

Teachers' Department

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons

FEBRUARY 7th, 1858.

Subject.—THE DANGER OF COMING SHORT OF THE HEAVENLY REST.

For Repeating. For Reading. Heb. iii. 12-14. Heb. iv. 1-9.

FEBRUARY 14th, 1858.

Doctrine.—LOVE OF GOD.—John iii. 15, 16; 1 John iii. 1, 16; iv. 7-10; Romans viii. 38, 39.

THE QUESTIONER.

Mental Pictures from the Bible.

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

[No. 50.]

A young traveller on a journey is overtaken by nightfall in a strange lonely situation. He puts together a heap of stones, which he purposes to make his resting place for the night. After sunset he lies down and composes himself to sleep. Early in the morning he awakes and appears much alarmed with what has occurred during the night. He erects an altar where he rested, and after pouring out a libation of oil upon it he makes a solemn vow and pursues his journey.

SOLUTION to Picture No. 49.

Paul's shipwreck at Melita.—Acts xxvii. 37-44.

More Difficult than was Imagined.

A man recently accepted a challenge to make one million strokes with a pen and ink within a month of four weeks, abstaining from the task on Sundays. On the first day he executed about 50,000 strokes, and on the second day nearly as many; but after many days his hand became stiff and weary, his wrist swollen, and it required the constant attendance of a friend to besprinkle it with an invigorating lotion, without interrupting its progress over the paper. The task was accomplished on the twenty-third day.

More than he thought.

A workman recently purchased, in a small provincial town in Germany, ten pounds of powdered sugar, but on examining it, he found that the grocer had mixed with it at least a pound of lime. On the following day he advertised in the public prints—"Should the grocer, who sold me a pound of lime along with nine pounds of sugar, not bring to me the pound of sugar he cheated me of, I shall forthwith disclose his name in the papers." The next day the workman received nine pounds of sugar from different grocers, who had similar actions on their consciences, and feared publicity.

John Kepler—his Enthusiasm.

When John Kepler discovered after seventeen years of investigation, the connection between the periodic times and the distance of the planets, his delight knew no bounds. "Nothing holds me," said he;—"I will indulge in my sacred fury; I will triumph over mankind by the honest confession that I have stolen the golden vases of the Egyptians to build up a tabernacle for my God, far away from the confines of Egypt. If you forgive me, I rejoice; if you are angry, I can bear it. The die is cast; the book is written, to be read either now or by posterity, I care not which. It may be well to wait a century for a reader, as God has waited six thousand years for an observer."

INTERESTING TO FIRE ENGINE BUILDERS.

A few days since a trial was had in Philadelphia of a small hand engine called the "Experiment," along with the Vigilant Engine, and though there is a difference between the air chambers of the two of 3/4 inches, the former threw water within a few feet as far as the other. The Experiment has an India rubber bag in the chamber, into which air is pumped, and it is the pressure of this upon the water that gives the engine superior forcing power.—It is not necessary to stop it, to force the air into the bag, inasmuch as the pump can be attached to the lever. The patentee is of the opinion that, with the improvement upon an engine of ten inch cylinder, water could be thrown four hundred feet. Some of the Philadelphia Engine Companies are about to give the new invention a trial.

The Illinois Baptist says that a worthy minister in Indiana, who had become somewhat mixed up in land speculation, recently announced to his congregation at the opening of divine service, that his text would be found in "Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, section four, range three, West."

Newspapers.

There is hardly anything so much needed in a family as a newspaper, and yet nothing, comparatively speaking, is esteemed of so little value. If a man undertakes to retrench his expenses, instead of lopping off what is really useless and extravagant, the first thing to be amputated is the newspaper. He will not drink a bottle of wine the less, nor chew the less tobacco, nor divest himself of a single unseemly habit; but he sits down and demonstrates to a certainty that a paper neither feed nor clothes him, and therefore it is a great tax. And then a note is despatched to the printer: "Sir, I cannot afford to take your paper any longer;" or, "Times are hard, money is scarce: ergo, you may discontinue sending my paper;" or with any other excuse that may come uppermost.

