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W. H. VANWART.  
November 20.

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Yours truly,  
CHAS. A. SYDNER.

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Sir: I desire to give you testimonial of my opinion of your Kendall's Spavin Cure. I have cured many horses with it. I have used it in large quantities. I think it is the best medicine on earth. I have used it for three years.

Yours truly,  
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Sir: I feel it my duty to say what I have done with your Kendall's Spavin Cure. I have cured many horses with it. I have used it in large quantities. I think it is the best medicine on earth. I have used it for three years.

Yours truly,  
ANDREW TRENCH, Horse Doctor.

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**The Closing Year.**

Time's fleeting shuttle fills the loom,  
The old year's task is wrought—  
A mingled web of joy and gloom,  
Or welcomed or unsought.  
Unfold the fabric!—though with dread  
We shrink to see its hues outspread.

O weak and wilful heart of mine,  
Thy conflicts and thy cares!  
I must not murmur nor repine,  
Though sometimes, unawares,  
Sighs echo from the songs I sing,  
And hope sleep on by drooping wing.

Yet sunshine sweet shone overhead;  
And many a bud and bloom  
Adorned the path my feet must tread,  
Till 'e'en its darkest gloom  
Refreshing fragrance could distill,  
Free as the dew on Hermon's hill!

So Faith stands steadfast—Faith benign—  
And with an upward glance,  
Her hand still closely clasped in mine,  
On—on—I will advance;  
And cares and conflicts all shall seem  
Only the shadows of a dream.

—Annie Gardner Hale.

**The Sabbath-School.**

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

First Quarter-Lesson I.—January 5.

THE FORERUNNER ANNOUNCED.—Luke 1: 5-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me.—Mal. 3: 1.

EXPLANATORY.

THE PARENTS OF JOHN.—Ver. 5. There was in the days of Herod. This was Herod the Great, the founder of the Herodian family and the father of most of the Herods mentioned in the New Testament after the infancy of Jesus. An active, brave man, he was made governor of Galilee at the early age of 25, and distinguished himself by his campaign against the brigands who infested the mountains. But he was a monster of selfishness and cruelty, murdering many of his own family. He rebuilt the temple in great magnificence in Jerusalem, which is consequently known in history as Herod's Temple, to distinguish it from Solomon's Temple. He died of a terrible disease, in Jericho, April, B. C. 4, at the age of 69, after a long reign of 37 years.

King of Judea. Herod was the first foreigner who reigned over Judea. He was not an independent king but was subject to the Roman Empire. A certain priest named Zacharias. Nothing is known of him beyond what is recorded here.

Of the course of Abia. Greek for Abijah. The priesthood were divided under David into 24 courses or classes, which took turns in administering the services of the temple. The heads of these courses were the "chief priests." Each course ministered for one week. And his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and therefore in the line of the priesthood. The priests could marry outside of their rank and tribe if they wished. But both John's parents were of priestly rank, and therefore among the nobility of the Jews so far as they had any.

THEIR CHARACTER.—Ver. 6. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances. They obeyed all God's laws to the best of their ability; they were both moral and religious. blameless. Not entirely free from sin, but leading a holy life, struggling against sin and making attainments in holiness.

THE DESIRE OF THEIR HEARTS.—Ver. 7. And they had no child. This seems to have been the one great trouble of their lives. (1) To have no children was a trial deeply felt in Israel; barrenness was regarded by the Jews as a mark of Divine displeasure. (2) Because it cut off all hope of the birth of the Messiah in that family. (3) It is a great misfortune in itself. And they both were now well stricken in years. It is not known how old they were.

