

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

JANUARY 13th, 1856.

Subject.—TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

For Repeating. For Reading.
John i. 1-5. | John i. 15-34.

JANUARY 20th, 1856.

Subject.—CALLING OF THE DISCIPLES.

For Repeating. For Reading.
John i. 15-17. | John i. 35-51.

THE Series of Lessons which we have commenced is taken from the "Consecutive Question Book," published by the S. S. Union.

We repeat the following notice:—
"Lists of the Lessons for six months" will be sent, free of postage, to any part of the Provinces, at the rate of 25 copies for three three-penny postage stamps. Orders prepaid.

WE are desirous of making the weekly visits of the Christian Messenger pleasant and profitable, not only to the fathers and mothers, among our subscribers, but also to the children and those who are just beginning to think and act for themselves, and of presenting to them such things as will give a right direction to their enquiries and induce them to read, so as to become acquainted with the principles we advocate and the progress of the Redeemer's Kingdom generally. We shall therefore occasionally give such pieces under this head as will be intended only for quite young people.

EDUCATION IN GREAT BRITAIN.

The Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council on Education, have recently published a volume of their Minutes for 1854-1855, which shows a gradual improvement in the provision made for the inspection of Schools, the examination of teachers, and aid afforded to those who obtain certificates of competency.

An important feature in the operations of the Committee is the employment of pupil-teachers, young persons between the ages of thirteen and twenty years, who are apprenticed to school-masters and mistresses, and are required to assist them in teaching during school hours, and receive special instruction at other times. One is allowed to about every fifty children, in large schools. The sum of £138,355 10s. 10d. was expended by the Government last year for this service, and £30,443 14s. 5d. for the payment of inspectors, persons wholly employed in visiting schools, examining teachers and pupil-teachers, and granting them certificates of competency.

The reports furnished by inspectors constantly supply materials for improvement. One of those reports, referring to the British Schools, says:—"There are few schools in which my second visit did not bring to light some marked improvement."

Another says: "We are getting excellent teachers, and every other impediment appears in process of removal; but in the length of time children remain at school, no progress is being made. Only 3 1/2 per cent. are above the age of thirteen years. About 32 per cent. are not over seven years of age."

The report on the state of the Normal College, Borough Road, which contains 135 students, and upwards of a thousand children, concludes with the following statement:

"A tone of cheerful mental activity tempered by religious sentiment pervades the establishment, and conveys an unmistakable impression that its purpose is to make its inmates not only abler scholars and more skilful teachers, but better men and truer Christians."

BROWN UNIVERSITY.

A CATALOGUE of the officers and students of this venerable seat of learning, for 1855- and '56, has the following facts and statistics: The name of Francis Wayland, D. D., instead of standing where it has for years, first in the Corporation and Faculty, has now disappeared and that of Barnas Sears, D. D., takes its place. Next to him in the Faculty is the well-known name of Alexis Caswell, D. D., who has so long had a prominent position in the education and science of our country, having purchased to himself a well-deserved reputation as a scholar, a gentleman, a Christian, and a minister, whose success as a teacher is equaled only by that with which he wins the confidence and respect of all who know him. The general condition

of the Institution was never more prosperous, having,—

Resident graduates,	2
Under " of 4 years standing	31
" " 3 " "	54
" " 2 " "	64
" " 1 " "	74
Total number of students,	225

N. Y. Chron.

Miscellaneous.

GOSSIPS.

A few days ago, brother John Candid met me in the street, and, with long face and lugubrious tones, began to tell me of a sad report which rumor was spreading of brother Isaac Honest. The tale in itself was not much; but the shrugs of the shoulder, the significant shakes of the head, and the speech of the eye, which said, "I am afraid, or rather hope it is all true," made the case appear a very bad one. Happily, I felt no disposition to believe a charge against a brother, especially as it was insinuated, rather than openly alleged; and therefore I asked, "Well, brother Candid, have you seen brother Honest on the subject, and ascertained from him the facts of the case?" The reply was, "No, my dear brother, I really have not time to attend to the matter; besides which, you will understand that I do not believe it to be true." "Well, my brother," I replied, "I shall go direct to brother Honest, tell him what you say, and ask him as to its truth." The look of the good man in return was a picture. How fervently did he implore me to take no further notice of it; and what solemn assurance did he give me in a five minutes' further conversation that he would be more cautious. I have at present yielded to his entreaty; but whether my conduct was right or wrong, perhaps your readers can determine better than I can. At all events, brother Candid, should he repeat the offense, will not fare so well at my hands another time.

