Community.

Even holiday-makers cannot escape from social duties, such as shutting gates behind them, avoiding walking through hay and crops, destroying the remains of their picnics, and restraining their desire to root up every rare plant they find, or to leave their initials on every place of historic interest that they visit. Many owners of parks, old castles, etc., refuse to open them to the public because they are afraid of damage that may be caused.

Question : How far do you think such an attitude is justifiable ?

If we are fortunate enough to have enjoyed good holidays, we ought to remember that many people never get a holiday in their lives. Dr. Grenfell of Labrador, when a young man, loving out-door life, found an added zest by sharing his enjoyment on holiday with lads from the East-end of London. Those who have short holidays cannot be expected to spend them in this way, though perhaps more of us who are young and active might follow his example. But all have a responsibility as citizens to aim for the time when no man, woman or child shall be deprived by poverty from knowing the benefits of a holiday.

Question : Can your School do anything to help give someone a holiday who scarcely ever has one ?

(The reading of H. Van Dyke's poem, " God of the Open Air," or of one of W. C. Braithwaite's poems mentioned above, would make a fitting conclusion to this lesson.)

August 12th.

II.—THE NEWSPAPER.

Bible Reading : Proverbs 8. 1-21.

Book References :

- The Public Mind.* Norman Angell. Especially Chap. VI. (Noel Douglas. 7s. 6d.)
 "The Pious Editor's Creed," from *The Biglow Papers.* J. Russell Lowell.
 Essay on "Lord Northcliffe," in *Prophets, Priests and Kings.* A. G. Gardiner. (Wayfarer's Library. Dent. 1s. 6d.)
 Copec Report on "Politics and Citizenship." Chap. V., "Christianity and the Press." (Longmans. 2s.)

Suggested Hymns : 5, 337, 338.

Aim of the Lesson : To understand something of the importance of the newspaper.

Notes on the Lesson.

A Marvel of Modern Life.

Of all the wonders of the modern world, none is greater or more far-reaching in its consequences than the newspaper. Do we ever feel like Lowell, when we pick up a paper, that we hold "the ends of myriad invisible electric conductors, along which tremble the joys, sorrows, wrongs, triumphs, hopes, and despairs of as many men and women everywhere"?

Try to imagine a world without newspapers, as it was in the Middle Ages. Then people knew scarcely anything of the world beyond their own horizon. Occasional travellers brought news of happenings in the outer world, but for the most part men and women lived in their own small sphere, busy with their own affairs, unable to enter into any of the great problems which faced their rulers.

Now contrast our experience to-day. We pick up our daily paper, and read what has happened in all parts of the world only a few hours previously, become familiar with leading men of all nations (even with their peculiarities of dress or diet), follow conditions of trade the world over, order our goods from great cities, however far distant we live. The modern newspaper is far more than its name implies, merely the conveyer of news. It

aims at being indispensable to everyone, a clearing-house for information by its question bureaux, of social benefit through pensions schemes, etc. (e.g., the "wireless for hospitals" effort), the leader of popular movements, such as community singing, a safety-valve for the aggrieved through correspondence columns, etc.

Presently we shall speak of certain dangers of the press, but if wisely conducted it may be a great influence for social betterment. To take an example from U.S.A., *The Ladies' Home Journal*, under the brilliant editorship of Edward Bok, was responsible, among other achievements, for inaugurating an attack on patent medicines, which resulted in an Act for their regulation; ran a scholarship scheme for higher education; and, through a "question and answer department" for young mothers, advised, in the first ten years, over 40,000 prospective mothers, whilst winning the approval of the medical world which originally opposed the idea.

Question : Can you give other examples similar to these, or suggest ways in which newspapers might be of real social benefit ?

The newspaper keeps us up-to-date with the world as it is, informs us of the trend of thought and public opinion, helps us to form our own opinions on all kinds of complex problems, helps to bind us together as a town or nation by keeping the thought of the community constantly before us. (The General Strike of 1926 reminded us how much we rely on our papers.) Its importance as a public platform is expressed in this statement by Dean Inge : "It becomes more and more worth while to address people through the Press than to talk to them by word of mouth."

How we get our Newspaper.

This revolution in man's outlook is very wonderful, and no less wonderful is the way in which this result is attained day by day. Some members of the class may be employed in, or have visited, a newspaper printing works, and might briefly describe the process. An up-to-date machine produces papers at the rate of 250 copies per second, converting fifty to sixty miles of paper into a day's edition in two or three hours, a copy of which is delivered at your door hundreds of miles away, only a few hours later.

Even more wonderful is the collection of news itself. To-day this is mainly done by news agencies, who are in touch with every part of the world by telegraph, telephone and wireless, while every paper employs its reporters for gaining first-hand information. And all this mighty network of services is at our disposal for a penny !

Influences behind the Newspaper.

Many people, when they read the paper, think they are getting all the essential news, that the biggest type indicates the chief items, and that a statement must be true because "it's in the paper." But many influences determine what news we shall or shall not read, and how we shall read it, even though the actual news bulletins from the central agencies is the same for every paper.

(1) *The paper's particular bias*, i.e., the constituency (businessmen, sportsmen, etc.), for which it is written, or the political party to which it is attached. News must be selected which will most appeal to these readers, and be treated so as to give the most favourable aspect of their point of view. This is done in many subtle ways, e.g., use of headlines and pictures, way in which news is written up, omission of part of an item of news, the clue that an editorial—however brief—gives to the readers' thoughts, etc. To see the truth of this, compare copies of two papers of opposed views on the same day, or remember that during the war the same event on the Front was described in totally different ways in England and Germany.

(2) *Financial interests are predominant*. With the growth of great combines of newspaper proprietors, the amount of capital required has become immense and competition keener. Local as well as national papers are bought up, and the day of the individual newspaper owner is rapidly passing.

Question : Do you think this change in the ownership of papers is an advantage or not ?

Advertisements have become a dominant factor, for it is these that determine a paper's success or failure, and that enable us to buy sixpennyworth of news for a penny. The aim is always to get the widest circulation possible among the most likely consumers.

Any method of increasing circulation, and therefore income, must be adopted to make a paper pay, hence free insurance coupons, competitions, betting tips, etc. It is an indictment of our society to-day that no newspaper can hope to succeed without racing news.

Question : To what extent do you think newspapers foster betting and gambling ? (Consider not only racing tips, but all forms of competitions, etc., that offer "something for nothing.")

(3) *Public Opinion*. So far we have mainly considered the influence of the paper on us, but in reality we have an equally powerful influence on the press. We say the press creates public

opinion, but actually a process of reaction is constantly going on between the two. The most successful editor gauges the popular sentiment at the psychological moment, responds to it, and so stimulates it still further (and incidentally gets the biggest circulation); e.g., hatred of Germany during and immediately after the war was fanned constantly by tales of atrocities, etc., in the press. It was said of Lord Northcliffe, "He had the common mind to an uncommon degree." Perhaps this can in some measure account for his unprecedented success as a journalist.

What do I want from my Paper?

Here consider quite frankly what we as individuals really want from our newspapers. If possible, take a "census" of the School, getting members to answer questions such as the following:—

- (1) How much time per day do you spend reading the paper?
- (2) Do you read one paper, or more, regularly?
- (3) What decides your choice of a paper?
- (4) What do you turn to first on opening your paper?
- (5) What features do you never read?
- (6) (For a Women's School) Do you find the Women's Page useful to you?

(If members can be got to answer these on paper prior to the lesson, and the results summarised on the blackboard, they will furnish most instructive material for this lesson.)

Answers to any such questions would be very varied, but would reveal certain common qualities—e.g., usually we like a paper that bears out our own opinions, deals fully with subjects which interest us most, presents news in what we consider the easiest form for reading, provides variety of interest, deals with personalities more than abstract problems. It is often some minor point (e.g., fashions, a serial story or crossword puzzle) that decides our choice of a paper.

Question : Does ONE AND ALL provide you, as an Adult School member, with what you want?

(A practical outcome of this lesson would be to forward suggestions and criticisms of this paper, over which all Adult School members have some control, to the Editor.)

The Press and Democracy.

"The thing which gave him the power of a statesman had nothing to do with statesmanship." This statement of Norman Angell's concerning Lord Northcliffe voices the danger of the

popular press. People who enjoyed Northcliffe or Bottomley, or any other writer, because of the way they wrote about football, or the latest divorce scandal, gained their judgments on matters of grave political import from the same source, and in a democratic country, with a universal franchise, to drift on in this way must lead to chaos.

What is the way out? There is no simple answer, though many solutions may be suggested. One essential is that the journalist should realise the grave responsibility of his calling. Lowell compares his position as equal in importance with that which the clergyman should hold in society, "the Moses" of our present age, who should "be the captain of our Exodus into the Canaan of a truer social order." He needs—and so do we as part of "the public"—to learn the reverence for wisdom expressed in our Bible reading to-day.

The only sure way, as for so many problems, lies along the uphill path of education. Our present educational methods (for rich and poor alike) do not develop sufficiently our reasoning faculties, the power of detecting truth, and of judging for ourselves. As individuals we should seek to develop these powers by exercising them as much as we can, and the Adult School offers us a splendid training-ground. We can practise their development when reading our daily paper. If we want to get nearest to the truth we must read with discrimination, and with an open and critical mind, and also sometimes read a paper of an opposite opinion, or one of the few more sober-minded journals (even though dearer and duller!) that tries to give both sides of a question. [It might be worth while sometimes to go without an evening paper for a week, and buy a weekly review of this character instead.] The more truly educated we become, the more equipped our minds, the more critically shall we receive other opinions, and the more carefully form our own.

It will have been seen that the thought of principle—of sticking to an opinion because it is true, whether popular or not—is by no means essential for a successful newspaper at the present time. This will only be altered as we change our values, and admire a man not because he agrees with us, but because he has the courage of his own convictions and honours truth above popularity.

Question : Can you suggest other ways by which the public might help to raise the present level of the Press?

August 19th.

III.—THE CINEMA.

Bible Readings : 1 Kings 10. 1-13; Phil. 4. 8.

Book References :

Great and Small Things, by Sir E. Ray Lankester. Essay on "Science and the Film." (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)

The cinema is so new an institution that there is as yet very little literature on the subject. An interesting series of articles on how to get better films, by Robert Nichols, appeared in *The Times* for August 27th to September 5th, 1925, and can be seen in Reference Libraries. Articles frequently appear in the newspapers, dealing with the subject from many points of view.

Suggested Hymns : 243, 390.

Aim of the Lesson : To understand the appeal of the cinema and how the present standards might be raised.

Notes on the Lesson.

A New World, and a New Language.

This week's lesson deals with another marvellous development of the modern world, as amazing as that of the press. With greater leisure-time, amusements have taken a far greater part in people's lives, and none is more popular than the cinema. No less than the newspaper, it has widened our horizon. When the Queen of Sheba heard of wonderful things she journeyed many miles to see them with her own eyes. To-day the wonders of distant places and famous men are not restricted to kings and queens, but the poorest in the land can, in a couple of hours, travel round the world, soar into the air, dive into the depths of the sea, watch people of all races at work and play, see contemporary events just as they happened, and look at pages from history more real than any written book. Here also is a new universal language, as easily understood by the most primitive as by the most civilised. Hollywood issues its films in over thirty languages, but the universal appeal of the eye, and the common instincts of mankind, transcend speech. Is this a fresh and powerful means of international understanding? We should take warning from the fact that the East is gaining many of its ideas of the West from the film—not always to our advantage.

You cannot pick up a newspaper without finding some reference to the cinema, sometimes so prominently that, as Norman

Angell says, "When Mary Pickford or Charles Chaplin comes to London the history of Europe seems to stop."

In 1927 the average attendance at cinemas in the British Isles was stated to be about 8,000,000 persons per week. In U.S.A., where in 1925 eighty per cent. of the world's films were produced and consumed, and where the trade ranked as the fourth most important industry in the country, the attendance must be many millions more than here. Surely we should try to understand what this form of amusement means to such vast numbers throughout the world.

Why do you go to the Pictures?

Try to get members of the class who attend the pictures to answer this question. People have different reasons. Some go just because it is the fashion. Lack of imagination or opportunity prevents some from devising more variety in the spending of their leisure. Many young people go because nowhere else can they be as warm and comfortable at so low a cost. They are crowded out of their small homes; at least it keeps them from the streets and the public-house. Probably at bottom everyone goes so as to escape for a little while from the dull realities of existence into a world of romance, excitement and laughter.

This desire not only finds expression in the cinema, nor is it anything new, for, however fortunate, men have always tired at times of their fate. Day-dreams afford one means of escape; so do novel-reading, poetry, music, the drama, etc. But all these demand some effort; the cinema scarcely any. The eye receives impressions more quickly and surely than any faculty, so, by the nature of its appeal, the cinema offers the easiest way of escape, not even requiring us to conjure up a picture in our minds, either of our own imagining, or from the spoken or written word.

Question : Do you think the cinema gives as lasting satisfaction as a means of escape from reality as any other way? Is it the way you choose?

What do you get?

Now consider whether we are satisfied with what we get when we go to the cinema. It would be useful if members could supply information such as the following :

- (1) How many Picture Houses are there in your town?
- (2) Which is the most frequented, and for what reasons?
- (3) What were the chief films shown during the past week?
- (4) If you saw one of them, was it the kind of film that satisfied you, or could you suggest any improvement?

The melodrama is the most popular type of film, always ending with the defeat of vice and reward of virtue. We enjoy it because this result, so contrary to human experience, fulfils our dreams of a better world. Comedy is, of course, popular because as we laugh we forget our troubles. It is a strange paradox that the film world, which appears so real by its mobility, is at the same time intensely unreal, because in nearly all pictures shown at present there is tremendous exaggeration of wealth and poverty, vice and virtue.

Questions :

- (1) What do you consider the best film you have ever seen ?
- (2) What feature in a cinema programme do you most enjoy ?

The Effects of the Cinema.

There is a close analogy between the press and the cinema in many respects. Both have to please the least educated, to exploit the most primitive instincts and passions, and demand what St. John Ervine calls "the lowest common denominator of intelligence." Hence the predominance of sex-interest, and the crude form of humour, displayed in the most popular films. Opponents of the cinema often speak of the immorality of films, but far more are merely childish than definitely bad.

When we remember the regularity with which so many people go to the cinema, we may well ask how they are being affected.

A Commission set up a few years ago by the National Council of Public Morals to investigate the whole question of the influence and possibilities of the cinema, stated in their report that "no social problem of the day demands more earnest attention."

We should remember that many find their lives are only bearable because they escape each evening into an imaginary world. Occasional visits to the cinema may be a mental stimulant, and a good film is as worthy of appreciation as a good play or a good book. But constant feeding on excitement must lead to instability of mind; the small amount of intelligence demanded, to lazy thinking; and continual living in an unreal atmosphere blinds people to the needs of real life. The "film-fan" is constantly applauding low ideals of life, for the cinema at present does not attempt to reveal the inner meaning of life in all its aspects, tragic as well as happy, which should be the aim of all art. Instead, happiness is the end of all things in the movie-world, and consists in winning your girl, your car, and a fortune. Life is envisaged in "Possessive rather than creative terms."

The Commission referred to above calculated that about ninety per cent. of the elementary school children of this country, between eight and fourteen years of age, frequent the pictures.

Children are often sent to the pictures to be out of the way, but parents should try to discover how they are being affected, perhaps by sometimes accompanying them, so that they may at least exercise some control over the films their children see. The above effects must be far greater on a child's impressionable mind than on a grown person's, and even worse must be the moral effect of growing accustomed to seeing crime and bloodshed applauded as noble.

Questions :

- (1) Can you give any instances from your own knowledge of the way in which people have been affected by the Pictures?
- (2) What kind of films do you think are most suitable for children?

The Possibilities of the Film.

Though present conditions may be unsatisfactory, we must not be blind to the immense possibilities. Fine films, such as "Ben Hur," are usually well patronised, showing that people appreciate a good thing when they see it. If cinema proprietors were more courageous in the choice of films, and refused to pander to the lowest in man, they might be surprised at the response.

The use of the cinema as an aid to education, both in schools and out, is only just beginning to be realised, and may have a great future before it.

Questions :

- (1) Do you think it would be a good thing to introduce more "Educational Films" (e.g., nature study, League of Nations, history, etc.) into cinema shows? Do you think these are appreciated at all by regular cinema-goers?
- (2) Do you attach any value to the use of the film as a means of religious instruction? (as practised in certain churches).

We must remember that the cinema is young, and it is unfair to expect too much yet. Unfortunately it is mainly considered by those concerned as a business proposition (cf. the press again) whose importance has even led to government regulation. "Art for Art's sake" is not yet the ideal of most film actors or producers, whose colossal fortunes present a striking contrast to the struggles for a bare existence of many of the leaders in the older arts. The cinema needs more artists who care for the excellency of their medium more than for pecuniary profit. The artistic possibilities of the film, entirely different from anything else, have as

yet scarcely been guessed at, but one day perhaps the cinema will have its Shakespeare, and then who knows what may happen !

Raising the Standard.

In the case of definitely bad films, or unsuitable performances advertised specially for children, we as citizens, either individually or in groups such as our Adult Schools, could use our influence more by protesting to cinema proprietors. A more positive way would be by supporting good films ourselves, and encouraging others to do the same. In U.S.A. the organisation of women's clubs (a very influential body) publishes lists in local centres of recommended films, making no mention of others being shown. The fact that "those who go to the Movies don't criticise, and those who criticise don't go," is hindering progress that might be made.

The heart of the problem of how to get better films lies in the need for a better public. We get what we demand, both in the press and the cinema, and at present the demand is from the least educated and thoughtful portion of the community. It is said that the policy of Hollywood is dictated largely by the "hicks and seedsmen" (i.e., small farmers and labourers of the backwoods). So once again we come back to the way of education as the only hope of raising the present standards. A mind awakened to the glory and interest of life will be no longer satisfied with crude plots, vulgarity and stupidity, but will demand films that re-invigorate as well as amuse, and that, along with the highest achievements in every art, make men more sensitive to beauty, and able to enter with greater understanding and sympathy into the joys and sorrows of human experience.

In conclusion, read Phil. 4. 8, and try to imagine what a transformation would take place if all cinema-goers, and all those engaged in the film industry, resolved to "think on these things." Perhaps the greatest contribution we as individuals can make to the solution of the problem is by endeavouring ourselves to attain to this ideal.

Question : Can you suggest any other ways of helping to raise the present standards ?

August 26th.

IV.—OTHER PEOPLE.

Bible Reading : 1 Cor. 13. 1-7.

Book References :

The Jesus of History. T. R. Glover. Chap. VI. (S.C.M. 2s. 6d. and 4s. 6d.)

The Man Nobody Knows. Bruce Barton. Chap. III. (Constable. 3s. 6d.)

Essays, "On saying 'Please'," "Those People Next Door," "Ourselves and Others," in *Many Furrows*, by "Alpha of the Plough." (Wayfarer's Library. Dent. 1s. 6d.)

The Road of Life. George Peeverett and Ernest Dodgshun. (N.A.S.U. 6d.)

Suggested Hymns : 17, 284, 349, 353.

Aim of the Lesson : To realise "the interest, the importance, the mystery of the lives that are round about us."

Notes on the Lesson.

The People We Meet.

We are all interested first in ourselves, and then in other people. We like discussing them—what they do, what they wear, what they say. We often feel annoyed with them, and yet none of us could get on without them, except on a desert island. The world is so planned that none of us "liveth to himself," but we depend almost every minute of our lives on what other people are doing.

Think of all the people we meet every day of our lives, those with whom we live and work, those we meet in the street, or on trams and buses, with whom we deal in shops, and who deliver goods at our doors—milkmen, postmen, errand boys, etc. We must come into touch with hundreds of other people every year, however secluded a life we may lead. Beyond that there are hundreds more on whom we depend, in all corners of the earth, who supply us with our daily needs—food, coal, clothes, light, etc.

How do we regard these people, particularly those whom we meet every day? They are often rather a nuisance—they get in our way when we are in a hurry, disturb us when we want to

be quiet or are busy, make a litter just when we have tidied up, want to amuse themselves in such noisy and foolish ways. Except for our chosen friends, it is very easy to think of other people as being in our way, preventing us from doing the things we enjoy.

Or do we think of other people as existing merely to supply our wants? Positions of power often make men think of others as mere pawns in their games of politics or business or pleasure. But all of us may easily think of them in terms of their usefulness to ourselves—e.g., the porter exists to carry my bag, the shop assistant to sell me what I want, etc.

When we have to deal with people in the mass, in the workshop, office, school or other institution, it is fatally easy to think of them entirely in general terms. Half of the present discontent in industry arises because people are not considered as individuals—they are even known by a number instead of by their real names. It is impossible to obviate this tendency altogether, but in E. Richard Cross's words, "We want more and more to give up treating persons as if they were things and to feel the interest, the importance, the mystery of the lives that are round about us."

The Attitude of Jesus.

Perhaps we can be most helped by seeing how Jesus regarded other people. We read of him as constantly surrounded by crowds, but if he ever got tired of them, he never showed it by word or look. "He had an all-embracing fondness for men." Even when he sought quiet and they followed him, "He had compassion on them." Nearly all his teaching was stories of what people did. Perhaps he found them so interesting that he could not help liking them and talking about them.

Most of us make a circle in our minds, outside which we do not have more to do with people than we are obliged. But Jesus treated the poor woman who touched him in the crowd with as much consideration as the rich ruler to whose house he was going (Luke 8. 41-56); he was taunted with being the friend of outcasts and sinners, and yet was invited to dine with influential Pharisees (cf. Luke 5. 29-32, and Luke 11. 37); he talked with despised foreigners as freely as with his own disciples (John 4. 5-30); took as much trouble for little children as for learned men (cf. Luke 18. 15-17, and 18-25); had time for a worrying old beggar, when his mind must have been filled with the critical days before him in Jerusalem (Luke 18. 31-43). Notice how many people mentioned in these references (and many more in the Gospels) were chance passers-by—people Jesus saw once and

probably never again. Life was changed for many because they happened to meet Jesus on a walk or at a dinner-party. Think of the people whose lives have crossed yours for a few brief moments this week—fellow-travellers in a railway carriage, children playing in the street, a hawker at the door. How did you treat them? With trust, courtesy, consideration? Or did you have as little as possible to do with them?

"One of the surest marks of greatness, of course, is accessibility and the appearance of having an unstinted allowance of time," says Bruce Barton. This was certainly one of Jesus' chief characteristics, as it has been of all truly great men—e.g., St. Francis, Abraham Lincoln.

Questions :

- (1) Why do you think Jesus treated people in the same way, irrespective of station, nationality, etc.?
- (2) Why did Jesus think it worth while to be at leisure for individuals?
- (3) Can you give any instances from your own experience of the difference a chance meeting has made to your life?

Getting the most out of People.

Is this the kind of attitude we are adopting? Life would be much more interesting and amusing if we really interested ourselves in people, tried to understand their ways, and to get to the bottom of what they said. (This does not mean being a "busy-body," who meddles in other people's affairs, when not wanted, out of mere idle curiosity.) How many of us can say:

"As we meet and touch each day
The many travellers on our way,
Let each such brief contact be
A glorious, helpful ministry."

The most exciting thing about other people is that you never know what they will do next. We sometimes say, "I never thought he could do that!" which shows how little we know of the hidden possibilities in the most ordinary folk. Sometimes we feel aggrieved with our friends because they seem to underestimate our powers; perhaps we are under-estimating theirs no less. We have all met people in whose presence we feel at home at once, and who make us feel that our ideas, however paltry they may usually seem to us, are worth attention. How do they manage it? They have what T. R. Glover says Jesus possessed, "The gift of discovering interest in uninteresting people," and

they discover it, not in any studied way, but just because they are so charming to us that we cannot help being our best. Their manner is the outward expression of the belief that

" There's no one to whom's not given
Some little lineament of heaven."

Questions :

- (1) Are some people born with charm, and others not, or is it a quality everyone can cultivate ?
- (2) What other qualities are required for getting the most out of people ?
- (3) Do you think it was the fact that Jesus believed in people that made them do things they had never dreamed they were capable of doing ? (c.g., Peter).
- (4) How far ought we to consider other people's feelings and opinions in determining our actions ?

The Way of Friendship.

The attitude we adopt towards others has a tremendous influence on our own personalities. The person who is always finding fault, criticising, pulling other people to pieces, repeating gossip, becomes bitter and cynical, and no one trusts him. A possible friend may easily be lost by a "clever" remark. The attitude of Jesus was one of charm, of "graciousness," and it is those who follow his way that grow like him. We only get the most out of others as we give our utmost to them.

Read again the Bible passage for to-day, if possible Moffat's rendering, especially of verses 4-7. Here is a perfect picture of a gracious personality, that might have been drawn direct from Jesus. Yet the fruits of a loving spirit here portrayed seem very small things—being kind, modest, polite, patient, believing the best about people, etc. Translated into actual life they simply mean not getting annoyed when someone interrupts us, not harbouring resentment when someone else is elected to an office we coveted, not turning round and saying, "I told you so"; remembering the little things that matter so much to someone else—to be in time for meals, to visit a sick friend, to answer a letter, to remember a birthday, etc. These things seem so trivial that we often think they are not worth bothering about. Yet they are, as "Alpha of the Plough" says, "the little courtesies" which "keep the machine of life oiled and running smoothly," or in Wordsworth's words, "The charities that soothe and heal and bless." So often we will do what we must for people, but no more. Can we sometimes go the second mile ?

The passage in Corinthians says that Love is the only effective thing in the world. The term is so familiar that we are in danger of thinking we know all about it, when perhaps we have only a dim, abstract notion. We can only hope to understand it as, with Jesus, we take the way of friendship in all our relations with other people.

" Let me live in my house by the side of the road,
Where the race of men go by.
They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong,
Wise, foolish—so am I.
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban ?
Let me live in my house by the side of the road,
And be a friend of man."

(S. WALTER FOSS.)

Question : Has the Adult School (or any other group) helped you, and how, to learn the art of living together ?

Section VIII.

The Web of Life.

NOTES BY ALICE ROBSON, B.Sc.

LAST year, in a series of lessons called "The Ladder of Life," we looked at a few of the different forms in which life is manifested on this planet, and thought of them as rungs in the ladder leading from the simple, single-celled animal or plant up to the complex, many-celled bodies which are more familiar to us.

In the course which follows we are to see some of the ways in which these very many different forms of life are linked together and are dependent upon one another. "None of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself," said Paul (Rom. 14. 7), and this is true of insects, birds, beasts and plant life as well as of man. Life is like a web made up of countless threads crossing and re-crossing one another.

A few illustrations are given in the notes which follow. For further study, a useful small book is Margaret and J. A. Thomson's *Threads in the Web of Life* (Macmillan. 2s. 6d.). The *Outline of Science*, edited by Prof. J. Arthur Thomson (Newnes), is well worth consulting in a library, especially Chap. XVIII., on "Inter-relations of Living Creatures." Prof. A. Dendy's *Animal Life and Human Progress* (Constable. 2s. 6d.) will also be useful.

