

Youth's Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, October 23rd, 1864.

Read—LUKE ix. 23-42: The transfiguration of Christ.
1 SAMUEL xxiii. 1-18: Saul's pursuit of David.
Recite—JOB v. 18-20.

Sunday, October 30th, 1864.

Read—LUKE ix. 43-62: Christ rebukes the love of pre-eminence. 1 SAMUEL xxiii. 19-29: Saul continues to pursue David.
Recite—COLONIANS iii. 1-3.

The following lively narrative will interest our more advanced readers as well as our young friends. It is a fine illustration of what is done in some places by means of Reformatory Institutions, and may suggest such means of doing good to those who regard the vicious as almost irreclaimable.

BUSTER AND BABY JIM.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BLUE FLAG," ETC.

"With God all things are possible."

CHAPTER I. THE BROTHERS.

There is a sunny street-corner in one of our cities, which was once the favorite lounging-place for the idle boys of all that neighborhood. In fair weather or foul, a knot of little fellows was sure to be collected there, buzzing away like bees, if they were not gathering honey. They talked and laughed and cracked their jokes, and seemed in truth a "merric company;" yet when the careful mothers who lived hard by sent out their sons on errands, they were sure to say, "Do n't stop at the corner," or, "Go round the other way, so that you need not pass that corner."

It was not that the group of boys which we have spoken could not boast some well-dressed lads among them, that they were condemned; no, it was not on account of their torn, shabby clothing, that they were such undesirable associates. Wise heads knew that such idle loungers were on the road to wickedness, if they had not already been guilty of crime. Passers-by might now and then hear an oath from their young lips, and the Sunday morning bells did not send them to the pleasant Sabbath-school, or bid them join happy families on their way to church. Two of God's commandments at least they were breaking; they could not be companions which any good mother would wish for her son.

Among the most unflinching frequenters of "the corner" were two brothers, who were known among their friends as "Buster" and "Baby Jim;" what their real names were no one knew, and on this point they were as ignorant as every body else. Ever since they could remember they had been wanderers in the streets of the great city, living by begging, pilfering, or by the doubtful charities of people far gone in wickedness. Just now they had some new acquaintances who seemed to take a great fancy to them. Buster and Baby Jim had found a house where they could always get a comfortable meal, and where rough men gave them a hearty welcome and seemed to take a special pleasure in counting the boys "one of them." Sundry hints had been thrown out as to teaching the brothers how to make a handsome living, and "Baby Jim" was led to believe there was a very easy way for him to lay up stores of money, and ride in his own carriage one of these days. The little chap could not help thinking that this would be much more agreeable than his present diversion of "hanging on behind" in imminent danger of the coachman's whip, though it might not be quite so exciting.

Through the day the boys were at the street corner, lounging and chatting, but in the evening they were going through a course of lessons preparatory to the very profitable branch of business on which they were expected to enter.

Poor young things; without father or mother, ignorant and penniless, what was to prevent them from starting upon a career of crime, to end in prison or on the scaffold? They had no true friend to warn them; no faithful, loving friend to call them to the ways of pleasantness and peace, and teach them the joy of honest labor and the manly satisfaction of earning their own bread.

As it was, the week went by, and Baby Jim's small face grew more keen, eager, and cunning in its expression; while Buster's every limb and feature spoke of the future ruffian, daily increasing in strength and daring.

There was scarcely a year's difference between the ages of the boys. They knew that, though strangers could hardly believe it. They well remembered it was their delight to stand side by side under the projecting shop windows, not an inch's difference in their height, though Buster even then claimed authority as the elder brother.

Exposure and hard usage had stunted little Jim; but his thin wiry figure seemed made of springs of steel, and was more than a match in strength for many a taller, sturdier form; yet with Buster he never presumed to contend. Truly Buster was too formidable an adversary for any of the boys lightly to engage him in battle. The big, burly lad was a kind of king among his associates, laying down the law, and sustaining his authority like many another monarch, by the irresistible argument of brute force.

Poor, tempted, sinful street-vagrants as were Buster and Baby Jim, there yet lingered in

their hearts one feeling which made them akin, though afar off, to saints and angels, and even proved them lost and wandering children of the God of love.

A true, deep affection for each other had somehow sprung up and been fostered in the midst of the hardening, miserable life they had led. Sharers of the same pangs of hunger and cold, alike neglected by all the world, they had grown doubly dear to each other through sympathy in suffering and loneliness.

