

Months' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, April 14th, 1867.

ACTS xiii. 1-15: Paul and Barnabas chosen to go to the Gentiles. 2 Kings xiii. Death of Elisha. Recite—JAMES iii. 17-18.

Sunday, April 21st, 1867.

ACTS xiii. 16-43: Paul preaching. 2 Kings xiv. 1-14: Amaziah's good reign. Recite—GENESIS i. 26-28.

The Mysterious Characters.

My uncle loved to call forth our wonder, though he rarely or ever did so without turning it to our benefit. One day when he came in from his walk, full of spirits, he flourished his stick above his head, and called out, "We have them! we have them! They have done mischief enough in the world, but we have them now."

"Who are they, uncle? Who are they? Please to tell us what they have done."

"Done!" said my uncle, "I do believe that they have been concerned in almost every forgery that has been committed for the last fifty years! Done! Why they have been spreading all manner of idle reports, that have not had a word of truth in them, and deceiving thousands. Done? I felt sure in my own mind that they have done more evil in the world than all the highwaymen and house-breakers that ever lived."

"This astonished us more than ever, and we then asked him how many there were in the gang? and how they dressed? and what kind of people they were?"

"Oh!" said my uncle, "there are more than twenty of them. They appear in all colors. I myself have seen them in red, blue, green and purple, but black is their general color. Some of them are taller than their companions, and these usually take the lead in all their plans and ways."

We next wanted to know where they lived, when my uncle told us that they were well known in the colleges and all public places; but these were not enough for them, forsooth, and they must needs have places provided for their use in the country as well as in the city, and abroad as well as at home.

This quite provoked us, for we thought that instead of having such attention paid to them, every one of them ought to be put in prison. But how great was our wonder, when my uncle told us that he wished us to become more acquainted with them, for that he really thought they might make us wise about many things which we did not know. "After all," said he, "they would never have done the mischief they have, had they not been led into it by others."

"Who can they be, uncle? But have they ever done any good?"

You shall hear," said he. "They rendered great aid to Doctor Johnson in compiling his dictionary, and I have good reason to believe that, if they had not lent a helping hand, John Bunyan would never have completed the Pilgrim's Progress." They are friends to arts and sciences, and though I never heard of their building ships, making steam engines, bridges, and mansions they freely give instruction to others how to do them. At the present time they assist missionaries abroad, and greatly help education at home. In short, I believe they have done much more good than I could tell you in a day.

Having now well enjoyed our wonder, my uncle went on to tell us that the gang, who had done so much good and evil, were neither more or less than the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. He said that we had many benefits and blessings that were sadly undervalued because they were common, and the alphabet might be reckoned among them.

"Most of our blessings," said he, "may be misused, and few things have been more misused than letters. When used aright they make us wiser, better, and happier; but when put to bad purpose they do much mischief in the world."

"But if," said my uncle, "taking up the Bible that lay on the sideboard within his reach, the letters of the alphabet had never been applied to any other purpose than that of making known the will of God in the world, this of itself would raise them above rubies in the eyes of all who truly fear the Lord. They proclaim the truth to the whole earth that all are sinners, and that salvation is only to be found in the Saviour, who died for sinners on the cross."

Though my uncle, when he began to talk about the letters in the alphabet was in jest, before he had done he was in right earnest; and if at the beginning of his remarks he awakened our wonder, at the end of them he called forth our thankfulness.

"Remember," said he, "that all who can read and write are bound to turn their talents to a good account, and bear in mind that the letters of the alphabet may assist us in keeping alive love and affection, in doing deeds of charity, in correcting evil, in imparting useful information, and in promoting virtue and piety in the world."

Our Boarding House.