September 2nd.

I.—THE WEB OF PLANT LIFE.

Bible Readings : Matt. 6. 28-30 ; Is. 32. 13-20.

Book References :

Outline of Science. Chap. XVII. Ed. J. A. Thomson. (Newnes. From a Library.)

Threads in the Web of Life. J. A. Thomson. Chapter XIV. (Macmillan. 2s. 6d.)

Chapters in Modern Botany. Geddes. (Murray. 6s.)

Suggested Hymns : 263, 403, 448.

Aim of the Lesson : To look at a few of the ways in which plants influence one another.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Bible Readings.

At the beginning of April there is in Palestine a great outburst of flowers ; daisies, poppies and anemones are especially abundant, only to disappear in May for lack of rain. Why is it worth while to consider—to study—such a brief life as this ? Some of the plants mentioned in these notes are much less worthy of consideration on account of beauty, but we can know much more about " how they grow " than was possible nineteen hundred years ago. One of the most interesting lines along which botanists have worked in recent years has been the study of the linkages which exist between one plant and another ; associations and partnerships on the one hand, parasitism on the other.

The reading from Isaiah illustrates a very frequent occurrence ; a slight change of conditions in soil, climate, etc., leads to a great change in the character of the vegetation in that place.

2. Succession.

One form of plant life frequently prepares the way for another which succeeds it. At many seaside places, the *marram* grass is found growing a little above high-tide mark. It grows in large coarse tufts, and by its runners and plentiful roots it binds the loose sand together. It has great vitality, and even if it should be buried by a sand-storm, it will reappear at the surface before long. On the sand bound together by the *marram*,

we find sea-holly, rocket, wild sea-kale, rest-harrow, with its pink pea-like flowers, and then shrubs like bramble, dewberry, and the little cream-coloured wild rose. Each of these plants, beginning with the marram, helps to bind the sand into firm ground and to enrich it with the products of its own decay, so that in time other vegetation can flourish there.

On the other side of the world, between Java and Sumatra, is a small volcanic island called Krakatau, which in 1883 was the scene of a terrific eruption. The green forest-covered island was converted into a lifeless desert covered with a layer of ashes anything from 90 to 200 feet thick. Three years later, a few ferns and flowering plants had already established themselves there. Now the island is fully clothed with forest again. It was found that the first colonists had been members of the very insignificant family known as Blue-green Algae, which prepared the way for mosses and plants of a larger growth whose seeds or spores were carried by the wind or by birds, or washed to the shore by ocean currents.

3. Competition.

Look at the numbers of little parachutes floating away from a dandelion "clock," each carrying with it a potential dandelion; at the vast numbers of seeds produced by some of our garden flowers like delphiniums and poppies. Think how many seedlings have to be artificially thinned out. In nature, the more vigorous plants stifle the less vigorous ones. "Every single organic being may be said to be striving to the utmost to increase in numbers; each lives by a struggle at some period of its life; heavy destruction inevitably falls either on the young or old" (Darwin, *Origin of Species*, Ch. III.). Competition, though most severe between individuals of the same species, takes place also between plants of different kinds, and the battle is not always to the strong. In wet places on heather moors, the *bog-moss* sometimes fills the pool and grows over the margin, stifling other kinds of plants under its wet blanket. On the Pennine moors there are tree-trunks buried beneath many feet of wet peat formed by the decay of the *bog-moss* which must once have crept up to the trees and spread over their roots till it killed them.

4. Association.

In many woodland areas the bluebell or wild hyacinth seems to have everything its own way. But after the blue mist of flowers has faded, the wood will be green with bracken, and in the winter and early spring the soft grass will carpet the ground. Are these plants competing? It has been shown not only that each of them flourishes at a different season of the year, but also that their

root-systems occupy different layers in the soil. The grass is lightly rooted in the leaf-mould on the surface of the soil, at the time of most active growth is the late winter and early spring. The bluebell, flowering in May, has its bulbs deeply sunk, while the bracken's underground stems occupy an intermediate layer. The bracken fronds are seen as tightly-curved croziers among the bluebells, and by the time they are fully expanded the bluebell seeds are ripening in their shade.

5. Partnerships.

Around the roots of beech and other common trees a network of fine threads is often found; these have been shown to be of a fungoid nature, like the white threads in a block of mushroom "spawn." Apparently the tree and the fungus have established some kind of partnership with one another, the fungus enabling the tree to make use of some decaying substance as food which without this help would be of no use. The moorland *heather*, which grows on soil too poor and sour for most plants, is also provided with a fungus partner, which in this case sends its threads all through the heather plant, root, stem, leaves and seed-vessels, and seems absolutely indispensable, for heather seedlings grown in a pure sterilised culture-solution will not develop roots until they are infected with the right fungus. It seems to be a case of the heather providing lodging and protection while the fungus increases the food supply.

Lichens, the little plants which form grey, green and orange splashes on rocks, old walls and roofs, and hang down like grey beards from the pine-trees in Switzerland and elsewhere, are very interesting examples of a permanent partnership between two very simple forms of plant life—a fungus and a little green water-weed or Alga. (Seaweeds are larger kinds of Alga.) Sections of these plants, examined under the microscope, show the colourless threads of the fungus mixed with the green cells of the Alga. These latter, being green, can, like all self-respecting green plants, build up food substances from the raw materials of air and water under the stimulus of sunshine. The fungus partner, nourished by the products of the Alga's activity, supplies in return water and salts. The result of this partnership is that lichens can live in the most unpromising places, and one of them, the "reindeer moss," is the chief kind of vegetation in polar regions.

6. Parasitism.

Though many of the fungi live on dead wood or something no longer alive (e.g., the jam and bread on which various moulds thrive), there are others that are only able to live on other living plants. The big bracket fungi often seen on the trunks of trees

w : comparatively harmless examples. The black spots seen on pea-
 more leaves in the autumn, and the mildew of rose-trees, are
 caused by parasitic fungi. Another one causes seedlings that are
 kept too moist to "damp off," and one nearly related caused the
 potato disease that brought famine to Ireland in the middle of
 last century. The *rust disease* of wheat is caused by a fungus,
 part of whose development goes on in the leaves of a totally
 different plant, the barberry.

But not all plant parasites are fungoid; some of the
 aristocrats of the plant world have adopted this easy way of getting
 a living. The *Mistletoe* is only a partial parasite. Its leaves and
 stems are green, and it can therefore manufacture starch for
 itself, but its water supply is gained from the tree on which it
 perches and into which it sends suckers. Several pretty little
 wildflowers such as the *eyebright*, *yellow-rattle* and *cow-wheat* are
 also partially parasitic on grass-roots. A complete parasite is
 the *Dodder*, often found on gorse-bushes. It has no root,
 practically no leaves—just a tangle of reddish stems and bunches
 of pink flowers. When the seed of the dodder germinates, it has
 at first a tiny root, but this quickly withers away, as the thread-
 like seedling moves round in a circle until it strikes a willow-twig
 or some other possible host.

7. Miscellaneous Linkages.

These include the protection afforded to seeds and seedlings
 through the winter by the covering of last year's leaves; the
 breaking down of these by the action of bacteria, so that they
 become available for the food supply of a new generation; the
 climbing and perching habit which enables many weak-stemmed
 plants to get a better supply of light and air by making use of
 other plants as props.

NOTES FOR LEADERS.

The foregoing notes suggest only a few of the many examples
 that might be given of the ways in which plants are linked together,
 and in some Schools there will be members who can open the lesson,
 from their own knowledge, on different lines, illustrating it from
 the plant life in the neighbourhood of the School.

There may be Schools in which nobody feels competent to do
 this. If so, do not hesitate to read the notes, stopping here and
 there to see whether anyone has noticed the sand-binding plants
 on a seaside holiday, the bog-moss, bilberry and heather on a
 moorland walk, or what are the first plants to appear on a derelict
 rubbish-heap.

September 9th.

II.—LINKS BETWEEN PLANTS AND ANIMALS.

Bible Readings : Is. 40. 6 ; Joel 1. 2-12 ; 2. 1-10.

Book References :

Joel, Nahum and Obadiah. Translated into Colloquial English. (N.A.S.U. 9d.)

Insectivorous Plants. Darwin. (Murray. 7s. 6d.)

The Formation of Vegetable Mould by the Action of Earthworms. Darwin. (Murray. 7s. 6d.)

Suggested Hymns : 116, 260, 408.

Aim of the Lesson : To see some of the relationships between plant and animal life.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. "All Flesh is Grass."

Consider for a moment the truth of these words. All animal life is dependent for its food upon the activity of green plants in air and sunshine ; the flesh-eating animals live upon grass-eating beasts ; even in the sea the starting-point of the food-supply is found in the microscopic green plants, "the meadows of the sea," in the surface layers of water, which are building up food substances as the land plants do, from the same raw materials of air and water. The first link to notice is therefore that of *food*. Normally, the balance is kept ; the birds, beasts and insects do not eat more than the vegetable world can supply (cf. Ps. 104. 14). Our reading from Joel shows us an exception. Plagues of *locusts* are still known and dreaded. In South Africa a locust swarm may have a frontage of fifteen to twenty miles and a length of sixty to seventy miles, taking several days to pass a given point. The trees on which the insects settle at night are sometimes broken by their weight, and even washing hung out to dry has been eaten. The vivid description in Joel should be read, if possible, in the modern translation issued by the N.A.S.U. What made this plague so terrible was that it was repeated—four successive swarms came. "What the first swarm of locusts left cut and broken, the clouds of the second attack have

obliterated. What these left, the third swarm has lapped up, and what the lappers left the succeeding swarm has devoured."

Note the reference to darkness and trembling in Joel 2. 10. Eye-witnesses describe the darkening effect of these millions of insects, and the quivering of their wings which seems like a trembling of the sky itself.

(N.B. Try to avoid discussion here of methods of control of these insect plagues, as these will be dealt with in Lesson IV.)

Turn now to our own country and try to think of all the vegetable-feeding birds, beasts and insects you know, and then try to realise how great must be the effect on the vegetation of this constant cropping. Darwin tells (*Origin of Species*, Ch. III.) of a barren heath near Farnham (Surrey) of which several areas were enclosed. After a few years Scotch firs had sprung up in multitudes within the enclosures, and yet none had been sown or planted. On looking closely between the heath stems on the open ground, he found innumerable tiny fir trees, sprung from seed which had blown from some old tree clumps not far away; but the cattle had browsed so closely that none of these had had the chance to develop. One little dwarf tree showed by its annual rings of growth that it had for twenty-six years been trying to get its head above the heather and had always failed.

2. Animals as Seed-carriers.

So far we have seen only the exploitation of the plant kingdom by the animal. There is, however, another side. It is of real advantage to a plant, fixed in the ground by its root, that its seeds should not fall into the earth close at hand, and in many cases animals are the means of seed-dispersal. The fondness of birds for fruit is a trial to the fruit-grower, but a gain to the fruit-tree, for the seeds of currants, blackberries, etc., pass uninjured through the bird's food-canal and are thus widely distributed. The *Mistletoe* seeds are carried from one tree to another in this way. Even on their feet birds often carry seeds; Darwin's partridge (*Origin*, Ch. XII.) is the classical example. The seeds of *broom* and *gorse* bear a small patch of oily substance greatly beloved by ants, which often carry the seeds considerable distances, dropping them by the wayside when they have eaten their particular tit-bit. *Sheep* are the unconscious carriers of many hooked fruits and seeds. Town-dwellers might note the flowers that spring up in vacant sites and waste places. How did the seeds get there?

3. The Conveyance of Pollen.

We all know how insects, and especially bees, visit flowers for the sake of their nectar and pollen. It is well worth while to

look at some of the common wild-flowers and see how impossible it is for the bee to get the nectar without at the same time getting well dusted with pollen so placed that it will be brushed off by the stigma of the next flower visited. The club-shaped masses of pollen of the wild *orchids* are particularly fascinating, with their habit of bending forward after they have been withdrawn from the flower, even if one has stolen them with the point of a pencil. Sometimes the insect gets the better of the flower, as in the purple *bell-heather*, where the bells are nearly always found bitten through by the bee, which has got the honey without carrying the pollen in return.

4. Some complicated Linkages.

The common *Red Clover* contains enough honey to taste sweet even to our palates, but the flower-tubes are so long that only the *humble-bee* can reach the nectar and carry the pollen, which must be taken from one flower to another if seed is to be set. The nests of *humble-bees* are often ravaged by *field-mice*, which eat the grubs. Now *field-mice* are hunted by *cats*, and in the neighbourhood of villages, where there are more *cats*, fewer *field-mice* are found and therefore more clover and a better pasturage for the cattle.

Certain *Acacia* trees of South America are liable to be attacked and greatly damaged by *leaf-cutting ants*. But in the large hollow thorns which have given the tree its name of the *Bull's-Horn Acacia*, another kind of ant lives, which issues forth to do fierce battle with the *leaf-cutters*, and sometimes drives them away. The tree seems to provide food as well as lodging for its standing army in the shape of *honey-glands* and little drops of oily substance on the leaves. But this web of life has still another thread. For long it was not known what the *leaf-cutting ants* did with the pieces of leaf which they carry away in their jaws, looking like an army carrying green banners, for they were never seen to eat the leaves. Then it was found they stored them in underground burrows and that on the leaf-mould a fungus grew, on which the ants' young were fed.

5. Plant Diseases.

Many of the commonest diseases which trouble the farmer, gardener and fruit-grower are of animal origin. The common *greenfly* or *aphis* is a menace for more than one reason. Not only does it prick the young leaves and shoots to suck out the sap, but the beak with which the prick is made contains two pairs of grooved needles in two canals, and, while sap is sucked up one, saliva flows down the other, and the *greenfly* is under strong suspicion of conveying disease from infected to healthy plants in this way.

Also, the stickiness with which the greenfly is surrounded makes a good medium for the growth of fungoid diseases.

Many kinds of trees are attacked by *beetles* which bore into the wood. In one of these, the female beetle bores a tunnel horizontally into the tree-trunk, with small vertical tunnels opening from it. In each of these she lays eggs, and closes the end with a wad of damp sawdust. Through the walls of the tunnel the sap oozes, and on these damp walls a fungus grows, almost filling the burrow. Then the mother beetle removes the wads, the grubs come out and eat the fungus, the spores of which were carried in by the mother when she first bored into the tree.

6. Insectivorous Plants.

A few plants, such as *Sundew*, *Butterwort* and *Bladderwort* in our own country, and the Pitcher-plants of warmer lands, have reversed the usual order and have taken to a meat diet. This is a fascinating side-line of study (see "Book References" above).

7. Tillers of the Soil.

A very ancient partnership exists between plants and the humble earthworm, which, in seeking its nourishment from the soil, helps the plant also seeking its nourishment, in part, from the soil. "Worms prepare the ground in an excellent manner for the growth of fibrous-rooted plants and for seedlings of all kinds. They periodically expose the mould to the air, and sift it so that no stones larger than the particles which they can swallow are left in it. . . . The plough is one of the most ancient and valuable of man's inventions; but long before he existed the land was in fact regularly ploughed and still continues to be ploughed by earthworms." (Darwin, *Vegetable Mould and Earthworms*.)

September 16th.

III.—THE WEB OF ANIMAL LIFE.

Bible Reading : Psalm 105, 26-36.

Book References :

Threads in the Web of Life. J. A. Thomson. Chapter X.
(Macmillan. 2s. 6d.)

Outline of Science. Ed. J. A. Thomson. Chapter XII., Section 7;
Chapter XVIII. (Newnes. From a Library.)

Suggested Hymns : 143, 378, 410.

Aim of the Lesson : To see some of the ways in which different forms of animal life are linked together.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Egyptian Plagues.

The short summary given in Ps. 105 of the series of disasters which preceded the Israelites' departure from Egypt (told more fully in Ex. 7, 7-11) is a very suggestive reading for our subject to-day. If we try to trace the events as they happened, and to see in them not a series of special miracles but a natural sequence, we are not trying to undermine belief, but rather to transform (in the words of Hastings' Bible Dictionary) "an unreasoning 'faith in the impossible' into a faith which recognises the 'finger of God' in everything."

In June, the River Nile rises, and the water is often discoloured by fragments of vegetable matter. By August it is sometimes dull red and evil-smelling. If this was what happened, the death of the fish was a likely result, and a mass of decaying matter would collect, suitable for the multiplication of frogs; these are normally most plentiful in Egypt in September. Next would follow mosquitoes, bred in the dirty pools by the river. The murrain, mentioned in Exodus but not in this Psalm, was probably some disease spread by the mosquitoes. After hail and thunderstorms—rare in Egypt, but sometimes occurring in January—a strong east wind brought locusts, which stripped the vegetation. A malignant epidemic was the final disaster; in the light of modern knowledge of the ways in which disease is carried, this was very probably insect-borne.

2. Nutritive Chains.

This is the name given to the long series of dependences of one creature on another for food.

"Animals eat plants or other animals, or, in some cases, what plants and animals have made, e.g., fallen leaves and stored honey. In any case, there is a continual circulation of matter from one embodiment to another. There is an endless cycle of incarnations. The cod-fish eats the whelk, the whelk devours marine worms, worms feed on the sea dust—meaning by that the microscopic organisms that swarm in the waters." (J. A. THOMSON in *Outline of Science*.)

Sometimes we can see one of these chains joined into a circle. William Beebe, in *The Arcturus Adventure*, a book which describes a recent voyage of discovery in the Pacific Ocean, says of the "sea-soup" of the uppermost layers of the water, "we saw what must have amounted to many, many tons of these minute beings—diminutive crustaceans, both adult and larval, the myriad species of jellyfish, and pelagic mollusks, worms, larval fishes, single-celled animals such as those which light up the sea at night, and my jolly little friends, the flying snails. Where these are gathered together in numbers, there will the self-determined fish be, tiny little chaps who dash about and feed upon the living soup of the sea. These, in turn, attract middle-sized fish, and these still larger ones. This would seem like a straight line—a linear chain of life, but it is, in reality, a great segment of a curve, the circle being completed when one of the great marauders dies, and furnishes food, not only for his former victims, but for the minute creatures that he would have disdained as nourishment."

The numbers of tiny animals in the sea are simply overwhelming. In a trawl-net of one yard in diameter, the result of an hour's trawling from the "Arcturus" was "a rich pink jelly," estimated, by careful dividing up and counting the creatures in a very small fraction of it, to contain over forty million individual living animals.

3. Partnerships.

We have probably heard of the lion and its attendant jackal, or the shark and its pilot fish. In the Hawaiian Islands there is a crab which "takes up an anemone in each claw and goes about with it, using the anemones after the manner of boxing-gloves, holding them up in a defensive attitude when alarmed, and also stealing from the anemone much of the food which it captures. The crab seems to be dependent upon the anemones but the anemone is not dependent upon the crab; and the status

of the former would appear to be one of servitude rather than of partnership. In other cases, more commonly met with, an anemone lives on a shell which is inhabited by a hermit-crab . . . and here there does seem to be partnership, both animals deriving benefit from their association." (*Discovery*, April, 1925.)

There is a plover living on the banks of the Nile which is known as the crocodile-bird, because it perches on the backs of crocodiles, picking leeches from their hides and sometimes even taking fragments of food from between their fearsome teeth. The crocodile probably gains some advantage, because the birds are very lively and observant, and always cry out when any danger threatens.

4. Dependence.

Between partnership and parasitism are found many grades of dependence of one animal upon another. Thus the fresh-water mussel is nearly always found to have certain mites upon it; these are not true parasites, but have just got into the habit of living on the food supply which the mussel is constantly sweeping within its shell. The mussel itself is dependent upon another animal for the bringing up of its children. Its eggs are produced about midsummer, but are retained in a special brood-chamber, and the tiny larvæ which hatch out are not allowed to escape until early in the following year, and then only if a small fish, such as a minnow, comes swimming slowly past. If this happens, the larvæ, no bigger than pinheads, are set free, and some fasten on the fish, and are carried about by it while they are growing and developing. After some time they drop off into the mud.

While the mussel's young are handed over to the minnow, there is another fish, called the bitterling, which pokes its eggs inside the mussel, and they develop in its gill-chamber.

5. Parasitism.

The greenfly, mentioned in last week's lesson, is a creature which, left to itself, would increase at an appalling rate. But among its many enemies is a wasp-like insect (*Aphidius*) which chooses a good fat aphid in which to lay a single egg. After a few days a grub hatches out and begins to feed at its host's expense. At first the greenfly does not seem to be inconvenienced, but it is finally killed, and the parasite, still in the greenfly's body, spins its cocoon and goes into the chrysalis stage, coming out as a perfect insect three weeks later. That is, if all goes well, for this parasite is itself subject to attack by a hyper-parasite, which lays its egg in the *Aphidius* larva already inside the greenfly. It is amazing that this little insect (*Charips*) can

wander about among a host of greenfly and select the one which is already parasitised even while it looks no different from the others.

The life-history of the *liver-fluke* is a good illustration of the way in which threads cross in the web of life. It is a parasite about an inch long, which causes the disease known as "liver-rot" in sheep. Its eggs are shed on to the ground, and if the pasture is well-drained and dry, they probably die. If they get into a pool of water, they hatch out and from each egg a larva escapes and swims about for a few hours. If during that time it comes across a water-snail, it makes itself at home at once, but nothing else will do, and unless it finds a water-snail within eight hours it dies. Further development takes place within the snail's body and at the snail's expense. As it dies, the larva escapes, usually on to grass, again running the risk of being dried up. If, however, the grass is damp, there is a good chance for the larva to exist until a sheep comes along and nibbles the grass, parasite and all. Once inside the sheep's body, the larva grows into an adult liver-fluke and lays its eggs, and the whole process begins over again. Another chance of failure for this creature, which, for a parasite, takes an extraordinary number of risks, is that its snail host may be eaten by a water-wagtail—a reminder of the importance of birds in preserving the balance of nature.

September 23rd.

IV.—NEW PATTERNS IN THE WEB.

Bible Readings : 1 Sam. 5. 6-12 ; 6. 1-11.

Book References :

- Insects and Man.* C. A. Ealand. (Grant Richards. 15s.)
The Book of Samuel. Translated into Colloquial English by Dr. Skinner. (N.A.S.U. 1s. 3d.)
The Control of Life. J. A. Thomson. (Melrose. 7s. 6d.)
Keeping up with Science. E. E. Slosson. (Cape. 10s. 6d.)

Keynote of Thought : Ps. 8. 3-8. (R.V.).

Suggested Hymns : 257, 313, 412.

Aim of the Lesson : To see how humanity influences, and is influenced by, other forms of life.

Note to Leaders : The Bible Reading had better be deferred until Paragraph 5 (a) has been considered.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. Man and the Forests.

Have you ever thought how many of our place-names suggest that this country was once much more thickly clothed with trees than it is now? Manufacturing villages with names ending in "thwaite" were once clearings among the trees; "royd" was a place that had been "rid" of trees; and Derbyshire has many names into which "ash" enters, the ash being the commonest tree in limestone districts. Why should men cut down trees? A few suggestions follow, and others might be given. (a) To make room for crops, (b) to lessen the danger of wild-beast enemies, (c) for military reasons—cf. the Roman roads in this country.

What are the results of tree-felling without re-planting? The leaves of a tree, always cool and evaporating moisture, tend to cool and moisten the wind which blows over them; in a warm climate the effect of this is to increase rainfall. The ground under trees is cooler and moister than if it were exposed, and when rain falls it is more easily absorbed. When trees are cut down, the soil tends to become hard and caked on the surface, and the rain runs over it, carrying stones and rubbish, grooving deep channels and sometimes filling up and choking river-beds. In Italy, the cutting of the Apennine forests some 500 years ago resulted in

the drying up of pastures, the flooding of the river Arno, and the choking of the harbour of Pisa by the gravel carried down. Now there are miles of unhealthy marshes between Pisa and the sea, and no harbour for even a row-boat to shelter in.

2. Man and the Birds.

One example may show what great change may result from a very small amount of human interference. A colony of black-headed gulls established itself on a Scottish moorland.

"In 1890, the Moss was a typical heather moor, with peat and moisture underneath. In 1892 or 1893, a few pairs of gulls came to nest on the Moss, and were encouraged; in 1897 there was a populous colony; in 1904 the number was estimated at 1500 to 2,000 pairs. The vegetation round about the colony underwent a remarkable change; the heather was replaced by coarse grass, and that by rushes, and these by a forest of docks. . . . The peat bed with its concealed and deep moisture was transformed into a surface marsh. . . . The grouse that used to frequent the moor took their departure. Teal ducks arrived, attracted by the marsh and the rushes. . . . Fifteen years passed, and the scene was changed. Man interfered again. . . . The villagers were disappointed because the coarse grass they had been wont to cut had been replaced by useless docks. The proprietor . . . was disappointed because the grouse had gone. So the edict went forth against the gulls. In the early summer of 1917 scarcely a gull was to be seen; the docks had almost disappeared; the rushes were giving way to rough grasses and even to heather; the teal had gone and the grouse were returning. In a few years a slight imprint of man's hand had set in motion a complicated cycle of changes."

(*Outline of Science*, Chap. XVIII.)

3. Man and the Beasts.

Two examples where human interference has turned out badly:

(a) Towards the middle of the nineteenth century some of the settlers in Victoria, Australia, kept tame *rabbits*, and one man turned a number loose. There seems to have been for a time a fashion in rabbits, and couples for breeding were in demand. But very soon their rapid multiplication (rabbits can produce four to eight families a year) and the absence of their natural enemies, resulted in a plague of rabbits, on whose numbers trapping, poisoning and hunting produced little impression.

(b) The *mongoose*, imported into Jamaica by sugar planters to keep down the rats which were infesting their estates, soon cleared off the rats and since then has nearly exterminated lizards, harmless snakes and small birds, so that insect pests abound.

4. Man and the Insects.

In 1869 an American professor was experimenting with various kinds of moths, hoping to produce by cross-breeding an insect which would resist a silkworm disease then prevalent. Among his specimens was the European gipsy moth, and some of them escaped. Twelve years later the district was ravaged by caterpillars. They dropped from the trees on people walking down the street; they invaded houses, food and beds; they completely stripped the trees of their leaves. They were the caterpillars of the gipsy moth, and since then much money and ingenuity have been spent in trying to conquer the pest.

5. Human Disease carried by Animals.

(a) *Plague*. Our Bible reading records an outbreak of bubonic plague, thought by the Philistines to be magically brought upon them by the presence of the sacred ark of the Israelites. So they were very glad to get rid of it, and it is significant that the golden emblems they prepared to appease the wrath of the god they supposed they had offended represented not only the plague swellings ("emerods") but also the mice which had at the same time ravaged the country. We know now that plague is caused by a microscopic parasite which spends part of its life in human blood and part in that of the rat, and that it is conveyed by the bite of a rat-flea. It is not likely that the Philistines knew of any connection between their two plagues.

