

## Youth's Department.

## BIBLE LESSONS.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 17TH, 1862.

Read—JOHN ix. 1-17: The blind man healed.  
DEUT. xiii. 1-5: The punishment of enticers to Idola-  
try.  
Recite—JOHN viii. 28-32.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 24TH, 1862.

Read—JOHN ix. 18-41: The miraculous cure of the  
blind man. DEUT. xiv. What might and might not  
be eaten.  
Recite—JOHN ix. 1-5.

## "SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

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

169. For what purpose was the anointing oil  
used in temple service.  
170. Give examples of Satan using his power to  
inflict bodily suffering.

Answers to questions given last week:—

167. Job. See chap. xxxi. 33.  
168. Myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus,  
cassa and olive oil. See Exod. xxx. 23-25.

For the Christian Messenger.

## Amusement for the thoughtful.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE PUZZLE NO. 8.

Your "likeness" truly, "has been seen,"  
In every-land "where man has been,"  
And those "dark words" by you revealed,  
Where soon made known, also fulfilled:  
Translated by the prophet bold,  
For the heathen King, as we are told,  
When he heard his awful, heavy doom,  
It made him tremble on his throne.  
His conscience wak'd, as from a dream,  
When weighed, the balance kicked the beam,  
Amidst the pomp of eastern state,  
The son of Evil-Merodach.  
While much intoxicated, he,  
His Kingdom must divided be,  
And given to Persians and to Medes,  
While he is slain 'mid his mis-deeds.  
The "FINGERS OF A MAN'S HAND" you were,  
Your writing filled all hearts with fear,  
Your oration then, you did deliver,  
On the banks of great Euphrates' river.  
See Daniel v. 5.

MYSTICAL FIGURES.

SCRIPTURE PUZZLE NO. 9.

For noble deeds I have no will,  
But, one I wrought to show my skill,  
And such a deed was never done,  
By any other 'neath the sun.  
As I was on the rough high-way,  
In which I took delight to stray,  
I saw, unseen, an object fair,  
Of love, and hate, and pity there.  
I stole the object for my lust,  
Although the robbery was just;  
But in the end it proved a bane,  
And gave me naught but biting pain.  
Without repentance or regret,  
I then made restitution quite,  
And this not as my own free choice,  
But led by an unspoken voice.  
Now children tell my name and race,  
In the Good Book you'll find my place.

Yarmouth.

DALETH.

## So many years lost.

There is something very touching in the state-  
ment, made by a clergyman, who recently had  
two female applicants for admission into the  
communion of the church he served. One was  
a girl of sixteen years, from the Sabbath school;  
the other a sober, matronly lady of about sixty  
years. As this young girl was relating the ex-  
perience of her heart, her belief in her acceptance  
with the dear Saviour, and as she rehearsed the  
story of Christ's love and suffering, the lady  
was observed weeping, profusely weeping.  
When the maiden had finished her story, the  
lady could not refrain from approaching her;  
and bending over her, she greeted her with an  
affectionate kiss, saying, as she did it, "Oh! can  
I ever forgive myself that I have lived so long  
without loving Christ when I might have begun  
as young as you?" What self-reproach and bitter  
reflections will be saved to our children, if  
the grace of God should convert them in early  
years.

## The Fortunes.

Good Fortune is a fickle fair;  
From place to place she loves to stray;  
Back from your brow she sweeps your hair,  
Kisses you quick, and springs away.

But Dame Misfortune, sad and slow,  
Comes to your house, and down she sits;  
She says she's in no haste to go,  
She stays beside your bed and knits.

## The cause at Rockford.—A Sketch.

BY MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

We had to choose a new pastor at Rockford. The old one had left us. We had held a tea-meeting and presented him with a purse of gold, and had bidden him "Farewell" with some regrets. For the first time for many years, we discovered that we loved and esteemed the shepherd who had gone in and out amongst us, ministering in holy things. To the great surprise of some of us, tears came into our eyes during that last meeting. He seemed surprised too. When it was too late, we urged him to stay. "We are but few, we are not rich; but still there is a work to do amongst us, and souls are of as much importance at Rockford as anywhere else."

