

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

The International Lesson for Sunday, January Eighteenth, 1914.

LUKE 15:25-37.

25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

29 But her, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Petrified phrases form a large part of common speech; everybody uses the words "good Samaritan," but few who do so understand their real point. A man is not a "good Samaritan" when he helps a member of his own lodge or church, or an old friend, or a fellow-townman, or one of his own kinfolk. He is worthy of praise when he does this, but he is not in the good Samaritan class. That title is reserved for the Irish who help Italians, for the Jews who are kind to Russians, for the British who deal tenderly with Germans, for the Californians who succor Japanese, for the Texans who serve Mexicans, for the Protestants who play brother to the Roman Catholics, for the white men who minister to the negroes, and for all others who give friendliness where unfriendliness might be expected.

The whole point of the story is that an alien did a good deed to a hereditary enemy who despised him. It was no mere kindness of man to man, no friend to friend. The good Samaritan stands as the type of those who go outside their own crowd and their own racial sympathies and their own racial group to do a kindness to the needy. For "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." The poorest Jew counted himself better than the greatest Samaritan. The latter was of mixed heathen blood and so was disdained and despised. When a Jewish wayfarer fell among thieves on the Jericho road his own nationals, the priest and the Levite, both of whom should have worn the spirit of "noblesse oblige" on their hearts, passed him by in selfish unconcern. And the "foreigner," the "heathen" Samaritan gave instant, efficient and continuous help to the man who was down.

This is a good story for these times. For ours is the century of cosmopolitanism. We are learning the lesson of world-brotherhood. The basic human ties that underlie all national or racial groupings are under-

stood never before. We are shaping our international relations and our Christian civilization to that ideal. When north mid-China was starving a few years ago and the prosperous Chinese themselves were heedless, it was the people of the United States and Canada who sent the relief which broke the famine. So today this western world is hearing the cry of starving Albanians and Bulgarians. The earth is full of the good Samaritan spirit in this year of our Lord 1914.

Indeed, so generally accepted is this principle of everybody's duty to help the suffering anywhere that it is hard for us to catch the radical note in the beautiful story that Jesus told. To His hearers it was a remarkable tale, and almost incredible. That an outlawed Samaritan should be merciful to Jew, who, in strength, might have scoffed or spit at him, was not easy to believe. The teaching of the parable has made such progress among men that to us it is the natural and reasonable procedure that every human being in real need should receive succor. The light of the Jews in Russia, of the blacks on the Congo, of the Christian Koreans in prison, of the slaves on the cocoa plantations all evoke a swift answer from the heart of the twentieth century.

Even farther yet has the Good Samaritan idea, as Jesus set it forth, made its way in the world. Today we perceive that suffering, destitution, or need of any kind, has a real claim upon the race. War itself, cruel and antiquated as it is, recognizes the rights of the wounded of the other side; and Japan cared for the Russian wounded. An accepted of this Christian age is that the world owes its help to every man who is down. The social service conception rules civilization. The scorn which the gentle tale of Jesus heaps upon the priest and the Levite falls straight upon every man or woman today who refuses to be a helper of his fellows.

The immortal story was born of the heckling of Jesus by a lawyer. The discussion had been of eternal life—that is, of life which partakes of the eternal qualities in its character as well as in its duration. Obviously, mere prolongation of existence is not enough to make heaven. This lawyer wanted to be a son and inheritor of eternal life. He asked Jesus how.

A Socratic answer was returned. What say the Scriptures? The lawyer was a good one, on course, the law in which he was versed was the sacred law, and not the civil—and he made answer according to the eternal principle: Love God and love your neighbor. That was easily answered. Ah, how simple is the saying of a creed! We are glib in religious affiliations. This lawyer though, had not sounded the depths of the teaching of the life loyalty that is first of all given to a Sovereign Jehovah; and that expresses itself in tireless service of humanity. So he has disconcerted by the terse retort of Jesus, "This do and thou shalt live," thus stressing the doing of the Word, rather than the reciting of the formula.

True of type, the quibbling lawyer sought a technicality. He was really more interested in justifying himself than in learning the truth. He cared more for his own reputation than for any new knowledge. So he thought to wriggle out of the dilemma by the evasive question, "Who is my neighbor?" I know that style of person; so does every reader. He thinks that to be able to discuss social questions is equivalent to doing social service; that criticism of the preacher is a satisfactory substitute for church work; that to be ostentatious on current issues absolves one from actual ministry for mankind.

That lawyer's quibble brought forth a revolutionary principle of neighborliness, and a literary classic. For Jesus made answer in the story of the Good Samaritan, a deathless parable which has been a well of knowledge and inspiration from which preachers and teachers beyond any man's numbering have been drawing for nineteen centuries.

