

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

(From "Robinson's Harmony.")

Sunday, January 24th, 1869.

MATTHEW viii. 28-34: ix. 1: MARK v. 1-21: LUKE viii. 26-40: The two Demoniacs of Gadara.

Recite.—I JOHN iii. 7-9.

Sunday, January 31st, 1869.

MATTHEW xix. 10-17: MARK ii. 15-22: LUKE v. 29-39. Levi's Feast.

Recite.—MICAH vi. 6-8.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

No. II.

- W-inc Jerem. xxxv. 6. E-mmaus Luke xxiv. 13-32. E-lizabth's Luke i. 13-20. P-eter Matthew xxvi. 69-75. N-aboth 1 Kings xxi. 14, 15. O-thniel's Judges i. 13-15. T-ophet Jerem. vii. 31. "WEEP NOT."—Luke vii. 13.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

No. III.

Who on an ardent lover laid a heavy yoke for years? And who was, by his father, called the snake, each creature fears? Who "wholly followed the Lord God" when others faithless proved? Who bore a promised son whose words of fire none heard unmoved? What king forsook the living God when his best friend expired? Who justly found the felon's death he for his foe desired? The middle letter of these names Will bring before our sight A prophet, famous in his day, Yet loath to do the right. He knew the truth, for Israel's God Had talked with him by night; But power and gold the idols were He served with heart and might. Although a higher hand restrained The ill he fain had wrought, His death in battle paid the price Of his rebellious thought. In vain we find clear light may shine. On what we ought to do, Unless our inmost heart we bow And love our Master too. The answer will be given next week.

CURIOUS EPITAPHS.—The omission of the comma makes this a curious blunder: "This stone was erected to the memory of Joseph Potter, who was accidentally shot as a mark of respect by his brother."

The poetic license of this is worthy of notice:—

"Here lies the bones of Thomas Woodhen, The best of husbands and the kindest of men.

P. S.—His name was Woodcock, but it would not rhyme."

Here is a bit of quiet satire on a stone erected by a disconsolate widow to her lamented husband:—

"Tears will not recall you, therefore we weep."

"TRAIN UP A CHILD &c."—The following is a genuine bit of human nature, early developed:— A little fellow (a minister's son, by the way) sat on the floor one afternoon, playing with his blocks, when some ladies called on his mamma. Very soon the conversation turned, I am sorry to say, on a bit of scandal that was in the village. Remembering suddenly that the child was in the room, and not knowing exactly how much he might understand of what was said, an abrupt pause was made in the conversation. There sat the little fellow, busy with his blocks, and in reality, not heeding a word of what was being said. But no sooner did the pause come than he turned round, and rolling on the floor, and laughing as though his little sides would burst, shouted, "Go right on; that's jest sitch as I like to hear every day!"

DELICATE.—A correspondent of a Presbyterian exchange, writing on what he calls a delicate subject—that of preaching to congregations by ministers not regularly employed by them—says: Now, there are some congregations who forget that it is their duty to pay for such services. Ministers of the Gospel "are not wood nor stone, but men." They live on provisions the same as other people, and strive to pay their grocer. A physician who rides half a day on horseback to see a patient expects a handsome fee, but a minister educated at a much greater expense, may ride further and receive nothing. I knew of one minister who, by invitation, went some distance to preach to a Church without a pastor, and received a sum covering about two-thirds of his travelling expenses. I know of another who went a day's journey, preached several times to a pastor's flock, and did not receive a cent nor a word of thanks, and paid a round price for the use of the horse for the trip.

COUSIN MABEL'S EXPERIENCES.

BY MISS E. J. WHATELY.

No. III. RITUALISM.

"I don't understand you. How can God set us apart except by putting it into our hearts to wish for it?"

"By the outward leadings of his Providence. If we have not the outward sign as well as the inward one, we run the risk of taking our own fancies for his will, and thus deceiving ourselves fearfully."

"How?"