I am a boarding-house keeper!—a landlord often called, though I am only a sublandlord. I belong to a sect called Hagi, and our chief has established, in different places of convenience to the members of the society various houses of entertainment where they may come from time to time for necessary food. Over one of the establishments in the small village of Krusi he

has placed me with directions to provide daily entertainment for all his people in the village. Some of the provisions he furnishes direct from his own storehouse. Others I can obtain only by great labor. To afford variety, I am allowed to exchange with any of his landlords in neighboring villages; and to add to both quantity and variety, I am directed to call upon those who daily meet at the table to furnish something as each may have in hand. This latter is in part designed to afford opportunity for any one to put upon the table such dishes as he may particularly fancy, or may think had better be set before the company—the whole coming under my supervision. A certain fixed price is charged each one to meet the necessary expenses incurred in supplying the food and preparing the table, and also to afford a little support for myself and family. It is allowed to admit free a few society members who may not be able to pay the small price charged.

Over this boarding house I preside. Early every morning I rise to begin the preparation of the day's meal. So many are to be fed, such a quantity and variety of food has to be prepared, and all to be properly arranged upon the table that I have to both bestir myself early and look sharp to the minutes as they pass, or when the dinner bell sounds for the boarders to come in, I may be far from being ready. As the village is small, and there are necessarily few members, comparatively, in it, the income of the house does not warrant the employment of much assistance, and I am obliged to do the most of the work myself. I not only select the food, but am obliged to take hold and help cook it myself—besides attending to all the business and exercising a general supervision over every thing. Then when the dinner is eaten I have to bustle around and help clear away, till, at length, last of all and at a late hour of the night I am able to retire. I endure all this the more patiently now, because I am in hopes that the population of our little village will speedily increase—particularly as regards members of our society—so that the income of the house will increase and I shall be able to have assistance.

At the regular hour, precisely at the striking of the bell, the boarders begin to file in. Often they are in family groups, members bringing in their whole families with them. Single ones drop in here, and there, and find places as best they can. Families are generally grouped about a table of their own. Wearing with extra labor, harassed with many cares, and great anxiety to set before my people as good a table as possible, I mark them as they come in and sit around the tables. Often the fare is not so good as I would have it, because I have not the means to buy. Then there are many savory dishes I could prepare only I have not the needful time and assistance.

But the great mass of the company know my circumstances and kindly commend my labor and wonder how I can, individually, accomplish so much. Some are without care and eat without thought of him who, in love, has toiled for them through the long hours of the day.

While the company generally commend, my eye rests upon some faces that do not appear altogether pleased, and I catch a criticism now and then. Of course there are a great variety of stomachs in the company and some will be ever thinking that what suits them should suit others. One dyspeptic grumbles at the sight of warm bread. Another would like more spice or seasoning of pepper and salt. One thinks that substantial corn beef and the like should be more freely set forth. Another desires the cakes and the niceties—while I stand, overhearing it all, flushed with heat and toil, and perhaps only too glad, that I have been able, under the circumstances, to furnish them any dinner at all. Of course, fault-finding in such a case is hard to be borne, and one complaining voice may serve more to depress my exhausted spirit than half a dozen commending ones can raise them.

I am often pained that I am not able to provide some little knick knacks especially for the children. They come in with such eager expectant faces, and glance hurriedly over the table to see whether they have not been specially remembered. But generally they see nothing, and sink down into their seats with such a disappointed look that my heart grieves deeply for them. Once I got a number of them to take hold and help me prepare something nice for themselves and others. For a time it went on finely, and it did my heart good to see how the little ones enjoyed it. Even the parents could not forbear tasting now and then, and some declared it was the best part of the whole fare. But the children got tired of coming to help, and one or two good ladies who kindly took hold to help fix something for the children, left off also, and business and work multiplied upon me, till the children were necessarily almost wholly neglected. It has grieved me much, and I do hope I shall be able to persuade the children and others to assist again.

I might extend the story of my keeping a boarding house to almost any extent. Any one who has any experience in the matter, knows what a life of toilsome drudgery it is to any faithful worker. One thing cheers me: I feel that I am in the service of my chief whom I dearly love, and I would be willing to do and suffer even more for him and those he loves. But I am a boarding house keeper! and when I have said that, my story is pretty well told.

The slanderer harms three persons at once; him of whom he says the ill, him to whom he says it, and especially himself in saying it.

Some men are as covetous as if they were to live forever; and others as profuse as if they were to die the next moment.

GOLDEN WORDS FOR DAILY USE.

