

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

MARCH 1st, 1857.

Subject.—THE CHOICE OF SEVEN DEACONS. THE FAITHFULNESS OF STEPHEN.

For Repeating. Acts v. 29-32. For Reading. Acts vi. 1-15.

MARCH 8, 1857.

Subject.—THE DISCOURSE OF STEPHEN.

For Repeating. Acts vi. 7-8. For Reading. Acts vii. 1-16.

THE QUESTIONER.

MENTAL PICTURES FROM THE BIBLE.

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

[No 1.]

'Tis night, but soft the moon-beam falls On yonder city's bastioned walls, And many a stately tower and dome, Of sleeping multitudes the home. There all seems peace; but gates well barr'd, And distant forms of watchful guard, Betoken fear of foes that night. And see! where from you dizzy height Of casement in the rampart placed, Two men descend with cautious haste.

The SOLUTION will be given in next number.

QUESTIONS to be answered next week.

- 1. What man named in the Bible had the greatest number of sons and daughters?
2. Find a great country's greatest blessing turned into a great curse as a punishment for the sins of its king.

Thoughts and Sentences.

- 1. The first seven years of a child are a bill of expense. From seven to fourteen his profits equal his expenses. From fourteen to twenty-one, his profits exceed his expenditures enough to pay for the first term, and having paid for himself, he goes free.
2. If a man is not tall at twenty; handsome at thirty; wise at forty, and rich at fifty; he will never be tall, handsome, wise nor rich.
3. He who begins the world with a dollar, if he doubles his interest every year, will in a few years, be worth enough to purchase Attica.
4. In speaking or writing, first understand the subject—then speak or write so plain that others may understand it; and do all with as few words as possible.
5. Most questions have two, and some, like a cube, have six equal sides. Turn which way you will, in sentiment or practice, some evil consequence follows. In such cases, the least possible evil is the greatest possible good.
6. He who strives to do right, and conquers his own ill habits and propensities, will find but little time to censure others. From this it does not follow, that the good man should justify the errors of others.
7. To err, is manlike; to repent, is saintlike; to forgive, is Godlike.

Telling Mother.

A cluster of young girls stood about the door of the school-room one afternoon, engaged in close conversation, when a little girl joined them, and asked what they were doing. "I am telling the girls a secret, Kate, and we will let you know, if you will promise not to tell any one as long as you live," was the reply.

"I won't tell any one but my mother," replied Kate. "I tell her everything, for she is my best friend."

"No, not even your mother, no one in the world."

"Well, then, I can't hear it; for what I can't tell my mother is not fit for me to know." After speaking these words, Kate walked away slowly, and perhaps sadly, yet with a quiet conscience, while her companions went on with their secret conversation.

I am sure if Kate continued to act on that principle, she became a virtuous, useful woman. No child of a pious mother will be likely to take a sinful course, if Kate's reply is taken for a rule of conduct.

As soon as a boy listens to conversation at school, or on the playground, which he would fear or blush to repeat to his mother, he is in the way of temptation, no one can tell where he will stop. Many a man dying in disgrace, in prison, or on the scaffold, has looked back with bitter remorse to the time when first a sinful companion gained his ear, and came between him and a pious mother. Boys and girls, if you would lead a Christian life, and die a Christian's death, make Kate's reply your rule. "What I cannot tell my mother, is not fit for me to know;" for a pious mother is your best friend.

European & Foreign News.

For the Christian Messenger.

[From our Special Correspondent.]

LATEST FROM EUROPE.

LONDON, Jan. 30.

[Concluded.]

WIDOW MARRIAGE IN INDIA.

DEAR SIR:

There has been an important innovation in Hindu Custom, at Calcutta. Every Sunday school child knows the force of caste, its curses and its bondage, and the fears entertained of its loss. Another feature of that idolatry has been, the non-marriage of widows: by which a girl, betrothed at six or seven years of age, must ever remain unmarried if her affianced, die, even though never united to him. No widow, beside, could remarry; and, sooner than lose her ornaments (a Hindu woman's chief treasure), eat but one meal a day, never lie on a bed, become degraded and outcast—as is the Brahminical or Shastras law—the Suttie often possessed greater charms for the poor bereaved woman, and in flames she died with her love, sooner than exist in scorn without him. Apart from the horrible cruelty of choice between suttie or such a life of misery, the practice was found to be a most prolific source of prostitution or concealed but notorious licentiousness. The Hindu woman was prevented the legitimate exercise of sensibilities which are among the Creator's best gifts.

"All she had upon one die was thrown; And if 'twas lost, life had no more to bring But mockeries of the past alone."

