

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, April 17th, 1864.

Read—LUKE I. 1-17: The birth of John the Baptist foretold by an angel. 1 SAMUEL X. 1-16: Saul anointed by Samuel.

Recite—PSALM LXXXIX. 15, 16.

Sunday, April 24th, 1864.

Read—LUKE I. 18-38: Annunciation of the birth of Christ. 1 SAMUEL X: Saul appointed king.

Recite—JOHN VI. 10-14.

STANZAS FOR LITTLE GIRLS.

Cold whistling winds, and pattering rain, Snow, sleet and hail, and ice! Old Winter's come, hear, you his train? He'll pass here in a trice! He's frightened all the birds away To some fair, milder sky, And there we'll let them sing and play Till he bids us a good-by.

He's rolled earth's carpets up, And laid them all aside; Hid every flower and buttercup, Her spring and summer's pride. He's plucked the leaves all off the trees, And thrown them all away, And left them naked to the breeze As long as he shall stay.

Old Winter does not care a whit For butterflies and flowers! Or where his snow-balls chance to hit, But sends them down in showers! The hills and plains, all cold and drear, He wraps them up in snow, Nor even drops one icy tear, For all their frozen woe!

Sometimes, indeed, the trees he trims, From out his jewelled store, And cases all the twigs and limbs With sparkling diamonds o'er; Then bids the sun look down so bright, On all the shining trees, And when he looks, he laughs outright At everything he sees.

But if he stare with his bright face, And look at them too long, He'll melt their shining silver case, Then all their beauty's gone! But Winter's reign is quickly o'er, Spring drives him out of town; Then earth wipes up her muddy floor, And spreads her carpet down.

Spring scatters round rich fragrant flowers, And sets the birds to singing, And pins new leaves on all the trees, While yet their music's ringing! The sun now takes another peep, The flowers look up with joy, And bid him not to go to sleep, Lest he their lives destroy.

From this we learn not to despair, But hope, and hope on ever, For though our life is full of care, It will not last forever. A spring will come and chase away All sorrow from our breast, When on us draws the summer day Of an eternal rest.

THE BIBLE NEGLECTED.

In the gloomy cell of an Indian jail, a number of prisoners were attentively listening to a gentleman, who was earnestly entreating them to study the Scriptures. Wishing to ascertain if they possessed the precious volume, he put the question, "Have any of you the Bible?" After a considerable pause, a soldier, who was under sentence of death for murdering a black man, broke the silence, and amidst sobs and tears, confessed that he once had a Bible. "But," said he, "I sold it for drink. It was the companion of my youth. I brought it from my native land. Oh! if I had listened to my Bible, I should not have been here."

LITTLE BY LITTLE.

There is an eastern story which tells of a man who was sentenced by his king to be starved to death at the top of a high tower, where he was left without any means of escape. His wife came underneath, weeping and wringing her hands. "Stop weeping, mother," he called out, "and bring me three things—a reel of thread, a little butter, and a beetle." When these were brought, he desired her to tie the end of the thread to the leg of the beetle, and to rub a little of the butter on its forehead, and then to let it crawl up the tower. Very, very slowly the beetle crawled up, for it thought that if it went straight on it would come to the butter which it smelt just in front. At last it reached the top of the tower, and the man carefully received the thread. Then his wife tied a piece of pack-thread to the other end, and when he had drawn this up, she tied a rope to the pack-thread, and fastening the rope to the side of the tower, he let himself down, and escaped. Small means often accomplish great things.

Why is a blacksmith like a safe steed? Because one is a horse-shoer, and the other is a sure horse.

SCIENTIFIC.

GERMAN DIVING MACHINE.—The foreign scientific journals describe an improved diving machine, a German invention, which is said to obviate the objections attaching to other machines of this class, without bringing new ones into play. The apparatus is so constructed as to be completely closed; the diver enters through a door at the top, which is afterwards hermetically sealed, and he takes down air enough to last six or seven hours, after which it can be renewed by means of tubes communicating with the ship on the surface, or purified by the introduction of oxygen. The apparatus is of a cylindrical form, with a double bottom for the reception of water-ballast, which is pumped in or out from within, with "lull's eyes" in front, on the sides, at the bottom, and overhead, a screen propeller worked by hand from within the chamber, a rudder and a smaller screw to make it revolve on its axis. Besides the means of locomotion it is fitted with a pair of paddle-wheels for moving along the bottom, with an anchor to resist powerful currents, and also with suitable weights which can be suddenly dropped if the conductor wishes suddenly to rise.

