

Youth's Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, March 19th, 1865.

LUKE XV. 1-10: Parable of the lost sheep and the piece of silver. 2 SAMUEL III. 13-27: Abner revolts to David.

Recite—MATTHEW VIII. 12, 13, 14.

Sunday, March 26th, 1865.

LUKE XV. 11-32: Parable of the prodigal son. 2 SAMUEL III. 28-39: David mourns for Abner slain. Recite—ISAIAH IV. 6, 7.

"A Praying Little Boy."

This little fellow was tempted not to pray; but persevered and was at last the means of leading his father to pray also. This boy once did not love to pray, but he found out that he was a sinner, and he came to Jesus and Jesus gave him a new praying heart, and then he loved to go to his little room and pray aloud as little christians always do.

He had a wicked father who did not know anything about a "praying heart;" for he had never asked God for one. One day when he came home from his business he heard a voice as if some one was talking in his little boy's room. He asked his wife what it was. She told him it was Johnnie praying. This made him angry. He said he would have nothing of the kind in his house. He told his little boy in a decided tone; that if he dared to do it again, he must leave the house and find another home. This made Johnnie feel very sad. He knew his father always did just as he said, and he had never been kind to his children. Like Daniel, when he was to be cast into the lion's den, Johnnie knew all he must suffer; but he determined to keep on praying. Next day his father came home and found him praying again. He went, at once, to his little room, and in a gruff voice, said, "Pack up your things and be off. I'll not have any of your praying in my house. You shall not live with me." This wicked father thought that if he could get rid of this praying, his conscience would not trouble him any more. And so the poor fellow packed up the little that was his, and took his bundle and walked down stairs to say "good bye."

He went first to his brother and sister and gave them the good-bye kiss. And then, with a dull heart, he leaned over the cradle, and pressed his quivering lips to those of the one he loved so much. His mother stood by weeping. How could he part with her? At last throwing his arms around her neck, and with the tears in his eyes, he sobbed, "good bye, mother." And then the little hero turned kindly to his stern father, and holding out his hand, said, "good bye, father." But the father could not stand it any longer. He could not keep the hot tears from his eyes. No, he could not, after all, drive away his noble boy. "Johnnie, you need not go now. Pray for me. I have been a wicked man to try to keep you from praying. I was wrong, you were right in praying. Oh! pray for me" was all that he could say.

And Johnnie did pray. "Yes!" and the father prayed too. He is now a converted man, and loves, with his dear family, to bow before the mercy seat. Don't you think this boy loved Jesus more than ever after. He had helped him to persevere in prayer, and had made his father a christian? You see the Saviour made good His promise, and did "not suffer him to be tempted above what he was able" to bear. This same "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother will be as good to you, if you will go to Him and ask Him for a praying heart. And then, if your father or friends are not christians, you may, perhaps, lead them to seek the forgiveness of their sins.

But I can hear you say; "It is so hard to be a christian. I love to read these stories; but I don't know how to be a good christian." A great many others have felt just so, but found it very easy when they were really in earnest, and were willing to come to Jesus and fall into His loving arms.

A little boy in Brooklyn, in a children's meeting, was weeping for his sins and said; "I want to be a christian; but I can't, it's so hard." Another little fellow, who had, just a day or two before, found peace in Jesus, said; "Oh! no, it's not hard. It's not hard to fall down, is it? Well, that's all I did. I just fell down; and Jesus took me."

And that is all you have to do. "Fall down." Look to Jesus, and fall down before Him; and Jesus will take you and make you His. And God will send His Holy Spirit and help you to go and try. You never did anything without trying, did you? If you could spend hours, as I have done, in reading over letters from little children, under twelve years of age, who give good evidence that they have trusted in Jesus, you would be more than ever encouraged "to try again."—National Baptist.

Agriculture, etc.

For the Christian Messenger.

Farming as it is in Nova Scotia.

Ms. Ross.

I have just been perusing a work, entitled, "Farming as it is," by T. J. Pinkham, and must say, that as far as I can judge, he uses sound logic. He enters more fully into the interests of the farmer, and the benefits he should derive,

than any author who has hitherto written upon the subject. And as the welfare of the farmer is a matter of particular interest to myself, as well as to a large portion of the inhabitants, in proportion to the demand for farm products in this province, I thought it not improper to offer a few thoughts that occurred to me, which might in time prove of some benefit to the thinking men of that class to which I refer. And seeing, that you often devote a portion of your columns to the subject of Agriculture; hints for the farmer; &c., and thinking, possibly, you might see merit enough in this article, to give it a place, I submit it; though the strain may be different from articles that generally appear upon the subject.

