

South's Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18TH, 1863.

Read—JOHN xix. 19-37: The crucifixion of Christ. JOSHUA iv. 1-18: The passage of the Jordan.

Recite—JOHN xix. 5-7.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25TH, 1863.

Read—JOHN xx. 1-18: Visit to the sepulchre. JOSHUA iv. 16-24: The people pass over Jordan.

Recite—JOHN xix. 25-27.

"SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES."

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

2. Mention five cases in the Bible in which affliction proved beneficial.

Answer to question given last week:—

1. A bullock of sheep, turtle doves or young pigeons, Lev. i.; and the scape-goat, Lev. xvi. 21. These prefigured the atonement of Christ, Heb. ix. 8, 24.

For the Christian Messenger.

Amusement for the thoughtful.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE PUZZLE, No. 19.

The Golden Calf made by Aaron from the golden earrings. EXODUS 32nd chapter.

SCRIPTURE PUZZLE No. 20.

- 1. The mount were three loved sons were slain, And where their fathers fought in vain, South East of Edralon.
2. The name of one who gathered corn, From harvest fields where Christ was born; The wife beloved of Mahlon.
3. The martyr's name who lived on earth, And died before his father's birth; Before the birth of Shem.
4. The country's name that stands alone, One boundary of the Persian throne; In book of Esther found.
5. His name in Nehemiah placed, Whose life his wanton schemes disgraced; Who rose but soon came down.
6. The name of him who lost his life, Because he had a lovely wife, To share another's love.
7. The goddess of a heathen shrine, By superstition held divine, More than the Lord above.
8. His name who dwelt on Chebar's bank, And inspiration deeply drank, Though in a foreign land.
9. These name's initials will impart, The virtue of a noble heart, In order as they stand. Brookfield. D. O. P.

The Cheering Word.

Little Charley was the dull boy of I school. All the rest either laughed at him or pitied him. Even his master sometimes taunted him with his deficiencies. He became sullen and indifferent, and took no pains to get on. One day a gentleman who was visiting the school looked over some boys who were making their first attempt to write. There was a general burst of amusement at poor Charley's efforts. He colored, but was silent.

"Never mind, my lad" said the gentleman cheerily, "don't be discouraged; just go and do your very best, and you'll be a brave writer some day. I recollect when I first began to write being quite as awkward as you are; but I persevered, and now look here." He took a pen and wrote his name on a piece of paper, in fine legible characters. "See what I can do now," he added.

Many years afterwards that gentleman met Charley again. He had turned out one of the most celebrated men of his day, and he expressed his firm conviction that he owed his success in life, under God's blessing, to the encouraging speech made by the school visitor.—S. S. Teacher's Journal.

Improve the Present.

Never whine over what you may suppose to be the loss of opportunities. A great many have had good early opportunities without learning much; every man may educate himself that wishes to. It is the will that makes the way. Many a servant that wanted knowledge has listened while his master's children were saying their letters; and putting them together, to form easy words, has thus caught the first elements of spelling. If any one has a strong thirst for knowledge, we do not care where he is put, he will become an educated man. The first step towards self-improvement is to leave off whining over the past, and bend every energy to the improvement of the present.

It is said that the pen is mightier than the sword. Neither is of much value without the holder.

Hints to Public Speakers.

A recent number of the London British Standard contains a notice of a Lecture delivered in Exeter Hall by the Rev. Richard Roberts.

It may be proper to state that this gentleman is a Wesleyan minister, who has already attained no common celebrity in that great community, while he is well known and much admired by multitudes beyond it. His appearance is prepossessing, his bearing is neither reserved nor forward, but that of a well-bred English gentleman and a practised public speaker, who is particularly at home amongst the masses. He is somewhat above the average stature, well formed, agile, and vigorous; the countenance is grave and thoughtful, yet genial and benevolent; the eye quick and piercing; the voice strong, clear, and flexible to an unusual degree, thoroughly master of the great hall, and commanding every portion of its numerous occupants—a better voice could not be desired.

