

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

FEBRUARY 21st, 1858.

Subject.—DUTY OF EXERTING OURSELVES TO OBTAIN THE HEAVENLY REST.

For Repeating. For Reading.
Heb. iv. 1-2. Heb. iv. 10-16.

FEBRUARY 28th, 1858.

Subject.—THE AUTHORITY AND HONOUR OF THE SAVIOUR'S PRIESTHOOD.

For Repeating. For Reading.
Heb. iv. 14-16. Heb. v. 1-14.

THE QUESTIONER.

Mental Pictures from the Bible.

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

[No. 52.]

THE CONSEQUENCES OF COVETOUSNESS.

A court of justice; but who is the criminal and what is the crime? Mutual distrust seems to reign over all, yet all seem determined to discover the guilty party. Ah, see, they set one aside. All his brethren are then brought forward, and a further search is necessary to learn which of them is now trying to evade the charge. One of these is found to be nearer akin than the rest to him who has caused the trouble. Soon one of these is taken and separated from the others, until, by the unerring process of theocratic law, one sinister countenance is fixed upon. On finding no way of escape, he quails before the ruin and disgrace which must follow his grasping desire and possession of the tempting prize. Amidst the scorn of his brethren he with shame confesses his crime and gives directions where the stolen treasure is hid.

SOLUTION to Picture No. 51.

Joshua addressing the tribes of Israel before his death.—Joshua xxiv.

A Model Pastorate.

In this unstable age, when no sacredness seems to attach to the tie uniting pastor and people, it is pleasant to record one striking exception to the general law of change. Dr. Putnam, of Roxbury, in his sermon on re-entering the renovated house of worship, alluded to the fact that since the organization of the church in 1632, it had been served by only nine pastors, and that all of these, with the exception of the speaker, died at their posts. Not one of them asked a dismissal from the pastorate, nor was any one of them requested by the church to resign. Three of them discharged the duties of their office during the long period of 169 years. The present pastor was ordained in 1830, and has already been more than a quarter of a century in his pastorate.

A Crowd.

Some people estimate a minister precisely as they do a horse—by his market price; others as they do a drummer who hunts up customers and secures trade; and others still, simply by the crowds which flock to hear him preach. We are reminded of an incident in the life of Bishop Horne whenever we think of this class:

Bishop Horne had his dignity somewhat taken down when he took possession of the Episcopal palace at Norwich, in 1791. He turned round upon the steps, and exclaimed, "Bless us, bless us! what a multitude of people!" "O my Lord," said a bystander, "this is nothing to the crowd on Friday last, to see a man hanged!"

Spiritual Death.

Strange as it may sound, how many a man has followed himself to his own grave. He is no mourner, (would he were, for then there might be still hope,) but he is an assister at the grave of his own better hopes and holier desires, of all which the true life of his soul consisted, which is all dead and buried, though he, a sad survivor of himself, still cumber the world for a while.—Trench.

Correct estimate of Grandmothers.

Rev. Dr. Tyng of New York, recently delivered a lecture upon "Old Women," in which he gave "our grandmothers" the following compliment: "Nothing," said he, "is more respected in a private family than the old grandmother who sits in the centre of its circle. I would not give up the worth of my children's grandmother in my house for the best and handsomest young woman in the land."

The Mission of the Artist.

Mrs. Ritchie, in her late book, entitled "Twin Roses," has the following:

"Blessed are the brush, the chisel, the pencil! Who shall say that artists are not positive benefactors of mankind? To render the beautiful ideal an actual presence, to fill the mind, through the medium of the eyes, with lovely images—to raise the hearts—to refine the daily thoughts—are not these works of beneficence?"

Adventure in the Tomb of David.

The following sketch, furnished by Miss Barclay, daughter of James T. Barclay, author of "The City of the Great King," gives an interesting account of her perilous adventure in gaining access to the Tomb of David.

