

YOUTH'S DEPARTMENT.

BIBLE LESSONS.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21ST, 1863.

Read—ACTS xxii. 1-16: Paul's defence before the Jews. JUDGES xviii. 14-21: The Danites carry off Micah's images. Recite—ACTS xxi. 20, 21.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28TH, 1863.

Read—ACTS xxii. 17-30: Paul brought before the Jewish Council. RUTH i. The death of Naomi's husband and sons. Recite—ACTS xxii. 14-16.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

Write down what you suppose to be the answer to the following question.

49. What was the earliest large building of which we have any record in Scripture, where was it situated, and in the territory of what modern nation was its site.

Answer to question given last week:—

48. Achan and Jonathan. Joshua vii. 14. 1 Sam. xiv. 37-43.

The angel's treasure.

BY THE REV. JOHN TODD, D. D.

It was midnight when the angel of light sprang from the earth to go upward. There were sobbings and groans as he left, for he came out of a hall-lighted chamber. Upward and upward he flew, and soon soared out of earth's night. Then he saw the sun before him. Onward and onward he flew, leaving the planet Venus on the right hand, and then Mars, and Saturn, and Jupiter, and the great Sun himself where left behind—far behind. Still upward he bent his flight, through the milky way into the vast regions of space, passing worlds and systems of worlds—straight upward and onward. At length he met a fellow-angel on his way to a distant part of God's creation, so distant that it would take many thousands of our years to reach it. The beautiful and noble beings paused to greet each other.

"Whither bound, my friend?" "To that far-off world never yet passed by angels' feet."

"How long have you been in the Presence since your last great work?"

"About two thousand years, yet they seem only a few hours. Time with us is hardly worth mentioning. I may now be absent many thousand years; but they are nothing—a mere drop dipped out of eternity. What have you there so carefully folded up, and carried in your bosom so tenderly?"

"A jewel from earth."

"Earth! Earth! O how much I have heard of that little world since the Son, who is on the throne, went there to do his great work. I have never yet had the opportunity to visit it; but I know all its history; and I have the promise that I shall go there some day before it is burned up and destroyed. Perhaps I may be sent on some errand of great mercy! I have seen multitudes who were created there, who came up to live with us in heaven. I have heard many songs, but none so loud or so sweet as theirs. They sing of redeeming love. How they sympathize with all that is done in their world! But I will not hinder you, nor will I inquire further as to your precious charge. Farewell!"

"Farewell, noble one! May every blessing attend you!"

So they separated. Then upward still darted the angel, straight towards the heaven of heavens. As he entered the golden gates, all made way for him, for they saw that he had brought something very precious. No one stayed him to ask a question. Through the ranks of glorious ones he passed, till he stood before the great white throne, where was light, greater than a thousand suns would emit. As he bowed in awe and love, a voice came forth, "Good servant, hast thou done thine errand?" Carefully and gently the angel took from his bosom a beautiful thing. It seemed lighter than air, sweeter than the breath of morning, and seemed to float, like music. The everlasting arms were stretched out to receive it. It was the soul of a little child!

"Suffer it to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

The beautiful little thing uttered no sound, but it seemed to thrill with joy unutterable. The ten thousand voices broke forth into songs of praise, and all the harps of heaven seemed to awake, and the daughters of music came forth from every quarter, and uttered his praise. For through all the courts the tidings spread that another jewel had come to shine in the eternal crown of Christ.

On earth there was a funeral. That night the mother dreamed that her little one was with her, and stretched out her arms to take it, and it was not there, as she awoke in tears. The little coffin held the beautiful body. Friends had put white flowers in the waken hands, as they lay folded on its bosom. The whole house was in deep mourning, for the sunbeam had been quenched. The mother sobbed and kissed the cold face of her child, and called it dead. And she thought of it as dead. She could not realize that Christ could love her child more than she did; or that anybody could take care of it as she could; or that any other world would be as good a place to educate and train it as this; or that any bosom could shield it as could hers; or that it was far better off than to be here. Will she ever meet it again? Will she know it among the angels of day when she next sees it? Will

it have anything about it by which any one would know that it was earth-born? Will it be her child to fondle and love? Who can tell? Ah! mother, if you are a Christian, when you come to see as you are seen, and to know as you are known, you will see and feel that this removal of your child was all right, and just as you are glad to have it. Dry up your tears, then, and trust all to the wisdom and goodness of your blessed Redeemer.—Sunday School Times.

