

Doubt's Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH, 1863.

Read—ACTS xv. 23-40: The resolution of the apostles and elders. JUDGES ix. 1-20: Abimelech made king at Shechem.

Recite—ACTS xv. 6-9.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1863.

Read—ACTS xvi. 1-18: Paul's call by a vision to Macedonia. JUDGES ix. 22-41: The destruction of Shechem.

Recite—ACTS xv. 30-32.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

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

37. How was the fire on the brazen altar of the tabernacle first kindled, and what express command did God give concerning it?

Answer to question given last week:—

36. They could use their right and left hands with equal dexterity. Judges xxii. 16: 1 Chron. xii. 2. They were also skilful in the use of the bow and arrow and the sling.

For the Christian Messenger.

Amusement for the thoughtful.

ANSWER TO PUZZLE, No. 36.

Friend "Ancient" your puzzle don't puzzle me much, I like Scripture puzzles, but care not for such, (Whether ingenious, subtle or muddy), As do not induce one the Scriptures to study. Without this preamble, perhaps 'twould be better, Simply to tell you that E is the letter Which duly inserted, or as you say, "well," The following "rigorous precept will spell:" "Persevere ye perfect men, Ever keep these precepts ten."

Stol.

SCRIPTURE PUZZLE, No. 37.

Born to high honours, in degenerate days, Dangers most imminent bestrewed my ways, I fought, and put my country's foes to flight, Full half its swords I wielded in that fight, Although I won in that unequal strife, Yet through parental rashness nearly lost my life. I once beheld a noble rival stand, Bearing a precious trophy in his hand, Still in my heart no jealousy did burn, But love, which never to hatred did turn. I saw my rival jeopardized through hate, And jeopardized my life to spare his fate, Through trials sore, in virtue's path he ran Until the goal he reached, assigned to man, While I, in battle sore, was rudely slain, But left in history an untarnished fame, Now give my name—the place where I did dwell, Likewise the battle field on which I fell.

DALETH,

Yarmouth.

Paddle your own Canoe.

Up this world, and down this world, And over this world and through, Though drifted about, And tossed without, Why, "paddle your own canoe."

What though the sky is heavy with clouds, Or shining a field of blue; If the bleak wind blows, Or the sunshine glows, Still "paddle your own canoe."

What if breakers rise up ahead, With dark waves rushing through: Move steadily by With a steadfast eye, And "paddle your own canoe."

If a hurricane rise in the midnight skies, And the stars are lost to view, Glide safely along With a smile and a song, And "paddle your own canoe."

Up this world, and down this world, And over this world and through, Though weary and worn, Bereft, and forlorn, Still "paddle your own canoe."

Never give up when trials come, Never grow sad and blue; Never sit down With a tear and a frown, But "paddle your own canoe."

There are daisies springing along the shores, Blooming and sweet for you; There are rose-hued dyes In the autumn skies Then "paddle your own canoe."

If you must form harsh judgments, form them of yourself, not of others; and, in general, begin by attending to your own deficiencies first. If every one would sweep up his own walk, we should have very clean streets.

The mean little thief. A confession.

When I was a very little boy, as I was playing in the streets of a large city, I met a little boy, younger than myself, who seemed to be in great distress. His eyes were much swollen by crying, and his loud sobs first attracted my attention.

"What's the matter, Eddie?" I inquired. "Why—why, I've lost my penny, and no other will whip me," he replied, and then burst anew into tears.

"Where did you lose it?" "It dropped out of my hand, and rolled right there into the gutter."

"Poor little fellow," I thought, as I really sympathized with him, and offered to help him find the lost treasure.

Eddie brushed away the tears with his arm, and his countenance brightened with hope as he saw me roll up my coat-sleeve, and thrust my hand into the gutter. How intently did he watch each handful, as it came out freighted with mud and pebbles, and pieces of rusty iron; Perhaps the next would bring out his penny! At last I found it.

"Oh, I am so glad!" I hear the little reader say. "And how glad you must have been, too! Now you could dry up little Eddie's tears, and make his face bright and his heart happy.—Now he could skip and run all they way home without the fear of his mother's displeasure."

