

Month's Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, September 17th, 1865.

JOHN I. 1-18: The divinity, humanity and office of Christ. 2 SAMUEL XXI: The hanging of Saul's sons. PsALM cii. 25-28.

Sunday, September 24th, 1865.

JOHN I. 19-34: The testimony of John. 2 SAMUEL XXII 1-25: David's song of thanksgiving. PsALM XXXIV. 1-5.

The Sailor-boy of Havre.

A French brig was returning from Toulon to Havre with a rich cargo and numerous passengers. Off the coast of Bretagne it was overtaken by a sudden and violent storm. Captain P., an experienced sailor, at once saw the danger which threatened the ship on such a rocky coast, and he gave orders to put out to sea; but the winds and waves drove the brig violently towards the shore, and notwithstanding all the efforts of the crews, it continued to get nearer land. Among the most active on board, in doing all that he could to help, was little Jacques, a lad twelve years old, who was serving as cabin-boy in the vessel. At times, when he disappeared for a moment behind the folds of the sail, the sailors thought that he had fallen overboard; and again, when a wave threw him down on the deck, they looked round to see if it had not carried away the poor boy with it; but Jacques was soon up again, unhurt. "My mother," said he, smiling, to an old sailor, "would be frightened enough if she saw me just now."

His mother, who lived at Havre, was very poor, and had a large family. Jacques loved her tenderly, and he was enjoying the prospect of carrying to her his little treasure—two five-franc pieces, which he had earned as his wages for the voyage. The brig was beaten about a whole day by the storm, and, in spite of all the efforts of the crew, they could not steer clear of the rocks on the coast. By the gloom on the captain's brow, it might be seen that he had little hope of saving the ship. All at once, a violent shock was felt, accompanied by a horrible crash; the vessel had struck on a rock. At this terrible moment, the passengers threw themselves on their knees to pray.

"Lower the boats!" cried the captain. The sailors obeyed; but no sooner were the boats in the water than they were carried away by the violence of the waves.

"We have but one hope of safety," said the captain. "One of us must be brave enough to run the risk of swimming with a rope to the shore. We may fasten one end to the mast of the vessel, and the other to a rock on the coast, and by this means we may all get on shore."

"But, captain, it is impossible," said the mate, pointing to the surf breaking on the sharp rocks. "Whoever should attempt to run such a risk would certainly be dashed to pieces."

"Well," said the captain in a low tone, "we must all die together." At this moment there was a slight stir among the sailors, who were silently waiting for orders.

"What is the matter, there?" inquired the captain. "Captain," replied a sailor, "this little monkey of a cabin-boy is asking to swim to the shore with a strong string round his body to draw the cable after him; he is as obstinate as a little mule!" and he pushed Jacques into the midst of the circle. The boy stood, turning his cap round and round in his hands, without daring to utter a word.

"Nonsense! Such a child can't go," said the captain, roughly.

But Jacques was not of a character to be so easily discouraged. "Captain," said he, timidly, "you don't wish to expose the lives of good sailors like these. It does not much matter what becomes of a little monkey of a cabin-boy, as the boatswain calls me. Give me a ball of strong string, which will unroll as I get on, fasten one end round my body, and I promise you that within an hour the rope will be well fastened to the shore, or I will perish in the attempt."

"Does he know how to swim?" asked the captain.

"As swiftly and as easy as an eel," replied one of the crew.

"I could swim up the Seine from Havre to Paris," said little Jacques. The captain hesitated, but the lives of all on board were at stake, and he yielded.

Jacques hastened to prepare for his terrible undertaking. Then he turned, and softly approached the captain. "Captain," said he, "as I may be lost, may I ask you to take charge of some thing for me?"

"Certainly, my boy," said the captain, who was almost repenting of having yielded to his entreaties. "Here, then, captain," replied Jacques, holding out two five-franc pieces, wrapped in a bit of rag. "If I am eaten by the porpoises, and you get safe to land, be so kind as to give this to my mother, who lives on the quay at Havre; and when you tell her that I thought of her, and that I love her very much, as well as all my brothers and sisters?"

