

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

OCTOBER 26th, 1856.

Subject.—THE CRUCIFIXION.

For Repeating. For Reading. John xviii. 19-21. | John xix. 1-22.

NOVEMBER 2nd, 1856.

Subject.—CIRCUMSTANCES ATTENDING THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST.

For Repeating. For Reading. John xix. 5-7. | John xix. 23-42.

Selections.

Well-lighted Lanterns.

Groping my way along as best I could, on a very dark night not long since, as I turned a corner of the street I saw, but a short distance ahead of me, a well-lighted lantern. At first I could not see who was carrying it, but he proved to be a boy, who was whistling merrily as he walked along.

Now that lantern was of much service to me. It threw its light back on the path, or side-walk, for many yards. It showed me where to walk, and it showed me where not to walk—if I wished to keep out of the mire.

I felt thankful to the boy, who was thus of so much use to me in lighting my way; while he knew nothing about the good he was doing.

He went along, not thinking of me, hardly knowing that I was behind him; and yet he was rendering me a very kind service.

Now I could not help thinking what a fine thing it would be if all the boys and girls, and all the men and women, who have the privileges of the gospel, were well-lighted christian lanterns! How much good they would do which now is left undone! We are not so much lanterns in what we say as in what we do. It is the quiet but real influence of a good example that is a light to lighten others.

A very young child may be a very useful lantern. A small lantern, well lighted, is of much service; while a very large lantern, without any light in it, is of no use. And who knows how many the light from his lantern will reach and benefit? Now, children, do not be dark lanterns, or such as give no light; but as you pass along through life, at home, or in school, or in the street, or wherever you are, show that you love the truth, and that you seek, by God's grace, to walk as you are taught in his holy Word. Show this in your lives. Show it by a cheerful, loving, honest walk with your companions. Never be afraid to let others see that you love God and desire to do what is right in his sight. If thus you live, many will be greatly benefited by it. Some may follow in the path of your light, whom you know not, nor ever shall know, until you meet them in the world of glory above.

Remember, then, to let your light shine before others, that they may see your example, and be led to glorify your Father who is in heaven.

THE FADING LEAF; or, Human Frailty and True Wisdom.

BY THE REV. W. P. BALFERN.

"We all do fade as a leaf."—Isaiah liiv. 6.

That man is but a passenger on board the swift sailing vessel of time,—a tenant at the will of another, in a very frail house,—is instructively apparent to all. His life is but a bridge of sighs thrown across the narrow stream of time, over which he is rapidly hastening to the shores of eternity. Various and impressive are the figures made use of by the Holy Ghost to set forth this fact, and which the christian should keep constantly before him, that he may live as a stranger and a pilgrim below, and, with the eye of his faith steadfastly fixed upon Christ, press toward that "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

In the language above cited, man is compared to "a fading leaf." How affecting is the representation, and how calculated to humble the pride of man!

"We all fade as a leaf." It is true of us all, high and low, rich and poor, peasant and prince, the poor beggar who drops on the pavement from exhaustion, and the potentate whose frown carries death to thousands, whose word sends myriads to the field of deadly conflict, or gathers them back to their homes in peace and joy.

"We all fade as a leaf." Strange that a man should require to hear this from the lips of the Eternal, that one whose path lies among the dead, who so frequently walks among the tombs,

and has to weep over the ravages of death, should require to be reminded of his own mortality,—that the seeds of death which he beholds levelling others around him are within himself,—and that he is swiftly passing on to the same goal at which they have already arrived.

"We all fade as a leaf." Yes, however green in youth, health, and vigour, we may be, we are constantly approaching the sere and yellow leaf of middle life, old age, decay, and death. The work is ever going on, it stays not; as yet, it may be, it shows not itself; no wrinkle lines the brow; the cheek as yet exhibits not the furrows of old age; still it is true "we all fade as a leaf." There is a latent fire within that will consume and blanch the cheek, and dim the eye, and close the ear; silver the locks, dry up the flow of warm and vigorous thought, palsy the hand, and make the strong man bend and move at last as feebly as the child whose infant steps require a mother's hand to stay and guide. "To dust thou shalt return," makes all move on, to "fade as doth a leaf." Gradually, insensibly, from childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, thence to old age, we melt away, silently, imperceptibly; we scarcely note the intermediate steps, until before us lies an open grave, towards which our tottering steps bear us along.

"We all fade as a leaf," irrevocably. Paint up the leaf we cannot; say to the yellow spot, "Thou shalt not spread," we cannot; fade,—die,—it will. Thou, oh youth; see here thy destiny; within the vigorous current which now fills thy veins, and gives the glow of health and beauty, to thy face, there lurk the seeds of death. Be wise and ponder these words, "We all fade as a leaf," and ere the evil day shall come, when, as the yellow leaf hangs feebly to the branch before it falls, thy life wasted, decrepid, hangs o'er the grave, seek that grace which flows from Christ, and which will make thee strong even there, and to the immortal spirit give a glow of health death cannot touch, and which shall never die.

