

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, August 16th, 1868.

MATTHEW V. 1-2: LUKE VI. 20-26: The sermon on the Mount.

Recite.—PSALM XVII. 7-11.

Sunday, August 23rd, 1868.

MATTHEW V. 13-26: The sermon on Mount, continued
Recite.—ROMAN III. 28-31.

Young men and Maidens.

MR. BROCK'S MIDSUMMER MORNING SERVICE.

On Sunday morning last, the Rev. W. Brock preached his annual sermon to "young men and maidens" at Bloomsbury Chapel. The attendance was as numerous as ever, for, notwithstanding that the service began at seven o'clock in the morning, every seat of the large chapel was inconveniently crowded, and every inch of available standing space occupied, from the doors up to the top of the pulpit stairs. The attractiveness of this service is abundantly testified not only by the large attendance, but by the distance many of the congregation travel to be there. One young man we spoke with had walked five miles that morning, and many others came from the suburban districts, and even from country towns. One gentleman, attracted by the crowd at that unusual hour, entered the chapel from curiosity. He was in the west of Ireland the previous morning, and thus unexpectedly joined the congregation, having first inquired if "the gentleman was a good preacher."

Mr. Brock took for his text the following words—"Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God," 2 Timothy iii. 4. Relaxation, recreation, pleasure, said the preacher, by all means. He believed we could not live without them,—that they were, indeed, to be enjoyed as the appointment of God. It was His will that we should be entertained in this world. Honestly and seriously did he therefore repeat it—relaxation, recreation, pleasure, by all means. Without doubt there was "a time to laugh." Innocently, then, might they be "lovers of pleasures." They often sang—

"Religion never was designed
To make their pleasures less."

And that was true, so far as it went; but it was not exhaustively true. They might rather say—

"Religion ever was designed
To make their pleasures more."

But there were some who were "lovers of pleasures" *wrongfully*, and their error came out in the text—they were "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God," and that made it all wrong. Pleasure, in its proper relation to God, was right enough; but these men reverse that proper relation, and therein was their sin. Of this loving of pleasures wrongfully he wished to say a few words that morning.

First: some were lovers of pleasures wrongfully, by as much as they chose their pleasures *without any reference to the will of God*. Men naturally craved pleasures, and there was no lack of those who were ready to provide for their desires. So abundant and varied was the supply, that if the craving were not altogether insatiable, there would be the cry that there was enough. But amongst the pleasures thus provided there were many that were absolutely and inherently bad. To touch them was to be defiled. Others were approximately so. Hence the necessity for choice—there must be selection. Now, those to whom he referred made their selection, but without any reference to the will of God in the matter. There were His express commands and prohibitions, but to these they gave no heed. It was nothing to them that God had commanded that they should make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil it in the lusts thereof. It was nothing to them that God prohibited fornication and all uncleanness. The Ten Commandments were nothing to them; and to all remonstrances they would reply, "A fig for God's commands," if, indeed, they did not put it in language stronger still. If they chose to go to the Casino and the Cider-cellars, they would go. They preferred the racy entertainments; and if they could they would have them racier still. They preferred the spicy amusements, and if there were some spicier still they would have them also. And to all God's commands and prohibitions they gave no heed at all. Some of his congregation might be disposed to ask, "And are there any such persons to be found?" Yes; they swarmed in this great city; and very many there were who, in making their choice of pleasures, had no reference whatever to the will of God—"lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

Secondly, others were lovers of pleasures wrongfully, inasmuch as they pursued them *without any reference to the CLAIMS of God*. These persons were careful in their choice, and would in no wise defile themselves with the "sinful pleasures" in which others indulged. They preferred the refined and intellectual, and the more so the better would their tastes be met. But then God had certain claims upon them. And how did they treat them? They regarded them not at all. They were under obligation to render God service, to improve their own minds, and to serve their own generation according to the will of God. God claimed these things at their hands, but if you asked them for the service they would reply that they must have that pleasure, and the service was unrendered. There was that book—

should they not be seeking by its study to improve their minds? Perhaps they should; but then they must go to that entertainment, and so the book was let alone. There were their fellow creatures all around them, needing such help and succour as they could afford; and if you pressed for the help and succour they refused, for they loved pleasures, and after the pleasures they would go. It was a sad thing, said the preacher, in connection with the early closing movement, that as soon as men got more time they seemed so instinctively to devote it to pleasure, as though that were the chief thing. And thus, though they had some regard to the commands and prohibitions, they disregarded the claims of God. "Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

