

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, June 19th, 1864.

Read—LUKE III. 15-23: Christ's Baptism. 1 SAMUEL XIV. 36-52: Saul's imprudent alijuration.

Recite—JOHN VI. 35-37.

Sunday, June 26th, 1864.

Read—LUKE IV. 1-15: The temptations of Christ. 1 SAMUEL XV. 1-15: Saul destroys the Amalekites.

Recite—JOHN XI. 25, 26.

THE RIGHT END OF THE SKEIN.

BY MRS. H. B. STOWE.

Mrs. Morris had passed a delightful Sabbath. It had closed a week every day of which had been devoted to special religious offices by the church to which she belonged, and each day, by its prayers, its sermons and hymns, had lifted her as by successive waves on wave, to a higher and still serene height of religious enjoyment. Seated now in the calm twilight of the Sabbath, she reviewed the week as from some serene height the traveller looks over an evening landscape. Never had she seemed to herself to have risen to calmer regions of the spiritual life. The world of common interests and petty cares; all that ever had distracted or wearied her, seemed to lie far below her feet, as a faintly remembered dream. There seemed no longer to be any trouble she could not endure, any cross she could not easily carry. The year had been marked with disappointment and bereavement; but now the yearning of bereavement was still; a celestial light seemed to gild even that distant grave over which she had shed so many tears. "Yes," she said to herself, in a sort of inward rapture, "at last the mystery of sorrow begins to explain itself, and God's will and my will have become one. This great peace is worth all it cost."

In the midst of all this peace she was conscious of a sort of shuddering aversion at the thought of Monday. Mother of a large family, pressed with a thousand daily and hourly calls, she felt the repugnance to pass from the serene spiritual regions of tranquil thought to the coarse common place of life. Then, too, she was a woman of sensitive nerves, quick to feel the jar and shock of aught that was jarring. Ah, she sighed, if it were only my duty to listen and to adore, if the worship and services of a holy week like this might be perpetual, if I could be in some serene, calm retreat where selected souls worship perpetually, surely, I might almost live without sin forever.

But Monday rose—bright, positive, sharp, worldly Monday—most Martha-like of all days of the week; and with it came burned toast and washy coffee for breakfast, to the manifest discomfort of the masculine head of the family; and when inquiry was made into causes, came back the message, "Cook says she is not going to get the breakfasts washing days, any more. Them as wants it must get it themselves."

The second girl in the staff, from whose unpractised hands originated the defective articles, was sure it wasn't her place to get it, and in general the week was ushered in, in as uncomfortable a manner as possible; and Mrs. Morris, being thoroughly discomposed, lost patience, and spoke several sharp words all around;—the celestial peace was broken. The domestic trouble was after a while smoothed over and arranged, but she was vexed with herself, and somewhat vexed that she should be met in the very outset of the week by such a mortification.

In the course of the forenoon came in Miss Martha Bright Body, the general factotum of all the benevolent arrangements and sewing societies of the church, to hold a consultation with Mrs. Morris—and as is very apt to be the case with these excellent people who gather a handful of seed out of every body's vineyard, she dropped some grains of strife here and there among her good seed.

"Do you know, Mrs. Morris," she said, "Mrs. Brown said she thought you hadn't shown good judgment in buying those calicoes? She said you gave too much a yard by three cents. I stood up for you. For my part I think Mrs. Brown always wants to have the lead in every thing herself; and then Mrs. Simpkins said you did n't do your part in having the society meet at your house; and I put 'em in mind how you'd been afflicted, and all that. I always stand up well to 'em, I can tell you;" and then came another half-hour of talk, and the good soul went away, leaving the sting of two nettles strokes to inflame in her listener's heart.

"Why should I mind it?" she said to herself a dozen times that day; but she did mind it. It came between her and her peace, and often hung on her with a vague sense of something disagreeable, even when she put it out of her mind.