PARCHMENT being sometimes very scarce the copyists of the middle ages adopted the plan of taking old manuscripts of that material, scratching out their contents, and penning them over again with some more recent production.—These were called palimpsests; and very frequently the recent writing was some fabulous story or a detail of the miracles of some pious saint, for the conveyance of which worthless trash to posterity valuable works had been erased. Numbers of these may be found in the National Library of France and in the Vatican; in many instances the new writing has totally effaced the old, but sometimes the original has resisted all the efforts of washing or erasing; and in this way have been recovered invaluable manuscripts of the Holy Scriptures and classic literature. This practice was so common in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, there will be found as many written on erased as on new parchment.

ARE THERE MEN IN THE MOON?—Mr. H. B. Small, late of Lincoln College, Oxford, recently delivered a lecture on the moon's structure, before the Montreal Historical Society of Montreal. After explaining that astronomers had been unable to discover any signs of the existence of an atmosphere surrounding the moon, the lecturer said:—If we are to make our argument of the moon being inhabited from analogy, we must start from some of the essential conditions of life in this globe. Take for instance, air,—could we conceive existence without it, how strange would it be. Little is thought in our daily career of the functions of the atmosphere. In its absence, eternal silence must reign, conversation be carried on only by signs, the eagle and condor would flap their wings in vain attempts to rise, no fuel would burn; nothing but electric light dispel the darkness. No tinted clouds nor gorgeous skies, but monotony of scene, ubiquity of darkness. Failing thus to exhibit the prime motor of life, it has been asserted that the moon is no evidence of the plurality of worlds. But modern discovery has shewn that there may be a probability of life existing there unknown to us. It has always been thought that what was applicable to one side of her disc, was applicable to the other. But to Mr. Hausen, a distinguished continental astronomer, is due the honor of discovering a discrepancy in that idea. The slightest deviation in time of the moon's course is noted accurately, and several cases of irregularity he has ascribed to the effect of uneven gravitation. He states that the centre of gravity and the centre of figure are not coincident, one being distant from the other eight miles! Thus her sphere is composed of a light and heavy half. An egg with its small end pointed to the eye, represents well its figure. Balls have been cast hollow, but with one side thicker than the other, the density being given, calculation described the curve to a nicety, and vice versa. His conclusion, then, is that the hemisphere turned towards us is the lighter half. The application of this to the question of inhabitants is very direct, as air and water would naturally gravitate to the heaviest side; and the imagination is free to picture on the hidden side of the moon a world corresponding to our own in the enjoyments of air and water.

MUSIC vs. LIGHT.—The Messenger, of Ixelles in Belgium, contains a strange account of some experiments which, it affirms, have taken place in that town, to show the effect produced by music on petroleum oil lamps. That journal asserts that they are at once extinguished by a certain note sounded on a brass instrument. "During a quatuor," it says, "three or four lamps placed in different parts of the room went out simultaneously, and M. Dubem, professor at the Brussels Conservatoire of Music, extinguished eight lamps successively by the sound of a trumpet." Very strange, if true.

A LETTER from Athens says: "An English company is now making application to the Greek Provisional Government for the concession of different railways. The intention is to have one principal line, about two hundred and thirty-two miles in length, which, starting from the Gulf of Arta, would run along the coast of Acarnania and the Bay of Corinth, to Thebes and Porto Baphiti, a port situated near Cape Sunium; also, two secondary lines from Thebes to Athens, and from the latter city to the Isthmus of Corinth."

When sorrows surprise you, and your heart is wounded, then one leaf from the tree of life to staunch the bleeding will be precious.

A COLUMN FOR MOTHERS.