(b) *Malaria and Yellow Fever*. Many students believe that the downfall of ancient Greece was due to the malaria which sapped her population, and there are great cities in India to-day whose human population has given place to wild beasts from the same cause. Both malaria and yellow-fever are caused by minute parasites that spend part of their life in human blood and part in that of the insignificant mosquito whose bite spreads the disease.

(c) *Infantile Diseases* are very commonly spread by the house-fly, which, with its evil habit of walking over filth and good food quite impartially, is responsible for conveying the germs not only of typhoid and cholera but also of those digestive diseases of which so many babies die in hot weather. In Cairo, in 1909, 3,000 babies died in two months, just after there had been an unusually large increase in the number of flies.

6. The Fight against Human Disease.

The knowledge of the part insects play in the spread of many diseases has made it possible to exercise control. This possibility was proved by some very brave experimenters. In 1900,

Drs. Sambon and Low went to live in the malaria-haunted Roman Campagna. They took no special precautions as to diet; they kept their windows open to the night air, believed to be specially harmful; but they kept the door and windows of their hut screened by wire gauze, and their beds curtained by mosquito netting. They both remained perfectly well, though the people of the neighbourhood told them they were courting death. At the same time a number of healthy young mosquitos were collected, allowed to bite hospital patients suffering from tertian fever (a mild form of malaria), and then sent to London, where two men, Manson and Warren, had volunteered to allow themselves to be bitten. The mosquitoes had their meal, and both men duly developed the fever.

Similar experiments were carried out to prove that yellow fever was conveyed by mosquitoes; there were men who volunteered to sleep in beds in which fever patients had lately died, while others allowed themselves to be bitten by infected mosquitoes. Some of these latter gave up their lives in this search for truth. The result has been that many places, formerly shunned as impossible for habitation, have become comparatively healthy. In Havana the deaths from yellow fever used to average 750 a year. In 1907 only one case was reported. The cutting of the Panama Canal, long ago abandoned as hopeless because of the death rate among the workers, has been accomplished by the help of such precautions as screening the houses, burning long grass near dwellings, draining pools or covering them with paraffin, punching holes in all old tins so that water cannot collect in them, and fining people who neglected to cover their water-tubs or allowed any water to stand about in which mosquitoes might breed.

Question: Can you suggest any similar measures we might take against the house-fly?

7. Control of Plant Diseases.

(a) *Chemical Control.* The American cotton crop is damaged by the boll-weevil to the extent of £60,000,000 annually. By dusting with calcium arsenate it is possible to check the plague. Recently the dusting has been done from aeroplanes, which in a few hours can dust an area which would take days to cover in any other way. 30,000,000 pounds of calcium arsenate were used in 1922, and much more is needed. An electrical process is employed to produce it, and for generating the current waterfalls are used. The boll-weevil flourishes in a wet season, but now the very rains which it enjoys will swell the waterfalls which work towards its destruction.

(b) *Biological Control.* If the natural enemy of an insect pest can be found, the lost balance of nature may be restored. A good instance is the "cottony cushion scale" insect, which damages orange and lemon trees in California. In 1889 the growers, in despair, sent a man to Australia, believed to be the home of the pest, and he found that the scale insect was there kept in check by one of the little beetles known as ladybirds. Novius, the ladybird, was taken to California and soon cleared the trees. Now it is reared at Sacramento for use in future emergencies, and the scale insect on which it feeds must be reared too. "We have quite a sight at the insectary now:" (1910) "over a ton of ladybirds boxed in 60,000 lots each, in screened cases, and in our own cold storage. We handle them in large cages, run them into a chute, and handle them like grain. They are for the melon-growers of the Imperial Valley."

8. Production of New Varieties.

(a) Consider any common fruit, e.g., *apple*, and count up the varieties, each with its own distinctive flavour and qualities of "keeping," cooking, etc., that you know. If possible, get some one keen on fruit-growing to tell you how these varieties have been produced. The grafting of fruit trees is in itself a good illustration of the way in which man has taken control. The work of Luther Burbank in producing such things as pipless oranges might be considered here.

(b) *Potatoes* are, for the purpose of the plant which bears them, underground storehouses of reserve food, which enables the buds for the following season to develop quickly. Since man found its usefulness, the potato has undergone many changes in size, time of ripening and the ability to resist disease.

(c) *Wheat* has been from very early times exploited by man, and its productive capacity enormously increased. Since the re-discovery in 1900 of the forgotten work of Mendel on inheritance, much work has been done in crossing varieties of wheat together with the object of producing new strains which can resist such diseases as the "rust" mentioned in Lesson 1., and in the direction of earlier ripening. If a new variety can be produced which ripens only ten days earlier than most, the farmers of Canada can push the area of cultivation some miles further northward in spite of earlier autumn frosts. Think how each discovery widens the boundary of human dwelling-places; is it not a fulfilling of the assertion of Psalm 8 that man can control the other forms of life on the earth?

Section IX.

**The Universal Appeal of
Christ (I).**

NOTES BY JESSIE M. WETHERED AND W. ARNOLD VICCARS.

Introduction.

JOHN'S Gospel is the starting-point of most of our lessons for the year. We may have wandered often beyond earshot of his voice but we have hardly strayed beyond the circle of his philosophy, for it is a very wide circle. We may recall how, in January, our subject was "The Word made Flesh," and, following that, how our lessons showed us the Divine Word as expressed through such channels as Music, Poetry and Science. We may recall how, in March, we considered the subject of Rebirth, and remember John's account of the meeting of Jesus and Nicodemus, and the great assertion, "Ye must be born anew." We took this element in the Johannine teaching and expanded it in two sets of lessons: the series on Peter—the "man re-born"—and that on the re-birth of religion through the Wesleys.

The Fourth Gospel is like a wonderful design, like an illuminated manuscript, or like one of those hand-woven Eastern carpets in the design of which a number of ideas are repeated again and again but each time with a difference, each repetition showing some added beauty of form or colour, and in which all the ideas blend into one splendid whole. So we may wander through the pages of this "spiritual gospel" and hear the familiar words and see the wonderful word-pictures as they present to us first one and then another of the great truths of Christianity. For the purposes of our lessons we have been obliged to do some violence to this book which we hold in such great respect: we have been obliged to dissect it, to present it in sections, each section showing one of the great ideas which are worked out in the book, not separately—as we have given them—but as parts of the one great picture—the picture of the Christ.

We have had our lessons on *The Divine Word* and on *Re-birth*, and we then took the great subject of *Life and its Renewal*. We are now to complete our present studies of the Fourth Gospel with six lessons on *The Universal Appeal of Christ*. We divide this last section into halves and take three lessons now and the final three in December.

September 30th.

I.—THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Bible Readings : John 8. 12 ; 12. 35-36 and 44-50.

Other References :

The Revelation of the Father. Westcott. (Macmillan. 6s.)

The Christ of the Indian Road. E. Stanley Jones. (Hodder & Stoughton. 3s. 6d.)

Jesus in the Experience of Men. Glover. (S.C.M. 6s.)

Suggested Hymns : 37, 36, 40.

Aim of the Lesson : To see Jesus as the Light of the World.

Notes on the Lesson.

In the first Bible passage, the writer of the Fourth Gospel shows us Jesus attending the Feast of Tabernacles, awaiting, with an expectant throng, one of the great moments of the feast, when, darkness having fallen, the lights flamed forth on the Temple walls, symbolising the light that guided their fathers through the wilderness.

Then, with one stroke of the pen, the incomparable writer reveals the Jesus of Palestine in his eternal setting as the Universal Christ. As the Temple lights showed up the surrounding darkness by contrast, so, the author declares, does Christ enlighten the whole world. He is, in fact, to the life of mankind what the sun is to the world. He brings gladness, beauty, safety, energy, unity and healing to men. His light is for all ; there is but one requisite—that the eye of man shall respond to the light and reflect back the rays ; otherwise there is blindness, a condition in which the light is non-existent. That is a tremendous claim and we need to examine carefully all that it implies.

Is the claim justified ? Has the life and death of Christ had an effect on the history of mankind comparable to that which is wrought on the world when night changes to dawn, and dawn to high noon ? What differences in the life and history of men has Christ made ?

We must not forget that the revelation of God to the world—which is the religious education of the race—is a continuous process. Long before the time of the birth of Jesus, a very high state of civilisation had been reached by the Greeks. This was shown

not only in art and drama but by the high value placed upon all the great natural and intellectual virtues, and the importance the Stoics attached to the control of impulse and the cultivation of conscience.

Into this world of thought Jesus was born, and, as Glover says (p. 221, *Jesus in the Experience of Men*),

" Jesus abolishes nothing real ; he comes ' not to destroy but to fulfil ' ; and the boundless significance of his work lay in uniting all the virtues that the common people and the Stoics between them knew, in a new and intimate relation with religion, or rather with God, and giving them a new breadth and freedom and life. . . . Jesus gave all virtue a new centre and a new motive ; act and theory jarred no more ; the human spirit had a charter and an inspiration to be what God meant it to be."

It is the thoughts of men which decide their destiny ; so we must try to discover what great changes Christ brought to the thought of his time.

He freed the human mind from the tyranny of fear.

Till his coming (and at the present day in certain pagan religions) men's minds were filled with fears of an unseen world, peopled with evil spirits and demons. Jesus taught that God was all in all and that his relationship to men was the intimate one of that of a loving father to his children. This relationship, shown by the life of Jesus to be so homely and so simple, was something quite new and has had most far-reaching effects.

He gave men a new idea of justice.

All history tells of men's struggles to achieve justice, and the many Codes of Laws bear witness to their efforts in this direction. But Jesus showed men a new standard of justice, based on universal sympathy and a right understanding of man's relationship to God. This standard is not yet realised, but, in our country, the laws for the protection of women and children, the abolition of slavery, and certain industrial laws, bear witness to the influence of Christ's teaching about justice.

He gave new meaning to the facts of pain and death.

Ever since the dawn of thought these facts have appalled men's minds. By the way Jesus met pain and death he showed not only that man could triumph over them and enter through them into a closer relationship with God, but that they may have a redemptive power on men's lives.

He gave a new light on man's goal and destiny.

He showed that men share the Divine Nature and are meant to be God's agents on earth, so living under the direction of the indwelling Spirit of God that, in the end, all mankind shall be brought into conscious unity with God.

If we now try to see how the light of Christ is spreading over the world to-day, looking to the East, we find that in Japan the person of Christ is attracting very great attention and calling forth admiration in a way which has never happened before. Much is bound to follow.

In China, in spite of the nation being rent by civil war, over four million copies of the Bible were sold in 1926, and this is bound to have an effect on an awaking nation.

In India, the response of the lower castes to the appeal of Jesus has been remarkable, and those who can refer to *The Christ of the Indian Road* will be greatly interested in the account given of the irresistible fascination that the person of Christ has for the educated Hindoo.

These words were written by a Brahmo-Samajist: "There is no one else bidding for the heart of the world except Jesus Christ."

In the Mohammedan world the same power of the character and teaching of Jesus to draw men to him is noticed.

Turning to the West, we can see how Christ sheds light on our present-day darkness and difficulties. One of the great problems of the day in the West is how to live in peace: nationally, industrially, in one's own being.

Nationally. If the teachings of Christ were faithfully carried out and honourable dealing was the first consideration in statesmanship, and if lust for land and wealth were subordinated to a desire to act justly for the good of all, wars would cease. The League of Nations has proved the value of open dealing and of bringing nations together to examine problems from an international point of view, and is inspired by a thoroughly Christian outlook. To-day sees the light of Christ's teaching revealing and dispelling the darkness of war as never before.

Industrially. We live in a time when peace in the industrial world is continually threatened because suspicion and selfishness have darkened men's outlook. Men (their desires centred on material possessions) are divided into rival camps—one side claiming their rights and demanding what they consider the conditions of their well-being, the other side clinging to their rights and possessions: both sides refusing the spirit of brotherhood, so that their faith in God and man is endangered.

The first requisite for putting things right is to "believe in the Light": that is, to feel that work—the love of making things—is one of God's good gifts to men and that men are meant to enjoy the use of this gift. Whatever, then, there is in the conduct of industry which degrades or embitters is of darkness, and it is God's purpose and all true men's desire that this darkness shall be vanquished. The conditions of industry can be so controlled that harmony can be established, if the impulse of love (demanding courage and sacrifice from all sections) is once released and allowed full sway. We see this happening in certain industries to-day where the spirit of co-operation is trusted and tried, and with the desire for co-operation becoming more and more insistent, we may see the Light of the World breaking in on industry.

Peace in Ourselves.

Restless dissatisfaction with life is a feature of the young life of to-day often remarked on, and many signs reveal people of all ages who are clearly not at peace in themselves—people who are living wholly on the lower plane of life, seeking by excitement and self-indulgence to silence their higher being which is clamouring for recognition. A real purpose in life can only be given and the conflicting elements within can only be unified by looking to Christ and obeying his call: "Learn of me." Only "in his will is our peace."

As long as we turn from the Light, stumbling, confusion, and constant conflict will result; but as we walk in obedience to Christ's teaching peace and new power are our reward.

So the whole great subject culminates in the attitude of the individual to the Light. Two thoughts about this arise:

1. How blind we all are at times and how often we deliberately choose to walk in darkness!
2. How Christ depended on his followers to reflect his Light and spread it everywhere. "Ye are the light of the world."

Questions:

- (1) What are the chief causes of spiritual blindness in men?
- (2) Is teaching about Christ the same thing as "preaching Christ"?
- (3) Do you think there is any truth in these words of an earnest Hindoo student: "If it were not for the Christians, we should all be Christian"?

Adult Schools which desire to observe this date as "Adult School Sunday" will find the following lesson peculiarly appropriate for their purpose.

October 7th.

II.—LEADERSHIP.

Bible Reading : John 10. 11-16.

Other References :

- The Epic of Everest.* Sir Francis Younghusband. (Arnold. 7s. 6d.)
The Life of Mazzini. Bolton King. (Everyman. Dent. 2s.)
The Duties of Man and Other Essays. Mazzini. (Everyman. Dent. 2s.)
The Revelation of the Father. Westcott. (Macmillan. 6s.)
The Pilgrim. T. R. Glover. (S.C.M. 6s.)

Suggested Hymns : 188, 126, 191, 197.

Aim of the Lesson : To see what is meant by Leadership.

Notes on the Lesson.

To the Western mind the idea of a shepherd leading his flock is at first strange. In England shepherds drive their flocks in front of them ; in the East, sheep are trained to follow the directions of a voice ; so that, in the first case, they go the shepherd's way unintelligently, driven on by fear ; in the second case they respond to the voice of warning or encouragement and go willingly wherever the shepherd leads.

Sheep, in the old nomadic days of the Hebrew nation, formed the great source of wealth, and the man who had the intelligence to obtain and keep large herds of sheep became the most important person of the tribe. So, in the Old Testament, we find that the patriarchs, Moses, David, and Amos, are shepherds, and when the Prophet (Is. 40. 2) heralds the return of the exiled nation and the people are called to behold their God, the figure he employs is that of the Good Shepherd gently leading his flock. As we have already seen, the artist writer of the Fourth Gospel constantly chooses a human symbol to convey teaching of eternal significance ; so it is not surprising to find that the allegory of the Good Shepherd has made a wide appeal, the figure appearing in the Catacombs of Rome and inspiring artists, musicians and poets all through the ages.

What makes a Good Leader ?

Get answers from the School.

1. *A good cause and purpose* are necessary. A cause for the benefit of many. The only reward sought being the accomplishment of the leader's aim.

2. *He must have a voice*; i.e., the means of making his purpose understood; character and personality, magnetism.

3. *He must have a greater knowledge and a wider experience* than his followers, ensuring sympathy with their difficulties and hardships.

4. *He must lose himself in his cause* and venture great risks when others would waver.

5. *He must be able so to win his followers' loyalty*, that they become united through that loyalty.

Mazzini is a modern example of such a leader. His cause was to keep alive the soul of Italy; his reward, exile and persecution. To-day he is acknowledged as a great leader and patriot.

Another example of great leadership may be found in *The Epic of Everest* (p. 237) :

"Four porters had been left behind, stranded on the North Col, and snow was falling persistently, rendering the passage up and down from the Col increasingly dangerous. At the risk of his, (Norton's) Mallory's and Somerville's lives these men must be rescued. They were of a different race and a different religion and of only a lowly position in life, but they were fellow men, and more, fellow men in a common adventure. They were ever ready to risk their lives for their leaders; these leaders must now risk their lives for them. When Norton, Somerville and Mallory started up the North Col to rescue these porters, they were already played out. Their only chance was to get back quickly to the base to recover form. Instead they had this infernally trying and excessively dangerous job of rescuing these men. It was the extra hardship which they suffered in rescuing the porters that prevented Norton and Somerville from reaching the summit. By effecting the rescue they had reaffirmed that principle of loyal comradeship upon which all mountaineering must be based, but by that act they had lost the real prize (i.e., of reaching the summit) which might have been theirs."

Questions :

(1) Do the best leaders get the most followers ?

(2) Ask the class to mention other great leaders, and test their qualifications and see if other qualifications should be added to the list.

Leadership in Politics.

The dearth of good leaders in politics makes one suspect a dearth of good causes, and yet there never was a time when the service of mankind was more in men's minds. The various sections of the electorate demand a leader who will secure them some material advantage, and each section is seeking its own advantage without considering the good of the whole. They desire a leader who will make large promises, be always in the limelight, and abuse rival parties.

So it was in the days of Jesus, and he rejected all attempts to make him this kind of leader. His answer to the demand for material advantages was: "He that would come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me." The attempt to put him in the limelight he met by "I am among you as he that serveth." The reward he promised was to drink the cup that he drank, and his advice for treating opponents was "Love your enemies." Greatly as the example of Jesus conflicts with modern demands of leadership, there surely is a challenge to would-be leaders to try his methods and to appeal to men's higher nature—to their self-sacrifice, humble service, and courage.

Questions :

(1) In what ways is Mussolini a good leader ?

(2) Do you agree with G. Adam Smith's words: "The service of mankind cannot be carried on by administration. In the absence of God, every man's ideal will turn from 'How can I serve my neighbour?' to 'How can my neighbour serve me?'"

Leadership in Religion.

The religious leader is up against many difficulties. Followers of Christ are divided by more or less trifling doctrinal differences into rival camps, their differences tending to obscure the vital truths of Jesus Christ's teaching. There is also a large body of religious people who are not prepared to accept the implications of modern scientific discoveries on religion, causing an inevitable clash with those who find in them fresh revelation of religious truth. Further, there is a large and apparently increasing body of those who are completely indifferent about religion, who need rousing from their apathy.

What, then, is required of Leaders in Religion ?

Turning to Christ for illumination, we find his appeal as a religious leader was always to urge men to test by experience the truth of his teaching. He led men by his own example and

learned himself by the things which he suffered. The allegory of the Good Shepherd, which has always been taken as the example for religious teachers, surely teaches, too, that practice must precede preaching. The shepherd leads his flock to pasture over ways he knows and has already travelled. What is required in the religious leader is a wholly sincere person whose voice gives no uncertain sound, who speaks that which he knows and testifies that which he has seen, and, who, by his close contact with his Master, brings his flock into personal touch with Christ.

Men are tired of theological and intellectual arguments about Christ. "The hungry sheep look up and are not fed." What they need is personal training in religion, leading to that personal devotion and obedience to Christ which transforms the life. This is the sort of education which is vital and has more power to develop personality than any other. Among the distractions of modern life the sheep no longer hear the directing voice. Is it not the duty of religious leaders to bring them back once more into earshot that they may know the Good Shepherd and be known of him ?

What are the results of following the Good Shepherd ?

- (a) *Safety*. He protects them from attack by enemies.
- (b) *Sustenance*. He finds pasture for them.
- (c) *Confidence*. Because they have seen his self-sacrificing love.
- (d) *Knowledge* through obedience. . . . They know his voice.

Questions :

- (1) In what ways do you suggest people may be helped in personal training in religion ?
- (2) In what ways can we help our religious leaders ?

October 14th.

III.—THE COST OF LIFE.

Bible Reading : John 12. 20-33.

Other References :

Historical and Religious Value of the Fourth Gospel. E. F. Scott. (Constable. 1s.) Chap. V. This little book gives a very brief but valuable summary of its subject.

The Fourth Gospel. E. F. Scott. (Clark. 10s. 6d.) Chap. IV. This larger book will be found very valuable for all who can consult it. It deals in detail with various aspects of the Gospel. The views taken by this writer and by the author of *The Ephesian Gospel* have in the main been followed in these notes.

The Cost of a New World. K. Maclennan. (Edinburgh House Press. 2s. 6d.)

"Merlin and the Gleam." Poem by Lord Tennyson.

"The White Man's Burden." Poem by Rudyard Kipling, in *The Five Nations.* (Methuen. 5s.)

The Golden Rule in Business. Arthur Nash. (F. H. Revell Co. Out of print.)

The Ephesian Gospel. Percy Gardner. (Williams & Norgate. 5s.) Of general value for these lessons.

Suggested Hymns : 24, 88, 234, 342.

Aim of the Lesson : To consider what is meant by the words "He that loveth his life shall lose it."

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Retrospect from Ephesus.

The book we are studying—the Fourth Gospel—appears to have been written in the Greek city of Ephesus in Asia Minor about eighty years after the death of Jesus (see Appendix, page 289). There was a world of difference between the people among whom Jesus lived in Palestine and those of the Greek cities eighty years later. Think for a moment of the changes in habit, circumstance, outlook, of our grandfathers and ourselves, and add to that the difference between one country and another. We shall see more of this in our next lesson. The Fourth Gospel was written by one who looked back on the events of the life of

Jesus with the circumstances of his own life and his own surroundings in his mind. The words of the Gospel are the words which the living Christ, who once trod the streets of Jerusalem, speaks to the men of another city in a later age.

Christianity was proving itself a living thing. It was appealing to new people; facing new issues; extending its borders. It was alive. What is the cost of life? That is our subject. We look at it first from Ephesus and then from England.

"Christianity had become mainly a Gentile religion" (Scott, *Fourth Gospel*, p. 109). The first Christians—the disciples—had been Jews. They came of a most exclusive race. Their great national traditions had held them together through centuries of oppression. Oppression had made them narrow, conservative, exclusive. Some of their prophets, such as Jeremiah and the author of the "servant songs" in Isaiah, had indeed proclaimed a way of life of wonderful nobility, liberality and love (refer back to lesson for February 21st, 1926, "The Hope of the Future"). But at the time of Jesus the vast majority of Jews were held by a narrow religious legalism. Their laws and their God were for *them*, and the "Gentiles," as they called everyone else, were outsiders. Christianity was begun by a Jew, and among Jews. And yet, eighty years after its beginning, "Christianity had become mainly a Gentile religion." Think what that must have cost in sacrifice of tradition, of inclination, of friendship. We have seen, in our lessons of April 15th to 29th, what a struggle it cost Peter to welcome the outsiders into the new society; and Peter was one of the warmest-hearted of them all. The "chosen people" idea had to be scrapped. It died as hard as the idea that one Englishman is as good as three Frenchmen. But life and progress demanded its sacrifice.

John gives us two pictures to describe how the wider movement began: first the discourse between Jesus and the woman at Sychar in chapter 4., on which Professor Gardner comments: "Until one has fully realised what Jerusalem was to the Jews, how completely it represented their national religion, their pride of race, their past history, and their hopes for the future, one cannot fully understand at what a cost of self-suppression and through what painful following of the higher light any Hebrew could reach that utterance" (*The Ephesian Gospel*, p. 222). And later we have this meeting between Jesus and the Greeks (see Scott, *Fourth Gospel*, pp. 109-111). Read John 12. 20-33 with care. See the picture John draws. How these few foreigners come, almost casually, to Jesus. How, as in a flash, he sees the vast possibilities opened up by their enquiry: "We would see Jesus." How he sees the sacrifice involved in that universal element which his life held: sacrifice for himself and for his

followers, but sacrifice which must be faced and which was worth facing (verses 24-27).

2. The Adult School Parallel.

It is worth while to remind ourselves how much our Movement was controlled by one section of Christians. But the Quakers did not run the Movement for the sake of their society and to this we owe much of our influence and breadth of appeal.

3. The Cost of a New World.

The subject of this section of lessons is *The Universal Appeal of Christ*. The purpose of this lesson is to face the cost. The moment of inspiration in which Jesus saw the possibility of a world-wide acceptance of his message showed him that so great an end could not be cheaply or easily gained. We shall, in our later lessons, see how Christ may bring unity into a divided world, peace and wisdom into a distraught world, goodness into an evil world. Our present work is to catch something of the vision which Jesus caught; for one moment to see the whole world made into God's realm through the spirit of Christ, illumined by that Light and guided by that Shepherd of which our last two lessons have told us. Then we ask the question: Why have the centuries gone by and this great thing not accomplished? And our answer is that most of those who have seen the vision have not been ready to pay the price of its accomplishment. Few even have seen what kind of sacrifice is required. Let us, then, count the cost of it.

Mr. Kenneth Maclennan, in *The Cost of a New World*, gives a survey of the world as it is seen to-day in its need for a real Christianity. His book will be found of general value. The following extracts from it may provide a basis of approach to the subject in a general way, while the eight chapters of his book deal with various lands or various factors in the subject.

"Must the old world, then, just go stumbling on through the ruins, must material progress continue to create evil conditions within each nation, and produce international conflicts and bitter race rivalries? The answer depends on whether national or individual self-interest is put first and human personality second. The supreme thing in the Christian religion is its regard for human personality" (p. 170).

"The missionary . . . does not only attack slavery, opium, drink and other evils, where he is sure of acting up to the home community consciousness. His standards are those of Jesus. That view of life is costly" (p. 86).

"The essential attitude of Christianity is a willingness to live or to die—to fling away one's life, to count it as nothing—for the sake of some reality other than one's self" (p. 177).

4. Nations and Men.

World visions are not only for nations to strive after, great adventures not only for armies. The finest visions and the highest adventures come to single individuals or to little groups. A world living in the spirit of Christ concerns us all. A workshop—even a home—controlled by that same spirit may concern us more nearly. But what do they cost? Arthur Nash, the American clothier, claims that he has made his business Christian by introducing complete, unqualified confidence into the conduct of all his affairs. That is more than most of us dare do even between husband and wife.

5. Some Questions :

(a) *What is Courage?* Discuss this statement (from *Orthodoxy*, by G. K. Chesterton): "Courage is almost a contradiction in terms. It means a strong desire to live taking the form of a readiness to die. 'He that will lose his life the same shall save it,' is not a piece of mysticism for saints and heroes. It is a piece of everyday advice for sailors and mountaineers. It might be printed in an alpine guide or a drill book."

(b) *Are you a "passenger"?* Consider the following extract from an address on "The World Task of the Christian Church": "Another cost of membership, hardest perhaps of all for many of us to face, is this: you have got to be an active member, you cannot join as a passenger. No team yet has been able to afford to carry passengers—sooner or later they get found out and dropped. . . . It may mean revolution in life's plans . . . it may mean only doing the job we are preparing to do better . . . it may mean anything: we have got to be prepared for it to mean anything."