Baby Jim lost his keen, old look when his eye fell admiringly on his brother, and the innocence of infancy and the softness of a woman would for the moment hover in his face, beautifying and purifying it as it spoke out the real love that was stirring within.

It was when Buster's arm was thrown protectively round his little companion, and only then, that one could catch a glimpse of the better side of his nature. At such times the defiant, swaggering young bully would for the moment show that union of strength and tenderness, of power and forbearance, which gives to a bold and manly character a peculiar charm.

It was perhaps as much to their true affection for each other that the brothers owed their influence among their associates, as to Buster's strength or the acknowledged shrewdness of Baby Jim.

What is true, noble, and good must ever have its power over the most abandoned of men. While the poor straggling vagrants of the street corner mockingly gave to big Buster and little Jim the name of "the Twins," each young heart in secret yielded its tribute of admiration and approval to the faithful love of the brothers.

CHAPTER II. "BUTTER AND EGGS."

All that is learned in the world is not gathered from books. A man or boy who will keep his eyes and ears open, will find out much that was never put in print. Many of the lads at the street corner could at the best but spell out a sign, or slowly read the headings in great letters on an "extra;" yet there was a kind of knowledge afloat among them which had for them its own use, not always of the most innocent kind.

The passers-by did not need to tell these observing boys who they were, or what was their business. A lawyer, a doctor, a merchant, a clerk, or a mechanic was as well known by them at a glance, as if he had his occupation put on the band of his hat, like the porters of city hotels. They could distinguish the up-town from the down-town people, and the "West-enders" from "east-enders." Plain clothing could not hide from them the comfortable, easy look of one who has always had his wants gratified without exertion; nor could the gayest finery shut their eyes to the empty purses of the foolish women who spent their all to make a fine show upon the public street. A countryman might try to look as much at ease as he pleased, and deck himself in new attire from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet; they knew where he came from, without the help of hob-nailed shoes or homespun to tell the story.

"Butter and eggs," said Buster to Baby Jim one day.

Jim followed the direction of his brother's finger, and saw a stout, cheerful-looking woman coming slowly towards the group among which he was standing.

"Yes," said Jim, nodding assent. "First visit to the city: Full purse; pocket on the left side drops heavy." The subject of these remarks was quite unconscious of any thing in her appearance suggestive either of the dairy or the farm-yard, but of neither would she have dreamed of being ashamed. She did not look like a person to be ashamed of any thing she said or did, at home or abroad. Her full face, with its rosy cheeks and wide-open blue eyes, was beaming with truth and kindness. She felt no mortification about her style of dress truly, though a foolish city belle would rather have stayed at home from church every Sunday for a month, than have worn that odd gray linen cottage bonnet, or that mousseline de laine, so perfect a reflection of the flower-garden in June. Our stranger was perhaps a little proud of her appearance, complacent at least, but not so far as to despise others less fortunate than herself. Her eye softened as it fell on the group of ragged boys, and her hand instinctively sought the left-hand pocket, where, as Jim had rightly judged, her funds were reposing.

Whatever might have been her kindly intention, she was not allowed to carry it out. There was a stir among the boys as she approached, and Jim exclaimed, "Now for it. Who'll get to the next corner first?"

At this challenge the whole party set off at full speed, rushing past the stranger as if borne on the wings of the wind. Unconsciously crowded and nudged by the rude little crew, the good woman could hardly keep her place on the sidewalk, and the glance she sent after them expressed any thing but approval of their proceedings. Gathering up her dress, she stepped quickly on, making mean-while mental comparisons between the manners of the city and the country, in which the region of butter and eggs had the decided preference.

At the appointed corner the runners stopped. A smile went round the group as Jim held up a well-filled purse, which in the confusion he had managed to take from the pocket of the country woman.

Buster struck it from his hand to the pavement, exclaiming, "Police! Run for your lives!"

Jim and his companions disappeared down an alley as if made invisible by a spell, while Buster stopped, picked up the purse, and pro-

ceeded to examine the contents, as if he felt himself in perfect security. The strong hand of a policeman was laid upon his shoulder, and there was an exclamation in his ear: "I saw it all. No lies, youngster; I know your tricks."