It would seem as if the week, so inauspiciously begun, was fated to poor Mrs. Morris. Her cook was in one of those surly periods to which the minds of most human beings are often subject, and nobody can say why cooks shouldn't be allowed their ill humors sometimes, as well as their betters; at all events, Mrs. Morris' head woman had such phases, which were only borne in peace because of her general honesty and ability. The second girl, a new hand, was well meaning, but blundering, and succeeded on Tuesday in breaking an elegant cut glass dish, which had come down as an heirloom to Mrs. Morris, from her mother's family. Had it been the death of a child, Mrs. Morris would have borne the stroke like an angel, but

as it was only her best glass dish, she thought she did well to be angry, and was angry, accordingly. In short, so many mischances happened in this luckless week, that when Sunday came again, she seemed to herself like some ebullient, shipwrecked mariner, who crawls, shivering, on to a rock to dry his wet garments and look about him. What a difference between this Sunday and the last!

"How am I ever to make progress in religion?" she said to her old Aunt Martha, who had come to spend the day with her. "I really think if I had nothing to do but attend on the means of grace; if we could have constant Sabbaths, and prayers, and hymns, I might endure; but each week's cares seem to wash out what Sunday does."

"Daughter!" said Aunt Martha, "you haven't got hold of the right end of the skein. It won't unwind as you are doing it."

"Do tell me, then, what is the right end?"

"The right way is to call your crosses and your cares your means of grace. They are better than prayers, and psalms, and hymns, when you take them in that way. Your means of grace, this week, have been your servant's ill tempers; the breaking of your glass dish; your children's heedlessness; the little, unjust, provoking things people have said of you. Call these your means of grace, accept, value, use them as such, and you will grow faster in religion than if you went to church every day of the week."

Mrs. Morris was silent. A whole new vein of thought was awakened within her.

"Now," said Aunt Martha, "have you told your Father in heaven all these things you have been telling me?"

"These things! O no! It has been my object to keep such trifles out of my mind in my prayers."

"Better let them in, and show them to Him."

"These little foolish things?"

"It seems they are great enough to hinder your peace; to stand in the way of your Christian life; if they can do that, they are not little things. Call them your lessons; take them into your prayers, speak freely to your Father of them; look at them as the daily tasks He sets you; believe every one of them has an appointed meaning, and no church or sermon can do so much for you. My child, I had not been alive this day, if I had not learned to do this."

Mrs. Morris knew that her aunt had been through the long trial which only the wife of a drunkard knows, and yet the peace of God was written in every line of her face, and these few words showed the secret of that peace. She resolved that the next week she would try and begin the skein at the right end.

Good friend, if your life skein will not wind smoothly, try the same experiment.

DON'T SPARE THE SEED.

BY THE REV. JOHN TODD, D. D.

A young farmer had his field nicely ploughed and harrowed, and was about to put in the seed. He first measured the field, and found how many rods there were in it. He next measured a rod and calculated how many plants it would take to fill it. He then calculated the seed in a half-gill, in a pint, in a quart, and in a bushel. The result was that he was satisfied that people usually sow four times the seed necessary. A peck was just a good as a bushel. Now seed was very dear, and if he could save three-fourths of his seed, it would be worth his while.

So he sowed his peck of seed—"sowed sparingly"—and at harvest time the crop was not worth gathering! He was greatly disappointed. Where was the mistake? He felt sure he had calculated and measured right. He then went to old Mr. Experience, a farmer of long standing and of great success, and told him his troubles.

"I am sure I calculated right."

"No, you didn't calculate right."

"Why not?"

"Did you calculate for the poor seed that could not germinate at any rate? There is a great deal of such in every bushel we sow."

"Why, I never thought of that."

"Did you calculate for some that would be buried too deep, or get into holes and not sprout?"

"Certainly not."

"Did you calculate for a great deal that would lie on the top of the ground, and which the birds would pick up before the rains fell, when it could take root?"

"I never thought of that either."

"Did you calculate for what the wind would blow off, or you would throw off from your lot?"

"No, sir."

"Very well. You see how it is that you did not obtain a harvest. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly. It is a law of God's wise government that runs through everything. You must think it over the next time you measure out your seed, and it will be worth more to you than the crop you have lost."

"I don't understand you, Mr. Experience. Will you please to explain it to me a little?"

"Well now, what ails Mr. Easy's family that they don't turn out better?"