The author above spoken of goes on to show by facts and figuring, that "Farming as it is," even in the populous State of Massachusetts is not a paying business. Not that judicious agriculture will not pay, if it meets with the remuneration which it merits. But that it does not, nor cannot pay, while the state in different ways is at work with batteries levelling at the farmer, under the disguise of Agricultural Boards, &c., the results of which are proved to tend chiefly towards the degradation of the farmer.

Now, I would just make the enquiry, that if "Farming as it is" in Massachusetts will not pay, will it not apply equally well to "Farming as it is" in Nova Scotia, though thank fortune, we are not so much annoyed with "Agricultural Boards," but other causes which in the end amount to nearly the same result.

We know, that the old "Bay State" has extensive home markets, which would be well for her farmers, were it not for Western States people supplying the market at reduced prices, for want of a home market. Now, this is just the trouble with Nova Scotia, which has not markets sufficient to pay all those engaged in supplying her with farm produce; consequently, most of those engaged in Agriculture live on half pay; when cost and profits are counted. Now, I would further ask, I think reasonably, why farming should not pay working expenses, a fair per cent on the capital invested; and a small profit besides; just as well as any other trade or occupation?

I was told, not long since, by a short sighted man, that "farming is the surest and most independent business he knew of," but without support to his theory, that would stand alone.

I though, in some cases it may appear to be as he says, and more, I admit that land can be bought that will pay more than double interest, but that won't do, we must take facts as they are, and farming on the average.

If it does not pay, there is certainly a reason; and that reason will be obvious, to those who will stop long enough to fully investigate "farming as it is" in Nova Scotia. Besides, any intelligent person need not be long in any of the rural districts, to discover, that the farmer goes through more physical exercise, in the form of manual labour, than almost any other class of working men.

The author above mentioned, relates an anecdote (which I think not out of the way to notice here,) to illustrate the position, that some farmers who consider themselves quite knowing take, and the mistake that too many of them labour under. He says, "A friend of mine had often been opposed in his view, by a rugged old farmer, who gave his own case for instance to prove that the business was lucrative; the farmer upon being asked if he had made money said, yes! I have done well, and I know it is a good business! But what are you figuring about? I was merely reckoning to see how much you have made; I guess I know how much I have made, without your figuring about it." "Well, well, I merely wanted to see;" figures you know won't lie. Well how do you make it? Do you want me to tell you? "Certainly I you can't alter it." Well then, if I have got it right, you lack \$6000, of having made a living. "How do you make that out?" You say, you had so much (showing him the figures) left you, yes, you are now worth so much, yes." Well then if you had put your money at interest, when you came in possession of it and kept it there, and got your own living since, you would have been worth what I told you."

I do not want to be tedious, but I feel that there is much that might, or ought to be said that would be advantageous to the interests of the farmer; and I feel pretty well assured, that if the farmers themselves do not move upon this matter, there will not be much said or done about it; as that class, who get their living independently of soiling their delicate hands with the plow, or in the potatoe field, would be very sorry to pen a sentence with the means in view, of enabling the farmer to get what his farm produce cost him, while in the present state of affairs they can get said produce often at less than half the cost. I would further say, that all who wish to see farming "As it is," and as it should be, with the cost and profits of agricultural products &c., fully discussed, (besides several interesting letters, some from those who stand high in the estimation of the Agricultural Board of Massachusetts,) should try and obtain a copy of the work referred to. If after a careful unprejudiced perusal, such person cannot say that he is paid for reading, and has learned something that may be of service to him, and that there is much "more truth than poetry contained in it," then he is or I am, as much mistaken as the fellow who sought for treasure at the terminus of a rainbow! I would just say, by way of conclusion, that if I can succeed in drawing out any dormant energies, of those more capable of investigating this subject, I shall have attained my object, and hope I may not be troublesome to your readers. That truth, justice and equity, may prevail, is the sincere wish of A. FARWELL.

Colchester, March 1st, 1865.

Provincial Parliament.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

FRIDAY, March 3rd.

THE EDUCATION ACT.

SPEECH OF THE HON. PROV. SECRETARY.