Thirdly, some others were lovers of pleasures wrongfully, because they pursued them *without any reference to the APPROBATION of GOD*. They gave heed to the commands and prohibitions, and had some respect for the claims of God, and therefore they would say, pleasure at its proper season and in its right proportion. But then, when they did enjoy themselves, they never for a moment thought to secure the approbation of God upon their pleasures. Such a thought never came into their minds. They were the gayest of the gay when they started on their excursion, and all through they had no idea of seeking God's approval. Religion at its proper season, but as for bringing it into their pleasures, they never thought of such a thing; instead of making their religion to suit all their actions, and to give the colour to all their doings,—pleasures as well as the rest. And thus these too were lovers of pleasure wrongfully, being "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

In conclusion, the preacher earnestly besought his hearers to belong to neither of these classes. No such pleasures for them. He repeated, relaxation, recreation, pleasure, by all means,—but always with due reference to the will, the claims, and the approbation of God. He urged them to seek true pleasures. Religion was not the sour and morose thing some represented it to be; but it was the source of the purest and the highest joys. Pleasure by all means—but not at the risk of losing "the pleasures that are for evermore." Let work be the rule, and pleasure the exception. Above all, let them take care that they be not finally banished from their Father above, "in whose presence there was fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there were pleasures for evermore." Let them not belong to those who were "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

At the close of the service Mr. Brock announced that he should preach a second sermon to "young men and maidens" in the evening. The announcement brought a large number of strangers, and the chapel was again crowded to excess. Mr. Brock preached a most appropriate sermon from 1 Chron. xxviii. 9:—"And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever."—*Christian World*.

The floating City.

Venice, queen city of the Adriatic, has been immortalized in song, and its streets of water, alive with gliding gondolas, and gay with revelry, are familiar to all. But, though less known, not less worthy of note is the capital city of Siam, of which a traveller thus discourses in the *Springfield Union*:

"One of the most wonderful cities in the world is Bangkok. Did you ever witness such a sight in your life? On either side of the wide, majestic stream, moored in regular streets and alleys, extending as far as the eye can reach, are upward of 70,000 neat little houses, each house floating on a compact raft of bamboos, and the whole intermediate space of the river presents to our astonished gaze one dense mass of ships, junks, and boats, of every conceivable shape, color, and size. As we glide among these, we occasionally encounter a stray house broken loose from its moorings, and hurrying down the stream with the tide amid the uproar and shouts of inhabitants and all the spectators. We also notice that all the front row of houses are neatly painted shops, in which various tempting commodities are exposed for sale; behind these again, at equal distances, rise the lofty, elegant porcelain towers of the various temples. On our right hand side, as far as we can see, are three stately pillars, erected to the memory of three defunct kings celebrated for some act of valor and justice; and a little beyond these, looming like a line-of-battle ship, and not very elegant palace of the king, where his Siamese majesty, with ever so many wives and children, resides."

"Now, be careful how you step out of the boat into the balcony of the floating house, for it will recede to the force of your effort to mount, and if you are not aware of this, you will lose your balance and fall into the river. Now we are safely transhipped, for we cannot as yet say landed; but we now form an item, though a very small one, of the vast population of the city of Bangkok."

"Every house has a canoe attached to it, and no nation detests walking so much as the Siamese; at the same time they are expert swimmers, and both men and women begin to acquire this very necessary art at a very early age. Without it man runs a momentary risk of being drowned, as when a canoe upsets, none of the passers by ever think it necessary to lend any aid, supposing them fully adequate to the

task of saving their own lives. Canoes are being hourly upset, owing to the vast concourse of vessels and boats plying to and fro; and owing to this negligence or carelessness in rendering assistance, a Mr. Benham, an American missionary, lost his life some twelve years ago, having upset his canoe when it was just getting dusk, and no one deeming it necessary to stop and pick the poor man up."

