

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

(From "Robinson's Harmony.")

Sunday, April 25th, 1869.

MATTHEW xv. 21-31; MARK vii. 24-37: A deaf and dumb man and many others are healed at Tyre and Sidon.

Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 5, 10.

Sunday, May 2nd, 1869.

MATTHEW xv. 32-38; xvi. 1-12; MARK viii. 1-21: Four thousand are fed. The Jews require a sign.

Recite.—S. C., 11, 12.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE TEXT ILLUSTRATED.

Eliab 1 Samuel xvi. 6.
Moses Exodus iv. 10-12.
Mary Luke i. 27-33.

"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."—1 Samuel xvi. 7.

Oh, there are some who turn aside
From humble lives, unknown to pride,
That have but humble aim;
Who see no virtue lie about,
Save where the world hath pointed out
Some glory-gilded name.

Yet many noble thoughts may glow
In yearning hearts that do not know
To clothe those thoughts in speech;
In human nature's silent mine
God sees a million jewels shine
Which man can never reach.

We lay our heroes in the tomb
With all the pomp of funeral gloom,
And sweetly mournful psalm;
Yet some who sleep in nameless sod,
May first obey when the trump of God
Shall break creation's calm.

QUESTIONS ON SCRIPTURE METAPHORS.

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

- 1. To whom are young believers metaphorically compared. Give three illustrations, with references.
2. What word is used metaphorically of Jehovah, as Protector of his people.
3. Name of disease which is used metaphorically for sin.
4. What five creatures are tyrants and wicked men compared to?
5. What is treated as metaphorical of great faults in contrast with smaller faults?
6. Name something which is used metaphorically in connexion with sin, charity, obedience, peace, sorrow, and punishment.

JACOB WRESTLING.

A BIBLE SONNET.

Jacob was left alone by Jabbok-brook,
Perturbed as its vexed waters darkly flowing;
Next day that cloud would burst, in blackness growing,
Since he, long years ago, his home forsook.
There came a Stranger with a gracious look,
A man in form, but more than manhood showing,
Who wrestled with him till the East was glowing,
Then blessed him there, and his departure took.
So with God's favour as a robe invested,
He faced that cloud—which broke in loving tears,
By the prevailing power his prayers had wrestled;
Teaching us still in darkest hour of danger
How we may find deliverance from our fears,
Through the dear might of One no more a stranger.
RICHARD WILTON, A.M.

WORKING CHEAP.—"What does Satan pay you for swearing?" asked one gentleman of another.

"He don't pay me anything," was the reply.
" Well, you work cheap, to lay aside the character of a gentleman, to inflict so much on your friends and civil people; to suffer; and lastly to risk losing your own precious soul, and all for nothing. You certainly do work cheap—very cheap indeed."

A Fifeshire man recently took his child to the minister to be baptised, who asked him, "Are you prepared for so important and solemn an occasion?" "Prepared!" he echoed with some indignation; "I hae a flint o' bannocks bakin', twa hams, an' a gallon o' the best Hieland whuskey; an' I wad just like to ken what better preparation ye could expect frae a man in my condition of life!"

What a folly it is to dread the thought of throwing away life at once, and yet have no regard to throwing it away piecemeal.

He that knows useful things, and not he that knows many things, is the wise man.

What good would centuries do the man who only knows how to waste his time?

COUSIN MABEL'S EXPERIENCES.

BY MISS E. J. WHATELY.

No. XII.

HOME OPPOSITION.

"I have just been sitting with dear Marion Staunton," said my young friend Emily Marsden, as she joined me in the garden of her father's house, where I was on a visit; "and indeed it made me think of your words when we were reading together yesterday, that there may often be martyrs and confessors in every-day life of whom the world knows nothing."

"And is your friend Marion one of those hidden confessors?" said I, half smiling at the enthusiasm of my young companion.

"Now, don't laugh, cousin Mabel, or it will make me quite angry; and indeed it is no laughing matter. Really few know what that poor girl has to suffer; and just because she will act as she thinks right, and will not give up her conscience to please her parent."

"You quite excite my curiosity, Emily. Tell me about your friend."