Buster had acted on the impulse of the moment, prompted by the desire to save his brother; and now, when he found himself a prisoner, his courage for a moment forsook him. He knew that his boasted strength was as nothing compared with the powerful figure of the policeman. Swift and stinging were the thoughts that rushed through his mind as he was hurried rapidly along by his captor. Already in imagination the grim cold walls of a prison were closing around him; already he was cut off from freedom and sunshine, and gazing sadly at the small barred window whose glimmer of light cast the only brightness on his dark lot.

Buster was but a lad, scarce twelve years old, and big tears forced themselves into his eyes as this gloomy picture presented itself to his mind.

The policeman, eager to overtake the countrywoman, lost no time in examining the face or studying the feelings of the culprit. Buster's tears were unnoticed, and the hardened, sullen look which he had summoned to conceal his fears was all that met the eye of the officer when at length he paused beside the object of his pursuit.

"Is this your purse, madam?" asked the policeman.

The woman put her hand in her pocket, and she exclaimed, "That it is. I must have dropped it. I believe I did take out my handkerchief a piece back."

The little group was here joined by a gentleman, whose eager inquiries were soon answered by a full account of the affair from the policeman, in which he left no doubt of Buster's guilt. The stranger was not yet forty years old, but he had all the dignity and wisdom of age, united with the fresh, loving sympathies of youth. A thorough Christian in heart and life, like his divine Master, he gave to the sinful and unfortunate his most tender interest.

His glance was full of yearning pity as it fell on Buster's young face. The boy looked up suddenly as the stranger took his hand and said, "I am sorry for all this, my little fellow. Perhaps it may not prove so bad as it seems. Suppose you tell me the truth about it."

"I did n't steal the purse," said Buster, for the first time breaking silence.

"Just as likely as not I dropped it. I'm not used to having money about me much," said the woman, now becoming uneasy and anxious to be through with the disagreeable scene. "Let the boy go. I'm to be off in the cars in less than an hour, and can't stand here talking. Look here, my lad, you are young to be walking in bad ways. May the Lord take care of you and keep you out of sin."

There was real earnestness in the woman's manner, and as she walked quickly away, Buster felt as if he were losing a friend.

"You do n't get off so," said the officer. "I know you, and you've got to stand your trial this time. It may keep your neck from the gallows to hide in the jug a while now; so come along with me, and put on a pleasanter face, if you can."

The rough, coarse manner of the policeman won from Buster no reply but a look of blustering defiance, while from the stranger's glance he turned away, as if unable to answer its tender pity.

John, the Grave-digger.

MR. GRAY had not been long minister of the parish till he noticed the odd practice of the grave-digger; and one day when he came upon John smoothing and trimming the lonely bed of a child which had been buried a few days before, he asked why he was so particular in dressing and heaping the graves of infants. John paused for a moment at his work, and looking up, not at the minister, but at the sky, said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"And on this account you tend and adorn them with so much care?" remarked the minister, who was greatly struck with the reply.

"Surely, sir," answered John, "I canna make over braw and fine the bed-covering o' a little innocent sleeper that is watin' there till it's God's time to waken it and cover it with a white robe, and wait it away to glory. Where sic grandeur is awaitin' it yonder, it's fit it should be decked out here. I think the Saviour will like to see white clover spread abune it; dae ye no think sae tae, sir?"

But why not thus cover larger graves?" asked the minister, hardly able to suppress his emotions. The dust of all his saints is precious in the Saviour's sight."

Very true, sir," responded John, with great solemnity, "but I canna be sure wha are his saints, and wha are no. I hope-there are many of them lyin' in this kirkyard; but it wad be great presumption to mark them out. There are some that I'm gey sae aboot, and I keep their graves as nate and snod as I can, and plant a bit flour here and there as a sign of my hope; but daurna gie them the white shirt, referring to the white-clover. "It's clean different, though, wi the bairns"—*The Gem.*

In a London Omnibus.—A Sketch.

A mighty woman with a bundle, a cross woman with a baby, an uncomfortable woman with a dog, an old gentleman with an ear-trumpet, a beaming young lady with an expansive crinoline, and the usual complement of nothing-particular-people, including myself, John Hayes, gentleman at large. I would not have been inside if I could have helped it; nor in an omnibus

at all if I could have helped it; and, judging from the surrounding faces, we were all in the same plight. We were all hot, and we all hated one another. When a fellow-creature is visibly radiating the caloric one already has in excess, hatred for him, or even her, follows in logical sequence, and we were waiting, absolutely waiting, for more passengers.

"Are you going on, conductor," said a mild gentleman near the door.