"Very plain, sir; they were sent to school very little during the week, went to Sabbath-school only now and then, were not taught and made to be industrious. They were not rightly educated."

"In other words, they were neglected—the seed of what makes valuable character was too sparingly sown. The seed of industry and frugality and of religion was not sown freely, and they reap sparingly. There's our minister, a dear, good man. But he gets discouraged.

He preaches on the Sabbath and sees no results. He feels that to go out here and there in the neglected neighborhoods and preach would do no good. He wonders why he must sow so much seed and gather in no more. How many of his best sermons have been apparently lost in the air! And yet he should not be discouraged. He must sow his seed in the morning, and not withhold in the evening, and sow beside all waters. Much will be lost. Even the seed of life thrown upon the ten lepers from the hand of our Saviour took root only in one heart. What if our labors and toils, to a good degree, be lost? We must sow the more. It is a great and general law of God, that 'He that soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully.'

"Thank you, thank you, Mr. Experience. I will think it over. I see just how I made a mistake—and more than one. I will go home and talk it all over with my sister Mary. We have both been teachers in our Sabbath-school for years, as you know. We were talking it over lately, how it is that we have seen so little fruits in our classes. I see how it is—we have been too sparing of the seed. We have not studied the lesson enough, been interested enough, and have not prayed enough over it and for them. We have thought that a peck of seed ought to produce as much as a bushel. We never calculated that we should sow much poor seed, that some of it would never get into the soil before the birds picked it up, and that some would be blown off. I see it now. I see that the farmer, the minister, the teacher,—all must sow bountifully if they would reap bountifully."

The Beggar.

Encouraged by Thy word
Of promise to the poor,
Behold a beggar, Lord,
Waits at Thy mercy's door!
No hand, no heart, O Lord, but Thine,
Can help or pity wants like mine.

The beggar's usual plea,
Relief from men to gain,
If offered unto Thee,
I know Thou wouldst disdain;
And pleas which move Thy gracious ear
Are such as men would scorn to hear.

I have no right to say,
That though I now am poor,
Yet once there was a day
When I possessed more:
Thou know'st that from my very birth
I've been the poorest wretch on earth.

Nor can I dare profess,
As beggars often do,
Though great is my distress,
My faults have been but few:
If Thou shouldst leave my soul to starve,
It would be what I well deserve.

'Twere folly to pretend
I never begged before,
Or if Thou now befriend,
I'll trouble Thee no more:
Thou often hast relieved my pain,
And often I must come again.

Though crumbs are much too good
For such a wretch as I,
No less than children's food
My soul can satisfy.
O, do not frown and bid me go!
I must have all Thou canst bestow.

Nor can I willing be
Thy bounty to conceal
From others, who, like me,
Their wants and hunger feel:
I'll tell them of Thy mercy's store,
And try to send a thousand more.

Thy thoughts, Thou only Wise!
Our thoughts and ways transcend,
Far as the arches skies
Above the earth extend:
Such pleas as mine men would not hear,
But God receives a beggar's prayer.

Literature.

Letter B.—A lady occupying room letter B at one of the hotels wrote on the slate the following: "Wake letter B at seven; and if letter B says, 'Let us be, don't letter B be, because if you let letter B be, letter B will be unable to let her house to Mr. B, who is to be on hand at half-past seven.' The porter, a better boot-black than orthographer, did not know at seven whether to wake "letter B" or "let her be."

The story is quite old of Mr. Ottiwell Wood's way of spell his name:

"O, double T,
I, double U,
E, double L,
double U,
double O,
D."

The lawyer who asked him in court how to spell it, was unable to write it down.

Persons fond of economizing words sometimes use letters in their stead. The fate of all earthly things is spelled in two letters—D. K. Effigy is spelled F. I. G. A man being asked by a young lady what phonography was, took out his pencil and wrote the following, telling her that was phonography: "U. R. A. B. U. T. L. N.!" (You are a beauty, Ellen.)

Curiosities of the Ocean Bottom.

Mr. Green, the famous diver, tells singular stories of his adventures, when making search in the deep waters of the ocean. He gives some new sketches of what he saw at the "Silver Banks," near Hayti.