"Well, dear cousin Mabel, she was my schoolfellow and my best friend when I was at school at B— with Miss Williams, you know; I am sure I shall always be thankful for the good I learned from that dear kind teacher of mine. But I had been well taught at home; now Marion had never heard a word of anything good, I may say, before she came. Her parents were in India; she had been most of her earlier years in a French school, nominally Romanist, but I fancy they were really quite irreligious and practically unbelieving. She often told me her mind was like a blank leaf when she first came to B—, as far as these subjects went. It was at Miss Williams' she first heard the truth, and became, I am sure, a real earnest Christian. Miss Williams told me that she never saw one who seemed to drink in the good tidings of the gospel as Marion did. Well, she was the dearest and kindest of friends to me, and being more than two years older, she was a great help to me in every way. She staid very late at school, for her parents did not wish to send for her, as Colonel Staunton's, time in India was nearly up, and Adeline, the elder one, was with them there already. And when I came home, Marion went to stay with some cousins till her parents returned, and was with them several months; they were very good Christian people, quite of her way of thinking, and Marion joined in all their work, and used to write me word how happy she was. Then when her parents landed, she joined them in London, and I saw by her letters she had great trials, though she told me very little, only asked me again and again to pray for her. But when they came to settle in this neighbourhood, and I could go and see her, I found out how much she had to bear. Her parents are quite opposed to all she had been taught, very worldly and fond of balls and gaities of every kind, and are very angry with Marion for not being willing to go out with them, and Adeline teases and laughs at her sister, and her father and mother are always talking at her, throwing out hints, even before others, which she can perfectly understand; and often they have such painful scenes! Mrs. Staunton is never satisfied to go anywhere in public without her daughters, and as something is always going on from that house, there is a struggle of some sort almost every day. Marion cried dreadfully, poor girl, when she told me about it; she said she knew it was the cross given her to bear, and she begged I would pray she might be able to bear it patiently. I cannot tell you how it grieved me to see her so tried."

"There will surely be a blessing, dear Emily," I said, "on any one who is seeking to bear the cross in a right spirit."

"I know it," said Emily; "but I cannot help longing to spare her the pain; however, I know that is a faithless feeling, for so much is said of the blessing of suffering for righteousness' sake. And dear Marion must enjoy something of that blessing even now in the midst of her trials."

Our conversation was closed here by Emily's being called away to execute some commissions for her mother; but in the course of the next day or two the subject was recalled to my mind by some remarks made upon it in a very different spirit by an old acquaintance on whom I was calling, one of those good people who are exceedingly fond of discussing their neighbour's peculiarities. She had been talking of a number of persons whom she wished me to know, and among others her friends Colonel and Mrs. Staunton; they were, she charmingly people "entertained so hospitably and pleasantly, gave such agreeable parties, and had two very handsome daughters, the eldest really a sweet girl," she said.

"I think Emily Marsden's great friend is the younger sister, Marion," I observed.

"Marion! oh yes, she is very dear and good and all that, just in Emily Marsden's way; but that sort of people is not much to my taste; though, by the way, I ought not to say it to you, Miss L—, who are rather in that line yourself."

"What line?" I asked.

"Why, in the serious line, you know; people who are always making a great deal of ragged schools, and missions, and meetings, and hymn-books, and so on; well, I don't quarrel with people for following their own hobby; if they all did it pleasantly and quietly as you do, dear Miss L—, I should not have a word to say; but what I can't bear, is people thrusting their religion down everybody's throat, like poor Marion Staunton."

"But I am afraid that is rather a reproach to me than to her," I said, smiling. "If I conceal my views and she avows them."

"Oh, now don't mistake me. Everyone knows what your views are, and we all know you are always trying to do everyone good, and that is quite right; but what I mean is, thinking it one's duty to plague everybody and make oneself as disagreeable as one can, and that is just what Marion does. Now Colonel Staunton is the kindest of men, and spares no pains or expense to give his children pleasure; but he and Mrs. Staunton naturally wish, for their children's good, to take them into society in moderation; and it is only but right they should; whatever plan is proposed, Marion is sure to say it is sinful, and so there is a disagreeable discussion, and her parents have to end by going without her. Mrs. Staunton told me it was really excessively trying, and it is hard on parents who are only anxious for their children's good. Then she will go out such a figure when she does go with them to any party; the other day when I met her and her sister out, any one would have thought that Adeline was the daughter of the house, and Marion a humble companion or poor relation, and it is really an annoyance to Mrs. Staunton, who takes such pains to have her daughters well-dressed. Then she will walk out of the room if some one begins to read aloud a novel, and she is always forcing serious subjects on people at the most unfitting times and places. She asked my niece Maria the other day when they were waiting at the railway station, if she was converted, or some such question, and of course, poor Maria was quite startled and amazed. It is a great pity, for Marion was a charming, lively, unaffected girl when she first came from France: she was spoiled by Miss Williams, and still more by those Daltons, who are all wild fanatics about religion. I can't think how the Stauntons could have allowed her to stay with them; I believe if she had staid a few months longer there she would have taken to preaching; as it is, she comes very near it!"

