

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

FEBRUARY 15th, 1857.

Subject.—THE APOSTLES PERFORM MIRACLES AND EXCITE DEEP INTEREST AMONG THE PEOPLE.

For Repeating. For Reading. Acts v. 12-15. | Acts v. 17-28.

FEBRUARY 22nd, 1857.

Subject.—THE APOSTLES ARRANGED THE SECOND TIME BEFORE THE COUNCIL AND PUNISHED.

For Repeating. For Reading. Acts v. 17-20. | Acts v. 29-42.

I've got a little Bible.

I've got a little Bible, Which my father gave to me; And O, it is the prettiest thing That ever I did see; Its cover, O, how red it is, Its leaves are edged with gold, And right together this bright clasp Of silver doth it hold; This is the very Bible, which My father gave to me.

Here is the outside; but within The richest pearls do die; Which may be found by even such A little girl as I. And I will learn a verse each day, And when to school I go, I'll say them to my teacher, and My pretty present show. This is the very Bible, which My father gave to me.

I wish that every little girl? And little boy I see, Had just such a nice Bible as My father gave to me; And every one would get a verse And say it every day; 'T would be a string of pearls to keep The wicked one away, This is the very Bible, which My father gave to me.

Christ's Witnesses.

There is no greater necessity among us, than that of personal piety in our churches. It is, and has been, through all ages of christianity the kind of preaching which has been most convincing. The scriptures attach a wonderful importance to this kind of preaching. They proclaim the doctrine that christians are the witnesses of God—that the church is the great moral lighthouse of this dark world.

But these all-important truths are sadly overlooked, and it is for this reason that the word promulgated from the sacred desk has so little power over the hearts and consciences of men.

The church, by their lives, bear testimony to the truths thus promulgated, and the world care much more about the testimony of the witnesses than the statement of the minister. Eloquence in our pulpits will not compensate for the want of piety in our churches. The minister's success depends more upon the personal piety of his brethren in the church than upon his own devotion or eloquence.

Good witnesses make the lawyer or advocate's case very easy. He may simply make a statement of the facts in the case, and if he has good reliable witnesses to confirm the statement, he gains the case. So, good witnesses in the church render the minister's task easy and his success certain.

A weak advocate can make a strong case, only give him the witnesses.

We often see this illustrated in our churches. A preacher of inferior talents is sometimes more successful than the most brilliant and powerful preacher.

But there is nothing mysterious here. It is not because that weaker brother is more humble or prayerful; not because his preaching is better adapted to lead men to Christ. Such erroneous conclusions are often drawn, and learning and true eloquence in the pulpit are often disparaged or undervalued.

Now the solution of the matter is not difficult, and only illustrates and proves the necessity of piety in our churches—the necessity of good witnesses to the truths preached.

It is often the case that when a church comes to the conclusion that they have an able and eloquent man in the pulpit, that the members throw off their own responsibility and rely on his talents for success. And he preaches on, year after year, with great earnestness, and becomes famous for his power in the pulpit, and still, but little success attends his labours. The difficulty lies here—he has no witnesses to the truths which he promulgates.

Let that church settle a man of inferior talents over them, and very likely they would

feel their own personal responsibility, and would rally around him and seek to aid him in every possible way. He preaches, but it is in weakness; but his members bear faithful testimony to the truths—they pray for him, conscious of his weakness.

It is for this reason that ministers of inferior talents often succeed so well. It is not their preaching, but the preaching of their brethren in the church.

I once resided in a town where there were four churches. To one of these churches there came a man of very inferior talents. It was generally supposed that the church must dwindle under his ministry. At first, a large proportion of his congregation left—would not listen to such a man. The church saw their situation and rallied around their minister, prayed for him and took hold with him as they never took hold with any other man. They knew that he was weak, and within one year the church doubled in its membership and in its congregation. More was accomplished in one year by that church under his ministry, than had been in five preceding years. True he flattered himself upon his success; but his own members, many of them, were free to acknowledge that he was a man of very small ability, and a man of no more piety than others who had preceded him.

If Christians generally discharged their duties as faithful in their lives and examples as ministers do in their preaching, the world would be speedily corrected.

Besides, personal piety in our churches is the only power that can stay the tide of infidelity that is sweeping over our land. A godly life is the only argument that infidelity will not resist or gainsay. Men will prevent scripture—deny its teaching; but no man can prevent or gainsay a godly life. It carries with it an irresistible conviction to every heart. No man ever stood up to argue against it for a moment. Infidelity is always silent before such witnesses. Ministers may prove that the Christian religion is of Divine origin—that it is heaven-born. They may proclaim its beauties and its glories, but in Christian lands men will be governed by the testimony of those who profess religion.