But, dear children, listen to the end; and while I know it will make you sad, and perhaps bring a tear to your eyes, it may do you good for a lifetime. I kept little Eddie's penny!

As soon as I felt it in my hand, all covered with mud as it was, I forgot all the lessons I had learned at home and in the Sunday-school. I forgot about God—that his eyes were looking right down on me. The wicked one entered into me, as you know he once did into Judas when for money he betrayed the blessed Saviour. I sold my honor, my good feelings, and my truthfulness, all for a penny.

I searched a little longer after I had washed it, and then, contrived to hide it, and then, putting on a sad face, told little Eddie that there was no use in looking any longer for it.

Oh! how the big tears swelled in his eyes, as with a disappointed look he turned away! How mean I felt. I felt guilty, as well I might, for I had already broken three of God's commandments. I had coveted; that led me to steal, and then came, in regular order, the lie to cover up all.—Alas! what one sin leads to!

Many years have gone by since that wicked act. Since then I have asked God to pardon me for that and many other sins I have committed; and though I love my Saviour, and hope that, in His mercy, the sins of my youth and of my riper years will not be remembered against me, yet I can never blot out of my memory's page the dark spot which that muddy penny has imprinted upon it.—Our Children's Magazine.

Twenty impolite actions.

- 1. Loud and boisterous laughter. 2. Reading when others are talking. 3. Reading aloud in company without being asked. 4. Talking when others are reading. 5. Spitting about the house, smoking or chewing. 6. Cutting finger nails in company. 7. Leaving a church before public worship is closed. 8. Whispering or laughing in the house of God. 9. Gazing rudely at strangers. 10. Leaving a stranger without a seat. 11. A want of respect and reverence for seniors. 12. Correcting older persons than yourselves especially parents. 13. Receiving a present without an expression of gratitude. 14. Making yourself the hero of your own story. 15. Laughing at the mistakes of others. 16. Joking of all others in company. 17. Commencing talking before others have finished speaking. 18. Answering questions that have been put to others. 19. Commencing to eat as soon as you get to the table; and 20. In not listening to what one is saying in company—unless you desire to show open contempt for the speaker.

For Postage Stamp Collectors.

"Admitting the British Colonies into our calculation, there are more than forty modifications of Queen Victoria's portrait, in several different shades of colour. The postage-stamp of the lowest money value at its ordinary rate is the French centime, worth a fraction less than two-fifths of an English farthing; the highest being the four dollar California Pony Express, representing the sum of sixteen shillings and fourpence. For beauty of form and hue, the postage-stamps of France and Greece, and, among our own dependencies, those of Nova Scotia bear away the palm; while the English penny postage-stamp and the postage-stamps of Belgium are about on a par, as far as ugliness is concerned. Siberian stamps are of the largest size issued, and those of Mecklenburg-Schwerin take rank as the smallest. For scarcity and daily increasing value the old issue of the Isle of Bourbon and New Caledonia, and those of Spain, Portugal, British Guiana and Van Diemen's Land may be especially particularised. So may the stamps of the Sandwich Islands, Nicaragua

and the Philippines, which are very rare; as are also those of the Italian Duchies. Such of our readers as may wish to turn "an honest future penny," should hasten forthwith to make a large investment in Roman Pontifical stamps, which are with good reason expected, at no very distant date, to attain an almost fabulous value.—Once a Week.

A Negro Pastor in New Orleans.

In 1847 I resided in New Orleans. My first acquaintance with a negro pastor was in that city. I sometimes attended his church and it was no unusual circumstance to meet there on Sunday many whites, both ladies and gentlemen, citizens and strangers, who were in attendance at those meetings.

This was a church composed entirely of blacks, most of whom were slaves. The congregation numbered quite a thousand persons. The building and lot were owned by the church, and the title-deeds were held in their name by responsible individuals. The pastor had been sold from Virginia to Louisiana, was a mechanic by trade, and the church had purchased his freedom. They paid him, in weekly collections, a yearly salary of something more than a thousand dollars. His character as a preacher and pastor will appear from the narrative; and though he is not a representative of the whole body of slave preachers in the Southern cities, yet he is a representative of a class. To understand the whole truth concerning the subjects before us we must contemplate both the good and the bad, for there are bad ministers even among the slaves, though in the main the good greatly predominate.

