

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

JANUARY 20th, 1856.

Subject.—CALLING OF THE DISCIPLES. For Repeating. For Reading. John i. 15-17. | John i. 35-51.

JANUARY 27th, 1856.

Subject.—CHRIST'S FIRST MIRACLE.—HE CLEANSETH THE TEMPLE. For Repeating. For Reading. John i. 43-46. | John ii. 1-25.

A FEW FRIENDLY WORDS

TO BOYS AND GIRLS.

We suppose you often think that your parents take the "Christian Messenger" for their own use alone, and that there is not much in it which you can understand, or would care to read, except it be some of the selections. We wish however to let you know that we shall occasionally put something in for you; so that you may look forward with pleasure for its appearance every week; sometimes you will find that there is much in it, that you will like to read for yourselves, and if you do so, you will very soon be able to understand more of it, so as to read aloud to your parents from its pages, while they are busily engaged in doing other things for you or your brothers and sisters.

We hope you read the passage of Scripture at the head of this column, every Sunday, and commit to memory those verses marked "For Repeating."

There was once a little boy who, when he was only twelve years of age, went a long journey with his parents, to worship God, and instead of returning with them, stopped behind for the purpose of hearing and asking questions about the Word of God. You may find more about him in the 2nd chapter of Luke from the 42nd to the 52nd verse. If you learn to love and imitate him, and endeavour to understand and act according to that Word you may expect that, as every new-year comes, it will find you more and more happy: and if you are spared to grow up and spend a long life of happiness and usefulness in this world you will at last be called by your Heavenly Father to enter that place above, where no sorrow will ever trouble you, and where all tears will be wiped from all faces, and where you shall be, "for ever with the Lord".

Sabbath Schools versus Horse Races.

Nineteen years since an attempt was made to establish horse races in the vicinity of Sunderland, but the scheme failed. On that occasion all the Sunday schools united in a grand demonstration, which contributed not a little to the ill success of the sporting experiment. On the third and fourth of September last the attempt was renewed, when another demonstration of the Sunday schools was got up, under the auspices of the Sunday School Union. The procession, which consisted of 10,000 children and 915 teachers, was one mile and a quarter in length—every school had banners and colours. The procession moved through the streets of the town, accompanied by two bands, the children singing hymns selected for the occasion. The effect produced upon the spectators, who densely crowded the line of march, was highly favourable; it caused many breasts to heave with emotion, and drew tears from many eyes. Tea was provided in a field at the outskirts of the town, the arrangements for which were admirable; and, considering that upwards of 2000 adults, in addition to the 10,000 scholars, were regaled with tea and cake, very little confusion prevailed. The expenses were defrayed by subscription. On the Sunday previous the attendance at all the schools was much above the average, thus showing that one-third of our children are usually absent without cause. A fact for teachers. Such a demonstration will not fail to be attended with beneficial results. It kept many away from the races; it was an emphatic protest against their establishment, and unmistakable evidence that in the estimation of the religious public their influence is demoralizing. It made manifest to all the immense moral power which Sunday Schools are wielding over the destiny of England and the world.—Teacher's Mag.

Opening of the Mission Hall and Day Schools in connection with New Park Street Chapel, London.

A commodious building, very near the above chapel, having been taken and fitted up for the purposes mentioned, was opened on Friday, Nov. 9. A tea meeting, very numerously attended, was held in the hall, after which a public meeting in the chapel, announced to commence at seven. By six o'clock, however, the spacious chapel was well filled; and in order to interest the large congregation assembled, Mr. Spurgeon gave a pleasing account of his visit to the west of England. Precisely at seven o'clock the pastor took the chair; and after the devotional exercises and a short opening address, called on the secretary to read the report, which was very encouraging. Dr. Fletcher was the next speaker, who referred, in a very interesting manner, to the progress of religious education during the last forty years. The Rev. T. J. Cole, and Mr. Tallfield, of the London City Mission, followed; after which Joseph Payne, Esq., gave one of his usual lively and interesting speeches, poetry, &c. A collection was now made, after which it was announced that about forty pounds was still required to complete the undertaking. A gentleman in the congregation immediately stated he would give ten pounds if the whole was made up that evening; others followed the good example and presently the whole amount was made up to the great joy of all present. Various and important objects are contemplated by this movement: A week day and sabbath school for the poor children of the neighbourhood—a library and reading rooms, with occasional lectures for the working classes—and preaching on sabbath evenings, for the accommodation of some, at least, of the hundreds who go away disappointed, unable to gain admission into the chapel. Thus encouraged by the past, we confidently anticipate great things for the future; and our constant prayer as a church, I hope, is, "O Lord, we beseech thee, send now prosperity."—Bap. Rep.

