

Outs' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

(From "Robinson's Harmony.")

Sunday, October 24th, 1869.

LUKE xiii. 19-35; The parable of the Mustard seed. Jesus is warned against Herod.

Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 55.

Sunday, October 31st, 1869.

LUKE xiv. 1-24; Our Lord dines with a chief Pharisee on the Sabbath, and other incidents.

Recite.—S. C., 56, 57.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

No. XXI.

Table with 2 columns: Name and Reference. Includes Samson's, Isaac, Melchizedek, etc.

"SIMPLICITY." Rom. xii. 8.

One there is from whom proceeds Bounty for creation's needs, And from him we learn That the right way to bestow, Is to let it seem as though Each their bliss did earn.

All we have from Him we win; And it is a bitter sin, If He gives us more, To gather vain self-glory up When we fill another's cup With ours brimming o'er.

As little children share their treat, And find the sharing makes it sweet, So simple bounty knows That in the thanks unstung by pain, And in its own content, is gain Far more than it bestows.

QUESTIONS ON SCRIPTURE METAPHORS.

The following questions are to be answered by the mention of words, all of which commence with the letter L.

- 1. What word is used metaphorically in connection with prosperity, eternal life, morality, and timidity?
2. Name two things to which both Christ and believers are compared?
3. Name something to which Christ, believers, Satan, and wicked men, are all compared?
4. Name a word used metaphorically both of sin and of grace.
5. What is made metaphorical of the Word of God, happiness, a good king, true believers, Jesus Christ, and God?
6. Name some ways in which leprosy is metaphorical of sin?
7. A metaphorical title used for Christ.
8. Name a word used for temporal calamity and spiritual weakness.

BIDDY BRINDLE.

Missis Biddy Brindle remarked one day To her mate, "Where are all the eggs I lay? A long, long time I've been doing my best To leave every day an egg in the nest; And to-day I thought I would count them o'er, And perhaps while doing so add one more. But methinks you will scold and cackle well When you've heard the story I have to tell; For of all my nice eggs, there is but one Remaining to show you what I have done. So I have determined no more to lay, But sit on the nest till I pine away." She sat there all through one day and a night, But feeling quite hungry, at dawn of light She went out of doors in search of some food, Though not in a very good natured mood. And when she returned she found in the nest A dozen large eggs—she thought them the best That ever any faithful Biddy had, And never had she been more truly glad. She cheerfully guarded them night and day Until three full weeks had glided away; Then she grew restless, and anxious to hear Some sweet little voices greeting her ear; But another dull week must come and go Ere Biddy could have her young brood to show. At length she proudly marched out with her chicks,

But they were so very full of odd tricks Her patience was sorely tried with them all, And none of them heeded her earnest call. They ran to the water, and swam, and played, Which made their kind mother sadly afraid. Thus oft does our anxiously sought-for gain Come freighted with sorrow, sadness and pain.

MINAH MOSS.

BLIND JOHN NETHERWAY.

CHAPTER III.

They found poor blind John sitting not very far away, and close to where a little rill, now a torrent, was dashing down into the main stream. He had sunk into a stupor, and had not distinguished the shouts from the roaring of the water; but those sweet sounds of sacred song

had aroused him, and when Peter reached him he was trying feebly to join in them.

It was some little time before John could clearly account for his day. He had, by being obliged to go out of his usual track, lost his way, and had gone round in a circle, so that when Peter found him, he believed himself to be some miles in another direction.

It was soon known that he was safe, some few rejoiced, but some would have taken his loss easily enough. As his dwelling, a ricketty old shed, had been not only stripped but nearly demolished by the rush of water, Mrs. Crisp took him to her house until some home could be provided for him. It was supposed that the authorities would refuse to advance his parish pay, and that he would be obliged to go into the poor-house.

'And the best place for him,' remarked Mrs. Williams to Mrs. Jenkins and others, 'I'm sure they're taken every care of. What can they want?'

'We thought of getting up a subscription just to gain a home for him with some poor person with whom he could be happy,' said Mrs. Crisp, who was busy canvassing the inhabitants of Clayton for the purpose; and found Mrs. Jenkins and a constellation of the 'upper class,' under the market place—a large, and loftily situated stone structure, from which they were inspecting the devastations of the late flood.

