

## Teachers' Department.

## Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

DECEMBER 5th, 1858.

Subject.—THE WITNESSES OF OUR FAITH IN CHRIST.

For Repeating. For Reading.  
1 John iv. 18-21. | 1 John v. 1-9.

DECEMBER 12th, 1858.

Intended to be committed to memory and recited by all.  
Doctrine.—SANCTIFICATION.—Ezra xxxvi. 25-27; Acts xxvi. 18; 2 The. ii. 13; John xvii. 17-19; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Acts iii. 26; Heb. ix. 13, 14.

## THE QUESTIONER.

## Mental Pictures from the Bible.

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

[No. 74.]

In an ancient place of worship, of great splendour two persons—a labouring man and his wife, enter with a young infant. After the ceremony of dedication has been performed and an act of worship engaged in with great solemnity, an old man comes to the young mother and congratulates her on the possession of her little treasure. He takes the child and makes a solemn statement respecting his future career, and also what shall occur to the mother in consequence. The parents are much surprised by his remarks, when an aged female, who also commands profound respect from those around, approaches, and, in a similar manner, lifts up her eyes to heaven, and expresses her gratitude for what she sees, and then tells the people that their long cherished hopes are soon to be realized.

Key to Bible questions in our last.

40.—In LUKE xv. 10, we read that Jesus said, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

41.—No. The righteous often suffer far more than the wicked.—PSALM lxxiii. 16-20; ECCLES. xii. 14; ACTS xvii. 31; ROMANS ii. 4-11; 2 THESS. i. 6-10; REV. xx. 11-15.

## Little Mabel.

In a prayer meeting in Boston, a middle-aged man rose and said, "I have been impenitent till within a short time, and I will tell you how it came to pass that I am now, as I hope, a disciple of Jesus."

"One Sunday evening, I was lying on the sofa in my parlor. My wife had gone out, and no one was with me but little Mabel, a sweet child about six years old, who was at the time making a visit to us, and who sat by the center-table, amusing herself with pictures. At length, getting tired of them, she came up to the sofa, and began caressing me in her winning, child-like way. 'Uncle,' said she, putting her soft little hand in mine, 'dear uncle, I want you to tell me something about Jesus; mamma always does Sunday nights.'

I was struck by the question, but evaded it, talking of something else. But the little creature would not be put off. Again and again she came back to the same request, 'Uncle, tell me something about Jesus.' Finding I did not comply, she said at last, opening wide her clear, blue eyes, 'Why, you know about Jesus, don't you?'

"That question awakened thoughts and feelings such as I never had known before. I could not sleep that night; the child's wondering words, 'You know about Jesus, don't you?' haunted me through all the long, silent hours. I felt that I did not know about Jesus, that I had not wished to know; and a sense of my ignorance and guilt weighed too heavily upon my soul to be shaken off. I was distressed for days. I read my Bible with an inquiring, anxious heart, till at length I found the blessed Savior, and could say in humility and faith, 'Now I know about Jesus,' that Jesus of whom little Mabel so eagerly wished to hear."

## A Dog Story.

It has always been a belief of mine that animals of the dumb creation think, all arguments to the contrary notwithstanding, and I have recently heard a dog story from some Portsmouth friends, resident in Brooklyn, that has increased my faith in the matter. Some neighbors of theirs have a very fine specimen of a Newfoundland dog, who, if half I heard of him be true, can do almost anything but talk.

Not long since his mistress said to him, "Ponto, you may go out in the front yard and stay half an hour, but don't go outside of the gate." After he had been gone a short time, his well-known knock was heard at the door, and, on being opened, Ponto was discovered, accompanied by a half starved, abject-looking object of his own species, with one of his legs disabled, which he induced to follow him into the front basement, and lie down on a nice soft mat

near the door. He then went into the kitchen, and intimated to Bridget that he wanted his usual forenoon's lunch, which having procured, he took it to his new friend, laid it down before him, and looked on with evident satisfaction while he ate.

As Ponto's mistress did not want a boarder of that description, she told him he must introduce his new friend into the street again, which he pretended at first not to understand, but finally, in a very apologetic way, however, did as he was ordered, assisting his unfortunate companion up two or three steps into the street, and looking after him as he limped on his way, with a sad and troubled countenance. So much for Ponto's character for benevolence. Of his character as a night-watch during the past summer he discovered that the front door had been inadvertently left open. He knew that was not correct, altogether the outside blind door was fastened by a dead latch; so he went to his master's bedroom, waked him up, and would not leave the room until he followed him down stairs and closed the door. He is thought to be worth three star policemen, and a pair of private watchmen in addition.—*Portsmouth Journal*.

