

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

The International Sunday School Lesson for Next Sunday, September 13th, 1914.

THE TEN VIRGINS.

MATTHEW XXV. 1-13.

1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them:

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." (Matt. xxv. 13.)

WATCHING FOR THE COMING KINGDOM.

The enemies of our Lord's teachings were finally silenced, although they were not won over to friendliness to him. Not being able to answer his words of divine wisdom, they withdrew from open combat and plotted secretly to destroy him. At last Jesus withdrew from Jerusalem with his disciples and sat down in the Mount of Olives, from whence they could overlook the entire city. From that point, with the city in full view, our Lord predicted the utter destruction of the city which had rejected him and foretold the events that should happen at the end of the ages. There is always something profoundly impressive in looking down upon a city from some high point of observation, as from the top of the Washington Monument or the town of the Metropolitan Building. Thousands upon thousands of homes are brought into one view; and as one thinks of the human lives which they shelter and gazes in perfect silence upon the moving throngs far below on the streets, it is impossible not to feel the impact of human life, activity, and destiny as it breaks with combined power upon the soul. To the sensitive soul of Jesus the appeal of the rebellious city of Jerusalem, as he looked upon it from the Mount of Olives, was overwhelming because it was a city without God. That is the summation of hopelessness and the final word of tragedy. For the multitudes in the city and through them to the whole assembled world our Lord had two all-important words on the eve of his departure from earth: "Watch! Work!" The first of these words is the key to the present lesson.

THE TEN VIRGINS.

It was the custom in the East for weddings to be celebrated with much pomp and rejoicing. Religious ceremonies were held at the house of the bridegroom before he went with his friends for the bride, and other ceremonies were held at her home before she left for her future home. The journey of the bridegroom from his own home and his return with his bride were both attended by processions of friends and were occasions of much joy and innocent revelry. The wedding took place at night, and any one who had a lighted torch might join the procession at any point on the way and share the festivities of the

occasion.

On one of these wedding occasions ten virgins went out on the highway to join the procession. Each had a lighted torch, and we may easily imagine the eagerness with which they waited for the bridegroom's approach. Five of the virgins anticipated a possible delay in his coming and provided themselves with a fresh supply of oil, should it be needed. The others made no such preparation; but if the bridegroom had come at the time he was expected, everything would have been all right with them. But a delay did actually occur, and it was midnight before he came. At the sound of the approach all ten of the virgins arose and went forward to join the procession. The five who had fresh oil went on with the other guests, but the other five, foolish at the beginning, were foolish at the end, and at the late hour of midnight went off in search of a merchant to sell them oil. When at length they appeared at the door of the festival hall they were too late.

THE DELAYED KINGDOM.

It was concerning the coming of the Lord to consummate his kingdom on earth that Jesus was teaching. He himself is the bridegroom, and the Church which has gathered about his name is the company of friends waiting his appearance. His coming in glory and power is not after the manner nor at the time many expected it to be. He desired his friends to be standing with loins girt and lamps burning watching for his appearance and ready to receive him with joy. But generations and centuries passed, and some began to think that Jesus delayed, and so were not prepared for him when he came. Some do not, even in our day, stand ready and watchful. They do not know that he is always coming with new opportunities, new glories, new praise for those who welcome him. It is too late to make preparations after the Lord has come; but it is a joyous day for those who with love and fidelity in their hearts, hear the sound of his approach at midnight or at daybreak or in the busy rush of the full day. It is a blessed thing so to live that at any moment we may enter into the Lord's plans for the world with perfect harmony of spirit and perfect accord of ambition. His coming is our day of opportunity; and if we are wise we shall be ready when the cry is raised: "Behold he cometh!" We shall enter into his courts with praise and shall sit down with him at his feast.

"WATCH THEREFORE!"

We are living in a day when the sound of his approach is heard from every land and every nation. China is rapidly becoming a Christian nation; Africa is opening up her darkened corners to the light of the gospel; the Balkans are presenting their stark needs to the healing of the Great Physician; Russia is warming her frozen heart at the altar of Divine Love; South America is appealing to the brotherly sympathy of Christians in the United States for leadership in the way of truth; and even from Mohammedan lands come some indications of spiritual life and activity. Never in the history of the Church have there been so many indications of the movement of God among peoples of the earth. In the homeland are evidences of enlarging spiritual life and outreaching eagerness to prepare the way of the Lord. Every problem that is called a social problem is discovered to be at heart a moral challenge demanding the cure which the Son of Man alone is able to make effective. All of these indications of the Lord's coming are heeded by the wise, and they enter into his renewed glory with him. No period of ten years the world has ever seen has ever been so full of life and divine energy as will be the ten years upon which we are now entering, and we shall deserve our place among the foolish if we delay longer the time of our preparation for the Lord's return to the earth.

We sometimes complain that we cannot see the Lord as the early disciples saw him, and therefore we think we cannot be sure of his coming, as the Ten Virgins on the roadside were sure. But if we have ears to hear, the Lord is speaking today, in louder tones than when he walked by Gal-

less or when he spoke the doom of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. The cry, "Behold, he cometh!" is shaking every continent of the earth to its foundations, and the Son of God comes forth with the wise of all nations in his train. Shall we be among the wise who arise and go forth to meet him?

"Just Bread."

"Just bread and butter and honey and milk for supper," said Doris. "Guess we're most to the starving place."

"I'm sorry," mother began; but grandfather interrupted, "I have seen the time when that plate of bread would have looked better to me than all the turkey in the world."

"Funny eyes you had," laughed Doris. "I'll always take the turkey, please."