And thou, too, aged friend, needest thou to hear, "We all fade as a leaf"? Another summer has well nigh passed away; thy outward form bespeaks thy passage to the tomb. The storm of death is near; and when this strong wind comes to beat upon thy frail and trembling form, to shake thee from thy place, where wilt thou fall? Is Christ thy all? Then well; the earth will take the brittle fibres of thy being for awhile; but, oh, thy soul, the bosom of thy God shall it receive! But should Christ be unknown, unloved, what then? Alas, poor aged man, the cold, sharp, cutting wind of death will tear thee hence, and bear thee to that dreadful sea of wrath, where Christless souls, upborne upon its heaving waves, for ever mourn, ruined and worthless, irrevocably lost.

"We all fade as a leaf." What then, believer? Should we not seek more deadness to the world? and worldly cares, should they so bow us down? We are not to be here long; we cannot; then why so much concern about the things we soon must leave?—why should they plague us so? And labour; yes, we have much to do, and little time allotted us; then let us be up and doing while it is day. And time; should we not seize the moments as they pass, and put them under tribute for our God? they are not ours. Oh, may we cease to trifle! And ought we not to love the gospel more,—the precious truth which never fails,—which lights our path with joy, gives strength, and points us to the skies?

And death; are we continually approaching it? and should we not prepare? Oh, let us not sit still until he comes upon us as an armed man to take us by surprise, but aim to live as those whose faith keeps steadfastly in view these solemn words: "We all fade as a leaf," and who expect ere long to see the Lord they love.

Health.

The pre-requisite to all enjoyment is health. You are sick, and your little sister brings in a snowdrop from the garden, or a sprig of verbena from the conservatory, and you take it with a languid smile, and lay it beside your pillow, and hardly look at it again. And your brother comes in and shows you a splendid present which has just been sent you, or he opens a letter and announces that the lawsuit is gained, and that you are heir to a noble property; but the pain just then is exquisite, and in this intensity of torture there is nothing you desire but deliverance from anguish. Or in the adjoining chamber a charming melody is played; but you beg them to leave off, for the noise is driving you distracted.

And so, spiritually, there is no health in us; but the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint.—Dr. Hamilton.

It is easy enough to look down upon others; the difficulty is in looking down upon ourselves.

Anecdote of Audubon.

Returning from Philadelphia, after an absence of several months, absorbed in the newly found delights of home, he failed to inquire the fate of a certain wooden box, which, before his departure, he had entrusted to the care of a relative, with the strictest injunctions as to its safety. At last, on interrogation, this treasure was produced, the dearly prized deposit of all his drawings, more cherished than a casket of rarest jewels! It was opened, and what was Audubon's dismay to perceive the misfortune which had befallen it. A pair of Norway rats having taken possession and appropriated it, had reared there a whole party. A few gnawed bits of paper were the only remains of what a few months before had been a thousand marvellous representations of the curious inhabitants of the air! The shock of such a calamity was too much even for the fortitude of Audubon. Like an electric stroke it thrilled his whole nervous system, and for some time caused the entire prostration of his physical powers. A burning heat rushed through his brain on the discovery, the discovery of the entire wreck of the result of all his efforts and his patience! For nights he could not sleep, and days were passed with listless apathy, till at length invigoration of mind and frame gradually, under kindly influences, returned. He once again took up his pencils, his note-book, and his gun, and went forth to the woods. Then consoling himself with the reflection that he could make much better drawings than before, he persevered untiringly for three whole years, until his portfolio was replenished!—Audubon, the Naturalist.

The Blessed Home.

Home! To be home is the wish of the seaman on stormy seas and lonely watch. Home is the wish of the soldier, and tender visions mingle with the troubled dreams of trench and tented field. Where the palm-tree waves its graceful plumes, and birds of jeweled lustre flash and flicker among gorgeous flowers, the exile sits staring on vacancy; a far-away home lies on his heart; and borne on the wings of fancy over intervening seas and lands, he has swept away home, and hears the lark singing above his father's fields, and sees his fair-haired boy brother, with light foot and childhood's glee, chasing the butterfly by his native stream. And in his best hours, home, his own sinless home, a home with his Father above that starry sky will be the wish of every christian man. He looks around him—he finds the world is full of suffering; he is distressed with its sorrows and vexed with its sins. He looks within him—he finds much in his own corruptions to grieve for. In the language of a heart repelled, grieved, vexed, he often turns his eye upwards, saying, "I would not live here always. No, not for all the gold of the world's mines—not for all the pearls of her seas—not for all the pleasures of her flashing cup—not for all the crowns of her kingdoms—would I live here always." Like a bird about to migrate to those sunny lands where no winter sheds her snows, or strips the grove, or binds the dancing streams, he will often in spirit be pluming his wings for the hour of his flight to glory.—Guthrie.

Mr. Caustic.