Yes, he knew and felt that, and had done so, during the whole of his stay; but his labours had not been so blessed as he had wished. On the whole he had felt very discouraged. True, we had all treated him kindly, and in some respects he had been happy in our midst. He thanked us for all from his heart. But there seemed some barrier here, some hindrance to success which he did not quite understand, which he could not at all overcome. So he believed he was doing right, in accepting the oversight of a church twice as large in a distant town, which had given him a thoughtfully unanimous invitation.

The day after the meeting we saw him taking his old walks; paying them a farewell visit. His step was slower, and his face very much sadder than usual. He walked through the beaten path of our old wood, over the fields, across the down, along by the sea, which we knew he had grown to love very much—back to his house, where he had earnest conversation with some of us, not to say bitter thoughts of a few others, and where he had spent agonizing hours in private prayer, wrestling as Jacob of old for the blessing, which in his case tarried and tarried until he grew weary of waiting. No wonder that an unusual quiver played around his lips, an unusual moisture came into his eyes, as he looked probably for the last time upon the familiar scenes.

And then the man of God departed. We surrounded the carriage door; and as we shouted "God blessed you, sir,"—he smiled and returned our wishes—kindly and gently, as if he had no account against us.

So now there had come to us the necessity of fulfilling that important duty—the selection of a minister. The deacons knew of several open to an engagement. They called a church meeting and told us what they knew about each, and helped us to select one or two, who could at least supply our pulpit for a few Sundays.

First came Mr. Ellis. He was a plain, outspoken, earnest man. Very little refinement about him, no politeness—that is, what "society" would call politeness, no grand words, no eloquent language.

Now the people at Rockford—albeit they were small in more respects than one—were very particular. They talked over Mr. Ellis, and decided that he would not do. True, he preached the gospel—there was no denying that—but then, he had not quoted a single line of poetry in all his sermons put together!!

Some objections, chiefly of this kind, were raised against each preacher who during two months broke to us the bread of life. At length however, some of the deacons spoke very decidedly in favour of one, superior in many respects to the others—of good preaching ability and sound scriptural views. So we agreed to invite him into our midst "for three probationary months, with a view to the ultimate pastorate." To our great amazement and indignation, our invitation was "declined with thanks." And when we begged to know the reason, the answer was—"The more I see of the people of Rockford, the more I am convinced that they are not likely to be great helps to their minister."

What could he mean? We had a Sunday-school, and worked constantly in it. Also, we had maternal, missionary, and other meetings. The brethren in their public prayers, always prayed for the minister. Why were not we as good "helps" as any others?

He declined giving any further explanation. We said a few things about that man which would not look altogether well in print! But perhaps it was excusable, as the church at Rockford had, on the whole, the organ of "love of approbation" very full developed.

The deacons scarcely knew to whom to apply now. They told us, however, that they had heard of one, a young man, a student, who might supply us for a few Sundays. Some remarks were made about the propriety of being preached to by "a boy," but only amongst the older members; the others rather liked the idea, and so we agreed to invite him for the next Lord's day.

## CHAPTER II.

It was a bright spring morning, the newborn flowers looked very beautiful, and the young leaves whispered lovingly as we passed beneath their shade. It was a real Sabbath day—so calm so happy, so restful—one of those days which sometimes help to bring us good and pure thoughts in spite of ourselves; and we who had been about our business all the week might well have hastened onward with the thought—"There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God."

—It flashed into some hearts, quickened some steps; but many of our number not having yet been chastened and tried, not having learnt many of affliction's lessons, had our thoughts, alas! too full of other things. With the elasticity of youth, the independence of health, we passed up the hill to the chapel, light words on our lips, mirthful smiles upon our faces.

The hymn was announced, and all eyes turned to the vestry door, whence issued Mr. David Whithers, the young minister, whom with some curiosity we had expected.

Nothing particularly striking in his looks; his face was grave and his manner serious; but so young—he looked only about eighteen, and many a way-worn traveller, hungering after the bread of life, was disappointed. Those who wanted something experimental, something below the surface, something to *live on*, sighed. Yet I know, after the first surprise had passed off, more than one earnest prayer arose for the young man, that we, God's waiting people, might get a crumb of blessing, even through him.

