

Yonths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, November 9th, 1866.

Acts iv. 1-22: Peter and John imprisoned. 2 Kings iii. 1-27: Jehoram's Reign.
Recite—HEBREWS xi. 36-40.

Sunday, December 16th, 1866.

Acts iv. 24-37: The disciples have all things in common. 2 Kings iv. 1-17: Elisha multiplies the widow's oil.
Recite—1 JOHN iii. 1-3.

The Little Voyagers on the Ice-raft.

Two dear little children were playing on the ice one day near the harbor's mouth. Their mother's cottage was not far from the shore, and they ran in now and then to warm their rosy cheeks by the bright driftwood fire, while the mother stitched away at her sewing. But at length the weather grew milder, and the sun's rays came down warm and bright. Little Mattie and Lewis were delighted with the change, and began to run and slide much farther from the shore, laughing and shouting in merry glee. But when they were distant from the land, further than they had thought, they felt a sudden heaving of the ice beneath their feet, and a loud crashing sound was heard "Home and mother," are the child's first thought when danger threatens. The little ones turned their footsteps hastily, to fly to the shelter of her arms; but behold! all along by the shore a wide, dark crack in the ice was growing, every moment wider and blacker. Directly, too, the ice began breaking up about them, and soon they felt themselves on a great ice-island, floating with the angry waters—down, down toward the open sea. Oh, how the little ones cried and shrieked aloud for help in their distress! How they stretched their hands toward the shore, where their mother's cottage stood—that mother still unconscious of their danger! Surely now there was no hope for them. But a sleepless eye was over them still. God could care for them just as well when on that fearful ice-raft, as when safe in their little beds at home.

A cold, piercing wind came on, and a vessel was standing out to sea, steering cautiously for the floating ice, which was sweeping down from the harbour. The look-out espied some dark object on a distant fragment, and reported it to the captain. He examined it anxiously with his glass, and, turning to the mate, said he believed "two little children were on that piece of ice." It seemed impossible that they could be alive; yet a boat was quickly got ready, and stout hands and arms were soon pulling hard for the reeding mass. "For the sake of our little ones at home," was the word which passed from one to another, and those brave men, with fathers' hearts, rowed with a will, until their boat touched the frozen bed on which the children rested. Though chilled and drowsy with cold, God had still kept them alive. The little boy's head rested on his sister's lap, and she had wrapped her apron about him to help to keep out the cold. Those rough sailors wept and thanked God with full hearts, as they gathered them close in their arms, and wrapped their own huge watch-coats about them. Both the children lived, and were restored at last to their almost distracted mother.

Would it not be dreadful to see any children dear to you in such position? And yet how many are in even a more terrible case? What of that lad who sets light by his mother's counsels, or disobeys his father's commands, and breaks loose from all the restraints by which love and duty would bind him? What of that girl who, in her giddy love of pleasure, is drifting on to the destruction of both body and soul? What of any and every child who forgets not only his father on earth, but his Father in heaven? Adrift on an open sea, to perish forever, if help come not. Parents, see to it! "Lord save me, I perish," was a cry that brought help once before to a poor perishing one. The same cry uttered in the same sense of need will bring help to you. "He that calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

A Word in behalf of Singing Schools.

The greatest mistake of the present day in musical matters is the tendency to set aside the good old-fashioned system of singing schools. Many improvements in the means of general musical education have been introduced within a few years past, but there is nothing that can take the place of these singing classes. Better lose all the rest than to lose these. Private instruction, though of the very best kind, can never take their place. In them there is not only improvement in music, but in just the things to which it is the province of music to lead. The social feelings, for instance, are there developed as they can never, by any possibility, be brought out by drawing-room instruction. By social feelings is meant not so much the mere matter of regard for each other among the members (although that, too, is an excellent thing), but the feelings referred to are those which lead to the greatest usefulness in society. Private instruction has an unfortunate tendency to exclusiveness. One result is seen in the difficulty now experienced in inducing the best singers of a congregation to take their places in the choir. It indicates a bad state of things when, as is now so frequently the case, a church

which contains, perhaps, a dozen excellent singers, is obliged to put up with very indifferent music on the sabbath. This could not happen if the young people of the church were brought together frequently for the enjoyment of social music, or, in other words, if they were brought up in the habit of attending a church or community singing school. Pastors should guard this point most carefully, and use all their influence for the perpetuation of this useful institution. It is true there is now a difficulty which was not formerly experienced, arising from a scarcity of teachers. It is better, however, to employ an indifferent teacher than for singers to give up the habit of "assembling themselves together." But if a first-class teacher can possibly be obtained, do not let the paltry consideration of a few dollars stand in the way of securing his services. The cost of preparation for teaching has increased almost a hundredfold within twenty-five years, and if the teacher is not well paid for his services in class instruction, he will soon turn his attention to the more attractive and remunerative department of private lessons.

