

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

APRIL 12th, 1857.

Subject.—THE IMPIETY OF SIMON MAGUS AND HIS CONDEMNATION.

For Repeating.

Acts viii. 5-8.

For Reading.

Acts viii. 14-25.

APRIL 19th, 1857.

Subject.—THE CONVERSION AND BAPTISM OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH.

For Repeating.

Acts viii. 14-17.

For Reading.

Acts viii. 26-40.

THE QUESTIONER.

Mental Pictures from the Bible.

Reader, you need but "search the scriptures," To comprehend our Mental Pictures.

[No. 7.]

The scene is in a cave at night;
And by yon torch's flick'ring light,
Behold, a chieftain kneels; his face
And form endowed with manly grace.
Three noble warriors stand around,
And wondering gaze; while, on the ground
He pours forth from a silver chalice
Some water. "Why does he refuse
That dear-bought draught, so grateful now
To feverish lips and aching brow?"
They seem to say. But he doth raise
His looks to heaven, with prayer and praise;
As if some unseen fount of love
Refreshed his spirit from above.

'Tis thus when from our hearts arise,
To God, the unselfish sacrifice
Of love and gratitude;
Like dew exhaled from summer flowers,
'Twill back return in fresh'ning showers,
Our spirit's drink and food.

QUESTIONS to be answered next week.

15. Name six events mentioned in the Bible in which God suspended the laws of the universe.

16. In how many ways did God communicate his will to man in the Old Testament, after the giving of the law?

SOLUTION to Picture No. 6.

Paul and the disciples at Tyre.—Acts xxi. 5, 6.

ANSWERS to questions in our last.

13. In the time of Saul there were no smiths.—1 Sam. xiii. 19.

14. The Jews, on the slaughter of their enemies.—Esther ix. 16.

Miscellany.

A Child Educator.

"Oh! dear grand-mother," said a little boy as he kissed his new-born sister that lay in her arms, "I must never be naughty any more, now we've got this baby. For, you know, if I am naughty, she'll learn to be naughty of me, and that will be bad for mother."

The good grand-mother, perceiving the force of the argument, strove to deepen it in the child's mind. He gazed earnestly at the face of the babe, and wonderingly felt its tiny hands, and feet, till its beauty and helplessness seemed to call forth an overflowing tenderness. When his mother approached, he ran to meet her, and clasping his arms around her knees, exclaimed passionately:

"Mother, mother, give me that baby for my own."

Not immediately comprehending his state of feeling, she made some inquiries. But all the answer she could obtain was the repetition,

"Oh mother! say it shall be my baby! Will you give it to me for my own baby, always?"

Moved by his tears, she answered in the affirmative. Then a great happiness and a singular sense of responsibility entered into him. To watch over the child seemed his business and pleasure. When he saw his mother so patient in nursing it, so attentive to its little ailments, he never failed to thank her for taking care of his baby. When any sudden willfulness of childhood came over him, he would check it by saying,

"Baby sees me. Baby hears me. It will not do."

So, between his desire of being an educator, and his heightened gratitude to his mother for her care over his child, a wonderful change came over the boy, who had formerly been quick-tempered and selfish, as if the stronger brotherly love, condescending with the grace of God, had given him a new heart, and power to lead a new life.

WHAT ECHO SAID.—What must be done to conduct a newspaper right? Write. What is necessary for a farmer to assist him? System. What would give a blind man the greatest delight? Light. What is the best counsel given by a justice of the peace? Peace. What cry is the greatest terrifier? Fire.

An accommodating Spirit.

In a certain New England parish, difficulty arose about the location of the new meeting-house, and the church was rent with the division. The pastor at length preached a melting sermon on the subject of union, and the congregation was dissolved in tears. The next morning Deacon Jones went over early to see his opponent, Deacon Shaw, to make an earnest effort for peace, and the following ensued:

Deacon J.—"Deacon Shaw, I haven't slept a wink last night—and I've come over to see if we can't have peace on this subject of the meeting-house; we must settle the difficulty."

Deacon S.—"Well, I'm very happy to hear you talk so, for to tell the truth, I always thought you were a little set in your way."

Deacon J.—"Not at all—and as a proof that I am not, I've come this morning on purpose to see you. Now, Deacon Shaw, we must settle the difficulty, and there is but one way to do it—you must give up, for I can't."

I never charge Ministers when they pray.

When the United States were twenty years younger than they now are, Mr.—, an agent for a Missionary Society, was riding over his wide field, and stopped for the night at a tavern. He did not conceal the fact that he was a minister, but introduced the subject of religion, as was becoming one travelling to the "Celestial City," who was anxious to take as many as possible along with him. When he was invited to the supper-table, he introduced the subject appropriately, and asked a blessing. Soon after supper, he said to the landlord, "I am weary with my hard day's ride, and should like to retire, but will wait for family worship, if you choose." The family were all called together, and the Bible brought in, and he led the worship. In the morning he asked a blessing at the table, and after breakfast said, "I have a long ride before me, and should like to be on my way, but will wait for family worship if you desire it." After worship, while a boy was saddling his horse, he asked the landlord for his bill. "Oh," said he, "I have no bill, and never charge ministers when they pray. One stopped with me awhile ago and did not ask a blessing or pray, so I charged him as I do other people."