Well might she kneel before monstrous images, imploring them with sweet gifts to preserve her future or present husband's life: for, him lost, never again could her young heart dare to love: only quench its fires in polluted streams, and offer up its virtue in sacrifice to a hellish creed.

Who, Mr. Editor, would not glow with such a theme? I am not ashamed to enlarge on it; the more so as the system has received a fatal blow; and that great cause of Indian society, male and female, public and social,—the non-marriage of widows—has tottered to its fall. At last, a rich ecclesiastic of the highest caste has married a child-widow, only 12 years of age. The Rubicon has been passed: Cæsar has waded the stream, and soon his following army will also cross. The threat of excommunication failed to prevent the marriage, and the threat has not been fulfilled. He keeps his caste; and so, now, may any who follow him. Though caste be apparently thus maintained, yet by a side wind that suffers also, and will do so still more. Female education, slowly but surely advancing, prepares the Hindu mind for the change; and, to be short, I can but quote the words of an eminent Brahmin, who, questioned as to his opinion, said,—looking round to be sure he was unobserved—If I speak as a man, it is a great good; if I speak as a Hindu, it is all wrong.

India is coming forward. Torture is abolished, obscenity controlled; and now widows are married, and the inmates of the Tenana, (female close apartments,) are taught religion, morality, science, literature. Let your readers, Mr. Editor, who would fully appreciate the importance of this step, and understand the relations of Hindu female society, read Mr. Clarkson's and other works, and they will take the same view as I do of this event.

CHINESE WAR.

I must content myself with sending but a rapid outline of events. You are no doubt aware of the bombardment of the Canton government works, on refusal of the Mandarin Yeh to give satisfaction for the murder of English crews. Our Plenipotentiary appears to have acted with laudable humanity, in delaying final operations till every other means had been exhausted. Later accounts state that Yeh remained obdurate as ever, and it was feared that nothing but the full bombardment and occupation of the city would bring about the result desired. Until the heights, the city, and suburbs are under our command, the Chinese will never be satisfied of their inability to contend against us with this pig-headed obstinacy. But, to occupy Canton, two more regiments and some field pieces would be necessary.

When one reflects what a human hive Canton is, the bare idea of bombardment makes the blood shudder. But what are we to do? We can't be quietly murdered, and take no redress, and let the thing go on; and, murdered, English

"India and the Gospel." "Memoir of Bala Shoodore Tagore." (Both excellent books.) Snow, London.

and Europeans have been and will be, despite treaty and everything else, unless, as against the Persians and Arabs, force settle the thing. It is a pity, but there seems no help for it. Alas for human nature!

To resume the thread of events: The French Folly Fort has been captured, with a loss of one man, shot through with an iron arrow. The Americans are in for it as well as we, and destroyed two other forts; but, unfortunately, struck a charged mine, which exploded, killing and wounding nearly a dozen.

A village, where a sailor and marine had been waylaid and murdered, was destroyed. The European Factories were set on fire, and, at the last details leaving, the flames were extending seriously: the Oriental, Agra, and Mercantile Banks being burnt, and the Consulate in danger.

Barbarous as usual, the Chinese have added the horrors of civil to those of foreign war. Those who recollect, that in the war between Rebels and Imperialists, they ripped each other open, will believe that fifty towns and villages have been sacked and burned, the inhabitants, without regard to sex or age, all butchered, and 50 000 people turned out of house and home. Who were the perpetrators is not known. They were, as usual, called "rebels"; but that is all.

When a Persian Ambassador politely requests that a man who lost his box may be delivered to him to send home to Persia, that he may be skinned alive for his carelessness (we not allowing exactly that form of punishment) when Chinese amuse themselves as just stated, and when steam places us so soon all together: is not the commixture of human nature more curious than any combinations of a kaleidoscope?

HOME AFFAIRS.

I have been so delayed that the post is just going, for a fortnight to come, and I have not yet said a word as to brave old Lord Palmerston and the coming Session: as to the anti-income-tax agitation now so general; the prevalent distress among 50,000 unemployed building operatives, who meet en masse in Smithfield and patrol the streets in orderly, peaceful companies, requesting aid.—(O that many of them could be drafted to our best colonies in British America!) These, and many other topics, I had hoped to touch upon, but cannot. In my next they shall be considered in the newest phrases.

Allow me also, Mr. Editor, briefly to express my deep sympathy in your recent narrow escape from fire, and my congratulations that it was no worse. Really, your friends, (and yours are mine, I hope,) must rally round you, and bring up the Christian Messenger to even a higher standard than before.