We strongly urge all churches to secure the attendance of their young people at some kind of a singing school during the coming winter.—*N. Y. Musical Gazette.*

Scientific.

OYSTER CULTURE.—At the recent meeting of the British Association, Mr. F. Buckland read, in section D, an elaborate report on Oyster Cultivation, in which, among many interesting details, were some connected with the chemical analysis of both the meat and mother-liquor. It appears that the phosphates are more prominent and important in the flesh composition than any other of its ingredients, and this accounts for the hygienic value of the oyster both for convalescents and in sea-sickness. The oyster-shell is formed from the mother-liquor, and the young of the oyster form their shells inside the parent shell. The study of the oyster is rivalling that of the salmon among British naturalists.

KILLING BY ELECTRICITY.—An Austrian chemist, Leinebroek, has discovered a way of inclosing electricity in small glass capsules, which will explode under the influence of the slightest shock. The capsule is inclosed in a steel cone, so that if shot from the rifle it will enter the flesh, and the explosion which follows is sufficient to kill a man. Experiments have been made on oxen and horses with perfect success, these animals having fallen down as if struck by lightning.

AN ASTRONOMER.—M. Herman Goldschmidt, the well-known astronomer, has just died at Fontainebleau. Though only an amateur in the science, he had discovered fourteen telescopic planets, and his only instrument was a common opera glass.

PRACTICAL HINTS.—Hard putty around broken window panes is quickly softened by pouring kerosene oil on it.

Putty is made by mixing "whiting" with linseed oil, to the consistence of dough. Every farmer should keep a supply.

Frozen Cream should be placed near the fire, gradually thawed, and then allowed to become very warm, not hot, then churn it, and bring the butter easily. The churn should be warmed to prevent chilling the warm cream.

To prevent flannel shrinking put it into cold water, place over the fire, and boil half an hour.

DOUBLE HEELING A STOCKING.—Knit the first stitch, slip off the next without knitting, knitting every alternate stitch on the right side of the heel, and every stitch when knitting on the wrong side. This makes the heel very thick.

At Vienna, the cost of the war, including the losses undergone by the neutral countries and the indemnities to be paid, is estimated at £40,000,000.

THE MASON & HAMLIN CABINET ORGANS.—For churches and all public uses these Cabinet Organs are admirably adapted, having great power, and being furnished in plain cases at very moderate cost. But their widest use is in drawing rooms and private houses. Unlike the melodeons, they are adapted to secular as well as sacred music, for their action is so quick that the most rapid music can be performed upon them, while from their sustained tones they are capable of a variety of effects which cannot be obtained on any other single instrument. Most opera music, and music originally written for orchestral instruments, is better upon the Cabinet Organ than upon the piano forte. A great advantage of these instruments is their quality of keeping in tune. One may be used for years without needing to be tuned. They are made exclusively by Mason & Hamlin, who are the inventors of several of the improvements from which they derive their fine qualities. Other reed organs are made, more or less resembling the Mason & Hamlin Cabinet Organs, but there are important differences of construction which seem to give them acknowledged superiority. Nearly all the artists of note pronounce them superior to all others, the best instruments of their class in the world. The popularity which these instruments have acquired in fashionable circles has led to their manufacture in very elegant cases and we have not seen more attractive pieces of furniture than are some of them.—*New York Day Book.*

Public Worship.

ONE OF THE PAPERS READ AT THE RECENT SESSION OF THE ENGLAND BAPTIST UNION, AT LIVERPOOL.

By Rev. S. Green.

(Concluded.)

IV.

Another note of our public worship should be reverence, external as well as internal, with that becomingness and order which befit that expression of our noblest, holiest feelings.

