

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

FEBRUARY 10th, 1856.

Subject.—TESTIMONY OF JOHN CONCERNING JESUS.

For Repeating. For Reading. John iii. 16-18. John iii. 19-36.

FEBRUARY 17th, 1856.

Subject.—THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

For Repeating. For Reading. John iii. 18-21. John iv. 1-26.

A FEW THOUGHTS

ON THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR FEB. 10TH.

The brief narrative given in this passage of Scripture of the ministry of Jesus and the estimation in which John the Baptist held him, may be considered as supplying us with some beautiful pictures. He tarried in Judea, probably at the house of Lazarus; going out day by day and preaching to the crowds who flocked to hear the gracious words proceed out of his mouth, and as they manifested faith in him, and their adherence to those truths he taught his disciples, by his command (see chap. iv. 2.) led them down into the waters of the broad river near and baptized them, whilst the crowd continued to increase in numbers, (verse 22.) as he proceeded to unfold to them the things concerning his Kingdom. Whilst this was proceeding John was probably a few miles northward, where there was much water, engaged in a similar manner; making known the near approach of that Kingdom, and administering the rite which was to prepare men to receive the full development of what he only waited the opportunity, so soon to be afforded him, of declaring, that "He (the disciples of Jesus) must increase" whilst "he (John's disciples) must decrease" and of making him known as the One from heaven above all and the giver of everlasting life. What a sublime example is this for all teachers to imitate. John had finished his work. He had introduced Jesus to the world and had baptized him. He was now willing to retire and give up all the popularity he had known, and directed his followers to Him as the source whence he had received all things, and on whom he was himself still dependant. He had been directed by the Spirit; but Jesus had that Spirit without measure and therefore no limit should be known to his ministry, nor to the blessings bestowed on those who joined themselves to Him.

The Infant Teacher.

FOR THE LITTLE FOLKS.

"Oh, mamma, mamma! see these beautiful flowers," exclaimed Ellen, as she came running to her mother, decked all over, head, neck and arms, with those wild-wood sweets of orange, purple, and white.

"Where did you get them, love?" asked the mother, thinking she really did look like a little fairy.

"The girls put them on me, mamma." And on they came bounding behind her, some eight or ten little Karen girls, with arms full of bright flowers. They had dark faces, with jet black hair and sparkling eyes, and looked so happy in having arrayed their little teacheress, as they called her.

"And what has Ellen been telling you, girls?" asked the mother.

"Oh, mamma!" interrupted Ellen, "we have been sitting on that grassy bank by the little stream, watching the pretty tulip-balls, and the little monkeys which came all about on the other side, to catch the flowers and rice we threw at them."

"And we have had such a pleasant meeting, too," added the little girls. "Ellen has told us all about God, and she says He made the monkeys, and the birds, and the trees, and the water, and she told us that God's Son came down and died for us; and that we must not get angry, or tell lies, or steal; and then she sang some pretty verses to us about it."

Her mother had been watching her little daughter, and saw she was trying to instruct the little heathen girls, and saw her kneel with them, and in their own tongue ask God to have mercy on the heathen, and make them cast away their idols, and worship the true God.

Don't you think it made that mother happy to see her daughter trying to do good? It did, children, and it will make your mothers happy to see you doing good. There are no heathen children around you whom you can tell about the Saviour, but still there are a great many ways in which you can do good, and make your dear parents happy. And one way is, by learning sweet little verses. Now try and learn this one.

"Jesus was a little child— He did never sin; Was not angry, rude or wild— I must be like Him."

The Teacher.

Not the warrior, then, nor the statesman, nor yet the master-worker, as such, but the teacher, in our day, leads the vanguard of humanity; whether in the seminary or by the wayside, by uttered word or printed page. Our true king is not he who, best directs the siege, or sets the squadron in the field, or heads the charge; but he who can and will instruct and enlighten his fellows, so that at least some few of the generation of which he is a member, shall be wiser, purer, nobler, for his living among them, and prepare to carry forward the work, of which he was a humble instrument, to its far grander and loftier consummation.

Far above the conquerer of kingdoms, the destroyer of hosts by the sword and the bayonet, is he whose tearless victories redden no river and whiten no plain, but who leads the understanding a willing captive, and builds his empire, not of the wrenched and bleeding fragments of subjugated nations, but on the realms of which he has discovered and planted, and peopled with beneficent activity and enduring joy.

