Sunday School Lesson

January 26. Lesson IV—Standards of the Kingdom—Matthew 5: 3-9, 17-20, 43-48. Golden Text—Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.—Matthew 5: 8.

ANALYSIS

I. THE BEATITUDES, 3-9.
II. JESUS AND OLD LAW, 17-20.
III. THE NEW LAW OF LOVE, 43-48.

INTRODUCTION—Having seen that Jesus came to proclaim the kingdom of heaven, we now pass on to the study in detail of some of the principles of this teaching. The Sermon on the Mount is the most famous of all sermons. Other discoveries pass and are forgotten, but this great pronouncement is as fresh today as when it was uttered. It contains much of the finest teaching of Jesus, insomuch that some people will say that if we can only live according to the precepts of this man, we shall be perfect. This is, as it were, the ethical program of Christianity.

I. THE BEATITUDES, 3-9.

Vs. 3-5. The beatitudes describe the kind of blessedness, or happiness, which the true Christian is to obtain, and they tell of the conditions which underlie these blessings. It is not easy to give a very clear division; but in a more or less rough way, we may divide them into three groups. The first, given in vs. 3-5, deal with the outward conditions in which men may find themselves. Many of these to whom Jesus was preaching were poor and anxious and destitute. They did not belong to the rich or comfortable class. Many had deep sorrow, and little to comfort them. These might naturally say that there was no chance for them in the kingdom of God. They were inclined to regard their poor condition as a sign of divine disapproval. If Jesus had no message for this class, he would not be a world-Saviour; for the poor and troubled always form a large majority of the population. Jesus does not say that poverty is, in itself, a blessing. Blessing may come in spite of the poverty and sorrow. For life does not consist in the abundance of natural possessions. The joy that Jesus brings, therefore, is independent of worldly wealth.

Vs. 6-9. This second group brings us from outward to inward conditions; and we are told that there can be no true happiness unless the heart is right with our neighbor and with God. There must be righteousness, and purity and peace. If the mind and heart be set upon worldly things, and if there are wrong desires and ambitions, then there is no divine presence, no joy.

Vs. 10, 11. We should include the third group also in our lesson, since this is the crown of all. Life without some great object, some goal, some passion, is not at its best. And Jesus says that the noblest of all passions is love for himself. He calls people to sacrifice for his sake, and in the glow of joy which comes from close friendship with him there is that which the world cannot give or take away. Study these suggestive words, "for my sake."

II. JESUS AND OLD LAW, 17-20.

V. 17. Jesus would inevitably encounter opposition from those who did not agree with much of his teaching. To them it was revolutionary, seeming to oppose the traditions of the Fathers. We gather from this verse that this opposition had become vocal, from which we conclude that this sermon was not given until his mission had advanced some distance. His enemies had said that he was opposing the law. Accordingly Jesus says that he has not come to destroy either the law or the prophets, he is rather the one, who for the first time, puts full meaning into the law.

V. 19. If any one teaches that the commandments have lost their binding force, or if any one teaches the binding nature of the commandments, but does not keep them himself, as these Pharisees were likely doing, they such could not belong to his kingdom.

V. 20. Jesus is willing to have his teaching tested by the rule of conduct, and if his followers do not show a better result than others, he will regard them as unfit for the kingdom. We might put the word "goodness" in place of "righteousness," and thus understand his statement as a challenge to his disciples to show that their goodness surpasses that of the scribes.

III. THE NEW LAW OF LOVE, 43-48.

V. 43. The verses that intervene are given to specific examples of the way in which Jesus reads a new meaning into old legislation; and we now have the last of these, the law of love. We do not find the actual words in the Old Testament, advocating hatred of our enemies (see Lev. 19: 19), but the rabbis had concluded from this passage that there were no obligations concerning those who were outside the chosen race of Israel. It is this narrow, national spirit which Jesus attacks. It is the privilege and duty of the disciple of Jesus to regard all classes as his frineds.

V. 45. To do this is to do what God does, who gives his blessings to all people.

V. 46. If they love only their friends they are no better than those who were looked upon as belonging to the most forsaken class, the publicans. For these people also loved their friends.

V. 47. In loving their enemies they are becoming perfect, since they are getting more and more like God.

News on Africa

Describes Country Where Ant Hills Are 25 Feet in Height

Ant hills 25 feet high and as much as 50 feet in diameter are to be found distributed through many parts of Rhodesia, Dr. J. Austen Bancroft, formerly Dawson professor of geology at McGill University and now consulting geologist for a large mining company in Rhodesia, said in describing the country in which he is now employed in finding tremendous deposits of valuable ores. The subject of his talk was "Mineral Deposits in Northern Rhodesia." In the course of the lecture he told many interesting things about the general nature of the country which was kept for the British through the far-sighted statesman, Rhodes, from whom the country got its name.

