

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, February 21st, 1864.

Read—ACTS XXVI. 1-14: Paul's defence before Agrippa. 1 SAMUEL IV. 12-22: The ark taken by the Philistines.

Recite—1 JOHN II. 1, 2, 12.

Sunday, February 28th, 1864.

Read—ACTS XXVI. 15-32: The effect of Paul's defence on Agrippa. 1 SAMUEL V: Dagon falls before the ark.

Recite—ISAIAH III. 7, 8.

Amusement for the thoughtful.

Answer to Grammatical Puzzle No. 46.

THE CHRISTIAN. THE WICKED MAN. "He has had much experience. In vice and wickedness he is never found. Opposing the works of iniquity he takes delight in the downfall of the neighborhood he never rejoices. In the prosperity of his fellow creatures he is always ready to assist. In destroying the peace of society he takes no pleasure. In serving the Lord he is uncommonly diligent. In sowing discord among his friends and acquaintances he takes no pride. In laboring to promote the cause of Christianity he has not been negligent. In endeavouring to stigmatise all public teachers he makes no exertion. To subdue his evil passions he strives hard. To build up Satan's kingdom he lends no aid. To support the gospel among the heathen he contributes largely. To the evil adversary he pays no attention. To good advice he gives great heed. To the devil he will never go. To Heaven he must go where he will receive the just recompense of reward."

FOUR SERVANTS OF SATAN.

Satan has a great many servants, and they are very busy running round doing all the harm they can. They ride in the cars; they follow the soldiers; they do business in the city; they go into the country; they enter houses and break open stores; they visit our schools. Some of their favorite spots are colleges and academies, where our boys are. Boys do you hear that? Indeed, they are very fond of young people everywhere. Some of Satan's servants are like roaring lions, going about seeking whom they may devour. You are not much in danger from them, because you can keep out of their way. Some are so vile-looking, you would naturally turn from them in disgust; others are such fellows that you would not be seen in their company; and there are still others you would rather keep clear of, without exactly knowing why. You know they are not good, and that is enough. But all of Satan's followers are not so quick to show their colors. Some are cunning, and pretend to be a great deal better than they are, in order to deceive people; and they do deceive people horribly. It makes my blood run cold to think of it. I know four of them, and some of the mischief which they have done. I found out their names, and I want to put you on your guard against them, for they are very sly. They will make believe to be your friends. They appear sociable, easy, good-natured, and not too much in a hurry. They seem to wait your own time, and entice you when you least expect it. "Oh, we want you to enjoy yourselves," they say, "and not be so particular;" and the arguments they use are very taking; at least, I must think so, since so many of the young listen to them and are led away by them. And all, I believe, because they did not see it was Satan's uniform they had on. Do you ask for their names? Here they are: "There's no danger." That is one. "Only this once." That is another. "Everybody does so" is the third; and "By-and-by" is the fourth.—Child's Paper.

HOW TO HAVE GOOD THINGS.

In the first place, be good yourself, and secondly, treat others in a kind and just manner. Why are some husbands good? Simply, because their wives are good in disposition and conduct. Some husbands, too, have remarkably good wives. Why? Because they are good husbands. They have for wives just the kind of women they have made them to be. There are paid back, by a just Providence, into their own bosom, the blessings which they have been gen-

erously bestowing on another. Some housekeepers never have bad servants, but always faithful and cheerful ones. You need not guess at the reason. Also, some servants are never so unfortunate as to have bad mistresses. Their good qualities keep the employers in an amiable mood.

Thus by goodness on your part, you will usually nurture and produce goodness in another. Sympathy has a mighty influence; and if we exercise amiable sentiments in the presence of companions, whether or not towards them, the same quality of feeling will move in their hearts. If such sentiments are frequently and customarily shown, you are, though secretly, shaping and modifying the character of your associates. You are making your mark for good. Your companions cannot withstand your influence.—It works quietly and surely, like capillary attraction ascending, despite gravitating or other hindering influences; and it will elevate your friends, often unconsciously to themselves, till some fine morning they awake to a realization of the fact that somehow, they are more kind, or more patient, or more truthful than they were at some former period in their life. How clearly our Saviour's words are illustrated by experience: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." There is no escape from the law of compensation. What you are yourself, your sympathizing companion will come to be. Rarely promulgated a great truth when he said: "A bad-tempered man has generally a bad-tempered horse."