A short story more. Thirty years since I was pastor of a church in which were some female gossips, a race which I hope are now rapidly dying away. Nothing could occur in connection with the church, but these prateways could make mischief out of it. At a church-meeting I stated that I was resolved to destroy this practice of scandal, and that I would embrace the very first chance of tracing its author. An opportunity soon offered. A young lady was proposed for church-fellowship, and the detractors were quickly at work. I overheard one telling of a pretty story, which, on its very surface, indicated exaggeration. "Is this true?" I asked. "I do not know, sir, but I hope not." "Why do you report what you are not sure of?" "Mrs.—" told me, sir, and I was only just mentioning it in confidence." To Mrs.—I went, and found that she had told something, but not quite so bad as reported. I insisted on her authority, and went on tracking the report from one to another, till it ended in—nothing. Not quite so either; for the whole facts were stated to the church, who, very wisely, strongly censured the practice and for a good period at least checked the evil. Did I act rightly in the case?

Let us bridle our tongues. Let us put a check upon our curiosity. "Do your own business." Next to your own, be careful of your neighbours' reputation. Be slow to believe aught against him. Give no credence to flying reports. Reject unfounded insinuations. Pay no attention to rumors that go about like orphans in the world or foundlings whom none dare own. Remember that "what every body says must be true," is a sophism worthy of the father of lies. As matters stand, every body's word is worth nobody's taking. If you hear against your will, demand proof of what you hear. Let not the scarcity of truth be atoned for by the abundance of affidavits. Keep truth on your side. Speak evil of no man. If your neighbour injures you, tell him his fault alone. If he wishes it, forgive him. Be no busy-body. Hate tale-bearing. O, if all would do thus! would there not be a millennium? But poor, weak, perverse human nature! wicked and inexcusable, as well as human! Alas! my hearers.

RUSSIA.

The Russians, in general, have very limited ideas on the subject of religion, as they, for the greater part, can neither read nor write; they go to church, where they repeat, with great devotion, a certain number of Aves and Paternosters

in their own language, or rather Slavonic, and cross themselves while the priest is celebrating mass, which is done with more or less pomp, according to the occasion or the riches of the church. If you ask a peasant, Where is God? he will generally point to the corner of the room, where there are hanging one or more coarse, badly-executed paintings, representing some of their saints, and which he is firmly persuaded are so many gods. This will, perhaps, create a smile of pity in England, but it is the natural result of their uneducated state, which precludes them from understanding all abstract ideas. They must have something corporeal—something they can see and feel; consequently, to abolish these would be to do away with all religion in their eyes. In their way they are very religious; I have even known some of them who, when they are about to commit a sin, will cover carefully their images, that God may not see what they are about. They are very strict in their fasts, which are very severe, as neither milk, butter, eggs, nor anything that is produced by animals, is permitted; and, of course, animal food is forbidden. The principal and longest fast is, of course, Lent, when they do not even eat fish during the first and last weeks, nor on Wednesdays and Fridays; from Good Friday till after mass on Easter-day, many of them eat nothing, but spend their time in watching, fasting, and praying, being firmly persuaded that Christ dies and rises again every year at this time. But, when the mass is over on Easter-day (generally about 4 a.m.) ample amends is made for the long fast, by stuffing to a degree that is really disgusting to look at and think of; nor is the brandy-cup forgotten; for, during the three days that Easter lasts, it is almost a sin not to be drunk; nor are the priests backward in setting the example in both eating and drinking.

The priests are objects of great veneration, although many of them are not far removed, in point of education, from their flock. I have met with those who could scarcely read, except their church books, which they had learned by rote. There are, however, many who are well educated, and even learned, but these are chiefly in towns. These are the two extremes, whereas the great body of them can read and write, and understand enough of the dogmas of the Russo-Greek Church to keep the people in their present state. Here also we find the same system of feeling going on as elsewhere; for if they take a fancy to anything that a peasant possesses, the owner knows that it is no longer his property, or he will not receive absolution when he goes to confession; or the priest may refuse to bury any of his family that may die, or to baptise his children, or may even excommunicate him. All classes fall upon the poor peasant.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

Missions in Shanghai, China.

The city of Shanghai contains a population of about 350,000. On May 30th, 1855, ten missionary societies had agents there, viz., 3 English, 6 American, and 1 Dutch. There were 13 European, 20 American, and 9 Native missionaries; 2 printing establishments, 29 schools, with 735 scholars, about 70 being girls. There were also 13 chapels, in which 82 services were held weekly, the attendance varying from 30 to 150.