"Early one morning, during the great Mahomedan feast of Rhamadan, I was called to the 'parley' room, to see my friend Moosa. This little fellow having become rather a frequent visitor, I was at first inclined to excuse myself, but remembering he had lately hinted at the possibility of my gaining an entrance into the Tomb of David, and in consideration, too, of the fact of being their fasting season, the everlasting finjan of coffee and doucer of sweetmeats—those otherwise indispensable marks of Turkish civility—might now dispensed with, I concluded to make my appearance. On entering the room, my pleasing suspicions were confirmed by seeing him close the door and mysteriously place his forefinger on his lips, in token of profound secrecy. He laid his ponderous turban on the divan beside him, doffed his slippers, crossed his legs, and then disclosed the nature of his errand. In short, I was informed that his sister was ready for an adventure; and, as I was too, we were not long in reaching 'Turfendah,' (his sister,) who immediately commenced operations. My hair was taken down, and braided in scores of little plaits. A red cloth cap, with blue silk tassel was placed on my head, and around it a gauze turban, with gold tassels and embroidery. My robe and trousers were of the finest Damascus silk, my girdle of cashmere, and tunic of light blue stuff, embroidered in silver flowers. My hands were already dyed with 'henna,' having undergone this process on the occasion of a former adventure in the Mosque of Omar; and still retained the deep yellow hue; my skin was pretty deeply tanned, too, from a residence of several years under a burning Syrian sun, which was quite an addition to my Turkish appearance. The sheet, veil, and slippers came in due order; and having secreted my pencil and sketch book in the folds of my girdle we sallied forth, accompanied by Turfendah's favorite slave.

"The reputed Tomb of David is just outside Zion Gate, hard by the Concurium and American cemetery. It is surrounded by an irregular pile of buildings, and surmounted by a dome and minaret. In the interior are some of the most grotesque architectural embellishments imaginable, on the capitals of some remains of the Crusaders' architecture. Just think of the frightful owl occupying the place of the classic acanthus and the mythic lotus! We passed several halls and corridors, evidently of the style of the Quixotic era of the Crusader's domination, before reaching the consecrated apartment, whose entrance is guarded by double iron doors. We found here an old dervish, prostrate in prayer, on the cold stone floor. Not being privileged, as we, to enter the sacred precincts he was content with gazing at the tomb through the iron bars for it is a rare thing for even a Mussulman ecclesiastic to gain admittance—my companion and her family only enjoying this privilege because they are very near relatives of the curator of the tomb. Our slave was despatched for the key, which she had no difficulty in obtaining, on the plea that her mistress wished to pray on the holy spot. But what was my consternation on seeing another slave return with her! I confess that I trembled, and was thinking I had best leave my awkward slippers behind, in case of retreat, as they would greatly impede my progress, and might thereby cause me to lose my head. She peered under my veil, asked who I was and seemed satisfied with the careless reply of Turfendah, that I was merely a friend of hers from Stamboul. She invited us up stairs to see the old keeper's harem; and Dahudeah (Moosa's little wife) who is always glad to change the purgatory of a residence with her lord and master for a visit of a few days here; for I can testify from personal observation that the young effendi lords it over her in true oriental conjugal style. Turfendah regretted she could not accept her kind invitation, and, as she was so much exhausted from fasting, she would prefer deferring it to another time. The slave then left, to our mutual relief, and, having dismissed the old dervish, the doors were closed and doubly locked.

"The room is insignificant in its dimensions, but is furnished very gorgeously. The tomb is apparently an immense sarcophagus of rough stone, and is covered by green satin tapestry, richly embroidered with gold. To this a piece of black velvet is attached, with a few inscriptions from the Koran, embroidered also in gold. A satin canopy of red, blue, green and yellow stripes, hangs over the tomb; and another piece of black velvet tapestry, embroidered in silver, covers a door in one end of the room, which they said, leads to a cave underneath. Two tall silver candle sticks stand before this door, and a little lamp hangs in a window near it, which is kept constantly burning, and whose wick, though saturated with oil—and I dare say, a most nauseous dose my devotional companion eagerly swallowed, muttering to herself a prayer with many a genuflection. She then, in addition to their usual forms of prayer, prostrated herself before the tomb, raised the covering, pressed her forehead to the stone, and then kissed it many times. The ceiling of the room is vaulted, and the walls covered with blue porcelain, in floral figures. Having remained here an hour or more, and completed my sketch, we left; and great was my rejoicing when I found myself once more at home, out of danger, and still better, out of my awkward costume."