'Subscription indeed! suppose we shall hear of nothing but subscriptions now; there's one comes with the loss of a cow, another with drowned sheep, another with lost goods—for my part, I've nothing to give,' said Mrs. Williams.

'Give!' said Miss Betsy; 'and things at such a price! a likely business; charity begins at home. Why Luther's no less than eighteenpence, I assure you—' she made the last solemn declaration to her friend.

Mrs. Jenkins looked half-ashamed to refuse; she knew how much her neighbour had done for the blind man and others, and she put her hand into her pocket.

'Now, my dear, I hope you won't encourage such nonsense,' said Miss Betsy; 'you know we are to have a subscription ball for the poor very soon, and that will be a great expense, for we must attend it, so let us keep our money till then. Netherway ought to be very thankful that there is a comfortable home for him in the poor-house.' And she looked at Mrs. Crisp as a wild bird does at a tame one, and as if in another minute she would fly at her with a good peck.

'True, there is the ball,' said Mrs. Jenkins, withdrawing her hand from her pocket; 'and they say the poor-house is very comfortable.'

'I should like them that say so to be there,—they would know then what it was to be shut in with some of the worst specimens of human nature, left to indulge their wicked tempers and utter their evil thoughts without much control.' Mrs. Crisp said this with a severity not common to her.

'If they're so bad, the old man had better go and preach to them,' said Miss Betsy, with a sneer.

'That is what he will do, if God so appoint,' said Mrs. Crisp, turning away hopeless and grieved, but determined to follow up Mrs. Jenkins when under better influences.

'This is a large market for so small a place, ma'am,' said a respectable looking man in plain clothes who had been standing with his back to the party during the foregoing conversation, but now turned and addressed to Mrs. Crisp.

'It is,' she replied, 'we got it by mistake.'

'A very happy mistake surely,' he said with a smile, and fixing a pair of dark eyes upon her with a penetrating look, which seemed to awaken some recollections in her.

'It was happy for us, but not for the builder,' she answered.

'And who was the builder?' he enquired as they slowly walked towards the end of the place, where but a few were standing.

'One Mr. Singleton,' she replied; 'it goes by the name of Singleton's Folly.'

'What—he made a bad speculation?' asked the stranger.

'Poor man—his life was a failure,' said Mrs. Crisp.

'Then he is dead?' was the enquiry.

'I can't say that—but his life in this place; he meant to do good, but didn't know how.'

'And did harm instead?' asked the man.

'You'll hear different accounts of him according to those you question,' said Mrs. Crisp, leaving the market, and turning towards her home. To her surprise the stranger accompanied her.

'You have had a very heavy flood,' he observed.

'Yes, the heaviest for twenty-five years,' she answered.

'That was called Singleton's flood, I believe, because he was supposed at one time to have been lost in it with his wife and child,' said the stranger.

'Yes, we call it so,' said Mrs. Crisp, and seeing the stranger note down in a pocket-book what she had told him, she guessed his business.

'You are collecting information concerning the place?' she said.

'Yes, I am; I have been sent here for that purpose. That old man you were speaking of with those ladies—is there anything remarkable about him?' he asked.

'He is a man full of Christian faith, humble and simple,' said Mrs. Crisp, 'no otherwise remarkable.'

'And he is destitute?'

'Yes, very few care for him, except those who can't help him. He has gone to-day to the Board to plead for out-pay; I fear he will fail,' said Mrs. Crisp.

By this time they had reached her door. The stranger did not seem to go on; she put in her latch-key, expecting him to bow and pursue his

way; no such thing, he looked gravely at her as he put his book in his pocket, as much as to say, 'Make haste and ask me in.'

It was no easy matter for her to refrain from hospitality, but a perfect stranger—a man—and she alone in the house; she had heard strange stories of robbery and murder; she hesitated a moment, when Miss Dodd, who had been to measure Mrs. Jenkins for a new dress and had found her from home, came to ask if she might have a rest with her till her return.

This turned the balance in the stranger's favour; 'two against one,' was good odds; she invited him in.

'I can tell you something of the place,' she said; 'it is not remarkable for much.'

Without apology or profuse thanks, he followed her in; her fare was always simple, and she had not an unusual supply, but she made him welcome to what she could give with a frankness that atoned, and more than atoned, for any deficiencies.