One Sunday afternoon I entered the African church among a lively throng of worshippers. I was a little late in my arrival, and the members of the church, anxious to secure seats, were hurrying impatiently to the sanctuary. If any one has never associated with the slave the idea of unvarying gloom, depression and suffering, he should have seen the chattering girls and fashionably-dressed boys who were pouring through the church court-yard. The younger "girls" were dressed in pretty, French-looking costumes, many of them exceedingly tasteful. The "boys" sported kid gloves, glossy beavers, patent-leather boots, and were many of them quite exquisite. This was the Sunday costume of house servants, clerks, porters, etc., in an Anglo-French city, and is no criterion for slave costume any where else; certainly not upon the plantations. As we seated ourselves near the pulpit we saw it occupied by the pastor of the church, another colored preacher, and a white preacher from Mobile; and we were informed, greatly to our disappointment, that the "white brother" was to preach. The services were commenced by the pastor, who prayed and read the hymns, in all which there was nothing peculiar. You might have as well been in a white congregation, and in a city any where else, for all that was distinctive in those services. But soon we had something peculiar. One of the deacons sitting at the right of the pulpit, in attempting to "raise the tune," unfortunately pitched upon the wrong metre, and couldn't make the music and the words fit. Here was an occasion for personal authority, and it came from the pulpit as follows:

"Who dat start dat tune? Who dat don't know how sing? Stop dat, and let somebody sing knows how to sing. Brudder Peter, you sing."

Poor deacon! he was overwhelmed; he fairly wilted under the pastoral crook. But "Brudder Peter" rose most sublimely to the occasion; hitting at a dash the right tune; and the immense congregation, who really "know how to sing," carried the rolling melody triumphantly to the skies.

And here was noticeable that particular element of negro worship which you can hear but in their meetings—devotional singing. Here the negro is within the sphere of his spiritual manifestations. His singing is not artistic; not wonderful for its vocalization; but you can hardly keep from weeping under its influence. There is about it a particular pathos, and it is the pathos of devotion. There is nothing which thus affects you at their "corn-shucking." There they are simply boisterous and monotonous; they are not even mirthful. But let them sing of Jesus, of salvation, of heaven, and you see how susceptible they are to those religious impressions which appeal to their gratitude, their sympathies and their hopes. You feel at once that you are listening to worshippers.

The usual prayer following the singing was by the "white brother;" and this, and even the white brother's sermon, were nothing remarkable, except for dullness. But the closing exercises by the pastor were remarkable, and exceedingly effective. These exercises consisted, first, of a minute and critical review of the white brother's sermon, with notes and corrections of said sermon, and a running practical application of the whole to his hearers; and, secondly, of another exposition of the same chapter, in the pastor's own peculiar style, and for all the world as if he was showing the white brother how he should have preached it. And, indeed, as to ability, there was no comparison between them. The pastor was a master. The subject had been an exposition of a chapter in James. The preacher belonged to a sect calling themselves Christians, though called by their neighbors Campbellites; and expository preaching is one of their weaknesses. The review of this performance was not highly complimentary to the expositor; and contained many effective hits, too palpably just to be ignored. Thus:

"My brudder call your 'tention to de fact dat God did temp Abra'am; and den he go on to tell you 'bout Abra'am's temptation. Now I

don't like dat word 'temp-tation.' 'God cannot be tempted wid evil; neither temptest He any man.' Suppose we read that word temp try. Ah, my brudder, (turning to the white preacher,) why you no say try?—After dese things God did try Abra'am.' He try His people now. Who hasn't trials and tribulations from God? But I don't like dat word temp. I tell you" (to the congregation) "God—don't—temp—any—body!"