Cheerfulness is the daughter of employment; and I have known a man come home in high spirits from a funeral, merely because he had had the management of it.

Correspondence.

HALIFAX, February 9th, 1868.

To the Shareholders of the Halifax Fire Insurance Company.

BEING still unreprieved for the destruction, during the fearful conflagration on the 1st of January, 1857, of my house, insured in the Halifax Fire Insurance Company for £400, and being exposed to the most serious injury in consequence, and learning that you are a Shareholder, I beg to bring the facts to your notice.

After the fire I made claim upon the City, and exhibited the ordinary proof to the Directors of the Company, and when the Legislature met, I petitioned for the passage of a Law to remove the objection against my claim on the city, arising from the fact, that two Aldermen and one firewarden, instead of three firewardens, had given the order for pulling down my House.

The City Council resisted my application, on the ground, that the fire had reached my House before the order had been executed, or given, and witnesses on both sides having been examined, the Committee reported on the necessity of a legal decision being obtained. I therefore reluctantly brought Actions against the Insurance Company, and against the Gentlemen who had given the order at the fire. The first of these was lately tried, and the following verdict was given:—"We find that the order to pull down the House had been given and, as far as it was carried into effect, had been executed before the fire reached the House; but, considering the loss sustained by the burning of the remaining portion, we find for the Plaintiff, damages Three Hundred Pounds." My Counsel believing that every thing in question was determined, advised me not to try the other action, and they applied to the Directors and to the City Council, in the hope that the Company would acquiesce in the finding of the Jury and the City authorities in the adjustment of the balance of my loss.

The Directors declined, and obtained a rule to be argued at the next April Term for a new trial. The injurious effect of this upon my claim on the City,—of which my Counsel had warned the Directors—was realized. The City Council rejected my application, but I believe they were influenced by the apprehension, that the object was, to relieve the Insurance Office at the expense of the City, and I think it probable that the whole matter would have been settled, had the Directors acquiesced in the verdict.

You will perceive that the course which those gentlemen have pursued has worse consequences than the withholding from me of the money, which nine Jurors on their oaths have awarded me; it obstructs and may defeat the settlement of my claim against the city,—and when you reflect that the argument of the rule for a new trial, owing to precedent business, is not likely to come on until November next you will be able to appreciate how much evil is done me by the decision of the Directors. Indeed the entire ruin of my business seems inevitable from the delay.

The Directors rely much on having proposed arbitration, and offered me £200 in full of my claim. Giving them all credit for having meant kindly when these offers were first made, their repetition was idle, and almost a mockery—because they were aware that in the attitude I occupied between them and the City, any adjustment with them, other than for the whole amount of the policy, or on the verdict of a jury, must compromise my settlement with the City.

I understand that the sentiment expressed at the Special meeting of the Shareholders, called last summer, in reference to my claim, evinced a strong disposition in favour of it, and afforded abundant evidence that no desire existed to meet me on the ground of legal liability.

The Halifax Fire Insurance Company was always distinguished for its liberality, and it cannot be said that such councils, while they guided its directors, injured the Shareholders, as dividends of from 20 to 30 per cent used to manifest. I do not ask anything but that just liberality which heretofore has been the rule of the Company; as indeed it is of all the higher class of Insurance Offices.

The fire reached my house, and there can be little doubt would have consumed it entirely, together with other property contiguous to it, also insured in the Halifax Fire Insurance Company's Office, had it not been for the efforts which had been made to stop it, by pulling the building down. Can the Directors see nothing in this fact, above the grounds on which they have obtained their rule nisi,—the enquiry of how many beams or rafters were burnt or scorched, and a nice calculation of the damage these sustained? They may say they have arisen above this view. Then why confine their discretion within limits that make its exercise useless to me? And if they are not confined by legal strictness, why not add to their offer another £100, sanctioned as they would be by a Verdict and the known kind feelings of the Shareholders? The difference is not great. No principle is sacrificed, for in this respect the payment of £200 or of £300 is the same, and the Verdict of the Jury involves no injurious principle, and can only be objected to on the ground of amount.

