

Youth's Department

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, February 26th, 1865.

LUKE xiv. 15-24: Parable of the Great Supper. 2 SAMUEL iii. 19-22: Asahel slain by Abner. REVELATION iv. 10-12.

Sunday, March 5th, 1865.

LUKE xiv. 25-26: Necessity of self-denial. 2 SAMUEL iii. 1-12: David's power increases; his family. REVELATION viii. 34-38.

A Battle with a Whale.

I shall never forget the surprise I got the first time I saw a whale. It was in the forenoon of a most splendid day, about a week after we arrived at that part of the ocean where we might expect to find fish. A light nor'east breeze was blowing, but it scarcely ruffled the sea, as we crept slowly through the water with every stitch of canvas set. As we had been looking out for fish for some time past, everything was in readiness for them. The boats were hanging over the side ready to lower, tubs for coiling away the ropes, harpoons, lances, etc., all were ready to throw in, and start away at a moment's notice. The man in the "crow's-nest," as they call the cask fixed up at the masthead, was looking anxiously out for whales, and the crew were idling about the deck. Tom Lokins was seated on the windlass smoking his pipe, and I was sitting beside him, on an empty cask, sharpening a blubber-knife. "Tom," said I, "what is a whale like?" "Why, it's like nothin' but itself," replied Tom, looking puzzled. "Why, wot a queer feller you are to ax questions?" "I'm sure you've seen plenty of them. You might be able to tell what a whale is like." "Wot it's like! Well, it's like a tremendous big bolster with a head and tail to it." "And how big is it?" "They're of all sizes, lad. I've seen one that was exactly equal to three hundred fat bulls, and its rate of goin' would take it round the whole world in twenty-three days." "I don't believe you," said I, laughing. "Don't you?" cried Tom; "it's a fact, notwithstanding," for the captain himself said so, and that's how I came to know it." Just as Tom finished speaking, the man in the crow's-nest roared at the top of his voice, "There she blows!" That was the signal that a whale was in sight, and as it was the first time that we had heard it that season, every man in the ship was thrown into a state of tremendous excitement. "There she blows!" roared the man again. "Where away?" shouted the captain. "About two miles right ahead." In another moment the utmost excitement prevailed on board. Suddenly, while I was looking over the side, straining my eyes to catch a sight of the whale, which could not yet be seen by the men on deck, I saw a brown object appear in the sea, not twenty yards from the side of the ship; before I had time to ask what it was, a whale's head rose to the surface, and shot up out of the water. The part of the fish that was visible above water could not have been less than thirty feet in length. It just looked as if our longboat had jumped out of the sea, and he was so near that I could see his great mouth quite plainly. I could have tossed a biscuit on his back easily. Sending two thick spouts of frothy water out of his blow-holes forty feet into the air with tremendous noise, he fell flat upon the sea with a clap like thunder, tossed his flukes or tail high into the air, and disappeared. I was so amazed at this sight that I could not speak. I could only stare at the place where the huge monster had gone down. "Stand by to lower," shouted the captain. "Ay, ay, sir," replied the men, leaping to their appointed stations; for every man in a whale-ship has his post of duty appointed to him, and knows what to do when an order is given. "Lower away," cried the captain, whose face was now blazing with excitement. In a moment more three boats were in the water; the tubs, harpoons, etc., were thrown in, the men seized the oars, and away they went with a cheer. I was in such a state of flutter that I scarce knew what I did; but I managed somehow or other to get into a boat, and as I was a strong fellow and a good rower, I was allowed to pull. "There she blows!" cried the man in the crow's-nest, just as we shot from the side of the ship. There was no need to ask "where away" this time. Another whale rose and spouted not more than three hundred yards off, and before we could speak, a third fish rose in another direction, and we found ourselves in the middle of what is called a "school of whales." "Now, lads," said the captain, who steered the boat in which I rowed, "bend backs, my hearties; that fish right ahead of us is a hundred-barrel whale for certain. Give way, boys; we must have that fish." There was no need to urge the men, for their backs were strained to the utmost, their faces were flushed, and the big veins in their necks swelled almost to bursting, with the tremendous exertion. "Hold hard," said the captain in a low voice, for now that we were getting near our prey, we made as little noise as possible. The men at once threw their oars "speaking" as they say; that is, raised them straight up in