His prayer, too, asked the same so fervently—it was a prayer that seemed to go straight up through the skies and reach the ear, nay, the very heart of the Infinite. It besought, it agonised for a blessing. It was fall of the humble boldness which catches the Father with up-heaving arms and cries, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." It asked for just the blessings we needed the most. We, thoughtless frivolous inhabitants of Rockford, felt our spirits enchained, drawn completely from the world, going up with his spirit in eager supplication. There were few—perhaps that morning not any—careless hearts beneath the bowed heads. Our prayers—they went up as the prayers of one man.

"All my springs are in Thee."  
A strange movement went through the congregation, a sort of corroborating breath. A loving grateful thought cleft the air—"All my springs are in Thee."

No curiosity now; no thought of the youth of the speaker. *The Spirit of the Lord was upon us*; it was almost like a second Pentecost. We settled ourselves and listened, humbly, patiently, to hear what God the Lord would say. It was a sermon never to be forgotten. We all remembered it. We remember it still, though we have heard so many since. We should never forget it. The strangeness of its adaptability struck us most of all. "It was exactly suited to my case"—"and mine"—"and mine"—said the hearers afterwards.

On an ordinary occasion we should have waited to be introduced to the preacher, or at least to shake hands with him as he passed; we should have stood about in groups, or walked home in companies, and talked about him, of his sermon, his delivery, and little peculiarities he might have had; but now, silently, with subdued hearts melted into contrition, or holding sweet intercourse with the unseen Saviour, we sought our homes, repaired to our chambers, caring for nothing but our souls' interests.

Thus it is when the Spirit of the Lord moves upon us. Dear reader, have you experienced this? If so, you have been able to see then the fearful distance at which on other days you keep from Christ—what a half-Christian you are in the main.

Some of us felt it that morning more deeply than words of mine may say. We had to bend very low before him who had thus shown us our hearts. The solemnity did not wear off. When families met to partake of the mid-day meal there was no light chat, but earnest tearful eyes looked into each other. The awakening made us unselfish. A brother, a sister, who sat opposite to us at table—had he found the Lord was she sitting at the feet of Jesus? Eternity seemed to be terribly near, and our love for the dear ones God had given to our hearts grew more intense as the awful fear of their insecurity overcame us.

So we spoke to our neighbours, urging them to come to the evening service; not because of the eloquence of the young preacher, but because we believed it would be a "good time for their souls, because we felt sure the Holy Spirit was at work among us."

At the close of the sermon—a sermon which seemed not man's word, but the very voice of God—Mr. Whithers spoke to us of the revival which had just begun in Ireland, and had even reached to some parts of England, and then he gave out that hymn which has since been the language of many a heart:—

"Lord, I hear of showers of blessing,  
Thou art scattering full and free;  
Showers the thirsty land refreshing;  
Let some droppings fall on me,  
Even me.

Pass me not, O God our Father,  
Sinful though my heart may be;  
Thou might'st leave me but, the rather,  
Let thy mercy light on me,  
Even me.

Pass me not, thy lost one bringing;  
Let me live and cling to thee;  
While the streams of life are springing,  
Blessing others, O bless me,  
Even me."

"Even me!" God heard the prayer as it welled up from contrite eager hearts, and answered it. A glorious revival was begun in our very midst. We had a prayer-meeting that night. There was no noise, no excitement, no shouting and sobbing; but there were silent tears, fervid inward cries. And from the house of God we went on our way rejoicing.

One man uttered a thanksgiving from his over-full heart as he entered his house; it was John Goff. He had never been inside of our chapel before; but he had found the Pearl of great price there.

LABOR is of noble birth; but prayer is the daughter of Heaven. Labor has a place near the throne, but prayer touches the golden sceptre. Labor, Martha-like, is busy with much serving, but prayer sits with Mary at the feet of Jesus!

## The Sailor and the Convict.

One morning, the throng which was gazing at the ship, witnessed an accident.

The crew were engaged in furling sail. The topman, whose duty it was to take in the star-board upper corner of the main topsail, lost his balance. He was seen tottering; the dense throng assembled on the wharf of the Arsenal uttered a cry, the man's head overbalanced his body, and he whirled over the yard, his arms outstretched toward the deep; as he went over, he grasped the man-ropes, first with one hand and then with the other, and hung suspended in that manner. The sea lay far below him at a giddy depth. The shock of his fall had given to the man-ropes a violent swinging motion, and the poor fellow hung dangling to and fro at the end of this line, like a stone in a sling.