Selected from C. H. Spurgeon's "Morning by Morning."

APRIL.

14. Sunday. I will; be thou clean, Mark i. 14. Redemption, like creation, has its word of might, Jesus speaks, and it is done. Leprosy yielded to no human remedies, but it fled at once at the Lord's "I will."

15. Monday. Your life is hid with Christ in God, Col. iii. 2. O believer, how sure and safe is thy inner life; if all the powers of earth and hell could combine against it, that immortal principle must exist.

16. Tuesday. O Lord, Thou hast pleaded the cause of my soul, Lam. iii. 58. O children of God, seek after a vital experience of the Lord's loving-kindness, and when you have it speak positively of it, sing gratefully, shout triumphantly.

17. Wednesday. The hope which is laid up for you in heaven, Col. i. 5. To those who are weary and spent, the word "rest" is full of heaven. When the banner shall be waved aloft in triumph, and the sword shall be sheathed.

18. Thursday. Are they not all ministering spirits Heb. i. 14. Angels are the unseen attendants of the saints of God. To what dignity are they elevated when the brilliant courtiers of heaven become their willing servants.

19. Friday. The place which is called Calvary, Luke xxiii. 33. Calvary yields the Christian comfort rich and rare. The temple of heavenly blessing is founded upon the riven Rock. No scene gladdens the soul like Calvary's tragedy.

20. Saturday. But Jesus held his peace, Matt. xxvi. 63. Calm endurance answers some questions infinitely more conclusively than the loftiest eloquence. The silent Lamb of God furnishes us with a grand example of wisdom.

New England in Palestine.

What is the truth about those Colonists from Maine who emigrated recently to Palestine? A late number of the *Examiner and Chronicle* contains the following:—

"It appears, after all, that we are all too hasty in giving credit to the unfavorable reports from the New England colony at Jaffa. Recent letters from that place tell a different story. They say the colonists are prosperous and contented, and that they maintain the most friendly relations with the people of the country. One gentleman writes:—

"This is the pleasantest country on earth, and the most fruitful, when properly cultivated. The land is smooth and undulating, not flat, and you can sow your grain, and plough it in, without fencing or meeting rocks or stumps. * * * The natives, Turks and all, great and small, high and low, treat us with the greatest respect, and will do everything for our comfort."

"The writer says that all the unfavorable reports that have been circulated in regard to the colony and its prospects, were the work of a man who was disappointed in some speculation, and takes this method in seeking revenge. We are informed that next spring a still larger company from New England will join the colonists. This is certainly one of the most singular movements of the age, and we are still of the opinion that our New England friends would find it more for their advantage to emigrate out West, if they feel crowded in their native States, than to seek their fortunes in a country which, in a few months, may be the theatre of a bloody war."

The "learned Selden" gave this dying testimony: "I have taken much pains to know everything that was esteemed worth knowing amongst men; but with all my disquisitions and reading, nothing now remains with me to comfort me at the close of life, but this passage of St. Paul—'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,'—to this I cleave, and herein I rest."

COMMON PATHS.—It sometimes seems to us a poor thing to walk in these common paths, wherein all are walking; yet these common paths are the paths in which blessings travel. They are the ways in which God is met. Welcoming and fulfilling the lowest duties which meet us there, we shall often be surprised to find that we have been unawares welcoming and entertaining angels.

A CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM.—The Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was to hold its 80th anniversary in the Locust Street Church in Harrisburg. Connected with the church is a Band of Hope; and at the opening of the conference the little folks addressed to the members of the following note:—

"Dear Pastors.—Allow us to inform you, that we have a Eureka Band of Hope connected with this church. We are only young girls and boys. We are pledged to abstain from the use of tobacco. Will you please set us a good example, and don't use tobacco in or about the church during conference."

"See that ye offend not one of these little ones."

It is as difficult for revenge to act without exciting suspicion as for a rattlesnake to stir without making a noise.

Submission is the foot-print of faith in the pathway of sorrow.

Agriculture, &c.

The food of Man and Plant-food.