## Proving a Congregation.

It is reported to us that one of our young ministers in T——, lately made full proof of his hearers after the following fashion:

Somehow it was, he got a bad start. The impression became general, and then the general impression deepened, before the Conference year was a quarter out, that he could not preach. Pity; but the poor fellow would never make a preacher! After his best efforts, people shook their heads. Before giving up, the thought crossed him—perhaps they were no judges. Such are the hardest to please. He therefore memorized one of Richard Watson's sermons, and preached it off, waiting anxiously for the effect. It did not raise his reputation in the least. The young man meant well, said the critics, but couldn't preach; it was clearer than ever. It was no act of self-denial on his part to tell that it was one of Watson's best.

## Extemporaneous Preaching.

Our Episcopal exchanges are very earnestly advocating the practice of preaching extemporaneously. The exclusive use of the manuscript they consider as a great barrier to success, especially in reaching the masses. The Rev. Dr. Clarkson in a letter in the October number of the *Church Review*, says:

Our clergy, and especially the Western ones, should be able to preach the glorious gospel of our "blessed Lord" at any time, in any company, in any place, without note or book. We ought to have "Professorships of Extemporaneous Preaching" at Gambier, at Nashotah, and Berkeley, and New-York, and all our Theological schools. The young men can be taught, and they ought to learn it. Every pettifogging lawyer in our Courts and Justice Rooms learns, in a few weeks or months, to speak fluently enough; and why cannot educated men, whose theme is the noblest that can occupy human thought, or employ human tongue, learn to speak fluently to immortal men of eternal things?

## The Babe of Heaven.

"Does you love God?"

The question came from a sweet pair of lips. Opposite sat a young gentleman of a striking exterior. The man and the child were travelling in a stage-coach. The latter sat on her mother's knee. Her little face, beautiful beyond description, looked out from a frame of delicate lace-work. For four hours the coach had been toiling on over an unequal road, and the child had been very winning in her little ways, lisping songs, lifting her bright blue eyes often to her mother's face, then falling back in a little, old-fashioned, contented way, into her mother's arms, saying by the mute action, "I am happy here."

For more than an hour the dear babe, scarcely yet entering the rosy threshold of her fifth year, had been answering the smiles of the young man who had been pleased with her beauty. He had nodded his head to her little tunes; he had offered her his pearl-handled penknife to play with, and at last his heart went over to her at every glance. The mild blue eyes, full of the innocence of a holy love and a trusting faith, made his pulses leap with a pure joy, and as the coach rattled on, he began to wish the end of the journey were not so very near.

The child had been sitting for the last fifteen minutes regarding the young man with a glance that seemed almost solemn, neither smiling at his caresses, nor smiling in the dear face that bent above her. A thoughtfulness seemed to spread over the young brow that had never yet been

shadowed by care, and as the coach stopped at the inn door, and the passengers moved uneasily preparatory to leaving, she bent towards the young man, and lisped in her childish voice these words,—

"Does you love God?"

He did not understand, at first, in the confusion, and bent over, nearer—and the voice asked again, clearly, almost eagerly, "Does you love God?" The thoughtful, inquiring eyes meantime beaming into his own.

The young man drew back hastily blushing up to the very roots of the hair. He looked in a sort of confused, abrupt way, at the child, who, frightened at his manner, had hidden her face in her mother's bosom—turned to the coach door—gave another look back, as if he longed to see her face, and then he left the coach.

He hurried to his hotel, but the little voice went with him. There seemed an echo in his heart constantly repeating the question of the child—"Does you love God?"

Several gay young men met him at his hotel. They appeared to have been waiting for him, and welcomed him with mirth that was almost boisterous. They had prepared an elegant supper, and after he had been to his room, escorted him to the table. The full gleam of the gas fell upon the glittering furniture; red wines threw shadows of a lustrous crimson hue athwart the snowy linen—there were mirth, wit, faces lighted with pleasure, every thing to charm the eye and please the palate, but the young man was conscious of a void never experienced before. His heart ached to see the child again, and ever and anon he seemed to hear her words,—

"Does you love God?"

His name was Gilbert. Only twenty-three years of age, he was a good scholar, and esteemed by his friends a genius. Already he had made his mark as a writer, but he had never thought as he thought to-night on the solemn import of that simple question,

"Does you love God?"

It came to him when held the red wine to his lips—it was heard amid the clatter of the billiard balls, the shouts of merry laughter that filled the wide room, everywhere. Whichever way he turned he saw the earnest glance of that blue-eyed child, heard the low voice singing, the low voice laughing, the low voice asking thrilling,

"Does you love God?"

It followed him to his bedside. He had tried to drown it in wine, in song, in careless levity; he strove to sleep it away, but heard it in his dreams.

The next night he met a fashionable friend. He was to take her to some place of pleasure. She was very beautiful in her dazzling robing. The gleam of pearls and the lustrous of silk and lace vied with each other to enhance her loveliness, but even as she came sailing into the room, with smiles upon her young, red lips, and a welcome in her words, there came, too, floating noiseless at her side, the presence of that angel child. The better feelings her innocent presence had awakened were warm yet, and before he knew it, the young man said quickly and earnestly, "Does you love God?"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the young girl, with a start of surprise.

