

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

MARCH 8, 1857.

Subject.—THE DISCOURSE OF STEPHEN. For Repeating. Acts vi. 7-8. For Reading. Acts vii. 1-16.

MARCH 15th, 1857.

Subject.—STEPHEN'S DISCOURSE CONTINUED. For Repeating. Acts vii. 9-10. For Reading. Acts vii. 17-29.

THE QUESTIONER.

MENTAL PICTURES FROM THE BIBLE.

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

[No 2.]

It is early morning, and the sacred house of worship is filled with pure and balmy air, and lighted with the first beams of the rising sun. But all is dark to the aged man, whom we see still reclining on his couch, for his eyes are closed in blindness. There is a holy and patient expression in his gentle face, but it is also very sad, and his grey head seems bowed in sorrow.

Beside him stands a lovely child, clothed in a priestly garment. His countenance beams with intelligence and truth, and he looks upon the aged man with a softened expression, full of mingled reverence, love, and pity.

The SOLUTION of the above will be given in next number.

Solution to Picture No. 1.—The Spies.—Joshua ii. 15.

QUESTIONS to be answered next week.

- 3. What city was condemned, destroyed, and cursed, but afterwards restored and healed?
4. Name the animals mentioned in the Bible as conveying instruction to man.
5. Name one who vainly sought relief from bodily affliction for nearly forty years, and found it at last where least he looked for it.

ANSWERS to questions in our last.

- 1. Rehoboam.—2 Chronicles xi. 21.
2. The River Nile.—Exodus vii. 19, 20.

Selections for the Young.

Manners and Customs of our Ancestors before the Reformation.

In those days there were no printed books; all were written out by hand, on parchment or paper; and, as it took a long while to copy a book in this way, they were exceedingly costly, so that none but the rich could possess them; and, in consequence, very few persons, except priests, and monks, and the like, could read or write. Even noblemen and ladies, and some kings, too, were not able to sign their own names, but had to make a mark like a cross instead. So you can think how little knowledge of these things poor people had.

In the country there long were only two classes—the great lords and knights, who lived in castles, and owned all the land; and the poor ploughmen, who were all slaves. After a while, here and there, some of these poor men, having been set free, became owners of small farms, which they tilled themselves, and were called yeomen. But in their dress and most other things they did not differ from the slaves.

Poor people's houses were then no better than sheds. Some posts set upright formed a sort of frame, which was filled up with wattled work, and plastered with clay; or the walls were built with lumps of clay. The roof was always of thatch. The door, if there was one, did not fit closely; and there was neither window nor chimney. The floor was only the bare earth, and the fireplace was no more than some stones to lay the wood across, to make it burn better—for coals were not known. Such stools and tables they had as you seldom see used for any purpose now; and for beds some dried leaves or straw in one corner sufficed. A single garment, which was a sort of skin, or leather shirt, with a girdle to carry a hatchet in, a leather cap, and leather stockings, or shoes—and worn night and day—with the addition of another skin, or a coarse woolen plaid, in winter-time, formed all their attire.

Cannot you imagine the discomfort and misery of their lot? And do you wonder that they should often be starved, and frozen to death, and that disease should carry off all the feeble children, and oftentimes almost all the people in a district? How could such people know how to read or think? How could they learn anything beyond the art of procuring food, and defending themselves if attacked?

They were worse off than the savages, in one respect—they were not allowed to hunt and take the wild animals for food: only the lords might do that.

Yeomen and millers were a little better off; and fishermen could often obtain a meal which the poor herdsmen or ploughmen could not. But their dwellings, if they had a second room, were very comfortless. The wind whistled in every cranny, and the smoke half stifled those who were in the room, as it slowly found its way through the numerous chinks and crevices, and out at the doorway and holes left in the thatch on purpose. And what the best of such houses were when it rained we can hardly think. These men, too, could not read or write, nor learn anything beyond their trades and occupations.

In cities and large towns, the artisans and working men were miserably poor, and lived just as filthy and wretchedly as the slave class in the country; and the lower kind of artisans were not much better off. The houses of the tradesmen were of every different grade, from the mud and thatched hovel, with a wide opening and a kind of shutter to turn down in front of it, to make a stall, rather than a shop; to stone and tiled houses, almost as grand as the palaces of the nobles, the bishops, and abbots and other grandees. Some of them had fine coloured-glass windows, and had their walls and ceilings handsomely painted and gilt. But the shops were all mere boards, or stalls, in front of open windows; and instead of their names and trades being painted up over the doors of tradesmen, the marks which each one used to sign with instead of his name, and the armorial bearings of the trade, guild, or company he belonged to, were cut in wood or stone there.