(c) *Dare we try "confidence"?* Look at the short statements in paragraph 4 above. How far have you succeeded in spreading the triumphant spirit of Christ by replacing suspicion with confidence? While answering this question think of our conduct at home, in our games, in our business, in our advertisements, in our politics.

(d) *What needs scrapping?* Do we link up Christianity with things which are not essential to it? Are there prejudices which we have built up into principles? How about judging success by the test of comfort? or of "efficiency"? or by the test of whether it "pays"? Do we put Sunday, or the Bible, or sect or party into a position of importance to which they are not entitled?

Section X.

The Web of World Life.

NOTES BY GEORGE PEVERETT.

Introduction.

A few words of introduction are necessary to our four studies on "The Web of World Life." In any attempt to deal with so vast a subject we can only hope to outline a few important aspects, which may be followed up and developed at other times and occasions. The value of these lessons will largely depend upon the extent to which such following-up takes place, whether in group or individual study and thought.

But an outline introduction, necessarily sketchy as it must be, is of value at this stage of our year's work. During past months we have discussed many aspects of the desires of men and nations and many aspects of that Gospel of Christ which we conceive to be part of God's purpose for the world. Again and again we must have been reminded that neither man nor race nor nation can live and die "to himself"; that we all, whatever our language, race, nation, or individual characteristics, are part of that web of life which includes all mankind and all created things.

Within the short period covered by the life-time of many of us who use this handbook the "web of world life" has developed, has thrown out new strands, has become vastly more intricate, and has knit the peoples of the world together so intimately that none of us is independent of the results of happenings in remote corners of the earth. Only some sixty years ago, David Livingstone was the first white man to enter vast tracts of "Darkest Africa"; to-day the native African in his kraal may put on his head-phones and hear "the news" relayed from ZLO, or stroll down to a picture-house to see the film that is being simultaneously shown in the Strand and in Ohio. A hundred other illustrations (from trade, press, war, etc.) might be used to suggest the way in which the lives of the peoples of the world have been brought "into touch." For good or ill, the extension and multiplication of the threads of the web of world life have made that life vastly more sensitive than ever it was before.

What men of other races and nations are thinking, planning, doing, creating, or destroying the world over is of importance to us and to others, because it is likely to have results that may immediately and vitally affect health, wealth, and happiness.

How to "come at" the study of so vast a subject as this new phase of human life in the best possible manner is not easy to determine, and the method adopted in the following pages is only one of several that would be equally good and equally open to objection. The opening lessons on the British Commonwealth start us where we are, as citizens of the world's greatest political system, which in itself presents an epitome of many of the world's problems, and of which few of us dare claim adequate knowledge. Our Commonwealth—we need to realise fully that it is "ours"—includes about one-quarter of the human race, inhabiting about one-quarter of the earth's land area; if we can get some clearer ideas and better knowledge of that quarter-world we shall make a good start towards understanding our relations to and with the whole.

The other two lessons are necessarily only outline sketches. If they can be thought of pictorially that will greatly help to understanding. The web of European life has spread round the world to the Far East, producing strange and often unexpected results both for white and yellow races. The webs of world-religions are laced and interlaced, stronger here and weaker there, ever varying in their "pull" on individual and social life, but in total exerting their influence, direct or indirect, on nearly every human alive.

In the web of world-life there are forces that unite and forces that keep apart the lives and interests of men. Which are to prevail? Which do we desire to prevail? To which is our allegiance given? As we gain knowledge of the ways in which mankind is at once divided and united, we may hope to learn how to make our contribution to the unity of mankind. The Divine Wisdom which "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" awaits human co-operation before that unity of blood expresses itself in unity of mind, purpose, and achievement.

October 21st.

I.—OUR COMMONWEALTH.

(a) Foundations and Character.

Bible Reading : Psalms 99 and 100.

(Unconnected with the British Commonwealth, but may be read "lest we forget" that "the Lord reigneth.")

Reference Books :

The Growth of Greater Britain. J. Fairgrieve and E. Young. (Geo. Philip & Son, Ltd. 2s. 6d.) A "human geography" book, well illustrated, and packed with information.

The Expansion of England. Sir J. R. Seeley. (Macmillan. 5s.)

Suggested Hymns : 4, 5, 337.

Aim of the Lesson : To increase our knowledge and understanding of the Commonwealth of which we are citizens.

Notes on the Lesson.

A Bird's-eye View.

An atlas is essential for the proper study of our subject; preferably one of large-scale, and showing commercial development, lines of communication, etc. The "arrogant red" in which British possessions are usually shown has the merit of throwing into relief those widespread territories. Lines of communication (rail and sea-routes), especially when marked in bands of varying width to show volume of trade, are illuminating, and graphically illustrate the web of life in the Commonwealth.

Note that British possessions comprise over one-quarter of the known surface of the globe, and that their population exceeds one-quarter of the estimated number of the human race. (Any good encyclopædia or reference book will give further details of importance and should be consulted, or refer to *The Growth of Greater Britain*.)

A Commonwealth of Nations.

We commonly use the term "The British Empire," which is as paradoxical as most other statements about "our" quarter of the globe. Only a small proportion of its population has any *racial* claim to be called British; only a small proportion of its

territories are governed on "imperial" lines. The supreme political dominion and absolute control of an emperor are entirely lacking almost everywhere.

This so-called Empire is entirely different from any other empire that the world has known. It is essentially a commonwealth of nations, in which Great Britain and seven self-governing Dominions are federated together; but beyond these there are nations, colonies, and islands in various stages of political development: India, with its Viceroy and Legislature; Imperial Dominions, with systems of government varying from semi-independent legislatures to administration by a Governor; and Protectorates, Spheres of Influence, and Mandated Territories. It would be well to take one each of these and examine briefly the differences in their political government and circumstances.

Note.—The independence of the Dominions has been emphasised by the election of Canada to a seat on the Council of the League of Nations; but this independence does not in any way weaken the bonds of the Commonwealth.

Foundations of the Commonwealth.

Warriors, pirates, adventurers, traders, statesmen, and missionaries have all played their part—sometimes unintentionally—as foundation-layers. In reading their history it may sometimes seem that the vast system of the Commonwealth came into existence as much by accident as by design, and that, at times, statesmen and administrators laboured for ends quite beyond their comprehension.

How far are we acquainted with the fascinating history of the beginnings and the development of the Commonwealth?

When we consider present foundations we are faced with further difficulties, and find a series of negatives. "There is no fundamental law upon which the Constitution of the Commonwealth rests," says one writer, whilst another declares that "apart from the Crown, which thus binds the Empire together, it is difficult to find any organs of Imperial administration. . . . There is no common chest for the Empire; no uniform system of law or currency or weights and measures; no Imperial religion; not even an identical official language." Legally, the Crown is that of a King who holds his office (and thereby "binds the Empire together") "solely by the authority of an Act of Parliament [the Act of Settlement, 1701], which is of no more, and also of no less, authority and permanence than other Acts of Parliament; it was passed in exactly the same way as any other Act, and if it had to be amended or repealed this would be done by another Act of Parliament in the ordinary form."

But so vast a political system and human association as the Commonwealth cannot be held together by negatives. We must seek for the positives which are the foundation of this structure. These were excellently summarised by the late Wm. Charles Braithwaite, in his study pamphlet, *Foundations of National Greatness* (1915), to which reference should be made.

(a) *National Consciousness.* The many evils that have been done in the name of, or as an outcome of, Nationalism and Patriotism must not blind us to the great constructive and creative power in national consciousness. The history of the Elizabethan era shows clearly how greatly it strengthened England by bringing a deep sense of unity in time of peril, how it helped to make men capable of feats of endurance and accomplishment beyond their own imaginings, how it fostered a great enrichment of life in literature, politics, religion, and exploration. (Refer, if possible, to J. A. Froude's *English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century*.) There is, perhaps, no finer expression of the ecstasy of patriotism than Shakespeare's words:

" This royal throne of kings, this sceptr'd isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise;
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war;
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea.

This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world"

John Drinkwater illumines that last line when he writes: " There is no purer patriot than the man who cannot bear to see his country a party to dishonour or cruelty because he loves her so much."

The early " national consciousness " of Englishmen laid foundations for the Commonwealth in that it brought to them a sense of unity which heightened their capacity as individuals; it helped to create a stream of common life that enriched the nation in many ways. Later it led to Cecil Rhodes' great vision of and service for the Empire as well as to some less desirable things. To-day we need to consider how it operates for good or ill.

In what ways do you think that patriotism or pride of empire affects the conduct of politicians, press, administrators, and the " man in the street " to-day ?

How far do you think that pride of empire is giving place to loyalty to the Commonwealth in the thoughts of men and women, and what are the probable effects of such a change of thought ?

(b) *Faith in Justice.* "They must seek and the, that which constituted the strength of the British Empire, foundations; and its foundations rested alone upon the justice and truth with which it was governed" (Lord James of Hereford). Only too often the record of the Commonwealth has been smirched by injustice; "but, slowly, British rule has come to stand more and more for even-handed justice, and for the protection of native races" (W.C.B.); and again, "Territories, which we had acquired in the spirit of gain, we came at last to administer and to guide with a sense of moral responsibility" (Richard Roberts).

Consider here the position of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, as the Supreme Court of Appeal for the whole Commonwealth. "Each part of the Empire, even each part of the United Kingdom, has its own law and its own legal system," but, in theory at least, and often rather startlingly in practice, every citizen of the Commonwealth may appeal to one supreme court for justice and the redress of wrongs.

"British justice, as the Recorder of the City of London remarked not long ago, knows no distinction of colour. This equality before the law has by the decisions of the courts been extended to the native inhabitants of dependencies. A few years ago a White Cap Chief of Lagos brought a suit against the Government of Southern Nigeria and was successful. I remember well the impression made by this fact on one of my African friends and his pride in the system under which at the behest of justice the august majesty of the British Crown had to acknowledge the claims of a petty chieftain in one of its dependencies. . . . A case is recorded of a West African Native, who, desiring to appeal to the Privy Council against a decision of the local Court, arrived in London with all his papers carried in a pile on his head. A solicitor who was approached by the Privy Council Office consented to take up the case, and in the result the appeal was allowed and the applicant returned to West Africa a happy man."—(*Christianity and the Race Problem*, pp. 89-90).

(c) *The Idea of Freedom.* It is significant that the assembly at Westminster is called "The Mother of Parliaments." From it have come the many Parliaments by which widely-differing nations express themselves in self-government. This self-government "is more than government by consent; it is government by co-operation of the governed." When Britain's faith in freedom failed, the American colonies revolted, to become the United States of America; when that faith was strong, Canada gained self-government after a rebellion and South Africa after the Boer Republics had been conquered and annexed.

How far are we at present expressing faith in freedom in our relations with India, Egypt, the Crown Colonies, and the Dominions?

Is it wise or just to give self-government to people who are not educated sufficiently to exercise that power properly?

How may the natives of such territories as, say, Kenya, Jamaica, the Barbadoes, or South Africa, be educated for a full share in self-government?

A Christian Commonwealth?

How far we can regard our Commonwealth as having a Christian foundation is a question on which there may well be great differences of opinion, according to what aspects of history and current affairs are taken into account. It is therefore, perhaps, all the more worth examining.

No positive reply can be based on the proportion of nominal Christian citizens in the Commonwealth. *Whitaker's Almanack* gives the following figures:

"Of the total population over 210,000,000 are Hindus, 100,000,000 Muhammadans, 80,000,000 Christians (67,000,000 Protestants, 13,000,000 Catholics), 12,000,000 Buddhists, 12,000,000 Animists, 4,000,000 Sikhs, Jains and Parsees, 750,000 Jews, and the remainder Polytheists and idol worshippers."

Of this vast number of citizens of the Commonwealth, we need particularly to study the work and influence of the Protestant Christian minority. In the Elizabethan era the pioneers of the Commonwealth were passionate fighters for both religious and political freedom. They were men of their day and generation--intolerantly using the weapons and means that were in common use. When many of them set up the authority of an infallible Book against that of an infallible Pope they were taking a step that inevitably led to much greater freedom. John Morley described the history of Freedom as "the emancipation of conscience from power and the gradual substitution of freedom for force in the government of men." (Dr. J. B. Bury's book, *A History of Freedom of Thought*, in the Home University Library, may be used in discussing this statement.)

It is important to note that Protestantism is fundamental in the British Constitution. After long and fierce conflict, it was enacted by Parliament (the Act of Settlement, which incorporated the Declaration of Rights of 1689) that the Crown should be held by the heirs of the Princess Sophia, one of the grand-daughters of James I., who was not next heir to any previous sovereign, but who was a Protestant, "and on this ground Parliament chose to enact that her heirs should succeed." Only a Protestant can hold the throne of "all the British Dominions." That is of importance, not merely as an historic fact, but because it is evidence of the passionately-held faith of the race which laid the foundations of the Commonwealth, and which worked out that faith in its social and political institutions.

The Master of Balliol has recently written : " The remarkable changes which have come over all our institutions in the last hundred years have been brought about not by the natural working of the institutions but by movements of public opinion which have been started by inspired men and women demanding that our laws should be more compatible and in accord with the religion we profess."

Can we say that men and women inspired by the ideals and faith of Protestant Christianity have largely created and changed the institutions of England and the Commonwealth, thereby bringing such institutions more into " accord with the religion we profess " ?

If we agree that that has been the case, we must at once go on to admit that a very great deal remains to be done before we can claim that ours is essentially a Christian Commonwealth.

(Compare H. Bisseker's statement : " The history of the world's social progress, since the days of the apostles, has been largely that of the leavening of human life with the principles of brotherly love inherent in the Christian gospel.")

Sensitiveness to injustice and to the moral defects of the Commonwealth is evidence of progress. We look back with amazement at the indifference with which our predecessors regarded things that are now intolerable to us. The leaven of brotherly love has had its effect up to a point ; now it makes many of us ardent advocates of further reform and progress and we eagerly work for and demand changes of laws and institutions. Only as the " leaven " succeeds in affecting the bulk of the community may we hope for the accomplishment of our desires. Sensitiveness to moral and administrative defects in the Commonwealth must be general before further progress is possible.

How can we, individually and unitedly, help to foster Christian values of life in connection with such things as (a) Empire Day, (b) the treatment of native races in such places as Kenya and South Africa, (c) the education of children in matters concerning the Commonwealth ?

Towards a World Commonwealth.

Some reference, however brief, is called for in the matter of relations between the British Commonwealth and the other nations of the world. Our Commonwealth must continue to develop and to find increasingly effective means for expressing its peoples' ideas of justice, liberty and brotherhood. This development should and must take place in close harmony with that development of the greater World Commonwealth which has its early form in the existing League of Nations. Both the

British Commonwealth and the League of Nations are helping men's minds to move away from the exploded idea of a super-state issuing its commands to lesser or weaker nations or partners; they are enforcing the lessons that democracy cannot be coerced and can only be persuaded, and that peace is the main interest of the peoples on every rational ground. Because we—not less than our fathers before us—have been and are privileged members of a great Commonwealth, there is placed on each one of us the responsibility of doing all we can to ensure, first, that justice, liberty and brotherhood shall be ever more and more expressed in our own Commonwealth, and, secondly, that this spiritual enrichment of the British Commonwealth shall contribute to that of all the nations of the world.

How do you think the British peoples can best render good service to the League of Nations?

What features of the British Commonwealth suggest desirable developments of the League of Nations? (e.g., in relation to armaments, subject races, judicial system, treaties, freedom of trade and travel, social intercourse, etc.).

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOK REFERENCES.

- A Short History of the British Commonwealth.* Ramsay Muir. (Philip. 1920. 2 Vols. 15s. each.)
- The British Commonwealth of Nations.* H. Duncan Hall. (Methuen. 1920. 10s. 6d.)
- The Expansion of the British Empire.* W. H. A. Woodward. (Cambridge University Press. 1921. 6s. 6d.)
- The Origin and Growth of the British Colonies and of their System of Government.* H. E. Egerton. (Oxford University Press. 1904. 3s. 6d.)
- The British Commonwealth and its Unsolved Problems.* C. M. MacInnes. (Longmans. 1925. 5s.)
- The British Empire.* Sir C. P. Lucas. (Macmillan. 1915. 2s. 6d.)
- The Third British Empire.* A. E. Zimmern. (Oxford University Press. 6s.)

The first two books should be obtainable from a local Public Library. As to the remainder, it is not intended that members should purchase more than one book. The suggestion is that members should consult as to which of the books they are getting, and then arrange to exchange with one another.

A good Atlas is very desirable.

- English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century.* J. A. Froude. (Longmans. 6s.) May be read to see how the author justifies his statement that "The English sea power was the legitimate child of the Reformation. It grew . . . directly out of the new despised Protestantism."
- Patriotism in Literature.* John Drinkwater. (Home University Library. 2s.) May be read in connection with foregoing paragraph on "National Consciousness."
- Foundations of National Greatness.* Wm. Chas. Braithwaite. (N.A.S.U. 3d. and 1s.)
- Geography and World Power.* J. Fairgrieve. (Hodder & Stoughton 5s.)
- British Commerce and Colonies from Elizabeth to Victoria.* H. de B. Gibbins. (Methuen. Commercial Series. 3s.)

October 28th.

II.—OUR COMMONWEALTH.

(b) Its Life and Links.

Bible Reading : Psalm 90.

(A "Prayer of Moses," ending in a petition appropriate to our subject).

Reference Books : See preceding lesson, pp. 230 and 236.

Suggested Hymns : 4, 10, 340, 345.

Aim of the Lesson : To consider some of the links that bind together the people of the British Commonwealth in their infinite variety of life.

Notes on the Lesson.

Infinite Variety of Life.

Infinite variety is one of the outstanding characteristics of the life of the British Commonwealth, whether we think of individual, social, religious, political, or economic conditions and activities. Consider the diversity expressed in a few illustrations: the "stately home," the slum tenement, and the suburban villa of England; the Kaffir kraal of South Africa; the oasis of the Soudan and the garden city capital of Canberra; the log hut of Canada's Northern Territories and the negro's hut of Jamaica. A British citizen may have white, brown, black or yellow skin; he may speak as his native tongue almost any of the world's languages and hold as his faith any of the world's religions; he may live under the immediate government of any political institution, from a Parliament elected by universal franchise to an alien autocratic Governorship; he may wear as his normal attire anything from frock-coat and trousers to the costume of Kipling's Gunga Din, which is described as "nothing much before, and a little less than half of that behind."

Discuss some of the widely differing manners and ways of life of various citizens of the Commonwealth, as, for example, a Zulu of South Africa, a French-speaking Canadian of Quebec, a Hindu or Mohammedan Indian, a Soudanese tribesman, a Burmese Buddhist, an Australian working-man; what do you think British citizenship means to each of these?

The Developing Web of Life.

It is worth while to keep in mind certain points dealt with in a previous lesson on "the web of life in nature," for they afford clues to life in the Commonwealth. It may be said that *Parasitism* was a characteristic of early relations between the Home Country and some of its overseas possessions. Colonies were desired and held for what could be got out of them; if they ceased to yield profit they were hardly worth keeping. Imperialism can hardly escape being parasitic.

The *Nutritive Chain* held good when, in early days, daring seamen sought new ways to the Indies to bring home cargoes of spices for meat dishes that would have been almost uneatable without them. It strengthened into a *chain of dependence* as trade flourished, and nations found it impossible to maintain and to raise their standards of life without overseas exchange of food and other goods.

Mutual dependence is the great characteristic of the present Commonwealth, and its extent may be discussed in the following notes on "Links that Bind." In our affairs, as in those of plants and animals, learning dependence has been a slow and costly business; and there is much yet for us to learn. But in politics, in economics, and in other spheres we have moved far towards established *Partnership*, the basis on which further and much greater progress may be made.

Links that Bind.

We may glance briefly at some of the important links of the Commonwealth.

(a) *Trade and Commerce.* This is the primitive and fundamental web for man and man, nation and nation. In the building up of the Commonwealth it has been of unique importance. To go down the Thames when the tide serves for many great ships to seek the sea gives some idea of the history and present-day workings of this "web of life." Steaming by a few yards from one another are vessels bound for ports spread over the whole world. (Read Kipling's "Big Steamers" here if possible.) Every ship is a shuttle in the web, carrying goods and passengers, communications and culture. Battleships and liners may bulk too largely in our minds; we do well to remember that vast fleet of the mercantile marine which is as essential a part of our sustenance as the shops from which we immediately purchase things we need.

Other shuttles in the web are railway-trains and the later aeroplanes, called into being as men have found the need for larger and more speedy inter-communication and interchange,

whether of goods or services. And now that radio has supplemented cables and telephones we find the web of communications becoming almost infinitely complex. Think what all this means to the life of the Commonwealth.

A "trade" illustration, to be studied and discussed with the aid of an atlas. It is "the true tale of Captain Cecil Foster and his shipwrecked comrades in 1923. His cargo ship, the *Trevessa*, carrying forty-four men, left Liverpool for Canada, and then threaded the Panama Canal, and crossed the Pacific. From Fremantle, Australia, it took a cargo of zinc stuffs, and then foundered in the Indian Ocean. In two row-boats, each with a mast and sail, the crews struggled westwards for twenty-three days, and at last reached land at the isles of Rodriguez and Mauritius, eleven poor fellows dying on the way. The crews included Englishmen, Scots, Welsh, a Swede, two Burmese, two Arabs, two Portuguese, one Indian, one Afghan. Each man's daily food was a small drink of water, a biscuit, and a little condensed milk." The boat journey was one of about 1,700 miles.

(b) *Emigration*. Vast numbers of people in the Home Country have relatives and friends "overseas." Discuss how this forms a bond of unity, particularly as it affects your own family or that of friends well known to you. But give some thought also to the *history* of colonisation; how often in strange ways—through desire to escape religious persecution, to seek adventure, to gain profit, to carry a gospel, or to find "elbow-room" in which to live—people of the Homeland have become missionaries of the Commonwealth.

What sort of news do you get from your friends who have gone "overseas"? How do they describe their ways of living, and how do they refer to the Mother Country?

What is the most interesting story of emigration that you know?

Consider how the great increase in means of rapid transport has affected emigration and relations between the home country and the Dominions.

(c) *Language and Literature*. English is not even the official language for many citizens of the Commonwealth, but it is the dominant language and the great link of a common tongue for the vast majority. How far does the use of a common language promote good understanding? It is often claimed that war between the English-speaking peoples of the world is unthinkable; how far is that claim based simply on the probability that those who speak a common tongue are less likely to misunderstand one another than those who do not?

The heritage of English literature, with the many contributions made to it by men and women of the Dominions, and with

its present virile life, is an inestimable bond, linking in thought and aspiration widely-scattered peoples.

What standard English books do you think would most strongly appeal to Britishers overseas?

(d) *Defence*. All the Dominions and territories of the Commonwealth are united in "a league of peace," expressed in no treaty or document. None need make any provision for arming against another, or for the settlement of differences and disputes by any other than peaceful means. How far do you think this forms a model for a world-wide "league of peace"?

The principle of self-defence in the administration of the Commonwealth is of modern growth, and, of course, only applies at present to the Dominions. The general defence of the Commonwealth is considered and determined by the Imperial Defence Committee. The Great War showed how united was the Commonwealth in defence. In a world armed as it is at present the link of common defence must be a powerful one. It is essential to realise that what we may regard only as means of *defence* may quite likely be regarded largely as means of *offence* by nations of the other three-quarters of the world.

To what extent do you think it is true to say that fear of attack and aggression is a "bond of Empire"?

(e) *Sport*. "Test Matches" suggest that sport plays its part as a powerful link in the Commonwealth. British games have been and are largely based on team-work, and such a writer as Basil Mathews, with wide experience of other lands, has no doubt that such games and the "team-spirit" that they engender form a great asset and link in the Commonwealth (see *The Spirit of the Game*. Basil Mathews and others. Hodder and Stoughton. 2s. 6d.).

(f) *Political System*. This may be said to be a more powerful bond in fact because it is so little of a bond in theory. The United States of America have a written constitution, and it is in comparison with that basis of a federal state that light is thrown strongly on the British system. To quote Wm. C. Braithwaite:

"The British conception of Empire has thus become the conception of a *Family of Free Nations*, each with self-government adapted to its own needs, but all united by common ideals of Justice and Freedom, and by a common loyalty to the family life. The conception is still being worked out in practice by a process of natural development. There are difficult problems to be faced, especially those which depend upon divergences of racial type, varying civilisation, foreign relationships and differing geographical and economic conditions."

Obviously this Family of Free Nations includes some members which are not out of the nursery, and some which think they ought to be! The heads of the family will make mistakes in their treatment of their juniors, and the youngsters will sometimes feel that they are being treated unjustly. What we do well to conserve as a powerful bond of the Commonwealth is this conception of *family* relationship between *all* the members of the Empire. It has in it great and glorious possibilities beyond any contained in an Empire based on the permanent and absolute domination of subject races and nations by any other race or nation. The free, adaptable, unsystematic political system of the Commonwealth *allows* of frequent adaptation to meet new needs and vigorous growth; how far it *operates* for the welfare of all and serves as a bond of unity is largely dependent on the vigilant sympathy of responsible citizens, and specially of those who live in the Home Country.

"Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom, and a great empire and little minds go ill together."—BURKE.

(g) *The Wider Patriotism.* Last week we referred to the "national consciousness" which "heightened the capacity of individuals" and "enabled the nation to develop a richer life." Brought to birth in a small island and carried over a quarter of the globe, this sentiment has proved one of the strongest—if not the strongest—link in the life of the Commonwealth. A flag, a homeland tune, a few words of dialect English—it is very simple things most often that call up powerful emotions which guide and govern the lives of individuals and peoples. Love of home and love of native land have led to the wider love that can include in its sphere peoples and lands that have never been seen or known. For all the evil that has been done in the name of patriotism, has not it been one of the great constructive forces in the Commonwealth? does not it hold the promise of that greater patriotism which shall become a sentiment binding all the peoples of the earth in one great human family?

Read Hymn No. 4, "Our Motherland," and consider how best we can hope to express its aspirations in everyday life.

Someone has written: "We have been blundering on towards the Kingdom of God in the British Commonwealth of Nations." How far do you think this is true?

For supplementary book references refer to preceding lesson, p. 236.

November 4th.

III.—EUROPE AND THE FAR EAST.

Bible Readings : Acts 17, 16-31 ; Psalm 96.

Reference Books :

Western Races and the World. Ed. F. S. Marvin. (Oxford University Press. 12s. 6d. From a library.) See Essay IX., "Western Races and the Far East," by Professor W. E. Soothill.

Creative Forces in Japan. Galen Fisher. An excellent study of political, industrial and religious forces in modern Japan. (The Livingstone Press hold a limited stock of copies. 3s. 6d.)

The Clash of Colour. Basil Mathews. (Livingstone Press. 2s.) This popular book will be found very useful. Refer to index re China and Japan.

The Civilisation of China. Professor H. A. Giles. (Home University Library. 2s.)

