The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON.

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

First Quarter, 1905.

JANUARY TO MARCH.

Lesson IX.—February 26—The Miracle of the loaves and fishes.—John 6 : 1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven.—John 6 : 51.

EXPLANATORY.

SCENE I. JESUS LEAVING GALILEE FOR PHILIP'S KINGDOM BEYOND JORDAN.—Vs. 1; Matt. 14 : 1-3; 13; Mark 6 : 30, 31; Luke 9 : 7-10. 1. AFTER THESE THINGS. How long the interval between John 5, our last lesson, and John 6, depends on the feast alluded to in John 5 : 1. "If it was Purim, only a month had elapsed; if it was Passover, a year." JESUS WENT OVER THE SEA OF GALILEE. R. V., "Away to the other side.

SCENE II. THE GATHERING MULTITUDES.—Vs. 2-5. 2. AND A GREAT MULTITUDE FOLLOWED HIM. The multitudes came from two sources. (1) The multitudes at Capernaum and the other villages on the Galilean shore of the lake, restless and excited by the political atmosphere, followed him because they SAW HIS MIRACLES (R. V.,) "the signs") WHICH HE DID ON THEM THAT WERE DISEASED. This motive must have taken many forms. Some were attracted by mere curiosity and wonder; some, doubtless, because the miracles were signs of the truths which Jesus taught, and they wished to know more of him and his teachings; others probably saw in Jesus the possible leader of the people in revolt against Rome, and the attainment of national freedom, others still had need of healing and help for themselves or their friends.

Jesus did not repulse any because they came to him from the lower motives; but he sent them away with better ones. The motives that lead men to goodness are not necessarily the motives of those that live goodness. They are steps to the house, not the rooms of the house. They are the roads to the city, not the city itself.

The statement in vs. 4 that THE PASSOVER . . . WAS NIGH, gives the reason why such great crowds assembled so easily. Great numbers had left their homes and were on their way to Jerusalem where, as we are told by Josephus, sometimes as many as two million were gathered at this feast.

READ THE BOOK.

"The Road to Wellville" Pointed the Way.

Down at Hot Springs, Ark, the visitors have all sorts of complaints, but it is a subject of remark that the great majority of them have some trouble with stomach and bowels. This may be partly attributed to the heavy medicines.

Naturally, under the conditions, the question of food is very prominent.

A young man states that he had suffered for nine years from stomach and bowel trouble, had two operations which did not cure, and was at last threatened with appendicitis.

He went to Hot Springs for rheumatism and his stomach trouble got worse. One day at breakfast the waiter, knowing his condition, suggested he try Grape Nuts and cream, which he did, and found the food agreed with him perfectly.

After the second day he began to sleep peacefully at night, different than he had for years. The perfect digestion of the food quieted his nervous system and made sleep possible.

He says: "The next morning I was astonished to find my condition of constipation had disappeared. I could not believe it true after suffering for so many years; then I took more interest in the food, read the little book "The road to Wellville," and started following the simple directions.

"I have met with such results that in the last five weeks I have gained eight pounds in spite of hot baths which take away the flesh from anyone.

"A friend of mine has been entirely cured of a bad case of indigestion and stomach trouble by using Grape Nuts Food and cream alone for breakfast.

"There is one thing in particular—I have noticed a great change in my menal condition. Formerly I could hardly remember anything, and now the mind seems usually acute and retentive. I can memorize practically anything I desire." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

The second source of the multitudes is shown in vs. 5 when JESUS SAW A GREAT COMPANY COME UNTO HIM, "not the same crowd as was mentioned in vs. 2, else that article would have been inserted, but a Passover caravan coming from some other direction," perhaps from the roads east of the Jordan and the lake, on their way to Jerusalem.

SCENE III. A DAY WITH JESUS.—Vs. 3; Matt 14 : 14; Mark 6 : 34; Luke 9 : 11. (1) JESUS WENT UP INTO A MOUNTAIN. The mountain that rises from the plain back from the lake. He and his disciples came into this region before the crowds could reach the plain by the long road around the shore. It is probable that Jesus also called the disciples apart from the multitudes in the afternoon, after his busy work for the people. AND THERE HE SAT WITH HIS DISCIPLES. Here in seclusion they could rest, and report more fully what they had done on the evangelizing tour from which they had just returned; could talk over their plans, their successes, their mistakes, and receive the instruction they would soon need as to the true way of preaching the gospel to the world, and as to the gospel they should preach.

SCENE IV. THE HUNGERING MULTITUDES.—Vs 5. WHEN JESUS THEN LIFTED UP HIS EYES. On the mountain side where he was talking with his disciples. AND SAW A GREAT COMPANY COME. Apparently another one in addition to those who had come from Capernaum and vicinity.

SCENE V. JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES CONSIDERING THE SITUATION.—Vs. 5-9. Jesus SAITH UNTO PHILIP. Why was Philip the one singled out from the disciples for this purpose? In vs. 6 it is stated that HE SAID THIS TO PROVE HIM, to test him, not for counsel or advice. Jesus was in no perplexity. "It was not bread he sought from Philip, but faith," says Augustine. It was to lead him and the other disciples to understand Jesus better and to trust him more. The process of testing both showed him himself, and then strengthened the good. The question thus gives us "a glimpse of the educational method of the great teacher.

Jesus (speaking to Philip, whose home was at Bethsaida, and who, therefore, was acquainted with the region and the people.) "WHENCE SHALL WE BUY BREAD THAT THESE MAY EAT?" (John.)