'I should like to see the house in which this Mr. Singleton lived,' said the stranger.

'Nothing will be easier for you to do,' said Mrs. Crisp. 'It is called 'The Old Banks,' it is now inhabited by a Mr. Haffenden, a good man, who can tell you the history of Clayton from the first stone laid in the first house in it.'

'Is Mr. Haffenden any relation to Mr. Singleton?' asked the stranger.

'No; he took the place because it lay in ruins, and restored it, and he holds it for Mr. Singleton, if he should ever return; he pays the rent to the gentlemen who act for the creditors,' said Mrs. Crisp.

'Creditors! then he left in debt?' said the stranger.

Mrs. Crisp shook her head expressively: 'It was a bad business,' she said, 'but you are not going to make a book about him, but about the place, so let that drop.'

'Was he really so culpable?' asked the stranger.

'He was wile and obstinate, and speculated when there was no chance of success, and wouldn't believe but that all his schemes were solid gains, till they proved to be air bubbles.'

'And a hypocrite—was he a hypocrite?' The stranger asked this with much interest.

'There is only one who knows the hypocrite. I would never dare to call any by such a name; but certainly Mr. Singleton did not deserve it,' said Mrs. Crisp. 'He was altogether mistaken, that is the worst that is true of him.'

'But he became banker for many of the poor, and he was treasurer for religious associations, and all the money disappeared,' said the stranger.

'Yes; and he was guardian and wronged his wards, and a trustee and impoverished a widow; but for all that I say he did it from want of head-piece.'

'But, surely, when he saw things going wrong?' expostulated the stranger.

'But he never did till the crash came, and then he was bewildered. He always hoped that one thing would mend another, and didn't know the meaning of fear till there was nothing to cover the last loss.'

The stranger seemed abstracted for a minute. 'How long before his disappearance did the facts of his bankruptcy transpire?' he asked.

About the same time. There was to have been a large prayer-meeting at the Old Banks, on the night of the flood; but on that day strange rumours were about, and at night the waters rose and threw down the wall, and he and his wife and child disappeared; and it was soon known that he had left little but ruin behind him,' said Mrs. Crisp.

'You remember it?' asked the stranger.

'I was a young widow then, with one son; I was to have been at the meeting. Yes, I remember it.'

THE TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN.

The American people have just witnessed that wonderful and impressive sight, the total eclipse of the sun. The Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, writing from Augusta, Illinois, August 9, says:—'One of the most sublime and awe-inspiring sights I ever witnessed—and yet one of the most difficult to describe—was the total eclipse of the sun, as we beheld it here on Saturday afternoon. Others will tell the story scientifically; let me jot down a few impressions of a scene that affected me as it did the children that stood beside me. Augusta—a thrifty village of this abounding region—was almost under the centre of the total obscuration. You could not have a better place to see it,' said the astronomer of Princetown College to me a week ago. 'And not to see the eclipse in its totality is about equal to being half-married or half-converted.'

'At four o'clock we stood in the door-yard of my friend with smoked glass in hand; and, as one of us was watching the blazing sun, he exclaimed, 'There she comes!' When a boy, I had read of this very eclipse, and of the moment it should begin. It did begin at the precise second predicted forty years ago! Such is the punctuality of the truth-keeping God. And will He not be equally faithful in keeping His spiritual promises? 'Wherefore dost thou doubt?' The shadow came over the sun exceeding gradually—even as I have seen the shadow of a growing sin creep over a bright Christian character. The landscape around us began to look yellowish and ghastly. The grass seemed to be getting sick. Over the trees played a weird, lurid light, and every leaf hung perfectly motionless. 'Oh! see how queer those flowers look! And those currant-bushes! It looks as if Nature was getting the jaundice!' An odd thought; and yet I do not know of any other idea that would more truly describe Nature's ghastly hue.

'See who'll catch the first star,' said one of our group. The shadow deepened. The devour-

ing moon pushed on, until the helpless sun was nearly smothered. 'There—look! look! See—see—it is almost gone!' Only a minute more, and it is total! 'Yonder is a star!' exclaimed one of our company. It was Regulus, blazing away close by the red of the dying sun. (But Venus had been shining for full five minutes, without our discovering her golden locks.) 'Only a few seconds more!' But, ah! what a transformation do those few seconds work! Even as in a human history the deed of a moment suffices to darken a destiny for life; and, still worse, it flings its total eclipse over eternity!

