

Youth's Department.

Bible Lessons.

Sunday, December 22nd, 1861.

Read—MATT. XXV. 14-30: Parable of the Talents. EXODUS XIV. 1-21: Miraculous passage of the Red Sea by the Israelites.

Recite—MATTHEW XXV. 1-4.

Sunday, December 29th, 1861.

Read—MATT. XXV. 31-46: The last Judgment. EXODUS XV. 1-21: Triumphant Song of the Israelites. Recite—MATTHEW XXV. 14, 15.

"Search the Scriptures."

Write down what you suppose to be the answers to the following questions.

101. Name an illustrious prophet whose history is comprised in three words, and to whom was revealed in the very infancy of the world, the awful day of its dissolution.

102. When did two vast armies owe their preservation to the presence of one good man?

Answers to questions given last week:—

99. Ruth. Ch. iv. 17, 22; Matt. i. 5, 17.

100. The prophet Ezekiel; and Mordecai, Esther's uncle. Esth. ii. 6; Ezek. i. 3; 1 Chron. xxiv. 16.

The Old Sailor-parson.

"Thou tellest my wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: Are they not in Thy book?"—PSALM 56: 8.

There died in Cleveland, O., some years ago, an old Campbellite preacher, named Samuel Kidd. He had been known long in that vicinity as a man of retired habits, and withal exceedingly eccentric in his manners. Summer and winter he wore the same black cap on his head, and carried about with him the same thick staff—a stick that must have been nearly equal in bulk to the club of Hercules. He never seemed to notice any one, but kept talking to himself and gesturing as he walked; and ever and anon he would be seen to stoop and pick a pin from the sidewalk, or, so sure as he crossed a piece of greensward, the dandelions that grew in the grass. Such, indeed, was his passion for these humble blossoms that so long as their season lasted, he never returned from his walks without carrying all his buttonholes full of them. The wags of the day used to nickname him "Elder Dandelion."

Being very familiar with the Scriptures, he rarely expressed himself without a quotation from them, and generally, when any one asked him a question, he finished off his reply with a text that would be sure to make his interrogator remember it. Sometimes, it is true, the force of the application depended on a pun, or on the mere drollery of it, but he commonly answered the fool according to his folly, and inquisitive people, who showed a disposition to tease him, for the most part went away with the impression that he had as much wisdom as wit.

One day a fanatic, named Peter Smith, who had figured at camp-meetings as an exhorter, and made no little trouble in several churches where he had intruded himself, accosted the Elder, as was passing in the street, with his usual formula against doctrinal preaching: "The old Israelites in their best days had only one way of thinking. Why were they not always quarrelling and fighting among themselves as these doctrinal churches are?"

"I think," returned the Elder, rather gruffly, "that you must find the reason in the 13th chapter of 1st Samuel: 'Now there was no Smith found throughout all the land of Israel.'"

At another time he was assailed by a certain sectarian who poured forth a tirade of abuse upon "revivals," "sensational preaching" and religious stir, and ended by challenging him to produce an instance out of all Scripture of a strolling evangelist.

"Jesus Christ is the first instance that occurs to me, sir," replied Kidd. "God's church in the world, when He found it, was just like your sect—stagnant as the Dead Sea. What Christ did for it then, His evangelists are trying to do to-day—keep the water of life running in it. Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel. . . . Therefore, behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will send unto him wanderers."

Once a case of scandal occurred in the village where the Elder was stopping, and while the gossip consequent upon it was at its height, a pedler, who had canvassed nearly the whole parish without making a "trade," met him with the question, "Where be all your women-folks in this place?"

"I reckon you'll find them all," answered the eccentric parson, "down at the sewing-society, in the brown farm-house, under the hill. C—P—lost her reputation day before yesterday, and I suppose they're gone to attend its funeral. 'Where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.'"

At another time a Presbyterian divine, not specially distinguished for the fruitfulness of his ministry, took occasion to rally him upon his baptismal opinions.

"Brother Kidd," said he, "it seems a little too much like forcing matters to call you and your denomination the Lord's sheep. You take to the water too kindly, and that isn't the nature of the animal. You're more like ducks; but we don't hear any thing in Scripture about 'the ducks of the house of Israel.' My ducks hear My voice, &c."