God declares that "ye are all my witnesses." "Ye are the light of the world." Heaven knew that men would form their views of Christianity from the lives of professed Christians.

And it has ever been so. A fearful responsibility rests upon every one who bears the name of Christian. He is Christ's witness, and will he testify falsely? Let a man testify falsely in a case that involves the reputation of his fellowman, and his character is ruined—stamped with infamy. And will a Christian testify falsely of his Lord and Master?—Christian Record.

"Be Courteous" at home.

Why not be polite? how much does it cost to say "thank you?" Why not practise it at home—to your husband, to your children, your domestics? if a stranger does you some little act of courtesy, how sweet the smiling acknowledgment! if your husband, ah, it's a matter of course; no need of thanks.

Should an acquaintance tread on your dress, your best, very best, and by accident tear it, how profuse you are with your "Never minds, —don't think of it, I don't care at all;" if a husband does it, he gets a frown; if a child, it is chastised.

"Ah, these are little things," say you. They tell mighty upon the heart, let me assure you, little as they are.

A gentleman stops at a friend's house, and finds it in confusion. He don't see anything to apologize for,—never think of such matters. Everything is all right,—cold supper, cold room, crying children,—perfectly comfortable. Gets home, where his wife has been taking care of the sick ones, and working her life almost out. Don't see why things can't be kept in order,—there never were such cross children before. No apologies accepted at home.

Why not be polite at home? Why not use freely that golden coin of courtesy? How sweetly they sound, those little words, "I thank you," or "You are very kind!" Doubly, yes, thrice sweet from the lips we love, when her smiles make the eye sparkle with the light of affection.

Be polite to your children. Do you expect them to be mindful of your welfare,—to grow glad at your approach,—to bound away to do your pleasure before the request is half spoken? Then with all your dignity and authority mingle politeness; give it a niche in your household temple.

"And what then?"

No. 1. I have a great deal of life to look in to yet awhile. There are many little things,—such as the theatre, balls, and other questionable amusements, which I will never be able to try, if I become a Christian right off. And, indeed, it is more than likely, that practically testing their vanity, I may become the better in the end. So I will wait.

No. 2. Business occupies my time. If I join the church now, there are many of the little latitudes of trade I will have to give up. Besides, if I make a fortune, I will adorn the christian character by showing that a rich man can be truly good, which is a far more edifying spectacle than for a poor man to be so. So I will wait.

No. 3. After all, why should I not enjoy in leisure and repose for awhile this wealth which I have had such a hard time in collecting? I know that a heart not subdued to spiritual things cannot be fit for heaven without a change; but this change may as well be made on a sudden as after a life-long struggle—when the soul is told to prepare for death, as when it is in the midst of life. So I will wait.

No. 4. A sick bed is no place for a subject requiring so much serious and undisturbed thought as this. I will put it off till I am better.

"THOU FOOL THIS NIGHT THY SOUL SHALL BE REQUIRED OF THEE."

Baptism Anecdote told by Dr. Chalmers.

In his last visit to England, Dr. Chalmers being at the house of a relative in Bristol, was unexpectedly called upon in a large party to baptize. The following description of the process, is given in his own words.

"Our tea was followed up," says the venerable doctor, "by the baptism of the younger children, which was laid upon me with the full consent and approbation of Mr. Haines, their clergyman; it was a very awkward affair, one vivacious boy of fourteen months was kicking and sprawling and laughing during the whole of my address; and then, to complete the thing, the bairn instead of being held out to me horizontally was held out perpendicularly; so that I could not apply the water to the face of it, but by touching its brow with my wet hand, and letting as much as I could trickle down. The child (Alexander Robert) thought I was playing with it, and got up with a great guffaw of a laugh, as the water flowed down its cheeks. I learned afterwards that the Independent ministers, like the Episcopalian, take the child in the one arm and baptize with the other, a thing which I could not have managed, and more especially with a boy so active and athletic as he was. This explained, however, the perpendicularly of the presentation by the father."

A Friend to fly to.