the air, and waited for further orders. We expected the whale would rise near to where we were, and thought it best to rest and look out. While we were waiting, Tom Lokins, who was harpooner of the boat, sat just behind me with all his irons ready. He took this opportunity to explain to me that by a "hundred-barrel fish" is meant a fish that will yield a hundred barrels of oil. He further informed me that such a fish was a big one, though he had seen a few in the Northwest Seas that had produced upwards of two hundred barrels. I now observed that the other boats had separated, and each had gone after a different whale. In a few minutes, the fish we were in chase of rose a short distance off, and sent up two splendid water-spouts high into the air, thus showing that he was what the whalers call a "right" whale. It is different from the sperm whale, which has only one blow-hole, and that a little one. We rowed towards it with all our might, and as we drew near, the captain ordered Tom Lokins to "stand up," so he at once laid in his oar, and took up the harpoon. The harpoon is an iron lance with a barbed point. A whale-line is attached to it, and this line is coiled away in a tub. When we were within a few yards of the fish, which was going slowly through the water, all ignorant of the terrible foe who were pursuing him, Tom Lokins raised the harpoon high above his head, and darted it into its fat side just behind the left fin, and next moment the boat ran aground on the whale's back. "Stera all, for your lives!" roared the captain, who, before his order was obeyed, managed to give the creature two deep wounds with his lance. The lance has no barbs to its point, and is used only for wounding after the harpoon is fixed. The boat was backed off at once, but it had scarcely got a few yards away when the astonished fish whirled its huge body half out of the water, and coming down with a tremendous clap, made off like lightning. The line was passed round a strong piece of wood called the "logger-head," and in running out, it began to smoke, and nearly set the wood on fire. Indeed, it would have done so, if a man had not kept constantly pouring water upon it. The order was now given to "hold on line." This was done, and in a moment our boat was cleaving the blue water like an arrow, while the white foam curled from her bows. I thought every moment we should be dragged under; but whenever this seemed likely to happen, the line was let run a bit, and the strain eased. At last the fish grew tired of dragging us, the line ceased to run out, and Tom hauled in the slack, which another man coiled away in its tub. Presently the fish rose to the surface, a short distance off our weather-bow. "Give way, boys! spring your oars," cried the captain; "another touch or two with the lance, and that fish is ours." The boat shot ahead, and we were about to dart a second harpoon into the whale's side, when it took to "sounding"—which means that it went straight down, head foremost, into the depths of the sea. At that moment Tom Lokins uttered a cry of mingled anger and disappointment. We all turned round, and saw our shipmate standing with the slack line in his hand, and such an expression on his weather-beaten face, that I could scarce help laughing. The harpoon had not been well fixed; it had lost its hold, and the fish was now free! "Gone!" exclaimed the captain, with a groan. I remember even yet the feeling of awful disappointment that came over me when I understood that we had lost the fish, after all our trouble! I could almost have wept with bitter vexation. As for my comrades, they sat staring at each other for some moments quite speechless. Before we could recover from the state into which this misfortune had thrown us, one of the men suddenly shouted, "Hallo! there's the mate's boat in distress." We turned at once, and truly, there was no doubt of the truth of this, for, about half-a-mile off, we beheld our first mate's boat tearing over the sea like a small steamer. It was fast to a fish, and two oars were set up on end to attract our attention. When a whale is struck, it sometimes happens that the whole of the line in a boat is run out. When this is about to occur, it becomes necessary to hold on as much as can be done without running the boat under the water, and an oar is set up on end to show that assistance is required, either from the ship or from other boats. As the line grows less and less, another and another oar is hoisted, to show that help must be sent quickly. If no assistance can be sent, the only thing that remains, to be done is to cut the line and lose the fish; but a whale-line, with its harpoon, is a very heavy loss, in addition to that of the fish, so that whalers are tempted to hold on a little too long sometimes. When we saw the mate's boat dashing away in this style, we forgot our grief at the loss of our whale in anxiety to render assistance to our comrades, and we rowed towards them as fast as we could. Fortunately the whale changed its course and came straight towards us, so that we ceased pulling, and waited till they came up. As the boat came on, I saw the foam curling up on her bows as she leaped and flew over the sea. I could scarcely believe it possible that wood and iron could bear such a strain. In a few minutes they were almost abreast of us. "You're holding to hard!" shouted the captain. "Lines all out!" roared the mate. They were paired almost before these short sentences could be spoken. But they had not gone twenty yards ahead of us when the water rushed in over the bow, and before we could