"No," replied the Elder, "but I suppose our sect is alluded to in the sixth chapter of Canticles, as one of the particular ornaments of the church: 'A flock of sheep which go up from

the washing where-of every one beareth twins; and there is not one barren one among them.' When my sheep get to be as unproductive as the flocks of some shepherds that I know, it will be time enough to give them another name."

When Parson Kidd died, the following item was found in his will:

"I give and bequeath to Sarah Du Pre, only surviving child of my only daughter and child, Catherine, (now deceased,) my mahogany chest containing my papers, among which are a note of hand for fifty dollars, payable of Israel Jewett, and a sketch of my life, writ by my own hand; and it is my prayer that she will devote the same to the furtherance of the Gospel."

The following is an abridgment of the story, thus quaintly bequeathed:

"I came into this world at Bennington, in the State of Vermont, on Saturday, the 18th of August, 17—. My parents were of the Quaker persuasion and brought me up to love peace and hate evil. The sixteen years of my first remembrance I spent upon my father's farm, gaining strength of body, and, as I believe, correct manner and a discreet mind; but just before I had completed my seventeenth year a disaster happened to me which destroyed my steadiness and altered the whole tenor of my life. On a certain winter's night, when myself and a party of young friends were retiring from a quilting frolic, we were set upon by a pack of wolves. Terror lent wings to our feet, and we ran with all the speed and vigor of youth and health to reach the end of the forest where stood the houses of my father and his neighbors. But we soon found that the murderous brutes were too near us to leave any possibility of escape by flight; our only alternative was to seek the shelter of a tree, and we barely succeeded in securing ourselves among the lower branches of this refuge, before the whole pack were yelling around us. Here, safe for the present, we solaced ourselves with the hope that our friends would soon miss us, and knowing well the peculiar dangers to which we might be exposed, would turn out in search of us. The minutes seemed hours in that terrible place, but we labored to cheat our fears with a show of courage and even of mirth; for we went so far as to mimic the cries of the wolves, and howled back to them with derisive laughter until we were hoarse.

"I had a favorite in the party, named Caroline Mason, and I had stationed myself next to her as if I would save her from death; suddenly the bough on which she rested cracked beneath her weight, and she fell, screaming, into the midst of the hungry beasts below! Convulsive hands were holding on to me, as I shrieked and struggled frantically to plunge after my beloved playmate. It was in vain that I raved and blasphemed. Why had they not saved her? Why did I not save her? and all the time gnashed and crunched the teeth of the wolves at the foot of the tree. Poor Caroline's cries soon ceased, and I knew little more that night till our friends came with guns and lanterns, and scared away the cowardly devils that devoured her. We came down from our hiding-place and I groped with a horrible fascination over the spot from which I had not taken my eyes since the breaking of the fatal limb.

"A few shreds of garments strewn about; a lock or two of long, bright hair; some bones gnawed and trampled in the bloody snow. O God! my beautiful Carrie! The horrors of the hour and the intense cold had so affected all of us that we were unable to stand, and our deliverers almost carried us home in their arms, but home never had any charm for me again. In fact, after that sad night, I believe I did all that could be done by a reckless, wicked youth to make myself unworthy of a home. It was in vain that my father obeyed all my whims with a silent indulgence, and patiently paid all my repeated debts. Good man! he said my mind was affected. It was in vain that my sister strove by her tenderness to win me back to steady habits, and make me forget the single calamity that had turned me into a profligate and an infidel. It was in vain that my mild mother put her hand on my head and said, 'My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of His correction, for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth.'"

"The love of kindred and the love of God I repelled and trampled on alike. I raged vehemently against Providence; I became exceeding wicked.

"Then came the war between England and the United States, about the 'Orders in council' and the impressment outrages, and I ran away and joined the army. It was not my lot to share in any battle during the first year of hostilities.

"After a while, I got a place on a ship of war, and in the course of events, we were sent to France on business for the government. It was summer time and good sailing, and being so near England made us all eager for an adventure with the enemy, accordingly Capt. Allen concluded to cruise a while in the channel, and do a little privateering. We succeeded in taking considerable war-plunder, and for eight or nine weeks, we kept the British shipping in constant apprehension with our eighteen guns and daring crew. No life suited me so well as this. I had longed to be on the sea and get rid of social restraint, and now I had my wish. I would have stayed where I was till I became an old man.