Now we believe that every one who will make a fair trial, and observe the influence of reading over his family, will find at the end of the year that he is not a cent the poorer for having been a subscriber to a good newspaper. He will have accumulated more real intelligence of the every day concerns of life and the movements of nations—we take it for granted that he has perused every number with avidity—than he would have done in a series of years deprived of the sight thereof. His wife will have picked up much information relative to the government of her children, many useful lessons in household economy and no small share of instruction suited to her situation. The children will acquire a habit of reading and a degree of intelligence worth the price of subscription ten times told. In fact, a good, virtuous, well conducted newspaper in a family, is the best economist of time and the aptest instructor of the mind.

[The first paragraph of the above extract from one of our American exchanges may be true in the experience of some newspapers. As for ourselves we cannot endorse it. On the contrary we might give numerous extracts from letters lately received, shewing that in many families they would rather deprive themselves of many of the comforts and even of some things considered among the necessities of life, than lose the weekly visits of the Messenger. Only a day or two since, one of our subscribers on paying for his paper fully confirmed the sentiment of the latter paragraph, and said that if he were by any means deprived of the means of paying for the Messenger, either of his children would gladly engage in any kind of labour to earn sufficient to do so rather than be without it. He had been a constant reader of the paper from the issue of its first number, but he found that the strength of his children's attachment to its pages was no less than his own, and as they grew up they became more and more interested in its contents.—Ed. C. M.]

The position of the Bible in 1557 and in 1857.

What a change has been wrought in three hundred years in the fortunes and reception of the Bible! A correspondent of an English paper draws attention to it, and says:

"It may be suggestive of some not uninteresting reflections to those who recognize the hand of God in the history of nations, to compare certain passages in the speeches of the Bishops of London and Winchester, delivered at the Bible Society meeting in Exeter Hall, with the sentiments of their predecessors in those sees at this very time three hundred years ago. The Bishop of London of that day was Edmund Bonner; his brother of Winchester was Stephen Gardiner. In the execution of their office as persecutors, they were zealous and active men, and fought against the Word of God with an energy worthy of a better cause. May the sight of their successors standing forward as the earnest promoters of Bible circulation, and the words of their successors, full of Christian love and wisdom, derived from that Bible, lead us to a due feeling of thankfulness to God and to an increased zeal for the dissemination of the truth.

"The Bishop of Winchester, in 1557, sitting in judgment on Stephen Gratwick, says: 'We will use each Bible go forth with you (i. e. heretics) as we these words accompanying will use the child; for if it, "Breathe, forth, O the child do hurt himself wind," and when we as with the knife, we will semble again, if God per- keep the knife from him. mits us to do so in succeed- So, because you will damn your souls with the Word, therefore you shall not have it.'—Foxe's Acts Ect., VII, 319.

"The Bishop of London, in 1557, sitting in judgment on Ralph Allerton, says: 'By my faith, I had a favor unto thee, but now (i. e. how he quoted the word of God against his persecutors.) I see thou art a naughty knave. Why wilt thou take unto thee to read the Scriptures, and canst understand never a word?'—Foxe, VII., 409.

"The Bishop of London, in 1857, says on the platform of Exeter Hall: 'If I call myself a Christian, I am obliged to maintain that the Scriptures ought not to be read; and therefore I, for my part, do most heartily look forward to the time when even those who most set themselves against the introduction of the Scriptures, will see that their position is altogether untenable, and that through the agency of this Society the Scriptures will be spread through the Roman Catholic as well as the Protestant lands.'

Another Column about Sailors.

HARDSHIPS OF SAILORS AND OFFICERS.—

A seaman's life, in its very nature, is encompassed with peril and hardship. It necessarily involves a deprivation of those social enjoyments, domestic ties and religious privileges, which man's moral and intellectual nature craves. This is equally applicable both to the officer and seaman. Let us not make that lot harder, by withholding from them our sympathy and our prayers.