Miscellaneous.

"HER HAP WAS."

"Her hap was to light upon a part of the field belonging to Boaz." Now, this word "hap," "her hap," is a wonderful word. It is used in our common version for happened. But you are not to understand it as implying a mere chance or fortuity. No, my dear friends, there is no such thing as chance in the government of God. "He sees the end from the beginning;" with him it is an eternal now. Then, in assigning "her hap," did not God assign her lot? If you weigh this passage well, and grant it its full weight, will you not find wrapped up in it the whole doctrine of a particular and personal providence? "Consider the word of God," saith Solomon, "for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?" "It is not in man to direct his steps." As good old Boston says: "there is a crook in every man's lot, but he cannot straighten it." Now, if this "hap" in the history of Ruth relates to an unerring providence as we have said, depend upon it that "hap" manifested itself in a famine before it was found in a barley field. "Now it came to pass in the days that the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land: and a certain man, of Bethlehem-judah, went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons." Here you see the first dawning of the "hap" of Ruth. Trials precede the merciful designs of God ordinarily, and you cannot tell what will be, until

"The clouds disperse, the shadows flee, And God is seen by mortal eye."

Rev. Thomas Binney, of London, tells a circumstance which very beautifully illustrates the "crook in the lot," "the hap of a soul returning to God." It is in point here. He says, "A brother minister, a friend of mine, was very feverish and restless one night after a hard Sabbath, and he could not sleep. On Monday morning he rose up early, about five o'clock and dressed, thinking he would just walk out, as he could get no rest; and, as he was passing along a little way from the town, he saw a poor woman whom he recognized, and when they met, he said to her, "Good morning, Betty," and passed on—that was all—just a kind, neighborly, loving word. A month or two

afterwards, a woman came to that minister, and said she wished to converse with him about her soul, and that she desired to be received into communion with the church; that she trusted she had yielded her heart to God, and given herself over to live and die in his service, and, said she, "You were the cause." "Do you remember meeting me one morning soon after five o'clock?" "Yes." "Well, I was then going to the river with a determination to drown myself. I had been for some time in a state of deep depression; my spirit was completely crushed and broken; I thought nobody cared for me, that I had not a single soul in the world who had a thought about me; and, as I passed you, do you remember that you said, "Good morning, Betty," and you said it in such a tone of sympathy—there was such a neighborly recognition in it—that I said to myself, 'Why, he does not look down upon me,—he does not pass me without a good word and a good wish; there must be something in life worth living for after all.' Well, sir, I gave up my purpose, and I turned round, and went home. The next Sabbath I went to your chapel, and, regularly ever since, I have sat under the preaching of the Gospel from your lips. I trust from that moment you spoke to me, there has been a change in my whole character, and that I am now willing to live for God."

Now, will you say, that providence and grace did not reign in the "hap" of poor Betty? Why then could not the minister sleep? Why did he get up and leave the house? Why did he not find something to do in his study to while away an hour? Why, if he must walk out, did he happen to take that road, and no other, and at five o'clock, instead of half an hour earlier or later? Who did he happen to meet that poor woman just when she was in that horrible state of mind—and use that single salutation, and none other? You can give but one answer. And the answer you give me in the case of poor Betty, I will give you in the case of Ruth. Providence was reigning—grace was reigning—and salvation was reigning—in both cases, unto eternal life, by Christ Jesus the Lord.—From a Lecture on Ruth, by the Rev. Dr. Armitage, New York.

COURAGE, MOTHERS.—Newton sinned away his early advantages, and became an abandoned profligate; but the texts and hymns his mother had fixed in his mind in his infancy and childhood, were never effaced, and finally fastened him to the Cross. Cecil tells us that, in the days of his vanity, though he withstood so many pious endeavors, he never could resist his mother's tears. Wilson, late Bishop of Calcutta, in his narrative of intercourse with Bellingham, the assassin, says he could make him feel nothing till he mentioned his mother, —and then he broke into a flood of tears. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand.—Vermont Chronicle.