A little child's reply.

A few days after the death of one of my parishioners, I called on the bereaved family, to sympathize with the widow and fatherless in their sorrows. Incidentally remarking to the youngest born, a bright little fellow of three or four summers, that he had got no father, now, I was met with the following cheerful yet affecting reply—a reply which has furnished me food for reflection ever since. "No," said the boy, "I haven't got any father," and the tears began to start from his large blue eyes; but, he added with a smiling countenance, "I have got a mother though, and I've got a James, and William, and a Elizabeth, and a Hannah," referring to his surviving parent, and brothers and sisters. Would that other children, and men and women also, were as reasonable and thoughtful as this little boy; and when some of their blessings are removed, would turn their grateful attention to remaining blessings innumerable, which may still be enjoyed.

Agriculture.

Sugar Cane in Vermont.

I received the seed last spring from our attentive Commissioner of Patents. Planted some on a border near shrubbery in May. A row eight feet long came up as "thick as carrots."—When about eighteen inches high, I pulled up most of it, leaving ten plants only. It grew luxuriantly ten and eleven feet high, but I paid no further attention to it, unless to laugh about the fine broom corn which I supposed it might be.

About the 1st of Sept., one of our learned college professors recognized it as Chinese sugar cane; and, having spent two winters on a sugar estate in Florida, he at once determined to make "von grande experiment," and for more than a month, watched it daily. On his return from church, on a Sunday early in October, as Paul Pry would say, he "just popped in" and said, "there will be a frost to-night, you must cut up that sugar cane." His orders were obeyed, though we had no frost for more than a week after.

Our learned Professor was now much troubled to devise a plan by which he could express the juice; he would have built a sugar mill, but for the reason that his ten cane-stalks, with their side suckers would dry before completion. So he examined my printing, book-binder's and lithographic presses, but finding nothing to answer his purpose, decided to take

a small sugar crusher used by grocers. This he had removed to my back kitchen, washed and put in working order. I went to my house about ten o'clock in the evening, and found him in a violent perspiration, without coat or cravat, with a stout servant boy running the cane stalks through the crusher. He extracted two and a half quarts of juice, which he took to his house, from which he made a pint of as light, clear, thick and fine syrup as I ever saw from any source.—C. Goodrich.

Curious Butter-making Experiment.

A few days since we were informed by a gentleman who stated that from his own personal experiment he would vouch for it, that cream put into a piece of cotton or linen cloth, and buried a few inches under ground at night, will be found in the morning with the butter-milk entirely separated and gone from the cloth, and the residue nice, sweet butter, requiring only to be worked! Moreover it was stated that this process deprived the butter of any offensive taste that it would contain if the milk was tainted with garlic or turnips. We tell the tale as it was told to us. If any one chooses, when the thermometer runs higher and the soil will admit it, to risk a pint of cream on the trial, we should be pleased to hear from him.—Homestead.

Temperance.

Maine.

A State Temperance convention was held at Augusta on the 29th of January.

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That the enactment of the Maine Law was hailed with rejoicing by every temperance man and woman, as a just expression of public opinion against the rum traffic.

Resolved, That in the results of the Maine Law, the best hopes of the friends of temperance were fully realized. The open traffic in intoxicating drinks was everywhere suppressed, and the sale of such liquors in many places entirely eradicated.

Resolved, That we recognize it as the imperative duty of every Temperance man to vote for such men only, as are well known, outspoken, unequivocal friends of the enactment of a Prohibitory Law, and of its prompt and vigorous enforcement.

Rhode Island.

A State Temperance Convention was held in Providence on the 24th of February. The importance and practicability of enforcing the Prohibitory Law, were declared in the resolutions: the fault of its non-enforcement was laid to the public officers, and not to the law itself.

North Carolina.

A bill has passed the House of Commons (79 yeas to 23 nays) prohibiting the sale of liquors within three miles of Western Carolina Male College. Mr. White, on speaking in favor of the bill, said that he spoke not only in favor of this institution, but for institutions of learning generally.

A bill has been introduced, prohibiting the sale of liquor or playing billiards, within five miles of the State Normal College.

Georgia.

Local action by southern towns and villages, on the liquor question, as our readers must have observed, is now very frequent. At La Grange, the municipal election lately turned on the question of reform in this respect. The reform ticket was elected by a considerable majority, and among the first acts of the new Council was to raise the price of a liquor license to \$300, and a billiard license to \$2000.