The lecture, of course, was read, and read well. The preparation was perfect, and so familiar was he with his MS. that he never once stumbled at a word. The style was terse, forcible, and clear as crystal; but occasionally, perhaps too elaborate, taking it out of the category of spoken addresses and placing it in that of literary essays, thickly set with point, antithesis, and epigram. At times, it not merely sparkled, but glared with flashes of fancy and dazzling picture. The power of Mr. Roberts in this attribute—for oratory, a most important one—is great, perhaps perilously so, since, instead of his obsequious handmaid, it frequently becomes his imperious mistress, luring him astray from the path of business after the manner of the worst portion of the Welsh and Irish orators, who luxuriate among flowers when they ought to be at work to gain an object.

A summary of the Lecture is then given, closing as follows:—

The last half-hour exhibited, not a building—a piece of solid masonry—but a pile of loose stones thrown together very much at random. The whole might as well have been spoken backward as forward. There was juxtaposition; but relation, connexion, there was none. Still the thunder continued to roll and the multitude continued to cheer, putting the calm listener in mind of the celebrated couplet,—

"He faggoted his notions as they fell, And if they rhymed and rattled all was well."

The multitude were carried away by fine flights of fancy, which had nothing to do with the subject, and which might equally well have been appended to any species of address or dissertation whatever. One of the pictures was very extended, quite a fancy piece, vehemently applauded. Further on there was a burst of claptrap concerning Italy and Garibaldi which had nothing to do with the subject—which only served, indeed, to consume time and to vulgarise the noble utterance which had preceded; but from the injudicious crowd it brought down thunders of applause. It may be proper to state that in the course of these wild careerings there was a copious, grand, and generous tribute paid to the late John Angel James, which was heartily cheered.

The writer proceeds:—

Mr. Roberts has every element necessary to form a splendid and powerful orator. If true to himself before many years shall have passed his head he need have no superior either in his own or in any other ecclesiastical community. The things required in order to this are not many, but they are of vital importance.

First, then, Mr. Roberts must put a curb on his potent, tyrant fancy. Whatever it may cost him, it must be subdued and so disciplined as to bring it under perfect control. It must be taught to stand quietly aside till called to perform the appointed task, and, that done, it must immediately retire. It must not be suffered to waste time, and overlay the subject in hand by its wanton gambols, its Boudin displays, which children, women, and weak men may admire, but which people of sense will resent as an indignity to taste and culture.

Secondly, if Mr. Roberts would take the place that belongs to him, there must be a complete revolution in his style of speaking. It is not required that he should abate aught; he has only to add. In one style he is great, very great; but there are two other styles in which he is wholly wanting, although in the nature of things they precede that in which he so excels, and are both absolutely essential to the character of the complete orator. These three styles are set forth with great force by the Roman orator Cicero in his famous work "De Oratore."

The vice of Mr. Roberts is the vice of the great mass of our public speakers, both sacred and secular. The artificial is everywhere in the ascendant, and nature, beautiful nature, is ignored. On the platform and in the pulpit the great majority are at fault. The voice is strained to the highest pitch, and at that pitch the orator dashes on regardless of propriety and nature, till he comes to a stand still. He shouts, he bellows, he roars, and the stupid vulgar stare, gape, and admire him! Thus it was in Shakespeare's days, and hence the admirable counsels which he gave to the players, which are worth more than volumes of dull dissertations upon rhetoric. Let us hear him:—

Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines.—Nor do not see the air too much with your hand thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious perrwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the very ears of the groundlings,

who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb show and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant; it out-herods Herod. Pray you avoid it. O, there be players that I have seen play—and heard others praise, and that highly—not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian pagan, nor man, have so stutted and belloved, that I have thought some of nature's journey-men had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

Mr. Roberts made an experiment of the third style of speaking, and was successful, as he always will be; but the performance lost unspeakably in truth, power, and beauty from the want of the first and the second. He adopted the first once, for about a minute, with admirable effect. He talked as a man to men, and in an instant there was a universal hush! Nature embrace nature; and forthwith the orator again spurred his noble steed, and away she went as before, straining to the uttermost! We wonder it did not occur to the observant genius of Cicero to look at the animal world: the quadrupeds supply an invaluable lesson to orators. They have three modes of movement; there is the pace, the trot, and the gallop. Now, this is Nature's lesson to orators. As with the quadrupeds so it ought to be with men in speaking. A horse that never waked, never trotted, but dashed on in one perpetual gallop, would be a terrible and an unmanageable creature! Now just so it is with our stouting, stilted, ranting orator. Cicero well says:—

Good speaking, then, may be divided into three characters, in each of which there are some who have made an eminent figure; but to be equally excellent in all (which is what we require) has been the happiness of few.

