Sunday School Lesson

January 6. Lesson I—Our Heavenly Father,—Matthew 6: 24-34. Golden Text—Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord Pitieth them that fear him.—Psalm 103: 13.

ANALYSIS.

I. ANXIETY OVER FOOD, 24-27.

II. ANXIETY OVER CLOTHING, 28-33.

III. ANXIETY OVER THE FUTURE, 34.

INTRODUCTION—The lessons for this quarter deal with the great teachings of our Christian faith, and it is natural that we should begin with the doctrine of God, for a religion is judged by its conception of God. How very different is the spiritual life of those who feel that they must worship with fear a hard and jealous deity from that of those who, in all their approaches, can say, "Our Father who art in heaven." If we believe that God is light, and love, and truth, we need not dread anything that may come from his hand. It is essential to notice how large a place the beliefs in the fatherhood of God had in the life and teaching of Jesus.

I. ANXIETY OVER FOOD, 24-27.

The earlier part of chap. 6 deals with the problems of Christian worship, including alms-giving, prayer and fasting, vs. 1, 7, 16. Here Jesus teaches his disciples on the nature of the God whom they are to worship. He is to be distinguished from Mammon. This word is common in the ancient eastern world, and signifies wealth. It represents the God of this world. Jesus does not mean that it is a sin to have money, but it is a sin to worship wealth. Those who look to money as their great support for every time of need are really refusing to put their trust in God. Money is their god. One cannot trust in God and in money at the same time.

V. 25. Men love money because it can purchose the necessities of life. Jesus does not recommend thoughtlessness, nor is he advocating idleness or carlessness, but he is warning them against that anxious care which is worried and alarmed over the ways and means of getting on. The objects that cause greatest anxiety are food and clothing. Several reasons are given to show how needless is this anxious fear. First, he reminds them that God gave life, which is the first and greatest of all gifts. Meat is not so important as life, and he who gave the greater will surely see that we have the lesser gift of food.

V. 26. A lesson is here drawn from God's providential care of the lower creatures. The birds of the air do not have man's intelligence, they cannot sow, reap, or build barns to store their grain, yet they get enough to eat. Bird life never ceases, and all of this is due to God's oversight. There is a providential government of the world. The same rule must hold when we pass up hgher to human life. We are of more value than many sparrows. "We never knew an earthly father take care of his fowls and neglect his children, and shall we fear this from our heavenly Father?"

V. 27. Our very weakness drives us to depend upon our Father in heaven. Man can indeed do many things, and he must work hard in this sphere in which he has been placed; but his powers are very limited. He cannot add a cubit to his height. He must take the body which is given to him. Why, therefore, should we worry and struggle as if everything depended on our own effort!

II. ANXIETY OVER CLOTHING, 28-33.

V. 28. The transition from food to clothing is very natural, and the same general line of argument is again followed. Let them look at the lower nature, at the fields which are clad in such wonderful garments. Yet these flowers do not have any way of weaving their own cloth, or of coloring it, or of putting it into shape. Some one else, therefore, must be looking often on the lovely garments of nature.

V. 29. Jesus was a great lover of the beauty of nature. He thought that the artless perfection of the flowers of the field surpassed even the most magnificent display that man could make. Solomon, the most magnificent of the kings of Israel, had nothing so lovely as the simple lilies of the field. This is a lesson we might well learn, seeking to find our delight in the natural beauties of the world about us.

V. 30. These flowers and grasses, when dred, were used for fuel. They did not have any lasting value such as is attached to human life. If, therefore, God bestowed such attention on perishable grasses, will he not give much more thought to his own children? Man can toil and spin, and as he uses his arts God will help him, and bring his work to a successful issue.

V. 31. The main lesson of v. 24 is repeated, which again urges the duty of daily labor along with a joyous, care-free spirit.

V. 32. Two further arguments are furnished. The heathen who do not have the knowledge of the true God naturally have these lower desires, and think only of the struggle and gains of the earth, but the disciples of Jesus are much better placed, since they have been taught that there is a heavenly Father who looks down from above, and who is willing and able to supply all our needs.

V. 33. The instruction now takes a positive form. They must seek two things: 1. The kingdom of God, which is the rule of God in this world. They must strive to advance in the cause of God, so that all the forces of evil may be overcome. 2. They must seek his righteousness, which means the kind of righteousness which God desires. They must keep his commandments, and exhibit a pure, holy life.

III. ANXIETY OVER THE FUTURE, 34.

V. 34. Again, Jesus warns his disciples, not against foresight, but against anxious care. So many people have forebodings of the future, and fear that they cannot meet the difficulties which they think may come. This fear is a sign of unbelief: it is also an evidence of folly. Do the task of today, and leave the morrow to bring its own difficulty. If we waste our energy with worry we shall be less fit for the trial when it does come. And when the evil does come God will give us strength to overcome. Thus in all this passage we see how minute is the care which our loving Father exercises over all his children.