"I will explain myself more fully. I believe God means us all to serve him actively under ordinary circumstances, and as far as our powers and opportunities allow, to try and do all the good we can, both in our homes and out of our homes, but always taking care that the inner circle is never neglected for the outer. That is often the great temptation of single women; not having the strong calls on them that a household and children of their own give, they are apt, if very energetic, to overlook the smaller and humbler claims of home, for the more exciting ones of outdoor work. To such we should say, 'This ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone.' A woman may fulfill home duties faithfully and thoroughly, and yet work actively outside her home, as many bright examples may show us. But what I meant by setting apart, was, that if God means a woman altogether to give up home life and be exclusively devoted to works of charity and the like, he cuts her off from home ties and leaves her alone, or comparatively so, to work exclusively for the outer circle. And then, if she has at the same time the desire to devote herself to direct missionary or charitable work, she is as true and real a sister of mercy as if she wore a black serge robe and a white veil, and I do not see how all the customs in the world could make her more so."

"You speak of the customs as if you thought there were a real objection to wearing a particular dress."

"One dress in itself is not more objectionable than another; the harm is, dear child, in thinking it in any way makes the dedication to God a more real one. How far a particular uniform dress may be useful in certain difficult kinds of work, must depend on the place a woman works in, and a number of other circumstances; it would be impossible to lay down any rule beforehand. The less one's attention is called to the outward appearance, the better; in all cases, the great importance for us is to remember, that if the 'kingdom of God is not meat and drink,' neither is it dress; and to take care lest the very same tendencies which make some anxious to be in the height of the fashion, may in others find their vent in liking to adopt a singular costume."

"But, cousin, what did you mean by being set apart for contemplative life?"

"I believe if God intends any of his people to lead a life of isolation and outward stillness, he lays them on a sick-bed; and then they have at least the knowledge that it is his ordering and not theirs, which puts them aside from active life; in general, it is true, a sickbed is rather a school to train us to patient submission, than a sanctuary for contemplation; but after all, in many convents or sisterhoods, I should think there would be discipline nearly as trying without being beneficial. God's discipline trains us as man's cannot do; if man tries to do God's work, he generally fails grievously."

"But do not you think, then, that a life of contemplation is a good kind of life to lead for some persons—not for all, of course?"

"If you mean by contemplation, the study and meditation of God's word, and prayer and communion with him, it is a blessed Christian privilege, and one which no Christian can safely neglect. But it is evidently not intended to be the sole occupation of life. The generality of mankind are not so constituted as to make very long exercises of this kind possible, and if they are forced to go through the outward form of them for every day and all day long, it often becomes a mere form. I believe that a real Christian should seek to maintain communion with his God in the midst of all the ordinary business of life, and that he should be careful to secure seasons of retirement and recollection, in which he may 'commune with his own heart and be still,' lest he should be carried away by his daily occupations, and led to forget his heavenly calling. But experience has shown in all ages and all countries, that a life of what is called 'contemplation' is not, in general, the life for which God has intended man; the proof of this being that it almost invariably, in practice, makes those who embrace it either become morbid and visionary, or sink into utter imbecility and mental stupor; and I believe this has been found the case with all those religious orders, who, like the Carthusians, are given up to a contemplative life."

"Is that possible?"

"Not only possible, but certainly true. I could give many examples from accounts I have read; I will only now tell you what I heard myself when visiting the famous Chartreuse convent at Pavia. I was told there that the monks were only allowed to meet and converse for an hour weekly; and that during that weekly recreation there was seldom much conversation, for no one had anything to say!"

"That does seem strange, certainly; but I think if any one could be happy in a contemplative life, it would be Millicent. She is so quiet and retiring at all times. However, I suppose it cannot be decided for some time whether she can go at all to—, for at present her mother cannot bear the idea. She only consented to Cecilia's going because she thought she might, if prevented, end by entering a convent abroad."

"And this, my dear child, is what I meant when I spoke of insubordination to God's will. He has set most of us in families, and it has been his will to place Millicent in a home and to spare her parents to her; can it be pleasing to him that she should leave them contrary to their wishes, and enter on a life they disapprove of?"

"But the case is this, dear cousin, Millicent can't bear to lead the gay, butterfly kind of life she is forced to do at her home, spending her days in shopping, balls and parties. She has borne it a long while, and she says she cannot think it right any longer."

