

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, September 6th, 1868.

MATTHEW VI. 1-18 The sermon on the Mount, continued.

Sunday, September 13th, 1868.

Concert. Or Review of the past three months' lessons.

"My brave Boy."

BY JEAN INGELOW.

(concluded.)

"We looked out from under the trees, and there again, in the glare of the sunbeam, was the spine of rock, now winding downwards almost across the mountain; the heat striking up from it made our eyes burn and our heads ache; but it was not very steep now, and it was nearly as broad as the turnpike roads here, so that I could have got down by the help of my hand and the plants. So off we set again; and now, as there was no danger, we went as we liked, and I led the way.

"I noticed a great lump of something lying in the path; it was as big as a calf, of a gray color, and spotted with white; if I thought about it at all, I supposed it was a stone. I never absolutely looked at it till we were within one pace of it; then my eyes seemed drawn to it, and fixed upon it. It was a serpent. The mule sprang back and snorted; her eyes looked as if they would start from her head.

"There she lay, the odious thing, sleek and fat, all coiled up and knotted, and her little eyes leering at me with a horrid sort of deceitful smile in them. It could not have been more than a moment that I sat gaping at her, but it seemed a year; and then the mule cried out almost like a human creature, and turned round and tore up again past the other mules, straining and stumbling, and uttering that fearful cry, till in two or three minutes we were up on that level place; and I turned and saw all the other mules but one tearing up the ascent and poor little Owen straining up on foot.

"There was dust in the road; first I saw only that; then, in the twinkling of an eye, I saw Owen's mule creeping up slowly, and my first thought was wonder where the serpent could be; and my next, wonder at the tremendously long tail that this mule was trailing after her. In another instant this tail was reared up and brandished over her back, and she was sprawling on the road; and the tail was that great serpent. Directly the serpent and the mule were rolled up together into one mass, and rocking from side to side, and writhing and struggling. At last—the wretched mule kicking still—they both fell together over the edge of the precipice, and went plump into the top of a tree; and while we set quaking and looking on, they crashed down from thence, and rolled among the ferns and canes, and were lost.

"It was a horrid sight; and when I got over my surprise a little, I found we had all dismounted, and that Owen was standing wringing his hands and crying with all his might; and then, after that, he stopped and burst out laughing till he made himself cry again.

"Of course we did not like those old monks to see an English boy crying, and we kept patting him on the back, and talking to him. At last he seemed to wake up all on a sudden, and began to look about him.

"Well, old fellow," Talbot said to him, "how are you now?"

"O," he said, "I'm all right. What are we waiting for?"

"But presently he remembered all about it. He was last, it seems; and as each mule came up to the serpent, it shied and dashed up the ascent; but his mule actually put her foot into the middle of the creature, slid it down among the sleek folds, and at once seemed paralyzed, and never stirred, but kept gazing at the thing as it uncurled itself and began to hiss softly.

"Owen said he did not remember how he got off, nor anything else, till he found us all shaking him, and telling him that he was quite safe; and he kept shivering and crying out, while he described the serpent's eyes, 'O, the hissing monster! I hate her—I do hate her! And, do you know, it has seemed to me rather shocking ever since, that instead of feeling thankful that we were all safe, I could think of nothing but that text in the Bible about Haman!'"

"What text, my dear boy," I asked him.

"Why, that account of how Haman came home and told his wife about his riches and his honors, and the distinctions that the king had conferred upon him, and then ended by saying, 'But all this avails me nothing so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting in the king's gate.'"

"I cannot see any connection between the text and the serpent," I observed; "how came you to think of such a subject?"

"It flashed into my mind directly, and I thought to myself, what is the good of having this world to live in, if such odious reptiles as this are to share it with us? How I did loathe that serpent! it quite curdles my blood even now when I think of her!"

"I have often heard people speak of that peculiar hatred," I replied, "and refer it to the enmity that God placed between the serpent and the seed of the woman."

"Yes; so the chaplain told us afterwards. I have often heard lions and tigers roar, when I have been keeping the middle watch, and have

felt a good deal of fear and a sort of respect for them, but no disgust. It was grand in the dark to listen; it made one think, O, you jolly old fellow, I'm glad you're not crunching my bones! But when you have once heard a serpent hiss, and seen his sleek body and the hideous leer in his eyes, it does not seem enough to have escaped; only to have looked at him sometimes makes you feel ill for days afterwards with disgust and fear.

