

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, October 18th, 1868.

MATTHEW xi. 2-19: LUKE vii. 18-35: John the Baptist in prison, sends disciples to Jesus.
Recite.—ISAIAH xxxv. 4-6.

Sunday, October 25th, 1868.

MATTHEW xi. 20-30: Reflections of Jesus on appealing to his mighty works.
Recite.—1 COR. i. 26-29.

The Dog in the steel Trap.

PERTH, SCOTLAND, August, 1868.

My dear little Friends: I want to tell you a nice story, which I think will interest you. Several days, while taking my morning horse-back ride here in Perth, a little girl came running to me, as I was riding across a field, weeping bitterly. Her first words were, "O sir, there is a dog caught in a trap, an' he's been greetin' a' mornin' sin nine o'clock; will ye no gang awa' an' tak him oot?"

I said to her, "But what are you greeting about? Your eyes look as if you, too, had been crying all the morning."

"O sir, he's greetin' sair, I cou'd na help it."
"But why did you not take him out?"

"I daur na, for the gamekeeper would be angry."

So I turned my horse into the edge of the woods, and there I found a nice-looking shepherd's dog away up among a ledge of rocks, with his forefoot fast in a strong trap. His foot was bleeding, and he was whining and howling and yelping in a most fearful manner. I found it very difficult to get to him, for the rocks were so steep and high. But I climbed up at last, and as I came nearer to him he stopped howling for a little, and as I had never seen a dog in a trap before, I thought he would be glad to have me open the trap, and let his bleeding foot out. But as I stooped down to open the trap, he flew at me, and bit my hand till it bled fearfully.

It would have been natural for me to have pelted him with stones and left him, but I pitied the poor fellow, so that I could not leave him. At last I managed to cut the rope that held him, but what do you think he did? The moment the rope was cut, though his foot, all bleeding, was still in the biting trap, still yet with the trap clinging to his foot, he sprang at me, and before I could turn round he seized me by the arm, and gave me another hard bite! I pushed him off, and he went tumbling down the hill side, making an awful noise as if he were mad. I was afraid that if the poor fellow was left in the woods he would die, and so I spent an hour or two in finding his master; and when at last I got him to his master, he quietly lay down, and let him open the trap and take out his cut and bleeding foot. When once his foot was out of the trap, he seemed thankful to me. He was not mad at all. He could not do enough to express his gratitude to his master and to me. It was only then that he came to his right mind, and seemed to find out who his true friend was.

You will wonder why I have told you this story. Do not, my dear little friend, lay down this letter till you have read the full answer. It taught me three most important lessons. First, the little girl's tears of pity for the poor dog caught in the trap led me to think of how Jesus weeps over sinners in the devil's trap. When we were in the Holy Land a year ago, we stood upon the spot, between Bethany and Jerusalem, where "He beheld the city and wept over it." I then wished that I was more like Jesus, that my tears might oftener flow at the sight of poor lost sinners in the devil's trap, and in danger of being dragged down to hell.

The little girl who was at work in the field near where the dog was caught, wept for nearly two hours, so great was her sorrow for the poor dog. But, my dear child, if you are not a Christian, you are in a worse trap than that dog was. All sinners are in the devil's trap. I, for one, feel sorry for you. I was once in just such a trap as you are in now, and I remember how my dear mother used to weep over me when I was a boy. She knew my danger better than I did. She knew that Jesus alone could save me from Satan's power, and fit me for heaven.

My dear young friend, that is true of you. Your soul is in danger. It was because the dear Saviour knew our dreadful danger that he left his home in heaven, and came down into this wicked world, and bled and died on the cross in our stead, that our sins might be all forgiven.

Again, you remember how that dog flew at me and bit me when I went to get him out of the trap. Just so I have known of some who have gotten angry when some good loving Christian has kindly gone to them and tried to get them out of the devil's trap. They feel so unhappy that they seem to think that if they become Christians they will lose some of their pleasures, and so they are often vexed with God's people that try to do them good. But little children do not often act so foolishly. A wicked infidel in Germany once flew at me, and tore my coat quite in two, when I was kindly telling him and many others about how the dear Jesus "was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." But little children always seem thankful when Christians try to do what they can to get them to the Saviour. But grown people are often so miserable on account of their sins that they feel cross and are ready to fly at those who are really their best friends, just as that dog flew at me when I cut the rope that he might get away to his master, who

would gladly let him out. In heathen lands I have sometimes gathered a group of children around me, and told them of the sufferings of Christ on the cross, and I have seen the tears in their eyes at the thought of their not loving him "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

I might have left that dog when he appeared so ungrateful to me, and flew at me, and bit me; and just so Christians are sometimes tempted to leave sinners alone when they are ungrateful for their kindness to them. But when they think of what Jesus suffered for those whom he came to save, they are often thus led to bear scoffs and insults that they may get their unhappy friends out of the devil's trap.

