

## Month's Department.

### BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, February 18th, 1866.

JOHN VIII. 39-59: The Jews attempt to stone Christ.  
1 KINGS VIII. 1-21: Dedication of the Temple.  
Recite—MARK VIII. 34-37.

Sunday, February 25th, 1866.

JOHN IX. 1-17: The Blind man healed. 1 KINGS  
VIII. 22-43: Solomon's prayer.  
Recite—PSALM CXXIII.

### The "Sensitive Plant."

One of the most curious little plants which grows in our gardens is the "sensitive plant." Did you ever see one? It has little long stems, with small leaves growing out on both sides, like the locust or acacia; and it bears modest pink flowers.

What makes it curious is, that it seems to feel. If you touch it, the leaves shut up and it lies down; therefore it is called the "sensitive plant." It cannot bear to be handled. It acts as much as to say, "You hurt me; I shrink from your rude touch." It is a delicate plant, and God gave it this shrinking nature to keep it from being injured.

If you keep touching it, however, it loses for a time this power, and does not seem to care.

Now, my children, did you know that in the garden of your heart God has put a little sensitive plant? You do not know it by that name, perhaps, but you will when I tell you it is conscience. If properly cultivated, it will shrink from the very touch of evil. It will say, and immediately, "Be off!—quit me!—I don't wish to have anything to do with you; you will only injure." Such a conscience, you see, is a great blessing to anybody. It will keep one pretty effectually out of harm's way. A boy or girl who has that, and minds it, will go straight. Bad companions can never lead them astray.

There is a danger, however, of conscience losing its sensitiveness. If you should come in contact with evil too often—that is, if you allow yourself to see or hear what is wrong, or to go at all with bad associates, or put yourself in the way of temptation, conscience will become insensible; it will get into the habit of not feeling, nor caring—which is very dangerous, because then a child may go very far astray, almost without knowing it.

Take good care, then, my children, of this precious plant. God put it in your bosom to warn you of the very approach of sin. Let nobody tamper with it. Keep it quick and tender, and you will ever have reason to bless God for its faithful cautions.

### Well rebuked—An incident.

A young lady of wealth and position decided to give a large party. As she had many acquaintances among those who do not deem it essential to the completeness of an entertainment that "reel, and jig, and waltz" be introduced, the stylish invitations were prefaced with the announcement, "no dancing." At the same time, the young lady personally assured her friends that the arrangement would be perfectly understood by all the company, and their scruples would not be infringed upon.

Judge of their surprise when, at an early hour in the evening, "a set" was hastily formed in the back parlor, and a young girl who had but lately made a profession of religion was coolly invited to play for them. Words failed to express the surprise and regret at this twofold indignity, especially when the young convert, apparently acceding to the request, accepted the arm of an escort to the piano.

Pausing a moment, however, she begged a friend to accompany her—one whom all recognized as an efficient member of the church. As the two stepped across the floor, a few words passed between them; the old lady taking up a volume of bound music, quietly turned the leaves, while the younger, awaiting her movements, gave the listeners a spirited prelude, which, presently, softly and tenderly died away as the clear voices of the two ladies in "harmonious accord," rendered with thrilling power:

"I would not live away, I ask not to stay."

A few steps were taken by the waiting dancers; and a silence as of death fell on them as a young lady, one of the gayest of the gay, exclaimed, in shuddering dismay:

"That's not the right tune to dance by!"

But the song went on, gathering in richness and power, as here and there, from different corners, deep, manly voices and woman's tender tones at length joined in with electrifying power.

At its close the player arose and courteously bidding her hostess good evening, retired, followed by all who had been "lured in by false pretences."—*Watchman and Reflector.*

### A sad mistake.

Fifteen years ago there was a revival of religion in C—, and many were hopefully brought into the kingdom of Christ. Among those for whom Christians were earnestly laboring and praying, was Dr. F—. He was a man of skill and talent, very popular in his profession, but gay withal, and averse to religious duties and services.

"Come, doctor, go to church with me this afternoon," said one of his Christian friends; "we're having extra meetings this week, and it will do you no harm to attend some of them."

"I've no time to throw away," was the careless answer. "You have a soul to be cared for, my friend," pleaded the Christian "and must take time for it at some period; better do it now." "It's as much as I can do to nurse up the sick bodies about me. I must leave you and the parson to look after the souls," the doctor gaily rejoined, and turned away.

