

Month's Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

SUNDAY, APRIL 13TH, 1862.

Read—JOHN ii. 1-25: Christ's first miracle. DEUT. i. 1-21: Moses' repetition of God's promises. Recite—JOHN i. 43-46.

SUNDAY, APRIL 20TH, 1862.

Read—JOHN iii. 1-18: Christ's conversation with Nicodemus. DEUT. i. 22-46: Moses' speech continued. Recite—JOHN ii. 13-17.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

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

133. Explain how it came to pass that the oldest man died before his father. 134. Name a good man who could not be tempted by the sinful example of a whole world, yet began the example of a new sin of his own.

Answers to questions given last week:—

131. The modesty of Elihu, and the deference which Job said was paid to him in his prosperity.—Job xxix. 7-13; xxxii. 4. 132. Solomon; who sent caravans to Egypt for linen, yarn, horses, and chariots, and ships to Ophir for gold and other articles of luxury. 1 Kings ix. 23; x. 28.

"Amusement for the thoughtful."

[We have received several correct answers to the Riddle in the C. Messenger of March 26th, each of them bearing marks of careful thought and acquaintance with the Bible. We should be glad to give our readers the pleasure of reading them all, but as that would occupy too much of our space, we have concluded to insert the two following, which our young readers will welcome, and for which they will doubtless join us in thanking the writers.—Ed. C. M.]

For the Christian Messenger.

ANSWER TO RIDDLE IN C. M. MARCH 26TH.

I come to commiserate, Your blind one and desolate. Though guileless indeed And free from all sin, I clearly perceive The straits he was in. No mind, true, he had, Though a fine-looking lad. His birth-place and home, To himself never known. As for his brother and father, I believe he had neither. Yet no doubt it is true, He was near to a Jew. As will better appear, When his name you shall hear. Saul's daughter nursed him, And Saul himself cursed him. But Saul he ne'er feared, Nor Saul's daughter rever'd. And though it is true, He was helpless indeed, Yet David he saved. Through his sponsor's intrigue. The name that she gave him, Doubtless was David. The place that she gave him Was doubtless her bed. He dwelt in a palace, But a crown did ne'er wear. And though hunted by malice, King David's did spare. Now you talk of his sponsor As being a monster, Though she watched round his bed With diligent care, And bolstered his head With a pillow of hair. How strange it may seem: But it is not a dream. There is truth in this history, Though great be the mystery. He was not a man, Yet solve it I can. So his name I will tell, Though not very well. And to find out his lineage, You must think of an IMAGE.

See 1 SAMUEL XIX. 13.

New Minas.

R. S. M.

For the Christian Messenger.

Riddles.

Solving enigmas and riddles has been a favourite exercise of boys and girls, little and big, from the earliest ages. It forms a very innocent amusement, and is at the same time a profitable exercise of the mental faculties. In a good riddle something is described. Various particulars are given, as blindly as possible, some things being often thrown in, merely for the promotion of blindness, or, in other words, for the mere purpose of throwing sand in the eyes. Solving the riddle must not be guessing but reasoning.

These remarks have been suggested by the ingenious riddle given in the last week's Messenger. Having solved it, I have thought that an exhibition of the mental process by which the certainty of the conclusion was arrived at, might be beneficial to the youthful readers of the Messenger.

First, I translate the poetry into plain prose.

I find the following particulars prominently set forth:

- 1. It was without life. 2. It had its origin among heathen. 3. It had been worshipped. 4. It was in a palace. 5. A king's daughter dressed it, named it, watched it, but had no affection for it. 6. It was taken for what it was not, and deceived somebody. 7. It disconcerted a plot. 8. It saved the life of a warrior. 9. It took the place of a king. 10. It long ago turned to dust.

Now it may be assumed that some of these particulars will be rather blinder than they should be, and that in others the covering will be too thin, and the description too clear for concealment.