The refuse returned to the earth from the food of an individual, is considered to correspond exactly with what is required in the form of manure to raise from the soil food sufficient to sustain that individual. There is, if we may so say, a law of reciprocity in the earth, so that it will return abundantly, in the fruitfulness of its productions; for a careful application of what is useless to man, to supply the waste taken by vegetation from its surface. By carelessness in the application of these waste materials, what would become the means of life, is converted into what is offensive, and what would even occasion disease and death. By careful attention to the removal of such refuse and its appropriation to agricultural purposes, the health of a community is improved whilst its wealth is increased. Every plan which proposes the cleansing of cities and utilization of all its waste matter is of the utmost importance. The Hague, the capital of the Netherlands and the residence of the King of that country, is to have a practical arrangement, which, when perfected, will be an approach to a more perfect system of drainage than has yet been attempted in any city in the world:

"The plan to be adopted is a very ingenious one, and although somewhat complicated, seems to be capable of efficient service. A main cylindrical tube is to be erected in every house—open above the roof to the air. Every story may communicate with the cylinder by airtight lids, to convey the contents of water-closets into it, itself communicating with a lateral street drain terminating in iron reservoirs at the road crossings. This is to be voided every night by pneumatic force, operating from the house cylinder throughout, to the tender which relieves the tank and removes its deposits to the poudrette factory, or to the channels of its transportation to the country and to the soil. The method is stated to be one of immense economy, and if practically efficient will doubtless be a model plan for greater cities."

PROFIT IN BEE-KEEPING.—As a proof that bee-keeping, as a business, pays as well or better than any branch of horticulture, I state that I am now offered for my bees, \$1,500 in cash.—It is not yet six years since I paid \$20 for the four stands with which I commenced the business. I have never bought a hive since. So this is the increase of my capital in five seasons, saying nothing of the bees, honey and wax sold in the meantime, or the profit derived from the business. Now that I have so many hives, I find the profit increasing every year without requiring more time and labour than I bestowed on a few. So far from there being any danger of over stocking, I find that my bees have done better the two past poor seasons than many have done where there were but a few hives kept in one place, and I am convinced that where they are managed rightly, hundreds of colonies will do well where one will. To accomplish this, however, it is indispensable to have them strong and vigorous in Spring that they may take advantage of the whole honey harvest.—Mrs. Ellen S. Tupper, in Iowa Agricultural Report.

PREPARING FOR SPRING.—Said a farmer who always takes time by the forelock, "In winter I prepare for spring: my plans for the crops for the coming season are all made and ready for execution so soon as the spring opens, be it early or late: my tools are all got in readiness, so that when the time comes to use them, I have not to go to the blacksmith to get chains mended, crowbars sharpened, and to the agricultural warehouse for ploughs or plough points, and so on to the end of the list of wants probable." Such a farmer never depends on his neighbor for what he can procure for himself: he never borrows tools, and would never lend, but for the incessant importunity of neighbor Slack, Hardup & Co. His motto is,—

Neither to borrow nor to lend, Ensures good neighbors and true friends. Boston Cultivator.

FIELDS OF DOCK. The root of the yellow dock, so troublesome to farmers, is an effectual alterative and a most valuable medicine. In the neighborhood of Lowell, Doct. J. C. Ayer & Co., have planted fields of it, where they raise tons at a crop. It is grown like the carrot or beet, in drills, and its quality or properties have been much improved by cultivation. It is one of the ingredients in AYER'S SARSAPARILLA, and we are informed, the extraordinary virtues of this preparation are largely due to the extract of this root that it contains. The Sarsaparilla root, used by this firm, is grown on plantations of their own, in Honduras, to secure an article of superior and wholly reliable quality. One of the reasons for the universally acknowledged superiority of their medicines, may be seen in the watchful care that is used in preparing them.—Vermont Statesman.

LETTER FROM HON. D. W. GOOCO, MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM MASSACHUSETTS.—Melrose, July 19, 1865.—DR. E. R. KNIGHTS—Dear Sir; I have used Dr. E. R. Knight's Syrup in my family for six years, and have found it an excellent remedy for Coughs, Colds, Sore Throats, and all consumptive complaints, &c. I have recommended it to several friends, who have received great benefit from its use.