Permit us, for the sake of illustration, to place you in the position of a foremast seaman on the New England coast, in winter weather. You cross the gulf with a roaring "southerly." It don't rain, it pours; your clothes are all wet, till you have nothing dry for a shift. You have been broiling for months under a tropical sun, the manilla rigging soaked with water is just like a sponge; every time you haul on a rope the water runs down your arms to your shoulders. All at once the wind shifts with a squall, and an icy "norther" comes down upon you from the white hills. Your hands, that have been soaked in fresh water till they are parboiled like a washerwoman's at the tub, now become hard, glassy and full of frost. Every time you hang your weight on a rope, they crack open, the sharp spires of the hemp stick into them, and the blood runs; 'tis real misery. The mate orders the watch to go below, and says, Be ready for a call, boys. You go into the fore-castle; don't know whether you've got any feet or not; don't know whether you've got any hands or not; can't feel them, they are numb. You turn in, as the sailors say, "all standing," which means to take off your pea-jacket and stand it up. It is full of ice and will stand alone. You get into your berth, all wet; lie there and shiver for awhile. By and by you begin to feel warm, and a steam rises from your body—just about to fall asleep, when all hands are called to shorten sail, and you hurry aloft in a snow-storm, again to freeze and perhaps to perish. That is a sailor's life before the mast. As an officer, it is not much better. The master of a ship pillows his head upon responsibility, and it is a thorny pillow. He is often expected to make bricks without straw, profitable voyages with low freights, short passages with head winds, while constant anxiety exposes him to the attack of contagious disorders. He is often perplexed with incompetent officers and worthless crews.—N. Y. Sailor's Magazine.

WHAT BECOMES OF THE GOOD SAILORS?—

This is a question often asked by those who contend that seamen as a class are continually growing worse, and that all attempts for their improvement are useless. One reply that may be made is, that the best men frequently leave the service and enter other occupations. The only way this can be prevented is so to elevate the character of that service, and improve the condition of those employed in it, that they shall find sufficient inducements to remain there.—Ib.

RELIGION IS WORTH SOMETHING.—

An English brig came into our port a few days since in a very bad condition. When only some 400 miles from the coast of Ireland, in a gale of wind, her bulwarks, galley, wheel, and boats were carried away, and much other damage done. "But," said the captain, "during it all my mind was at perfect peace, and though in such a condition I never had a pleasanter voyage." Why was this? Ans. He is a praying man. He stayed his mind on God, and therefore was at peace, just exactly as God has promised.

Reader, is not the religion of Christ worth something?

On the next Sabbath morning after I had entered the pulpit I received the following note from the captain as he and his crew walked down the middle aisle:

PHILADELPHIA, May 11, 1857.

"George Robson, of the Wm. Penn, and his ship's company, desire to return thanks to Almighty God for his goodness to them in bringing them to this, their desired port, in health, and in permitting them to enter his house to mingle with his people. May we all find it a Sabbath of rest to our souls for Jesus sake.

GEORGE ROBSON, Brig William Penn."

TESTIMONY OF A RUMSELLER.—It is still contended by many officers, owners, and others, that sailors are no better than they used to be with all the efforts for their reformation. Listen to what one who keeps a Rum Sailor Boarding House said the other day. "No use to keep boarding house now—nothing made by it—so few sailors drink now to what used to; nothing made."

How does this correspond with the croak of those who say sailors are getting worse and worse—are nothing but drunken dogs.

Truly the Lord has blessed the means made use of for the elevation of seamen in the moral scale. And if owners and underwriters will do their duty and do away with the "advance," they will be elevated still more in that scale and very much in their seamanship.—Ib.

Agriculture.

ASPARAGUS BEDS.—Very many persons who possess gardens and have an abundance of room, deprive themselves of this delicacy because they think there is a great deal of trouble and mystery in raising it. There is scarcely a simpler crop produced in the garden. We have given over and over again the mode of setting out beds, and may refer to it again in our next issue, as it can be done any time before the closing up of the season by frost. Our purpose now is to give a hint as to the way of treating beds in autumn. It is this: When the stalks have turned yellow, mow them off close with a scythe, and burn on each bed its own crop, scattering the ashes evenly over it. Then take a broad-pronged fork, which should be used in every garden, and fork over the bed, being careful not to injure the crown of the plants, and apply a top-dressing of rich, short stable manure. Let this remain until the frost is out of the ground in the spring, when the loose top should be raked off, and the remainder forked in. About the first of April sprinkle over each bed a dressing of cheap salt to the extent that no portion of the ground can be seen. This is all that will be required until the ensuing fall. A bed of asparagus, properly made in the first instance, and cared for in this way afterward, will last for twenty-five years.—Germantown Telegraph.