"I see how it is. She has firmness enough to break loose from it all and leave her home to become a nun, but not enough to make a separate life for herself in the midst of her family, fulfilling all her duties towards them, and trying to please them in things indifferent, and at the same time steadily avoiding the dissipations which she feels to be wrong. Yes, such a course of life would certainly be a more difficult one than the one she is choosing, and would require more real firmness and constant self-denial."

Gertrude opened her eyes in utter amazement. She had evidently looked on her friend's conduct as an exemplification of the most exalted self-denial and firmness of resolution, and the idea of viewing it as an easier course of action than the alternative of remaining at home, had never occurred to her. And yet, may it not afford a clue to the eagerness of many young persons in our day to enter on what is called a religious life, especially when belonging to a family much immersed in worldly gaiety? They have difficulties at home, and they find it easier to break away at once from all, than to "walk circumspectly" in their own families and homes, steadily abstaining from what they think wrong, and yielding in matters where only their own taste and comfort are concerned. Such a course of life requires a daily watchfulness and self-denial from which many would shrink, who would rather enjoy the excitement of an open course of penance and austerity."

Our conversation was not continued at that time, and next day Millicent left us to return home. I left also about this time, but gladly gave a promise of returning to my cousins to pay them another visit as soon as I could conveniently make arrangements to do so. Circumstances, however, prevented my fulfilling my intention at this time; and it was not till the following spring that I found myself again entering the pretty cheerful porch, embowered with evergreens, and met the warm greeting of my two young friends and their mother. They were not slow in giving me all the home news; and the principal piece of information was that Millicent had at last obtained a reluctant consent from her mother to join the sisterhood of which they had before spoken to me. The headquarters of this society was a watering-place not very far off, and they were making efforts to establish branches in some neighbouring towns. In this Miss Harrington's old friends, the rector of M— and his wife, were specially interested; and Millicent was now staying for a short time with them, it was supposed, to assist in arrangements of this kind, before joining the superior in the "home" at—. As she had not been regularly enrolled in the order, she was still at liberty, while awaiting the superior's summons, to call on some of her most particular friends; and Gertrude and Edith Wellwood being the chief of these, she had seen them already once, and soon after my arrival, again came to call. She had already assumed the dark serge dress and large cross in front—a dress which in its severe simplicity was not unbecoming to the graceful and dignified style of her beauty. The calm, serious countenance had an air of more concentrated thought than before; she met her friends very affectionately, and their mother and myself with a gentle, though rather frigid courtesy; but to none of us did she speak much. I longed to learn more of her new life, and how far it satisfied the aspirations and longings which it was evident a nature like hers must have had; but her words, slow and quiet as ever, were more than ever cautious and reticent; it seemed as if an impenetrable drop scene had been lowered, and no one could even catch a glimpse of what was behind it. She declared herself perfectly happy, however, and on Mrs. Wellwood's making some remark about the trial it must be to leave her mother and sister, she calmly observed that to do what one felt to be right was always the happiest course in reality, and she was sure her mother would herself acknowledge it in time. I felt that the visit on the whole left an impression of great sadness on my mind, but the girls were in raptures. Their friend's influence seemed greater than ever.

"I do think," said Gertrude to me, when we were alone, "that if ever a life on earth can be called a truly holy and heavenly one, it is such an one as dear Millicent is preparing to lead." She looked at me for an answer.

"I respect her sincerity, and evident desire to devote herself to what she believes right," I said. "But pardon me, dear Gertrude, I cannot call the life of a religious recluse a heavenly one. On the contrary, I believe it in most cases to be emphatically earthly."

"How can you show that?" cried Gertrude.

"Simply from this book," I replied, taking up a Bible which lay on the table, and turning to the third chapter of the epistle to the Colossians. "Read this, dear Gertrude."

"If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."

"Well," said Gertrude, "and is not withdrawing from all earthly cares and pleasures exactly doing this very thing?"

"What do you think the 'earthly things' are which St. Paul alludes to here, dear child?"

"Why, of course, worldly business, and riches, and pleasure, and all that."