utter a word the boat and crew were gone. Not a trace of them remained. The horror of the moment had not been fully felt, however, when the boat rose to the surface, keel up, and, one after another, the heads of the men appeared. The line had fortunately broken, otherwise the boat would have gone to the bottom with her. We instantly pulled to the rescue, and were thankful to find that not a man was killed, though some of them were a little hurt, and all had received a terrible fright. We next set to work to right the upset boat, an operation which was not accomplished without much labor and difficulty. Now, while we were thus employed, our third boat, which was in charge of the second mate, had gone after the whale that had caused us so much trouble, and when we had got the boat righted and began to look about us, we found that she was fast to the fish about a mile to leeward. "Hurrah, lads!" cried the captain, "luck has not left us yet. Give way my hearties, pull like Britons! we'll get that fish yet." We were all dreadfully done up by this time, but the sight of a boat fast to a whale restored us at once, and we pulled away as stoutly as if we had only begun the day's work. The whale was heading in the direction of the ship, and when we came up to the scene of action the second mate had just "touched the life;" in other words, he had driven the lance deep down into the whale's vitals. This was quickly known by jets of blood being spouted up through the blow-holes. Soon after, our victim went into its dying agonies, or, as whalers say, "his flury." This did not last long. In a short time he rolled over dead. We fastened a line to his tail, three boats took the carcass in tow, and, singing a lively song, we rowed away to the ship. This ended our first battle with the whales. Appleton's Library of Travel and Adventure. EARLY PIETY. Youthful piety has many and great advantages. Jesus loves the young—it is said of the "young man who had great possessions," "Jesus loved him." God says, "My son, give me thine heart," and "they that seek me early shall find me." "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Josiah is highly commended of God for his early piety. Early piety will have a great influence upon the temper and passions of the young. Early piety will be a safeguard against the snares and temptations to which youth is exposed. It will have an important influence upon our connections in life. How many young people make themselves miserable during life, and throughout eternity, in consequence of forming improper connections. Early piety will be your protection against wicked companions. Evil communications corrupt good morals. Keep away from the wicked and profane. Seek the companionship of the virtuous and the good. Give your hearts to God, improve your minds, and cultivate your hearts with care. Youthful piety will be your solace in old age. You will never regret having sought God in your youth. If you seek God in your youth, you will be able to adopt the language of David when he was old: (Psalm lxxi. 5) "O Lord, thou hast been my trust from my youth." Nothing can exceed the importance of early piety—everything depends upon it. Oh, that our youth could realize its importance! The hope of the church is in our youthful piety. How sedulously ought not the church, therefore, to labor to promote the piety of her children. The Sabbath school and catechism are all important. Let our churches not neglect these potent agencies. Let there be "line upon line, precept upon precept," until our children are brought into the fold of Christ. Let prayer be made for the youth of our congregations, until all shall know him, from the least unto the greatest, "whom to know aright is life eternal." Godfathers and Godmothers. The following (says a correspondent) is a verbatim copy of an advertisement which appears among the ordinary advertisements in Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper, for Sunday, November 20th, 1864: "A priest (or parson), with two godfathers and one godmother wanted, to do for a child, born on the 1st according to what is stated in the baptismal service of the Church of England, as is worded in their respective Prayer-Books—N. B.—A handsome remuneration will be made to parties performing, but testimonials will be required that all shall be performed as is promised and vowed to by them, without proviso; 1st, That the child is regenerated and made an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; 2nd, That the vowed parties will live to carry out their solemn vows; 3rd, That the child shall be kept from all temptations of the devil, that she shall keep all God's commandments, and walk in the same all the days of her life.—Apply to H. Browning, 4, Holly-terrace, Wyndham-road, Camberwell." A New Interpretation. "I was preaching one evening," writes a clerical friend who relishes a good thing richly, "from the passage in the history of Moses where he, with his two friends, Aaron and Hur, was standing upon a hill and beholding the battle between Israel and Amalek. My text was, 'Aaron and Hur, started up his hands,' and I argued the duty of the people to hold up the hands of their minister, from the example of