[Horace Greeley.]

I was once Young.

It is an excellent thing for all who are engaged in giving instruction to young people, frequently to call to mind what they were themselves when young. This practice is one of the most likely to impart patience and forbearance, and to correct unreasonable expectations. At one period of my life, when instructing two or three young people to write, I found them as I thought, usually stupid. I happened about this time to look over the contents of an old copy-book, written by me when I was a boy. The thick up-strokes, the crooked down-strokes, the awkward joinings of the letters, and the blots in the book, made me completely ashamed of myself, and I could, at the moment, have burned the book in the fire. The worse however, I thought of myself, the better I thought of my backward scholars; I was cured of my unreasonable expectations, and became in future doubly patient and forbearing. In teaching youth, remember that you once were young, and in reproving their youthful errors, endeavour to call to mind your own.

Miscellaneous.

Sketch of Sau Quala.

BY DR. MASON.

It was the first cascade I had met in the Karen glens, and burst upon my view as I was threading my way barefooted and barelegged up to the bed of a babbling brook, in one of the early years of my missionary life, to the base of a range of mountains higher than the Alleghanies, on whose unbroken summit a railroad might be constructed without bridging a single stream, up to Tibet, and through to the highlands of Central Asia, where Noah and his sons cultivated the vine. From these mountains, the stream descended comes tumbling down in a clattering cascade, through a deep gorge, and descends into a small lake, a mile or two distant, teeming with tame barbel and carp, clothed in green and gold and scarlet, that come to the hand to be fed, petted as living offerings to the pagoda on the cliffs which throw their shadows over the waters.

About forty years ago, a tottering bamboo house might have been seen on the brink of the gorge, through which this brook leaps, threatening with every gust of wind to fall into the gulf below. Its inmates were a tall, long-bearded Karen man, a very fair, round-faced Karen woman his wife, and one child, about two years old. They were groaning, with the rest of their nation, under Burmese oppression; but they had heard some indistinct reports,

that the ships of the white men often appeared in the Burmese seaports, and believing that these white men were their destined deliverers, they began to look up in hope that the epoch of their salvation drew nigh; so when a second son was born unto them, about this time, they called his name Hope, QUALA, because they said, "We hope happiness will come to us in his days." This is the Rev. Sau Quala, now in charge of the Karen mission in the province of Youngoo;—where he has baptized more than fifteen hundred converts.

His father was an austere man. He brooded to the confines of madness over the wrongs of his nation. "The bamboo leaf"—to use his own metaphor—"it falls on thorns, the thorns pierce it. Thorns fall on it, the thorns spear it. Our habitation is a thorn bush. We come upon the Siamese, the Siamese make us slaves. We happen upon the Burmese, the Burmese make us slaves." He felt as if his heart would not overflow, but burst with suppressed rage against his Bubbish oppressors. He hated them with an unquenchable hatred; and he hated their religion, and their pagodas, and their images, and their priests, and everything that was theirs. He hated the taskmaster; who ordered him to-day to dig boats or pull logs; and he hated the officer, who commanded him to-morrow to cut bamboos or ratans, or collect dammer or beeswax, or gather cardamoms or capsicum. "The iron had entered into his soul." The habit of looking on so many objects with unmitigated detestation, absorbed every better feeling of his nature, and left him not even the shadow of a smile for his quiet, uncomplaining wife, who planted the cotton, weeded it, watched it, gathered it, carded it, spun it, dyed it, wove it into cloth, and then made it into tunics and shawls for himself and his children.

I have seen many agreeable Karen women, but never one that made so deep and lasting an impression on my mind, and awoke such pleasing emotions, as Quala's mother. If ever human being received the gospel as glad tidings, she did. Were I an artist, called upon to depict Mary at the feet of Jesus, I should immediately transfer her to the canvas from the picture on the tablet of my memory, as I have seen her seated at the feet of the teacher or teacheress.

Whenever she could leave her home, she was with the missionary, wherever he might be; whether in the city or in the jungle; and whenever she was with the missionary, from early dawn to late at night, she was literally seated at his feet, or at the feet of his wife glistening through her large almond eyes, beaming with intelligence and happiness, that seemed to fascinate the beholder; or, when there was a pause, her harmonious voice would tell, in her musical Trans-Gangetic Italian, the change which God had wrought in her heart, and her glorious prospects for the future. She lived a few years only after I led her into the baptismal waters, but they were years of spiritual growth;—the bud opened into the blossom, and the full-blown flower; like a babe in heaven, expanding into an angel.