Suggested Hymns : 34, 347, 348.

Aim of the Lesson : To try to understand some of the differences between the peoples of Europe and the Far East, and how these differences may be reconciled.

Notes on the Lesson.

"There is only one history—the history of man. All national histories are merely chapters in the larger one."—RABINDRANATH TAGORE in *Nationalism*.

Of most of us it may be said that our eyes have not seen the great countries and peoples of the Far East, our minds have not been informed as to their history and character, our thoughts turn to them but rarely and usually only in times of actual or threatened disaster. Yet we and they are caught up—whether for good or ill—in the web of world-life, and their lives as well as our own are constantly affected by intercrossing in the threads of that web. The measure of our ignorance may well be the measure of our humility at the outset of this lesson.

The Study of a Map.

A good map is essential, so that we may get a mental picture of the vast section of the world which we Europeans call the Far East. It should, if possible, be supplemented by a commercial atlas, as that will give information as to climate, trade, and natural resources. (The last-named will be found of

peculiar importance in any consideration of intercourse between East and West). Get your map out, therefore, and with it before you, discuss this statement by Professor W. E. Soothill :

The Far East—what does one mean by it? Strictly speaking, the term covers all the eastern peoples beyond the confines of our Indian Empire—Siam, Malaysia, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, French Indo-China, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan, Tibet, and last and greatest, China. Just as we sum up the European nations as a White Race, so nearly all these Far Eastern peoples can be generally summed up as the Yellow Race. Now these Yellow Races are as varied in development as are the races of Europe. You have the unlettered nomads of the north, baked in summer, frozen for months in winter, with their own languages, laws, customs, and meagre literature. You have the unlettered peasants of the far south, with their very different languages, laws and customs, peasants who toil for a bare living under a sun which the year round threatens to melt the very bones; where also you find the inflammable Malay and the gentle Javanese. You have the ignorant fanatical Tibetans on the west, on the east modern Japan, and in the midst the great continent of China, with its five per cent of lettered men and its ninety-five per cent of illiterate toilers, and with every variety of climate and development. (*Western Races and the World*, pp. 182-3.)

Points that call for special attention are not only the differences between the peoples and conditions of these great countries and those of Europe, but also the tremendous differences that exist between peoples of the great Yellow Race; and with this, the fact that the two leading nations of the Far East, China and Japan, are the "keys to the whole subject." It has to be noted that, except for these two great nations, practically the whole of the Far East is in subjection to alien rule—mainly European, though it is Japan which has subdued Korea.

Early Days of Intercourse.

For many centuries there was little or no communication between the Far East and the West. Professor Soothill says: "It is only during the last hundred years or so that the Far West and the Far East have seriously developed intercourse, and only in our lifetime that they have begun to fraternize. The advent of the West to the East has naturally been very disturbing. It did not begin under happy circumstances, and pecuniary 'profit' for both sides was the sole bond which enabled the acquaintance to be maintained."

We need not dwell at length on the pitiful story of early communications between white and yellow peoples. But we shall only get the necessary clue to later history and to problems

of to-day if we realise that many of the early adventurers—Portuguese, Dutch, Spaniards, and even English—"were by way of being bold and brutal buccaneers," who did not trouble "to burden themselves with a conscience." Westerners earned the title of "barbarians" by the way in which they endeavoured to extend their trade to China; their attacks and massacres provoked counter attacks and massacres; their contempt was met by contempt. Professor Soothill says:

"Not without excuse, therefore, did the Chinese style all Europeans 'barbarians,' and treat them as dangerous intruders, who were too active to be wholly excluded, but must be rendered as innocuous as possible by confinement to specified areas and by rigorous supervision. Thus was bred the spirit of contempt which a century and less ago treated with contumely the noble envoys of the East India Company and of the British King, and which brought about in 1842 the so-called Opium War, a war in which opium was the accident, albeit an accident unsavoury and discreditable. At bottom the real cause of the war was the Chinese word for 'barbarian' and the spirit of contempt engendered by it."

There were hours when it seemed as though the course of history might have been changed. In 1601, the Jesuit, Matteo Ricci, "founder of the Christian Church in China," was well received at the Court in Peking. His learning and judgment might have borne rich fruit in understanding and goodwill, had it not been for the conduct of traders, strife amongst the Roman missionaries, and the intervention of the Pope in political matters. How great is the tragedy when the work of the best men is frustrated by the conduct of their lesser brethren!

The Need for Sympathy.

We shall only understand something of the present situation of China and the Chinese—their agony of conflict and upheaval—as we regard their history *sympathetically*. Desiring to be left alone in their immemorial seclusion, they have had European trade, communications, political thought and practice, social relations, mechanical industry, and religious ideas and institutions, thrust upon them. Forced to admit these against their will, they have adopted many European ideas and practices for their own protection. Any attempt at allocation of blame for the past is out of the question, especially for those of us who are aware of our own ignorance. Speaking with a vast knowledge of the subject, Professor Soothill writes: "I am not vain enough to be unduly proud of our past history in China, but there is still less room for the Chinese to be vain. If two blacks don't make a white, two bads make a worse. At any rate,

for several decades past Britain has acted sympathetically and honourably. . . ."

Points for discussion :

In the space of a single lifetime China has passed from government by a system in which the Emperor was regarded almost as deity to the form of republicanism. What effects is this radical change likely to have had on the thoughts and conduct of her people ?

China has undergone an industrial revolution by the introduction of European methods in factory manufacture, mining, railways, etc. What are some of the good and evil effects of this change ? (Refer, if possible, to *Factory Conditions in China*, by Miss Constance Smith. League of Nations Union pamphlet No. 216, price 3d.; and to the *Consular Reports on Labour Conditions in China*, Cd. paper 2442, published by H.M. Stationery Office, price 2s. 6d.)

Political Changes and the Common People.

It is, of course, only possible here to touch on a few of many extremely complicated problems that arise in thinking about China. One important point may be stressed. We are apt to make the mistake of thinking and talking about China as though it is comparable to Britain or some other of the European nations with highly-developed political and democratic life. To quote once more from Professor Soothill :

" People here have had it drilled into them that the Chinese are a ' peace-loving people,' and assume that they are therefore a peaceful people. . . . But anyone who knows the history of China, ancient and modern, knows that it has followed the usual course of human history, only more so, in that it has soaked its soil with the blood of its own people more than any other country, unless it be India. . . ."

" My point is that there is nothing historically improbable in China dividing into two or a score of warring states as so often in the past. But as a centralised Government, under an autocratic divine-right sovereign, has been the loadstone of the nation through all history, so it is probable that a centralised Government will prove necessary to a Republic, and to emergence from the present distress. To all appearance China will remain a Republic. . . ."

" As to the common people, they know little of these political changes. They are neither politically educated nor politically interested. Hitherto their attitude towards Government has been similar to their attitude towards Religion. Both were matters for condolence, since Government meant tax-gatherers, or the law-courts, with nothing whatever to show for either, except loss of money or many stripes, while Religion generally indicated misfortune, sickness, or death, with a coffin and a grave as unwelcome additions to one's property and estate. As a matter of fact the Chinese have never been governed. They have only been taxed. . . ."

Whenever we read news about events in China, let us think in terms of its millions of men, women and children, "a multitudinous people, who are most happy when they are working, whose highest bliss is a wife and family, and who are well contented with an all too simple life," a people into whose lives there have come all the disturbing influences of the West, and who have a tremendously difficult road to travel before those influences—religious, social, industrial and political—can be reconciled with the age-long traditions, customs, and modes of thought that still largely govern their lives.

A Note for Discussion :

"Even people who cannot read at all are having their minds changed. In some parts of the Far East there are more cinemas in proportion to the population than there are in London. And the film tells to the people of every Asiatic race in the language that any man, woman, or child, however ignorant, can understand—i.e., the language of the picture—the story of the world's life. . . . The film flickers before the eyes of the East not only the wild feats of Buffalo Bill and the antics of Charlie Chaplin, the Oxford and Cambridge boat race and Sherlock Holmes, but the race-conflict (as in the prize-fight between the negro Siki and the Frenchman Carpentier), and the passionate romances of the West, that degrade the white woman in the eyes of the East. He contemplates with oriental reflectiveness the battle scenes of the Somme and the surrender of the German Navy. Behind those impassive, inscrutable faces, as they sit in the cinemas or study in their class rooms, the new thoughts of the West are creating fresh ambitions for the East."—*The Clash of Colour*.

The Progress of Japan.

Japan presents a very different picture of the inter-weaving of the webs of European and Eastern life. On her volcanic islands, geographical conditions helped to breed a virile race which was more successful than the Chinese in resisting Western influences. But, at the critical time, resistance gave way to acceptance—an acceptance which resulted in the adoption of "the military technique, the political institutions, the economic organization, and the spiritual culture of the West." Western nationalism and imperialism were met and resisted by their own weapons. How successfully this was done was shown by the victory of Japan in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5. But it was not only in warfare that Japan adopted Western ideas and methods. Professor Soothill, in 1922, wrote :

"Japan was early led into the way of modernization, with a progress so rapid that, through alliance with Great Britain, a position of international equality has been gained still unearned

by China. Japan has won her place by ordered government, by a radical revision and, on the whole, creditable administration of her laws, by systematic and thorough study and application of western methods, by the early reformation on a sound basis of her educational system, by the development of her industries, and by the very thorough development of western man-killing methods. . . . With an over-flowing population, a shortage of home-grown food, and an oppressive taxation, chiefly for military purposes, Japan is making an organised endeavour to exploit the resources of China, Manchuria, and Korea for her own advantage. This is making Japan a bad neighbour. Korea has been mercilessly, China arrogantly treated. . . ."

By way of illustration in connection with the first part of that quotation, refer to Frank W. Metcalfe's article on "Prison Reform in Japan," in the October, 1927, issue of *One and All*. The story which he tells suggests that Japan has outdone nearly every European nation in her enlightened and humane reform with regard to the treatment of criminals. On the latter part of the quotation, bear in mind that Japan has proved herself a good international neighbour in the work of the League of Nations. If it is true that self-defence has driven her to imperialism, it is also true that enlightenment has led her to take a foremost place in working for disarmament, and her Dr. Nitobe stands as a great figure amongst the whole-hearted servants of the League and for the welfare of the world.

One-third of the Human Race.

The peoples of the Far East—the Yellow Race—form about one-third of the peoples of the world. That "yellow third" cannot be cut out, cannot be isolated, must be ever more closely woven into the greater web of world-life. Traders desire it, for their own and the general profit; doctors and scientists desire it, because disease and ignorance are their natural enemies; church and missionaries desire it, because they have a world-gospel; statesmen desire it, for the welfare and stability of their own state structures; the Yellow Race desire it, for the welfare of their rapidly increasing populations, and because, also, their leaders are inspired with hopes and ideals for the future. Self-interest, misunderstanding, and ignorance are the lions in the path of progress.

Writing of the conflict between the civilisations of the East and the West, Mr. Leonard Woolf has said, "Imperialism is no longer possible, and the only question is whether it will be buried peacefully or in blood and ruins." Because the issue is uncertain, we should all be the more keen, whatever little thing we are able to do, to help towards the peaceful solution.

The Way of Hope.

Influences for good in these matters seldom get much space in newspaper columns—their “story” lacks the news-value of accounts of movements of warships and troops, of political speeches, or of crimes and disasters. But those influences are at work, and we should keep ourselves acquainted with them as far as possible. Note carefully the points in the following quotation from Professor Soothill, writing about the things that have effected change in the minds of many thoughtful Chinese. He says that the change has been brought about

“by the Mission College and Hospital, by wise British servants of the Chinese like Sir Robert Hart, by trusted British and other ministers like Sir John Jordan, by our honourable Consular Service, by able missionary writers like Drs. Y. J. Allen and Timothy Richard, by gracious lives of many missionaries, and especially by the increasing number of Chinese who visit the West, particularly America.”

If we had succeeded in weaving into the texture of our own national, economic and social life, and of our international relations, a full measure of Christ's gospel of Fatherhood, Sonship, and Brotherhood, should not we be better able to face our fellow-men and women of the Yellow Races hopefully and unashamed? The web of world-life is so intimately woven that our most ordinary every-day conduct may have its influences for good or ill in the life of the Far East. How far we practise, or fail to practise, the Gospel of Love, affects the relations of Europe and the Far East, even though as individuals we may never converse with men or women of the Yellow Races.

Some Questions :

Do you know anyone who has visited countries of the Far East? If so, what have they to say about their experiences?

Have you been able to meet Chinese or Japanese men or women? If so, what impression have they made on you?

What do you think are the reasons why Australia and America try to keep Eastern peoples out of their countries?

What are some of the main articles of commerce exchanged between Europe and the Far East?

Why is it that European clothing is worn by many people of the Far East?

How have Japan and China been able to help in the work of the League of Nations?

What do you know about missionary work in China or Japan?

How far do you think that the life of a factory worker in China can be compared with that of one in England?

How do you think the earthquakes and other great disasters of Japan affect the character of her people?

What is the most interesting thing you remember having read about China or Japan?

How would you start to tell a Japanese or a Chinaman about Christianity?

What would you say to him if he asked why it is that most people in this country are not church members?

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOK REFERENCES.

- Buddhism.* Mrs. Rhys Davids.
The Ancient East. D. G. Hogarth.
 (Home University Library. 2s. each.)
Three Religions of China. Professor J. E. Soothill. (Hodder and Stoughton. 5s.)
The Philosophy of Confucius. C. Y. Hsu. (Student Christian Movement. 1s. 6d.)
China and Britain. R. O. Hall. (Livingstone Press. 2s.)
China and Modern Medicine. Harold Balme. (Livingstone Press. 3s.)
Women Workers of the Orient. Margaret E. Burton. (Livingstone Press. 2s.)
In China Now. J. C. Keyte. (Livingstone Press. 2s.)
China and Her Peoples. L. E. Johnson. (Livingstone Press. 2s.)
China To-day Through Chinese Eyes. Second Series. By T. C. Chao, P. C. Hsu, T. Z. Koo, T. F. Lew, M. T. Tchou, F. C. M. Wei, and D. Z. T. Yui. (Student Christian Movement. 2s. 6d.)
 A book by leaders of the Christian Church in China, discussing currents of thought in that land to-day.
Christianity and the Race Problem. J. H. Oldham. (Student Christian Movement. 3s. 6d. and 7s. 6d.) Refer to index references to China and Japan.
Nationalism. Rabindranath Tagore. (Macmillan. 6s.) Particularly valuable chapters on Nationalism in the West and in Japan.
Japan in Transition. L. L. Shaw. (Church Missionary Society. 2s. 6d.) Published in 1922, this book deals with political and social changes in Japan, "considered from the standpoint of the Christian missionary."

Note to Leaders:

It is important that members should be induced to read Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in advance of the two studies of the play due in a fortnight's time.

November 11th.

IV.—THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS.

Bible Reading : Acts. 17. 16-31.

Reference Books :

Comparative Religion. J. Estlin Carpenter.

Mohammedanism. D. S. Margoliouth.

Buddhism. Mrs. Rhys Davids.

Missions : Their Rise and Development. Mrs. Creighton.

These four volumes are published in the Home University Library, price 2s. each.

Suggested Hymns : 20, 22, 158, 349.

Aim of the Lesson : To consider what part religion plays in the web of world life.

Notes on the Lesson.

The great religions of the world may be likened to vast webs, each binding together its adherents by intangible threads of loyalty and devotion. The webs overlap and their threads are interwoven. They take no account of national boundaries and very little of racial divisions. Their power over their members may be almost supreme or merely nominal. In varying degree they are all "missionary" agencies, seeking to win more and more adherents to the truth as they see it. Rivals for the loyalty of men, they must somehow exist side by side, keeping their rivalry in restraint because the propagation of religion by fire and sword cannot continue in a world that has already advanced far along the road of inter-dependence ; may we say, also, because such great proselytising religions as Christianity and Mohammedanism have learned their lesson in this respect ?

The World Distribution of Religions.

A good atlas is again essential if we are to gain a bird's-eye view of some aspects of our subject. But it needs to be used with caution. A small-scale map of Asia and Europe will show great areas coloured to represent the distribution of religious faiths. At best this colouring can only suggest predominant religions, and the splashes of secondary colours can only give a bare idea of the intermingling of faiths. Four shades of colour represent four great divisions of the Christian faith in countries

and areas where they are strongest, but without showing any membership of those Churches in India, China, etc. The blue for Hinduism is clearly defined in India, but takes no account of many Hindoos scattered elsewhere. We make the best use of such maps if we treat them as showing where the webs and the main threads are strongest, and as failing to show the intricacy of the web of world-religions; if we use them to get into perspective our ideas of the comparative strength of great religions.

For November 18th we had some figures as to the adherents of various religions in the British Commonwealth, and it will be remembered that these showed Christians as in a minority. Any such large-scale figures can only be approximate, and this should be kept in mind in regard to the following summary:

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ADHERENTS OF VARIOUS RELIGIONS
THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.* Millions.

| | | |
|---|---------|-----|
| Christianity (including Roman Catholics, Church of England, Greek Church, Lutheranism, and various denominations) | | 560 |
| Buddhism | | 140 |
| Confucianism, Taoism, and Shintoism (held with Buddhism) | | 400 |
| Islam | | 220 |
| Hinduism | | 210 |
| Judaism | | 12 |

Unity and Diversity.

We cannot here discuss or outline the distinctive characteristics of even the greatest of the world's religions. Dr. Estlin Carpenter says: "Beneath infinite diversity the mystic will affirm the unity of the whole, with the poet of the Masnavi, Jalálu'd-Dín of Balkh (A.D. 1207-1273)---

"Because He that is praised is, in fact, only One. In this respect all religions are only one religion."

But if we take even such small books as those on Mohammedanism and Buddhism in the "Home University Library," reading them sympathetically (that is essential to understanding), and comparing with Christianity, we become aware of the great divergences between these three faiths. All are the expression of that "internal world of thought and feeling" which is common to mankind, but their vast complexity of belief, ritual and doctrine afford a subject of infinite complexity to students. To quote again from Dr. Carpenter:

* Various reference books give widely different summaries.

" Comparison that confines itself solely to counting up resemblances here and there will be of small value. We cannot comprehend the real meaning of a single religious rite, a single sentence of any scripture, apart from the context to which it belongs. Acts and words alike issue out of experiences that may be hundreds of years old, and sum up generations, it may be whole ages, of a continuous process. . . .

" Behind the external evolution of a given religion, its modes of worship, its ministers, its doctrines, lie more complicated questions. What causes shaped these acts and moulded these beliefs? What elements of race are to be discerned in them? How can we account for the diversities between the religions of peoples belonging to a common stock, like those of India and those of ancient Italy? What have been the effects of climate, of the struggle with alien peoples and new environment? How does the food-supply influence the formation of religious ideas? What contacts have been felt with other races, and what positive loans or more impalpable influences have passed from one side to the other? "

We too easily fall into the error of the eighteenth century writer, that " the first general division of religion is into True and False." The more intensely we hold our own faith, the more needful it is for us to be sympathetic in our judgment of the multitudinous ways in which others have sought to know God and to do his will.

Our own knowledge of the great variety of doctrine, belief and practice in the Christian Churches should make us specially careful in speaking of (still more in passing judgment on) other religions. Christianity includes the Quaker and the Roman Catholic, the Fundamentalist and the " broadest " of Churchmen; Mohammedanism includes " religious orders and mendicant ascetics," " much of the earlier animism still remains " among its people in the Arabian deserts, and it has its Sâfi mystics of Persia; of Hinduism it is said that " out of these elements, a crude and ever-varying animism at the bottom, a highly-refined metaphysical pantheism at the top, figures of incarnation and deliverance, the cultus of the dead, caste, and transmigration, the complex strands of modern Hinduism have been woven." There are marked similarities and differences between the great religions, and within each of them are enormous variations of belief and practice.

The Birthplace of Religions.

" Asia has been the mother of religions, but various fates have befallen her offspring," writes Dr. Carpenter. Leaving out of account older faiths which, after existing in strength for centuries (e.g., the ancient cults of Babylonia), it is Asia which has given birth to all the religions in our list on page 252.

Buddhism had its origin in India, but now has its home in China and other Eastern countries. Hinduism keeps its hold on the country of its birth, as Confucianism does in China. Judaism and Christianity look to Palestine as their mother country but have "only a precarious tolerance in the land which was once their home." Islam was born in Arabia, the youngest of the world's great faiths, and its vigour has carried it across two continents.

A map of the religions of the world should be studied here and note made (a) of the birthplaces of various religions, (b) where they now exist in the greatest strength, and (c) the races and nations which have most largely accepted them.

Mohammed and Christ.

Of all the world's great religions, Islam and Christianity are the two which are making great progress. Islam, the name given to his religion by Mohammed, was carried "by a fierce burst of missionary effort," with the free use of fire and sword, into Persia, Syria, Egypt, India, and Europe, so that it led to the great Crusades and to the occupation of Spain and other European lands for centuries. It has had its scholars and teachers, who made great contributions to learning at a time when Christianity was at a low ebb. Its days of battle are—and, one hopes, may for ever remain—things of the past. But its missionary zeal is still an active force. The "simple ritual demands of the prophet, the recital of the creed—'There is no god but God (Allah), Mohammed is the Apostle of God'—the observance of prayer five times daily, the annual fast in the month of Ramadhān, the bestowal of alms, and the pilgrimage to Mecca"—these have made a great appeal to men of widely different races and have won their acceptance.

Africa is the continent where Islam has made its greatest progress in recent years. There its gospel has been welcomed by down-trodden native races, who have found in its acceptance a welcome into a great fraternity which has given them a sense of dignity as well as a source of spiritual strength. "The march of Islam" in Africa has been the greatest direct challenge that Christianity has had to face in modern times, and it has had a great deal to do with the Pan-African movement—that new unity of the black races which threatens white races, governments and institutions.

"Islam too may boast that it can show a brotherhood more real than that of modern Protestantism. A visitor to a Mohammedan mosque enquired what place was reserved for the Nawab during divine service. 'What?' exclaimed his guide, 'A place for the Nawab in the House of God? The Nawab and the beggar'

stand side by side.' He spoke the simple truth. In the house of God distinctions of class or race count for nothing. Unless the Christian Church can exhibit a brotherhood as real as that of Islam, we cannot be surprised if the latter is more successful in winning the allegiance of pagan peoples."—(*Christianity and the Race Problem*, p. 263.)

Christianity and the World.

We must be specially interested in the web that Christianity has woven through the life of the world and in its relations with the web of Judaism out of which it came; the web of Islam which rivals it in missionary zeal; the web of Hinduism, with which it is so intimately in contact in India; the web of Confucianism in the Far East; the web of Buddhism with its gospel of renunciation. This aspect of our subject is finely treated in Mr. Oldham's *Christianity and the Race Problem*, and special reference should, if possible, be made to his chapter on "The Universal Community of the Loyal." He writes:

"So strong is the sense of shortcoming among many who belong to the Church and so keen the disappointment among some who are outside at its failure to exert a deeper moral influence on the life of our time, that the tendency at the present day is perhaps rather to exaggerate than to ignore the faults and imperfections of the Christian Churches. The criticism brought against them both from within and from without is that they have fallen far short of the ideals which they themselves have been the principal agents in teaching the conscience of mankind to approve."

Consciousness of our own defects and shortcomings should make us very tolerant in our judgment of the religions of other peoples. But much more than toleration is needed. "Christianity, because of its faith in the Incarnation, is bound to 'recognize, respect, love and protect continually . . . the less full and less articulate stages of grace, in the other religions and in all they possess of what is true . . . as also coming from God.' . . . The Christian will experience a kinship and fellowship with all lovers of truth and goodness in the non-Christian religions, knowing that whatever of truth and goodness is in them has come to them from God."

"Kinship and fellowship" should govern our relations with all who give allegiance to other religions than our own. The webs of world religions interweave and overlap. From that springs the great opportunity of the Christian Church to proclaim the supreme worth of its gospel. M. Maeterlinck has a striking phrase: "When Jesus Christ met the Samaritan, met a few children, an adulterous woman, then did humanity rise three times in succession to the level of God." How can we try to rise "to

the level of God " in our relations with those of other faiths ? We may not often meet them, but the rarest and the simplest occasion is of importance. Even if we never meet them, our state of mind is important. The work of Christian missions reflects the intellectual, moral and spiritual condition of home churches. The policies of states reflects the state of mind of their peoples. The press appeals to passion and prejudice and finds it prosperous to do so because passion and prejudice govern many lives ; it would not make such appeals, and could not make profit out of them, if the mass of the people could " rise to the level of God " in their thoughts about inter-racial and international questions.

Creeds and Conduct.

Men of other religions will judge Christianity not by our creeds but by our conduct. If individual and national conduct displays arrogance, self-seeking, injustice or contempt, it is of no avail to proclaim that we are Christians or that our nation is Christian. In the web of world life men and women of all religions are faced with problems and tasks that can only be overcome or accomplished as they work together irrespective of their differences of belief and creed.

" Lesser differences are forgotten in the unifying force of a common purpose. In a battle with plague in India or with famine in China no one asks whether a volunteer is Indian or Chinese or British or American (or, we may insert : Hindu or Confucian or Catholic or Protestant) ; the worth of a man is his capacity to help. When men are in earnest about the fight with disease or ignorance, every man who can strike an effective blow for the right cause is a welcome ally. Teachers when they meet in an international gathering are aware of their fellowship in a common task on behalf of humanity. A similar sense of fellowship transcending differences of nationality and race is a common experience in international meetings to further humanitarian, social or religious ends. When this experience comes to men for the first time it sometimes breaks on them as a revelation and opens up an altogether new world." (J. H. OLDHAM.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS.

Make the fullest use you can of one or more of the suggested reference books to get a background in your own mind for the lesson.

With an atlas or an outline on a blackboard, note the areas and countries of Asia and Europe where the respective religions (a) had their origin, (b) have their present " homes," and (c) mainly extend their influence.

Note the figures of the comparative membership of the great religions throughout the world. Ask members what these figures suggest to them; as, for example, surprise by their novelty, ignorance of how most of the human race worship, or what they believe.

Ask members to say (a) what they think are the things that all religions have in common; (b) what are some of the most notable differences in these religions; (c) what they can say about the two questions (from Dr. Carpenter's book): "What have been the effects of climate, of the struggle with alien peoples and new environment? How does the food-supply influence the formation of religious ideas?"

It has been said of Mahatma Gandhi that "He is a Hindu by religion because he has been born a Hindu by race." How far do you think that is generally true of men and women.

Discuss why Islam has made great strides in Africa? Do members think that Christianity makes greater demands on its converts than does Islam? If so, ought Christian missionaries to "water down" their demands on their converts?

Discuss how Christians can best show their respect for other religions and for those who believe in them. If you were in the company of a Mohammedan and a Buddhist, what things do you think you would have in common for discussion?

How has Christianity been of service to peoples of other faiths in relation to health and disease, ignorance and education, freedom, poverty, respect for women and children?