A child's Sunday.

The Lord's-day is not always pleasant to the little folks. It is a Thou-shalt-not day to them. They move in that path and we say, "Remember the Sabbath day;" they take another road to be asked "What day is it?" while a warning finger stops any special outburst of childish life. We build a high fence about them, on whose every picket is Thou shalt not, in flaming letters. Keep this day holy is the command, but how little do children know what that means—indeed, how little do adult Christians understand the freedom of that law. Children sometimes say, in homes where Sunday is a grim and scowling day, "Do tell us what we can do," so let me say in this line, tell your children more of the freedom of the day, and less of its restraints.

When eight years of age my mother took me on a visit to an uncle who was a Sabbatarian, or Seventh-day Baptist. The twilight of Friday evening was almost lost in the darkness when we drove up to his door, after a long day's ride. My rather boisterous greeting was suddenly solemnized by the information that the Sabbath had begun already, a thing which I could not account for. Saturday morning dawned, and like a boy in a new place, I was up with the sun to see how things looked by daylight. My uncle brought my vigorous whistling to a most sudden pause, and the dog with whom I was getting hilarious was shut in the barn. A boy full of life and fun, with a long June day before him, was thus met at sunrise with a stern and solemn "Thou shalt not," which stepped across his path full a hundred times before the sun went down, which, if I remember well, seemed to stop longer in mid heaven than when it waited for Joshua to pursue the enemies of Israel. If my good uncle had told me something I might do besides counting the diamonds on the wall paper, had read to me, or talked to me, or even told me why he kept Saturday, it would no doubt have started the sun, and perhaps given me a desire to visit him again which I did not carry away. I was only required to sit still, and if that requirement don't make a boy labor on the seventh day, then he is different from the specimens of energetic humanity that have come under my observation.

The trouble is, there is not enough of the spirit of the Lord's-day, or of the life-day of the church at home. We give up religious instruction to pastors and Sunday school teachers, and use nothing but the curb at home. The day that commemorates a living Christ ought to be a joyful day, preeminently a religious day, full of Christ, and full to the brim with cheerfulness and gladness. The Bible has variety and interest enough to make Sunday the queen day of the week in the estimation of the children. Tell them of it, and tell them how to spend it.

When I came home from church yesterday, after preaching a sermon on the fourth commandment, I found my four-year-old boy driving two chairs for horses, just ready to start for church. Of course I went, and in due time we arrived safely. We had the usual sermons, one from the father and the other from the son. My heart and my boy's heart were in fullest accord with the spirit of the day. He will not forget my sermon, and I am sure his will not be forgotten.—*Ex. & Chron.*

Christ's quotations from the old Testament.

Our Lord makes quotations from, or direct reference to, passages in twenty-two out of the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, viz: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, 1 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Jonah, Micah, Zephaniah, Zechariah, Malachi. In Matthew he quotes nearly one hundred passages, from nineteen books: in Mark fifteen passages, from thirteen books: in Luke, twenty-five passages from thirteen books; in John, eleven passages, from six books. If we may make such comparisons, we may say that Deuteronomy and Isaiah were his favorite books. In Matthew alone are eighteen references to Deuteronomy, and three in the other Gospels. To Isaiah there are twenty in all. To the Psalms there are sixteen, to Daniel fourteen, to Exodus fourteen, to Leviticus thirteen. In the eighty-nine chapters of the four Gospels are one hundred and forty direct allusions to specific passages of the Jewish Scriptures. Our Lord never makes a single quotation from the Apocryphal books, nor can we gather that he had ever read them. It is remarkable that his quotations are much more literally from the Septuagint than those of the Evangelists, when they quote for themselves, or of the Apostles, as found in the Acts and Epistles.—*W. & A.*

Extremes meet.