No other book has so many internal evidences of genuineness as the Bi-

ble. Thus, this little story tells how the traveler "went down" from Jerusalem to Jericho. Those of us who have been over the road know how he "went down," a descent of almost a mile in a short journey of about 20 miles. Jericho lies in the deepest depression of the earth's surface, which is the valley of the Dead Sea.

That difficult road has been by one of the strangest persistences so common in the Orient, a resort for thieves from time immemorial. Only recently have the Turkish soldiers, made it reasonably safe, and forced the line of outlawry to the Jordan river. Every hearer of the story, as Jesus told it, recognized the appropriate setting of the incident on that lonely and dangerous road; which now, however, is safely traveled by hundreds of pilgrims every year. A rest house and souvenir shop today stands on the reputed site of the scene.

Typically Orient, too, is the eagerness of the priest and the Levite to avoid entangling themselves in the scrape. "Don't mix up in the other man's trouble," is the selfish rule there. In China they will let a man drown, rather than try to succor him. A rare Samaritan was the hero of the parable, to take personal responsibility of the stranger in trouble, and put himself to inconvenience and expense. I met a young American Jew at Jaffa once who took exactly this same sort of care of a poor old woman whom he met in the steamship office, eager to get to Alexandria. He was a modern improvement on the priest and the Levite.

The parable points the truth that life is won by deeds of kindness. To have life, which is fullness of experience, we must give of ourselves to other lives. "A man's life consists of the number of things to which he is alive." A wealthy western business man boasted to me recently that he has never been a hundred miles from his native city; and he has no interest except his business of making money. Poor fellow! I pitied him more than any beggar I saw on his city's streets. He cannot even see why it is that his business is slipping away from him, he is losing money, and his soul is like a shrivelled pea. He has missed life. Had he been wise enough to give he would have been able really to live. The niggardly, self-serving, self-engrossed life misses even the little goals at which it aims. The Good Samaritan way is the way of wisdom, as well as of helpfulness. Altruism is a workable philosophy.

Man Found Shot, Hired Own Slayer, Police Say.

Berwick, Pa., Jan. 8.—That William Lechtenfeld, whose body was found riddled with bullets in Briar Creek Township December 19, had paid \$30 for his own murder, is the conclusion announced today by officers who have been working for weeks on the case. Lechtenfeld furnished the revolver that he borrowed from another. He bought the cartridges that were to penetrate his own body. He then hired the assassin to commit the deed and stood in the bushes while the fellow aimed and fired, is the theory of the police.

To prove this the State constabulary officers have much evidence. The motive of the crime was lacking from the first. There was every indication of suicide with the impossibility of it. He had threatened suicide by poisoning and shooting but feared to do so. In a saloon he offered money to a man to kill him, and it has been established that he left the saloon with a strange foreigner, although nothing was thought of it at the time. The fact that he paid for his own murder is indicated by the fact that he had money about the amount he offered for the killing when he left home and there was little on his person when the body was found.

"You seem fond of moving pictures." "For a change," replied Miss Cayenne. "It is one of the few forms of theatrical entertainment where you are sure there won't be dialogue containing profanity."—Washington Star.

Notable Victory for Harry K. Thaw.
Concord, N. H., Jan. 11.—Harry K. Thaw would not be a public menace if released on bail, according to the report of the commission appointed by Federal Judge Aldrich to inquire into Thaw's mentality. The report says the commission finds Thaw is not now afflicted with any of the mental diseases from which he was suffering when he slew Stanford White.

The finding was announced today. While the commissioners say they have reached "a definite and positive opinion" as to the present mental condition of Thaw and his probable state of mind at the time of the homicide, "they refrain from expressing this opinion in view of their instructions from the court not to embarrass any subsequent litigation, when the broad question of insanity might be involved."

"Upon the question of menace or danger through granting of bail, we may, however, be permitted and probably are compelled," concludes the report, "to record our finding that whatever may have been the mental condition of Harry K. Thaw at the time of the homicide, he now is not suffering from any of the mental diseases alleged by the prosecution at the time of the trials or subsequently thereto, namely, manic-depressive insanity, paranoia, dementia praecox or delusional insanity.

"In our opinion it is reasonably probable that Harry K. Thaw's liberty under bail would not be dangerous or a menace to the public safety."

Mr. Crabb—"A speaker in Syracuse said that the women of today are not using their brains."

Mrs. Crabb—"She's right. If they were there would not be so many getting married."—Buffalo Express.

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Ladies' Aid Society first Sunday afternoon.

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The public is cordially invited to all services.

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Sunday School at 9:30 a. m. J. L. Scott, Superintendent.
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Christian Culture Class, Saturday at 8:00 p. m.
Church Conference, Wednesday before first Sunday of each month, 7:30 p. m.
Observance of Lord's Supper, first Sunday in each month.
Woman's Union, first Monday of each month, 8:30 p. m.

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Rev. George L. Currie, Pastor.
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