

A Comparison.

ORTHODOX S. S. LESSON.

The Birth of Christ.—LUKE 2:8-20. Christmas Lesson.

REVISED VERSION.

And there was shepherds in the same country abiding in the field; and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this is the sign unto you; Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Glory to God in the highest.

And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.

And it came to pass, when the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that it come to pass, which the Lord has made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in the manger. And when they saw it, they made known concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child. And all that heard it wondered at the things which were spoken unto them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, even as it was spoken unto them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.—Luke 2:10.

TOPIC—Angels rejoice in the salvation of men.

PERSONS.—The shepherds, the angels, Mary, Joseph, the babe Jesus.

A CHRISTMAS TALK.

Nearly nineteen hundred years have passed since the song of the angels echoed over the field of Bethlehem; and still it is ringing over the world to-day. As each Christmas season draws near, more of those for whom Christ died have heard of his love for them, and more hearts have bowed to him as their Master and Lord.

You have heard the message which the angles proclaimed, "on earth peace, good will toward men." You know the beautiful story of the gospel. But have you ever obeyed the message which God sends his servants to tell? Have you ever sought the Christ? Suppose the shepherds had spent the night in talking of the wonderful

glory, and not gone to see the babe in the manger? If you seek for Jesus you have God's promise that you shall find him. And when you have found him bow down in worship, as did the wise men; then give unto him gifts, as they did. The Savior is God's great gift to the world. What will you give him this day? He is pleading with you, saying, "Give me thine heart." Can you refuse the gift? When you have found him, meditate, as did Mary, upon the wonderful things that God reveals, and publish, as did the shepherds, the good tidings of a Savior come to redeem man, repeating the song of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men."

QUESTIONS.

What curse was inflicted on the serpent for his share in man's sin? Between whom was there to be enmity? What should the woman's seed do to the serpent? What should the serpent do to the woman's seed? What was inflicted upon the ground for man's sin? What does the earth bring forth? How must man earn his bread? Unto what return? From what was man driven? What have the people in darkness seen? What shall the wonderful child be called? How long shall he reign? What good tidings are brought? Who has comforted his people? What is said of the visage of the servant?

What were shepherds doing? Who came upon them? What shone around them? How did they feel? What did the angel bring them? Who was born that day? How should they know the babe? What did the multitude of the heavenly host say? Whither did the angels then go? Where did the shepherds go? Whom did they find? What did they make known? What was the feeling of those who heard the good news? What did Mary do?

SECULAR S. S. LESSON.

Two Christmas Eve Pictures.—

THE FIRST PICTURE.—A large room lit with bright electric lights; carpeted with a rich carpet that looks like moss; filled with plush-covered furniture; curtained with silks and laces.

In the center of the room stands a large evergreen tree whose branches are loaded down with all the good things a boy or girl could wish for, from candies, fruits and toys to warm mittens, hoods and furs.

Dancing around the tree, laughing and singing with joy, are two well-dressed, rosy-cheeked, curly-headed children, a boy and a girl.

The happy parents of the children are seated on soft-cushioned divans enjoying the delight of their darlings.

THE SECOND PICTURE.—A small room lit with a dim tallow candle; a bare, dirty floor; only a few pieces

of broken furniture scattered about; only one little square window light and that uncurtained.

In the center of the room on a dry goods box stands a small twig of evergreen with two sticks of candy, and two cheap, bright-colored, cotton handkerchiefs tied to it.

Standing near this mimic tree, shivering with cold and hunger, are two pale, hollow eyed, ragged children, a boy and a girl.

As the children stand thus, looking at the tree that their poor mother has tried to prepare for them, a drunken growl is heard and their beastly father enters the room. The mother stands weeping and the frightened children creep into a corner.

Jesus Christ, whose birthday is celebrated by the rich, is said to be the saviour of the world. Has he saved it? If so, from what? From crime, from poverty, from suffering, from misery, from degradation? A thousand times NO. After nineteen hundred years the world is far from being saved.

Shall we trust in Gods any longer, or shall we awaken from the spell that has been cast over us by wily priests and save ourselves?

QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON.

What kind of people do you think lived in the first room described? Do you think it easy for such people to be happy and good? Tell why you think so? What is described in the second picture? Do you think it easy for such people to be happy and good? Give your reasons for thinking so? Are we all saved from sin, poverty and suffering? Will believing anything save us? What alone will save us? What can you do to bring about better conditions?

Gem of Thought: This is a true saying and worthy of all acceptance, that human effort alone can save the world.

News from Portland.

The entertainment given last Sunday evening, was a success every way. Yes, financially. We have enough now in the treasury to give a respectable Christmas entertainment, but there will not be much left.

Misses Ethel Bailey and Bertha D-vey, were at their best, last night in their new song, "As a good little girl should do" receiving thunders of applause and have been asked to repeat it at the Marquam Grand opera house, January 6th.

Our Sunday School mourns the loss of the presence of little Sophia Dilg, she having gone to Seattle to live.

Mr. Fick announced the arrival of a new "Freethinker" at his residence yesterday, a boy, weight, 8 pounds. We wondered what caused the Lordly appearance of Mr. Fick,

and immediately knew the reason when we learned the above.

Mrs. Van Hoeter and baby Eunice have just returned from their trip East.

Several members of our Sunday school have been invited to participate in the concert given at Union hall on New Year's eve.

It would have done you lots of good to have seen the Lord Chamberlain blow the Giant over last Sunday night. The part was well acted and sustained by Miss Pearl Peters.

Six Smiles.

Little drops of reason
Little grains of sense
Makes a man progressive,
Not straddle of the fence.

Little drops of humbug,
And of faith a grain,
Makes a poor fanatic
Who is apt to go insane.

Wife.—Why did you stand and talk so long with that Turkish peddler?

Husband.—I was trying to convert him.

"Hub! Great missionary, you would be. What did you tell him?"

"I told him a Christian was not obliged to have more than one wife."—Great Divide.

"That apple Adam and Eve ate must have been green."

"What makes you think so?"

"Well, as near as I can figure it out, they doubled up and went to housekeeping shortly after eating it."—Times.

Aunt Dorothy—How many commandments are there, Johnny?

Johnny (glibly)—Ten.

Aunt Dorothy—And now, suppose you were to break one of them?

Johnny (tentatively)—Then ther'd be nine.—Amusing Journal.

She—I am so afraid of you newspaper men!

He—Why. Are we so bad.

No; but there's no telling when you are going to press.—Hartford Times.

WANTED.—A good Secularist compositor who is willing to sacrifice for the cause by working one year for board and lodging and a little pocket money now and then.

No one with bad habits need apply. Address TORCH OF REASON.

We give the TORCH OF REASON and the Truth Seeker for one year to new subscribers, for \$3. The TORCH OF REASON and Free Thought Magazine for one year to new subscribers for \$1.75.

In addition to the addresses by members of the Liberal University faculty, the Silverton Marine band will give a grand concert at Liberal hall, Sunday evening, Jan. 3rd.