"Gent's of inquirin' turn o' mind," was the reply, addressed to the lamp-post. The meek man was quenched, but the mighty woman, pointing into the omnibus, said—"Look there, conductor," and he peered in. Her tone was so solemnly expressive that we were all conscience-stricken. The uncomfortable woman covered her dog to the verge of suffocation, the old gentleman put up his ear-trumpet, as I have noticed deal people generally do if there is anything to be seen; I being conscious of an odour of half-burnt cigar about my waistcoat pocket, tried to look Eau-de-Cologne. The mighty woman repeated "Look there," and the conductor's eyes, as in a mesmeric sleep, followed her finger up to the end and the roof of the omnibus. Then he read aloud—"In case of incivility." There he stopped, and grunted "Ugh!" But that conductor was conquered; how delighted we all were, and with what toadyism we looked at the mighty woman, who tried to seem unconscious, and at last failed ignominiously by breaking into a hearty laugh, and exclaiming, "That did him, I think; but it was almost a shame, poor fellow." We ceased to honour, and began to love our champion after this.

"Please help me in, I'm blind." It was the tiniest, sweetest voice; we all turned to see a little girl lay her hand confidently on the conductor's arm. I took her from him as fearfully as if she had been in very truth what she looked like—my parian Clytie—the same pure sweet face, with the delicate features and drooping white eyelids; but the sadness of her pallor was relieved by the vivid dark gold of her hair, which fell in soft thick rolls into her neck.

"Isn't there a dog here?" she said presently. "Yes, darling," and the dog's owner, as she handed it to the child, looked uncomfortable no longer, the blind face turned to her's seemed to charm away its nervousness.

"What a dear little fellow," said Clytie, and the rough terrier grew popular.

"Do they let you go far alone?" said cross woman.

"Oh, yes," The little one gave a low glad laugh of triumph. "I've been to the blind school; I can do everything for myself now."

"Would you mind saying that again, my dear? I'm very deaf," said the old gentleman. She repeated her sentence, adding, with an odd womanly pity, "It must be so sad to be deaf."

I said involuntarily, "You don't look as though you were ever sad."

"I? Oh no, I never am now Emy is well."

"Who is Emy?"

"Why, my little sister; oh! such a little darling, but she was ill for a long time, so long."

Clytie's voice faltered, as though she was living over again a great sorrow.

"But she is well, now?" I said.

"Oh yes, quite strong, and it is so nice."

"Have you many sisters and brothers?" asked the young lady.

"No, only Emy, and one brother, baby Tom; he's such a great fat fellow, and he laughs, you can't think how he laughs." If it was anything like the musical rill his sister sent rippling through the air, I should like to have heard that baby.

"What does he laugh at?" said the cross woman.

"Oh, everything; at Emy and me, when we play Panch and July; and at dinner, when there's dumplings, and sometimes he lays on the floor, and laughs at himself, and we laugh too, it's so funny." The little one's mirth was infectious, we all joined in, with various modulations of the roar of the deaf gentleman, who could not stop himself, and set us off again, little Clytie clapping her soft gloved hands, till she made the dog bark, and the conductor looked in to say, "Well, it ever I see such a row."

"Euston-road, please," said Clytie, turning into a business woman all at once.

The unwelcome place seemed to come directly; as I turned from helping the child out, I saw the cross woman's face breaking up into tears.

"It's queer," she said, "but I feel like to cry to see her so merry."

I was unpleasantly conscious of what my dear dead mother used to call the apple in my throat, so I was grateful to the deaf gentleman for saying "Eh!" and saving the effort of replying. We all fell into quietness, but it was curious to notice how forbearing we grew to one another; the child's great loss, worn like a flower-crown on the head of some pictured saint, made our petty discomforts all melt away. The young lady began to play with the baby, the old gentleman with the dog, and I, who object to all gratuities on the principle of never having any money to spare, was, absolutely pleased, when the mighty woman handed back her change to her vanquished foe, saying,

"Never mind the penny, conductor."

Even the cross woman grew quite interesting, a reminiscence of a youth she had known when she was a girl, who had recovered his sight after being blind for a year.

I think, if, instead of being a plucked civil service candidate, I could be a woman with a mission, I would choose that of my unconscious little Clytie.—*Cor. of The Queen.*

The christian's hope of heaven is the sweetness of prosperity, and the support of adversity, and cures us at once of all attachment to the world, or expectation of rest in it.