In the evening the pastor met him on the street, and renewed the invitation. "I have no time to spare," was still the doctor's plea; "every man must stick to his business. Yours is theology, and mine is pills and powders."

But you owe a duty to yourself in this matter of seeking salvation; and when will you ever have a better opportunity than now to attend to it? "When I have made a reputation and a fortune, parson; I cannot stop to seek anything else at present." And he went resolutely to his office to read and study the medical lore which should help him to success.

Dr. F—'s popularity soon called him away from C—to a distant city, and for many years his former friends lost sight of him; but last week the now aged pastor of C— was startled with the information that the doctor was in a rapid consumption, and had come back to the country to die. He hastened to his bedside, and found that he was still a stranger to the hopes of the gospel. Most tenderly did the minister of Jesus plead with him to seek the salvation so long neglected—so often slighted.

"I have no time now," said the dying man. "Fifteen years ago I might have become a Christian; but I thought I couldn't afford the time then I was so busy. That was a sad mistake; I see it now, but too late. Death is coming, and I have only time to die."

So indeed it proved; for that was his last day on earth, His sun set in utter darkness. Hopeless end speechless, he passed to his last account. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," is the voice of heavenly wisdom and love.—*Am. Messenger.*

### Sale of Dead Letters at auction.

The great sale of articles accumulated through the year in the Dead-Letter office took place recently at Washington, and was attended with the liveliest kind of bidding.

The *Star* says that over half the immense catalogue is articles of jewelry, largely of the "dollar" sort, but with a sprinkling enough of the genuine to induce a lively competition. Upwards of three hundred articles in the collection were packages of patent medicines, in the shape of pills, powders, unguents, oils, old school and new school, homeopathic, allopathic, Thompsonian, eclectic, and all sorts, for the relief of every malady known to man or woman. There were over one hundred and fifty gold (supposed to be) watches on the catalogue, and no end of silver watches. Also, an indescribable medley of all the varieties of wares known to civilization. Among the odd articles thus passed through Uncle Sam's mails, finding their way to the Dead Letter office, were sets of shoemakers' tools, packages of type, ladies' wigs, bundles of clothing, duplicate parts of sewing-machines, packages of felt hats, iron cog wheels (small), lots of lampwicks, dress elevators, shoulder straps, pieces of a piano, lamp burners, hundreds of military books, etc.

The proceeds from the sale will be deposited, subject to the order of the owners, should any of them ever turn up.

### Missionary Intelligence.

[From the Macedonian.]

**HIS OWN EXECUTOR.**—Mr. S. A. R. DeWolf, a member of the First Baptist church in Charlestown, Mass., died a short time since at the residence of his parents in Aylesford, Nova Scotia. When it became evident to Mr. DeWolf that he must soon go the way of all the earth, he immediately set himself about the arrangement of his earthly affairs. He paid over to the Missionary Union \$1000, and distributed among various other benevolent organizations and to the members of his family the remainder of his property, took his departure from earth and entered into his heavenly rest. He was a young man of devoted piety, and his example is well worthy of imitation.

**IDOLATRY NOT YET CRUSHED.**—Mr. Rose, of the Rangoon mission, presents an item less encouraging, in some aspects, than the accounts of religious interest among the people. Notwithstanding this revival of interest in idolatry may only indicate that the prince of evil fears the invasion of his domains, and therefore arouses his followers to fresh endeavors.

Twantay, one day from Rangoon due west, a large town frequently visited by Mr. Stevens and others, I have visited on three previous occasions, spending there from one to three days each time. I spent three days this time, but with less hope that any are at all moved by the Spirit of God towards Christ and the gospel than on either previous occasion.

Indeed, the whole town and surrounding villages are stirred up by the Twantay woodchuck to make liberal contributions to repair their idols and idol-houses, and rebuild their pagodas. Hundreds and thousands who have done but little or nothing for twelve years for these purposes, are now expected by the woodchuck or his people to give, and are admonished of the fearful consequences, if they longer neglect their gods. The fear of displeasing this high native official is quite enough to move the whole region to a compliance with his wishes. To this I attribute a manifest change in the spirit and tone of the people. They seem full of zeal for their idols

on the one hand, and ashamed or afraid to listen to the preaching of Christ on the other.