Philip. "TWO HUNDRED PENNYWORTH ($32.00) OF BREAD IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR THEM, THAT EVERY ONE OF THEM MAY TAKE A LITTLE" (John.)

The Apostles. "Send the multitudes away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge and get victuals" (Luke.)

Jesus. "Give them to eat" (Luke.)

The Apostles. "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?" (Mark.)

Jesus. "How many loaves have ye? Go and see" (Mark)

Andrew. "THERE IS A LAD HERE, WHICH HATH FIVE BARLEY LOAVES, AND TWO SMALL FISHES."

9. FIVE BARLEY LOAVES. Or round, flat cakes like large crackers. Barley was the poorest food of the people. The lad probably brought them for his own lunch, possibly to find a market for them. TWO SMALL FISHES. The Greek (opsaria) is a diminutive; it properly means what was eaten along with the bread, and especially refers to the small and generally dried or pickled fish eaten with bread, like our 'sardines,' or the 'caviar' of Russia, the pickled herrings of Holland and Germany.

SCENE VI. FEEDING OF THE MULTITUDES BY THE MIRACULOUS POWER OF JESUS.—Vs. 10, 11. 10. MAKE THE MEN SIT DOWN. For three reasons: (1) That there might be no unseemly crowding, with the disasters and crushing of the weak, which would naturally follow a rush; (2) "that they might understand they were to have a full meal and not a mere bite they could take in their hand in passing;" (3) for the convenience of distribution, so that none should be overlooked. NOW THERE WAS MUCH GRASS IN THE PLACE. The grass was luxuriant at this season of the year.

11. JESUS TOOK THE LOAVES, which were in the form of thin cakes or crackers GIVEN THANKS. In Mark the Greek word means "praised, celebrated with praise." HE DISTRIBUTED TO THE DISCIPLES. Jesus conferred a great privilege on the disciples in making them the instruments of conferring his bounty. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Jesus could have rained manna from heaven, or summoned angels to help, but he gave this privilege to his disciples. The fountain that gives forth what it receives is fresh and clear and beautiful.

AS MUCH AS THEY WOULD. No one went away hungry. So even with God's gospel; there is enough for all and to spare. No one need imagine that others will have to go without because he receives all he needs.

SCENE VII. GATHERING UP THE FRAGMENTS.—Vs. 12-14. GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS. R. V. "Broken pieces."

13. FILLED TWELVE BASKETS. The wallets or hand baskets of the twelve apostles, such as Jews usually carried on their journeys.

"This was for these Orientals a most important lesson in thrift. The poor are proverbially thriftless everywhere; but nothing could exceed the lavish wastefulness of the poor Oriental when a moment of good fortune had filled his hands with plenty.

Let nothing be wasted or lost in God's work. Using well or wasting the fragments of time, of opportunity, the nooks and corners of life, makes all the difference between success and failure.

The effect of this miracle was to convince the people that Jesus was (vs. 14) THAT PROPHET THAT SHOULD COME INTO THE WORLD, the expected Messiah and deliverer; and they tried to make him a worldly king, and compel him to fulfil their ideas of what the Messiah should be. Where else would they find a king who could feed his army without expense or trouble, who could cure his wounded soldiers by a word, who had wisdom and power divine? Such a king could easily overcome the Roman power. Jesus resisted the temptation, and spent the night in prayer. For such a kingdom as they expected was necessarily a failure. The next day at Capernaum he met many of these people and taught them about the Bread of Life.

It is both a daring and a dangerous thing to try to live secretly for Christ. It breaks off the sprouting tendrils of the new life, and so there can be neither bud, blossom, nor fruit. A light shut up tight in a lantern only soots and burns that which contains it. So it is with the soul. It is its nature to shine forth, but turned back upon itself it dimes and dies. There are some in every congregation who are trying in a half hearted sort of way "to be good" That is too indefinite. There are no sharp outlines to it. It does not mean anything that is humble or heroic. The result in almost every such case is disastrous.—E.P.Ingersoll.

Be resolutely and faithfully what you are; be humbly what you aspire to be. Man's noblest gift to man is his sincerity, for it embraces his integrity also.
—Henry D. Thoreau.

The annual meeting of the Canadian Association for the prevention of consumption will be held in Ottawa on the 15th March next. The afternoon will be devoted to the routine business of the Association. In the evening a lecture will be delivered by Dr Adams of Montreal on some phase of the crusade against consumption. His Excellency the Governor-General will preside on the occasion.

INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY

On and after MONDAY, November 21st, 1904, trains will run daily (Sunday excepted) as follows:

TRAINS LEAVE ST. JOHN.

6—Mixed for Moncton,	6.30
2—Exp. for Point du Chene, Halifax, Sydney and Campbellton	7.00
26—Express for Point du Chene, Halifax and Pictou	12 15
4—Mixed for Moncton and Point du Chene	13.15
8 Express for Sussex	17.10
134—Express for Quebec and Montreal	18.00
10—Express for Halifax and Sydney	23 25

TRAINS ARRIVE AT ST. JOHN.

9—Express from Halifax and Sydney	6.20
7—Express from Sussex	9.00
133—Express from Montreal and Quebec	13.50
5—Mixed from Moncton	15.20
3—Express from Moncton and Point du Chene.	16 50
25—Express from Halifax, Pictou and Campbellton	17.40
1—Express from Halifax	18 40
81—Express from Moncton (Sunday only)	24 35

All trains run by Atlantic Standard Time 24 00 o'clock is midnight.

D. POTTINGER,
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