THE FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

"FANNY," said Mrs. Adams to her sister, "how do you manage to teach your children everything? Mine go to the same school, and are in the same classes, but they seem so far behind them when they are playing together. Now I believe we learned a half-a-dozen things from Maria and Willie when they were at our house last Saturday. She showed me how to kill the moths in my carpet, by laying a wet cloth over it and then passing a hot iron over it softly. The steam is sure death to them. Then Will got our bucket out of the well by using the steelyards and clothes-line. We were at our wits' end because the rope had broken, and we had not a drop of water to get dinner with. How do they know all these things, I should like to find out?"

"They read the papers, Annie!" said the mother, laughing. "That is the only branch they take up, different from your children. Then I have taught them to make a scrap-book together, in which they save all the useful, interesting little items that would otherwise be lost and forgotten. I dare say you will find that 'remedy for moths' in it among the receipts, and I remember Willie's telling me of some boys he read of, who got the bucket out of the well in that manner. You know I have often urged you to take a good family paper, if only for your children's sake. The political one you have can, of course, not be very interesting or profitable to them. A good religious newspaper, which the children are taught to read every week is like a gold mine in your garden. You cannot estimate its worth in money. They will gather new and valuable ideas from it by hundreds; they will learn lessons that will be useful to themselves and others all their lives; they will be more intelligent men and women when they grow up, and be far better fitted to take care of themselves in the world. The reading men and women get a living a great deal easier than others. Then, too, the religious knowledge they gain may be, as it often has been, the means of leading to Jesus. By all means, Annie, take a religious newspaper this year, for your family, if you wear your winter bonnet all summer to pay for it. It is an easy matter to save out two dollars from your household expenses, when you have such an important end to gain."

Will not every mother take to heart this lesson, and encourage her children to read with care the family paper, and instruct them how to preserve in a readable shape the useful items they may find in it? And remember, you do a life-long kindness to every family you can by any means induce to take your family newspaper.

THE INFLUENCE AND PLEASURES OF HOME.

SELF CONTROL and discipline must be learned at home, or license in after life will surely follow. Let home be the nursery of truth, of refinement, of simplicity, and of taste. Study to make it attractive to your children by every means in your power, and lose no opportunity for improving their minds and cultivating their home affections. Let system and order, industry and study, taste and refinement, be cultivated at home, and comfort, harmony, and peace will reign within your dwelling, however humble. Do your children love music, or drawing, or flowers, encourage their taste to the utmost of your ability. Indeed, where the love of music pervades a family, and is judiciously cultivated, it is an important aid in the training of children; for the child whose soul is touched with melody easily yields to the voice of affection and seldom requires severity. More than this, the harsh tones of the father's voice, as it commands, and the cutting tones of the mother as she forbids, become milder and more persuasive, if accustomed to join with their children in these recreations, and thus both parents and children are mutually refined and elevated. Let me add that I cannot conceive of any purer enjoyment than is felt by the head of a family, as wife and children gather about him, and pour forth their sweet voices in songs of praise at the morning sacrifice and the evening oblation. If the father has money to spare, I do not doubt that he might make a good investment in a piano, a melodeon, or some other musical instrument, to accompany the voices of his wife and children, provided always that practice on these instruments be not allowed to interfere with the practice at the kneading-trough, the wash board, or with any other duty that a true woman, be she daughter, sister, wife, or mother, ought to understand. These duties and these pleasures are in no degree incompatible with each other, or out of keeping with a farmer's home. Whatever tends to develop the intellect, to refine the taste and purify the affections, may find a fitting place in every farmer's house. If he has wealth, none has a better right to adorn his walls with the gems of art, and surround his home with all that is beautiful in cultivated nature.

A GOOD TEST.

A stranger entering a prayer-meeting, made some remarks, in the course of which he said, "If you don't believe I've got religion, go and ask my wife; she'll tell you." The expression came out so bluntly as almost to cause an explosion of laughter. But is it not a good reference? Many a man's estimate of his own religion might be proved all vanity by just asking his wife, and getting an honest answer from her. How does his religion make him act at home? That is the grand test.

Keep in good humor, anger is pure waste of vitality. No man does his best except he is cheerful.

Missionary Intelligence.

BURMAH.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF MR. VAN METER.