To go to his aid was to run a frightful risk. None of the crew, who were all fishermen of the coast recently taken into service, dared attempt it. In the meantime, the poor topman was becoming exhausted; his agony could be seen in his increasing weakness could be detected in the movements of all his limbs. His arms twisted about in horrible contortions.—Every attempt he made to reascend only increased the oscillations of the manropes. He did not cry out, for fear of losing his strength. All were now looking forward to the moment when he should let go of the rope, and at instants, all turned their heads away that they might not see him fall. There are moments when a rope's end, a pole, the branch of a tree, is life itself, and it is a frightful thing to see a living being lose his hold upon it, and fall like a ripe fruit. Suddenly a man was discovered clambering up the rigging with the agility of a wild-cat.—This man was clad in red—it was a convict for life. As he reached the round top, a gust of wind blew off his cap, and revealed a head entirely white; it was not a young man.

It fact, one of the convicts employed on board in some prison task, had at the first alarm run to the officer of the watch, and amid the confusion and hesitation of the crew, while all the sailors trembled and shrank back, had asked permission to save the topman's life at a risk of own. A sign of assent being given, with one blow of a hammer he broke the chain riveted to the iron ring at his ankle, then took a rope in his hand, and flung himself into the shrouds.—Nobody, at the moment, noticed with what ease the chain was broken. It was only some time afterward that anybody remember it.

In a twinkling, he was upon the yard. He paused a few seconds, and seemed to measure it with his glance. Those seconds, during which the wind swayed the sailor to and fro at the end of the rope, seemed ages to the lookers-on. At length the convict raised his eyes to heaven, and took a step forward. The crowd drew a long breath. He was seen to run along the yard. On reaching its extreme tip, he fastened one end of the rope, and then there was an inexpressible sensation of terror; instead of one man, two were seen dangling at that giddy height.

You would have said it was a spider seizing a fly; only, in this case, the spider was bringing life, not death. Ten thousand eyes were fixed upon the group. Not a cry, not a word was uttered; the same emotion contracted every brow. Every man held his breath, as if afraid to add the least whisper to the wind which was swaying the two unfortunate men.

However, the convict had, at length, managed to make his way down to the seaman. It was time; one minute more, and the man, exhausted and despairing, would have fallen into the deep. The convict firmly secured him to the rope, to which he clung with one hand while he worked with the other. Finally, he was seen reascending to the yard, and hauling the sailor after him; he supported him there for an instant, to let him recover his strength, and then, lifting him in his arms, arried him, as he walked along the yard, to the cross-trees, and from there to the round-top, where he left him in the hands of his messmates.

Then the throng applauded; old galley sergeants wept; women hugged each other on the wharves; and on all sides, voices were heard exclaiming, with a sort of tenderly subdued enthusiasm: "This man must be pardoned!"

He, however, had made it a point of duty to descend again immediately, and go back to his work. In order to arrive more quickly, he slid down the rigging, and started to run along a lower yard. All eyes were following him.—There was a certain moment when every one felt alarmed; whether it was that he felt fatigued, or because his head swam, people thought they saw him hesitate and stagger. Suddenly, the throng uttered a thrilling out-cry; the convict had fallen into the sea.

The fall was perilous. The frigate *Algeiras* was moored close to the *Ocion*, and the poor convict had plunged between the two ships.—It was feared that he would be drawn under one or the other. Four men sprang, at once, into a boat. The people cheered them on, and anxiety again took possession of all minds. The man had not again risen to the surface. He had disappeared in the sea, without making even a ripple, as though he had fallen into a cask of oil. They sounded and dragged the place. It was in vain. The search was continued until night, but not even the body was found.

The next morning, the *Toulon Journal* published the following lines—"November 17, 1823. Yesterday, a convict at work on board of the *Orion*, on his return from rescuing a sailor, fell into the sea, and was drowned. His body was not recovered. It is presumed that it has been caught under the piles at the pier-head of the Arsenal. This man was registered by the number 9430, and his name was Jean Valjean."—*Victor Hugo's new work.*