"Of course the apostle does mean that we are not to set our affections on such things; but I believe what he alludes to specially in this passage, is a different kind of earthliness. Look at the word 'then' in the first line; 'If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things,' etc. 'Then' must mean to refer to something that goes before. Look back to the second chapter,—you see he is speaking there of being subject to ordinances, 'touch not, taste not, handle not,'—of a 'voluntary humility,'—of 'will worship, in neglecting the body,' etc; and it is in direct connexion with all this that he goes on to say, 'If ye then be risen,' etc. Therefore it seems to me that the earthliness he is in this passage reproving is not the mere love of worldly riches or pleasures (though that, of course, he would equally blame), but precisely what your favourite religious recluses are constantly aiming at,—a slavery to outward ordinances, a submission to man rather than God, and the practice of bodily austerities. It is the anchorite, the monk, the nun, he is reproving in this passage, or what would answer to them in his time. He not only blames them as mistaken, but as earthly and carnal. Think over the passage in this point of view, dear Gertrude, and you will see what I mean when I say I cannot look on such a life as a heavenly one."

Here the conversation was interrupted, and was not again renewed; and soon after circumstances obliged my speedy departure.

Scientific.

THE VELOCIPEDE.

The velocipede consists of two wheels, the one directly behind the other, and connected together by a light iron frame work. The fore wheel is usually a little the highest of the two. When speed is aimed at its diameter may be as great as four feet, while that of the hind wheel should hardly exceed two feet eight or nine inches.

The propelling force is applied through treadles, which are fixed to the fore wheel. The rider drives himself by the alternate action of his feet upon these treadles. The motion of the feet is not unlike that of rapid walking. The rider sits upon a little saddle just over the fore part of the hind wheel. He guides his velocipede by turning the fore wheel to either side. This is done by a stiff iron rod which rises from the axle, and has a cross bar at the top that is held by both hands of the rider.

The first art of the velocipede is to keep your balance. This is not unlike the same art in skating. It can only be acquired by practice. The more rapid the motion, the easier it is to keep the machine upright. In velocipede contests in Paris, prizes have been given to the slowest rider.

With wheels of small diameter, the rider stops himself by putting his feet to the ground.—With high wheels he checks his speed with a brake, and descends to the earth by inclining to one side till the foot touches. In mounting one with high wheels, a skilful practitioner starts his velocipede with a push, and then springs into the saddle.

Several forms of the entertaining and really useful vehicles are manufacturing. One with two wheels for gentlemen only, is considered the best. Others are made with three or four wheels for ladies. They are worked with a very trifling expenditure of force, are easily guided, and can be made to get over the ground at an astonishing rate. In some of the trials of speed the velocipede has passed over eighteen hundred metres—nearly a mile and a furlong,—in four minutes and twenty-eight seconds; and in another case, aided by a slight incline for a third of the distance, nearly a mile and a half was made in four minutes and fifty seconds.

BORING FOR WATER.—The London Spectator says that Sir Robert Napier, in his Abyssinian expedition, compelled "a lofty African desert to yield water by an American device not twelve months old." "A half-dozen mules," it says, "are drawn up, loaded with thin, steel tubes. Tap, tap, tap, goes a hammer, rigged up in five minutes, and in ten the curse of Africa has been conquered, as if a new Moses had smitten the rock, and pure water for an army is spouting among the stones."

ENGLISH PATENT HARNESS BLACKING.—Excellent for buggy tops, harness, &c. Old harness, if hard, may be first washed in warm water, and when nearly dry, greased with neatfoot oil.—The ingredients are three ounces of turpentine, two ounces white wax, to be dissolved together over a slow fire; then add one ounce of ivory-black and one drachm of indigo, to be well pulverized and mixed together.—When the wax and the turpentine are dissolved, add the ivory-black and the indigo, and stir till cold. Apply very thin; brush afterwards, and it will give a beautiful polish.

BREAD MUFFINS.—Take some bread dough, that has risen as light as possible, and knead into it some well-beaten egg, in the proportion of two eggs to about a pound of dough. Then mix in a teaspoonful of soda, that has been dissolved in a very little lukewarm water. Let the dough stand in a warm place for a quarter of an hour. Then bake it in muffin rings. You can thus, with a very little trouble, have muffins for tea whenever you bake bread in the afternoon.—Miss Leslie.

Philadelphia has taken steps to import a thousand English sparrows, which will be let loose in the public squares and parks next spring.