WARMTH OF THE SOIL.—The warmth of the soil, under a clear sun, is surprisingly above that of the air, the difference being, even in temperate climates, as high as sixty-five degrees. Thus Schubler finds in July, when the air is 81 degs., the soil will be 146 degs.; and during one of his observations at Tubingen, in Germany, the air stood at 78 degs. and the soil at 152 degs., a difference of 74 degs. With surface of the same colour, the materials composing the soil make little difference in its capacity to become heated provided they are in similar states as to dryness. Sand, clay, loam, garden-mould, &c., show very little difference with the thermometer. Color, however, has a powerful effect. Although exposed to the sun for hours, differently colored earths never attain the same temperature, the lighter coloured always remaining considerably cooler. The conclusion seems inevitable that in some countries the surface soil must occasionally approach 200 degs. Fahrenheit. Under such a degree of heat the decomposition of the organic matter of the soil must go on rapidly, with the evolution of much ammonia and carbonic acid, agents which play an important part in the modification of the mineral matter of the soil, as well as stimulate vegetation.—Anon.

URINE.—The urine of a cow or horse is worth about three dollars per annum. The advantages of irrigating grass-lands with cow urine almost exceeds belief.

Mr. Hardy, of Glasgow, who keeps a large dairy in that town, by using cow urine, cuts some small fields of grass six times; and the average of each cutting is fifteen inches in length." If this is all true, farmers should exert their utmost efforts to economize this substance, and apply it to their crops with great care. It is, undoubtedly, a most energetic and efficient fertilizer, and one which, we are inclined to think, has been allowed to run greatly to waste.

HOW TO MAKE LARD CANDLES.—The manufacture of lard candles is carried on to a considerable extent in some of the western States, particularly Wisconsin, and being monopolized by the few, has proved very lucrative. The following is the receipt in toto. To every 8 lbs. of lard, add one ounce nitric acid; and the manner of making is as follows: Having carefully weighed your lard, place it over a slow fire, or at least merely melt it; then add the acid, and mould the same as tallow, and you have a clear, beautiful candle.

In order to make them resemble bona-fide tallow candles, you have only to add a small proportion of pure beeswax.—Country Gentleman.

YOUNG COLTS.—When should a young colt be broke? I say never, never! Teach him as much as you can, but don't break him! that is all out of the fashion. Teach him to do as you tell him, to come and go at your will; make a particular friend of him, and you may use him at any age you please, but be careful not to use him hard or badly. Cattle may be hot at the age of two years, as well as boys at seven or eight; and when he is two, three or four years old, a few days before you wish to use him, put on the hames, put him in the chills, and let him stand several hours; stay by him, fondle him all over, lead him about and call him some name. Do this for a few days, and the first time you hitch him to a buggy, he will go as you tell him. When he will go well before a carriage, then put on the martingales, and a check, if he does not carry his head to please; by degrees draw his head as you wish to have him carry it, and in a short time it will become a habit that can easily be retained. The time was, and is now, in some places, when every one thought a colt must be bitted; that is, put a great strong bit in his mouth, and draw his head into his breast, and have him throwing himself down, while a cart whip was lacerating his sides, all of which is just the thing to spoil a colt. I say never bit or break a colt, nor burn the hampers.

The terms, man and woman, manly and womanly, in their proper and full import, convey far more than those of gentleman and lady, gentlemanly and ladylike. A true man and a true woman will be gentlemanly and ladylike, and a great deal more besides.—There are men, and there are so-called gentlemen, who have little or nothing that is manly about them.