

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

OCTOBER 4th, 1857.

Subject.—PAUL'S MISSIONARY LABOURS AT SEVERAL PLACES.

For Repeating. Acts xviii. 1-4. For Reading. Acts xviii. 12-28.

OCTOBER 11th, 1857.

Subject.—PAUL PREACHES AT EPHESUS, AND CONFIRMS HIS DOCTRINES BY MIRACLES.

For Repeating. Acts xviii. 24-26. For Reading. Acts xix. 1-20.

THE QUESTIONER.

Mental Pictures from the Bible.

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

[No. 31.]

A verdant and well-wooded country, with many a fountain of fresh springing water; near to one of which is an encampment of soldiers. Another army approaches, and passes by, led on by hundreds of its native aristocracy. In the rear, the royal standard is displayed, and a monarch of candid and benevolent aspect is seen holding converse with a young hero of attractive though foreign appearance. Suddenly jealousy seems to inflame the visages of the aristocratic vanguard; at the favour thus shown to a stranger, and, angrily accusing him of treacherous designs, they demand his immediate dismissal. Perplexed and annoyed, the king for a time defends his young ally, but is eventually compelled to accede to the demand of his imperious nobles.

QUESTIONS to be answered next week.

75. Find a divine remedy for the wrath of a neighbour.

76. What king tried in vain to prevent the fulfilment of prophecy?

SOLUTION to Picture No. 31.

King David with Zadok and his sons.—2 Sam. xv. 17-29

ANSWERS to questions in our last.

73. 2 Sam. xix 34.—How long shall I live? Mark viii. 37.—What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

74. Joseph.

For the Christian Messenger.

An Hour among the Flowers.

BY RUPERT RUDOLPH.

When I was very young I was greatly astonished to hear an aged person speak in disrespectful language of the flowers; and, indeed, it is a source of wonder to me yet, that any person can be found so blinded to the beautiful in Nature, as to be indifferent to the charms of those most attractive productions of creative wisdom—the blossoms. But thanks to Heaven such solitary beings find few congenial spirits in our beautiful world.

The cultivation of a taste and love for the sublime and beautiful in Nature affords the purest means of obtaining enjoyment our earth can bestow. Where can we find more variety, beauty and splendor than is exhibited among the flowers? No wonder all classes find among them a common pleasure. The playful innocent child chooses them as its fondest companions, with which to while away the leaden-winged hours in their tedious flight, and weaves them so closely in with his happy dreams and sleepless reveries, that time can never efface them from his memory.

The languishing invalid loves them, because they were his amiable associates before disease laid its prostrating hand upon his frame, and in their company he fondly anticipates the time when health shall again bloom on his pallid cheek, and he can enjoy the genial sunshine, and inhale the invigorating air, fragrant with the breath of living flowers; or perchance they lead his mind upward to that blissful land, where health and joy are as perennial as its amarantine flowers.

The gray-haired man trusts them as the only truly unchanging associates of his youthful days. They lift the dim veil of Time from his vision, and Memory once more retraces with vivid accuracy, the long-past scenes of childish joy, which once animated his breast. His imagination recalls the countenances of his friends—the gay companions of his youthful days, which have long since thrown off the trammels which bound them to earth, and passed through death's dark portals into an eternity beyond. Their alternations of bloom and decay reminded him of the certainty of meeting his departed friends again, when the winter of his life is past in all the brilliancy of a new-born Spring.

The hapless idiot, in his soulless dreamings,

delights to revel among the blossoms, and can appreciate the fragrance of a bouquet, as well as can the satin-fingered maiden; while the profound man of science considers them not beneath his observation, and sits down among them for systematic study.

How strangely and sweetly are blended in the flowers the gay and the grave—the blithe and the mournful. Befitting emblems they are to deck the marble brow of the gay young bride, as well as the pallid cheek of the cold cold corpse. To decorate the festive hall, as well as for the hands of affection to spread around the new-made grave. To give joy and mirth to the gatherings of pleasure, and to impart solemnity and gloom to the sable bier.

I cannot but shudder when I imagine that a world might have been formed without a blossom. How desolate would have been the scene! It would have been as a firmament without a star—as a face without a smile—as a wedding without a bride—as a human being without a soul. The beauty would be taken from earth, the glory from creation. The morning stars which sang so sweetly on that beautiful morn, would have been compelled to omit one of the most pleasing and sublime stanzas in their joyful song. The revolutions of the Seasons would lose their greatest interest.

It is the springing and budding of the flowers which invests Spring with its ideality; their full expansion and perfect bloom imparts to Summer its highest charm; while "mellow, melancholy Autumn" receives its sublimity and sadness from their decay, and Winter its dreariness from their total absence.