Her son Quala, while a boy, had some of his mother's finest traits, and all his father's intelligence and decision of character, without any of his moroseness. His name, like Noah's, was prophetic of the man. He was ever full of hope. He treasured up in his memory every tradition which prophesied the emancipation of his nation from their galling servitude and cruel taskmasters. There seems to have been a wide-spread tradition over Eastern Asia, that a great deliverer would arise in the West—probably a primitive tradition of the Messiah. We find it in Media or Persia at the birth of Christ, and hence the Magi went west in search of him, and to make him offerings in testimony of their obedience to his laws. We meet it again in China, for, according to Chinese history, the emperor sent west, some time during the first century of our era, in search of a great God of whom he had heard indistinct reports, and that the embassy met with the priests of Buddha and Buddhism, instead of missionaries and Christianity, as they would probably have done, had the church had her representatives in Thibet or India. In modern times, this same tradition was found in Siam, by Gutzlaff, who wrote: "It was well known by the predictions of the Pali books, that a certain religion of the West would vanquish Buddhism."

And when the English Governor first came to Amherst, the Talaing priests told him they had "found written in their sacred books, that a colony of white men would one day settle in the neighboring country."

This tradition the Karens appear to have seized upon, and expanded beyond any other nation. It was often the theme of their wild improvisations; and no stanza that young Quala heard was ever forgotten. Often, while watching his father's rice field to keep out the peacocks and parrots, monkeys and wild hogs, he would sing:

"The children of God are those who took From the hand of God, the Holy Book; The white foreigners are the sons of the Lord, They obtained of old his Holy Word."

When the English took Tavoy, he was fourteen or fifteen years old; and they had not been in the place many days, before, accompanied by his father and mother, he went into the city. No sooner were they within the walls than, to their great consternation, they were taken into the presence of the Governor and several military officers; but were soon reassured, when the Governor would not allow them to prostrate themselves before him, according to Oriental custom, but bade them stand erect, and talked kindly with them, dismissing them with presents of money, and a turban for each. "Then," said Quala, "I remembered the prophetic stanzas; which say:

"See! See! the whites! so fair, so neat; With grace they go, they sit, they eat, Most gracefully they stand and walk, Most graciously they look and talk."

It was two or three years after this period, that Ko Thahbyu, immediately after his baptism, went forth to preach the gospel to his countrymen in the jungle, and the first Karen house which he reached was Quala's father's. There, or next-door, he stopped to spend the night, and there the neighbours assembled around him in the evening, under the impression that Ko Thahbyu being a stranger, he would, according to custom, trace his genealogy, to show that he was not an enemy, but a relation; for with the Karens, as with the Latins, a stranger is also an enemy. They were surprised to learn the subject of his mission, and Quala says, "I believed when I first heard; and said to myself, Is not this the very thing we have been waiting for?" So, though not the first baptized, Sau Quala was the first Karen convert after Ko Thahbyu.

Domestic Worship.

The patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, wherever, in their pilgrimages, they fixed on a place of residence, erected an altar to God for family devotion, and called on the name of the Lord.

Joshua resolved that as for him and his family, they would serve the Lord, that is, worship him.

Job practiced family worship. He sent and sanctified his children, and rose early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings, according to the number of them all. "Thus did Job continually."

David, having spent one day in bringing the ark from the house of Obedom to the place he had prepared for it, and in presenting peace-offerings before the Lord, returned at night to bless his household, that is, to pray for a blessing upon his family, or to attend upon family devotion.

Cornelius, the centurion, it is said, "feared God with all his house," meaning, worshiped him with his family.

The Apostle speaks, in his epistles, of churches in private houses. By this phrase he means families where religious services were observed.

In the Lord's Prayer, we have a command for family devotion. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father, who art in heaven. The form of prayer is plural. It must, therefore, mean social prayer, and if social prayer, then family prayer—for a family is the most proper society to engage in this devotion.

Paul, in his Epistle to the Colossians, having pointed out the duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, adds, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." The subject upon which he was speaking, and the manner of his speaking, leads us to conclude he meant family prayer.

In his Epistle to the Ephesians, he enjoins it as a duty, to "pray always with all prayer