"But I was going to tell you what a brave thing Talbot did; as long as I live I shall always think it was the bravest thing that could be, and I shall respect him as much as any grown-up man, though he is only two years older than I am.

"I told you that we had all dismounted in that shady place; the mules were standing huddled together, but we were in no fear of the serpent, for we knew she would not quit her prey; so we all sat down, and the kind old monks broke off some branches, and we all began to fan ourselves with them, while they got out some provisions. There was a sort of patty, made of the flesh of iguanas,—very nice those creatures are, I can tell you,—and then there was some cake of Indian corn, and some baked parrots; but just as we put the very first mouthful into our mouth, Talbot started up as if he was perfectly astonished, and said to us, 'Why, youngsters, we shall never be on board ship by sundown if we stop to rest here, and you know what our orders were; and in an instant he threw down his cassava and bread, and began to saddle one of the mules again with all his might. We were extremely surprised; we did not know that the order had been at all urgent. The monks too were surprised; they rose with many bows, and as plainly as possible let him understand that it was their wish and intention to rest. But the more they said, the faster Talbot saddled. Their bows and politeness changed to anger, and still the saddles went on; they thought he could not understand, but they understood that he was perfectly bent upon setting off again forthwith; and boy as he was, they did not seem to know what to do to prevent it. We were rather sullen at being so disturbed; but Talbot's manner and determination so amazed us, that when he ordered Owen to get up and mount, the poor little fellow obeyed instantly. Talbot struck the mule with a whip, and off she set down the spine. 'Now then,' he said to me, 'up with you, T—; your mule's ready.' He was trembling with hurry and impatience. 'No,' I said, 'it suits me to wait a little longer.' I shall never forget his face then, it seemed to express so many things—terror, entreaty, and determination. 'I've no time to wait,' he said, 'but if you don't mount this instant, T—, I must strike you.' He was far stronger than I, but as he lifted up the whip I knocked up the handle, and it fell. Instantly he turned to the Indians; they obeyed him, and set off without a word; then the astonished monks, casting melancholy eyes on the provisions, were somehow made to mount. I don't know how he did it; but I suppose they were so amazed at his behavior and his audacity, that they had no sense left to contend; and Talbot gave each mule such a blow at parting, that she set off at full speed.

"And then he turned to me. 'Now then,' he said, 'there is but this one mule left for both of us; mount, and be quick.' I felt that he had no right to command, and I was angry and astonished. I fixed my eyes on him for a moment: his whole face seemed to be changed by his impatience, and worked and quivered with it. I heard the pattering hoofs of the other mules; they were still audible. If I could have known! 'No,' I said to him, 'I WILL NOT go till I have an explanation.'

"Very well, then," he answered, "there it is. He had already got his hand on my shoulder to urge my mounting; he now turned his eyes towards the most shady and secluded end of the bower, and there—O it makes me cold to think of it!—there, on a rock, folded and reposing, lay another serpent, just like the one we had seen before. It was watching us, and bathing its long, slender tongue in a narrow sunbeam. Instead of springing up and setting off for my life, I could not stir, nor breathe, nor get my eyes away from the fearful creature; but Talbot dragged me up by main force, and mounted behind me; and off we set slowly—O, how slowly!"

"We had no whip to urge on the mule with, for I had dropped it when I snatched it from Talbot, and I shall never forget the terrors of the next five minutes. At last the mule caught sight of her companions and mended her pace, and in a few minutes we came to open sward, where only a few trees were scattered here and there.

"When we had found a really safe place, where the rock sheltered us, and where there were no crevices in which any creature could hide itself, we all lay down, and Talbot made an apology to the monks; and I contrived to explain to them what he had done. They were exceedingly delighted with his presence of mind, and kept repeating, *Muschachio mio, Muschachio mio*."

"Talbot told us that he saw the serpent the moment the provisions were served out, and was so frightened at first, that for an instant he thought of springing on to a mule, dashing down the slope again, and then turning round when he was safe, to warn us of our danger. As he really did something so different, I think it was very honorable of him to confess this first intention."