There may be a jealousy lest the liability of the city should be too much abated, but this is no just reason for the sacrifice of one, who, confiding in the liberality of your office, has done his business there.

The Directors have not taken the opinion of the Company since the trial, and they have refused my request to be furnished with the names of the Shareholders.

I have nothing left but to make an Appeal to the Shareholders myself, to save me from the ruin attendant on the delay, expense and risks of litigation. I have no means of making the appeal except by sending this letter to those of the Shareholders whose names I can discover, and by addressing the rest through the press.

I beg your careful and kind consideration of the case. I shall feel truly gratified by your giving me your signature to a memorandum of the nature subjoined for authorising the Directors to acquiesce in the Verdict. The importance of your early reply is great, as the concurrence of the Directors may induce the City Council to consent to the balance of my claim and thus prevent any collision with them before the Legislature, which I am most anxious to avoid.

I have the honour to be
Your obedient servant,
S. SELDEN.

[MEMORANDUM.]

To the Directors of the Halifax Fire Insurance Company:

GENTLEMEN:

Under the circumstances of Mr. Selden's case, I, as one of the Shareholders, authorise and request your withdrawing the rule for a new trial, that he may have the immediate benefit of the Verdict, and that the policy may be settled in conformity with the finding of the Jury.

For the Christian Messenger.

Acadia College.

MR. EDITOR,

I see by a notice in your paper of yesterday that the interests of Acadia College are likely to be "most seriously imperilled." Baptists of Nova Scotia, it is a time which calls for immediate and vigorous action. Will you permit Acadia College to go down at last? Must our Institution, at the mention of which so many hearts throb, and so many eyes water, be closed after all that has been done? Must the place around which so many hallowed associations already cluster, become at last deserted? Brethren shall we bring upon ourselves everlasting disgrace?

In the Baptist denomination in these Provinces there are thousands who are worth their hundreds, hundreds who are worth their thousands, and tens who are worth their ten thousands. And yet Acadia College is likely to be "most seriously imperilled,"—aye, and will be closed unless we at once come up to its aid as MEN and as CHRISTIANS.

Brethren, let us not allow it to be suspended; if we do, its present students will be lost to it forever. And, moreover, where could we soon again get such a staff of professors—gentlemen so beloved by their classes, by the community, and by all with whom they are acquainted?

Brethren, prove yourselves worthy of the name of Baptists: prove yourselves worthy of the trust committed to you by those "Fathers" of beloved memory who toiled for you, and "bore the burden in the heat of the day": come up, to a man, and Acadia College will no longer be imperilled.

But where are the students? Have they no love for the Institution? Are there no fond memories clustering around that beloved spot? Are there no ties which bind Acadia to their hearts? Must those hallowed rooms be tenantless,—rooms daily vocal to the voices of prayer and praise? Cannot some of them take scholarships? Ought not those who have enjoyed its advantages to be foremost to sustain its interests, and ought not those who have gone forth to work show their love to *Alma Mater*, and seek to awaken sympathy for her in others by taking scholarships themselves? Are there not some ten or twelve of such who might take the lead?

Mothers, will you let Acadia College go down? Your sons have gone there: your prayers have been answered in their conversion: in many cases your fondest hopes have been more than realized in seeing them lay their all on the altar of Christ and become ministers of this gospel. You have but to exert your influence and Acadia College will flourish.

Fathers, you have with becoming pride watched the advancement of your sons—sons educated at Acadia. Surely you should feel. Is it of no consequence to you whether Acadia College shall prosper or not? Is it of no importance to have a flourishing Institution,—or will you permit Acadia College now to languish and die? Will you allow her at last to become a wreck, after having outridden storms far more fierce? It needs but that each should do his duty, and the College will be saved.

Brethren, the night is dark: it is a time which calls for prayer. Let us, with the simple faith of little children, commit the interests of our beloved Institution to the care of our Heavenly Father, and ask him to aid us in our difficulties.
Thursday, Feb. 4th, 1858.