Mark Marks goes to Church.

Mark Marks says he went to church yesterday for the first time in many Sabbaths; after service was out, stood upon the porch as the crowd passed out, to see the styles, as he declares that what half the people leave their houses on Sunday for. And while he stood there, he tells us, the conversation of those passing him was exceedingly interesting, when put together as he heard it. One person would pass him conversing, and he would hear a portion of what was said, and another would come along talking about something else, a part of which caught his ear, and so on. And this, says Marks, is the way it strung out: "Very good sermon, Mrs.—." "Some sort of red stuff trimmed with narrow blue braid." "No, I didn't like it one bit; 'twas cut too full around the shoulders." "Didn't you see him? He sat in Mr.—'s pew." "Pshaw! Mrs. D.—had one of them last fall; it's old style."

"What a horrid looking nose he's got; I thought Fanny said he was good-looking." "You don't say so. Have you got an invitation?" "Yes, he is a very logical preacher." "Did you notice that flashy plume she had on?" "No place for a young child, any way." "I got it at Talcott & Post's." "Got any tobacco, John?" "Pooh! I wouldn't speak to him, any way." "I should think Mary—would be ashamed to wear such an outlandish—." "They say that dipatch at out Sumter is all bosh." "Not half so pretty as Mrs.—'s; though it don't look so bad, after all." "It must have cost as much as two dollars a yard." "So Bill Easton said last Saturday." "I don't see him once in a dog's age." "Yes, I'll be there at seven precisely." "I can't tell; but Sam knows all about it," etc. And Marks says he went home deeply "convinced," probably, that merely going to church, is not walking in "the narrow path."

The Mired Lamb.

A man going through a piece of woods heard the bleating of a lamb. He went in the direction of the sound and found a lamb in the mire so deep that he could not get out. Nothing but his head was above the mud and water. He had strayed from a neighboring pasture, and while wandering in the wood, fell into the mire. He did not know any better than to leave his pasture. Young persons who do know better, sometimes wander from the ways in which their parents teach them to walk. They fall into the mire of sin. When once in they sink deeper, and have no power to extricate themselves. The Good Shepherd alone can save them, and if they do not call Him to their aid they must perish.—16.

GREET ONE ANOTHER WITH A HOLY KISS.

—When this injunction was given, salutation by kissing was as much in vogue with those to whom it was given, as shaking hands is now with us. It was therefore no more singular at that time, than would now be a direction to christians in this country to extend to each other the right hand of fellowship. This token of love was therefore generally given by the primitive believers, and no one supposed that there was any impropriety in it. As exceptions however after a season were taken to it by the enemies of the church, and formed the basis of calumnious remarks, the practice gradually fell into disuse, and has now almost wholly ceased. Prof. Stuart says of it that it is a "res loci et temporis"—a thing of time and place—an ordinance which may or not be observed, as the locality and the age may determine. And Wilson quaintly remarks, that "the kiss is denominated holy, to distinguish it from the wanton, and the adulatory, and the predatory, and the dissimulatory kiss."

IMPROVE THE MOMENTS.

—Some one has said, "Spare moments are the gold dust of time." If they are, they are often wasted—lost, and that inadvertently. They slip away as easily and imperceptibly as the dust, nay, more so! We gather up the dust of gold with care, and foggishly neglect the dust of time, which is far more precious. As Franklin said of dollars and cents, so we say of years and moments. Take care of the moments and the years will take care of themselves. Moments make up the years. If they are rightly improved, the years will be improved, and there will be no gaps left for Satan to enter the fruitful field within.—Morning Star.

Be not disheartened, as if comfort would not come at all, because it comes not all at once; but patiently attend God's leisure; they are not stilled the swift, but "the sure mercies of David." Be assured when grace patiently leads the front, glory at last will be in the rear.

Next to the Bible and history, our old men are connecting links with the past, sent down from one generation to serve as a conservative element in the next succeeding, without which they might madly destroy themselves.

To some men the mere fact of existence, the simple walking through the air and light, gives more pleasure than others find in the whole round of so-called pleasures.

Speak Kindly.