"The banks of the coral on which my dives were made, are about forty miles in length, and from ten to twenty in breadth. On this bank of the coral is presented to the diver one of the most beautiful and sublime scenes the eye ever beheld. The water varies from ten to one hundred feet in depth, and is so clear that the diver can see from two to three hundred feet when he is submerged, with but little obstruction to the sight. The bottom of the ocean, in many places, is as smooth as a marble floor; in others it is studded with coral columns, from ten to one hundred feet in height, and from one to eight feet in diameter. The tops of these more lofty support a myriad of pyramidal pendants, each forming a myriad more, giving the reality to the imaginary shade of some water nymph. In other places the pendants form arch after arch; and as the diver stands on the bottom of the ocean, and gazes through them in the deep winding avenue, he finds that they fill him with as sacred an awe, as if he were in some old cathedral, which had long been buried beneath 'old ocean's wave.' Here and there the coral extends even to the surface of the water, as if these lofty columns were towers belonging to those stately temples that are now in ruins. There were countless varieties of diminutive trees, shrubs, and plants, in every crevice of the corals, where the water had deposited the least earth. They were all of a faint hue, owing to the pale light they received, although of every shade, and entirely different from plants I am familiar with that vegetate upon dry land. One in particular attracted my attention; it resembled a sea fan of immense size, of variegated colors, and the most brilliant hue. The fish which inhabited these 'Silver Banks' I found as different in kind as the scenery was varied. They were of all forms, colors, and sizes—from the symmetrical goby to the globe-like sunfish; from those of the dulcist hue to the changeable dolphin; from the spots of the leopard to the hues of the sunbeam; from the harmless minnow to the voracious shark. Some had heads like squirrels, others like cats and dogs; one of small size resembled the bull-terrier. Some darted through the water like meteors, while others could scarcely be seen to move. To enumerate and explain all the various kinds of fish I beheld while diving on these banks, would were I enough of a naturalist so to do, require more space than my limits will allow: for I am convinced that most of the kinds of fish which inhabit the tropical seas can be found there. The sunfish, sawfish, starfish, white shark, blue or shovel-nose shark were often seen. There were also fish which resembled plants, and remained as fixed in their position as a shrub; the only power they possessed was to open and shut when in danger. Some of them resembled the rose in full bloom, and were of all hues. There were the ribbon-fish, from four or five inches to three feet in length; their eyes are very large, and protrude like those of the frog. Another fish was spotted like the leopard, from three to ten feet in length; they build their houses like beavers, in which they spawn, and the male or female watches the egg until it hatches. I saw many specimens of the green turtle, some five feet long, which I should think would weigh from 400 to 500 pounds."

Hints to Correspondents.

The following simple rules are of especial service for the guidance of those who write for the press; and, if faithfully observed, would save editors and printers a world of trouble. Correspondents should adhere to them:—

1. Write with black ink, on white paper with ruled lines.
2. Make the pages smaller than that of a foolscap sheet.
3. Leave one page of each sheet blank.
4. Give the written pages an ample margin all round.
5. Number the pages in the order of their succession.
6. Write in a plain, bold hand, with less respect to beauty.
7. Use no observations which are not to appear in print.
8. Punctuate the manuscript as it should be printed.
9. For italics, underscore one line; for small capitals, two; capitals, three.
10. Take special pains with every letter in proper names.
11. Review every word, to be sure that none is illegible.
12. Never write a private letter to the editor on the printer's copy, but always on a separate sheet.
13. Don't depend on the editor to correct your manuscript.
14. Don't ask him to return the "copy."
15. Don't press him to tell you why he refused to publish your article.

PRAYER is chiefly a heart work; God heareth the heart without the mouth, but never heareth the mouth acceptably without the heart. Your prayer is odious hypocrisy, mocking God, and taking his name in vain, when you utter petitions for the coming of his kingdom and doing his will, and yet hate holiness in your heart. This is lying unto God, and flattering him with your lips; but no true prayer; and so God takes it.

Deeds are fruits; words are but leaves; words and deeds are noble companions.