I remember a bad boy in one of my children's meetings in Glasgow, who was so wicked that he came into the meetings just to make a disturbance. He seemed to hate me, and all the good people in the meeting. But we did not turn him out of the church, for we knew it we could only get him to Jesus, that he would let him out of Satan's clutches, and so we prayed for him, and told him how kind and loving the Saviour was. And after a little we saw great tears rolling down his cheeks! God showed him that he was indeed in the devil's trap, in danger of being dragged down to the dark prison-house of hell. At first he seemed to think that he was such a sinner that he could not be saved, but when he went to Jesus, his Master, he found him able and willing to break the iron fetters of sin, and to let him go free.

And this leads me to say a word or two about the last lesson which that story teaches. You remember that the dog, though he would not let me open the trap, was quite willing that his master should do it. I thought all the time, that if I could only get him to his master, that he would soon take him out of the trap.

And so, my dear little friends, if you will only go to Jesus he will help you out of the devil's trap in a moment. He came into this wicked world to "preach deliverance to the captives, and to set at liberty them that are bound."

How glad that master was to open that trap! yes, and the loving Jesus will be even more glad to set you at liberty from all your cruel sins, if you will only come to him. He loves you. He has shown his great love for us by dying on the cross for us. He had to suffer for our sins before he could save any of us. We are by nature Satan's lawful captives. He claims us as his own: "All, even little children who are not Christians, serve Satan, and thus we read in God's word, 'Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered?'" "But thus saith the Lord: Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered."

But though our Saviour is now so able and willing to save us, it cost him his life before he could offer life to us. It did not cost the master any trouble to save his dog from a painful death, but it cost Jesus bloody sweat in the Garden, and cruel mocking and sufferings in Pilate's Hall, and dreadful agony on the Cross, that so we might be saved. What a sinner you must be not to love him for all this! I have often felt ashamed that I have loved him so little, yes, even the little love that I have for him has led me to take a journey of five thousand miles that I might see the place where "He loved us, and gave himself for us."

Do you not feel sorry that you have never truly loved this precious Saviour? Oh! come then, and tell him how sorry you are for all your sins, and he will forgive you.

He will take you out of the devil's trap, and you will then love him, and you will also find your heart filled with love towards those Christians whom you feared or disliked before. You will feel a thousand times more grateful to Jesus, and to them, than that dog did to his master and to me.

That bad boy of whom I told you, in Glasgow, could not do enough to show his love for Jesus and to me, after Jesus took him out of the devil's trap. For eight weeks he came to my meetings every day, and I often heard him telling the boys whom he found in the inquiry meetings, weeping for their sins, that Jesus was able to save them—that he had died for just such sinners as they were—that he had saved him though he was such a wicked boy, and that he would save them, too, if they would only repent and trust him with all their hearts.

Here is a child's prayer which may help you to express your feelings and desires to God:

O Lord, I am a sinful child. I am in the devil's trap. I cannot get out myself. I need thine help. Show me, I pray thee, by thine Holy Spirit, that Jesus has bled and died on the Cross that I might be saved.

Help me to go to him as I am, with the fetters of sin upon my soul, and to believe that he will deliver me from "the terrible enemy" who "goeth about seeking whom he may devour." Dear Saviour, I thank thee for thy great love in "bearing our sins in thine own body on the tree." Thou art my rightful master, I wish to serve thee. Make me thine forever, for thine own dear sake. Amen.—E. P. Hammond, in Evangelist.

The use of Illustrations.

BY E. D. JONES.

The Bible is a book of illustrations. All its parts glisten with brightness as it attempts to explain itself by the aid of material objects, and those things that are familiar to the human mind. The five books of Moses give us truth illustrated by types and shadows. The facts of Bible history seem to be the personification of certain great principles. The brilliancy of

Oriental poetry lends its help to carry truth with force and beauty in the Psalms and prophecies, and impresses them pleasingly on the mind.

