

Boys' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

(From "Robinson's Harmony.")

Sunday, April 18th, 1869.

MATTHEW xv. 1-20: MARK vii. 1-23: Our Lord justifies the disciples for eating with unwashed hands. Pharisaic Traditions. *Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 6, 7, 8.

Sunday, April 18th, 1869.

MATTHEW xv. 21-31: MARK vii. 24-37: A deaf and dumb man and many others are healed at Tyre and Sidon. *Recite.—S. C., 5, 10.

*We have omitted to mention that the Baptist Sabbath Schools in Halifax, and in a number of other places, have agreed to use the "Scripture Catechism" for reciting lessons. We have consequently given the number of the questions appointed by them.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

No. VIII.

Table with 2 columns: Name and Verse. P-hilip Acts viii. 27-40. R-euben Gen. xxvii. 21, 22. O-rpah Ruth i. 7-15. F-elix Acts xxiv. 24. I-saac Gen. xxiv. 63-65. T-erah Gen. xi. 28.

"PROFIT." Prov. xiv. 23.

If a duty rise for thee, Though its end thou canst not see, Do it with thy might: And thou its reward shalt find, When this present lies behind, In the future's light.

Every passing moment caught, And to useful purpose wrought, Leads to higher aim. Those who youth in toil employ In their later life enjoy Learning, wealth, or fame.

But perchance the sweetest thing Willing industry can bring, Is the joy it gives: Who lets his moments idly flow, And no earnest work doth know, Never truly lives.

SCRIPTURE TEXT ILLUSTRATED.

No. III.

Whom did a prophet think that God Would choose to fill his people's throne But found, he, for his servant, took A younger brother then unknown?

Who was a silent timid man, Who had no burning words to say: And yet was sent by God to right The wrongs in which his people lay?

Upon what simple Jewish maid Did such a wondrous blessing fall, That all the world revere her name, And all her sex her "blessed" call?

By these three stories prove a text, Which comfort doth contain For all, who beauty, gifts, or rank, Can never hope to gain.

JACOB'S LADDER.

A BIBLE SONNET.

All day companionless and staff in hand An exile from his home he had been flying, Till, when the sun was set, he paused, and sighing, Found a rough pillow in that darkening land: But soon with wings of angels he was fann'd, Sent down to solace him in slumber laying, Their love-task on a shining ladder plying, Whereby the space from heaven to earth was spann'd. Thus sometimes when our souls have felt forsaken, Dark, desolate, oppress'd—by God's command, Angels our weary steps have overtaken; With unseen hands have gently soothed our sorrow, And hovering round us in a loving band, Turned a sad night into a joyful morn.

RICHARD WILTON, M. A.

HARM OR GOOD, WHICH?

"Is there any harm in playing cards?" asked a good lady of me the other day.

"Yes, I have known a great many people to be injured by it," was my reply.

This, I believe, is the true way to deal with such questionable things. They cannot be viewed per se, as right or wrong. They have no moral character of their own. But how do they affect people? Do they hurt any body? If so, then there is harm in them.

Another thing: That was not the way for a Christian to ask the question. It should have been, "Is there any good in playing cards?" It argues a low state of spirituality to be simply avoiding harm. It would be more consistent for Christians to be seeking for the good rather than simply shunning the evil. All doubtful questions ought to be put in this way. Is there any good in this? Things are good or bad to us

according as they affect us. This principle applies to all questionable practices. Give the benefit of the doubt to the safe side. Is there any hurt in going to the theatre, in dancing, in gaming? Ask the question the other way. Is there any good? Does it make you more spiritual, more prayerful? Do you feel more like working for Christ after an evening at dancing.

COUSIN MABEL'S EXPERIENCES.

BY MISS. K. J. WHATELY.

No. XI.

PARTY SPIRIT IN MISSIONARY WORK.

"There is often continued Margaret" a great deal of party spirit even in those who profess to keep clear of all parties.

"What then is the remedy?" said Amy.