"Yes, indeed," I replied; "and I think he showed wonderful presence of mind and a noble courage."

"I was sure you would say so. He said that he then considered the confusion and fright we should all be in—rushing this way and that way,

*My brave boy, or brave fellow.

some running down on foot, others hindering one another, perhaps frightening the mules, and letting them run away,—and you must remember that our lives almost depended on these mules; we could not get either up or down the mountain without them; and then you must remember too that Owen, after the fright he had had, was not fit for much. If it had been any other wild animal, of course he would have told us at once; but as it was a serpent, he feared we should be paralyzed; and if not that, get dispersed and fall over the precipice; besides, he hoped at first that it was asleep, and dreaded lest any noise should waken it. As for me, my behavior when he was obliged to show it to me makes me think I should not have escaped. I shall always think that Talbot saved my life, for the serpent was beginning to uncoil himself."

"There can be very little doubt that he did," said I, "and most probably he was asleep when Talbot first saw him, and might have been awaked by the noise you made in quarrelling together."

"We were told afterwards that those ash-colored serpents are believed always to live in pairs," proceeded my brother, "for when one is killed, another is almost sure to be seen about the same spot."

"I hope after this second escape you did not think of Haman," I observed.

"No, I didn't," said my brother, with a much more thoughtful face than was common with him.

"When you think of the fear and hatred with which you regarded the serpent," I continued, "you should consider that this enmity was implanted because our first parents were tempted to sin by Satan, under the form of a serpent; and that it is sin which we ought to fear and dread, far more than the serpent, which can inflict no injury, excepting to the body. You should be grateful, too, that the promise given so long ago has been fulfilled by our Redeemer—the promise that 'the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.'"

"Yes," said my brother, "that was what the ship's chaplain said to us when we came on board."

And so ended my brother's story.

Saved by the skirt of my Coat.

Some years since, having some civil business in the Bhundara and Rajpore districts of Central India, and thinking nothing about tiger-hunting, I was strolling at some distance away from the village, when I saw, not very far off, a tiger. At first I was not much afraid, feeling sure that he would move quietly off, if not molested; and as I had no weapon at all, you may be sure I had no wish to make a closer acquaintance. I was then in the open plain, as was the tiger, though just about to enter the jungle.

Judge of my horror when I saw him lash his tail backward and forward a few times, and then start off at a trot towards me. I had that better part of valor which you know folks call discretion, not to think of opposing the brute; so at the sight of that ominous lashing of the tail, I turned round and intended walking away, hoping that I should not be followed. Keeping a sharp look-out over my shoulder, I saw that the tiger had marked me for his prey; so there was nothing for it but to run to the nearest tree that rose in a jungle, a few hundred yards distant. I knew my running would be the signal for my enemy to increase his speed, and a love of life, and a thought of my dear ones far away, nerved me with unusual agility and strength. I heard the tiger take the first spring from the plain into the jungle, and the peculiar sensation that then ran through me I shall never forget. An impulse seized me to spring too; and with two or three kangaroo-like bounds, I reached the foot of the tree. I jumped up against the trunk, trusting I might lay hold on some branch which would support me, for had I missed either my foothold or grasp, I should have dropped just in time to be devoured the very instant of my enemy's approach. I never made such good use of my feet in all my life, and they have been of some service to me where I have been; and having on thin boots, I clutched the bark with my toes.

One more bound, and the tiger was just at the spot I had occupied but a second before. And now again my clothing came to my help, for had I had on a strong cloth garment, I must have been dragged from the tree, and should have perished. As it was, my coat was made of a thin native fibre, not unlike our muslin, but coarser and darker, and this garment, in his last spring, the tiger caught with one of his claws. With all my might I made a half spring, half scramble, higher into the tree, and away went my coat-tail like a bit of paper. This checked the brute for a second, and then I found myself beyond his reach, when standing on his hind legs. But this was but a small protection, and I increased the distance as much as I could by climbing into the higher boughs. I by no means felt safe, for they were so thin that I feared they could not support me, and then I thought that a spring against or up the tree might shake me off. I thought he would not be likely to trust his heavy body to a moving branch. Such was my hope, and I have been told since, such was my safety, had not other deliverance come.