The Proverbs are conveyed in the form of apt and wise sayings, applicable to all shades of human experiences.

In the Gospels we have divine truth illustrated by history, incidents, parables and miracles. The Epistles are illustrated by a great variety of familiar subjects to enforce upon the mind strong logical arguments, that contain truths which every believer is expected to make his life-study; while John closes the book with his wonderful Apocalypse, in which he illustrates what he saw by a grand procession of figures, giving to us the most exalted conceptions of the glory he was called to witness.

We need no better precedent for the use of illustrations than the fact that the Holy Spirit adopts the system so freely in the books of the Bible.

Christ has given us abundant examples when we find him calling upon the wind, water, soil, seed, sun, and hundreds of other objects, as agents to convey sacred lessons to the conception of human and finite minds. Aside from his divinity, there was nothing which gave him any more influence over the common people, who heard him gladly, than his command of apt illustrations.

The great secret of the popularity and success of such men as Summerfield, Whitefield, Chalmers, Guthrie, Beecher, Spurgeon and Christmas Evans, may be attributed largely to their free and judicious use of appropriate illustrations.

The sources of illustrations are inexhaustible. I could not undertake to enumerate the ten thousand channels that are opened to earnest seekers after these helps to the truth. They are to be found in the vast expanse of nature, history—sacred and profane—idolatrous usages, manners and customs of nations, astronomy, fables, proverbs, poetry, and all the varied incidents of every-day life. All things are brought to aid in the great work of making truth transparent. The vegetable kingdom alone furnishes an almost inexhaustible fund of illustration. Some two hundred and eighty allusions are made to the vegetable kingdom in the Bible, and Solomon is said to have spoken "of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the byssop that springeth out of the wall."

Irregular Teachers.

When a teacher is absent on a given Sabbath the whole lesson is lost to the whole class. Here is one entire week of religious instruction gone. On the following Sabbath, should the teacher be present, the result will be about the same; the scholars will not know whether to learn a new lesson or the old, and, in doubt, will learn none at all. One day's absence of the teacher does, in fact, cause the loss of two weeks' instruction. Where there is occasional irregularity of the scholar also—the scholar absent one Sabbath and the teacher the next—all instruction comes to an end. A large experience in this matter has led to the conviction that it takes at least three weeks of diligent attendance on the part of a teacher to repair the injury to his class of one day's absence, and that a teacher who is absent from his post on the average as often as once in four weeks, cannot possibly be making any headway.

Mistakes of Teachers.

It is a mistake to suppose that mere talk is teaching.

It is a mistake to think that hearing a Bible lesson recited, reading of questions from a book, or telling stories, is good Sabbath school teaching.

It is a mistake to think that one who in manner and temper is impatient, dogmatic, overbearing, slow, heavy or dull, can be a good Sabbath school teacher.

It is a mistake to suppose that one who is not understood, or is misunderstood, is a good teacher.

It is a mistake to suppose that he who gossips with his class is a good teacher.

It is a mistake to suppose, because we have a general idea beforehand, that we shall be able to supply the details and illustrations as we go along.

It is a great mistake to underrate oral teaching, and overrate mere reading and reciting from the Bible.

It is a great mistake to think our scholars too young to appreciate a well-prepared lesson or a well-governed school.

Many valuable horses die from the effects of colic. The best thing to do in a case of this kind is to pour a bottle of "Johnson's Anodyne Liniment, into a long necked junk bottle, add half a pint of molasses and water, then pour the whole down the horse's throat. In ten minutes the horse will begin to eat.

"Parsons' Purgative Pills" will greatly relieve if not entirely cure, dyspepsia, when everything else fails. They have been tried in some desperate cases, and have given more relief than any other medicine.

R. R. R. AS AN EXTERNAL INVIGORANT.—When the vessels of the skin become inert and dry eruptions and exfoliations, accompanied with itching, ensue, the surface thus affected, and the spine should be rubbed for ten or fifteen minutes with Radway's Ready Relief, thrice a day. By this means evaporation will be promoted, and the skin rendered pure and healthy. The Relief should also be taken inwardly, diluted according to the directions.

Price 25 cents per-bottle. Sold by Drug-gists.

Scientific.

The Sun a ball of Ice—Where do Light and Heat come from!