How can we best reconcile belief in the Gospel of Christ as a gospel for all the world with great respect for other religions?

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOK REFERENCES.

- Christianity and the Race Problem.* J. H. Oldham. (Student Christian Movement. Paper, 3s. 6d.; cloth, 7s. 6d.) Especially the last three chapters.
- Mahatma Gandhi: An Essay in Appreciation.* R. M. Gray and M. C. Parekh. (Student Christian Movement. 3s.) Valuable as a sympathetic study of a great Hindu leader.
- Christianity and the Religions of the World.* Dr. Albert Schweitzer. (Allen and Unwin. 3s. 6d.) Two lectures delivered at Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham.
- Religions of the World.* C. C. Martindale. (Benn's "Sixpenny Library.")
- Three Religions of China.* Professor J. E. Soothill. (Hodder & Stoughton. 5s.)

Section XI.

Shakespeare.

NOTES BY JOHN A. HUGHES, M.A.

November 18th.

I.—“THE TEMPEST” (1).

Bible Reading : Psalm 104 or 107.

Neither of these readings is suggested as being appropriate in any precise way, but rather as helping to create a particular atmosphere in which to study this lesson.

The Tempest presents to us a world of many “orders”—princes, beings of the air, the savage, the lovely Miranda, the sailors—all compounded into one complex relationship. Psalm 104 suggests many “orders” under one Providence. (Is Prospero intended to symbolise Providence?)

The Tempest also, amongst other things, has many notes of release sounding in it; e.g., release from the old idea that wrongs must necessarily be revenged. Psalm 107 is peculiarly fitted to illustrate and amplify the many examples of release which *The Tempest* affords, for it is a Psalm of Release.

Reference Books :

Shakespeare. Sir Walter Raleigh. (Macmillan's “English Men of Letters” Series. 3s. 6d.)

Shakespeare: a Survey. E. K. Chambers. (Sidgwick and Jackson. 7s. 6d.)

Essays and Lectures on Shakespeare, etc. Coleridge. (Everyman. Dent. 2s.) This is specially valuable.

Characters of Shakespeare's Plays. Hazlitt. (Everyman. Dent. 2s.) Some very striking comments and sidelights—very valuable for our study.

Shakespeare's Workmanship. A. Quiller-Couch. (Benn. 9s.) History and criticism of the play; some comments of value for our lessons. Chapters XV., XVI., XVII.

Shakespeare. G. B. Harrison. (Benn. 6d.)

Suggested Hymns : 70, 129, 157, 363.

Aim of the Lesson : To understand something of Shakespeare's object in writing *The Tempest*.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. Shakespeare's later Romances.

The last group of plays written by Shakespeare—*Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*—are all Romances. In them we live in a world of the imagination, where anything may happen. Consider some of the elements of this play—a magician of power and a magic storm; a creature of the air and another of the earth—half beast, half man; a typical young prince of fairy tale, and as lovely a love story as ever was told; and a ruckle of drunken sailors stalking “reeling-ripe” through an enchanted island! There we have something of the setting, and some of the people who are to move for us in that setting. But the object of this and the other romantic plays is not merely to amuse or enchant us. There lies behind them a serious purpose which our poet works out—the more freely because he is not bound by any realities. (His romantic world is well described by Hazlitt: “As the preternatural part has the air of reality, and almost haunts the imagination with a sense of truth, the real characters and events partake of the wildness of a dream.”) Let us try to discover what that purpose was.

2. Tragedy—and “quiet places.”

The tragic world is full of possible beauty, and few of us would be without those tremendous moments in Tragedy in which human worth is revealed almost as in no other circumstances. We would not reduce life to a flat surface never to be disturbed by any fire or upheaval. Yet there is beauty in a still sea, as in a placid life, and not always does calamity go to the far end where it overthrows the individual. The tragedies of average lives are on no heroic scale, and in many instances are resolved into concord. We come through them—through storm into quiet places; and we can speak of the joy and strength of tranquillity, of tranquil days in which the soul suffers no deterioration, as well as of the exhilaration of efforts and testing times which call out our maximum manhood.

Note.—On this point consider the bearing of Maeterlinck's remarks in his essay on “The Tragical in Daily Life” (in *The Treasure of the Humble*): “Is the art of happiness not longer than that of sorrow, and do not certain of its attributes draw nearer to the soul? Must we indeed roar like the Atrides” (i.e., typical heroes of Greek tragedy) “before the Eternal God will reveal Himself in our life? And is He never by our side at times when the air is calm, and the lamp burns on, unflickering?”

3. Away from the brink.

At any rate, there are many who, having dared to look life in its tragic aspect full in the face, for one cause or another recoil at length. It may be because they have come to realise that there are aspects of life besides the tragic one, and that a too close attention to the tragic aspect tends to obscure these others; or it may be because not only one's hope, but one's very reason, is threatened if one looks, and continues to look, too closely into the horrific things of life. Let us be aware of these things by all means, but not to the exclusion of other factors. Pain and death are not all that life holds.

It is thought that we may observe a recoil of this sort in Shakespeare. There was what we may well call his tragic period, when every issue was pressed home to its conclusion of blood and death. Then he seems to have said: "But this is not always how it ends;" and so he wrote plays of Reconciliation. In *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline* there are all the makings of tragedy, just as there are in *The Tempest*. But in all three we are led through the danger zone into the calm waters of reconciliation.

Without expanding this subject further we may sum up what we have said with two extracts from Sir Walter Raleigh's *Shakespeare* :

"The Tragedies must be reckoned his greatest achievement; so that it may sound paradoxical to speak of the sudden change from Tragedy to Romance as if it betokened a recovery from disease. Yet no man can explore the possibilities of suffering as Shakespeare did to the dark end without peril to his own soul."

"For many years Shakespeare took upon himself the burden of the human race, and struggled in thought under the oppression of sorrows not his own. Did his grip weaken to cause him to turn to Romance? The marvel is he ever turned to play again! The Romances are our warrant that Shakespeare regained a perfect calm of mind."

Questions :

- (1) How far do you think we are right in trying to look into the dark things of life?
- (2) What is the connection here of Browning's words: "'Tis looking down that makes us dizzy"?

4. The meaning of Reconciliation.

In our previous Shakespeare lessons we remarked on the fact that Tragedy concerns itself only with this side of the Veil. There may be a Beyond, but here and now Tragedy shows us in shining light Human Worth, drawing us on to contemplate it and extract out of it its significance, . . . and then gives us a stage full of the dead. And such dead! Desdemona, Othello, Hamlet,

Lear, Cordelia. The heart, even though exalted, breaks at the thought of the waste.

Let us hear what Quiller-Couch has to say about this :

“ Desdemona, dead by her pillow ; Cordelia limp in Lear’s arms—
Thou’lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never.

That cannot be the end of it ! . . . this shall *not* be the end. There may or may not be another world in which wrongs are redressed. But there is a continuance of this world in newer generations [he imagines Shakespeare saying] . . . this warm, kind world is all I know, and in it, as I am Shakespeare, Desdemona’s fate and Cordelia’s shall *not* be the last word, and the sins of the fathers shall *not* be visited on the children.”

And so we have the heroines of the Romances created for us.

“ Creatures of loveliness, made to love and conceive children, renewing the promise of the world.”

Note.—The lesson of Shakespearean Romance is of supreme importance in its bearing on life as we live it and know it. It stresses the fact of *continuance* in this life : the passing on of life and ideas from generation to generation. In short, its message is one of evolution. Two points may be noted :

- (i) There is Tragedy in the Universe, and the waste (as we call it) that accompanies Tragedy.
- (ii) But waste is not all. Let us not lose sight of the gains, for we are faced by the fact of creative evolution, one feature of which is that the gains of one generation are passed on into the next. “ Happy endings ” have a place in life as they have in Plays !

5. Nobler than Revenge.

We referred in a previous lesson to the change of tone which took place in the Elizabethan mind in regard to the nobility of Revenge. The note is now fully sounded in *The Tempest*. Prospero, aforesaid Duke of Milan, and deprived and driven out by his brother, now, through opportunity and his own devising, has that brother in his power—to do what he would with him ! What *would* he ? Some say that at the beginning of the play he intends only revenge, and that a change takes place in his mind only when his own lovely daughter, Miranda, falls in love with Ferdinand, the son of one of his enemies.

Anyhow, as the play moves to its close, so does Prospero’s design become more clear. It is towards something higher and nobler than revenge. Incidentally the passage where it comes out most clearly is one which serves another purpose of the play—

Shakespeare's desire to show the pre-eminence of the "Human Order" over all other kinds. Note this connection very closely. Are we to understand that where Man is, and where he is most himself, there is no place for revenge?

ARIEL (*in reference to Prospero's enemies*):
 ". . . if you now beheld them, your affections
 Would become tender."

PROSPERO: "Dost thou think so, spirit?"

ARIEL: "Mine would, sir, were I human."

PROSPERO:

"And mine shall.

Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling,
 Of their afflictions, and shall not myself,
 One of their kind, that relish all as sharply,
 Passion as they, be kindlier moved than thou art?
 Though with their high wrongs I am struck to the quick,
 Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury
 Do I take part: the rarer action is
 In virtue than in vengeance."

(Act V., Scene 1.)

The reconciliation then comes because Prospero is great enough to be forgiving. He is in control of himself, and thus can control his world. "Be cheerful," he can say to others, because in himself is the source of cheer.

Points for Discussion:

Consider all this in relation to the precept of Christ, "With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again."

Is it ever worth while trying to "get our own back"?

In what ways particularly is Man superior to the lower orders of nature, especially to those nearest him?

6. The Love Scenes and their Importance.

Whether we will to do so or not, we cannot bind the future generations to *our* way of loving or hating. The tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* shows the members of the new generation trying to break the fetters their elders would place around them. In *The Tempest* an even greater thing appears. One of the *enemies* actually now wills that the fetters of hate shall be broken and that a reconciliation shall, if possible, come about through the new generation.

"It goes on, I see,
 As my soul prompts it."

"At the first sight
 They have changed eyes."

(Act I., Scene 2.)

No nobler love scene can surely ever have been written than that which opens Act III. It is a masterpiece, says Coleridge, and says well. Note the beauty of the language for one thing, and the ardour, combined with the modesty and sincerity, for another.

FERDINAND :

" . . . 'tis fresh morning with me
When you are by at night. I do beseech you—
Chiefly that I might set it in my prayers—
What is your name ? "

MIRANDA :

" Miranda . . . "

FERDINAND :

" Admir'd Miranda!
Indeed the top of admiration; worth
What's dearest to the world! "

Read Miranda's speeches. Note her beautiful directness.

" Do you love me ? "

FERDINAND : " Wherefore weep you ? "

MIRANDA :

" At mine unworthiness, that dare not offer
What I desire to give; and much less take
What I shall die to want . . .
. . . Hence, bashful cunning!
And prompt me, plain and holy innocence!
I am your wife, if you will marry me."

All this should be compared with the beautiful frankness of Juliet :

" Fain would I dwell on form, fain, fain deny
What I have spoke: but farewell compliment!
Dost thou love me ? "

(*Romeo and Juliet*, Act II., Scene 2.)

It is the same hand which wrote both scenes—the hand of one who thought nobly of women, and who has a respect for all "that *continuates* society," as Coleridge remarks. One who thinks well of man, as the poet of *The Tempest* does, must needs think well of woman.

We may note the same belief in man which we found in *Hamlet*. It is through the mouth of Miranda that it is given to us.

" How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't! "

(Act V., Scene 1.)

She can look out at mankind like this, not only because she is happy but because she is good. "She means nothing but good to the world and in return will credit it only with good." (Quiller-Couch.)

Question : Do you admire this frankness on the part of Shakespeare's women? Do you find it natural?

7. Shakespeare's Farewell.

This was his last complete play, and it is imagined that in the speech given to Prospero (Act V., Scene 1) he describes his own marvellous exploits. But now his work is over, and, he says,

" I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And, deeper than did ever plummet sound,
I'll drown my book."

Thus the magic of Prospero came to an end: but not so the magic of Shakespeare. That remains for us here in a way that we should try to understand and appreciate. In this and the other last plays "the fire has settled to burn with a steady heat." It has the qualities which many have observed in the later works of Beethoven—it is centrally-heated: there is a glow from within. It is not an old man's play. "The brain that devised *The Tempest* was not unstrung by fatigue." But, as in the later works of many artists, there is an autumn glow which issues from the steady fire of an accumulated wisdom and deepened knowledge of life.

NOTE TO LEADERS.

It will be obvious that profitable use can only be made of the above notes if class members have been induced to become well-acquainted with the play. Efforts should therefore be made well in advance to secure that they have at least read or re-read the play during the preceding week.

Assuming that that desirable end has been secured, the leader can then address himself to helping the class to appreciate the character and scenes of the play.

The main points of the above seven sections of the notes may be taken in turn, the leader aiming not at a detailed examination of the drama, but at the best possible rendering of selected lines and speeches, to illustrate the points, and at demonstrating how Shakespeare, having come through tragedy to peace and quiet places, presented this beautiful romance for the profit and delight of his fellow-men.

November 25th.

II.—“THE TEMPEST” (2).

Bible Readings : John 2. 23-25, and 4. 27-29 (cf. Luke 7. 39).

The readings are chosen as illustrating the insight of Christ into the characters of men and women, and his ability to see good where others failed to do so. A story is told in a Persian legend which illustrates this faculty in him very strikingly. One evening, on returning to Jerusalem, he found a group round a dead dog lying in the street with a rope round its neck. After listening to many slighting remarks on the poor beast, such as “He has been hanged for thieving,” and “Look at his torn hide, one could not even cut a shoe out of it,” Jesus looked down on the dog with compassion and said, “Pearls cannot equal the whiteness of his teeth.” In similar manner “the gentle Shakespeare,” as he was called, had the faculty of understanding men and women; and it is this understanding—well illustrated in *The Tempest*—which is one of the outstanding qualities of his work.

Reference Books :

See book list given for previous lesson.

Illustrative Quotation :

MIRANDA :

“O brave new world,
That has such people in’t!”

Suggested Hymns : 244, 409, 416.

Aim of the Lesson : To study *The Tempest* more closely, so as to appreciate its poetry and its insight into human character.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Poetry.

Some parts of *The Tempest* will be found very difficult to follow at first, and will only yield their meaning after several readings. See, for example, Prospero's narrative in Act I., Scene 2, in which he makes known to Miranda who and what he is. “Here is a very huddle of thoughts,” writes Sir Walter Raleigh, . . . a “scurry of thought” . . . “The syntax is that of thought rather than of language.” One imagines how the language flowed “fire-new” from the brain of its author, and one may well conclude that “there was no

blot in the papers." Words and meaning rushed together and shaped themselves into one magnificent act of creative art as if it were inevitable that thus it should be. "This later style of Shakespeare . . . is perhaps the most wonderful thing in English literature." (Raleigh.)

This hurried utterance, in which thought reaches the confines of language and of grammar, and almost bursts them, is not confined alone to Shakespeare. The last works of Beethoven, in similar way, reach the bounds of musical syntax. The fancies nearly break through language. We are led to see in such examples how human thought is ever beating at the bounds of possible expression, and making new forms for itself. So has it ever been in all creation from the beginning till now. The Word struggles to become flesh, and makes for itself new forms in which that great fact shall become increasingly possible.

But scurry and complexity are not all that can be found in the language of *The Tempest*. Read Miranda's beautiful giving of herself in Act III., Scene 1, lines 77ff, and there find that simplicity, surely unparalleled in any other English writer, which Shakespeare dropped into at moments when feeling was most deep. Look at the words used in this passage. Note how many monosyllables there are, and compare it, e.g., with Othello's heart-breaking speech which begins, "It is the cause, my soul, it is the cause." Or Lear's last heart-broken speech beginning, "And my poor fool is hang'd!"

Language cannot further be simplified, nor feeling more truly be expressed.

Still we have not by any means exhausted what may be said of the poetry of *The Tempest*, and no class should feel that it is not worth their while to spend some time over this matter. This play is a Romance. Look, then, at the romantic words that are used. Has any other play of Shakespeare's such yoked words as there are here, compounds of such great charm? "Sea-sorrow," "sea-storm," "sea-swallow'd," "sea-change," "seamarge." The play rings with such sounds, and they produce an effect of peculiar romantic beauty on our minds.

What music there is in words like these in Ariel's song, for example. It is in the key of the play.

" Full fathom five thy father lies ;
 Of his bones are coral made :
 Those are pearls that were his eyes :
 Nothing of him that doth fade,
 But doth suffer a sea-change
 Into something rich and strange.
 Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
 (Burden : Ding-dong.)
 Hark ! Now I hear them, Ding-dong, bell."

Professor Chambers speaks of "Shakespeare's later mood of serene optimism" (*Shakespeare: A Survey*). It breathes through the very language of *The Tempest* and is responsible for the exquisite beauty of its words and phrases.

2. Various Orders of Beings.

Prospero. Who is he? Providence, Man, or just Shakespeare himself? There is no answer to this question, but some may find it interesting to interpret the play in the light of one of these ideas. Anyhow he is the master of his world by virtue of his books. In plotting with the sailors against him, Caliban thus advises them:

"Remember
First to seize his books; for without them
He's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not
One spirit to command."

Are Prospero's books the moral and intellectual faculties of man, the things which make him what he is, and without which he would be—what?

Note at any rate that by virtue of his superiority he stands between the being of air, the breath-like Ariel on the one hand, and the earthy, coarse creature, only just above the brutes—Caliban—on the other. He is not without some kinship to either, or he could have nothing to do with them; but how much above them both he is! This it is to be a man. How great a place he occupies! "What a piece of work is a man!" How splendid and wonderful are these faculties which distinguish him! How are they to be used? For selfish ends, for the domination of others, or for the making of new and better things? Can Prospero give us any answer? How does he use his powers? Let us try to find out.

Ariel is one of those "ideal beings" which Shakespeare seems to delight to invent. There is a distinctiveness about him, so that, for instance, he is not in the least like Puck in the first of our poet's dream-plays. Does he not strike you as being just the servant for Prospero, sharing in a kind of way in the dignity and power of his master?

Caliban must be approached with caution, if we are to make anything of him, and with that sympathy which Shakespeare evidently had for him. Let us note that Shakespeare's love of man and interest in character are so great that repeatedly he creates a character which at the outset was to have been "unsympathetic," and before he is done with him we have been made to laugh or cry with him. That gaunt human figure, Shylock, came so much to life under the dramatist's hand that

the play refuses to be a comedy when he is on the stage. Falstaff came so much to life that there was no room in one play for him and Henry V., and so he had to die; but one feels that Shakespeare never forgave Henry for being the cause of his literary death!

The same thing seems to have happened here. Shakespeare may have set out merely to depict a savage, or some sort of sub-man; but the result is such that no one can follow Caliban closely without growing in sympathy and pity for him, and even in some sort of respect. Coleridge tells us he "is all earth . . . gross in feeling and images," with the dawnings of intelligence but devoid of the moral sense, and so coming short of manhood. "For it is in the primacy of the moral being only that man is truly human." Dr. Johnson found him gloomy of temper and malignant of purpose, and he certainly is all that. He is untempered instinct; there is no control or restraint over instinctive impulse on the part of his dawning mind. He has not wit nor experience enough to be able to recognise Stephano for what he is—a mere drunken sailor.

"A most ridiculous monster, to make a wonder of a poor drunkard!"

Yet in his own world he knows his way about. The natural history of the island is his book. He knows where a jay's nest is, and where the fresh springs are to be found. And further, when he and the two sailors are on their way to Prospero's cell, and the two latter are tempted to delay by the gaudy apparel hung out by Prospero as a bait, Caliban is not so deceived. He shows "the superiority of natural capacity over greater knowledge and greater folly" (Hazlitt).

"Let it alone, thou fool; it is but trash."

And note finally that he never speaks but in blank verse. Surely Shakespeare must have thought well of him to give him the famous and beautiful lines on the noises of the isle.

"Be not afraid: the isle is full of noises,
 Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.
 Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
 Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices,
 That, if I then had wak'd after long sleep,
 Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
 The clouds methought would open and show riches
 Ready to drop upon me; that, when I wak'd
 I cried to dream again."

(Act III., Scene 2).

Shakespeare created many masterpieces of character; Caliban is one of them.

Question : Does this study of Caliban throw any light for you on uncivilised man ?

The Sailors. " These fellows with their sea-wit are the least to our taste of any part of the play," says Hazlitt, " but they are as like drunken sailors as they can be, and are an indirect foil to Caliban, whose figure acquires a classical dignity in the comparison." Do you agree with that ? Do you share with many others the dislike to see drunkenness made a comic subject ? That is a fairly modern attitude. In Elizabethan times things were the subject of comedy which to-day we consider too serious to laugh about. But it is an interesting fact that laughter is a sure way of calling attention to a wrong. The time comes when the seriousness of it is realised and the laughter dies on men's lips. So to-day we are less prone to treat drunkenness as a comic theme than our predecessors were, because we understand its seriousness a little more than they appeared to do. If we can, let our objection to the treatment of drunkenness as a comic theme rest for a moment, and laugh at the rich, indeed the *fat* comedy of these laughter-provoking scenes. Stephano is built on a truly heroic scale, and kings it in a truly kingly way. (The comic genius of Shakespeare was running in full flood when these scenes were written.) But he rules only by the power of the bottle, and so, alas, his rule is but for the day. His power pales to nothing before that of Prospero. As for Caliban, he realises in the end that it was merely the liquor he worshipped in Stephano !

" What a thrice-double ass
Was I, to take this drunkard for a god,
And worship this dull fool ! "

But there was something about the man, as his last injunction testifies :

" Every man shift for all the rest, and let no man take care for himself, for all is but fortune."

Dare we laugh in our School over him with Shakespeare ? It is to be hoped so.

3. Ideas by the Way.

It does not do to use a masterpiece of Shakespeare's as a peg to hang some little moral on, but there are one or two ideas by the way which attract us in reading this play, and we can be forgiven if we take and use what appears to be there.

(a) "*The beggar on horseback.*"—Coleridge points out (and Tolstoy makes yet more of it) that Shakespeare has a certain veneration for all the established institutions of society, and hence is inclined to poke a little fun at the " passions and follies of a

mob." "He is never angry with it," however, but there is in his attitude something "of almost affectionate superiority."

Let this be as it may, he gives us, in the little kingdom over which Stephano ruled, a comic picture of the rule of those who cannot even rule themselves! "See the good-humoured way in which he describes Stephano passing from the most licentious freedom to almost absolute despotism over Trinculo and Caliban."—ruling them by what merit or right? We may ponder a little, too, over the bursting of the bubble of Stephano's kingship, and over the whole question of rule. Who is it who is fit to rule—any and all, without regard to ability or character? That is an interesting question, which we have not been able to answer yet.

Note Caliban's drunken outburst. "Freedom, high-day! High-day, freedom!" Does freedom come in drink, or in anything short of personal development, intellectual and moral?

(b) *Civilisation Contacts*. Prospero taught Caliban to speak—but civilised man owes to primitive man something more than that; and he must never treat him just as a means to an end. Would you criticise Prospero's attitude towards Caliban on the ground that he uses him merely as a tool? Are any men ever entitled to treat other men, however low in the human order they may be, like that?

"You taught me language; and my profit on't
Is, I know how to curse."

Or had Prospero actually given a fine example at the outset of how the higher man should treat the lower (see Act I., Scene 2, lines 344ff, "Thou most lying slave," etc.), and then been obliged to withdraw the freedom and care he had given to Caliban at the first?

Professor Chambers sees in *The Tempest* a little picture of our own, and others', world-wide contacts with primitive races, and asks: "Is it upon Caliban or upon the missionaries of civilisation that the wrong falls?"

(N.B.—The reference is, of course, not to missionaries in the ordinary sense of the word, but to the many—explorers, adventurers, traders, merchants, soldiers, sailors, and administrators—who have gone out from Europe to other lands with "civilisation" in their hands. Their story is not always a pleasant one.)

Drink and the Savage. That first scene between Caliban and the sailors may make us laugh, but there is bound to be a little wryness about the laughter, for we remember the fine primitive races that have been destroyed by "fire-water." The scene speaks for itself in this regard. Quiller-Couch remarks on this scene that while we have to our credit many fine empire-builders,

yet there is the other side, and he sees here "the beginning of what they call 'our world-wide empire' in Stephano . . . in this unholy drunken figure."

Question : In what ways do you think we have done what we ought to have done in regard to the primitive races ?

(c) *Gonzalo's Utopia*. Read the passage in Act II., Scene 1, in which Gonzalo paints an ideal commonwealth, founded and directly dependent on nature.

"All things in common nature should produce
Without sweat or endeavour."

Would you agree with the idea that such notions are merely delightful nonsense ; that nothing but a bare living can ever be got out of the soil direct ; that the only hope of raising the general standard of living is by high-speed industry ; and that we need the application of co-operation and scientific methods to secure a better standard of life for the many ?

4. The End of it all.

PROSPERO :

" . . . be cheerful, sir :
Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air :
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep."

And Quiller-Couch remarks on that, "But Miranda loves Ferdinand, and Ferdinand loves Miranda, and (thank God!) neither of them believes a word of it!" No, because Love is an eternal value, or it is nothing, and as such will outlast all dreams!

Section XII.

The Universal Appeal of
Christ (2).

NOTES BY JESSIE M. WETHERED AND W. ARNOLD VICCARS.

December 2nd.

I.—UNITY IN DIVERSITY.

Bible Reading : John 15. 1-17.

Other References :

The Ephesian Gospel. Percy Gardner. (Williams & Norgate. 5s.)
The whole book will be found valuable by all who can consult it. For this lesson the picture of Ephesus given in Chaps. I. and II. should be read, and the comments on the allegory of the Vine—pp. 236-239—should be considered.

The Fourth Gospel. E. F. Scott. (Clark. 10s. 6d.) (See note on p. 224) For this lesson see pp. 79-81, 259 and 289-292.

The Cost of a New World. K. MacLennan (Edinburgh House Press. 2s. 6d.), and *The Clash of Colour*, by Basil Mathews (U.C.M.E. 2s.). Either of these books will give a picture of the diversity and problems of the modern world.

The Christ of the Indian Road. E. Stanley Jones. (Hodder & Stoughton. 3s. 6d.) This interesting book deals in a very compelling way with our subject as applied to India and shows how unity as between East and West can be found, and can alone be found, in Christ.

The Golden Stool. E. W. Smith. (Edinburgh House Press. 2s. 6d.) Gives a very good and carefully drawn picture of Africa and of the problems which have so suddenly arisen in that continent owing to the rapid progress of discovery and colonisation.

"A Death in the Desert," poem by Robert Browning.

Keynote of Thought :

"Call Christ, then, the illimitable God."
(*"A Death in the Desert,"* Browning.)

Suggested Hymns : 16, 35, 41, 284, 349.

Aim of the Lesson : To show the unifying power of Christ.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. The Old World Diversity.