A minority of the Grand Jury of Gwinnett County, in a memorial to the Legislature condemn the License law, and pray for a law prohibiting the sale of liquors to boys under twenty-one years of age, to "secure our negroes," and "save our children." The Temperance men of Monroe, lately bought up the liquor of two grocers, and none is now sold in that town.

The Temperance men of Carroll county have engaged a lecturer to visit all portions of the county, and address the people, urging them to rally to the standard of Prohibition. A Prohibitory candidate for governor was to have been nominated on the 20th of February.

Louisiana.

One of the reasons urged for prohibiting the liquor traffic in the Southern States, is that the liquor-seller corrupts, debases, and poisons the slave. We have recorded cases where fines of \$300 and upwards were imposed for selling liquor to slaves.

Two meetings have recently been held in the town of Plaquemine, Iberville Parish, at which the citizens resolved themselves into Vigilance Committees, and having found out the names of several persons engaged in the notorious business, ordered them to leave town within forty-eight hours. Up to Friday last two of them had left. A den was pulled down by the citizens.—Prohibitionist.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Readings of Ancient Versions.

MESSRS. EDITORS,
In my communication on *Various Readings*, reference was made to the use of ancient versions in determining the genuine reading of the text in the original. The thought will naturally occur to reflecting minds, that these versions, which must have been frequently transcribed, may also have undergone some changes. Such is the fact. My old copy of the *Septuagint*, printed at Frankfort in 1597, notes diversities in many cases. They do not usually affect the sense to any considerable degree.

There are instances, however, in which it appears evident, that the early translators followed a reading different from that which is now found in the original text commonly received. This is well known to every person who has, like the writer, perused the Old Testament in the Greek Septuagint and the ancient Syriac Version, and compared them with the Hebrew. It is at least highly probable, that these have sometimes preserved the genuine reading, as it was penned by the inspired writer. Two instances may be noticed.

In Exodus xiv. 25, the statement of the Lord's dealing with the Egyptians, as given in the Common Version, which accords with the present Hebrew text, and with modern translations generally, is, He "took off their chariot wheels, that they drove them heavily." I remember that in the days of my boyhood it seemed strange to me, how they could, in such case, drive them at all. Doubtless, the same difficulty has occurred to many others. But the Syriac Version reads, "(Esau) He bound their chariot wheels;" and the Septuagint, "(Synedese) He bound together." The congruity of this is at once obvious. If one of the wheels of a waggon be bound, so that it cannot turn, the vehicle may be drawn, but it will be heavily.

That these translators had a word in their copies different from that which we now have, is manifest. It is easy to account for the change in transcribing. These versions were made before the vowel points were introduced; and the Hebrew word *asr*, to bind, differs only in one letter from *sur*, (in hiphil) to take off. It is known to those acquainted with the subject, that the letters *aleph* (a) and *vau* (u) are frequently dropped in Hebrew, as with us the letter *u* is by some omitted in such words as *labour*, *favour*, &c. A transcriber might therefore readily mistake one of these words for the other.

In Hosea xiii. 10, we read, "I will be thy king." The Hebrew word (*chi*) that occurs here, is correctly rendered "I will be." But the same letters, by a slight transposition, form the word which signifies *where*. The translators of the ancient Greek and Syriac versions appear to have read it in the latter form; for they have transcribed the clause, "Where is thy king?" So in the 14th verse of this chapter, in which the same word occurs twice, and is rendered "I will be," they have it *where*. This reading receives confirmation from the language of the Apostle Paul, which seems to be a citation from Hosea, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—(1 Cor. xv. 55.) The context (verse 7, 8,) in which God threatens to be to the Israelites, not as their king, but "as a lion—as a leopard—and as a bear bereaved," and asks, (verse 10) "Where is any"—the supplied word *other* is superfluous—"that may save thee in all thy cities?" accords with the reading, "Where is thy king?" In unison with this view it is generally adopted in translations, both ancient and modern. Though our translators were very scrupulous in their adherence to the received text, yet they have remarked in the margin, "Or, *Where is thy king?*" King Hosea being then in prison.—2 Kings xvii. 4.

The attentive reader will observe, that in these instances, as is usually the case where discrepancies occur, no point of doctrine or of duty is affected. Whether the chariot wheels of the Egyptians were taken off or bound, their pursuit would be retarded; and this is the principal fact recorded in this part of the narrative. In the latter text, whether JEHOVAH said to Israel, "I will be thy king," or asked, "Where is thy king?" the language was evidently intended and adapted to shew them, that Hoeshea, the king in whom they had trusted, was unable to deliver them.

While a careful examination of the ancient versions suggests solutions of some apparent obscurities and difficulties, it tends also to establish the general accuracy of the original text. As witnesses who occasionally differ in some slight and immaterial circumstances, while they agree on all the main points, mutually confirm each others testimony, so do the manuscripts and