"Be easy about that, my boy. If you die for us, and we escape, your mother shall never want for anything." "Oh, then, I will willingly try to save you," cried Jacques, hastening to the other side of the vessel, where all was prepared for his enterprise.

The captain thought for a moment. "We ought not to allow this lad to sacrifice himself for us in this way." "I must forbid it."

"Yes, yes," said some of the sailors around him; "it is disgraceful to us all, that this little cabin-boy should set us an example of courage; and it would be a sad thing if the brave child should die for old men like us, who have lived our time. Let us stop him!"

They rushed to the side of the vessel, but it was too late. They found there only the sailor who had aided Jacques in his preparations, and who was unrolling the cord that was fastened to the body of the heroic boy.

They all leaned over the side of the vessel, to see what was going to happen, and a few quietly wiped away a tear which would not be restrained.

At first, nothing was seen but waves of white foam, mountains of water which seemed to rise as high as the mast, and then fell down with a thundering roar. Soon the practised eye of some of the sailors perceived a little black point rising above the waves, and, again, distance prevented them from distinguishing it at all. They anxiously watched the cord, and tried to guess, by its quicker or slower movement, the fate of him who was unrolling it.

Sometimes the cord was unrolled rapidly: "Oh, what a brave fellow!" they said; "see how quickly he swims!" At other times, the unrolling of the ball of string stopped suddenly: "Poor boy!" they said; "he has been drowned or dashed against the rocks!"

This anxiety lasted more than an hour. The ball of string continued to be unrolled, but at unequal periods. At length it slipped slowly over the side of the vessel, and often fell as if slackened. They thought Jacques must have much difficulty in getting through the surf on the coast. "Perhaps it is the body of the poor boy that the sea is tossing backwards and forwards in this way," said some of the sailors. The captain was deeply grieved that he had permitted the child to make the attempt; and, notwithstanding the desperate situation in which they were, all the crew seemed to be thinking more of the boy than of themselves.

All at once a violent pull was given to the cord. This was soon followed by a second, then by a third. It was the signal agreed upon to tell them that Jacques had reached the shore. A shout of joy was heard on the ship. They hastened to fasten a strong rope to the cord, which was drawn on shore as fast as they could let it out, and was firmly fastened by some of the people who come to the help of the little cabin-boy. By means of this rope, many of the shipwrecked sailors reached the shore, and found means to save the others. Not long after all had safely landed, they saw the vessel sink.

The little cabin-boy was long ill from the consequences of his fatigue, and from the bruises he had received by being dashed against the rocks. But he did not mind that; for, in reward of his bravery, his mother received a yearly sum of money which placed her above the fear of want. Little Jacques rejoiced in having suffered for her, and at the same time in having saved so many lives. He felt that he had been abundantly rewarded.

Missionary Intelligence.

Associational Meeting in Burmah.

Mr. Van Meter, of the Bassein Mission, writes as follows, March 26, of the Associational meeting which he recently attended.

Nearly all the pastors and preachers were present, and added much to the interest of the meetings, by the active part they took in the proceedings. They are gradually learning the laws and order of such assemblies, and it is pleasing to watch their progress from year to year, and more especially among the Sgaws, the greater part of whose letters on this occasion would have done credit to an Association in any State of our own land. It must be borne in mind, however, that this was their twenty-third annual meeting.

The number of baptisms during this year is larger than has been reported for any one of the ten years past. The whole number is 395, — a marked advance on that of last year, which was only 219. Of this number, 249 were baptized during the first six months, as already reported, leaving 151 for the second half of the year.

A good time well earned.

In the account of the Association at Thongzai, Mr. Ross adverts to the difficulties under which some of those who attended, labored in reaching the place of meeting, and the pleasure they experienced afterwards.

