

The Sunday-School.

FIRST QUARTER,
LESSON VIII.—Feb. 19.

JESUS AT THE POOL OF
BETHESDA.

JOHN 5 1-15.

Commit Vs. 8, 9. Read John 5: 1-47.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*A great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles.* John 6: 2.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Place.—Jerusalem. The site of the Pool of Bethesda is disputed. Ganneau and Schick decide that it was near the eastern wall of Jerusalem, north of the temple plateau, where now is the church of St. Anne. It is one of two sister pools, fifty-five feet long, arched in by five arches, while five corresponding porches ran alongside.

On the other hand, Conder thinks it is the Fountain of the Virgin, at the foot of the Ophel slope, southeast of the temple. It is the only natural spring of Jerusalem, and still presents the phenomenon of intermittent "troubling of the water." See *Hasting's Bible Dictionary*.

Time.—The spring of A. D. 28; two or three months after the last lesson; probably the passover, beginning March 29; but possibly the feast of Purim, about a month earlier.

Place in the Life of Jesus.—The earlier part of the second year of his ministry. An episode in his great Galilean ministry.

A SICK MAN AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA.—Vs. 1-5. *After "these things."* Two or three months after the healing of the nobleman's son. *A feast of the Jews.* Probably the Passover. *Jesus went up from Galilee to Jerusalem to attend the feast. By the sheep market.* The market was usually near a gate to the city. *A pool . . . called . . . Bethesda.* "House of Mercy," or "Place for receiving and caring for the sick." The site of the pool is uncertain. *Having five porches.* Covered colonnades where people can stand or walk. *Lay a great multitude of impotent folk.* People without strength. The class of disease brought to these waters is described as *blind, halt.* *Waiting for the moving of the water.* That there was a moving of the water is evident from the statement of the sick man, V. 7. *Had an infirmity thirty and eight years.* How long he had waited in vain by the waters is not stated.

JESUS HEALS THE SICK MAN ON THE SABBATH.—Vs. 6-9. *Jesus saw him lie.* As the eye of the surgeon quickly selects the worst case in the waiting-room, so Jesus specially fixed on the one who had been now a long time in that case. Hopefulness was written on his face. *Wilt (wouldest) thou (do you wish to) be made whole?* The question was to awaken hope in his soul, to arouse him from his despondency. *I have no man, when the water is troubled.* The bubbling of the healing gases lasted only for a short time. *While I am coming, etc.* There was a rush and scramble for the one chance. He thought that Jesus would help him into the pool, but he did much better than the man's hopes and *saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.* The bed was a light mattress, or thick blanket. *Took up his bed.* Showing his faith and obedience. *And walked.* Showing the completeness of the cure.

LIGHT ON PRESENT DAY PROBLEMS.

Sickness and trouble are instruments in God's providence for leading us to realize our sins and needs. They compel us to turn away for a time from the rush and excitement of worldly business and pleasure, and in quietness look at our hearts and lives.

As the healing of the sick, and the relief of the suffering bore witness to Jesus that he was the Saviour, so one of the strongest witnesses to Christianity to-day is found in what it does for the poor, the sick, the troubled. It is the business of every Christian, and of every church, to bear such witness to Christ.

Waiting. Not a few are waiting for some singular stir of the emotions to carry them into the kingdom, instead of going directly to Jesus. They wait long, even while Jesus is close by offering life and salvation.

Jesus cures the morally sick as he did this man at Bethesda, not so much by what he does for them as by what he does in them.

The real test of a man is his answer to the question, Are you willing to be made whole? Do you really desire to be saved from your sins, and to do the perfect will of God?

OPPOSITION TO CHRIST ON ACCOUNT OF HIS GOOD DEED.—Vs. 10-16. *It is the Sabbath . . . not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.* The principle was that the ordinary business of carrying burdens should not be carried on during the Sabbath. The man defended himself by saying that the great and good man who healed him had told him to do it. But the man *wist, knew, not who it was.* *Jesus findeth him in the temple, where one cured would want to go.* *Sin no more,* implying that his suffering was the result, at least in part of his sin.

The fact that Jesus wrought this miracle and others (six in all) on the Sabbath aroused opposition on the part of the Pharisees, so they sought to kill him.

Every one who is not earnest in reform is sure to meet opposition.

How Jesus met this opposition. The rest of the chapter is taken up with the way Jesus met the opposition, and is full of instruction for all who are trying to do good in the midst of opposition.

He showed that he did on the Sabbath the same kind of works that God was doing, works of mercy, of religion, of helpfulness. There is no record of his doing secular work on the Sabbath.

In healing the sick man, and in all his labors, he was bringing life to men. He was his Father's agent and almoner.

The life of Jesus reveals to us the character and actions our Heavenly Father loves; and by doing things on earth, as they are done in heaven, we are learning "to be practised in heaven's ways when we reach the heavenly life."