"But, one day, the old sloop-of-war Pelican bore down upon us and we were obliged to fight against heavy odds. The captain was one of the first to fall, then down dropped four gallant seamen-soldiers, till twenty-three were lying on the bloody deck or carried below, and we were forced to haul our colors down. I found myself a prisoner on board a British vessel; my reckless spirit received a check. Submitting myself, however, to circumstances, with as good a grace as I could, I looked for a kind of wild comfort

in the fact that at least, I was to be in a land where every thing was new to me. For the first few months of my prison-life I amused myself with observation, but as things at out me grew familiar, the old uneasiness returned and had not God provided a diversion for me, I know not but that I should have committed suicide.

"There was a little girl about six years old, the daughter of one of my fellow-prisoners, who visited our ward every day, bringing food, flowers and delicacies to her father, and by degrees I had made the child's acquaintance, and came to esteem her quite a favorite. One morning she brought me a bunch of dandelions, and the following dialogue ensued between us:

"You love flowers, don't you, Katy?"
"Yes, sir, and so does father, and so does mother; mother says they are the angels' alphabet, and she makes 'em talk to her?"
"Ah, and who are the angels?"
"The beautiful people that live with God."
"What do the flowers say to your mother when she makes them talk, Katy?"

"We toil not, we spin not,
But every year
In beautiful garments
To you we appear.
No queen in her glories
Were lovely before
The charm of our colors,
The sweets of our store.
Then look, unbelievers,
And say if you can,
Since neither your art
Nor the cunning of man
Could dress these bright beauties,
O who shall you praise,
For work of such wonder,
That woe you to gaze?
'Tis God, the Great Father,
And it He display
Such care for us flow'rets,
That fade in a day,
How shall He not rather,
Your Spirit watch o'er,
And call you to love Him,
Believe and adore."

"Dear child! I looked after her as she went away from me humming that cheerful measure, and there came a strange feeling over me, as if one had visited me from a better world. Then I looked on my dandelions, and thought over the last words of Katy's little hymn. 'What would I not give for her happiness?' I said to myself 'her father in prison, and her mother poor; forced to sell flowers and berries to get a simple living; and yet she is taught to carry in her heart a Christian philosophy that turns her very penury into a paradise!'

"All day and all the night, I was alone with my thoughts and my dandelions, and they were a sermon to me. Thrown upon reflection as I had never been before during my life-time, I heard the voice of God with a distinctness that was new and awful to me. All I heard and all I said told loudly of God. Every corner of my prison was full of God. I flung away Tom Paine and got a Bible, and as I read, I found the light of knowledge, but I did not find the light of peace. So weeks and months wore away, and I read and committed to memory that blessed Book, until, after I had served hostage for nearly two years the war ended, and I was sent home. My father and mother were both dead, and my sister was married, so I suffered my roving spirit to get the better of me again, and for four years I was a sailor on a merchantman. Again the Lord led me to the land of my birth. I converted the little property that had been left to me into money, and came West to farm it and trade on the great lakes.

"One Sabbath I heard a Campbellite minister preach in a log school-house, and the sermon and all the services so powerfully affected me, that I determined to give up all other business and devote myself wholly to laboring in the Gospel. I rose in that little assembly, and with many tears repeated Montgomery's Christian vow:

"People of the living God,
I have sought the world around.
Paths of sin and sorrow trod,
Peace and comfort nowhere found.
Now to you my spirit turns,
Turns, a fugitive unblest,
Brethren, where your altar burns
O receive me into rest."

Here the manuscript ends. The old man's last moments were soothed by the presence of his grand-daughter and a pious nephew. They asked him if he felt that he was almost at home.

"God is near indeed," he said; "yes, He has always been. 'Thou tellest my wanderings; put my tears into Thy bottle—are they not in Thy book?'"

And they engraved those words upon his tombstone, and now in the dark, calm nights, the foliage of a great willow rustles against the slab as if the soul of the good Elder sat there and turned the leaves of the Bible he loved so well.—W. & R.

GOING TO SLEEP.—It is a delicious moment certainly, that of being well nestled in bed, feeling that you shall drop gently to sleep. The good is to come—not past; the limbs have been just tired enough to render the remaining in an posture delightful; the labor of the day is done. A gentle failure of the perceptions comes creeping over one; the spirit of consciousness disengages itself more and more with slow and hushing degrees, like a mother detaching her hand from that of her sleeping child; the mind seems to have a balmy lid closing over it, like the eye: 'tis closing—'tis more closed—'tis closed. The mysterious spirit has gone to take its airy rounds.