"To cultivate a spirit of Christian love, my dear friend; that, I am sure, is the secret; to endeavour to live so near to Christ, that we shall learn to love his work and his people for his sake, and to rejoice, like the apostle, even when the gospel is 'preached of envy and strife,' so as it be but preached. Such a spirit of love, dear Amy, will lead us to look on our faults and the faults of our brethren, as has been well remarked, 'as common enemies, to hate the sin and yet love the sinner, and to strive to overcome the spirit of party in ourselves and others, not by railing against all organizations generally or individually, but by combating the principle at its fountain head as it arises in our heart. This can only be done by bringing our renewed nature to bear upon our outward work; and I believe we are all apt, as Christians, to neglect that point. Just as an unskilful hand in writing, or playing, or in any other manual labour, will make the wrists do the work which ought to be done by the fingers, or in some other way bring the wrong set of muscles into play, and so give himself useless fatigue and fail in his efforts; so Christians, I think, are apt to bring the wrong moving powers to bear on their daily work. They let the true heart-religion which they really possess, lie idle, while party feeling, spurious love of activity, vanity, or the like motives, do the work which their Christianity was meant to do. And this is the cause, I believe, of the inconsistency in the conduct of many who have really spiritual life, but do not see the necessity of bringing it to bear on common every-day occupations, and making, as the poet says, 'All of these partake.' If we bring our Christianity—I speak of those who have life in Christ—into this daily use, party spirit will melt away in the light of Christian love; as it did with that little band of Moravian brethren, who, when some dispute on a speculative matter had arisen among them, met together to pray and read the first epistle of St. John, and found that all feeling of division had disappeared in the sense of Christ's presence, which filled their hearts. This is the kind of spirit we want to see among us now. If a flower could speak and tell you how it gets its brilliant colours, would it not say that it is by living in the sunshine? Let us try, dear friends, to get, spiritually, into the sunshine—into the light of the Sun of Righteousness, and that will set all our disputes at rest."

Margaret and Amy were silent; but their looks, as each pressed my hand, showed they felt as deeply as I did, the need of more reality in our Christian life, to combat this grievous evil, by which God's work is everywhere so marred and hindered. After a short pause we renewed the conversation.

"But in Amy's case," said Margaret, "would you think it well for her to keep decidedly aloof from all these people when she goes back to India?"

"What does Amy say?" I asked.

"I believe I spoke hastily," said Amy. "I cannot help feeling I would rather keep quite clear of them; but I do see now that perhaps such a course would not be the best."

"I would certainly say rather try, by kind offices and Christian love, to overcome their prejudices if you can. This does not imply that you are to mix up your work with theirs, or compel yourself to follow their suggestions. I would say, go quietly on in your own course; only whenever an opportunity occurs of showing kindness, make the most of it, and endeavour to live not only at peace but on friendly terms if you can. In some cases you may be unable to conquer their prejudices, but try it fairly."

"And what rules," said Margaret, "would you generally advise people to follow whose work, like mine, for instance, may bring them into contact with other agencies?"

"I think in the course of your practical work several will suggest themselves. For one thing, to make a rule never to take a discarded agent of another Association without first communicating with his or her former employers, and ascertaining the cause of the dismissal. If you decide that the cause was insufficient, or—what is very possible—that a person who did not work well with one agency may do better with another, from some modifying circumstance or difference as to suitability of disposition; then make a point of informing the other employers of the step you have thought it best to take, and be careful to do this courteously, and so as not to appear to slight them. In such a case, beware of allowing your new agent to make complaints or gossip about former employers. Put anything of the sort decidedly down at once; and in all cases discourage gossiping stories or remarks about other societies, schools, etc. A great deal of ill feeling often has its rise in mere gossip. And now I must be going for I have an appointment, and so, I believe, have you, Margaret."

"And so have I," said Amy, "and more to do than I have well time for; but I feel the

time has not been wasted, and I think I see my way more clearly than I did before."