Parents should always speak kindly to children when retiring or going to bed. Then, more than at any other time, it is important that children should have their hearts softened by voices and looks of tenderness and kindness. They should go to rest with thoughts of love and affection for their parents, and gratitude and love to their Heavenly Father for his goodness to them. How can we expect children to say their evening prayer acceptably and with a blessing to themselves, if they are required or permitted to retire to bed ill humored, or vexed by a frown or unkind words from their parents? And yet many parents send their children to bed not only in bad feeling, but often hungry, as punishment for some offence. No course can possibly be more objectionable.

Not long since, I spent an evening at the house of a friend with several other friends and acquaintances. This friend had two interesting and lovely boys, about ten and twelve years of age, who very much enlivened the company with their innocent prattle and childlike hilarity. At half-past eight o'clock, the father called these little boys to him, near to where I was sitting, and taking each one by the hand, he said very kindly and pleasantly to them, "My children, it is time to retire. You will feel dull and heavy at school to-morrow, if you sit up any longer." They both hung their heads for a moment; then both, with a pleasant smile, kissed their father, then their mother, and took leave of the company. A lady, one of the company, who sat near us, expressed great surprise that "the little boys should retire so willingly, when they appeared so happy with the company, and the music." The gentleman replied, "I always speak kindly to my children, and they never disobey. To-morrow morning I shall say to them, 'My children, I was much pleased that you retired so willingly last evening; and your conduct was very highly approved by Mrs. H.—, who saw you retire so pleasantly and quietly.' This, said he, is their reward—my approbation, and the approbation of their friends."

Mountains made of molehills.

Troubles bring out character. A noble nature combats them with courage, or endures them with calmness. A base or puny nature sinks down in astonishment or disheartenment. It looks on the most insignificant troubles as grievous, and knuckles to them without making an effort at resistance. It cannot regard them with the least equanimity, but persists in seeing in every annoyance, however slight it may be, something insufferable and invincible. Trouble is commonplace, all the while recurring in every one's experience; yet some minds are no sooner beset by it, than they imagine themselves singled out and set apart for unwonted, cruel chastisement, and hence as justified in revolting against their lot, in restlessly fretting, or lazily desponding.

He would be a queer farmer, who, because his field was sown with rocks, should sit down and wring his hands, one moment revile the stones and the next moment bewail them, and beguile himself by picturing a Utopia, where rocks were unknown. Not so have the people of the Eastern States farmed it. They found the soil pre-occupied, and well high choked with rocks. They did not succumb, dumfounded or appalled by the obstacles. They resolutely took them in hand, ousted them from their places, and put many of them to some good use. When they brought up against an immovable boulder, they ploughed around it. The soil which they redeemed, has proved worth their trouble.—Once so rocky that the sheep seemed unable to pick out the grass till their noses had been ground down, it is now richly bedecked in green, and yields to its owners enough and to spare.

Reader, fellow-settler on the green earth, rocks in plenty are in your way. Obstacles cannot be escaped any where this side of the moon. It is for you to decide whether they shall be weakly deprecated, and suffered to remain, balking and impoverishing you, or whether they shall be gravely assailed, and turned to good account.

THE OBJECT OF TRIALS.

—The old eagle, in teaching her young to fly, removes the lining of the nest, so as to leave nothing but the rough framework of sticks—"stirreth up her nest"—and thus makes it an uncomfortable place for them. She fluttering her wings over them; taketh them on her wings; beareth them high in air, then escapes from under them, and eaves them to fly without support until tried and fearful, when the old eagle flies beneath them, and takes them again on her wings, not only as a support, but so that the archer can neither hurt nor destroy. So the Lord leads his people. The place we have chosen for our nest he makes uncomfortable for us. By affliction and misfortune he stirreth up our nests, and when, like Peter, going down beneath the wave, he bears us up; tries again our strength and confidence in him, and so teaches us to mount up with wings as eagles—to run, and not be weary; to walk, and not faint.

SHAKESPEARE MONUMENT.

—It has at length been decided, in London, to erect a statue or monument to Shakespeare in the centre of the city where he spent nearly half his days, and did the work that secured him immortality. A provisional committee has been formed, which will soon be named, and an appeal be made to all who speak the language of Shakespeare to aid in the great work. It is proposed that it shall be the feature of the tercentennial anniversary of the birthday of the bard, which occurs next year.

Agriculture, &c.