THE BIBLE IN THE COAL MINE.

Any one who has had experience of life among the rougher classes of society must have noticed the instinctive reverence often exhibited by ignorant or even vicious people for the Word of God, and for sincere Christians. Rev. Charles Vince, of Birmingham, related the following incident at the last anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society:—

One of the auxiliaries of this Society is located in what is called the black county. There is the Hilltop auxiliary to the Bible Society; and about fifteen months since they determined every Saturday night to send round two or three Christian men with packages of Bibles with which to visit the public houses, and in that way to reach, as far as possible, the miners and puddlers of the district, catching them when they got their money, and asking them to spend some part of their wages in buying the Word of God. I was present the other day when the report was read, and these men told us they went into a public house one Saturday night, and said to the men assembled there, "We have come to sell you some copies of the Bible."

One of the men said, "Wouldn't it be a good thing for us to have a copy to read down in the pit at dinner time?"

This proposition met with general approval, and they agreed to buy a copy for the purpose. Of the first copy handed to them the landlord said the print was too small to read down in the pit, and if they would buy one with a larger type he would give a shilling toward the cost. The one with larger print was bought, and one of the men said with great simplicity, "If we have the Bible at dinner time, we mustn't have no swearing." In their untutored way they made a law that if any man swore in the pit while the Bible was being read, a fine should be imposed; and that fine was, that the offender should receive the vessel containing the beer for dinner, and might look at it, but must pass it on without touching it.

You may think that there is something of a ludicrous air about this; but, after all, was there not a wonderful testimony to the power of the Bible? Is there any other book in the world that you could carry into the company of men, and make them say, "If we open this, and begin to look at it, we must begin to put away some of our sins?"

"WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS," &c.—In the deepening twilight of a summer evening a pastor called at the residence of one of his parishioners, and found, seated in the doorway, a little boy with both hands extended upward, holding a line.

"What are you doing here, my little friend?" inquired the minister.

"Flying my kite, sir," was the prompt reply.

"Flying your kite!" exclaimed the pastor; "I can see no kite; you can see none."

"I know it, but I know it is there, for I feel it pull."

If our affections are set on things above, we shall have a sense of it which cannot be mistaken.

A PARROT CALLED AS A WITNESS.—A man lost a favorite parrot, which was discovered in the possession of another person, who refused to give it up. He was accordingly summoned to produce the bird in a Court of law. The real owner, on being asked how he could prove that it belonged to him, replied that the parrot should be his only witness. It was then brought into Court in a cage covered with a cloth, and began to whistle the tune to "Take your time, Miss Lucy" while some subject was being discussed in Court. His owner then put his face to the cage, and desired the parrot to kiss him, which the bird then did most affectionately. "He will do the same to any one," said the defendant, and putting his mouth to the cage the parrot seized his lip and pit it very severely, to the great amusement of the Court. Its owner then took it out of the cage and kept it on his hand, when the bird answered several questions put to it in a ready and extraordinary manner, and also showed so much affection for its master that the Judge immediately ordered the parrot to be restored to him, and the defendant had to pay all expenses.

A PLEA FOR THE CHILDREN.