[We have prefixed the subjects of the paragraphs in the following speech, for the purpose of facilitating reference to them.—Ed. C. M.]

Hon. Pro. Sec. said.—I rise, Mr. Speaker, to introduce a bill for the better encouragement of education, and, in doing so, I may remark that although the government have not been able to lay it upon the table at an earlier period than the present I am quite sure that hon. gentlemen will appreciate the difficulties under which we have labored, and will make allowance for the time that was necessary to confer with the members of the Legislature after the opening of the session. I was anxious, also, that the country should have the fullest opportunity of expressing its views upon this important question, and even down to this very day petitions have been presented on this subject. No government was ever called upon to undertake a more arduous task, than when a twelve-month ago the present government undertook to grapple with this difficult subject of education. That question has been fraught with such difficulties, that although, from time to time, tolerably strong Governments—sustained by very fair majorities in this Legislature—have held the reins of power, and whilst it has been admitted, that there was no matter that demanded more imperatively, the consideration of the Legislature and the action of the Administration, yet none of them were able to carry successfully through the House a measure calculated to promote the education of the country. Although the present Government, at the last session, had the good fortune to be sustained by a very large majority of this House—although the previous general election had proved that the party with which I have the honor to be connected had the confidence of a very large proportion of the people, yet on a question of this kind, of such vital consequence to the country at large, they did not hesitate to invite the co-operation and support of gentlemen on the Opposition benches. They felt they were entitled to ask that aid from any opposition in reference to a question which did not affect one class or party, but all classes and parties in the Province;—that it was due to the great question of Education that it should be as far as possible placed above party, and dealt with in such a mode as to secure the confidence and co-operation of both parties. Everyone must feel that, however strong any party might be who was called upon to take up so difficult and delicate a question, that it was due to the success of the measure that it should secure the interest and sympathy of all classes in this country. Therefore when we proposed a radical change in the system of education, which had been so long desired in this country, we assumed all the responsibility which should fall upon a government, and at the same time, invited the cordial co-operation of all our opponents, as essential to the proper construction of a wise and useful measure on the subject. The government were aware, as every intelligent man was aware, that to deal with a question of such difficulty and delicacy as that of education, it would be impossible for any party however strong,—for any government, however much they might enjoy the confidence of the house or country, to mature a measure, which would not necessarily involve a great deal of hostility and trouble on the part of many of their friends and supporters throughout the country, and that it became doubly essential therefore, if any educational measure were to be successful, that it should have the support of intelligent and patriotic minds of all sections in the country, as that alone would place it upon the sound and stable basis which it was desirable that such a measure should rest upon. I am bound to admit that the gentlemen who composed the opposition in this Legislature did, with a patriotism that I think is deserving of all praise, frankly respond to the invitation of the Government, and on this, as upon many other questions of public policy, avowed at the outset their determination to assist in, and give their best energies to the maturing of such a measure as would tend to the most successful results in regard to the great cause of education in this country. I believe that owing to the aid derived from both sides of the house, the government were enabled to pass a measure which will be recognized in all time to come as a great step in advance in relation to the education of the masses in this province.—I am aware that a great deal of clamor has arisen in the country—that much hostility has been excited in connection with the measure—that much difficulty has occurred in reference to its administration, and that probably this province was never agitated, from one end to the other, to a greater extent than it has been during the last twelve months in relation to the important subject of common school education; but I am proud to be able to say that notwithstanding all this excitement and clamor—despite the fact that this question was one which touched the pockets of the masses, and was therefore necessarily calculated above all others to excite a feeling of hostility,—we have the facts before us and the public to show that this measure, although not so perfect as it was desirable it should be—although not so successful as it ought to be—has proved itself eminently adapted for the great object for which it was intended. When I call the attention of the house to

the facts bearing upon this question, I think I shall be able to show, whatever may be the shortcomings of this measure, whatever difficulties may have been connected with its administration, so far from having proved a failure, we have the evidence, after only three months of time since it has been in operation, that it has been as successful as this house, in reference to a question of such delicacy and difficulty, could reasonably expect.