I can never describe what agony and terror I felt when in that tree. So long as any effort was to be made, the mind was centered in that, and goaded on the physical powers to do their utmost; but when I had done all I could, to be there, with death literally staring me in the face, and I likely to fall into its jaws at any moment, was more than I could bear. It was nervousness—or agitation, if you like—increased by exhaustion and bodily weakness; but I

felt my brain reel, and my heart grow sick. The suspense and terror of those moments I often recall. I hope I had thought of and prepared for death before, but I had never been brought face to face with it; and when I had contemplated it, it had been with loved ones around to minister and soothe. I was somewhat calmer when I felt the help of One who has promised to be a present help in all our trouble; and perhaps this was a sense of the help that was at hand. I heard a low growl from the tiger, which scudded to me like one of disappointment rather than of attack, and then I had the unspeakable joy of seeing him trot off. Greater joy still! I saw a company of people in the plain, whom my enemy had recognized, and wished to avoid.—Kind Words.

A plea for the little Folks.

Don't expect too much of them; it has taken forty years, it may be, to make you what you are, with all their lessons of experience; and I dare say you are a faulty being at best. Above all, don't expect judgment in a child, or patience under trials. Sympathize in their mistakes and troubles; don't ridicule them. Remember not to measure a child's trials by your standard. "As one whom his mother comforteth," says the inspired writer, and beautifully does he convey to us the deep, faithful love that ought to be found in every woman's heart, the unflinching sympathy with all her children's griefs. When I see children going to their father for comfort, I am sure there is something wrong with their mother.

Let the memories of their childhood be as bright as you can make them. Grant them every innocent pleasure in your power. We have often felt our temper rise to see how carelessly their little plans were thwarted by older persons, when a little trouble on their part would have given the child pleasure, the memory of which would last a life-time. Lastly, don't think a child a hopeless case because it betrays some very bad habits. We have known children that seemed to have been born thieves and liars, so early did they display these undesirable traits, yet we have lived to see these same children become noble men and women, and ornaments to society. We must confess that they had wise, affectionate parents. And whatever else you may be compelled to deny your child by your circumstances in life, give it what it most values, plenty of love.—*Episcopal Methodist.*

DEATH BY SUNSTROKE PAINLESS.—The general impression is that death by sunstroke is very painful, but the contrary would seem to be the fact, judging from the following account of the effect of such a visitation, given by Gen. Sir R. Napier. He experienced an attack while in Scinde, where the thermometer, according to the General himself, was of as much use to him as it would have been to a boiling lobster, and wrote as follows to one of his daughters: "The sunstroke was a staggerer: yet my hope is to die by one, for never can death come in an easier shape. I was just deadly sleepy; it was deadly had I been left alone; but the only feeling of the transition would have been a tiredness like that experienced at being suddenly waked up before time. This was to a degree almost to be called painful then came a pleasant drowsiness with anger that the doctors would not let me sleep. Were it not for others, would that my horn had sounded; so easy, so delightful, I may say, was the approach of death." This resembles the accounts that have been given by men who have been saved from freezing to death, after having got far down in the valley, so that excess of heat and excess of cold produce precisely the same effect.

THE SINGING OF ALL.—In congregational praise it is wonderful to notice how discords are lost in the mass of sound, how harsh voices blend acceptably with sweet ones, and how incongruous elements combine in a wave of harmony. Only secure the singing of all, and the most refined taste will find pleasure in the result. The reason is, the result is harmony. This is a well ascertained scientific fact. "Let the people praise Thee, O God, let all the people praise Thee."

Cicero gives expression to a beautiful thought when he says, "I go from life as from an inn, not as from home."

A SHIELD AGAINST DANGER.—There is no safeguard against epidemic disease like Radway's Ready Relief. When there is infection in the air it should be taken at least twice a day. Those who follow this counsel will, in nine cases out of ten, escape the bad effects of malaria, when whole neighborhoods around them are prostrated.

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The best outward application known for flesh-wounds, sprains, bruises, swollen or stiff joints, is Johnson's Anodyne Liniment. It stands upon its own merits, and is the best family medicine in the world.

If you are threatened with a fever, soak the feet in hot water, drink freely of some hot herb tea, and wrap up warm in bed to sweat; then take a small dose of Parsons' Purgative Pills.