"We will all pray to be helped more and more to meet all our difficulties in a spirit of Christian love, and then assuredly our path will be made plain before us," I said; and so we parted.

Nearly a twelvemonth after this conversation, the same speakers were assembled round my tea-table one evening. The only one missing of our little group was Amy, who had been for some months returned to her duties in India. Something in conversation reminded us of our talk on party spirit the year before, and Margaret asked if we remembered it.

"Indeed I do, for one," said Julia. "I am reminded of it whenever I go to the singing practising. I did really feel ashamed of my party feeling; and do you know I was so struck with what you said that I have been trying to help some of the girls who practise for the other class; and I thought that, as I had greater musical advantages, the best way in which I could overcome my exclusive feeling was to try and help them; and two or three of the girls come and practise with me the day before their own singing class every week, and we get on nicely."

"Yes," said Caroline, "Julia has set to work quite energetically to improve poor Broad Street. One or two of our choir did not much like her doing it; but she persevered. And since we are to compare notes, I may say I hope I have been on my guard about too great eagerness in regard to my collections. I have been content to go on quietly, and not to attempt to come to a collision with Mrs. Thompson. And you, Margaret?"

"I have often thought of our conversation, and I have tried to be watchful; but I am sure I have reason to be humbled by frequent failures. But I think I have gone on better with Mrs. Dorington, and been more careful in checking little bits of self-assertion which might unnecessarily wound her; and we have so much fewer collisions now that I am sure the difference shows me I had not been watchful enough before. But I feel more and more my own need of being constantly on my guard."

"And in that sense of your weakness lies your strength, dear Margaret," I rejoined. "But I think you will like to hear something about Amy."

"Oh yes. Her letter to me was written when she was but just arrived. Have you heard lately?"

"Yes, and I will read you the part of her letter in which she tells how she has gone on with respect to the difficulties she spoke of. She says: 'I did not hear anything of Miss L.—immediately after my arrival; but at last I learned from an old pupil who was married and settled at her station, that Priscilla, after going on at first very smoothly, had behaved in such a manner as to outrage Miss L.—to dismiss her. I also heard that Miss L.—had been very ill in consequence of the overwork and worry this had brought upon her, and was really in distress for a teacher, her other one having left shortly before. I saw the time was come for me to overcome my feelings of annoyance, and come forward; so I wrote to offer to lend Miss L.—one of my under-teachers, whom I could spare, till she could suit herself with another. She very gratefully accepted this, but having meanwhile commenced work too soon, she had a relapse, and was again laid up. I now took courage, and offered to visit her. My offer was accepted. It cost me a struggle, but I went. I found her convalescent. She was very shy at first, and we did not make much progress. However, I went again, and at last I summoned resolution to speak openly of the affair of Priscilla. We had a long conversation, not altogether pleasant, but it ended well, and led to our understanding each other better. I found she had had some false statements jaimed on her by Priscilla; and I suspect, from what she admitted, that some little pride, and some misunderstanding of things I had said and done, had hindered her from speaking or writing to me as she ought certainly to have done. She has a peculiar temper, and had been prejudiced against me evidently by her predecessor, Mrs. R.—; and now, on looking back, I see I may have sometimes given her cause of annoyance. I think she is really sorry for the misunderstanding, and I feel sure we shall henceforth be really fellow-workers and fellow-helpers, instead of rivals; and I do trust and pray that I may be led here and more to look not on my own work but on God's.'"

"Yes," said Margaret, "that is the secret—to learn to keep clearer of self. I had never thought selfishness could mix so much with work for God."

"Ah, dear Margaret, the remark is a true one that every one has a self of his own.' We may give up our pleasures, our property, our comfort, for God's work, and yet all the while it may be for self and not for the Lord. We need to beware of those two little dangerous words, 'my own,' 'my work,' 'my society,' 'my school,' 'my mission.' How often we let the 'my' become the uppermost thought! We have to learn that none of these things is pleased to make use of our instrumentality or another's, whether he works through this agency or that, is his affair and not ours. It has been truly said 'that we are all privates in his army,' and our duty and happiness is to be so absorbed in the great fight going on between his power and the power of evil in this world, that we can rejoice whether he uses our work, or church, or society, or others; that we can be ready and content to say, with John the Baptist, 'He must increase, but I must decrease;' and to look, in short, on the work as we shall do in the day when the sowers and reapers have met to rejoice together for ever. Meanwhile let our watchword be,

"Fix on His work thy steadfast eye, So shall thy work be done."