Though the fauna of Rhodesia will eventually disappear, the land is still a great resort for big game hunters.

Though there are still a large number of lions in Rhodesia, these have learned to save their hides by keeping out of sight. One may travel 400 miles across the wildest parts of the country and not sight a lion, though their unfinished feasts will be visible, Dr. Bancroft stated. The buffalo is perhaps the most dangerous animal. When wounded he becomes dangerously vindictive, following his attacker for miles ready to charge at some unexpected moment and secure what is undoubtedly a well-planned revenge.

TO BE REMEMBERED

When we realize that every liberty, every privilege, every advantage that comes to us as men and women has been bought with a price—that the dark, subterranean lives of those who toil day and night in the bowels of the earth, the perils and hardships of those who sail to and fro on the stormy seas, the benumbing weariness of those who dig and ditch and handle dirt, the endless tending of looms and plying of needles and carrying of burdens—

the fierce confederate storm
Of sorrow barricaded evermore
Within the walls of cities—

all this is done and endured and suffered by our fellowmen, though blindly, for our benefit, and accrues to our advantage—when we begin to understand this, a nobler spirit enters into us, the only spirit that can keep our wealth, our freedom, our culture from being a curse to us for ever, and sinking us into the ennui of a selfish hell.—Dr. H. Van Dyke.

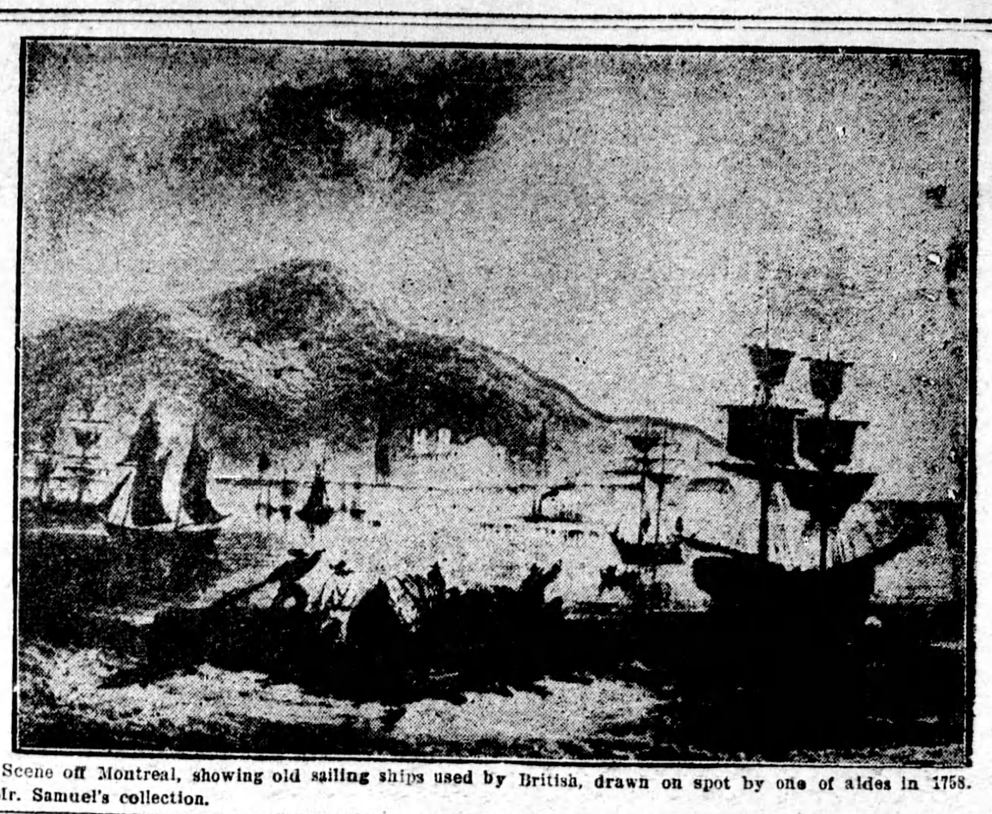
Missionary—"I've come to do you good."

Cannibal—"You can't do it; I'm on a diet."

"Schoolmasters and schoolmistresses have to deal with ignorant children on one side and with ignorant educational authorities on the other."—Bertrand Russell.