It is a curious fact, brought out by Stanley, the Dean of Westminster, in a series of articles in *Good Words*, that while Protestant Englishmen and Americans, claiming to be representatives and followers of those brave reformers who endured all things to testify against the

absurdities and corruptions and luxuries of the Church, are laboring with almost comical zeal to lead Protestantism into the extravagant rites and forms of Popery, the Pope himself, Pius IX, finds his pleasure in the singularity of primitive austerity. He dresses in white, like the early Christians; he receives the communion sitting, and celebrates that sacrament not on a marble altar or before a gorgeous chancel, but on a plain wooden table, cherished on account of the tradition that it was used by St. Peter in the house of Pudens, at Rome; at the consecration, he stands facing the congregation, like the Presbyterians; he carries no crozier, though claiming to be the bishop of the world;—nay, so primitive is he, that in the Pope's chapel there sounds no music of instruments, but simple voices sing the service in tones whose marvellous purity and freedom from instrumental guidance makes an unearthly, almost spiritual, effect.

Of course, it is the highest elaboration of art to make simplicity a constant element of influencing the senses and emotions; but it suggests a quaint reflection, not unmixed with humor, to see the Protestant straining for the high-wrought refinements of ceremony, and the chief Papist affecting the uttermost display of plainness—and both for the same object, religious impressiveness.—*New York Examiner.*

THE CHARITY THAT COVERETH—"Dear moss!" said the old thatch, "I am so worn, so patched, so ragged; really, I am quite unsightly. I wish you would come and cheer me a little; you will hide all my infirmities and defects, and, through your loving sympathy, no finger of contempt or dislike will be pointed at me."

"I come!" said the moss; and it crept up and around, and in and out, till every flaw was hidden and all was smooth and fair. Presently the sun shone out, and the old thatch looked gloriously in the golden rays.

"How beautiful the thatch looks!" cried one.

"How beautiful the thatch looks!" cried another.

"Ah!" cried the old thatch, "rather let them say how beautiful is the loving moss, that spends itself covering all my faults, keeping the knowledge of them all to herself, and by her own grace making my age and poverty wear the garb of youth and luxuriance."

Scientific.

To light a dark room.

The London *Builder* recommends a plan for lighting a dark room, in which the darkness is caused by its being situated on a narrow street or lane. The *Builder* says that the glass of a window in such a room is placed several inches within the outer face of the wall, as is the general custom in building houses, it will admit very little light, that which it gets being only the reflection from the walls of the opposite houses. If, however, for the window be substituted another in which all the panes of glass are roughly ground on the outside, and flush with the outer wall, the light from the whole of the visible sky and from the remotest parts of the opposite wall will be introduced into the apartment, reflected from the innumerable faces or facets which the rough grinding of the glass has produced. The whole window will appear as if the sky were beyond it, and from every point of this luminous surface light will radiate into all parts of the room.

AXE-GRINDING—It is one of the peculiarities of this world that nearly every man we meet has an axe to grind. Even the most prosperous and well-to-do people, who would appear to be above "carrying any such concealed weapons" on their persons, nevertheless do carry them, and ready to produce them with or without the slightest provocation. Two friends think that they are having a nice quiet chat, and that both of them have for the while "sunk the shop," when presently, just as they are about to separate, out comes the inevitable axe, and the whole charm of the interview is gone. There appears to be no escape from the thing, and even children, who we are told "should not handle edged tools," have all, from the cradle up, their little axes, and are as persistent and as cunning in getting them ground as their elders. Not to have any axes to grind puts one in such a novel attitude towards the rest of the world that it is best, perhaps, to pretend to have, at any rate, lest you be accused of being "righteous over much." And yet it is such a relief to many of us to come across a person, now and then, who is simple, unselfish, disinterested—who in a word has no axe to grind, and with whom therefore you can entertain free and frank relations—that we are getting quite out of patience with axes, and disposed to go against them altogether.—*Toronto World.*

The great railroad achievement of the age is that of the railway over Mont Cenis, between France and Italy, just completed, that picturesque route of sixty-five miles being now travelled in about five hours. From the summit down either side no motive power beyond natural momentum of the train is requisite—a great thing if the brakes don't break, but if they should—well, the reader can fancy the rest.

The rich may dress, and feed, and ride, and live in a way of their own choosing; but as to getting to heaven there is only God's way—the way of the poor. They may fare sumptuously every day, but there is only one sort of Manna.