SUNDAY SICKNESS.

Dr.—, among other valuable papers, a few years ago, published one describing this remarkable disease, which has not yet been treated in books of Pathology.

1. This disease is of the intermitting kind; attacking the patient with violent paroxysms, which return every seventh day. These paroxysms return only on the Lord's day and hence is called Sunday Sickness—but by the faculty it is technically known by no other name than "Dei Dominici Morbus."

2. It partakes somewhat of the nature of ague, especially as it is attended with a great degree of coldness. This coldness is first apparent, early in the morning of the Lord's day; in many cases seizing the patient before he has left his bed. But it begins in the region of the heart, and is attended with dulness of the head, followed by yawning and lethargy.

3. The patient is sometimes deprived of the use of his limbs, especially the legs and feet, so that he is indisposed to walk to the house of God.

4. In some cases this attack has come upon them after they have gone to the house of God, and has been attended with yawning and slumber.

5. In other cases there has been great uneasiness in the house of God, and a disposition to complain of the length of the sermon, though they have been known to sit very contentedly in a play-house several hours at a time.

6. Persons affected with this disease never mourn on account of their confinement from public worship, as many afflicted with other diseases often do.

7. These persons surprise their neighbors with their great activity and health on Monday, however unfavorable the weather may be.

8. Most of the faculty agree that there is a low, feverish heat, technically called *fibris mundi*, or fever of the world, which may be detected in these patients, during the intervening days of the week.

9. There also seems to be a loss of appetite for savory food, and a want of relish for *panis vite*, bread of life, which, in this case, is the indispensable remedy for the disease.

10. Persons affected with this disease, generally have a dierelish for private religious exercises of the closet, and the reading of the Scriptures.

11. This disease is also contagious; neighbors receive it from neighbors, and children from parents.

THE SINGING LESSON.

BY JEAN INGELOW.

A nightingale made a mistake; She sang a few notes out of tune, Her heart was ready to break, And she hid from the moon. She wrung her claws, poor thing, But was far to sprout to speak, She tucked her head under her wing, And pretended to be asleep!

A lark, arm-in-arm with a thrush, Came sauntering up to the place; The nightingale felt herself blush, Though her feathers hid her face. She knew they had heard her song, She felt them snigger and sneer, She thought this life was too long, And wished she could skip a year.

"Oh, nightingale!" coo'd a dove, "Oh, nightingale! what's the use, You bird of beauty and love, Why behave like a goose? Don't skulk away from our sight Like common, contemptible fowl; You bird of joy and delight, Why behave like an owl?"

"Only think of all you have done; Only think of all you can do; A false note is really fun From such a bird as you! Lift up your proud little crest; Open your musical beak; Other birds have to do there best, You need only speak."

The nightingale shyly took, Her head from under her wing, And giving the dove a look, Straightway began to sing. There was never a bird could pass, The night was divinely calm; And the people stood on the grass, To hear that wonderful psalm!

The nightingale did not care, She only sang to the skies; Her song ascended there, And there she fixed her eyes. The people that stood below, She knew but little about; And this story's a moral I know, If you'll try to find it out!

WELL ANSWERED.—A person who suspected that a minister of his acquaintance was not truly a Calvinist, went to him, and said: "Sir, I am told you are against the perseverance of the saints." "Not I, indeed," answered he; "it's the perseverance of the sinners that I oppose." "But that is not a satisfactory answer sir. Do you think that a child of God cannot fall very low, and yet be restored?" He replied: "I think it will be very dangerous to try the experiment!"