"Is it necessary that one should die to prove that he is sincere,"—Aristide Briand.

"It is not needs but markets that comand the attention of statesmen."—Clarence Darrow.



Scene off Montreal, showing old sailing ships used by British, drawn on spot by one of aides in 1758. One of Mr. Samuel's collection.

Mahatma Gandhi The Stormy Petrel

Indian Affairs are Receiving Serious Consideration from the Press the World Over

WORRYING JOHN BULL

India's demand for self-government, the correspondents agree, has taken on a new form that threatens to put the British Government in a tight place

The recent bombing of the railway train carrying Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India, we are told, was a feeble explosion in comparison to that set off by Mahatma Gandhi when he announced before the All-India Nationalist Congress at Lahore that he and other Indian leaders had abandoned their stand for a dominion status, and would henceforth be satisfied with nothing short of absolute independence for India.

The next day the executive committee, by a vote of 134 to 77, voted to submit to the conference a resolution demanding independence from the British Empire. And when the 2,000 native delegates assembled for their first full session on December 29, they listened with tumultuous cheers to a speech in which the fiery young president, Jawaharlal Nehru, announced: "We are now in conspiracy to free India"—by peaceful means, if possible, he added, but by war if necessary.

The big tent where this occurred presented a wonderful sight, the correspondents declare. The event had drawn eighty thousand visitors to Lahore. Thousands squatted outside on khaddar or homespun cloth spread over straw on the ground, and the sides of the tent were decorated with manners bearing mottoes such as "Swaraj (home rule) will drive a nail in the coffin of the British Empire." When the national flag of green, red, and white stripes was run up on the sixty-foot pole before the tent, the Associated Press tells us, the throng, shouting "Long live the revolution!" broke through the police cordon and swarmed toward the platform, causing such a crush that several men fainted. On the same authority we read:

"Mahatma Gandhi, long a leader of the Nationalist movement, led the fight against the proposed dominion status in the British Empire, and introduced non-co-operative measures to enforce the Congress party demands for independence. These included refusal to attend the round-table conference called to meet in London to discuss the political situation in India, and avored boycott of the Central and Provincial legislatures with authorization for a program of civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes when the committee thinks it advisable."

The altered attitude of Mr. Gandhi, who is supposed to hold one-third of India's 380,000,000 natives in the hollow of his palm, can mean only one thing—that the National agitation has itself acquired a momentum which the moderate can not now check, says the New York Herald Tribune, adding:

"A year ago Mr. Gandhi was pleading for caution; he assented to the demand for dominion status only to avoid more radical action. Now he, himself, is forced to demand independence; once more, it is said, to forestall the more impetuous leaders who would otherwise take the situation from his hands. It is the old difficulty of nationalistic agitation that once it is started it can not be controlled. However narrow may be its popular base, however unwise its claims might prove, or however damaging to the masses in whose name the claims are raised, the agitation takes on a reality of its own, and the leaders are hurried down the steep slope of measures which it might be difficult to justify on any rational basis of policy."

The All-India Conference last year, the Associated Press reminds us, adopted a resolution calling for a campaign of "civil disobedience" if dominion status was not granted to India by the end of 1929. The British Government sent a distinguished commission headed by Sir John Simon to report on the degree of self-government that might safely be entrusted to India's medley of races and religions, but the report of that commission has not yet been made public. This investigation was started by the last Conservative Ministry, but the Labor Government of Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald has renewed all preceding pledges and reiterated the promise that India shall have dominion status in time. But the Nationalists, becoming impatient, have now adopted a policy which, as one dispatch puts it, "seems certain to deal a crippling and perhaps a fatal blow to the whole British policy of constitutional reform in India." According to a United Press correspondent at Lahore:

"Mahatma Gandhi's program includes the calling of an extraordinary session of the Congress next February, with attendance limited to 1,000 influential delegates sworn to proclaim 'civil disobedience' of British rule. Such action, it is expected, will force the Government to declare the Congress an unlawful body, and arrest the delegates. Thereupon Gandhi will mobilize another 1,000 with the same result, continuing the program until the Government or the Congress breaks."