The lofty and majestic speaker, who distinguishes himself by the energy of his sentiments and the dignity of his expression, in impetuous, diversified, copious, and weighty, and abundantly qualified to alarm and sway the passions; which some effect by a harsh and a rough, gloomy way of speaking, without any harmony or measure; and others, by a smooth, a regular, and a well-proportioned style.

On the other hand, the simple and easy speaker is remarkably dexterous and keen, and aiming at nothing but our information, makes every thing he discourses upon rather clear and open than great and striking, and polishes it with the utmost neatness and accuracy. But some of this kind of speakers who are distinguished by their peculiar artifice, are designed, unpolished, and appear rude and unskilful, that they may have the better opportunity of deceiving us; while others, with the same poverty of style, are far more elegant and agreeable,—that is, they are pleasant and facetious, and sometimes even florid with here and there an easy ornament.

But there is likewise a middle kind of oratory, between the two above mentioned, which neither has the keenness of the latter nor hurls the thunder of the former, but is a mixture of both, without excelling in either, though at the same time it has something of each, or (perhaps more properly) is equally destitute of the true merit of both. This species of eloquence flows along in a uniform course, having nothing to recommend it but its peculiar smoothness and equability; though, at the same time, it intermingles a number of decorations, like the tulle of flowers in a garland, and embellishes a discourse from beginning to end with the noblest and less striking ornaments of language and sentiment.

Those who have attained to any degree of perfection in either of the above characters, have been distinguished as eminent orators. But the question is whether any of them have compassed what we are seeking after, and succeeded equally in all; for there have been several who could speak nervously and pompously, and yet, upon occasion, could express themselves with the greatest address and simplicity.

Cicero proceeds to amplify these three styles at great length, reversing the order, descending first on the simple and easy, then on the somewhat stronger, fuller, and richer style. He goes on:—

The third character is the extensive, the copious—the nervous, the majestic orator, who possesses the powers of elocution in their full extent. This is the man whose enchanting and diffusive language is so much admired by listening nations, that they have tamely suffered eloquence to rule the world;—but an eloquence whose course is rapid and sonorous!—an eloquence which every one gazes at, and admires, and despairs to equal! This is the eloquence that alarms or soothes them at her pleasure!—This is the eloquence that sometimes tears up all before it like a whirlwind, and at other times steals imperceptibly upon the sense, and probes to the bottom of the heart!—the eloquence which ingrafts opinions that are new, and eradicates the old; but yet is widely different from the two characters of speaking before mentioned.

He who exerts himself in the simple and accurate character, and speaks neatly and smartly with out aiming any higher!—he, by this alone, if carried to perfection becomes a great if not the greatest of orators; not does he walk upon slippery ground, so that if he has but learned to tread firm, he is in no danger of falling.—Also the middle kind of orator, who is distinguished by his equability, provided he only draws up his forces to advantage, fears not the perilous and doubtful hazards of a public harangue; and, though sometimes he may not succeed to his wishes, yet he is never exposed to an absolute defeat; for, as he never soars, his fall must be inconsiderable. But the orator, whom we regard as the prince of his profession—the nervous—the fierce—the flaming orator, if he is born for this alone, and only practices and applies himself to this, without tempering his copiousness with the two inferior characters of eloquence, is of all others the most contemptible. For the plain and simple orator, speaking acutely and expertly and with an appearance of wisdom and good sense; and the middle kind of orator is sufficiently recommended by his sweetness:—but the copious and diffusive speaker, if he has no other qualification, will scarcely appear to be in his senses, for he who can say nothing calmly—nothing gently—nothing methodically,—nothing clearly, distinctly, or humorously (though a number of causes should be so managed throughout, and others in one or more of their parts) he moreover, who proceeds to amplify and exaggerate without preparing the attention of his audience, will appear to rave before men of understanding, and to vapour like a person intoxicated before the sober and sedate.