A short time since I was awakened by the sound of footsteps in my chamber, and a confused noise in the streets. I soon became aware that an alarm of fire was lending its peculiar terrors to the dead of the night, and that a startled child was hurrying to nestle in a parent's arms. A few gentle words, a few loving caresses, and the tumultuous throbblings of that little heart were stilled, and the child was soon again in a sound, sweet sleep. "What a blessing to have a friend to fly to," was the thought that came at once into my mind; and what a lesson for us all, in this simple incident. "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." We may not always have an earthly parent or friend to fly to. But a sympathizing Saviour we have always. Times of need will come, when neither father nor mother will be able to help us. He always will, who has gone to appear in the presence of God for us. Children, remember your friend. He has given you your parents, that by first learning to fly to them, in every time of need, you may as you grow in age, learn more and more to fly to Him, by believing in, and trusting, and praying to Him. He has made a promise, your Heavenly Father, your gracious Saviour, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

A HUMBLE HOME.—Are you not surprised to find how independent of money peace of conscience is, and how much "happiness" can be condensed into the humblest home? A cottage will not hold the bulky furniture and sumptuous accommodations of a mansion: but if God be there, a cottage will hold as much happiness as might stock a palace.—Rev. James Hamilton.

Temperance.

Kill the Animal.

The proposition to eradicate the evils of drinking by multiplying lager-bier shops, reminds us of what is told of a man who was at the expense of keeping a great dog, for which he had no use, and which his wife was constantly urging him to sell. One day he exclaimed with a congratulatory smile. "Well, wife, I have at last rid you of a nuisance. I have disposed of Jowler."

"Good!" exclaimed the wife, "that will be a great expense saved. What price did you get for him?" "Fifty dollars, my dear—that is, I swapped him, and took in exchange two puppy dogs, at twenty-five dollars a-piece."

A mad dog is a fitter metaphor for the liquor traffic. And how shall this furious animal be prevented from biting people? We approve the receipt which has already been extensively published—Cut off his tail close behind his ears. And so we say—Cut off the liquor traffic, root and branch.

Over Two Thousand Arguments for Prohibition.

During one year, the Alliance Weekly News, the organ of the United Kingdom for the suppression of the liquor traffic, has recorded two thousand two hundred and eleven cases of casualties or violent deaths. In every case the party or parties were under the influence of alcohol. Every case was of recent date, and occurred in the United Kingdom. They sum up as follows:—

- 711 Brawls and Violent Assaults, including cases of Stabbing, Cutting and Wounding.
234 Robberies, being upon Drunken Persons.
237 Cases of Atrocious Cruelty upon Wives and Children.
166 Serious Accidents.
162 Actual or Attempted Suicides.
520 Horrible Deaths.
121 Murders or Manslaughters.

Such are the results of the sale and use of strong drink, as recorded in one weekly journal. Yet the half, or the tenth, is not told in the above record. Certainly, if you multiplied all the above by ten, it would still fall far short of the ills and casualties and monstrous brood of horrors which has resulted from the traffic during the year in the United States.

Prohibition in the Hawaiian Islands.

An act has just been passed prohibiting the importation and sale of opium in the Hawaiian Islands. The following is the preamble and first section of the bill:—

Whereas, Suicides and serious riots are of frequent occurrence, from the use and abuse of opium and other poisonous drugs; and whereas, there is danger of the pernicious habit of using opium being acquired by his Majesty's native born subjects, from the example of the Chinese. Therefore,

Be it enacted by the King, the Nobles and Representatives, in Legislative Council assembled—

SECTION I. Any person who shall be convicted before any magistrate of importing, selling, vending or furnishing opium, or any preparation thereof, shall be fined a sum not less than fifty dollars, nor more than five hundred dollars, in the discretion of the Court; provided always, that nothing in this section shall prevent the importation and sale of opium as medicine, by duly qualified physicians and surgeons, licensed as such by the Ministers of the Interior.

Insanity—an illustration of the Traffic.

"Drink, and be mad then!"—COWPER.

The Earl of Shaftsbury has lately declared, in his character as Commissioner of Lunacy, that from 50 to 55 per cent of the insanity of Great Britain was produced by intoxicating drinks.

This is doubtless below the truth. Allowing that but half of the insane in the United States become so from drink, it would still leave the vast number of THIRTEEN THOUSAND raving maniacs in the American Republic, who were made so by the cup.

This is but one of the lesser items in the account of Intemperance. But imagine all these thirteen thousand madmen assembled together! And in this monstrous and sickening spectacle behold a vast but still inadequate illustration of the enormities, the guilt, the desolation, and the appalling horrors of the Liquor Traffic!

A TEMPERANCE TOWER.—As you sail up the Cove of Cork, says the Dublin Tablet, a tower meets your eye. It was built by a tradesman of that city, in honor of the great Apostle of Temperance in Ireland—Father Matthew.