It is true, without them, we could listen to the sweet murmurings of the purling brooklet; but no sweet flowers would deck its margin, or unconsciously watch their own sweet faces reflected clearly in its sparkling depths. The golden-tinted humming bird would flutter cheerlessly over the barren waste, where nothing bloomed for it to stoop down and kiss. The wood-nymphs and satyrs, of which the poets dream, would desert the umbrageous dells, where we supposed them to exist; and where the blue-eyed violets bespangled the mossy carpet, and smiled instinctively in the face of the happy student of Nature. If we examine their structure we cannot admire too greatly the wondrous perfection of their parts and form.

From the simple catkins which dangle on the beechen spray, to the queenly rose—the sovereign gem of the flowers—one general system of beauty and grandeur pervades the whole.

The delicacy of their airy petals, their unrivalled odor, and among some species, the wonderful facilities which nature has assigned them for disseminating seeds and perpetuating their generation affords an ample theme for admiration and study. Nothing below Omnipotence could have formed them, and nothing on earth is more beautifully calculated to awaken in man a spirit of veneration and reverence.

It is said of Linnaeus, the eminent Swedish botanist, that, on first seeing a splendid flower, he fell on his knees and thanked God for thus beautifying the earth.

The stars which shine in the heavens at night show forth the power and majesty of the Creator; but the Flowers, delicate and frail, show us his loving-kindness—his mindfulness of fallen man. Wherever we see them, their faces are looking heavenward, and directing us, in spirit, to the glorious land of eternal spring, where

"Tears shall ne'er bedew our cheeks And flowers ne'er decay; Where youth's glad hours shall not grow dark, Nor night succeed the day."

LUXURY.

I am no advocate for meanness of private habitation. I would fain introduce into it all magnificence, care and beauty, where they are possible; but I would not have that useless expense in unnoticed fineries or formalities; cornicings of ceilings and grainings of doors, and fringing of curtains, and thousands of such things which have become foolishly and apathetically habitual—things, on whose common appliance hang whole trades, to which there never belonged the blessings of giving one ray of pleasure, or of becoming of the remotest or most contemptible use—things which cause half the expense of life, and destroy more than half its comfort, manliness, respectability, freshness and delight. I speak from experience; I know what it is to live in a cottage with a deal floor and roof, and a hearth of mica slate; and I know it to be in many respects healthier and happier than living between a Turkey-car-

pet and gilded ceiling, beside a steel grate and polished fender. I do not say that such things have not their place and propriety; but I say this emphatically, that a tenth part of the expense which is sacrificed in domestic vanities, if not absolutely and meaninglessly lost in domestic comforts and incumbrances, would, if collectively offered and wisely employed, build a marble church for every town in England; such a church as it should be a joy and blessing even to pass near in our daily ways and walks, and as it would bring the light into the eyes to see from afar, lifting its fair height above the purple crowd of humbler roofs.—*Ruskin.*

LEFT!

Seventy years ago there lived in a quiet New England village, two brothers who had grown up to manhood together, and who, tired of the dull monotony of their father's farm, had determined to go to sea. With pleasing anticipations of the voyage, they went on board the vessel early on a summer's morning, and as the sunlight streamed over the hill-tops and gilded the familiar places of their childhood, they were bounding merrily over the waters towards the blue ocean. As they were borne swiftly onward, and their native hills faded from sight, they little thought that those hills would be beheld nevermore by the most of that little company.

"Death treads in pleasure's footsteps round the world."

In a few hours after the land had disappeared from the horizon, the clouds began to gather in the heavens, and the rising wind heaped high the billows around and beneath them, or lashed the angry waters into foam. The vessel, tossed like an egg-shell upon the waves, creaked and groaned in every joint and seam, now staggering like a drunken man as the heavy surges dashed against her, and then rushing furiously onward before the increasing gale. At such a time the mariner's hope is in the strength of his vessel; woe to him if her timbers are not sound, or her parts but feebly joined together. This vessel was unfortunately an old and unsafe one, so that in a little while she became a shattered and helpless wreck. Her crew, unnerved by fear, and in hourly expectation of death, still clung despairingly to her, while through the thick rain they eagerly scanned the horizon in search of some friendly craft which might rescue them from impending destruction. Far away to the windward they descried a sail, and the sight gave new hope to their hearts. "We may yet be saved," said they; and with fearful interest they calculated the time which would elapse before the wreck would probably go down. With intense satisfaction they saw that the ship was making directly towards them, and that she was rapidly approaching. But now a new question arose; how they could be taken off in such a gale. No boat could live on such a sea. No vessel could pause for a moment with that furious storm driving her onward.