"Yes," said grandfather, "a big dish of nice slices of turkey breast would not have tempted me from one little piece of that bread one time. It was when this country was all new," grandfather went on, for Doris was listening for the story. "It was very different from now. We bought the land at a dollar an acre. Now it is worth more than a hundred times as much; but we worked hard, and had none of the conveniences that are thought to be necessities now, while we were helping to bring the land up to its present value.

"The corn and wheat were ground at water mills run by the streams through the country. Well, one unusually cold winter all the streams froze, and for weeks no flour or meal could be ground. The nearest market was a hundred miles away, and could be reached only in wagons, and as nobody wanted to risk the trip in such weather, we did without bread for six long weeks. My! but the first hoecake tasted good after that! I never have felt like saying 'just bread' since. And what do you suppose we ate instead of bread? Why, turkey breast! There were plenty of wild turkeys, which are really the best kind. Mother put slices of the breast on a plate as she would bread, and we ate them with gravy or molasses or anything we had. It was good at first, and we children who came from the East, where turkey was not so plentiful, thought we were living like kings. But soon we began to get fearfully tired of it. In fact, if you try to eat anything every day for six weeks, you get tired; but when you stop to think, you always want bread. Just imagine not having even a cracker or a butter cake for six weeks, and see how good this bread and butter will taste."

"It's good without imagining such bad luck," Doris said, "and I'll not say 'just bread' again, either."—Wesleyan Christian Advocate.

That Mournful Wail.

Some would have you believe that North Carolina is going forward by leaps and bounds. For our part we wish it was so but occasionally there arises a mournful wail from Raleigh about the shortage of funds to meet current expenses. This too, in face of the fact that has doubled in the last decade. They tell us there is something loose somewhere in the administration affairs. Bah! There is none so blind but they can see some things some time.—Credmoor Times News.

If they continue to kill them off at the rate of a hundred thousand or so a day the war cannot last forever.

It is a hard matter to raise more money by taxation when everybody seems to be thinking they are paying enough.

Gets His Fifth Wife.

About three weeks ago the fourth wife of Mr. Rufus Henry Pulley, of Raleigh, N. C., divorced, decided to marry again. About the same time Mr. Pulley also decided he was ready for another ceremony and Miss Mary Emery became his fifth wife. Deputy Clerk Virtuvius Royster performed the ceremony and the office of the clerk of the Superior Court was the scene of the wedding. Pully gave his age as 70 years and his wife's was 65.

Snow Camp Telephone Situation.

Since the division of the telephone exchange at Snow Camp and the general upheaval of the community in which it is situated there has been little progress made toward a satisfactory settlement of the "affair" in fact the subscribers on the old and the ones belonging to the exchange seem to have gone farther away from any agreement whatever and meanwhile the community in general has been very unpleasantly divided in social "affairs." In some sections the lines have been drawn very tightly. Those of the new lines refusing to help a near neighbor who remained with the old company; in some cases there has been harsh words very freely indulged in and ill feelings arisen that it will take years to remove. A very unfortunate and shameful state of affairs it certainly is, and one that needs to be carefully attended to, for a division of the "phone" service of a community is serious enough, to say nothing of differences between friends and neighbors which is a hundred times worse.

Now as to the cause of the trouble or rather the causes, for quite sure there is more than one cause. However the most apparent one, seems to have been a few "runners" as they were fittingly named, who took it upon themselves to boost the new company. These cacklers have caused a lot of the unpleasantness by running to and fro and telling tales and counting "coups" regardless of the truth or common sense of their statements, frequently the brunt of their talk was turned on some friend or neighbor who did not side with them, and in this way caused disputes and differences between many who had always been friends. However these runners have to a great extent ceased their talk and although the result of their works is painfully apparent. But after all it is to be hoped that a satisfactory settlement may be reached and good will restored toward one and all.

These remarks have been given from an unbiased point of view, and as can be seen are not intended to reprimand the old company or the new.

AN OBSERVER.

September Court Abandoned.

Greensboro, Sept. 2.—The lawyers here met a few days ago and decided not to make up a calendar for the two weeks September term of court and this term will probably be abandoned. Judge Devin does not approve of this practice, however, and he has told the lawyers that if a calendar is not made up for terms in the future when he is riding the district that he will come on the first day of the term and take up the docket with the first cases and call through the docketing, consulting cases in which there are no pleading and apparently no effort to get them tried. There are more than 600 cases on the docket in the county and there is no excuse for the attorneys doing away with the present term. It is such things as this that bring courts and attorneys into disrepute. The more than 1,000 litigants who have cases pending in court have a right to have their cases settled whether attorneys wish to try it or not.

Cassidy Will Bring Suit Against City.

Mt. Airy, Sept. 1.—Joseph Cassidy, whose daughter was killed here last Saturday by a live wire, will enter suit against the city, which he will claim was negligent in allowing a live wire to fall and remain on the street. He will claim that the wire fell two hours before the accident, and the city will contend that the wire had just fallen and the girl received ample warning.

Word from Chicago is, "Wheat rallied today after an early break due to sales by speculators." If the manipulations of the speculators could be eliminated prices on everything would be steadier and the people generally would have a better idea of where they are located as regards the cost of living.—News and Observer.

The New York Evening Post takes a column to prove that war is never humane. We are sorry for the person weak-minded enough to suppose that it ever is.—News and Observer.

Mrs. Whittier—"What delightful manners your daughter has."

Mrs. Wiler (proudly)—"Yes, you see she has been away from home so much."—Smart Set.

The same old bull is found in many of the war bulletins.—The Greensboro News.

Those counties that get more from the State Treasury than they pay into it will perhaps be satisfied for things to remain as they are.—Durham Herald.

The laws of supply and demand do not seem to operate in war times.—Greensboro News.

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