THE HOUR OF PRAYER.—Ver. 8. While he executed the priest's office. The offering the daily sacrifice, burning incense, and all the ceremonies pertaining to the temple. Before God. In God's presence as manifested in the temple. In the order of his course. In his turn to perform the ceremonies. According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was. The work of each priest in each course was determined by lot: who should kill the sacrifice, who sprinkle the blood, who burn the incense, etc. This lot was cast every week. His lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. The golden altar of incense stood within the temple proper, in the Holy Place, before the veil that separated it from the Holy of Holies. The other sacrifices were offered on the great altar in the court of the priests, in front of the temple building. The offering of the incense, permitting the offerer to enter the sacred and awful place, was a great and rare privilege. The priest entered in white robes with unsandaled feet, with two attendants, who retired when they had made everything ready.

power of Elias," as a great religious and moral reformer, a stern rebuker of vice. To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. (1) Either literally, to produce domestic concord, the disruption of families being one of the most common signs of the decay of religion in the community, and the beginning of moral chaos; or (2) figuratively, to turn the hearts of the fathers the Israelites, to the Gentiles, the children, apostate, prodigal, outcast, but still children. And the disobedient to (rather into) the wisdom of the just. The meaning is, he shall bring the Gentiles to accept the wisdom of righteousness. To make ready for the Lord (Rev. Ver.) a people. By his denunciation of sin, by showing the dreadful nature and the awful consequences of sin, he awakened the conscience of the people, and made them feel their need of a Saviour. A people prepared for the Lord. That the few who would receive the Messiah might be made ready, it was necessary that John the Baptist should preach repentance, and thus create a sense of spiritual need. It was only those who became "poor in spirit" that would be "prepared" for the coming of "the kingdom of heaven."

**Practical Hints.**

Heartfelt obedience to every known command is the gateway to higher experiences and blessings. It is right to pray for temporal blessings, but the desire for them should be absorbed in the desire for spiritual blessings. There are peculiar blessings and power in united prayer (Matt. 18: 19, 20). The best gifts come in answer to prayer; and often in God's house of prayer, we have visions of joy, hope and peace. It was while Jesus was praying that he was transfigured. God answers our prayers for our selves, while we are praying for others. The answers to our prayers are never denied, but are often delayed till the best time comes for them to be given. God's answers are larger and better than our hopes and prayers. True greatness is divine greatness—greatness of love, of character, of power used for the good of others. Christianity has special care and nurture for the children. It brings parents and children near together, making them mutual helps and blessings.

**Don't Frighten the Children.**

Doubtless every adult who reads these lines can recall with vividness the feeling of terror which was experienced in childhood when someone with less sense than imagination "scared" him with some ghoulish tale or awful threat. Such a treatment of a trustful child as will arouse and terrify, is simply criminal. No child should be "made to mind" by a threat which may cause not only real present fear but possibly future mental injury. Such thoughtlessness should be never permitted on the part of a servant, and no parent who loves his children should ever for a moment think of scourging obedience by any such hurtful method. Some one has been showing the folly of such a course by overdoing a description of it in the following humorous vein: "Remember, Honora," said Mrs. Perkins to the new nurse girl, "I do not allow the children to hear stories that will frighten them when they go to bed. You may tell them about birds and harmless little fairy stories, but nothing about fears or lions."

"Yes, mem," replied Honora; and this was the harmless little story she told that night: "Wanst there wuz a great big monster of an animal wid horn an' tail of hot fire an' teeth a yard long that wint around in the dead of the night atin up little byes an' girruls thas bothered there nurse askin' her to get up an' give them water in the night and tellin' how she lift the baby for a wurrud with the perlace min in the parruk and little things loike that. An' this ter-r-rible big monster could go right through solid walls, moind yez, an' he'd ate yees up 'fore yeez could scrame out. Now cuddle up an' go slape like good byes an' girruls or he'll be afther yeez av yeez say a wurrud. Moind that. Shup yer shiverin' now, Birdie; an' phwat do yeez mane by chatterin' yer teeth loik that, Willie! To slape wid yeez or yeez'll be ate up the minit I takes the light out."

Each day as it comes brings its pleasures, but to all earnest people its trials as well. They are happy, however, and strong in the thought that daily grace is given them.

The power of Christianity centres in the person of its Lord, and the Christian motive that is strongest and most powerful always is "for my sake."—D. W. M. Taylor.

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