Our best, in every respect, should be consecrated to God. This maxim, perverted, is at the root of all formalism; but, rightly understood, it suggests most important and seasonable truth.

Our best, we say, in heart and hand—the best of what we are, what we have, and what we can do. Only let us be sure that it is consecrated to God, and not to our own self-esteem. No mistake is so common, no temptation is so subtle, as the tendency to gratify ourselves under the semblance of offering a tribute to God. The limit between the two things we cannot assign; it must rest with individual conscience and feeling. This only we may say: that as soon as any act or part of our worship begins to detain the attention upon itself, to be cultivated or delighted in for its own sake, the mischief whose end is idolatry, is already at work. For what is idolatry but the fixing of our highest affections and emotions—those which belong to worship—on something short of God Himself?

Our form of worship should be as the pure glass through which to behold the spiritual. Violations of taste, propriety, or order, are the blemishes which stain the glass, and dim its transparency. These, accordingly, we would remove with care. But, the attempt to colour the glass with hues of earthly brilliancy, or to adorn it with pictorial device, would equally, though in another way, arrest the eye that should gaze unobstructed through to heaven.

So it may be often said, "How charming the hymn!"—"how melodious the chant!"—"how eloquent the sermon!"—"dare we go on?"—"how beautiful the prayer!"—when not a thought has ascended to God.

Now we would have melody, beauty, eloquence, the purest that human taste and wisdom could bring; yet pervaded by a spirit that should make it ever manifest that these things are not for their own sakes.

Very sedulously too would we remove everything that would mar the harmony or completeness of Christian service. Thus, the place of worship should correspond in its arrangements, its comfort, and its beauty, to the fairest homes of the Christian people who have built it; it should be treated with the same respect; we who would not sit with our heads covered in the house of a friend, ought also to uncover here; punctuality in all the services should be most rigorously regarded; the thousand details of order should be carefully and noiselessly managed; and as to the worship itself, its expression should be tasteful and correct; the singing, for example, however simple, should be in time and tune; and the assembly should stand, or sit, or kneel together, laying aside an unaccommodating individualism in the sense of a common engagement; and no uncouth or grotesque ways, however unconscious in their simplicity, should offend the rightly cultivated taste. Thus much the educated among us have a right to ask, while even the most uncultured will feel their value.

It is sometimes said, in treating upon this topic, that, if we want to keep our young people, we must be prepared to make concessions to their love of the beautiful, even though we depart a little from the stern simplicity of our fathers. Now, I cannot forbear from expressing my conviction that these same young people are sometimes a little misrepresented. If of unrenowned heart and unspiritual feelings, nothing that we can ever furnish in the way of beauty or display will attract them. If we begin with any form or pomp of ritualism for their sakes, we shall only too probably encourage them to go where they will find the reality, of which we offer at the best the cheap and shabby imitation. No: it is not thus that we can keep our hold upon them. But, on the other hand, we have no right to offend those whose tastes we educate, and who in their own homes as accustomed to every social propriety, by aught of the mean, the slovenly, or the disorderly in the house of God. For instance, why should we annoy their musical tastes with tunes and a style of singing them, which to any cultivated ear would be simply barbarous? We have it at least in our power to show that our service of God in every part of it is "comely." Let us then remove from their way the hindrances to impression, and then we may fairly trust to the spirit that hallows all our worship and gives it dignity, solemnity, and power to work its impression upon their hearts, and to win them by an influence far

"Beyond the pomp that charms our eyes,
Or rites adorned with gold."

A further most important characteristic of our public worship should be a spirit of fellowship. As far as may be, we should worship together.

The principle of our worship is congregational. The priestly or vicarious idea is utterly repugnant to us. The minister himself is but one in a band of brethren.