I seize upon the last idea; "it turned to dust." I say gold turns to dust. But will this meet all the cases? It is worshipped. It does almost everything in general; but I cannot recollect cases in Scripture history where it did these things in particular. I fix upon statement No. 5: "A king's daughter watched it tremblingly." Now I know that "kings' daughters" occupy but a small space in the Bible. But two or three are mentioned. I begin with Saul's, the first I can think of. A good deal is said of Michal who was married to David.—Now I have it. She took an image and placed it in his bed, and said it was David, "the name dearest to her," she covered it, watched it, but had no affection for it. I apply every particular. It meets them all. I have no doubt that that is the answer. See 1 Samuel xix. 13.

Having solved the riddle so satisfactorily to myself at least, I will give another one on Bible history, which may be new to some of your young readers.

ONE OF THE LARGER CHILDREN.

Another Riddle.

"We left our little ones at home, And whither went we did not know, We for the church of God did roam, And lost our lives in doing so. We walked a straight and narrow road, With all the wicked full in view, We lived to man, we died to God, Yet of his worship nothing knew."

April 2nd.

[We give two weeks again for our young friends to solve "Another Riddle."]

The Library of the American Bible Union.

The scarcity of primitive editions of the Scriptures, in this country, has been often the subject of comment and regret among theologians. In Europe they command sufficient reverence to prevent their transmission or sale to any other land. During the last century the connoisseurs in antiques, ambitious students, polemic professors, and infidels even, sought the Biblical parchments of primitive Christianity and the tomes of the days of the Reformation—eager alike to achieve fame by their contradictory or confirmatory evidence furnished by the text and deduced by analogy. This competition for their possession has raised them a thousand-fold in value, and rendered it almost impossible to obtain an early edition. In the absence of interpretative revelation, these old parchments have been made the arbiters of doubtful passages, and, to many, have been the silent Sanhedrims of the Christian dispensation.

The American Bible Union of New York, the only body in the world organized to effect a Revision of the Scriptures in all the languages of the earth, has, however, fallen on a rich placer of Biblical lore, connecting by complete succession, twenty centuries, ready to declare against innovation, or the removal of one jot or tittle of the word of God. This portion of their library was purchased some years since at the auction of a celebrated collector on the continent of Europe, whose family had been, for nearly a century, gathering them.

The Library is divided into two departments, and is located in the spacious suite of rooms over the porch of the First Baptist Church, Broome Street. It is here the revisers labor, and send forth preparatory editions of the Gospels, the Epistles, or some one of the books of the Old Testament, which are subjected to a scholastic examination before their final adoption.

The first department of the Library is located in a chamber which is exclusively devoted to the criticism of the varied materials of revision, with a view of determining the original Greek text. The shelving, extending in triple rows around the apartment, contains manuscript versions of the Scriptures from the second to the ninth century, each, in itself, a mammoth volume, illustrating the patience and industry of the early scribes. Fac-similes and printed copies of many ancient versions also abound. In these the clear, square, almost capitalized letters of the classic Greek, as distinguished from the chirography of modern times, is alone visible. On a large centre table are the voluminous works of the early Christian fathers, containing quotations from the original Scriptures, which are jointly consulted whenever the standard Greek text becomes doubtful or contradictory. What is inspired is thus determined by corroborative analogy, and its relative agreement with those writings universally admitted to be canonical.

The second chamber is devoted to the philology of the New Testament, and comprises all the leading copies of the Scriptures, beginning with the first printed edition—the Complutensian, issued in 1514 in Spain, the Hebrew, Greek

and four modern languages—and closing with that of Tregelles, printed in England two years ago. On one long and deep shelf are a series of modern translations for the learned, in the tongues of Europe, including the early English versions, from that of Wickliffe in 1380, to King James' in 1611. Here may be seen the "Breeches Bible" of 1561, the Bishops' Bible, from which the present authorized version was mainly taken, and which was published in 1568, Cranmer's Bible, the Book of Psalms, which is still used in the Liturgy of the Episcopal Church, Tyndale's, Wickliffe's, Coverdale's, and the Geneva Bibles, and Thompson's translation of Beza's New Testament. The unanimity of many of these versions is striking when contrasted with the more modern editions. So popular was Cranmer's translation of the Psalms that in the first edition of the King James' version it was placed in parallel columns with the common translation of that book.