Br. Douglass thinks the distance from Bassein to Thongzai not less than 250 miles. Br. D. and the six delegates from the Bassein church went all that distance and rowed their own boat. It would be strange for so many to come together at the cost of so much time and effort, and not think it best to have a good time.

Whether our native brethren and sisters in solemn convocations passed such a resolution, I cannot say; but I only repeat the unanimous opinion of the native Christians, when I say that from the beginning to the end, it was a very good. "wonderfully good." As the respective delegations from distant locations came together and witnessed the exhibition of so much talent, intelligence and respectability, and as they began to mingle in the prayer and conference meeting, and listen to the sermons, and lift up their voices in praise, and as they contrasted their present prospects, precious types and glorious light their former dense and dismal darkness, out of which they had so recently been brought, it is a wonder if their hearts did not burn within them?

The natives of India are not ignorant of the virtue of giving. One of them, Mr. Remchund Roychund, a native cotton broker, has given to the University of Bombay \$100,000 towards the erection of a library, and as much more for the expense of a clock and bell tower. — *Macdonald.*

FOR SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

NEGLECTED TEACHERS.

It would seem very strange if a congregation should go to the church some Sunday morning, and after sitting for nearly an hour find to their surprise that the pastor had gone off somewhere and had never thought of making preparation for the supply of his pulpit during his absence. Sunday school teachers, many of them, have no hesitation in suddenly leaving their classes, going away from the city without making the slightest preparation for the supply of their place. We should condemn the pastor who neglects his congregation thus, and the teacher deserves the same censure. The difference between the two is simply this: the one has a limited number and the other an indefinite number. The sin should never be tolerated in any Sunday school. Such teachers, on being absent from the school without providing a substitute or giving the superintendent notice of the proposed absence, should be suspended until satisfactory excuse is presented, and even then the teacher should not be allowed to resume the position until a solemn promise is made to avoid in future such occurrences.

Sickness or unavoidable absence are sufficient excuses; but no excuse can be accepted where a teacher deliberately stays away and fails to send word in some way to the superintendent. The position of teacher in all our Sunday schools is held too lightly. Its responsibilities are but little understood and appreciated by a host who are enlisted in the work. Many feel that it is a light task and at any time can be laid aside with perfect indifference.

The duties that crowd themselves upon one who has assumed to teach the way of life to immortal souls, can never be regarded as light or trifling. God holds every Christian responsible for souls about him. By the vows of his allegiance to Jesus Christ, his Master, he is bound to help dying men, women and children to the knowledge of those things which have been wrought out to save them. When immortal souls are placed in his care, there is a relation created, an awful responsibility assumed, that cannot be thrown aside with indifference.

HOW TO TEACH.

The teacher's work is chiefly to aid the scholar in gaining a knowledge of the lesson. The teacher is supposed to know the elements of the lesson under consideration; what it is composed of, facts, principles, precepts, &c. The child is supposed to be anxious to gain a complete knowledge of what is to be taught. How is this to be gained? The teacher must first know, if he would be successful, how he can best fix the truth in the mind of the child. It is true the reflecting and reasoning faculties develop earlier in some children than in others. It is difficult to discover the advancement of these powers in the different scholars composing a class. But this rule is a safe and sure one for successfully interesting and improving the mind of the scholar: *Wake up the mind rather than feed it.* Help the scholar to produce from his own mind, in his own language, what perhaps you would naturally have told him. Encourage the scholar to exercise his own mind rather than depend on the teacher for the examination of the various points in the lesson. Suggest to him some principle before explained, hint at existing truths bearing on the subject, and let the scholar achieve the victory for himself. A difficulty overcome, a question solved so that the mind has a clear view of the answer, is a valuable attainment for the scholar. The mind has acquired real knowledge. What the mind earns for itself is worth more than what comes to it from other minds. The point gained is never forgotten. It becomes a part of the mind, and the mind can never lose it. The teacher, then, is to help the scholar to gain by the working of his own mind the knowledge that is sought. Never undertake to lecture them; it is almost a fruitless effort. A very small portion, indeed, reaches to a fixed position in the mind. Throw aside all long lectures to the class. The scholar's mind is weakened, and for want of good exercise becomes comparatively fruitless. Draw from the scholar an intelligent answer, not a monotonous "No sir," or "Yes sir." The mind is not improved by that. Let the teacher by every invention possible be an efficient help to the scholar, to encourage, excite, and improve the mind by such reasoning processes as will bring it to delight in an active exercise for proper development. If the teacher can successfully do this he has gained the great secret of good teaching. — *National Baptist.*

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Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

The Sabbath School and the Church, once more.