"Sensationalism in Science" forms a series of interesting papers in the *Belgravia Magazine*. The latest one is upon daylight, and it advances the following curious theories:

The established doctrine is that heat and light are propelled from the solar orb out equally into all parts of surrounding space, and fall upon earth and the other planets just as (and no more than) they do upon any waste part of the sky. And these rays of heat and light, we are told, decrease rapidly alike in number and in power, diminishing with the square of the distance from their source, the sun. But is it so?

Ascend in a balloon, and what do we find? Do heat and light increase in intensity as we rise in the air nearest to the sun? By no means. Six miles up all heat is gone. The thermometer is at zero, and hoar frost gathers on every cord of the rigging of the air-ship. How can this be, if heat comes down to us in diminishing force from the sun? If that were true, heat ought to increase rapidly as we ascend nearer to the sun, the source of it. Even light, though exceedingly pure—the air being free from the aqueous element—is less intense in those airy altitudes. Look up from the car of a balloon into the abyss of the sky above, and what do we see? A bright dazzle comes from the spot of the heavens where the sun is; but he is shorn of his rays. All around the sky overhead is of a deep azure, like the color of Prussian blue—a well-known sign of light imperfectly developed; just as we see in the flame of a candle or gas-jet, at the part of imperfect combustion—or, to take a better example, just as the blue flash of the electric machine becomes yellow or white-light, when the power of the machine is increased. There is little light in the air at those altitudes; the moment the prism, by the gyrations of the car, is inclined away from the direct rays of the sun, there is no spectrum at all. Manifestly, then, neither heat nor light come to us from the sun in the manner supposed—namely, travelling down to us through the empty waste of space, and decreasing with the square of the distance. For, if this were the fact, both heat and light would decrease rapidly with the lessening distance as we ascend; whereas light diminishes, and heat wholly disappears!

Calmly considered, these facts of themselves not only upset the common theory, but suggest the true one. Heat and light are generated, spring into existence, within the sphere of our planet. No heat or light in the wastes of space. Heat there can be none, seeing that the thermometer falls to zero only six miles above the earth's surface.

And light, too, evidently fades away in a thin blue luminosity in those upper regions where the terrestrial gases, the exhalations of the solid earth, become attenuated; where they probably merge into pure hydrogen, and into that most subtle sublimation of matter which we call ether, which is at present even in a vacuum of an air pump.

The daylight, I say, is the offspring of our own planet impregnated (so to speak) by the solar orb. Our heat and light are generated within the domain of earth itself. A cosmical force, which we call gravitation or attraction, and which is more or less inherent in all matter, comes from the sun; and that force or influence becomes light and heat when it enters and acts upon the atmosphere, the gaseous and ethereal envelope which surrounds the planets.

THE STOMACH AND THE MIND.—Much of our conduct depends, no doubt, upon the character of the food we eat. Perhaps, indeed, the nature of our meals governs the nature of our impulses more than we are inclined to admit, because none of us relish well the abandonment of our idea of free agency. Bonaparte used to attribute the loss of one of his battles to a poor dinner, which, at the time, disturbed his digestion; how many of our misjudgments—how many of our deliberate errors—how many of our unkindnesses, our cruelties, our acts of thoughtlessness and recklessness, may be actually owing to a cause of the same character? We eat something that deranges the condition of the system. Through the stomach nerve that derangement immediately affects the brain. Moroseness succeeds amiability; and under its influence we do that which would shock our sensibility at any other moment. Or perhaps a gastric irregularity is the common result of an over-indulgence in wholesome food, or a moderate indulgence in unsuitable food. The liver is afflicted. In this affliction the brain profoundly sympathizes. The temper is soured; the understanding is narrowed; prejudices are strengthened; generous impulses are subdued; selfishness, originated by physical disturbances, which perpetually distract the mind's attention, becomes a chronic mental disorder; the feeling of charity dies out; we live for ourselves alone; we have no care for others. And all this change of nature is the consequence of an injudicious diet.

WHAT SCIENCE CLAIMS.—At a meeting of the Edinburgh Royal Society, Prof. Blackie said he was not worthy the name of a man who would not stand his chance of being shot for the sake of science. What if such a test were required of professed Christians!

It appears from statistics, that between the ages of twenty and twenty-five the number of deaths among the bachelors is double of those that occur among married men.