SPEAK GENTLY.—Yes, "speak gently." O speak gently to the wanderer from the fold of Christ; there are perchance cords unbroken in that sinner's heart, which if rudely swept by unskilled hands, may shatter forever the ties that bind the heart to hope and heaven. It may be thy proud heart may urge thee to "pass by the other side," but listen rather to the spirit of charity, remember the blessed Saviour clad not in anger, nor turned in scorn from the repentant sinner. There is power in a word or look of kindness, that will be felt by the most sin-hardened heart, that may awaken aspirations for holiness in hearts long corroded by sin and sorrow.—Morning Star.

—In a "mixed conversation," says the pious John Newton, "it is a good rule to say nothing without a just call, to the disadvantage of others." The same writer says, "I was once in a large company where very severe things were spoken of Mr. W., when one person seasonably observed, that though the Lord was pleased to effect conversion and edification by a variety of means, he had never known anybody convicted of error by what was said of him behind his back. This was about thirteen years ago, and it has been on my mind as a useful hint ever since."

SLANDER.—The devil sits upon the slanderer's tongue, and opens the ear that listens to him. What is the difference, then, between speaker and listener? If men ceased to listen, the slanderer's vocation would soon be at an end. There would be no backbiters, if there were no hearers.

REVIVAL IN CHARLOTTEVILLE, VA.—A correspondent of the True Union, speaking of a revival in that place, says:—"Large and commodious as our new house of worship is, it was nightly thronged with earnest and attentive listeners. Fathers, mothers, children and grandchildren, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, and the children of Africa, have been made happy participants in this glorious outpouring of God's Spirit; as many as seventy white persons have professed to have found Jesus precious to their souls; and within the last four days fifty-five white persons were received into this church, 52 of them candidates for baptism, and I learn there are upwards of thirty colored persons who profess conversion, up to the present time. On Wednesday two persons were baptized. On Friday night, in the presence of an immense congregation of some 1200 or more, the ordinance of baptism was administered to 18 of the female converts, and, to night, the same ordinance was administered to 25 of the male converts.

HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM. A correspondent of the Journal and Messenger writes: That a whole household, composed of the parents and two children, have been baptized. The ordinance was performed at night, and they went on their way rejoicing.

GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA.—At a meeting of the State Mission Board, the Corresponding Secretary stated that the quarterly reports of about two-thirds of the missionaries, furnished the gratifying return of over 300 baptisms.

NEW YORK.—Gloversville.—Our meetings have now been in progress ten weeks. God, by his gracious Spirit, has been with us in a marvellous manner. Nearly one hundred, since our meetings began, profess to have found peace in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. On the last Sabbath in November thirty-six went forward in obedience to our Lord's command, and were buried with Christ in baptism—making seventy persons that have made a public profession of their faith in the Redeemer. And yet the work goes on. Many are still anxiously inquiring, "What must we do to be saved?"

BAPTISMS.—Seven were baptized last Sabbath in the Bloomingdale church, eleven in the Cannon-street church, two at the First church, and one at the Tabernacle.

FORTY-FOUR persons were baptized, Nov. 11 at Carter's wharf, Rappahannock River, Va.

THE BIBLE, AND THE JEWS IN AMERICA.—A conference of the Jews, composed of Rabbis and delegates from the various synagogues in the country, (the first ever held in the United States,) took place at Cincinnati, on the 17th ult. The first afternoon was devoted to preliminary discussion, and the consideration of a platform basing the entire proceedings of the conference upon the inspiration of the Bible and the teachings of the Talmud, which was finally adopted. The second day was devoted to the discussion of the derivation of the Talmud, whether it was of divine origin or the work of the elders of Israel in the days of Moses and Joshua; decided as the result of both—i. e., that it is partly spiritual, partly rabbinical—a divine treatise upon the Scriptures, and more particularly the Pentateuch.

The power of the Jesuits has decayed. The number of members of the order, this year, 1855, is 5,510, distributed thus:

Table with 2 columns: Country, Number of members. Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, 1514; France, 1697; Belgium, 463; Spain, 364; Germany, 117; England, America, and other countries, 1264; Officers, &c., &c., 61. Total: 5510.

This is however a larger number than the order could show half a dozen years since, the reaction since 1848 and '49 having, as I have shown in former letters in regard to other engines of spiritual and political despotism, also assisted the Jesuits to something like a thousand new members and novices. Still, compared with their numbers in their day of prosperity, it is a great falling off. Take the year 1717 for instance. At that time there were in Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia, 3,639; France, 3,119; Holland and Belgium, 1,020; Spain, 2,207; Germany, 2,609; England, America, and other countries, 7,282.

Table with 2 columns: Year, Number of members. In the year 1717, 19,876; " " 1855, 5,510. A falling off in 138 years, of 14,366.