Besides these, the Library abounds in rare old theological works, commentaries, criticisms, speculations, manuscripts filled with descriptions of the ancient customs and geography of the East, capable of casting light upon the figurative language of Holy Writ, and of which they have often become the incontrovertible interpreters.

Whatever may be the result of the Revision movement inaugurated by the Bible Union, the literary materials for the work they have undertaken, are as ample and complete as have ever before been within the reach of Biblical scholars. No higher treat could be offered to the student of theology, or of ancient literature, than a visit to this large collection of rare manuscripts and ancient books.—N. Y. Evening Express, March 15, 1862.

Religion a Business.

The other day we spoke in commendation of an active Christian brother, to one who was willing to take things in an easy, dog-trot way.—"Oh! yes," was the answer, "he makes a business of it."

That was just it. Here was the secret of his Christian influence. Religion was with him a "business." He was not unmindful of certain "promises to pay," such as, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Nor were his calculations based on any Pelagian "tables of interest." He "went into it" because he liked it, or in better words he had a love for his calling. Thus he "invested his stock" such as cannot depreciate, for he laid up "treasure in heaven."

But he made a business of it. Now it is to be remarked of such, that though often the humblest of men there is a spice of shrewdness in their dealings. None are more watchful for opportunities, hence often creating surprise, because often "catching men with guile."

"Why, it beats all, you can't escape him!" says the poor sinner, whose heart has been softened by his personal appeals.

We happen to know a good old elder who has this trait of making a business of his religion.—He bethought himself one day of an aged sinner "I'll go straight off and see him. It's high time he were come to Christ, for death will soon come to him." So with business promptness, off he went, and met the old man on the road. "Ah! neighbour C——, I was going to your house to see you, to speak with you about your soul." "Why, Mr. V——, this is strange; you know I am not superstitious. But I started for the village, resolved to go by the way of the avenue; and despite myself, I came this way after all.—Now, had I gone the way I intended, I should have been out of your reach." And so the good elder caught this hoary sinner, and set about recruiting him for the kingdom.

"He made a business of religion." How Christ-like! It is the true imitation of Jesus. "Wist ye not I must be about my Father's business."—Brit. Mess.

In Jesus.

At a boys' prayer-meeting, which I conducted some time ago, I requested that all who felt that they were really happy should hold up their hands. One hand only was held up. The owner of that hand was a stout, strong lad, about seventeen, dressed in coarse clothes, and blackened from head to foot by the effects of his daily toil, like a chimney sweep; his appearance told rather of hard work and privation, than of happiness; yet when I made my request, without a moment's hesitation, and with a bright, confident smile on his face, up went his hand.

"What makes you happy?" I said. The answer was given in a deep, steady voice expressive of a mind entirely and satisfactorily convinced of the truth of its conclusions—"CHRIST!"

The poor, uneducated lad, had discovered experimentally the solution of that important problem, which has puzzled so many wise heads since the creation of the world, "Where is happiness to be found?" He had found it in the only place in the universe where it can be found—in "Christ."

I have watched the lad closely, and believe his assertion to be true. He is happy, and it is his childlike faith in Christ that makes him so. He can say—

"Christ is my light, my life, my care, My blessed hope, my heavenly prize; Dearer than all possessions are, Chief of ten thousand in my eyes."

Reason's arm is too short to reach the jewel of assurance. This pearl of price is put into no hand but that hand of faith that reaches from earth to heaven.

Agriculture, &c.

For the Christian Messenger.

Information wanted about Colts.