DEAR BROTHER,

At this juncture of affairs I find myself in a most unenviable position. By my opponent I am represented as "young," unaccustomed to write, "a small game," incompetent and cowardly; yet ambitious, vain, assuming, intolerant, and, worse than all, having a strong bias toward Popery. But I would have been content to pass by all this, and leave the articles that have been published to speak for themselves, had not an apparently disinterested party, over the signature of "Philos," in your last issue, condemned in sweeping terms the discussion and those engaged in it, representing it as "a timely illustration of an evil" upon which he most caustically expatiates. Now of course, for it I alone am responsible, and having been represented by this writer as one of the "pugnacious gentry" called preachers, and yet about on a par with my adversary as respects the spirit with which my part of the discussion has been conducted, it would almost seem as though the interests of the Denomination, as well as my own, require that, if possible, I exonerate myself from at least some of the charges. Till this communication appeared, I had flattered myself into the belief that in the temper manifested I had so much the advantage, as to make up for my deficiency in ability, and that therefore, being on equal terms, our sentiments would be impartially weighed and compared. Perhaps, however, I might accept as an equivalent for this new disparagement the admission of my antagonist that I am not as "unaccustomed to write" as he supposed, and that I have very considerable talent for variety, sententiousness and argument, — himself being "no match" for me in this — coupled with the honorable position in which "Philos" has voluntarily placed me, had he not so emphatically condemned the motives inspiring such discussions, and their lack of "general interest." Now with whatever indifference I may regard the various opinions so freely handled respecting my capabilities, I am not willing that either the controversy, or myself should rest under the imputation of being inspired by a mere desire to "gratify egotism." Indeed I had hoped, that since, aside from the assertions of my reverend opponent, there was no proof of the existence of such feelings, your readers would generously acquit me without any more laborious defence than that attempted in my last. Since this, however, does not seem to be the case, I must ask to be permitted to appeal to them once more.

And to begin — *contempt for the Church* seemed to me strongly to characterize Bro. Goucher's communications, and I entered the lists in her defence. He spoke in his "Essay" of "Churches largely composed" of parents having no interest in S. S. work, claiming rights and powers not their own. And in his reply to my first queries, he talks flippantly of "the Church acting the dog in the manger part;" of "growing indolent members," and "those twice dead;" of such bodies "holding the religious destinies of the community in their hands," and having in their "decision life and death;" and of "a dead church arrogating to itself prerogatives and powers that belong to God only," stereotyping progress and hindering good; making no distinction between true churches and false, but of course, applying all to those of our own denomination. I thought that while such representations might do very well for an irreligious Temperance lecturer, in his efforts to prove that moral agencies than the Church of Christ, they hardly became "a minister of the Gospel," and were a libel on that sacred body of which Jesus is not ashamed to be acknowledged, Head.

But this was not my only impulsion. The relation that ought to subsist between the Church and the Sabbath School was a subject in which I felt the deepest interest, and, notwithstanding that my opinions are represented to have been formed "without investigation," upon which I had bestowed some thought, that clause, I understood to imply that the privilege and duty of Sabbath School work was inherent in the individual, and that the Church had, and ought to be permitted to have nothing to do with it, at least in the way of control; that, in a word, they were distinct, if not antagonistic interests. My inquiries were intended to draw from him an avowal in full of his sentiments upon these points, and though this was not rendered as graciously as we had a right to