Some of these tradesmen used not to keep shops, but would travel about the country, and visit all the fairs which were held in different places. And many things could be bought only at these fairs in those days. Wealthier merchants travelled from one country to another with their wares. Marco Polo, the first who wrote a book of travels in modern times, and who went far away into Asia, was only a merchant. But such traders as these were very few, in comparison with the smaller and less wealthy, who made up the trades' guilds in the corporate towns and cities.

For travelling, too, there were no smooth, well-kept highways, and, of course, no railroads. Narrow, dirty lanes, were all the roads then. And people did not travel in coaches, but on horses and mules; and they could not in consequence travel very far at a time. And then there were such vast forests, and wide heaths, where robbers would lie in wait for passers-by, that merchants had to wait until a sufficient number were going along the same road, to be able to defy these daring plunderers.

And not only were the noblemen's houses in the country, castles, but the cities had walls and ditches, for safety; and when any one went in or out, the gate had to be opened, and the portcullis raised, and the drawbridge lowered. And all day and night there was watch kept, lest an enemy should get in unperceived; for there was almost always some kind of private war going on between some of the great barons, or between them and the cities. And this caused life, to be held very cheaply; and very little was said, or cared, if any one were wounded, or lost his life by any accident.

The ships in those days were not much bigger than the long-boats which our great vessels carry now; but they were such clumsy things, that one would be as great a curiosity to us as a Chinese Junk. Such large ships as we have, with steam-engines to propel them by paddles or screws, would then have been looked upon as a work of magic.

All the common handicraft, weaving, and currying, and building, and working in metals, &c., were practiced then; and some of the churches and castles that were built then, would put to shame much that we do now. But church building was reckoned a religious service then; and wealth can always make strong and beautiful houses for its possessors. It is the condition of the greatest number of people at any time that shows the character of the age.

Songs and ballads, learned by heart, and sung to doleful tunes, sometimes with the accompaniment of a bagpipe, a hurdy-gurdy, or a fiddle, were all that the people in general had to take the place of books and learning, history, poetry, and music, in these times before the Reformation. And such was the state of things, generally, from about King Alfred's days to the time when the Duke of York began the wars of the Roses, to try and take the Crown of England away from Henry the Sixth.

Lions and their Cubs.

Did you ever see a live lion?—Yes, at the menagerie.

But lions that you see at menageries are taken from their mothers before they are weaned. They are then carried away from their native forests, where they might have run about and grown hearty and strong; and are fed, not on the milk of the old lioness, but on whatever their keepers see fit to give; then they are cramped up in close unwholesome cages, where they can scarce turn round; what chance have they of growing up to look like lions? Instead of that bold, kingly look, that magnificent form and flowing mane which they would have had if the old lioness had brought them up according to her notion, their shapes become mean and poor, their manes thin, their look unhappy and broken-spirited, and their whole appearance, very miserable. Ah, a wild lion is quite another affair, as you would soon find, could he but crunch your little heads between his jaws.

Now I should like to see a real forest lion, at a safe distance, of course. I should wish to be upon a tree, or on the top of a high mountain, perhaps. He is not afraid of anything, not he! he comes tramping along, cracking the bushes as he goes, and snuffing round to find two or three big men to make a luncheon of. A little kid would be only a mouthful for him.

When a lion and lioness, leave their home in the forest to take a ramble, the lioness always goes first and leads the way; and when she stops in her walk, the old lion stops too, till she is ready to go on. When they come to an Arab's tent where they mean to get their supper, the lioness lies down a short distance off, while the old lion bounds in and snatches whatever he thinks madam will like best, and then lays it down at her feet. He looks on all the time she is eating it with a great deal of satisfaction, and never thinks of touching a bit till she has had enough.

When the lioness's little baby-cubs are born, she does not leave them (even for an instant) for a great many days; the old lion goes to market, as he ought, and brings home the family dinner. When the little baby-lions are three months old, and have got all their teeth (a great many lion-babies, like other babies, die cutting their teeth), when they have got all their teeth, not before, the affectionate mother lioness goes out for a walk to get them food; but she only stays two or three hours. I wish those foolish young mothers, who go to balls and dance till day-light, while their poor little hungry babies are screaming themselves sick, would take pattern by the old lioness. Well, when she comes back from her walk, she brings along some mutton (we won't be particular about asking her where she got it, because she might give us a rough answer). Then she carefully skins the mutton, and after tearing it into small bits, she gives it to her baby lions to eat.

The old lion does not like to stay with his little babies, because their frolics disturb his dignity; so he wont sleep in the same place with them and their mother, but chooses a place near by, where the old lady can roar after him if anything happens. When the old lion takes his young ones out to hunt, if the poor little things seem afraid of any strange noise they hear, he just puts his mouth close to their ear, and roars into it, loud as thunder, as if to say, stop that now, you cubs! or I'll give you something worth while to be afraid of.