The Garden in Winter Time

There is one pleasure that is equal to that of reading a congenial book before a blazing wood fire; that is: sitting before the sam wood fire and laying plans for the garden that is to be when the snow and ice are gone.

The writer is not alluding to the age-old joy of reading seed catalogues. One of these may indeed be near, but much of the information and knowledge which it contains lies in the experience of the planner herself and is buried as deep as a round shiny seed, or a struggling root ready to wake and grow once more, at the first penetrating touch of March sunshine.

Tools for Spring.

No, it is not a printed catalogue which the writer needs as the February winds blow chill outside, so much as a convenient blank book and a well-sharpened pencil. There are things that will be needed as soon as the work in the garden is begun, and she lists them as carefully as she would place pearls upon a string, the only regret being that there are not more to write down.

She will need a new trowel this year. The handle of the one which has served faithfully for four summers, snapped without warning at the transplanting of the last tulip bulb.

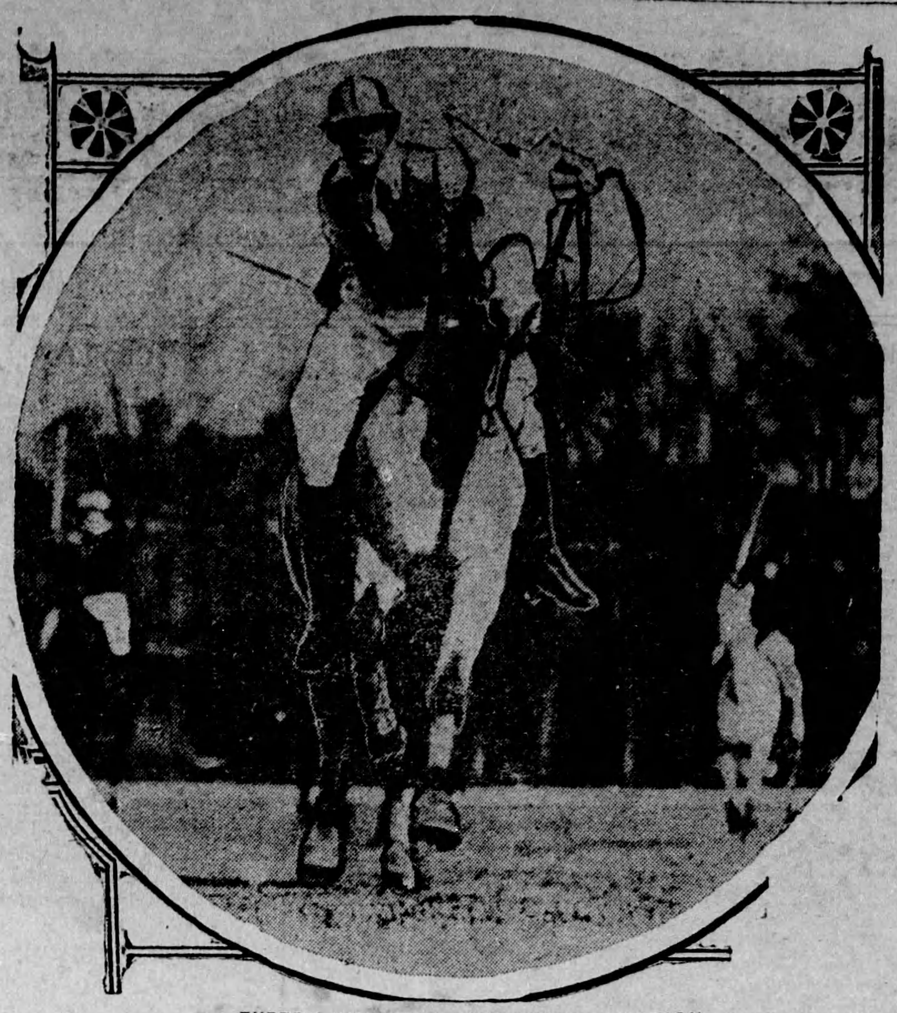
Now, armed in imagination with this keen bright scoop, which she can even now feel making its way down into the sweet spring earth, she closes her eyes and pictures the small tool house, banked up with snow at present, wherein stand those other brown implements of the gardener's art.

The rake is good, also the spade; the hoe may have to be replaced by a new one; and the wheelbarrow will need a few heartening nails. Otherwise the garden machinery is in good repair.

The ground will not have to be ployed this year. A thorough spading will be all that is needed; and then the patch at the end of the path, with the long bed leading to it, will be ready for their summer days.