John's Gospel was written at Ephesus. Following the lesson for October 14th, let us look rather more closely at that city and see what it was like and what the people who lived there were like, about the year 100 A.D. Ephesus was then one of the most important cities in the world. What makes a city important? Sometimes trade, like that of Glasgow; sometimes learning, like that of Oxford; sometimes religion, or the possession of a great cathedral like that of Rome or perhaps of York. Ephesus was important in all three ways. To-day its harbour is silted up and its trade has gone. It is difficult to find on a modern map, but look it up on a map of the ancient world or of St. Paul's journeys, and you will see its importance. It was a great port through which trade passed between the Eastern world and the cities of Greece and Italy. It was a place of crowded wharves and of busy market, and a meeting-place of men of many nations. It was also a city of learning. Not the learning of the science laboratory such as we find in modern universities, so much as the learning of philosophical speculation. But that abstract side of learning occupied the schools far more then than now, and Ephesus was a great centre of thought. Philosophy made its mark on the minds and lives of men much as science does with us. The man in the street was as familiar with the jargon of philosophy as we are with that of evolution or of the motor-cyclist. In the world of religion Ephesus was famed for its mighty temple of Diana, of which we may read in Acts 19. That chapter gives a good idea of the popularity of the worship of Diana and of the renown it brought to the city. Acts 19. also tells something of the diversity of religions in Ephesus. There were Jews, there were followers of John the Baptist, and (verse 19) there were followers of the "mystery religions" which, with many fine ideas, taught a reliance on magic and on the repetition of dark and magical sayings (see *Ephesian Gospel*, chaps. 1-2).

Faced with the problem of this diversity, the writer of our Gospel drew his new picture of the Christ who called to them all, "I am the Way, the Truth, the Life." As we read the gospel we see the Christ again as the supreme divine figure lifted above every restriction of race, or of country, or of time. His message of Life is for all men in all ages, and in the allegory of the Vine all are equal sharers in him.

2. The New World Diversity.

"O, the difference of man and man!" said Shakespeare's Goneril (*King Lear*, IV., 2), as she compared her husband with the

man she preferred. And her husband, comparing Goneril with her sister Cordelia, might have answered, "O, the difference of woman and woman!" Think how various we are in our character, in our desires, in our ideals. (Certainly Adult Schools don't suit everybody!) Is there any possible real and deep unity for us?

Think of the foreigners you know; of their ways which seem as funny to us as ours do to them. And the differences go deep; there is diversity of ideal and of blood. Is there any possible real and deep unity for Europe?

Think of the peoples of the East, of India, of China, of Japan. Think of the backward races of Africa. The diversities are profound. Is there any possible real and deep unity for the world? (See the books suggested in "Other References.")

3. The Vine and its Branches.

Now read our passage—John 15. 1-17. Few more wonderful things have ever been written. As you read it first, hear Jesus speaking to his disciples of that intimate bond which joined them to him and made them one. Then read it slowly again and hear the Christ speaking to his new disciples, to those men and women in Ephesus who had never seen him, but who were learning unity in the life and love he brought them. How diverse were the branches in that city of many nations. Yet they were one through him, and his life in them was being shown by their "fruit." Then, once again, read the passage and hear him speak to us, to each little society here which bears his name, and to our whole great world which he is calling into his life.

4. Notes for Leaders.

This lesson falls into three sections. Each section should be considered with the "aim of the lesson" in mind. First look at paragraph 1—the old city of Ephesus. Try to show what a busy city in the ancient world was like. Then apply the "aim": a group of men and women knew for certain that they had found something capable of drawing together all their various and often discordant elements. Were they right? Did the spirit of Christ—whenever it really entered into the life of the past—make men one? The question is difficult to answer without more knowledge of the fundamentals of history than most of us possess. We may be obliged to take refuge in the knowledge that this group of diverse people, keen and apt to quarrel as they were, felt this power which bound them in a deep unity.

The second section of the lesson is about our own diversities. Draw a broad picture and get members to contribute. How different we are in temperament: "One man's meat is another man's poison." Then see the diversities among nations. Then

again apply the "aim" and ask the question: Does the Spirit of Christ, whenever it really enters into our life, make us one?

The third section of the lesson is about Christianity as a world religion. Look at that great phrase, taken as our "key-note of thought." The illimitable God! That is a tremendous thought. John would link it up with the opening idea of his book, "In the beginning was the Word"—"all things were made by him"—"in him was life": it is all illimitable. And John says the purpose of Christ's life is illimitable too: "that he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." Robert Browning goes the whole length of the matter: Christianity is a world religion or it is nothing:

"Call Christ, then, the illimitable God,
Or lost!"

Such is the summary he puts into the mouth of John's commentator.

5. Foreign Missions.

While these notes are going into print great preparations are being made for the meeting at Jerusalem of the International Missionary Council, from March 24th to April 8th. The meetings will be reported in the newspapers and can probably be referred to when taking this lesson. Two hundred carefully chosen delegates, about half of them nationals of the countries they represent, will have met and faced up to the many problems of the personal, industrial and international impact of Christianity. In the past we have often failed to give enough thought to the special needs of nations other than our own and to their different outlook. E. S. Jones's book, *The Christ of the Indian Road*, brings out this mistake in much of our attitude and work. The Jerusalem meetings aim at creating a better understanding for the future. Their deliberations are being so carefully planned that they may well mark the beginning of a new and better epoch.

December 9th.

II.—THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

Bible Reading : John 16. 5-15.

Other References :

The Fourth Gospel. E. F. Scott. (Clark. 10s. 6d.) Chap. II. "The Holy Spirit." This book is referred to in the notes on this lesson as "Scott."

The Ephesian Gospel. Percy Gardner. (Williams & Norgate. 5s.) Chap. VII., "The Doctrine of the Spirit."

The Spirit. Edited by Canon Streeter. (Macmillan. 10s.) Containing sections by various writers on God and his relation to man considered from the standpoint of philosophy, psychology and art. Some of the articles in this book are referred to in the notes on the lesson and will be found of value by any who can consult the volume.

The Double Search. Rufus M. Jones. (Published in America ; obtainable from Friends' Bookroom. 7s. 6d.)

The Historical and Religious Value of the Fourth Gospel. E. F. Scott. (Constable. 1s.) In this smaller book of Prof. Scott's, Chapter X., on "The Eternal Christ," will be found very useful in connection with this lesson.

Suggested Hymns : 62, 239, 249, 251.

Aim of the Lesson :

To see how the Spirit of Christ guides us into Truth.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. What is "Spirit" ?

Miss L. Dougall writes : "To spirit in all living creatures belong such life, hope, health, enterprise, curiosity, joy, kindness, love, as they may know. Stones or corpses do not know these affections ; therefore it is to the spirit in the universe that life and love belong" (*The Spirit*, section 2, "God in Action," p. 26). The author proceeds to show how the word includes evil and good spiritual powers and how the early Christians took the word and "appropriated it to the Divine Spirit which made for fellowship. It was a new use of the word. So used, it served to distinguish the indwelling force they felt to be God from those demonic forces which they, in common with their world, believed to inspire men

with animosities and diseases. They were hilarious, those early Christians. In their records we come constantly upon words that evince good spirits."

The writer of the Fourth Gospel tells in his opening chapter of the creative "Word" and of the "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." But when he speaks of the Spirit he has in mind the living Spirit of the Christ which he himself knew and whose influence he saw in illumined lives in the followers of Christ among whom he lived.

The history of the word *Spirit*, its relationship to *wind*, *breath*, *ghosts*, and its various uses at different times, would make an interesting study for those who have time for it (see, e.g., *The Ephesian Gospel*, pp. 141-145).

2. The Author.

One of the early historians, Eusebius, wrote, "Last of all, John, perceiving that the material (or external) facts had been set forth in the (other) gospels . . . composed a spiritual gospel." John sums up his conception in his grand and simple statement, "God is spirit." He uses this conception, as we saw in our last lesson, to break down the barriers of race and age. Our present lesson shows us how the Spirit which once was Jesus lives and works in the lives of his followers. Without referring to Jesus as Spirit, he shows him as a continuing presence, a "Comforter" or "Helper," one on whose active presence his followers could rely at all times.

3. The Urgent Need.

John's conception of the "Comforter" or "Helper" arose out of a great need and a great danger. The generation of men who had lived with Jesus had passed. They had left their wonderful stories of him, and they had impressed on their followers a belief that he would very shortly re-appear to establish a new and glorious age. They had died and the "second coming" had not happened. None was "left to repeat 'I saw, I heard, I knew.'" Doubt and discouragement began to creep into the young Christian societies. Questions were being asked as to whether Jesus had ever lived, and speculative minds already pictured him as a myth, an apparition, a creation of the imagination which had never taken earthly form and lived as man among men. John meets these speculative questionings by setting forth in its fullest value the power of the things which are unseen, by asserting their reality in the actual experiences of his fellows, and by anchoring them in the earthly life of a real Jesus. In the second place he meets the question, "Where is the promise of his coming?" by his own more spiritual conception of one whom death had only snatched

away for a moment that he might return for ever. The doubtings of the time are well suggested in the second half of John 16., where the disciples question, "What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me," etc. (see Scott, p. 303, etc.).

John meets the question of the disappointed with the bold assertion that the presence of the spiritual Christ is better than the bodily presence (see Gardner, p. 156).

Question : How has the spirit of Christ proved freer to work in human affairs since the crucifixion than during the lifetime of Jesus? Suggest some of the problems which it has attacked since, but did not attack during his lifetime (e.g., slavery), and some which have arisen since, but which were unknown in his lifetime.

4. How it works.

We may now consider the ways in which John tells us how the spirit of Christ worked in the lives of his fellow-members of the little Christian society in Ephesus. As we consider them let us see how they apply to us too.

We cannot limit the spirit of Christ in its scope, nor lay down rules for its working. John speaks of three ways in which the "Helper" came to aid him.

(a) *Remembrance* (John 14. 26). We understand the life of Christ as we look back at it from the vantage point of our own experiences and problems. Think how often a saying of Jesus comes to us with new meaning when applied to our own experiences. Think which are the sayings or deeds of Jesus that you most prize: ask the members of the class which mean most to them: try to trace each to some contact with your life. Can you recall times when some word of Jesus has broken in on you with new understanding? The disciples returning from Emmaus exclaimed: "Did not our hearts burn within us . . . while he opened to us the Scriptures?" And Paul has given us a saying of Jesus which had come to him with meaning through his own experiences (Acts 20. 35), a saying which none of the Gospels record and which would have been lost to us if it had not thus been commended by Paul to his friends at Ephesus.

(b) *Judgment* (John 16. 8-11). The life of Jesus set a new and higher standard for all men to live by. "We test our lives by thine." This subject will be considered more fully in our next lesson. The fact we now note is that it is the Spirit of Christ which prompts our better judgment; which guides us into Truth. John says the Spirit will "reprove the world of sin." What we know is that when a man turns from evil to good, then is the moment in which he most clearly hears the voice of Christ. Each member of the class can tell of this.

(c) *Fuller knowledge* (John 16. 13-15). We cannot rest alone on the recorded words of Jesus. His words held eternal truth, but they were spoken in relation to the events and thoughts of his own day. The revelation was to be progressive. It has been the supreme duty of the Christian community in every age and place to speak the word of Jesus in relation to the ever-changing scene of life, to proclaim "the living reality, the eternal which lies beyond and behind the changing phenomena of experience."

Class leaders should refer back to our lesson of February 5th, on "The Progress of Inspiration." The record of the Bible is a record of growing knowledge. We feel that the story culminated in the revelation of God in Jesus: but the Christians in Ephesus were faced with occasions unforeseen: What should be their attitude towards these foreigners? How should they regard these new Greek thoughts? How should they regulate their young society and organise their worship? It is in the pages of John's Gospel that we can see how the Spirit of Christ came to them as the "Helper" and guided them to a fuller knowledge than could have been given by Jesus to his friends in Galilee.

What about our own days and our own new duties and new problems? Has Christ no part in them? When Jesus lived in Galilee he was interested in absolutely everything he saw around him. He plucked the heart out of every problem. The Christ is the same to-day. You cannot name the most advanced science which does not need his Spirit to guide its application to human needs.

5. The Personal Call.

"He comes only through doors that are purposely opened for him" (*The Double Search*, p. 37). We state one of the aims of our Adult Schools to be "To help men and women to understand and to live the life of Jesus Christ, and to encourage them in their personal allegiance to him." We can only begin to do this as our own minds and hearts are open to receive from him.

December 16th.

III.—VICTORY OVER THE WORLD.

Bible Readings : 1 John 5. 1-5 ; John 16. 1-4 ; 32-33.

Other References :

The Ephesian Gospel. Percy Gardner. (Williams & Norgate. 5s.) Chap. XI., on "The Church and the World," will be found useful to all who can consult this book.

Life of St. Francis of Assisi. See *The Little Poor Man of Assisi.* J. O. Dobson. (Student Christian Movement. 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d.) ; or *St. Francis of Assisi.* G. K. Chesterton. (Hodder & Stoughton. 2s. 6d.) ; or *The Little Flowers, &c.* (Everyman Library, No. 485. Dent. 2s.)

The Pilgrim's Progress. John Bunyan. The description of "Vanity Fair" will be found useful for reference or for a reading.

Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion. J. R. Inge. (Longmans. 2s. 6d.) The opening pages of chapter IV. give a useful analysis of the distinctively Christian virtues as compared with the pagan.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. R. L. Stevenson. The novel which tells of the higher and the baser passions which strive in every man.

"A Grammarian's Funeral." Poem by Robert Browning.

"My Triumph." Poem by J. G. Whittier.

Suggested Hymns : 29, 81, 158, 361.

Illustrative Quotations :

"The things which mattered now were love, sacrifice, service, goodwill rather than tooth and claw."

"Christ is the prophecy of a new humanity."

(R. M. JONES, *The Double Search*, p. 24 and 37.)

Aim of the Lesson : To see the forces which are arrayed against Christ, and the nature of his victory over them.

Notes on the Lesson.

1. **The Worldly World.**

There have been times when the world was regarded as hopelessly bad, as "lost," as an evil place from which to escape. In his book on St. Francis, Mr. Chesterton shows how this was the

only possible attitude for Christians for many years in "the dark ages." In England, not so long ago, John Bunyan wrote his immortal book about the pilgrim whose one master impulse was to escape from this world and from the wrath which its wickedness had provoked.

But most people in most ages have felt the world to be pretty good. We, in our day, are keen to recognise at least a spark of goodness in all men.

The Fourth Gospel opens with a recognition of this widespread goodness. We are told of "the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." But, as the design of the Gospel unfolds, we almost lose sight of this opening idea. We watch the growth of a society of men and women, lifted above "the world"; a society, indeed, with which "the world" is in perpetual antagonism. What was the reason of this? Let your thoughts go back again to the city where this Gospel was written, with its pagan atmosphere and traditions and with its colony of Jews, often more bitter opponents of the new religion than the Greeks or the Romans. Often the little Christian society would feel very isolated in the new life they were trying to live. Sometimes among the early Christians this society seemed extraordinarily complete in itself; "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul" (Acts 4. 32); while a pagan observer commented, "See how these Christians love one another."

"Those who are faithful and listen loyally to the voice of God make up a spiritual realm of which Christ is Lord" (Gardner, p. 243).

What is this worldly world? Why the antagonism? And do we, too, live in a world which must be overcome?

2. The Ephesian World.

We have already, in our earlier lessons, looked at the great city of Ephesus where our Gospel was written. Prof. Gardner's description will help us to see the position of the little Christian society there:—

"It is hard to define the exact thought of the Evangelist, when he speaks thus of 'the world.' Ancient thinking was far less exact and definite than modern. And a mystic like the Evangelist will use words not in the concrete way of a historian, but with all their atmosphere of meaning which appeals to the imagination and the emotions rather than to the intelligence. He would not be thinking primarily of the Roman Empire, which in Asia Minor interfered but little with the early proceedings of the Christians: outside Judaea anything like an organised persecution of the new sect did not exist. As it is clear from

the Acts, it was the irreconcilable hatred of the Jews, stirring up popular tumults, which the early missionaries of the faith had to encounter. The Roman officials were far more likely to protect than to harass them. But when we consider the Ephesian background of the Gospel, the character of "the world" will be clear. A busy, thriving city, in the very highways of trade, and in the main channel through which Asiatic influences spread into Europe, and European into Asia, comes up to our imagination. There were the quays and the markets of commerce; there were the resorts of pleasure and dissipation; there were the halls and porticoes where the philosophers discoursed all day; there were the frequent processions and shows of the votaries of Isis and Cybele, with their trains of shaven priests and self-mutilators; above all there was the organised worship of the great goddess Artemis, 'whom all Asia and the world worshippeth,' by whose cult Ephesus had grown rich, and whose image was copied in scores of cities of Asia Minor. It was a world not at all like the severe crowds of Jerusalem: more like the Vanity Fair of the imagination of Bunyan, wholly given to pleasure and to gain.

"Such a world must always be in opposition to the seriousness of religious reformers, who regard the amusements of the frivolous, and the search after wealth and visible honours, as unworthy of the attention of men whose hearts are set on the things which are invisible, who make the doing of the Divine Will the one worthy purpose of life."—GARDNER, *The Ephesian Gospel*, pp. 249-251.

3. The Modern World.

The Fourth Gospel may have been written in a pagan city and with the circumstances of the ancient world colouring its pages. But it was not written for those times alone. It is a book for all time. Let us therefore try to look at our world, at the motives which impel our conduct, and see how this spiritual realm fares in our modern times. It is a picture of conflicts. Every one of us must take our side in the struggle, for it is fought out anew in the life of every one. R. L. Stevenson's story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde has, in some measure, its counterpart in us all.

The Seen versus the Unseen. The material world attracts us: its visible shows appeal to our senses; the hours of our days are perforce occupied in supplying our bodily needs. Do we rest there? If so, we are "of the world." Or do we, living in this material world, use it as the proving place of an invisible and eternal spirit? (John 6. 27.)

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth." If necessity did not force us, some of us would not labour at all

Is that true? Anyhow, nearly all of us are better men through having to work for our living. Then what does the verse mean? It means that we must ask what is the "living" for which we work. Old Scrooge, at the beginning of Dickens's story, slaved for gold: at the end of it "he became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man, as the good old city knew, or any other good old city, town or borough, in the good old world." We all know other illustrations. We can all analyse our own motives for labouring.

The Superficial versus the Fundamental. We love to see a quick return for our efforts. The immediate and the superficial easily satisfy us. The children of this world must "eat and drink for to-morrow we die." Compare this with the patience of Browning's Grammarian:

" Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
 Heedless of far gain,
 Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure
 Bad is our bargain!
 Was it not great? did not he throw on God,
 (He loves the burthen)—
 God's task to make the heavenly period
 Perfect the earthen?"

Or compare the attitude portrayed in Whittier's poem, "My Triumph."

The Easy versus the Hard. We have had a lesson on "The Cost of Life." Those who are "of the world" have too much love of comfort and of popularity to pay that price. "Hard is the good." The opening verses of John 16 show us that the early Christians had a very hard time. Those who pray to be delivered from evil must yet be ready to face evil.

The world's heroes, almost to a man, must be sought among the world's hardest workers. This is true, not only of explorers such as Livingstone or Scott, heroic though they were, but of the heroes in every walk of life; in science, in commerce, in thought, in statesmanship. Think of the finest men and women you have known. See how much in their characters was due to their indomitable spirit, their steady hard work in the face of difficulties.

The Selfish versus the Sacrificial. The great and final test of us all is the test of our will. If we are "of the world" our loves will be selfish loves. If we are not "of the world" they will be sacrificial loves. (John 15. 13.)

Look at these four fields of conflict between the worldly and the Christian and see the battle as we know it in every scene of life. Is it absent from politics, from business life, from the home, from our inward life ?

Questions :

- (1) What is the most " worldly " place you know ?
- (2) What are the most " worldly " sort of people you know ?

4. The Victory of Christ.

In this conflict with the world Christ is the victor. (John 16. 32-33.) That fact lies behind all Christian history. The writer of the Gospel knew it. He had seen the fact of it. He had felt the power in his own life. So had the writer of the Epistle of John. So had Paul; and he gave his own analysis of the conflict as he had seen it, and of the victory. (See Galatians 5. 13-25.) Since those days every age has given new evidence of the redeeming power of those Christian virtues and of the reality of the life in Christ—the life into which we, too, are called to enter.

December 23rd.

CHRISTMAS.

Bible Reading : John I. 1-14.

(This is the "Gospel for the Day" which is read in every Anglican Church at Christmas.)

The singing of carefully selected Carols, or the reading of part of Charles Dickens' *Christmas Carol*, will form a good accompaniment to this lesson.

Suggested Hymns : 179, 180, 182, 441, 442.

Aim of the Lesson : To deepen our appreciation of the meaning of Christmas.

Notes on the Lesson.

In 1914 the armies of great nations fought furiously for nearly five months—then, when the dawn broke on December 25th, they found it practically impossible to keep up their conflict. Not only did many of them "cease fire"—in not a few instances they climbed out of their trenches of death, signalling peace to one another as they went forward to fraternise.

Of the many thousands perhaps only a minority were members of Christian churches, but deep-rooted in the minds of nearly all were memories and associations that asserted themselves strongly on this one day of the year. Iron discipline could not altogether overcome the sentiment that sought and found expression in so remarkable a manner.

The world's greatest birthday asserted its grip on the minds and hearts of men on that memorable occasion. That it was not allowed to have full play was not the fault of the men who were "in the front line." In succeeding years it seemed to many of us a mockery to celebrate the birthday of "the Prince of Peace" whilst world-wide war was raging, but the day never returned without the thoughts of men being turned longingly to its immense significance.

What is the real significance of Christmas to us who are living in days of peace? Has it become merely an occasion for pleasure-seeking, or do we keep alive in our hearts what it means.

and what it *might* mean if the Christian peoples of the world celebrated Christmas as the world's greatest birthday, with all that that might mean in *securing* peace?

On a day somewhere about 1928 years ago there was born to humble parents of the Jewish race, in circumstances that were anything but conducive to maternal and child welfare, a child who was named Jesus. Exactly what happened in those days of Cæsar Augustus, when the great Roman power ordered a census of the people of a subject race, we do not know. What we do know is that round that birth there grew up many stories and legends, every one of them an indication of the tremendous influence of the child who, passing from the home of a village carpenter into the strenuous life of a preacher of a new gospel, ended his earthly days on a felon's cross, founding by his life and death the most powerful religion that humanity has ever known. Many years after, the author of the Fourth Gospel wrote the story of that child, that life, that death. Note his words: "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Turn to the gospels and read afresh how the fact of that birth is recorded with a rich embroidery of legend and story. How much does it matter which is exact record and which the result of the play of imagination? As men looked back and dwelt on the story of that life and death, their emotions were aroused and their imaginations powerfully stimulated. They could only conceive of the advent of such a life as accompanied by signs and portents, by herald angels and by the recognition of pious men, bringing gifts symbolic of the life that was to follow the birth.

Christmas celebrates humanity's rejoicing in Expectation and the Glory of Renewed Life. The Christian Church has brought into its festival, and given a new meaning to, various pagan customs and symbols. Yule log from Lithuania, Druidic mistletoe, Roman presentation of gifts, the tree of the Roman saturnalia, and Santa Claus (St. Nicholas or "Goodman Noël")—all speak of older customs connected with the annual victory or re-birth of the sun.

"It was, however, the aim of the Christian Church to ennoble and lift above their heathen associations all the customs that survived from bygone ages, and with this end their noble liturgy was framed, and many dramatic representations of the birth and early events of the life of Christ were instituted."

We inherit this celebration of the world's greatest birthday. Do we give adequate thought to its significance and observance, seeing in it both the symbolism of the re-birth of the sun and the reverent remembrance of the birth of the Son of Man and Son of God ? Or do we just drift into a holiday from work, with mixed feelings as to its value and no moment given to thought on its origin and significance ?

Shall we celebrate Christmas this year as a time when we see afresh, if not for the first time, the Christ in every child, the God in every gift ? As a day when we realise afresh the glory of life, ever renewed materially and spiritually ? A day apart in every year, and a day to inspire every day of a coming year ?

Appendix.**THE FOURFOLD STORY OF JESUS.**

By G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D.

What the Gospels tell of their own origin.

For anyone interested in the way in which history comes to be written, the most important words in the New Testament are those at the beginning of Luke's Gospel, and yet many readers pass them by without particular notice. Let us read them again in the form in which they occur in Moffatt's translation. "Inasmuch as a number of writers have essayed to draw up a narrative of the established facts in our religion exactly as these have been handed down to us by the original eye-witnesses who were in the service of the Gospel Message—and inasmuch as I have gone carefully over them all myself from the very beginning, I have decided, O Theophilus, to write them out in order for your excellency, to let you know the solid truth of what you have been taught." How often readers of these words must have wished that they could get a look at the records of which Luke speaks! Modern study of the Gospels has now enabled us to fulfil that desire, and with almost as much certainty as if the books were actually before us. This is a great and wonderful achievement only made possible by the patient and diligent labour of scores of students, who have loved their task so much that each word has been carefully examined in order that its secret might be discovered. The fascinating story has been often told, and we can only sketch it afresh in very brief outline, that the members of our Schools may understand more clearly, and value more than ever before, the wonderful Gospel of John to which so much space is given in this year's series of lessons.

The Early Preachers.

The book of Acts gives us various specimens of addresses delivered by Stephen, Peter, Paul and others, as they set forth the message about Christ to different classes of hearers. Among the younger members of this community was John Mark. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary tour,

and afterwards became the close companion of Peter. At a later time he was again with Paul, and much esteemed by that experienced missionary (2 Tim. 4. 11). Thus he would have ample opportunity of hearing the way in which different teachers presented their message, but early writers speak of him as being in a special manner Peter's interpreter. Possibly his knowledge of Greek was better than that of the apostle, and it is easy to imagine how requests may frequently have been made to the younger man to write some account of what had been said, lest it might be forgotten. Careful readers will find in Mark's pages many little personal touches of description about Jesus, and other phrases more frank and outspoken than in later writers. It has also been noticed that Peter himself is described more fully and with less reserve than in the other Gospels. Thus it has often been named "Peter's Gospel." In Paul's letters we also find echoes of the early preaching and teaching (e.g., 1 Cor. 15. 1-11). In this passage the writer speaks of passing on to the Corinthians what he had himself received, and, as we must remember, Paul's letters are the books in the New Testament that were written most early. This passage stands as our first written testimony to the Resurrection, and contains incidents connected therewith that are not found elsewhere. (Note especially "appearances" to Peter and James, and *no* mention of the women.) For another example of a similar sort see 1 Cor. 11. 23.

Mark's Gospel the Foundation Stone.