"I was thinking, as you came in, of a lovely child I saw yesterday," he replied. "As I was in the act of leaving the coach, she suddenly looked up and asked me that question."

"And what pray, put it into the child's head? What did you answer?"

"I am ashamed to say I was not prepared with an answer," replied the young man, casting down his eyes.

That night pleasure had no gratification for him. His feet trod languidly the mazes of the dance, his smiles were forced, and more than once it was said of him, "He does not seem himself."

No he was not like the gay, thoughtless self of former years. There was a still pool lying in his bosom, the waters of which had never before been disturbed.

Now a little child had dropped a pebble in, and the vibration was to go on through eternity.

Dust-soiled and travel-weary, a thoughtful man walked through the principal street of a large Western city. As he went on, apparently absorbed in his own meditation, his eye accidentally encountered a face looking down from the window of a handsome house. His whole countenance suddenly changed—he paused an instant—looked eagerly at the window, and in another moment his hand was on the bell-handle. He was ushered into the very room where sat the lady of the house.

"You will pardon my intrusion," he said, "but I could not pass by, after seeing you accidentally at the window. I have never forgotten

you nor your little girl who five years ago in a stage coach put to me the artless question—'Does you love God?' Do you remember?"

"I think I do," said the lady, smiling, "from the circumstance that you seemed so much startled and confused—but my dear child asked almost every person with whom we met, that or similar questions."

"Her innocent face is engraven on my heart," said the young man, with much emotion. "Never, since that day, have I been tempted to do that which my conscience would not sanction, but the earnest, serious gaze with which she regarded me before she asked that question, has come to my mind. Would she remember me, do you think? Absurd, though; of course she would not. But I should remember her, anywhere—under any circumstances. Can I not see her, madam? Is she at home with you? I long to take her in my arms, and hear once more the voice that God has used to draw my heart to Him."

Strange that in his eagerness he did not notice that paling cheek—the quiver of the mother's lips—the sudden placing of her hand against her heart! Strange also that he did not mark the absence of pattering feet, of little, gentle indications that a child's fingers had been busy in the room about him.

Suddenly, as he ceased speaking, there came over him a startling consciousness. He saw the tear-stained cheek turned toward the window; he noticed the garments of sombre hue; he heard the silence reigning within.

"Madam—is the child—"

"She is in heaven," came low and brokenly from the trembling lips.

The young man sank back on his seat, agitated, dumb; sorrowful that he had with so rude a touch torn open the still bleeding wound in that womanly heart.

"These are sad tidings," he said, after a long pause, and his voice was troubled—"dear little angel! she is then speaking to me from the grave."

The mother arose and beckoned him to follow her. Into a little hallowed chamber she went, where in a case were the books the child loved, her Bible, her beautiful rewards, her childish toys.

"There," said the mother, now quite broken down, and sobbing as she spoke, "there is all that is left on earth of precious Nettie."

"No, madam, that is not all that is left; I am a monument of God's mercy, made so through her holy influence. Before she asked me that question on the eventful day, my mind was a chaos of doubt, bewildering and conflicting errors. I had dared to question the existence of an Almighty Creator.—I had defiantly thrown my taunts at Him, who in great forbearance has forgiven me. My influence for evil was unlimited, because men looked up to me and chose me for their leader. I was going the downward path—groping blindly in a great labyrinth of error, and dragging others with me, Madam, by this time I might have been a debauchee, or libertine, a God-defying wretch, but for her unlooked-for question,

"Does you love God?"

"Oh! that voice! that look! that almost infinite sorrow—that divine pity, that through her glanced into my soul. Madam—these tears bear witness that your child left more than precious dust and perishing toys."

Utterly broken down, the strong man wept like a child. All he had said was true—for he held the hearts of men in his hands. In genius he was now one of the strong ones of earth, and all that powerful mind was engaged in spreading the tidings of man's salvation through Jesus Christ.

O! little children do a mighty work.

Reader, in the sweet accents of that babe of heaven, is there not a voice in your heart asking,

"Does you love God?"—W. &amp; R.

—One reason why the world is not reformed is because every man is bent on reforming others, and never thinks of reforming himself.

—How glorious to implant in the mind the love of trees, of flowers, of gardens, of the country! They are the pure sources, in after life, that pour forth a panacea to cure the ills that man is heir to.

A PLEASANT PARTY.—A warning to Proof-readers.—The Edinburgh Evening Courant, of the 7th ult, tells us that, "On Monday Mrs. Bridport invited a party of Friends to a picnic at Eype."

HOW TRUE!—It is not work that kills men, it is worry. Work is healthy, but you can put more on a man than he can bear. It is not the revolutions that destroy the machinery, but the friction. Fear secretes acids; but love and trust are sweet juices.