Flower Arrangements.

It seems best to change the arrangement of the flowers this spring. Of course the hollyhocks and Madonna lillies will come up in the same place as heretofore, but the dahlias an dthe annuals are to have a different view of the lawn and the creek. Instead of a long row of dahlias there is to be a clump to the left of the wide patch of garden ground. Here they will see the morning sun as usual, here they will be near the running water which will protect them from the early frost, and here in the autumn they will nod their beautiful heads against the evergreens, and not one gorgeous rich petal coloring will be lost.



EXPERT WOMEN POLO PLAYERS IN ACTION

Polo is becoming quite popular with the fair riders in Canada, England and the U.S.. Some women are excellent players.

The giant larkspur must keep its old place against the hedge. Loving eyes traveled there as often as busy days would allow last summer, and in no other place could the blue flames so easily be seen from the house.

For some of the smaller plants there is going to be a radical change. Instead of rows of mignonete and sweet alyssum and a few isolated plants of heliotrope an dlemon verbena, there must be a swamp of midsummer fragrance. These four are to be planted together in a moist corner of the patch of ground near the creek. On the hottest day they will be cool and green, and inside in the library with the blinds drawn on a table among the books will always repose a bunch from the swamp.

The writer is in that library now and the room needs no cooling breath at present; rather the replenishing of the fire and a tighter drawing of the red curtains. Again the flames leap up, and she is reminded at once of the nasturtiums which she will have everywhere, dwarf and climbing varietie salike. They shall be placed around the edge of the round bed and in a mass at the foot of the barberry, and all summer long she will have a bunch of those cool, round, wet leaves and those burning pungent blossoms on her desk.

The bulbs, of course, were all planted in the fall. It will not be long now—only a little over six weeks—before the fat, green sprouts will begin to show above the ground. Their arrangement is the same that it has been for years. Jonquils stand at the back of the long bed; narcissuses and tulips are intermingled next; and all along the farthest edge snowdrops and scillas are interspersed.

Once these all blossomed in the April snow, together with some tiny dwarf purple iris. The dreamer can see the flowering now, with its snowy background. The cold and the melting snow did them no harm, but rather seemed to refresh them.

A clump of red geraniums will be needed next summer. Their blooms never fail; and out in teh sun somewhere a small new bed is to be made expressly for the salvia. This must be near the big maple , so that the scarlet will blossome among the yellow leaves.

For the phlox, the asters, the marigolds, the little pink and white verbenas, and the tigridias, more room must be provided.

It will be best to separate the golden glow and have it all along the fence between the house and the meadow, a gleaming sunlit line of flowers reaching down to the creek.

Then there is the pansy bed at the side of the verandah. One wonders how the rambler slips in thet same bed look to-night, under the preserve jars, buried in the snow. They would be hard to make a living on my fore the summer is over. There is the trumpet vine, too, planted on the elm tree last year. That also should make strides before another winter falls, and its red flower horns pierce the air.

The honeysuckle grew well last year. It has a good start now, and has reached the upper verandah. It ought to join the wistaria on the other end during the coming months. Will the wistaria bloom this year? There was one beautiful lavender bloom last June, way down near the forsythia bush.

Forsythia! The first thing to-morrow morning some twigs must be gathered, and they should blossom here in the library inside of two weeks.

Smart Dressing

Even a casual survey of the shops shows to what an extent Dame Fashion is seeking the ensemble effect this season, and not the outstanding individual item. Practically all the afternoon frocks are planned in relation to an afternoon coat, so taht each combination of frock and coat makes a perfect ensemble. The relationship is usually established by color, though frequently it is through the use of the same silk in both frock and coat lining.

In other ensembles in which the coat and skirt strike the same note, one can use several blouses of varying degrees of formality and so get a complete daytime wardrobe. The blouse may match the skirt, but the contrasting blouse is the newest and smartest. Lemon or sulphur-yellow is often seen with gray, brown or navy and it looks chic. Very pale yellow is lovely with beige or gray on those who can wear it. White is always good with black; and red, beige, and blue are still being used with beige or navy.

The most formal blouses are made of soft light-weight metallic fabrics, metallic brocade or velvet, georgette or fine all-over lace. These are for the afternoon ensemble. Less formal are satin, satin crepe or moire., and among the practical materials are radium, silk crepe and crepe-de-chine, all of which may be used like the wool jersey for the sports type of ensemble. The new jerseys come in angora or lacy weaves in plain colors, or they are printed or woven in modernistic or tweed designs.

Choosing.