Revival among the Burmans.—Bassein, Nov. 10, 1863.—We are glad to be able again to tell of new conversions from among the heathen, and of additions to our churches. The number thus far reported has been small compared with those of 1862; but from present signs, we may hope that the Spirit is moving on many hearts, and that, as a result, not a few will be brought into the fold of Christ before the close of this year. The additions are from among both Burmans and Karens. I give now some account of the former.

Early in September, Leh Saung, pastor of the Pay Beng church, sent an earnest request for Burman hymn books and tracts, especially the catechism.—Two Burman families had just come into his village, with the design of settling with them and receiving instruction in the doctrines of Christ.

14.—Sent Shweg Long and Tha Bwa to visit these families and others in that vicinity, to assure them of our interest, and to encourage them to persevere.—Tha Bwa was prevented by sickness from going beyond his own village, which is about half the distance. Shweg Long went on alone. He reports these families are very poor, needing help, and thinks that one motive of their coming to this village was to get aid, as others had, from these Christian Karens. The women, he says, seemed much more interested than their husbands. He visited the other villages, but saw nothing of special interest.

Inquirers.—Influence of a Christian Life.—26.—Ko Bike and Ko Lo start on a tour to the north of Bassein. They returned Oct. 4th, much encouraged.—They report the names of several, in different places, who have been considered as inquirers for some time. They received them gladly, seemed anxious for instruction, but are not yet ready to acknowledge Christ publicly.

Another important fact is the increasing influence of solitary Christians, or families, in villages where all others are heathen. Their exemplary lives, and faithful, though quiet, testimony for the truth of the gospel, is gradually gaining upon the convictions of their neighbors. In one instance, at Khyoung Kon, where for two years past there has been but one disciple, a timid, retiring young man,—now, father, mother and other members of the family, if not of the village, are about ready to unite with him in the worship of Jesus.

New Converts.—The day after the return of Ko Bike and Ko Lo, Moung Op, the preacher formerly in the city, but now located on the river Duggah, the region visited by them,—came in accompanied by several applicants for baptism. I thought at first of having them wait for a few weeks, until I could go and see them in their homes, and administer the ordinance in their own village; but they seemed so anxious and gave such satisfactory responses to all our inquiries and suggestions, that it hardly seemed right to refuse them. Four were received at this time, two males and two females. Of the number, two were husband and wife, and had been avowed disciples for only a few months.

But though so recent, Shweg On, the husband, had given very careful attention to reading and investigation, as was evident from his examination, and had also formerly, for some time, heard the truths of the gospel from one of the Karen preachers in the Henthada district. He is an educated and intelligent man, and has already been laboring earnestly to convince others of the value and importance of gospel truth. In his examination, special mention was made of contributing for the support of the gospel. I expected to see some sign of disappointment or surprise; but so far from this, he assented promptly and cheerfully to the claim. The other female was Moung Op's own mother-in-law; making the fourth member of this family baptized within a little more than one year. At the time of his marriage (a second wife) some two years since, no member of the family; not even his wife was a Christian.

The Chinese Members.—Oct. 11.—Sunday. Moung Op is in again with a company of his people, two or three of whom are asking for baptism, and those recently baptized are desirous of partaking of the Lord's Supper. And I have now definitely promised to be with them at Sat Khyoung next Sabbath. Our congregation to-day was larger than for some time past. Ko Han, the Chinese member, excluded some three months ago for dealing in arrack, was present for the first time since. He says he is anxious to give it up, and will do so as soon as he can sell without too great a sacrifice. I am sorry to say that owing to the action in Ko Han's case, or for some other reason, the Chinese portion of the congregation is not so regular in attendance or so numerous as formerly.

SIAM.

LETTER FROM MR. SMITH.

Bangkok, Nov. 5, 1863.—One, we trust, has given himself to our blessed Master, and has united with the church. And though only one has done so, we are not faithless nor are we discouraged. We feel confident that God will yet raise up for Himself a chosen people, if the field is but properly cultivated. The work may be slow and tedious, but the results will be glorious, if there is a sufficient force and sufficient means for its accomplishment. We pray for more faith and for more laborers, knowing that the Father, for Jesus' sake, will give as He has promised.