**BAPTISM OF FOUR BURMANS.**—Mr. Douglas, of the Baccin mission, under date of Sept. 5, 1865, gives an encouraging account of the baptism of four Burmans.

Since I last wrote, I have baptized four Burman men, three of them heads of families, between twenty and thirty years of age. The last one was baptized a week ago yesterday. He is a son-in-law of the native judge at Prome. I baptized him in a large tank, in the northern suburb of the town at 5, P. M. Expecting a considerable number would assemble to witness the baptism who do not come to the chapel, I arranged to preach at the water-side. Not less than a thousand were present; and, except four or five Burman lawyers who occasionally manifested a desire to make some reply, all gave quiet, respectful attention during the service. The Burmans are emphatically a religious people, as much so as the Pharisees were in the days of our Saviour.

The Moravian missionary ship, which conveys supplies and missionaries to the missions in Greenland and Labrador, has made her annual voyage without fail for ninety-five successive years. The vessel now in use is the ninth that has been employed for this purpose. During the entire period, no serious accident has befallen the ship, nor has there been a loss of life among the crew or passengers.

The railroads in India are fast destroying the restrictions of caste and the merit of pilgrimages. Many pilgrims, journeying to their holy shrines, instead of measuring their length in the mud or painfully walking for three or six months, take the quickest road by rail; and on the cars, when they need refreshment, they eat food and drink water wherever they can obtain it, asking no questions arising out of their superstitions.

### Scientific.

#### EXPANSION OF WATER IN FREEZING.

The exceptional fact stated below is one with which everybody ought to be familiar as showing in an extraordinary way Divine wisdom, power and goodness:

It is one of the properties of heat, that it causes all bodies to expand. If you touch the bulb of a thermometer the mercury rises, the heat which it received from your finger causing it to expand.

The tubular bridge over the Menai Straits is lengthened on a summer day as much as three inches; and, if you notice, you will find that the iron rails upon which trains run are never placed with their ends touching, in order that, when heated by the sun, they may have room to obey this law of nature. Clocks go slower in warm weather than they do in cold, because then their pendulums are longer; and often, in a frosty night, your watch gains many minutes; the cold having contracted the balance, causes it to move more quickly.

No other examples need be given; suffice it to say that every substance, every vapor, every gas, of whose existence we are aware, when heated, will expand, and when cooled will contract.

Did I say every substance? No, not every substance; there is one exception. If a long glass tube be filled with water, and placed in the open air in a frost, the water will, obedient to nature's law, contract; but as soon as that point of temperature is reached which is indicated on a Fahrenheit thermometer by 39 1-2°, the water ceases to contract and begins to expand, until at 32° it becomes ice. The law is only interrupted for 7°; and yet were it not for this seemingly small deviation, a very large part of our earth would be uninhabitable; for, had the water contracted regularly until it froze, it is clear that ice would have been heavier than water, and, as soon as a particle of ice had been formed on the surface, it would have sunk to the bottom, and in a short time the whole of the water would have been solidified; and not only the fish destroyed, but so great a mass of ice formed that the summer sun would not be able to melt it, and in a few years our land would be but the barren hunting grounds of scattered tribes of Esquimaux.

#### A FINGER IN A HOT PIE.

An English philosopher writes:

My excellent friend, the Vicar of St. Vitus, Lancashire, lately requested me to accompany him over one of the extensive plate-glass works near the town. I was so enchanted almost at the very entrance that I could get no further, and left my guide to proceed with two young ladies who accompanied us. They went through the establishment; I remained at the entrance.

Why did I remain behind?

To try an experiment—a fearful one, to the uninitiated; to plunge my hand, or rather the fore-finger of my left hand, into a mass, some twenty-five pounds, of molten glass; liquid metal glass at a white glowing heat.

I inquired of the score of hard-working, intelligent men around me, and of the genial-hearted manager, if they dared venture on the experiment. They replied, "No." The Vicar and the ladies were sent for. When in their presence, as well as that of the men, I deliberately plunged my finger into the liquid fire, somewhat rapidly, but with not very great haste; it came out unscathed.

The enterprising fellows around soon followed it up; some just dipping into the glowing mass; some, braver, plunging the hand right to the

bottom of the ladle, or small caldron, that held it, and none were burnt.

How came this? I will explain the reason.