HEALTHFULNESS OF CURRANTS.—A correspondent of the American Agriculturist, says:— "Whenever I see the abundant planting of currants recommended by you, I feel as if I must tell you that I have found this excellent fruit a sure preventive of dyspepsia. For three summers past I have made my breakfast of them as long as they were to be had, and eaten them frequently during the day besides. I find that a plateful of currants eaten with sugar in the morning, disposes of all the bad accumulations in the stomach, without giving diarrhoea, and helps to strengthen the digestive power through the wholesome acid this fruit contains, in which it is superior to the strawberry, raspberry, etc., for I have tried each in its turn. I can digest without trouble a breakfast of currants, while at times my stomach has been so weak that a cup of broth or soup only would give me pain as if a cancer was gnawing within me." This accords with the experience of many others, but in the treatment of dyspepsia, or any other disease, it should be borne in mind that "what is one man's meat is another's poison." Each must experiment and determine for himself what is suited to his particular case. In general, however, it may be safely asserted that a more liberal use of this and other fruits during summer, in place of meat, would greatly diminish dyspepsia and other ailments of the digestive organs. It is to be remembered, however, that when currants are eaten, every berry is to be broken, before it is swallowed; the gastric juice of the stomach cannot act upon the unbroken skin, and whole currants produce irritation through the whole alimentary canal.

MOWING PASTURES.

—We have often spoken of the advantage of keeping pastures free from the dead grass which, where the crop is not fed off, will accumulate. After grass has gone to seed, it is refused by stock, and the patches where it lies will be left, even after a new growth is started. The old grass make the new sour and unpalatable. To keep the grass sweet, the pasture should be cleared off at least once a year. On a late visit to the farm of Rev. C. C. Sewall, of Medfield, he called the attention of the writer and other persons to some hay which he had cut in the pastures. Finding, after many years' experience, that during the flush of feed in the fore part of the season, his cows would leave certain places almost untouched, and which were, consequently, about lost so far as to yield any return, he mowed them, obtaining a considerable quantity of hay. This was done last year; and finding a decided advantage from the operation, he has repeated it the present season. The hay obtained in the pasture is of good quality, consisting in a great degree of the Kentucky blue-grass (Poa pratensis), with a mixture of other early species. Mr. Sewall finds that by mowing the grass, the cows feed off the succeeding growth and all the pasture is kept smooth and clean. By this means the cows actually get more feed than they would otherwise, as the rejected spots would have remained untouched if the growth had not been cleared off. The same thing might be done with the same advantage in thousands of other cases.—Boston Cultivator.

KEEPING OF WINTER CABBAGES.

—We have no reason to change our old mode of keeping cabbages through the winter; and to those who have not stored theirs we again commend it as all that is desirable. Take up the cabbage by the roots—set it closely together in rows up to the head in sod, roots down, the same as it grows—drive in posts at the corners of the bed and intermediate spaces, if necessary, higher one side than the other—nail strips of boards, doors, or if you have nothing else, bean poles and corn fodder, so that the roof will be clear of the cabbage and allow the air to circulate—close up the sides with yerd or garden stuff of any kind—and your cabbage will keep all winter, fresh and green, and be accessible at all times, or nearly so, the frost not being nearly so severe under this protection as in exposed places. We have pursued this plan for years and it has always given satisfaction. Remember, exclude moisture—never mind the frost, which is a benefit rather than an injury.—Germantown Telegraph.

BOILING POTATOES.

—This is a formula: Let each mess be of equal size. Let the water boil before putting the potatoes in. When done pour off the water and scatter three or four table-spoonfuls of salt cover the pot with a coarse cloth, and return it to the fire for a short time. Watery potatoes are made mealy by this process. How simple is the process, yet how few understand it!

WINTERING MILCH COWS.

—Good warm shedding, if not already prepared, should be got ready for these, having an eye, as already intimated, to proper ventilation. If there is any animal which policy would dictate the good treatment of, it is the milch cow. It should be remembered that it is only the food she consumes beyond what is required to support the natural waste of the system, that can afford a surplus in way of milk. Hence the food which would barely support two cows, and leave nothing for the owner, if eaten by one cow would enable her to return the value of one-half of it in milk. So that the advice of a close observer to a farmer, to sell one-half of his cows to increase his produce of butter and cheese, had reason at the bottom of it.

CITY PEOPLE usually appear to know more than they do—country people less.