The good lady's tirade was interrupted by other callers, and I took the first opportunity of leaving, meditating as I went on the different way in which a question may be viewed from opposite sides. Emily was indignant when I repeated what I had heard, and eagerly declared all Miss Simpkins' accounts to come from prejudices of a gossiping, worldly-minded woman, and therefore not to be worth attending to. But knowing from experience that in such cases there is often truth on both sides, and that the imperfections of sincere Christians often lay them open to the attacks of unfriendly critics, I made up my mind to suspend my judgement till I could observe for myself; and as I was soon after introduced to the Staunton family, the opportunity was not long delayed. After two or three casual meetings, I was pressed by Mrs. Staunton to come with Emily Marsden (whose mother's health prevented her going out), to an evening party at her house. "Not a large party, I assure you, dear Miss L—; I know you don't attend those kind of things—but just a few friends."

On the appointed day we went, but found the gathering what quiet people like ourselves would have certainly called a "large party;" the two drawing-rooms were well filled, and every one seemed in full dress. Still, the pleasant, lively manners of Mrs. Staunton gave the whole circle a character of ease and freedom not always found in such gatherings. I soon made my way to the daughters, but I could not help perceiving that there was some truth in what Miss Simpkins had said with regard to Marion's personal appearance. The contrast between Adeline's snowy muslin and pretty wreath of roses, and Marion's plain dark silk, and somewhat carelessly arranged hair, was as striking as the difference between the bright good-humoured air of enjoyment in the one sister, and the grave, anxious look of the other. And though equally handsome and graceful in person and manner, the first impression, to a casual observer, would have been in favour of Adeline.

A few minutes later I was sitting in a recess, opening into the conservatory, where some greenhouse plants partly screened me from observation. Mrs. Staunton came up to her daughters, and not observing me, said in a whisper, which her evident vexation made louder than she meant—

"My dear Marion, I am sorry I did not see you before you came down. Why did not you put on your white dress and wreath? did not you see I had ordered you one just like Adeline's?"

"Marion thinks all these things wicked," said Adeline, laughingly; she is going to get a nun's hood and dress, or a quaker cap, next time she has to make her appearance. Which have you decided on, Marion?"

"Don't tease, Adeline," said Marion; "I will explain to you another time, dear mamma, please say no more now." And perceiving me nearer than she thought, she turned to me, and entered into conversation.

We had many topics in common, and I was so much interested by her simple but animated manner, that I soon forgot my first impression, and as I watched the varying expression of her face, I could perceive that under the anxious look which had struck me, there was an indefinable something lying deeper, a kind of calm underneath outward trouble, which I have never seen but on the faces of those who have really found the secret of true peace with God. It drew me still more to the young girl, and we got into deeper and more interesting converse, which was at last interrupted—considerably to our annoyance—by an extremely chatty old lady taking her seat on the sofa next me, and beginning to address me a number of common place questions, to which I was obliged to give my attention. Marion drew back with an expression of disappointment on her countenance, which was only too legible, and turned to a book of engravings on the table near her, as if to avoid joining in the old lady's chit-chat. Presently the talk became more general, and something was said of a recently published and very popular novel.

Adeline declared it was enchanting, and she couldn't lay it down.

"I quite pitied Marion," she said, "for her objection to such books, for on a rainy afternoon, when one can't get out, a book like that is such a resource. But I believe Marion would think it less of a sin to stand at the window and count the drops, if her store of tracts were not at hand!"

"Why don't you read novels, Miss Marion?" cried my neighbour, the chatty old lady. "Dear, what self-denial in such a young lady!"