Water constitutes the great bulk of our bodies. Mr. Frank Buchland merrily says we are merely some forty five parts charcoal mixed up with some four or five parts of water. On plunging the hand into the heated mass, the intense heat converts the moisture of the skin into steam, thus forming a sort of halo round it, and prevents contact with the metallic fire. Let the mass be at but a dull, red heat, steam will not be generated, and on withdrawing the finger, a *thimble* will be the result; the glass will adhere to the fingers with a terrible burn, and you'll cry *p. corvi*. This playing with fire is not new to me. I have tried the experiment with molten lead, and have not been injured. M. Boutigny was, I believe, the first to call attention to the matter some time ago; he tried his finger in molten iron, I followed it up in lead. Soon afterwards Boutigny paid a visit to this country, and at some iron works in Norwich a caldron of iron in glowing fusion was prepared for him; he quietly divested himself of his coat, drew up his shirt-sleeve, removed the rings from his finger, and having plunged his hand and arm in cold water, coolly and calmly inserted them in the molten mass, and drew them steadily through it and then out, without the least injury. Directly I saw the molten glass, the experiment flashed upon me, and I was desirous to try it with that material. The result was, as I have narrated above.

A COAL FIELD has been discovered at the base of Mount Olympus, and the coal is of such excellent quality for making steam, that a depot for the supply of steam vessels is to be established at Suez. . . . In Artesian wells sunk to the depth of two hundred feet—in Algeria, small fish of the carp species have been discovered, having eyes.

The Moa's Egg recently brought to this country from New Zealand and offered for sale, is to go back for want of a purchaser at a price satisfactory to its owner. Its dimensions were ten inches through its longer, and seven inches through its shorter, axis. There are larger eggs than this upon record.

### Agriculture, etc.

**KEEPING FRUIT.**—There is no one condition to the successful keeping of fruit in winter, so important as a cool temperature. The worst of all is warmth and moisture combined; and many fine supplies of winter fruit are ruined by shutting them up closely where there is no ventilation nor access to cool air. Where moisture cannot otherwise be easily avoided, ventilation will lessen the difficulty. If the cellar windows are hung on hinges so as to be opened at different degrees, any desired amount of fresh air may be obtained, and during the cold weather of winter the temperature may be reduced as low as needed. There are only two requisites—personal attention, and one or two thermometers. The most desirable temperature would be within two or three degrees of freezing; but as there are sometimes sudden changes outside, in the absence of the attendant, it may be most prudent to keep the thermometer at 38° or 40° degrees.

**PLANTING TREES.**—"Pioneer" in the *Prairie Farmer* says on this subject: "I have transplanted many hundred forest trees in the last ten years, and I have rarely lost a tree, and most of them set in the fall. One of the most important rules to be observed is, before taking up a tree, mark it in some manner, so that you will know which is the north side, so as to be able to re-set it in exactly the position it grew in the woods. This may seem to many of no importance, but to those who know that there is in the bark and wood of all trees a radical difference between the north and south sides, the north side being close grained and tough, while the south side is invariably more open grained, and brush, or soft, the importance will be seen. If this is done, your tree does not have to undergo a complete change in all the parts, and is ready to start off and grow at the proper time as readily as though it had not been moved.

**CREAM IN WINTER.**—Keep where moderately warm, and add at each milking (or once a day) a little hot milk. Heat the milk till almost to the boiling point; beat it fresh from the cow. The quantity is about a pint to a pailful at each milking. The effect of this is to prevent the cream from turning bitter; the buttermilk will be as sweet and fresh as in summer, and the butter in consequence will be better than without this treatment. We have this from an old, experienced dairyman, who has practiced it for many years, and we are personally known to the excellence of the practice. It is a point that should be known—for there is much bad butter made in winter, and buttermilk unfit to use.—*Colman's Rural Word.*

**MOST EXPEDITIOUS WAY OF FATTENING FOWLS.**—On this subject the *Irish Farmer's Gazette* says:—"Coop them in a moderately warm, dark quiet place, with good ventilation, and keep them perfectly clean, and fed on boiled or steamed potatoes, mixed with crushed oats or oatmeal, and blended with sweet milk with a little fine sand added, and given warm, but not hot. If in health and well attended, they will be fit for use in a fortnight. They may also get bean, pea, or barley meal mixed with the potatoes."

Tested in water, if eggs are good they rest upon the side. If one floats end up, you may be sure of a bad egg.