these good men of old, who thus supported Moses. "On my way homeward from the church one of the leading men of my parish joined me, and after expressing his great satisfaction in my discourse, begged leave to suggest one point that I had quite overlooked. "Ab!" said I, "and what can that be?" "I mean," he answered, "the powerful argument in favor of female influence." "I confess," said I, "that I do not perceive that the subject is hinted at; how do you discover it, my dear sir?" "Why, does it not read," said he, with some surprise, "that Aaron and her held up his hands? I suppose the woman helped as much as the man." Agriculture, etc. A DANGEROUS PRACTICE. Many persons who use kerosene lamps are in the habit, when going to bed or when leaving the room for a short time, of turning the wick down low in order to save a trifle on the consumption of oil. The consequence is that the air of the room soon becomes vitiated by the unconsumed oil vapors, by the gas produced by combustion, and also by the minute particles of smoke and soot which are thrown off. Air thus poisoned is deadly in its effects, and the wonder is that more persons are not immediately and fatally injured by breathing it—Irritation and inflammation of the throat and lungs, headache, dizziness, nausea, are among its direct effects. The alarming prevalence of diphtheria of late years is certainly traceable to this as one of many procuring causes. It is also true of the dreadful disease known as the "spotted fever," (which appeared in this vicinity last winter), having broken out in a very fatal form at Long Branch, N. J. Dr. Sayre, one of a committee of physicians who visited the place to examine the cases, names as among the predisposing causes to it this very habit of burning kerosene through the night with the lamp wick turned down. To save oil at the cost of sound lungs, is not economy but most wasteful extravagance. If you wish to leave your room for a short time, blow out the light, and place the match box where you can readily find it; and if you are compelled to burn a light through the night, be sure the wick is turned up far enough to secure a clear flame without smoke.—Portland Press. SIR MORTON PETO, M. P., ON THE SEWAGE QUESTION. At a dinner recently in connection with the Kent and Maidstone Cattle Show Sir Morton Peto, said it was remarkable that the question of the utilisation of the sewage of towns and cities should remain until the present time before any moment was made to obtain powers to carry out the work. He believed the question would greatly occupy the attention of Parliament during the session. There were also other questions connected with the subject that affected the welfare of the British farmer. In a distant country—China—which was even now scarcely opened to us, agriculture was so much appreciated that the Emperor went in state once a year to plough three furrows. The heir apparent to the throne had to plough five furrows, the Prime Minister nine furrows, and the magnates more in proportion, for the benefit of agriculture, which was a source of great wealth to that region. What we were going to apply to Parliament for now had been in practice in China for a long time. There was not a village in China—there was not a house in it—where the sewage was not carefully preserved and utilised. There was not a barber's shop in the whole empire where the soapuds and the cuttings of hair were not carefully preserved and utilised. He need not, therefore, say to them that it was a subject worthy of consideration. Not long ago he walked with a friend into a beautiful Lothian district, where the farm houses looked clean and nice, and appeared just such places in which a man might wish to retire and end his days in peace. The farm-buildings were well built, and one farm was situated on the side of a hill; but the manure and everything from it was taken and thrown into a pond below, where it was allowed to waste. Now, what would a Mandarin visiting this country say to that. He would say truly, "These men are the outside barbarians." It was to that point he wished to draw their attention. There was another subject to refer to respecting sewage. He was sure medical men would bear him out when he said it affected health. Those gentlemen knew when they heard of fevers breaking out at different places that often it was from the want of good drainage. It was one of the laws of Providence that that which the earth required, if allowed to remain unused, was injurious to the health of man. The natural wonders of California, which have attracted the attention of the world and surpass in interest and grandeur anything before known, have been exceeded by recent discoveries in the same region. The newer, rarer wonders lie further south in Tulare country; they include mountains 15,000 feet high, the highest in the limits of the whole United States territory, and higher than the king of the Alps, Mount Blanc; also perpendicular walls of rock 7,000 feet high, or twice as high as those that give grandeur and fame to the Yosemite Valley, and a grove of big trees—bigger than those into which hollow trunks three horsemen ride abreast—which is 25 miles in extent. These new discoveries are in the valley of the Kern River.