If one reads Mark's Gospel, and then immediately afterwards that from the pen of Luke, one will be struck by many similarities. Not only the stories themselves, but oft-times the words in which they are told, will be found to be the same. There is much new material in Luke—sometimes long sections that have nothing to correspond with them in the shorter book, but the resemblances are very remarkable, and are not to be accounted for by the mere fact that similar narratives are given by two narrators. A parallel may be found in modern newspapers, when a common source of information has been worked up by various writers, each of whom makes his own additions or alterations. The facts can only be properly accounted for in one way—*Luke had Mark's narrative before his eyes*. Again, if one turns to Matthew's Gospel, he will have a similar experience. Here the material has been more fully used, and the order of events is often different, but again the definite conclusion is reached—*the writer of Matthew had also Mark's narrative before his eyes*. But can we go further and find another of Luke's books? The answer seems to be an absolutely certain "Yes!" Let us this time read the Gospels of Luke and Matthew together, for the moment disregarding

Mark, and we shall find many passages of close similarity, notably parables, the section known as the "Sermon on the Mount," and the prophetic discourse delivered in Jerusalem, which are too much alike for the resemblance to be accounted for otherwise than by the conclusion that each writer had the same written material before him as he composed his Gospel. This seems to have been some collection of the sayings of Jesus. Is anything more likely than that one of the first possessions an early Christian would desire would be some of the great teachings of Jesus in a written form? The New Testament itself bears record that the Gospels contain only fragments of what he said and did (cf. John 20. 30, 31; 21. 24-25; Acts 20. 35).

What is "Q"?

But in recent times more than one discovery has been made of actual written documents that contained such sayings, some of which are in our Gospels, in slightly altered form, and others not there at all—see *The Unwritten Gospel*, by Roderic Dunkerley (Allen and Unwin. 8s. 6d.), and *The Unwritten Sayings of Christ*, by Griffinhoofe (Heffer and Sons. Out of print). There were probably many such collections in the early days, and one definite set seems to lie behind Matthew's Gospel. This probably Luke also used, though he divided it more and put the words more frequently into their probable historical setting. To this collection scholars have given the sign "Q" (the initial letter of the German word, "Quelle" meaning "source"; cf. our English word "well" meaning a "water source"). Luke, Matthew, and perhaps even Mark, must have had other sources, from which they derived matter peculiar to their own books; but into these more intricate problems it is not possible for us here to enter.

Had Luke's Gospel an earlier form?

One further modern theory must here, however, be touched upon, especially as, in the present writer's judgment, it is almost certainly correct, and throws a flood of light on many questions. In very few words, the theory is that the Gospel of Luke had been issued first in a shorter form, probably beginning with the chapter that now stands as the "third." A possible reconstruction of this earlier Gospel consists of the following passages in the present one, and they are worth careful study (Luke, chapters 3. 1-4. 30; 5. 1-11; 6. 12-8. 3; 9. 51-18. 14; 19. 1-28, 37-44, 47, 48; 22; 24). If we read the shorter form we shall make several discoveries as to the chief interests taken by the writer in the story of Jesus, and some of his reasons for thinking it worth while

to re-write it. We shall also find special and peculiar links with the Gospel of John, of which we shall speak presently, and the reasons why, with the knowledge of new material, he later revised and enlarged his book. We have also an interesting parallel in the Book of Acts, from the pen of the same writer. The foundation of that book is generally recognised to be the narrative of Luke as a personal eyewitness of events in the main section of the book from chapter 16. 10 (where the word "we" first occurs) onwards. If Luke did this on one occasion it is probable he did it on the other. He was obviously a man who desired, as we say, to keep his writing "up to date" by revised editions of his work.

For more detailed examinations of the first three Gospels, and their relation to one another, readers must be referred to the larger books dealing with the subject, and we now turn to the question of the Fourth Gospel, known as that of John.

Why was a fourth Gospel necessary?

It is not easy to speak definitely about dates, and we have no space here to examine the question in detail, but we may say roughly that 1 Corinthians was written about A.D. 50, thus being a witness to the events to which it refers within twenty years of the time of their happening. Probably Mark and the earliest form of Luke are witnesses to independent sources of information about the year 60 (though their sources must be earlier). Matthew will give us a testimony of about ten years later, and both early tradition and modern scholarship would agree that the Gospel of John dates from 90-100 A.D. The place of its origin is almost certainly Ephesus. At first glance it is very different from those which preceded it. Very few narratives (save those of the Passion) are common to the four, and in language and style it stands by itself. It contains no parables, though it has beautiful allegories—e.g., that of the Vine, to which a lesson is devoted in the present Handbook.

But a further examination reveals certain close contacts, especially with the supposed earlier form of Luke. The chief of these are—stories of Martha and Mary, interest in the Samaritans, the separation of the Last Supper from the Passover, and consequently a different date for the Crucifixion (on the eve of the Passover—the earlier form of Luke seems to have given this), and incidents of the arrest and trial of Jesus. Even distinctive forms of the teaching of Jesus, rare in the first three Gospels, have their parallel in Luke and John (see Luke 10. 16-24; cf. Matt. 25. 30). The teaching of Paul had become immensely important, owing to his widespread missionary activities and the influence of his letters. Many elements in it were found difficult (see 2 Peter 3. 15, 16, though probably a later testimony). He

had been all along engaged in controversy particularly with those who wished to subject Christians to Jewish ideas and rites, and on the other hand, had been compelled to re-interpret the ideas of Jesus in such a way as to make them acceptable to people familiar with the Greek language and thought (see especially *Colossians* and *Ephesians*, and also another writer's views in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*). Perhaps he had been led overmuch to stress his great thought about Jesus as one with the Eternal Christ—the Son of God from all eternity—manifested for a time in human form, and thus “humiliated,” hiding his glory (Phil. 2. 6-11), but now and for ever dwelling in the splendour of the eternal world. It was at least very easy for others to read this teaching in such a way as to belittle the necessity for laying much stress on the earthly life of Jesus, and to think only in terms of God's relation to men through his eternal spirit. Occasional words of Paul (2 Cor. 3. 17) might at any rate countenance their regarding the Spirit as identical with the Christ whom men had recognised in Jesus.

At Ephesus there was probably a specially sharp emphasis laid on certain aspects of Paul's teaching, and the controversy may have been keener there than elsewhere between “Judaisers” and Paulinists on the one hand, and on the other between those who valued the earthly life of Jesus and those who considered that of secondary importance. To one man, anyhow, it seemed that the time was ripe for a new setting of the immortal story.

“New occasions teach new duties: time makes ancient good uncouth,
They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of truth.”

So he took his pen in hand, and told the story from a new angle. Who he was we cannot definitely decide, save that he was “an honoured, beloved and highly-trusted disciple” (John 21. 24). His book reveals him best as one who had entered more perfectly than any one else into the inner mind and purpose of his Lord. The Church has loved to regard him as the special friend of Jesus during his life-time—his favourite disciple (John 19. 26, Moffatt). Nor can anything that has been discovered definitely disprove this theory, so it is open to us all to believe it if we wish. Anyhow he is one of the men most gifted with spiritual insight and imagination that the world has ever known. To him the earthly life of Jesus was his greatest glory—the humiliation was in itself the highest triumph (see, e.g., the exquisite narrative in John 13. 1-16, and compare it with Luke 12. 37, 38). He has evidently not depended much on the writings of his predecessors. For him the spirit and not the letter was of

primary importance. He has not even troubled to give the form of the words in which Jesus spoke in any other way than in the language that came naturally to himself, so that frequently we cannot tell in his pages when the words of Jesus end and his own reflections upon them begin; but we know his aim, and we know he has gloriously succeeded (John 20. 30, 31), for the testimony of Christian men and women all down the ages agrees that this book has unveiled to them the secret of eternal life with greater clearness and power than any other that has been written.

Books dealing with the subject are very numerous, and many of them admirable. Probably the most accessible and brief of recent treatments is Canon Streeter's *The Synoptic Problem*, pp. 672-680 in *Peake's Commentary* (from a library). Consult also E. Grubb, *The Bible, its Nature and Inspiration*, pp. 185-209 (Allen & Unwin, 2s. 6d.) and, on the Gospel of John, his book *The Word Made Flesh* (S.C.M., 2s. 6d. and 4s.). For students who wish to pursue the subject very fully Canon Streeter's *The Four Gospels* (Macmillan. 21s.), to be found in large libraries, is by far the best book.

The Theosophical Society in England

23, BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.

Lectures every Sunday (7 p.m.) at Mortimer Hall;
93, Mortimer Street (Near Oxford Circus), London, W.1

PENNY BOOKLETS

ON SALE IN THE PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT
23, BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1

Theosophy and the Theosophical Society

There are no Dead
Reincarnation
The Law of Human Destiny—Karma
The Occult Side of Christianity
The Power of Thought
Scientific Evidence that the Dead still Live
The Other Side of Death
Man in Life and Death
To Those who Mourn
The Work of the Theosophist
What is the Theosophical Society
The Great Plan
Lemuria and Atlantis

Reconstruction and the New Era

The Message of the Coming Religion
What Theosophy is
The Child, Our Responsibilities and Opportunities
The Brotherhood of Religions
Thought, the Creator
Theosophy and Christianity
The Jubilee Convention and the Three World Movements
When the World Teacher Comes
Annie Besant, D.L., Theosophy and The Coming Race.

FREE SERIES OF BOOKLETS ON APPLICATION.

BOOKS FOR BIBLE STUDY.

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge.

Consisting of five hundred thousand references and parallel passages, with numerous illustrative notes arranged in chapter and verse to suit all editions of the Bible. In cloth, 8/6 net; and leather binding, 17/6 net.

The Bagster Comprehensive Helps to Bible Study.

With a new Concordance, elementary introductions to the Hebrew and Greek languages, illustrations, and an indexed Bible Atlas. Revised by Professor WALTER F. ADENEY, M.A., D.D. Nonpareil type. Size of book, 7 by 5 inches. Cloth binding, 4/- net. India paper, French morocco, yapped, red gilt edges, 7/6 net.

Simplified Helps to Bible Knowledge.

A series of practical, up-to-date aids to the use and study of the Bible, covering clearly and concisely, its history and teaching. Illustrated by original sketch maps, etc. Foolscap 8vo. paper, 6d. net.

Cruden's Concordance to the Bible.

Embracing every passage of Scripture contained in the largest editions. Size 6½ by 4¼ inches. Cloth, 3/- net.

Bagster's Students' Books in Greek and Hebrew. All Catalogues free.

BAGSTER'S, 15, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4

ADULT EDUCATION
is one of the most pressing
needs of Democracy to-day

The Educational, Social and Religious
Work carried on in East and Central
London by

The Bedford Institute Association
(with its nine centres of activity)
should appeal to all Adult School
men and women.

£4,500

URGENTLY NEEDED
FOR ITS MAINTENANCE
AND DEVELOPMENT

Please send your contribution to
REGINALD A. SLADER (Secretary)
THE BEDFORD INSTITUTE
QUAKER STREET, LONDON, E.1.
who would be happy to furnish information
about the work. Please ask him to do so.

FELLOWSHIP HOLIDAYS

BY

MOUNTAINS, MOOR AND SEA.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| THE LAKE DISTRICT | NORMANDY |
| THE NORFOLK COAST | SWITZERLAND |
| CORNWALL AND DEVON | THE ITALIAN LAKES |
| THE SOUTH COAST | THE AUSTRIAN TYROL |
| NORTH & SOUTH WALES | also |
| THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS | YOUTH'S CAMPS |
| THE ISLAND OF ARRAN | TOUR THROUGH OLD ENGLAND |
| THE DERBYSHIRE MOORS AND DALES | WINTER HOLIDAYS. &c. |

Full particulars from

HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP

(Dept. A.) "HIGHFIELD," GOLDSMITH'S GREEN RD., LONDON, N.W.11.

*To See AN ADULT SCHOOL IN
SESSION*

is better than to read about it

WHY NOT VISIT

The CENTRAL ADULT SCHOOL
FRIENDS HOUSE, EUSTON ROAD, N.W.1 ?

Exactly opposite Main Entrance, Euston Station

ROOMS 7 and 8

GROUND FLOOR

EVERY THURSDAY at 7 p.m.

Visitors from other countries
especially welcomed ' ' '

Write for Syllabus to

L. B. BURTT, 46 CARSON ROAD, DULWICH,
S.E.21

The Handbook Lesson considered is that dated for the Sunday following

"Reading is to the mind what exercise
is to the body."

Sir Richard Steele.

The compilers of the Adult School Lesson Hand-
book recognise that other books are necessary to
supplement the aid they give. References are there-
fore given during the year to many additional
books. Any of these books we shall be pleased to
supply. Will you send us your orders or enquiries?

TEACHERS & TAUGHT TRADE DEPT.,
4, FLEET LANE, LONDON, E.C.4.

Manager: C. F. GARROOD

CURWEN EDITION

MUSIC FOR ADULT SCHOOLS AND CHOIRS.

FOLK AND NATIONAL SONGS.

Collected and arranged by S. BARING GOULD, M.A., and CECIL SHARP, B.A.

ENGLISH FOLK-SONGS FOR SCHOOLS (6051) .. Price 6/-

Vocal Edition 2/- Words only, 6d.

Separate edition, Staff notation only, 3d. each.

Selected and arranged by Sir H. HADOW.

SONGS OF THE BRITISH ISLANDS (6179) .. Price 5/-

Vocal edition, 1/6. Words only, 6d.

Collected by Mrs. CLIFFORD BECKETT.

SHANTIES AND FOKEBITTERS (6293) .. Price 2/6 net.

Collected by ALICE E. GILLINGTON.

OLD CHRISTMAS CAROLS (6266) .. Price 2/6 net.

Noted by JOHN GRAHAM.

DIALECT SONGS OF THE NORTH (6285) .. Price 2/6 net.

Edited by CLIVE CAHEY.

TEN ENGLISH FOLK-SONGS (6301) .. Price 2/6

Collected and Edited by Sir R. R. TERRY.

THE SHANTY BOOKS, Parts I & II (2951/2)

Thirty Shanties in each for solo voice. Price 6/- net cash each.

Words only 6d. Vocal editions. Price 1/6 each.

Collected and arranged by W. G. WHITTAKER.

NORTH COUNTRY BALLADS, SONGS AND PIPE TUNES (6306)

Vocal edition (complete) 2/6. Two parts each 6/- net.

Full detailed Catalogues upon application.

LONDON: J. CURWEN & SONS, Ltd, 24, BERNERS STREET, W. 1.

FIRCROFT BOURNVILLE

Residential College for
Working Men.

Courses in connection with the
Selly Oak College are arranged
for Adult School Members.

**Subjects: Bible Study,
Economics and Social
Affairs, etc.**

Fees £25 per Term.

The N.A.S.U. Council offers to
provide up to half the fees for
two Adult School Candidates
who will enter for a year's course
in October, 1928, and whose
local Schools or Unions will
make an equal contribution.

For full particulars apply to the Bursar.

BOOKS are A NECESSITY

TO . . .

Every Thinking
Man and Woman

Send your Book orders
TO

W. J. BRYCE,

"An Adult School Bookseller."

69, HIGH HOLBORN,
LONDON, W.C.1.

Telephone: Chancery 7415.

CHAIRS

OF
SUPERIOR QUALITY

Cheap Chairs
for Halls,
Mission Rooms
&c.



Catalogue on application

Mealing Bros., Ltd.

Avenue Chair Works,
West End Road, High Wycombe

Telephone: Wycombe 499

ADULT SCHOOL BADGES



The National Adult School Badge—
"THE EUREKA"

Sole Manufacturers—

A. FENWICK, Ltd.

Original Introducer of Adult School
Badges; also manufacturer of every
description of Medals, Badges, Jewels,
etc., etc.

ATHLETIC WORKS,
VYSE ST., BIRMINGHAM.

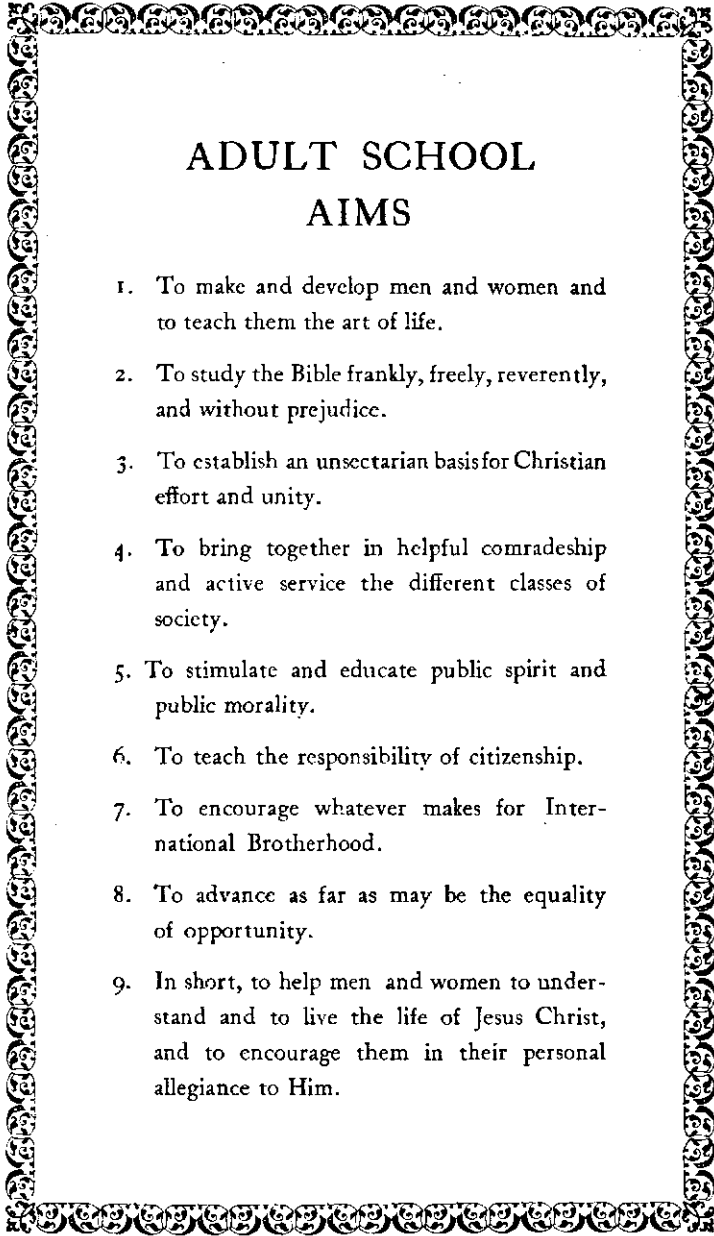
LISTS FREE.

WE ARE GLAD TO KNOW

that copies of the Adult School Lesson Handbook are valued by many men and women not connected with the Adult School Movement.

Any such readers of this book who would like to have information about Adult Schools and their work are cordially invited to write to the

**NATIONAL ADULT SCHOOL UNION,
30, BLOOMSBURY STREET,
LONDON, W.C.1.**

A decorative border with a repeating floral or scrollwork pattern surrounds the central text.

ADULT SCHOOL AIMS

1. To make and develop men and women and to teach them the art of life.
2. To study the Bible frankly, freely, reverently, and without prejudice.
3. To establish an unsectarian basis for Christian effort and unity.
4. To bring together in helpful comradeship and active service the different classes of society.
5. To stimulate and educate public spirit and public morality.
6. To teach the responsibility of citizenship.
7. To encourage whatever makes for International Brotherhood.
8. To advance as far as may be the equality of opportunity.
9. In short, to help men and women to understand and to live the life of Jesus Christ, and to encourage them in their personal allegiance to Him.

A SELECTED LIST OF

Adult School Publications.

[SEND CASH WITH ORDER—ALWAYS.]

THE HISTORY OF ADULT SCHOOLS.

THE ADULT SCHOOL MOVEMENT: ITS ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT. By G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D. 453 pages, with 20 illustrations. Limp cloth, 1s. 6d. net, post free, 1s. 10d.; Cloth boards, gilt, 5s. net; post free, 5s. 6d.

STUDY BOOKS AND BOOKLETS.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. By NORMAN ANGELL, J. FAIRGRIEVE, M.A., C. DELISLE BURNS, M.A., and G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D. 124 pp. 1s. net; post free, 1s. 1d.

SOCIAL SURVEY. A Guide to Good Citizenship. By GEORGE PEVERETT and ALFRED T. PIKE. 6d. net; post free, 7d.

PENAL REFORM. Outlines and Suggestions for Study. By EDITH M. WHITING. 3d. net; post free, 3½d.

STUDY OUTLINES ON INDUSTRIAL HISTORY. Notes on English Industrial History. By C. EDWARDSON. 6d. net; post free, 6½d.

ROBERT BROWNING. His Life and Poetry: A Handbook of Study. By EFFIE RYLE, M.A. 6d. net; post free, 7d.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH AND HIS POETRY. Study Circle Notes. By EFFIE RYLE, M.A. Second and Revised edition, 4d.; post free, 4½d.

THE AIM OF EDUCATION. By E. SALTER DAVIES, M.A., Director of Education for Kent. 3d. net; post free, 3½d.

THE MESSAGE, THE MESSENGER, AND THE METHOD. By G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D., EFFIE RYLE, M.A., and J. H. WIMMS, M.A., B.Sc. 1s. net; post free, 1s. 1½d. Cloth, 1s. 6d. net; post free, 1s. 7½d.

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF PAUL THE APOSTLE. By ELEANOR D. WOOD, M.A. Paper, 1s. 3d. net; post free, 1s. 5½d. Cloth, 2s. 6d. net; post free, 2s. 10d.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN. Daily Study Notes, by G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D. 3d. net; post free, 4d.

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE. Daily Study Notes, by G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D. 6d. net; post free, 7d.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK. Daily Study Notes, by G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D. 6d. net; post free, 7d.

THE ROAD TO LIFE. A series of studies in common problems of life. By GEORGE PEVERETT and ERNEST DODGSHUN, B.A. 6d. net; post free, 7d.

THE FOURTH GOSPEL. A series of studies in the Gospel of John. By ANNA L. LITTLEBOY. 6d. net; post free, 7d.

PAUL THE PIONEER. Studies in the Life and Thought of Paul the Apostle. By M. C. ALBRIGHT. 1s. net; post free, 1s. 1d.

DRAMATIC BOOKLETS.

WHERE LOVE IS, GOD IS. Little Plays, No. 1. A dramatised form of Tolstoy's story. By A. M. P. Dawson. 6d. net; post free, 6½d.

THE TWO PILGRIMS. Little Plays, No. 2. Founded on Tolstoy's story, "Two Old Men." Dramatised by F. J. GILLMAN. Foreword by STEPHEN GRAHAM. 6d. net; post free, 6½d.

THE PROCONSUL. Little Plays, No. 3. A Dramatic Story of the Early Christians, 304 A.D. By SEAWARD BEDDOW. 8d. net; post free, 9d.

COMMUNITY PLAYING. A Handbook of Production. By HORACE SHIPP. With Foreword by JOHN DRINKWATER. 6d. net; post free, 6½d.

A NEW VERSION.

BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN COLLOQUIAL SPEECH.

THE BOOK OF AMOS. A new translation, by PROFESSOR T. H. ROBINSON, M.A., D.D. 6d. net; post free, 6½d.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS. A new translation, by PROFESSOR T. H. ROBINSON, M.A., D.D. 1s. net; post free, 1s. 1d.

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH. A new translation, by PROFESSOR ADAM C. WELCH, D.D. 1s. 3d. net; post free, 1s. 4d.

THE BOOKS OF RUTH AND JONAH. A new translation, by CONSTANCE M. COLTMAN, B.D. 9d. net; post free, 10d.

THE BOOKS OF JOEL, NAHUM AND OBADIAH. New translations by J. GARROW DUNCAN, B.D., G. CURRIE MARTIN, M.A., B.D., and CONSTANCE M. COLTMAN, B.D. 9d. net; post free, 10d.

THE BOOK OF HOSEA. A new translation, by J. W. POVAH, B.D. 9d. net; post free, 10d.

THE BOOK OF SAMUEL. A new translation, by JOHN SKINNER, D.D. 1s. 3d. net; post free, 1s. 4½d.

A full list of publications will be sent post free on request to the

NATIONAL ADULT SCHOOL UNION

30, BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON, W.C

THE OLD RECTORY

STOKE, GUILDFORD.

The London Adult School Union
GUEST HOUSE

A charming old-fashioned country house standing in its own grounds and situated just outside the interesting town of Guildford, it is a splendid holiday centre from which to explore the beauties of Surrey.

Conferences and Week-end Lecture Schools
can also be accommodated.

Open from mid-March to October and also at Christmas.

Guildford and London Road Stations are less than an hour's journey from Waterloo and the train service is excellent.

For charges and other particulars apply to the Warden.

BEWDLEY

THE MIDLAND UNION GUEST HOUSE

In BEWDLEY—a town whose name was originally Beau Lieu, or Beautiful Place—the above house, built in 1607, is situated. That it is in the centre of most gorgeous country is a fact worthy to be tested by all members of the Adult School Movement, as well as by others.

In Spring the glory of the Fruit Blossom.

In Summer the glory of River, Hill and Forest.

In Autumn the glory of wondrous Tints.

Always the glory of Fellowship.

Amongst many others, excursions, very reasonable for cost, are run to New Radnor, Church Stretton, Wenlock, Ludlow, Malvern, Ankerdyne, Hereford and District; also half-day excursions are planned for those who feel they cannot do more.

There are long walks, short walks, and an old-fashioned garden, where those who incline to do so can rest to their heart's content.

For particulars apply:

THE WARDEN, MANOR HOUSE
BEWDLEY

PENSCOT

*The Adult School Guest House
for the West Country*

“PENSCOT,” once an old village inn, is situate at Shipham, near Winscombe, Somerset. The house stands high up in the “Heart of the Mendips,” and is surrounded on all sides by stretches of open country. Black Down rises behind, to the right lies Callow, and to the left Dolberry, crowned with ancient earthworks, while the Cheddar Gorge is about three miles distant. The scenery all around is varied and beautiful. Shipham is about fourteen miles from Bristol and an ideal centre for Holidays, Week-end Lecture Schools, and Conferences on Social Problems and Pioneer Experiments. It is readily reached by through trains from Bristol and by a good service of motor-buses. Special terms for winter months.

Apply:

*WARDEN, PENSCOT, SHIPHAM,
Near WINSCOMBE, SOMERSET.*



COBER HILL

CLOUGHTON, NR. SCARBOROUGH.

THE COBER HILL GUEST HOUSE is open all the year round, and has many attractions—Holidays, Lecture Schools, Conferences, Educational Weeks, Reunions; also Handicraft Schools—the latter being a special effort during the winter months.

Book early in the year for your holidays. The moors, sea, and garden, are quite incomparable. Easter, Whitsuntide and Christmas parties are specially attractive. The Management feel sure the guests would enjoy their stay better if those who possibly can take their holidays at some other time than August would do so. The crush in that month is tremendous.

In addition to the Guest House, eighteen Bungalows for family parties are open from May 1st to September 30th. Hostels in Scarborough, Saltburn and Filey are open for the month of August, and a special hostel for quiet and rest is open all the year round at Court Green.

For full particulars apply :
The Manageress, Cober Hill, Cloughton, Nr. Scarborough.