How tenderly were the little ones of Israel cared for in that dispensation which is associated with the sternness of the Divine law! There was hardly ever any great gathering of the people as in the days of Moses or Joshua, in which the little ones and the stranger at the gate are not remembered. In the days of Joshua, when the men of the eastern tribes returned home, they built an altar as a witness to their children of the God whom their fathers served. In the directions for the keeping of the day which was to be for a memorial and a feast to the Lord throughout all generations, the questioning of the little ones is thus beautifully anticipated, "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover—who passed over the house of the children of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians and delivered our homes." In the celebration of the passover in after days, these directions were literally carried out. When the second cup of wine were filled, the son—or some other young person, if there were no son—would ask, "What mean ye by this service?" and the person presiding would respond according to a prescribed form,— "How different is this night from all other nights! For all other nights we wash but once; but this night we wash twice. All other nights we eat unleavened bread, but this night we eat leavened only." And in this manner, going through the whole ceremonial, instructed the young questioner. Thus, by the taking part in the service, the memory of that solemn night when Israel was made free, as well as the hope of better things to come, was kept alive in the hearts of the children from generation to generation.

If the children were thought of in that dispensation of shadows, how much more should they be remembered by those who profess to carry out the desires of Him who invited them near to receive His blessing, and told the wondering listeners of a heavenly ministry ever carried on in their behalf; and who pronounced one of the heaviest curses that ever fell from His blessed lips upon those who neglected the little ones.

We do not mean to affirm that in this age of Christendom at least the spiritual instruction of children is not cared for. Our Sabbath-schools and the earnestly-expressed anxiety of Christian parents testify to a deep interest in their welfare. But we venture to assert that the securing of their interest in the public services of the Lord's day is a problem yet to be solved. The children, indeed, of the Sabbath-school are dragged into their seats with due punctuality, and the children of Christian families go by the gentle constraint of parents; but, as a rule, it is to be feared the children of the congregation take comparatively little interest in the proceedings. Let the reader call to mind his own experiences as a child. He was unlike most children if he had not his own devices for keeping himself alive during the long prayer and the sermon. It may be that he was an unusually good boy, and is shocked at the very suggestion. But many of us can remember counting the bright nails in the green baize pew, going through the alphabet backwards, or staring through each pair of fingers at the devotional attitudes of the worshippers, and gauging their piety by the number of times they opened their eyes during the long prayer. It is to be feared that things have not much improved now, judging from the number of those who leave off attending our places of worship the moment they have liberty to act for themselves. The Church has not been altogether indifferent to this state of things, and sundry schemes have been suggested as a remedy. A few years ago separate Sabbath services were much in vogue. But many parents, as we think wisely, objected to the breaking in upon the habit of going to a place of worship as a family and so separating themselves from their children. Besides which, it was very difficult to find men who had that talent for preaching of children to make the experiment safe in many places.

We venture to suggest whether it would not be a desirable thing to devote a part of each Sabbath morning service especially for the children—a short prayer, a child's hymn, and a short address.

The writer of this article has for some years adopted this plan with the most gratifying results; and, as the practice for which he pleads is not one commonly adopted, the reader will pardon him for describing the manner of its introduction and some of the fruit it has yielded. At the close of what is commonly called the long prayer, the congregation chant a psalm, after which an address is given to the children. It consists of some free paraphrase of a Scripture narrative, or of some lessons from Scripture put into the form of a simple life-parable, or a tracing out of a child's temptations and sins side by side with the old message of redeeming love. After the address the children sing some simple hymn, in which the congregation join, and it often seems more enjoyed by every one present than the graver airs of the other parts of the service. The whole of the children's share takes up about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes. The result is that all the children, as a rule, wait with more or less eagerness for their little sermon; and the writer has reason to believe that it greatly helps them in their attention to the remainder of the service. Parents who are accustomed to be with their children for a little while in the after part of the day, testify that they find in it suggestions for further remark, and the Sunday-school teachers a link connecting their work with the pastor's, often valuable to them; while some, when circumstances have called them into other scenes, have testified concerning them as bring-

ing a joy which none can take away. Moreover, it has to be confessed, though this may be the writer's own fault, that the majority of the congregation like it better than their own sermon. It gives opportunities for little explanations of Scripture not always suited to a graver discourse; while the simple illustrations and freshness of style make it as fitted for those in the congregation who have little intelligence (a much larger class than preachers are often aware of), as for the children themselves. If the poor people ever in free conversation quote from a sermon, it is almost invariably from the children's address; and the writer avows his belief that the majority of the people would rather give up the ordinary sermon, if one had to be surrendered.