Let me give you a sketch of Mr. Caustic:—His domestic life may have sharpened his character, but his sharpness is of a larger scale. He is severe in his business transactions, his will is law, he is a standard; and if I have any affair with him, I always dread the encounter, if I am conscious that I differ from him in opinion.—There is no long suffering nor "forbearing in love" with him. He is liberal in his way, very; he is kindhearted in his way; is strictly honest and upright, and obeys all laws but the law of love.

His home relations do not soften his character, and he is very keen to detect errors and shortcomings. He has a very high standard for others.

He abhors hypocrisy, and in judging of men, of professing christians generally, does not discriminate between defects in religion in itself, and faults of character in spite of their religion. Hos. iv. 8. "They eat up the sin of my people." Ps. xiv. 4. "They eat up my people as they eat bread."

Mr. Caustic considers a profession of religion no guarantee of honesty; indeed, he would sooner trust a man who makes no profession. Alas! that there should be any just ground for such an accusation.

But Mr. Caustic knows better than this. He knows that hypocrisy is not religion, and the very counterfeit shows the value of the genuine, or it would not be worth counterfeiting.

Mr. Caustic knows so well what is right; he sees so closely what is consistent or inconsistent with christian character, that I long to see him set us the example of perfection. He is so keen to detect failings, let him avoid them all. I am tired of being shown only the dark side of the picture, and would gladly have a bright example of consistent christian life. Have we not a right to expect it from Mr. Caustic?—New York Observer.

Agriculture.

For the Christian Messenger.

Essay on the Management of Orchards in Nova Scotia.

Nova Scotia Exhibition Prize Essay.

[Concluded.]

PRUNING is a part of the management of trees that requires a good degree of judgement according to the manner of growth of each particular variety. It may be laid down as an invariable rule—that the colour and quantity of the foliage indicate the health of the tree,—and as all the sap has to circulate through the leaf before it can sustain the growth of the tree, or produce fruit, all pruning of trees in the spring is attended with bad effects especially on young trees. Observe the effects of opening the Sugar-maple or birch trees in the spring, or pruning the vine. The sap flows in a copious current and exhausts the vital energy—such in like manner is the effect on fruit trees pruned in spring,—therefore the pruning should be deferred until some time in July or August, when no bleeding would take place and the wound would soon heal over. When absolutely necessary to prune large trees it should be done in the months of January or February, as the wound would dry before the spring, but in this case it should have a covering of white lead or paint to exclude the weather from the stump until healed over. Pinching off the points of the shoots in the months of July and August, is a mode of stopping an over luxuriant state of trees, and tends to fill the fruit spurs or buds, causing the tree to come sooner into a bearing state, also the side limbs of trees may be bent down and tied to the stock or to stakes in the ground, which will have the effect of stopping too great an ascent of sap, and induce the bent branches to produce fruit. It is in this circumstance that causes espaliers and wall trees to produce earlier than standards. Pinching off the shoots is attended with other good effects; if trees are over luxuriant late in the fall it causes the remainder to harden and stand the effects of the winter frosts. The over succulent state of the peach tree (especially in a rich soil) is often the cause of its perishing during the winter, but by taking off a part of the young shoot, the remainder would be ripened, the fruit buds developed and a crop insured in general, as it is only on the young wood of one year's growth that the fruit grows the succeeding season. If a young tree is coming into bearing prematurely and thereby stopping its growth, it is necessary to take off the blossoms and examine around the surface of the soil, if it is not attacked by the borer or some other cause's destroying the roots; stopping the necessary flow of sap, thus causing the tree to come prematurely into a bearing state.

Those who are strangers to the cultivation of fruit trees will be surprised and often perplexed at the anomalies which continually present themselves. It will then be self-evident that gardening cannot be altogether learned from books. Every tree having a habit of its own, or a constitution peculiar to itself, must be individually and diligently observed and studied, some require little or no pruning, while others the more they are pruned the more they have a tendency to run to wood.

The foregoing hints will assist the pruner to acquire the tact of bringing his trees into a mature and bearing condition.

The Borer is a worm entering about the surface of the ground into the tree, and throwing out of a small hole, first, the bark cut very fine like saw-dust and then entering the wood, which it will perforate and cut up in various directions, and if not extracted will ultimately cut the tree over the entire surface, effecting its escape in the winged state, and proceeding to deposit its eggs in the bark of other trees. In some rare instances (if any ligature is around the tree) they will deposit their eggs higher up the trunk. At their first cutting the tree they are very minute, but soon attain a growth of about an inch in length by one fourth of an inch in diameter. A mixture of bees wax and coal-tar melted together and applied warm with a brush around the stem for a few inches above and below the surface of the ground will generally stop them from cutting; the tender bark to deposit their eggs. They attack the apple, quince, thorn, and sometimes the plum trees.

Another pest is the Caterpillar which is the production of a Moth that deposits its eggs in a black ring around the young shoots, about the beginning of August, these are hatched by the heat of the sun, in the following spring. They feed on the buds as they expand, and destroy the whole foliage, increasing in size, and gathering together into clusters during the heat of the day, in which position they are easily destroyed. All the rings that can be observed ought to be gathered before the period of spring arrives. There is also another enemy, the Canker-worm, which follows the com-