Each moment now lessened visibly the distance between the two vessels, and augmented the anxiety of every heart. The crew of the coming ship were seen moving about upon her deck, making preparations to do something for the rescue of the shipwrecked men. Swiftly onward she came like a race-horse over the waters, now rising on the top of a mighty surge, and then sinking to the bottom of an ocean abyss. Oh, the intense agony of that brief suspense! As she neared the wreck, her commander was seen standing on the bow, while the storm beat fiercely upon him, all intent upon the humane effort about to be made. Sailors stood upon the side of the ship with long coils of rope in their hands awaiting the word of command. Then through the air, in a tone that struggled for mastery, with the shrieking of the wind and the uproar of the waters, came the direction from the captain to seize the ropes about to be thrown them. The shipwrecked made ready. In a moment more the vessel came bounding past as near as she could come with safety, and the ropes were thrown. In a moment those ropes, their last hope, had fallen and been swept away; but two of their number upon whom the cords had rested, had seized them, and were being dragged on board of the now fast receding ship.

One of these was one of the two brothers. The moment he touched the deck of the vessel, he looked to see who else was saved. His brother was not there. In an instant his eye had returned to the wreck, and there he beheld that brother, the playmate of his youth as well as the companion of his manhood, holding out his arms in sad entreaty, while his quick ear caught, over all the raging of the storm, the wild, despairing shriek for assistance.

Who can imagine the emotions that filled the soul of that unhappy man at this maddening sight? He rushed insanely to the side of the vessel, and would have plunged into the sea with the vain fancy of rescuing his lost brother, had not the sailors held him with a strong grasp. He fell upon his knees in frantic prayer to the God of heaven, in behalf of that brother; then he turned eagerly to the captain, and besought him to turn about his vessel and once more attempt to save him. But though all the hardy crew wept at the scene before them, they knew it was impossible to comply with his request. The two were never to meet on earth. "One was taken, and the other left."

Permit me, reader, to enquire if you have yet entered the ark of mercy which God has provided for the safety of your immortal soul; or are you exposed in the poor shattered bark of your own righteousness and merits to the dreadful storms of life, and the fierce beatings of God's wrath? Hasten for your life. Abandon the treacherous vessel, for though the water is smooth, and the skies fair, she may seem to be strong enough, be assured that tempests will arise, from whose fury you cannot be preserved by her poor planks.

Christian, stands there by your side a dear friend, who as yet has never become a possessor of the hope you enjoy? Stretch forward your imagination to the time when, sinking amid the billows of eternal death, that friend may call, in the accents of despair, for assistance it will be impossible for you to give. Oh, work while the day lasts, for the salvation of your perishing friend,—and you, impatient one, heed the christian's admonitions, mindful that "one may be taken, and the other left."

Review.

The Illustrated Family Gymnasium; containing the most improved methods of applying Gymnastic, Calisthenic, Kinesipathic, and vocal exercises to the development of the bodily organs, the invigoration of their functions, the preservation of health, and the cure of diseases and deformities. With numerous Illustrations. By R. T. TRALL, M.D. Price, \$1 25

Various specifics and remedies are prescribed for the removal of disease, and for warding off the ills to which flesh is said to be heir, according to the bent of the person prescribing, or, in some cases, according as the interest the party has in the use of his prescription, may dictate.

Many of the physiological evils to which we are subject are doubtless the result of habits into which we have fallen, from imperfect acquaintance with our own physical organization.

Much of the medical treatment we have to endure might doubtless be avoided by keeping up a course of muscular exertion and physical activity in the earlier years of our lives, together with the avoidance of that which is injurious in eating and drinking, and improperly exposing ourselves to heat or cold.

The mental application necessary for securing a respectable standing with intelligent men and women induces many, both teachers and parents, to sacrifice every other necessity of our nature for the purpose of storing the mind with facts and imparting what are called accomplishments.

Sometimes the laws of our nature are so far neglected and the undeveloped powers subjected to such improper positions, during the time of study, as to produce actual and permanent deformity, and lay the foundation for many long years of disease and suffering.

Efforts have been made from time to time to introduce a system of gymnastics for boys, and calisthenics for girls, but these systems have hitherto failed in securing anything like general adoption in educational institutions. The work mentioned above is a more thorough and systematic attempt than has before been presented to the public. It purports to combine a course of gymnastic positions and movements with those calculated to remove malformations and correct deformities.

In the first part are: bodily positions and movements, for standing, sitting, lying, running, leaping, skating, and swimming.

The second part has special gymnastics, Indian club exercise, with various movements intended to remove tendencies to consumption, asthma, and other internal diseases. Modes of exercising the extremities as a remedy for congestions of the head, &c. &c.

The work is a Family Gymnasium and does not require a drill sergeant to put the subject through its exercises.

Allopathy, Homeopathy, Hydropathy, and all the hundred other paths are here outdone by making disease fly at the touch of the magician's wand. The work of the regular practitioner will be considerably narrowed down when these modes of cure are found effectual and are universally adopted.

Our advertising columns too will become less profitable, as the vendors of patent medicines have to seek other employments when they find "their occupation is gone."