A Column for Sunday School Teachers.

NOT ALL OVER WITH HIM.

A young man was fishing from a raft which was floating in deep water. It happened that one of the logs, which should have been fastened with a staple to the chain that bound them all together, was loose; as he stepped upon it, it rolled over, and let him in; the weight of his body opened a passage between the logs, and the slime on their surface caused them to slip from his grasp, and he fell through,—the logs closing over him.

There were but few persons about, but providentially one man saw the accident. Seizing a boat-hook, he ran to the raft, wedged the logs apart, and watching when the body should rise drew out the frightened angler, and placed him in safety. The whole affair had happened so quickly, that little damage was done. After shaking himself, and resting a little, the young fellow was able to walk home without help.

On the following day, feeling far from well, he stayed at home, and then sent a polite note to his preserver, asking that he would visit him at his house. The man readily went. Shaking hands with him, the young man said, "I have sent for you, Mr. —" to tell you plainly the very great obligation I am under to you, and beg that you will let me know in what way most agreeable to yourself I can show my sense of it. You see I do not want to shirk the matter. I am quite sure that but for your prompt help it would have been all over with me.

"I cannot agree to that," said the other.

"Nonsense; I tell you I should have been a dead man in three minutes more."

"Most likely."

"Well then, my good friend, what do you mean by not agreeing with me?"

"I mean that it would not have been all over with you. At length he said, without looking around,—

"Are you a preacher?"

"Yes, and so are you."

"I? I am any thing but that."

"Pardon me; all men preach by their lives and conduct: a good life preaches life, an evil life preaches death; and thousands who may never hear sermons may be led by the preaching of our lives."

"Ah, that is all very true, of course; but the question now is, what can I do for you; let us come to business."

"I am coming to it. I have but one wish in respect to the life I have saved through God's providence—it is that henceforth that life may be given to his service. If you would reward me for the trifling pains I have taken, do so by earnestly seeking your own salvation. Can you promise me that?"

"Well," said the youth, "you are really most unselfish; and I will promise you one thing, at any rate, with all my heart—I will think seriously about it."

"Be it so; I accept that for my reward.—Good morning."

"Well," said the youth to himself, when the good man was gone, "since I am pledged to think of this matter seriously, I may as well begin at once." He took down his Bible, and read—and read and thought day after day. The reading of God's word brought him to his knees. From praying for repentance and faith, he grew in time to bring forth the fruits of the one, and to do the works of the other; and he lived not only to profess the religion of Christ, but to commend it to others by his example.—Cottager.

STUDY YOUR SCHOLARS.

Study your scholars. Study them as members of a class, study them as individuals, study their habits and circumstances, their tempers and weaknesses, their wants and sins. This is perhaps one of the first pieces of advice which I should like to give to the young and inexperienced Sabbath school teacher; and that, not only because I think the duty necessary in itself, but also, because I think it is one too much neglected among us. In preparing our lessons we study our Bibles, study them diligently and carefully; we study our catechism; we study books of reference and books of illustration; but those to whom the lesson is to be taught we study very little, if at all. Of their peculiarities of thought and feeling, of their temptations and trials, we know little if anything. In such a case, how can we expect to succeed—how can we give strength where we know nothing of the weakness, or help, where we know nothing of the want—how can we expect to influence where we know so little of the motives of action, to arouse a conscience whose wounds we do not understand, or to touch a heart to whose feelings we have no key; and how often, in point of fact, do we see the most skillful, most earnest, and devoted Sabbath school teachers fail altogether in these respects—how often do we see a lesson, which seems to us most interesting, touching, and beautiful, fall quite tame and ineffective on the little scholars for whom it was meant?—Scott. S. S. T. Mag.

THE BIBLE IN FORMING CHARACTER.

An English barrister, who was accustomed to train students for the practice of law and who was not himself a religious man was once asked why he put students, from the very first to the study and analysis of the most difficult parts of the sacred Scriptures?

"Because," said he, "there is nothing else like it, in any language, for the development of mind and character."

The pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts; and the greatest art in life is to have as many of them as possible.