The carrying out of the scheme, however, has not been without its difficulties. To find suitable themes every Lord's day in addition to the usual discourses is no light task; and of the two the composition of the children's sermon is often the more difficult. Children love a certain minuteness of detail, which it wants much pains to supply; it is of little use to paint for them with a broad brush. Moreover, there is a transition of feeling, from the quiet and rest of the devotion, to the liveliness of the children's address, which sometimes involves not a little sacrifice of comfort. The scattering of the children over the congregation, and the boxing up of the Sunday-schoolers at the further end of the building, makes it more difficult to secure their attention as you desire, and it is very likely that one used to a dress children assembled in a room, under his direct glance, would be at first a little disheartened by his loss of power. If the preacher can read well, he will find it will not injure the effect to write his little picture sermon, and read it. It will enable him to give a finish and minuteness of detail which children love, as they love the tracery of a glass window, or the little bits of seaweed they pick up on the shore. A child's eye does not take in great sweeping lines or curves, but rather the undergrass and flowers of the hedgerow, or the shells and pebbles washed by the waves.

Spite of all difficulties, the scheme is well worth the trying. If we can but make our children really love our Lord's-day services, the battle is more than half won. The truth, that the children around us will soon be the men and women to give tone to the life about them, has become so trite, that we scarcely think that every moment they are passing on to their inheritance. If we do but train them wisely, they will take the old banner we have so freely borne from our dying hands, and raise it still before the sinful and the lost of another generation.—London Freeman.

BODILY CARRIAGE.

Instead of giving all sorts of rules about turning out the toes, and straightening up the body, and holding the shoulders back, all of which are impracticable to many, because soon forgotten, or of a feeling of awkwardness and discomfort which procures a willing omission; all that is necessary to secure the object is to hold up the head and move on, letting the toes and shoulders take care of themselves. Walk with the chin but slightly above a horizontal line, or with your eye directed to things a little higher than your own head. In this way you will walk properly, pleasantly, and without any feeling of restraint or awkwardness.

If any one wishes to be aided in securing this habitual carriage of body, accustom yourself to carry your hands behind you, one hand grasping the opposite wrist. Englishmen are admired the world over, for their full chests and broad shoulders, and sturdy frames, and manly bearing. This position of body is a favorite one with them, in the simple promenade, in the garden or gallery, in attending ladies along a crowded street, or in public worship.

Many persons spend most of their waking existence in the sitting position. A single rule, well attended to, in this connection would be of incalculable value to multitudes—use chairs with the old fashioned straight backs, a little inclining backwards, and sit with the lower portion of the body close against the back of the chair at the seat; any one who tries it will observe in a moment a grateful support to the whole spine. And we see no reason why children should not be taught from the beginning to write, and sew, and knit, in a position requiring the lower portion of the body and the shoulders to touch the back of the chair all the time.

A very common position in sitting, especially among men, is with the shoulders against the chair back, with a space of several inches between the chair and the lower portion of the spine, giving the body the shape of a half hoop; it is the instantaneous, instinctive, and almost universal position assumed by any consumptive on sitting down, unless counteracted by an effort of will; hence parents should regard such a position in their children with apprehension, and should rectify it at once.—Hall's Journal of Health.

IN WHICH DIRECTION?—On the summit of a hill in a Western State is a court house, so situated that the rain-drops that fall on one side of the roof descend into Lake Erie, and thence through the St. Lawrence into the Atlantic.—The drops the other side trickle down from rivulet to river, until they reach the Ohio and Mississippi, and enter the ocean by the Gulf of Mexico. A faint breath of wind determines the destination of these rain-drops for three thousand miles. So a single act determines sometimes a human destiny for all time and for eternity.