And now I will tell you a curious thing: this lion, so strong, so grand, so terrible, whose roar makes the strongest man's heart to quake, this lion has his deadly foe in the shape of flies. Often lions have ulcers on their bodies, the flies get in them, and make them very sore and corrupt; and the lion not knowing how to rid himself of them, they soon put an end to his life. Ah, you old forest Goliath, strong and brave as you are, you have your David!

ARTIFICIAL STONE.—A new material, composed of sand, plaster-of-paris, and blood, reduced with water to such a consistency as will permit pouring into moulds of any required form, has been patented. The composition hardens in a very short time, and, it is said, increases in firmness and compact texture until it finally turns into solid stone. Another description of artificial stone is that manufactured of fine sand, united together with a fluid—silicate of soda. In consequence of the peculiarly simple composition of this material, it has been found easy to manufacture it of porous as well as compact stone, and also such articles as grindstones and sythe-stones. The porous stones are peculiarly useful, as they make admirable filters, and by placing a coating of fine pure white sand upon them they can never be choked.

Temperance.

For the Christian Messenger.

"Love, Purity, and Fidelity."

Pursuant to public notice, a meeting of "Invincible Division" Sons of Temperance—was held at the residence of Brother Phillip Hudgings, for the purpose of making him a donation. Brother William S. West, read the following address:—

"Worthy Brother, several years have rolled away in succession, since you were first initiated into our ranks; our object was to 'conquer the conqueror of the mighty, and destroy the destroyer of millions.' Our watchword is 'onward and upward.'"

Worthy Brother, although we have been deprived of your presence in the division room by the dispensation of an All-Wise providence, who in his instructible wisdom has laid his afflictive hand upon you, He who has done it is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, therefore it is our duty to submit to his chastening hand. Worthy Bro. we have heard of your Love, Purity, and Fidelity to the Temperance Cause, in which you so long ago embarked. While you are called to pass through deep waters of affliction be steadfast, and immovable, and reflect, by this we conquer. We are still stemming the tide of opposition, and hope to gain some higher ground in order to bring our artillery to bear on the Enemy's Camp. We have every reason to be encouraged. Truth must and will prevail.

You have probably seen by our weekly papers, that officers commanding Reg'ts. in Halifax, as well as soldiers, who fought on the battle-field of the Crimea, are being initiated into the ranks of this noble order. Let us buckle on our armor and march into the field, never grounding our arms till the battle is won.

Worthy Bro. as the representative of "Invincible Division," in token of our esteem and regard,—I present you with a copy of "The Abstainer" newspaper for twelve months, together with the sum of Five Pounds."

The division then adjourned to the Temperance Hall, Bro. Morton Taylor, W. P. taking the chair. The Chairman addressed the meeting giving a full history of the Order of the Sons of Temperance, and alluded to the necessity there was for our united efforts in putting down this liquor traffic.

The Sacred Music Society, being well represented by both the Ladies and gentlemen forming that body, we were entertained between the speeches with some beautiful music, selected by Bro. Zebina Neiley.

Brother Ebenezer Stronach, made a powerful appeal to all present, to come forward and enlist in the good cause, and related some excellent anecdotes, illustrating the subject.

Bro. Henry Saunders brought to our minds the days of old, when we were sitting under the speeches of the late much lamented bro. Theodore Harding. He has retained some of the echo of his thunder. His address was a most powerful appeal.

Bro. George Duncan next made a most excellent Temperance address.

Bro. Abraham VanBuskirk made a most impressive speech, of some twenty minutes, on the benefits of Temperance, and referred to the great improvements going on in this vicinity, he referred to the new Furniture Factory just opposite our Hall, and the temperance principles of its proprietor, and of its certain success.

Bro. Abraham Stronach gave the speech of the evening, blending the sublime, the beautiful and the imaginative together, as by a master mind.

Bro. Ebenezer Stronach then gave the benediction, and the meeting adjourned.

Reported for the Division, by Bro. G. W. BUSTEED. Prince William Street, Aylesford, February 3rd, 1857.

[Western News please copy.]

PROHIBITION.

Rev. Dr. Edwards expresses himself on this subject:

Can that traffic be justified by an enlightened and virtuous people, which holds out the chief temptation to intemperance and strews the land with beggars, with widows and orphans, which breaks up the foundation of social happiness consigns millions prematurely to their graves, and fills the world with wailings, lamentations and woe? I answer NO! Policy, Religion, Morality, Patriotism condemn it.

The Rev. Dr. Wayland, late President of Brown University, is the author of the following:

Can it be right for me to derive my living from that which is debasing the minds, ruining the souls, destroying for ever the happiness of the domestic circle, filling the land with women and children in a condition far more deplorable than that of widows and orphans; which is the cause of nine-tenths of all the crimes which are perpetrated in society, and brings upon it nine-tenths of all the pauperism which exists; which accomplishes all these things and does it without ceasing? Do you say you are not responsible for the acts of your neighbors? Is this clearly so?—Is not he who navigates a slave ship a pirate?"