That John Bull is somewhat disturbed—especially by the threat of an Indian boycott on English goods—was indicated by an immediate wavering the price of cotton at Liverpool, which in turn affected New Rork. J. L. Garvin, writing in the London Sunday Observer, declares that the Nationalists of India are deliberately copying the methods used by the Sinn Fein leaders in Ireland a dozen years ago, even to adopting "The Wearing of the Green" as their fighting song. He adds, however: "The Sinn Fein elements of Indian agitation are profoundly self-deceived by Irish precedents which could only lead them to gigantic disasters." If the congress at Lahore were truly representative of all India, says the London Sunday Times, the resolution demanding complete independence would be the gravest event since the mutiny of 1857, but it adds:

"In point of fact the Congress is nothing of the kind. It is composed of some thousands of unrepresentative Indians whose brains have been fermented with ideas of Western democracy. It is not even popularly elected. Even if all shades of Indian political opinion were represented in it the Congress would still remain hopelessly unrepresentative of India nine-tenths of the population of which are illiterates not caring a fig for politics."

That the Liberal party of India, at least, has no use for the radicalism of the Gandhi Nationalists is indicated by a dispatch from Madras to the New York Times, December 30, saying.

"The National Liberal Federation here to-day denounced the policy of independence advocated by the Nationalist Congrss at Lahore. The Liberals passed a resolution cordially welcoming the Viceroy's announcement regarding India's future."

Fortune of War

Ethel Mannin in the London Evening Standard (Ind. Cons.): It is far easier for women to get jobs and to make money to-day than for men to do so. For men jobs of any kind, still less remunerative posts and big appointments, are desperately scarce, whilst for women they open up on every hand, and the number of women earning a salary, or making in businesses of their own, a thousand pounds a year and more is steadily if slowly being added to, both here and in America. . . . It is especially embittering for men that all the opportunities for money-making and commercial success generally, which have resulted from the upheaval of the war, have gone, not to the men who fought, but to the women who stayed home, and those not the women who were called upon to sacrifice sons and husbands either, but to that younger generation of women—my own generation—who were school girls in 1914, and whom the war touched but lightly.

Oldpop—"How did you sleep last night?"

Newpop—"Between walks."

British Empire is League in Itself

Success of Commonwealth Proof of Practicability Says Smuts

New York—The British Empire as a precedent for the League of Nations was held out by General Jan Christian Smuts, former Premier of South Africa, speaking at a monster dinner here. In the Empire, he pointed out, one quarter of the population of the world, representing all races, colors and creeds, were living together in peace with no army or navy required to enforce it.

He asked why this condition could not be extended to the whole world.

The dinner was a part of the celebrations arranged in the United States for the tenth anniversary of the founding of the League. Some 32 organizations interesting themselves in securing the entry of this country into the League, participated.

The British Empire of to-day, the General said, was nothing else but a League of Nations in itself. The only way to secure perpetual peace was by applying the same idea on a larger scale. The success of the Empire is proof of its practicability.

General Smuts said his mission was not to engage in propaganda for the League, but merely to lay the facts before the people in the United States. In not more than ten years he predicted the whole human race, including Russia, would be represented at the Council table of the League.

"It would be a very serious and very tragic thing," he went on, "if, when all the nations of the world gather there, the seat of the founder and inspirer should remain vacant."

Tribute to Wilson

In this and other references he paid tribute to the late President Woodrow Wilson as one of the main forces in bringing the League into existence. Mrs. Woodrow Wilson occupied a seat of honor next to General Smuts.

The United States, he pointed out, was bound to enter into international conferences whether within or without the League. The pact of Paris required it. In this way the method of conference for disposing o international disputes would become universal and once this came about peace would be guaranteed without fail.

A gradual disappearance of opposition to the League in the United States was noted by John W. Davis, who presided. There was not one responsible person in the country now, he said, who would say the League was dead, was a failure or should be revised.

Russia and Religion

London Morning Post (Cons.): To resume relations with Soviet Russia and to give free entry to her representatives and agents has always seemed to us a monstrous folly from a political point of view. There is, however, a consideration far stronger. Soviet Russia is the avowed and implacable enemy of the Christian faith—of any form of religion whatsoever. The intention is clear and unashamed. Religion must be destroyed not only in Russia but throughout the world in order that the social, economic and political theories of Bolshevism may take root and flourish. Religion is first to be destroyed in order that the world revolution may follow.

Industrialized Western Canada

Victoria Times (Lib.): Throughout the West during the year 1929 there has been a very satisfactory expansion in industrial development covering all lines of manufacturing which pertain to the West, and it has been a year in which new industries producing articles not hitherto manufactured have been established—another year of investigation into trade possibilities, bringing into the West many representatives of important organizations, from which have resulted new agencies, new expansion and new and attractive prospects for the future.

"The man of fifty has usually come to terms with the world and the devil and is suffering from fatty degeneration or sclerosis of the conscience."—Dean Inge.

MUTT AND JEFF— By BUD FISHER

Can a Flee Commit Perjury?