MR. EDITOR,—

As the breeding and raising of colts is a question of some interest to many of your readers, I take the liberty of sending you two or three questions with the hope that some one who has had experience in the matter, will, through your columns, furnish some information to myself and other young farmers:

- 1. How old should a colt be before being weaned? 2. Is it best, on weaning a colt, to feed it on hay or roots? or both combined, the first and second winters? 3. Is it better to keep a mare, having a colt, in good flesh by oats and meal, or to feed her exclusively on hay, or on hay and roots combined?

Yours, JUVENIS.

WEEDS IN FIELDS.

Some of our farmers are frequently complaining of the weeds that spring up in their fields after the usual time of hoeing, etc.; and some are so much in fear of them that they go through their corn and potato fields and pull up, hand by hand, what the hoe did not properly notice. One reason for this extra labor is a desire to destroy the seeds of the weeds, so that none will appear next year.

But men of experience know that if every weed is pulled up and burnt it will make but little difference in the growth of another season. Most fields are full of the seeds of weeds. Some vegetate this year and some next year. We can hardly afford to pull up field weeds by hand where a plough can pass freely.

When a field is permitted to lie fallow in order to give it rest, and improve the soil, we prefer to see a large growth of weeds on it, for then the plough has something to bury and turn to manure. We sow oats, or buckwheat, on poor soils for the very purpose of turning them under to enrich the land. Weeds among the oats and wheat answer the same purpose; the more the better.

Where the plough is not obstructed by stones or stumps there need be no trouble about weeds—for they may be all buried by a good ploughman, in case he has learned how to sweep them down flat by means of some small and pliant bushes attached to the ear of his plough.

When a real farmer buys land, he prefers to see it covered with weeds rather than to see no rank weeds, I can easily make it bear grain or grass. A good plough will bury the whole growth of weeds, seeds and all, so completely that none will be seen the next year. Harrow the furrows well, mixing in a little fine manure, and sow some grass seed, to be tured with a brush harrow, and you will not know, next year, that any weeds were in the land.

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THE HAIR.

As to men, we say, when the hair begins to fall out, the best plan is to have it cut short, give it a good brushing with a moderately stiff brush, while the hair is dry, then wash it well with warm soap suds, then rub into the scalp, about the roots of the hair, a little bay rum, brandy, or camphor water. Do these things twice a month—the brushing of the scalp may be profitably done twice a week. Damp the hair with water every time the toilet is made.—Nothing ever made is better for the hair than pure soft water, if the hair is kept clean in the way we have named. The use of oils, of pomatums, or grease of any kind, is ruinous to the hair of man or woman. We consider it a filthy practice, almost universal though it be, for it gathers dust and dirt, and soils whatever it touches. Nothing but soft water should ever be allowed on the heads of children. It is a different practice that robs our women of their most beautiful ornament long before their prime; the hair of our daughters should be kept within two inches, until their twelfth year.—Hall's Journal of Health.

EFFECT OF MUSIC ON THE SICK.

The effect of music upon the sick has been scarcely at all noticed. In fact, its expensiveness as it is now, makes any general application of it out of the question. I will only remark here, that wind instruments, capable of continuous sound, have generally a beneficial effect—while the piano-forte, with such instruments as have no continuity of sound, has just the reverse. The finest piano forte playing will damage the sick, while an air alike "Home Sweet Home," on the most ordinary grinding organ, will sensibly soothe them—and this quite independent of association. [Florence Nightingale.]

HEALTHINESS OF ROOM PLANTS.

The editor of the Horticulturist, in an article on Room Plants, says, "It has been objected by some that it is unhealthy to keep plants in rooms; but their arguments lack coherence and force, and we are compelled to record our experience against the position. We believe them, on the contrary, to be conducive to health, not only by their soothing and cheering influence on the mind, but as purifiers of the air, so that all may indulge their tastes without the least apprehension of injury to their health."