The newest dress materials are the prints, notably the silk, rayon and celanese velvets. Printed satins, crepes, celanese and rayon fabrics are also very smart. With these go afternoon coats of velvet, velveteen, broadcloth, zibeline, suede coating, napped coating, velours, wool and, rayon, cashmere or fabric fur. The new note for collars and cuffs seems to be flat fur banding, but long-haired furs, especially fox, are very smart. The accessories—hat, hand bag, jewelry, hose and shoes—match the coat, coat lining, frock or fur.

All of which means, of course, that in the midst of a bewildering array of beautiful fabrics one must exercise this season a much more artful selection than has heretofore been necessary if one is to be attractively dressed. And the busy homemaker who does most of her own sewing hardly knows where to start.

The coat seems to be the most logical item to begin with, for around it one can build two or more ensembles, eac hof which may be as different and as pleasing as if it were the only one. The first step is to choose a coat pattern and a dress pattern of types that previous experience have proved to be most becoming. In some cases this is most easily ascertained by trying on a few ready-made coats and frocks until one finds just the right style, then buying patterns along the same general lines. If this is done early in the day when clerks are not busy with purchasers, and one's purpose is frankly stated, saleswomen will be found ready to co-operate.

Be measured fo revery new pattern. Slenderness nowadays is not so much a matter of weight as of measure, for clever women weigh more than appearances indicate. The smart woman reduces by eliminating all unnecessary lingerie and by selecting designs cut on narrow lines and of bodyless materials, and by measuring herself accurately so her clothes fit her beautifully and precisely.

The Mirror Test.

After buying the desired coat pattern one should find out what materials are recommended for making it up and avoid the temptation of selecting others. The reason for this is that the expert designers who made the pattern for each individual garment worked with cloth, an dthey have recommended only those fabrics that they are positive will give satisfactory results for those particular models. If buying the pattern their experimenting was paid for.

In front of the mirror, the shopper should try the materials she likes best by laying a fold of the goods against her face to see which fabric, color and shade make the most of the color of her hair, eyes and skin. This should be done in daylight, unless she is sure. If there is any doubt about trimmings artificial light often plays queer tricks. If there is any doubt about thimmings taht come close to the neck, they too should be tested. Indeed, it is best to take nothing for granted. The amounts required for each separate item are all listed on the pattern envelope.

The lining of the coat in an ensemble must blend well with the outer fabric, but if the frock is to be of the same material, the lining must be just as carefully chosen as the fabric for the coat and by the same tests. And before having the material for the coat lining cut from the bolt, be sure that it is one of the fabrics recommended for making up a frock of the design chosen, or disappointment may follow when the ensemble is complete.

If a skirt is wanted of the same fabric as the coat, buy enough for both garments, all in one piece. Do not risk finding the material gone after only the coat is made. If both frock and skirt are wanted, but only one of them can be bought at the moment, it is better to let the frock wait. Dress material that will harmonize with the coat fabric and lining may be picked up almost any day, but material cut from the same piece of coating, almost never.

Intra-Empire Trade

Toronto Globe (Lib.): The opportunity for developing intra-Empire trade can never be seized as long as there exists a disposition to block action because some parts of the Empire may benefit more than others. What is emportant to realize is that all would benefit by sensible and possible rearrangements. It may be that there is no present hope of adopting any uniform, all-embracing plan such as the elder Chambrelain envisaged. But even the experiment of the Empire Marketing Board has shown what can be done in other directions if energy is efficiently and intelligently applied. There is infinite room for the application of such energy in an Empire embracing a quarter of the globe. The British Commonwealth is potentially a market and an economic unit beside which the United States is a tiny dwarf. Can our statesmen grasp the potentialities of this giant, and will they have the courage and the intelligence to cut his fetters?

Clergy and the Empire

London Truth: There is one subject—but probably not more than one—upon which all the Bishops of the Anglican Church — High, Low or Broad, at home or overseas—are agreed, and this is that they cannot obtain a sufficiency of clergy. . . . But it is not merely the home benefices and curacies that have to be filled. From the Dominions and the mission fields the demand for clergy is equally clamorous. Under existing conditions those regions cannot supply their own needs; they are compelled to beg for clergy from England, and if they cannot get them English settlers and native Christians have to go without religious ministrations. I say "under existing conditions," and the question which ought to be faced is whether those conditions need—or, indeed, can—continue. It is simply impossible to provide a sufficient number of professional stipendiary clergy for small and scattered communities, such as are found in Western Canada or the "back blocks" of other Dominions.

They that deny themselves will be sure to find their strength increased their aections raised, and their inward peace continually augmented.—Matthew Arnold.

Small Boy—"Daddy, what do you call a man who drives a car?" Father—"It depends on how close he comes to me."

And, by the way, it might be quite a shock to one-half of the world to find out how the other half lives.

MUTT AND JEFF.—Bud Fisher.

For a Thrill You Gotta Read the Lion Tamers' Daily Bugle.