'TOTAL!' we all exclaimed together. In an instant, in the twinkling of an eye came down an awful shadow as of a black wing, filling the whole heavens. It was ineffably frightful. Coleridge's lines flashed into my mind in a moment—

'The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out! With one stride comes the dark!'

'To the north the horizon was dyed with a rich orange hue. But above us and around us the air seemed to be filled with fine black particles. It was so dark that I could not recognise a countenance a hundred yards off; and yet it was not the darkness of an ordinary evening. It was the darkness of death! Above a group of trees before us a flock of birds flew wildly to and fro, as if panic-stricken. A couple of cows went lowing past the gate—the only sound in the awful stillness. Just over the fence a half-dozen chickens had composed themselves to roost in a cherry-tree. A dozen stars were twinkling in various parts of the heavens. The air was chill as midnight.

'The best description I can give of the sun when in total obscuration is that it looked as if a circular shield of sheet-iron had been riveted over it; and just at the lower edge glittered a bright, rosy clasp or nut, as if it was the head of the screw which attached the black shield to the sun. All around that shield flashed out the white rays of the corona. This corona had a shimmering, shivering brightness, and was fearfully and wonderfully beautiful. Its edges were not smooth, but scalloped, and from every point small beads of light seemed to float off into the sky.

'The mighty pall-of-darkness hung over us for almost three minutes. During that time every one in our group had a death-like hue. So might have looked the face of the universe to the Apostle John in some of his apocalyptic visions. At two minutes after five, as we stood gazing at the black orb, with its magnificent corona, a sudden flash of golden light burst forth from the northern limb. It was the most thrilling instant I ever knew, and the most splendid spectacle I ever witnessed. As if God said 'Let there be light!' a sheaf of dazzling rays burst forth in a twinkling and came flying towards us through the air. The whole sky lightened instantaneously. Methought that the 'sons of God' must have seen something like this when on Creation's morn the first flood of radiance broke on black chaos at the Almighty voice. He spake, and it was done! 'Thou makest darkness, and it is night.' 'Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment.'

'And so, as we watched the blessed light burst forth, and, swift as an archangel, wing its bright way through the whole heavens and over all the earth, it was to us the most perfect of all images of the ineffable Lord Jesus! The Christ of Calvary breaking in on the midnight of a world lying in wickedness! Christ's sweet, gracious word chasing away the darkness of doubt and unbelief from a depraved heart. Christ's overpowering love turning the night of impenitence into a rosy morn of faith and joy! Christ the comforter scattering the gloom which shrouds the chamber of sorrow. All these visions of our Divine Lord were borne to us on the wings of that first exciting sunlight. We saw the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His beams. We saw, as if pictured on the sky, that glorious miracle of grace when 'old things become new' and spiritual death is turned into spiritual life, and in that wondrous transformation 'the Lamb is the Light thereof.' Henceforth I shall never point a poor sinner to the Saviour without recalling the delicious thrill of last Saturday's sun-burst. And so on my own failing vision in the dying-hour—when this world goes under eclipse—may the first glimpse of heaven break in ecstasy, and the Lamb be the Light thereof for ever.—Christian World.

Scientific.

JAPANESE MATCHES.—Mr. R. Trevor Clark has stated in the Chemical News that the Japanese matches are identical with the spur-fire of the Chinese. He gives the following form for making this beautiful little fireworks: Lamp-black, 5; sulphur, 11; gunpowder from 26 to 30 parts, this last proportion varying with the quality of the powder. Grind very fine, and make the material into a paste with alcohol; form it into dice, with a knife or spatula, about a quarter of an inch square; let them dry rather gradually on a warm mantelpiece, not too near a fire. When dry, fix one of the little squares in a small cleft, made at the end of a lavender stalk, or, what is better, the solid straw-like material of which housemaids' carpet-brooms are made (panicle stems of Arundo Donax). Light the material at a candle, hold the stem downward, and await the result. After the first blazing off, a ball of molten lava will form, from which the curious curvations will soon appear.

A nobleman, who was a great amateur painter, showed one of his performances to Turner. This great artist said to him, 'My lord, you want nothing but poverty to become a very excellent painter.'