"My dear Mrs. T—" said Adeline, "don't you know she thinks all those things quite wicked?"

"Do you really mean you never read novels, Miss Marion?" reiterated old Mrs. T—.

"No," said Marion, suddenly roused to answer, in a tone rather more decided than the occasion called for, "I never open a novel."

"And why, may I ask, my dear young lady?"

"Because," said Marion, in the same tone of grave decision and almost displeasure, "I could not feel myself right in ever reading such books."

"I told you she thought it dreadfully wicked," said Adeline, mockingly.

"I never used that expression, Adeline," interposed Marion with a slight sharpness of tone; "but I do think novel-reading would not be a right or fitting employment for any one who wished to live as a Christian."

"But as we are none of us Christians" responded Adeline, "I suppose we poor heathens may do as we like, mayn't we Mrs. —? Well, don't begin a discussion now, for pity's sake," she added, as Marion was about to reply, "we get enough of that. We are going to have music and not arguments. I am going to ask Miss Home to sing."

Music was now the order of the evening, and Adeline was among the best of the instrumental performers. Mrs. Staunton then wished Marion to take her part, and came to speak to her about it. Marion's face grew grave. She couldn't possibly play she said; she was not prepared, and disliked playing in public. Her mother was evidently much annoyed. She turned to me. "Is it not a pity, Miss L—, that this foolish girl should give up her music, when so much time and pains have been given to it? I know she is a good musician, and she knows I particularly like her to play in the evening; and Mrs. M— and Lady D— have been particularly asking that she would play."

"I will play to them as long as they like in private, dear mamma," said Marion; "but not here I really cannot. I will tell you why another time." And to cut short the discussion, she drew Emily's arm in hers, and led her into the little ante-room, where they remained in conversation till the party broke up.

In our way home, Emily was anxious for my opinion of her friend. I praised, as I could honestly do, very warmly, but hinted that she had rather confirmed Miss Simpkins' account of her, as a person who did not make her religion attractive in the eyes of her friends.

Emily took up the cause of her friend warmly. "I am sure Miss Simpkins has prejudiced you against her, cousin Mabel. She will have it that poor Marion brings all her troubles on herself."

"That is going a little too far, my dear Emily. Is there no medium between being a blameless sufferer and 'bringing all one's troubles on oneself?' Very often it is God's will to permit us to meet with real trials, which may, nevertheless, be much lessened or increased by our own conduct. I do think your young friend has something to learn on that head, though I do not wish to judge too hastily."

The next morning, when Emily and I were sitting together, we were surprised by an early visit from Marion. She came in with red eyes and a perturbed manner, and tried for some minutes to talk on indifferent subjects with evident effort. On Emily's asking her whether anything was the matter, she burst into tears.

"My dear Marion," cried her young friend, "tell me all that has gone wrong, for I am sure something has. Don't mind cousin Mabel, for she is everyone's confidant—mother confessor general to all her friends and acquaintance."

"Thank you, Emily, for your good character of me. I hope I may deserve it. I am sure your friend need not fear my not sympathizing fully with her. I will do my best to advise her."

"Oh," said Marion, when she had a little recovered her calmness, "it is nothing new—the old trouble again. I ought not to mind it; but I can't get hardened to it, and then—"

"Begin at the beginning, dear."

"Oh, in the first place, mamma was very much vexed with me both about my not being dressed like Adeline, and on account of the music last night. She said she expected her daughters both to try and please her, as one, she was thankful to say, always would. Then she added, Lady D— was going to give a fancy ball next week, and she hoped she should see us both together, and dressed in a fitting way. Adeline was very merry on the subject of my coming as a scour de charité. I spoke as soon as I could get in a word, and said I could not possibly go to such a thing, for I thought it wrong; and I had told them already I wished to do nothing which I couldn't feel entirely fitting a consistent Christian, and for which I could not pray for a blessing. 'I believe you are afraid of shocking your favourite, Mr. Harvey, of the iron church,' said Adeline; 'you know, mamma, he is always preaching against balls and parties and such things.' 'I know he is horribly narrow-minded,' said mamma; 'I only heard him once. Lady D— says he thinks no one can be in the right way who does not anathematize all amusements.' Then I know I was foolish. I spoke up and defended Mr. Harvey, and said I had never heard him use