The Jews would say: "These are extraordinary and extravagant claims. They are incredible." Jesus replies that he had three credible witnesses to his position:

(a) The testimony of John, and his mission.

(b) The testimony of the works which the Father did publicly through Jesus.

(c) The Father's testimony through the scriptures which were being fulfilled in Jesus.

HOW OLD?

"Mother," said a little child, "how old must I be before I can be a Christian?"

And the wise mother answered, "How old will you have to be, darling, before you can love me?"

"Why, mother, I always loved you. I do now, and I always shall," and she kissed her mother; "but you have not told me yet how old I shall have to be!"

The mother made answer with another question: "How old must you be before you can trust yourself wholly to me and to my care?"

"I always did," she answered, and kissed her mother again; "but tell me what I want to know," and she climbed into her mother's lap and put her arms about her neck.

The mother asked again: "How old will you have to be before you can do what I want you?"

Then the child whispered, half-guessing what her dear mother meant, "I can now, without growing any older."

Then the mother said: "You can be a Christian now, my darling, without waiting to be older. All you have to do is to love and trust and try to please the One who says, 'Let the little ones come unto Me.'"

"Don't you want to begin now?" The child whispered, "Yes." Then they both knelt down, and the mother prayed, and in her prayer she gave to Christ her little one, who wanted to be his.—*Holston Methodist.*

AIMLESS READING.

One of the most dangerous habits a young person can form is the short-story habit. On the other hand, one of the most advantageous things a young man or a young woman can do is to train the mind by persistent effort to take sinewy and comprehensive grasp of great themes. As you lift heavy weights in the gymnasium accustom your mind to deal with the books which it is the fashion to call "heavy." Put yourself on a short allowance of story papers, but read the reviews and scientific periodicals. Make history and biography your mental staples. Depose brevity from among your gods, and put in his place thoroughness. It is easy to make of your mind a sand-bank, instantly dry after the patter of innumerable rain-drops. What you want to make of it is a well.—*Christian Endeavor World.*

Sell your Cold for \$1.

You surely won't stop at a dollar bill to cure that horrid, sniffing cold? Go to any druggist and get "Catarrh-ozone" and your cold will be a thing of the past. There is almost witchery in the swift way Catarrh-ozone kills colds. But when you consider the penetrating, healing and antiseptic qualities of Catarrh-ozone perhaps it's not so wonderful. Certainly there is no remedy half so prompt for colds and catarrh as Catarrh-ozone. Refuse a substitute and insist on having only "Catarrh-ozone."

If one admires the patience, gentleness, sweetness and unflinching energy of another; if he finds himself renewed and invigorated and inspired by such contact—why does he not himself so live that he may bring the same renewal and inspiration to others?—*Lilian Whitling.*

Ayer's

Doctors first prescribed Ayer's Cherry Pectoral over 60 years ago. They use it today more than ever. They

Cherry Pectoral

rely upon it for colds, coughs, bronchitis, consumption. They will tell you how it heals inflamed lungs.

"I had a very bad cough for three years. Then I tried Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. My sore lungs were soon healed and my cough dropped away."

MRS. PEARL HYDE, Guthrie Centre, Ia.
25c., 50c., \$1.00. J. C. AYER CO., Lowell, Mass.
All druggists.

Old Coughs

One Ayer's Pill at bedtime insures a natural action next morning.

I have never had a policy. I have simply tried to do what seemed best each day, as each day came.—*Lincoln.*

A Sure Cure for Headache.—Bilious headache, to which women are more subject than men, become so acute in some subjects that they are utterly prostrated. The stomach refuses food, and there is a constant and distressing effort to free the stomach from bile which has become unduly secreted there. Parmelee's Vegetable Pills are a speedy alternative, and in neutralizing the effects of the intruding bile relieves the pressure on the nerves which causes the headache. Try them.

Love is not getting, but giving; not a wild dream of pleasure and a madness of desire—oh, no, love is not that—it is goodness and honor and peace and pure living—yes, love is that; and it is the best thing in the world and the thing that lives longest.—*Henry van Dyke.*

Nine times out of ten Pain Killer (Perry Davis') will be found to fill your needs as a household remedy. Used as a liniment for stiffness and taken internally for all bowel complaints. Avoid substitutes.

A nagging cough drives sleep and comfort away. You can conquer it with Allen's Lung Balsam, which relieves hard breathing, pain in the chest and irritation of the throat. Give it freely to the children.

It is just as easy to form a good habit as it is a bad one. And it is just as hard to break a good habit as a bad one. So get the good ones and keep them.—*President McKinley.*

The TOILET IS INCOMPLETE WITHOUT POND'S EXTRACT

RELIEVES CHAFING, ITCHING OR IRRITATION. COOLS, COMFORTS AND HEALS THE SKIN, AFTER SHAVING.

Avoid dangerous, irritating Witch Hazel preparations represented to be "the same as" Pond's Extract, which easily sores and often contain "wood alcohol," a deadly poison.