Our Schools under the former Act compared with the present.—Those who will take the trouble to refer to the reports of the able superintendents of education who filled the position for many years in this Province, will find that the common school education of this country was in as deplorable a condition as it could well be at the time this measure was brought up for the approval of the house. They will see that the common school education of this country required reorganization throughout the Province from one end to the other—that the time had come when some great radical change was imperative. There is, perhaps, no duty of a more delicate character, than any Government could be called upon to discharge than the re-organization of the school sections. It is obvious that, coming home, as the re-arrangement did, to the interests of every man in the province—attended with difficulty as it was, inasmuch as it touched the pecuniary interests of the people residing within these sections—this measure must have been necessarily fraught with much embarrassment. No duty could be calculated to involve a greater degree of difficulty in its adjustment than the arrangement of these school sections. Now let us enquire into the results that have attended the operations of the Act. In over two hundred of the school sections, no school houses existed at the time it was brought in. There was no means for carrying on a school. Many houses were without windows or doors, and in a dilapidated condition generally. Now we have the gratifying evidence that out of these 1400 sections outside the city, in 18 counties which have only been heard from, embracing a little over a thousand sections, there were only 213 in which no meetings were held under the Act passed last year. There were only 142 sections in which meetings were held, and refused to organize under the law. In 654 cases of the 1000 heard from, the law was adopted—a law making a radical change in the mode of carrying on the schools of the country.—a law carrying on its face the most obnoxious feature that any law can—assessment, which imposed the principle of direct taxation upon the people, in twenty-nine of these sections graded schools were established, containing numerous departments. A still more gratifying fact is it, that, obnoxious as the law was calculated necessarily to be, that not only 654 meetings have been held under it, but at this day, with something like one half the schools in operation, the result of free schools is, (as we have good reason to believe,) that there are more children at school than under the old law. Whilst great difficulties have arisen, whilst this law presented the most unpopular feature that a law could exhibit—whilst it required time for the people to understand and appreciate it, yet it has given a stimulus to free schools that must be exceedingly gratifying, not only to the government but to the Legislature which gave it force. In many cases the result has been that when under the old law the attendance was only from 30 to 60 pupils, you can count the number by hundreds—proving satisfactorily to the mind of every man that the effect of the law has been to open wide the portals to hundreds and thousands of children who otherwise would be without education. This is a result so satisfactory that I think it has placed for ever at rest the question whether in this province the principle of free schools shall continue to exist. I believe, considering all the difficulties that this measure was necessarily exposed to, the evidence which is now furnished to the House of the result of its operations during the comparatively brief period the people have had an opportunity of understanding its merits, have been such as to render it impossible for any Government or any legislature, unless they forget what they owe to the country and the education of the masses, to recede a single step back from the great principle of establishing free schools, and of maintaining that legislation which has been already enacted—that every child in Nova Scotia shall have the means of obtaining a common school education.

Improvements under the New Law.—Not only in the attendance at schools numbered by hundreds where there were only forties and fifties, but in connection with another feature of the enactment, the arrangement made to establish superior schools, the most gratifying results have been obtained. A most effective stimulus has been given all over the country to the common school education by the principle that the best school should be entitled to, and should, by a competitive process, obtain the position of Superior schools. Not only is every one enabled to obtain a common school education, and a still higher education through the superior schools, but in every county the means are provided of learning those acquirements that would fit a man for the highest position in life—for the learned professions or whatever his abilities might enable him to fill. Out of 12 counties to which that provision applied—for the law did not touch those counties where academies already existed, 9 made arrangements for giving the highest means of education to the people. In connection with these academies the memorial which has been read by the hon. member for Yarmouth, (Mr. Killam,) shows the extent to which that county has appreciated the importance of the highest description of education and the amount of patriotic exertion that the people in that enlightened section have been prepared to exhibit, in order that they may have the indisputable ad-

vantages the instruction. When it is ende to the cation; that country was the persons tion of teach for more lu understand the statute book —if there the part of never the it out to been the he Provin to obtain a —proving education to men of ers. In on ing person tion of the school teach ments of t tion from were instr give perm whose qu der the ment do al change mon school step which am proud government from the take a yes measure were so r the stand the great schools sh be opened lieve the would rise the course worthy of that is no the measu judicial province. The Pa ed with n the coun tional na have no ernment so with t conviction would na out the step with governm arouse, action of They b through governm use to t clared n fess I w with petu especial ties that the old to find a part of happy t are bett have to the influ minds of erence opportunity (frat t product the peo From t number against that th mount Kings Queen tures. deal of mouth has ext spirit i person The co only s been there ation t The petiti some o us lat over, from t leaving ligent of its 750 pe one p am h proad have. of bo mann step i only when must most