Postman waits: he does not enter into this matter, so that must excuse more from YOUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Prayer for Colleges.

MR. EDITOR,

As the last Thursday of February, usually observed throughout the United States as a day of prayer for Colleges, is now drawing near, perhaps the following statements on that subject may not be uninteresting, and may possibly tend to call forth more earnest prayers for the conversion of those now at our own institutions.

"Origin of the concert of prayer for Colleges in the United States.—This was a spirit of supplication among Christians in behalf of Colleges and Theological Seminaries, created by statistical information in respect to them, published from time to time in the Annual Reports of the American Education Society. A concert of prayer was first established to be observed every Sabbath morning. Frequent and powerful revivals of religion in colleges followed, which seemed very much like answers to the supplications offered at these seasons of prayer. The children of God were encouraged to persevere, and finally, in consequence of a circular issued, with the knowledge and approbation of the Directors of the American Education Society, the last Thursday of February, 1823, was set apart by many of the friends of Zion as a season of fasting and special prayer, that God will pour out his Spirit on the Colleges of our country the present year more powerfully than ever before."

"Answers to Prayer.—Subsequent to the establishment of the Sabbath Morning Concert, the Spirit of God was poured out, and cheering

results witnessed. From 1820 to 1823, inclusive, there were revivals in fourteen different institutions; in 1824 and 1825, in five different colleges; in 1826, in six; in 1827, in four; in 1828, in five; and in 1831, in nineteen Colleges, resulting in the hopeful conversion of between three hundred and fifty and four hundred students. In one of the Colleges, the revival commenced on the very day of the concert.

In 1832 some few institutions were blessed with the effusions of the Spirit; and also in 1833. A larger number were blessed with revivals in 1834, and no less than eighteen in 1835; and between one and two hundred students were brought hopefully into the kingdom of Christ. It has been estimated that fifteen hundred students were made the hopeful subjects of grace in thirty-six different colleges, from 1820 to 1835 inclusive."

"If any thing could make still more apparent the connection between this concert of prayer and the frequent revivals of religion that have occurred in our colleges since its appointment, it is the additional fact that these revivals have nearly all occurred during the winter term in which the concert is observed, and for the most part shortly after its observance. That is, perhaps, the most favourable season of the year, for special attention to personal religion in colleges, as it is also in churches.

There is also no doubt a natural tendency in such a concert to produce such results. When the eyes of the whole church are directed simultaneously towards the young men in our institutions of learning, it would be strange if they did not turn their thoughts towards themselves and each other; and if their teachers did not feel deeply their responsibilities in regard to them, and warn and entreat them tenderly not only publicly, but in private; and if pious parents and friends did not pray for them, and write to them with peculiar pathos and power,—thus producing a concentration of interests which it would seem must burn upon the most seared conscience, and warm the coldest heart.

And God, who loves united prayer, and also works by all suitable means, has heard the prayer of his people, and made use of these favourable circumstances, and given efficacy to his Word, which is usually preached with unusual pungency at such times: and the consequence is that that Winter-Term, and more especially the last few weeks of it, have been the birth-season of hundreds and thousands of young men in college, who are now ministers of the gospel, and teachers of youth, and missionaries of the cross, and men of influence in every department of, in almost every portion of the world.

Could the Concert be observed by all the churches, observed with earnest and believing prayer not only, but also with fasting (for this kind goeth not out but with prayer and fasting) we might hope for far more glorious results. And if our colleges were also remembered every Sabbath in the prayers of the sanctuary, and every morning and evening in the prayers of pious families—remembered with that particularity and tenderness, and importunity and faith which their peculiar character and standing demands from the whole church and which the providence and the Spirit of God have so conspicuously sanctioned and encouraged,—we might hope that the good influence would not only be felt every year, but be diffused and prolonged throughout the year; thus preventing apostasy and inconvenience, sustaining a more uniform as well as a more elevated standard of piety, and bringing into the ministry whole classes and colleges of such holy men as God could consistently own and bless in the speedy conversion of the whole world to himself."

The above remarks are taken from Tyler's Prize Essay, on Prayer for Colleges, a book which could not be carefully read without profit.

I may just add that there is an encouraging state of religious feeling here at the present time. Last Sabbath five of our number were led into the baptismal waters, and afterwards united with the church. Some of these are very remarkable instances of the power and efficacy of prayer. May it not be hoped if the coming Thursday should be prayerfully observed by the churches, great blessings will follow?

Acadia College.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Minister's Library.

On receiving lately a present of an addition to my small library, of a standard work, it brought to my recollection some notices I have seen in the "Messenger," presenting to the notice of benevolent persons, this particular