This is what Cicero pronounces the "finest of orators;" and we commend it to the attention of Mr. Roberts and all whom it may concern. This point was admirably elaborated by the renowned Archbishop of Cambray in his celebrated dialogues on eloquence. That great genius says: "I told you before, that the whole art of good orators consists in observing what nature does when unconstrained. You ought not to imitate those harangues who choose a way to declaim, but will never talk to their hearers. On the contrary, you should address yourself to an audience in such a modest, respectful, engaging manner, that each of them shall think you are speaking to him in particular. And this is the use and advantage of natural, familiar, insinuating tones of voice. They ought always to be grave and becoming, and even strong and pathetic when the subject requires it. But you must not fancy that you can express the passions by the mere strength of voice; like those noisy speakers who by bawling and tossing themselves about, stun their hearers, instead of affecting them. If we would succeed in painting and raising the passions, we must know exactly what movements they inspire."

These few lines are worth a mint of gold to the man who desires to be a useful speaker. Talk, then, Mr. Roberts! The power of talk is omnipotent! Mark its effect in that great pulpit potentate Charles Haddon Spurgeon. In Cicero's first and second styles he has no equal, and in the third, when he chooses, no superior except James Parsons, of York who stands unquestionably, on this point, at the head of English preachers.

The preaching of Mr. Roberts is nearly as much at fault as his lecture was in Exeter Hall. It is less vehement, but not more natural. Once wound up, he speedily ascends to the same key high and monotonous, but most remarkably varied by a peculiar change of voice on a single word, which is pronounced with an elongated, a deep, and a pleasing organ swell, imparting a singular variety to the monotone. He uses about 7,500 words an hour, and this strange relief-rate may occur about every hundred. The thing is awakening, and actually gratifying to the ear. This was curiously exemplified last night in City-road Chapel, where he preached to a great congregation on behalf of Radnor-street Schools.

The eloquence of Whitfield was, we believe, the best example of all that the orator ought to be that modern times have seen. All these styles were fully exemplified in his marvellous eloquence. Cornelius Winter, his friend, and for some years an inmate with him in the Tabernacle House, has left on record a beautiful testimony on this point, which will be found in his Life by the late Mr. Jay.

The voice of Mr. Roberts and his whole class which constitutes all but a totality—is well indicated by the poet Cowper. In reference to the style of Churchill he says:—

Contemporaries all surpassed, see one; Short his career, indeed, but ably run; Churchill; himself unconscious of his powers, In penury consumed his idle hours; And, like a scattered seed at random sown, Was left to spring by vigour of his own. Lilted at length by dignity of thought And dint of genius, to an affluent lot, He laid his head in luxury's soft lap, And took, too often, there, his easy nap. It brighter beams than all he threw not forth, 'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth. Surly and slovenly, and bold and coarse, Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force, Spendthrift alike of money and of wit, Always at speed, and never drawing bit. He struck the lyre in such a careless mood, And so disdained the rules he understood, The laurel seemed to wait on his command; He snatched it rudely from the muse's hand.

This high, monotonous, artificial style unhappily prevails to a vast extent in public prayer. Nowhere is there a greater absence of nature, and nowhere is the absence of nature so revolting! The thing requires only to be closely and solemnly examined to be understood and felt. Men will speak to their Maker in a tone in which no human being would ever think of addressing a magistrate or a monarch, when admitted to an audience on some important subject. Once in motion, on they shoot—no a few screams—without break or variation, till they reach the amen! Those who have heard the late Dr. Calmers pray need no further explanation. There he stands, with solemn awe, speaking to his Maker as a subject to a sovereign.

All is propriety, dignity, humility, truth, and nature. On hearing him for the first time, you are startled, and as you never felt before in such an exercise. The speaker seems to mean what he says. There is a sublime reality in the utterance; he appears as if he almost saw the Invisible! How unlike is this to such of the artificial stream of sound which passes in the pulpit for prayer!

The whole is commended to the attention of all concerned. QUIRUS.