It appears that there are six Christian churches in that city, viz., two in connexion with English societies, the London Missionary formed in 1844, and the Church Missionary formed in 1850; and four in connexion with American societies, the Southern Baptist, formed in 1847; the Sabbatarian Baptist, formed in 1849; and the Episcopal Methodist, formed in 1851. To the inquiry, "Church, when formed," the American Episcopal Missionary Society returns the characteristic answer, "A. D. 33." Their mission to Shanghai was commenced in 1844. The present number of members in the six churches is 63. Total from their formation 109. The number of applicants for membership is 25.

The missionaries practice itineracy with great vigor, some of them making journeys of one or two hundred miles into the interior. The aspect of missionary affairs is very encouraging. There is a great demand for books, and nearly 10,000 of "The Sinner's Friend" have been distributed.

Sweden.

The remarkable work of God is making progress in Sweden. The present revival has ex-

tended over a very large proportion of the parishes of the province of Dalecarlia. A gentleman, says the *British Banner*, holding the office analogous to that of Sheriff, in Scotland, declares that many of the rich and powerful have come to believe in the Lord Jesus, and work zealously for the kingdom of God. Mr. O. H.—, proprietor of iron mines, and of a large estate in the dark district in which he resides, every Sabbath gathers around him large companies, and proclaims to them the gospel. The King and the Crown Prince, during their recent journey to Norway, visited Mr. H.—, and at his invitation, took a meal at his house, when he spoke of his doings, in proclaiming the gospel among his dependents. In many parishes remarkable and extensive awakenings have appeared and continue. The instruments have been one Christian minister, beside many colporteurs.—*N. Y. Examiner.*

VALUE OF BIOGRAPHY.—The lives of men of science have one peculiar advantage, and they often show the importance of little things in producing great results. Smeaton drew his principle of constructing a light-house from noticing the trunk of a tree to be diminished from a curve to a cylinder. Rembrandt's marvellous system of splendour and shade was suggested by accidental gleams of light and shade in his father's mill. White of Salborne, carrying about in his rides and walks a list of birds to be investigated, and Newton turning an old box into a water-clock, or the yard of a house into a sun-dial, are examples of those habits of patient observation, which scientific biography attractively recommends. Biography will also often serve to cheer merit when its hopes are drooping. It leads down a gallery of portraits, and gives the comforting or warning history of each.—It shows Jackson working on his father's shop-board, and cherishing a love of art by an occasional visit to Castle Howard; Richardson, a printer's apprentice, stealing an hour from sleep to improve his mind, and scrupulously buying his own candle, that his master might not be defrauded; or the Chinese scholar, Morrison, laboring at his trade of a last and boot maker, and keeping his lamp from blowing out with a volume of Matthew Henry's Commentary.

MEETING OF INDIANS.—The *Christian Messenger*, of Brantford, C. W., states that, "a general meeting of the Indians of the State of New York was lately held at the Cataragus Reservation. The assembly was composed of persons belonging to various Christian denominations, who all joined harmoniously together in the different services. Rev. Peter Jones, and Elder W. N. Cusick, were the only preachers from Canada, and they took a large part in the meeting. The result was, that 66 Indians were converted to God, and left to join the churches they preferred. Amongst the Six Nations Indians, there are 300 regular communicants. The Indian Baptist church, in Tuscarora, is prospering. They are intending soon to hold a general meeting along with brethren from the States, to seek God's saving and reviving grace."

The *Foreign Missionary*, the organ of the Old School Presbyterian Board for Foreign Missions, has the following table, said to have been prepared with much care, and from reliable sources, showing the relative supply of ministers of evangelical churches, to the population of the United States, in 1832, 1843, and 1854:

Years.	Population.	Ministers.
In 1832	13,713,342	9,537
In 1843	18,768,822	17,073
In 1854	25,953,000	25,427

Or thus:

In 1832, 1 Minister to every 1,437 souls.
In 1843, 1 " " " 1,093 "
In 1854, 1 " " " 1,020 "

TALKING AND READING.—Nothing is better than conversation as a corrective of self-sufficiency. In educated conversation a man soon finds his level. He learns more truly than from books, in converse with living men, to estimate his powers modestly and justly. A book is passive; it does not repel pretension; it does not rebuke vanity. Indeed, reading and study become to many but the nurture of conceit. If some persons value themselves on the books they own, it is not surprising that others should value themselves on the books they read.—*The Yarwood Papers.*