Hence, by the way, our general objection to clerical vestments of every kind. This is more than a fashion; it rests upon a principle. The preacher is not a member of another order; but a brother standing up among brethren to

teach them. Academic vestments, indeed, are in place amid academic associations. But the gown of the professor, the gown of the scholar, means something very different from the gown or surplice of the minister. Very significant is the lesson taught us by the present ritualistic revival in the Church of England. Those engaged in it know well what they mean. It is not for love of the ecclesiastical millinery itself that so many men of determination and of power are engaged in this strange revival. Were this all, we might well afford to scorn the details which now fill some of the Anglican journals. While we are assembled here, the Church Congress is sitting in the city of York; and connected with it there is an exhibition of clerical vestments and other ecclesiastical ornaments. This exhibition has been the topic of most serious discussion in some of the journals to which I allude, and, amongst other matters, it has been urged with almost touching earnestness, that lay figures should be provided for the due exhibition of the robes—from artistic repositories, it may be presumed, or the purveyors of theatrical masquerade. The minds of many have been accordingly much exercised, until the secretary of the exhibition, is enabled happily to announce, in the *Church Times* of the 6th October, that "Messrs Brown and Son, of Manchester, will have on sale at the exhibition vestments displayed on figures." Now, what does all this mean? Has an inexplicable mania seized on a number of foppish young clergymen intent on a new sensation? This explanation would be false from beginning to end. The clergymen in question are often neither young nor foppish, nor is this movement a mania. The intention is to give to the Church a priesthood; and to impress this upon the multitude through the eye, even as the Oxford Tracts of thirty years ago endeavoured to indoctrinate it on the intellect of the few. The facts of the case show that the robes, with the accompanying observances, are doing more than the tracts in their widest influence ever wrought. Already multitudes accept this priesthood, and regard the vesture but as the symbol of vicarious service before the altar. Service, I say; I might add sacrifice; for the ground of such sacerdotalism really lies in a revived doctrine of the Real Presence. In fact, it is made by this school the test of correctness in things ecclesiastical; to acknowledge, in the bread and wine, "a present Mediator." In the *Christian Year* of Mr. Keble, to whose memory we would, with all our dissent from his doctrines, delight to do honour as to that of a sweet and saintly Christian poet, there occurs this stanza, referring to the Eucharistic emblems—

"O come to our Communion feast;
Here present in the heart,
Not in the hand, the Eternal Priest
Doth His true self impart."

In the 96th edition, published since Keble's death, the verse is altered—

"Here present in the heart,
As in the hand, Eternal Priest, &c."

A change effected (the reader is informed by a note) by the dying request of the poet.

Surely, all this is most significant; not only as calling us to renew the testimony which for generations our fathers have given, on behalf of the simplicity and spirituality of Christian worship, but as suggesting the sure result if once in any form men admit the priestly thought. We need to uphold the true and equal brotherhood of the whole company of worshippers before God, to abandon the clerical distinction, and to remember that whatever of truth there is in the priestly designation belongs to all Christians: to whom it is said, "Ye are God's clergy," and in another place, "Ye are a royal priesthood."

Let us ask whether we might not make the truth outwardly more apparent in our worship. Here a few inquiries are all that we can submit.

For example: is it well that the minister should himself conduct the entire service? It is often the case that from the beginning to the end of worship only one voice is heard. The office of the clerk is practically abolished. The pastor gives out the hymns, reads the Scripture, offers all the prayers. We confess sometimes to a regret for the old times when some honoured and excellent deacon was wont to occupy the reading desk. Nay, we would go further. Are there none in our churches who might with propriety and edification read the Scripture or lead, upon occasion, the prayers of the assembly? Why should they be always silent? Wherefore should not undoubted gifts be exercised, and the union of voices as well as the union of hearts present acceptable worship to God?

Again, would it be impossible for the congregation to take some audible part in public prayer? We speak with diffidence here, knowing how often the suggestion has been made and how invariably the attempt to follow it has failed. Yet we would ask, might not the Lord's Prayer at least be offered by the responsive voices of the whole congregation? If, indeed, we believed that this prayer was, as some have alleged, no better than a Jewish formula, provisionally adopted by our Lord until He taught His disciples something better, we might acquiesce in its general disuse; but if, as we believe, it is the model and summary, if not the form, of all true prayer, there would seem to be a special fitness in its solemn, stated repetition by the whole congregation. It is, I venture to think, a disadvantage that this unequalled form of words is so infrequently employed in our public devotions. But if this and other prayers are left to the minister alone, at least the people have the Amen. This is plainly spoken of in the New Testament, as the customary and seemly expression of the people's feeling "the Amen at the giving of thanks;" and we may add by parity of reasoning the