This was fair exposition. The white preacher had also made another point in which he was open to correction; and the pastor corrected him—thus:

"My brudder also tell you 'bout de las day; and 'bout de angel Gabriel blowin' de trumpet to wake de dead and call de people to judgement. Ah, my brudder" (turning to the preacher,) "where you read dat 'bout angel Gabriel blowin' de trumpet? I tell you" (to congregation) "dare ain't one word in dis blessed book 'bout angel Gabriel blow de trumpet! God gwine to blow His own trumpet—DE TRUMP OF GOD!—Angel Gabriel nothing to do wid it!"

This was also fair criticism. The practical application also was not wanting. In alluding to what the preacher had said during his exposition about the government of the tongue, he gave his fair hearers the full benefit of the application—thus:

"My brudder also speak about de gubnement ob de tongue! de gubnement ob de tongue! DE GUBNERMENT OB DE TONGUE!!! Ah, my sister, you got a big slap dar!"

This was a hit, as was evident from the sensation.

Then came what I suppose was the showing of how the subject should have been handled by his white brother; and how it couldn't have been better illustrated. And in the resume which was given of the sacrifice of Isaac, and the results of Abraham's "trial," some of the negro peculiarities when under preaching were manifested. Especially was this true during the very graphic description given of the prospective sacrifice. There was but little of the negro syllabication or intonation in the finest parts of the description. How the man accomplished it I have never been able to conjecture, but the description of the offering of Isaac was intensely affecting. We were all in tears. Such pathos, such descriptive eloquence, such simple imagery, such analysis of the father's emotions when the rescue came, such an overwhelming effect when all this in a sudden burst of appeal was applied to the hearers, and their deliverance by Christ. Such pathetic tones when alluding to the sacrifice on Calvary, and "no ram in the thicket there." It was a most extraordinary exhibition.

As for the hearers, it was very easy to see what most moved them. At the description of their rescue by Christ—the coming from heaven as a substitute—the injunction that "no hand should be laid upon the lad;" and the assuring, exhilarating parts of the discourse—they would first begin a gentle swaying, rocking motion—as the intensity of their emotions increased they would throw up their hands and half shout, as if their enjoyment was irrepressible. Then would come down the pastoral crook with:

"Now look at dat. I'm 'shamed ob you dese white brudren here too! You won't let me go on wid de glories ob salvation. You 'gin shoutin'." I had to keep you on de tribulations to keep you quiet!"

Here was the explanation of the whole philosophy of the effect produced upon his impressive hearers. In their simplicity they were literal believers. They believed the promises and assurances of the preacher without caviling; and they shouted over their certain salvation. They believed that they were to reach heaven through tribulation, and they were saddened at the allusion. It was the exhibition of what is one peculiar element of the negro character—his simple receptive nature, and his earnest emotional faith. "He believeth with the heart," and "receiveth the truth as a little child." Here, too, was illustrated the character of the preaching which is to affect the negro. The white preacher was didactic, dry and powerless; and the same is true of all the white preaching which I have heard addressed to the negro. None can move the negro but a negro. He alone understands the avenue to their emotions and sympathies, because they are identical with his own.

As in most white churches the contribution box came at the close of the exercises. But who would have expected a plate full of silver from slaves! They were as liberal as princes, though it was only their usual Sunday-collection. The contribution amounting to about thirty dollars.

These services as I then witnessed them, and as I afterwards had occasion to learn during a two years' residence in New Orleans, were a fair specimen of negro worship in that city. So orderly was the congregation that they were not even watched by the authorities. Such exclusive meetings among the negroes were, however, peculiar to that city. At services which I have attended in Savannah, Charleston and Richmond, the congregations were under much greater restraint, and were therefore more formal in their manner of worship. I have selected my illustrations from the church in New Orleans because of this, preacher and audience were alike unrestrained, and showed the negro's peculiarities when under the refinements of a city. Harper's Magazine for September.

An eruption of Mount Etna, of a more than usually serious character, has recently taken place, and has occasioned the destruction of a large amount of property on the skirts of the mountain.

It is noted by the English papers that the prize-winners in recent militia rifle matches are all blue-eyed men.