

Months' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

(From "Robinson's Harmony.")

Sunday, May 15th, 1870.

MATTHEW xiv. 1-14; MARK xiii. 1-13; LUKE xxi. 5-19: Jesus on taking leave of the temple, foretells its destruction and the persecution of his disciples.

Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 103.

Sunday, May 22nd, 1870.

MATTHEW xiv. 15-42; MARK xiii. 14-37; LUKE xxi. 20-36: The signs of Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem, and put an end to the Jewish state and dispensation.

Recite.—S. C., 104, 105.

ANSWER TO SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XXXVI.

N-oahdiah Neh. 6: 14.
O-neshmus Philemon 1: 12.
A-lub's 1 Kings 21: 8-12.
H-atach Esther 4: 5.

NOAH.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

NO. XXXVI.

Who with his left hand smote a monarch dead?
Who was into freedom by an angel led?
What orphan queen once saved a nation's fall?
What famous woman dwelt upon a wall?
Who, being mutilated, owned the treatment just?
Who says "a fortress shall be humbled in the dust?"
Who, as he rested after years of toil,
Said of another, "Let him dip his foot in oil?"
The initials of those names will spell
The name of a tribe of Israel.
—W. & R.

A MANLY ANSWER.

Five boys, pupils in a boarding-school, were in the room. Four of them, contrary to the express rules, engaged in a game of cards. The fifth was not standing and looking on to see how the game would go, but engaged in some work of his own. One of the players was called out. "Come," said the others to their companion; "it is too bad to have the game stop in the middle. Come and take his place." "I do not know one card from another." "That makes no difference. We will teach you. Come; do not let our sport be spoiled." The boy perceived that this was the decisive moment. Ah, just such are the critical points, —sometimes the turning point of life. His resolution was instantly taken. He made no more excuses, but at once planted himself square upon principle. "My father does not wish me to play cards, and I shall not act contrary to his wishes." This ended the matter. It did more. It established his position among his companions. It compelled their respect, and preserved him from temptation for the future. Such a boy inspires confidence. The incident may seem small in itself, but it gives promise of the future better than thousands of gold. Three sterling qualities are manifested: A conscientious regard for the wishes of parents, superiority to the fear of the ridicule of his companions, and decision. These qualities form a shield and a buckler in regard to all temptation. Years have passed. That boy has become a man. Various and trying have been the scenes through which he has been called. Severe have been the temptations to which he has been exposed. But he has come forth as gold. No parent weeps, no friend blushes for him. —American Messenger.

THE CABIN BOY AND THE SAILOR.

"How is it I do not seem to hear you speak bad words?" asked an old sailor of a boy on board a man-of-war.
"O, because I do not forget my Captain's orders?" answered the boy brightly.
"Captain's orders!" cried the old sailor, "I did not know he gave any."
"O, yes," said the boy, "I keep them safe here, putting his hand on his breast. Here they be," said the boy, slowly and distinctly: "I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by the head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil."
"Them is from the good old log-book, I see," said the sailor, "which I do not know much about these days."
"Then I am afraid you have lost your reckoning, sir," said the boy, "and are drifting on to the breakers."
"Wha then?" asked the old man.
"You will be wrecked," answered the boy, "wrecked forever."
The old sailor had been wrecked. He knew what it was to be in a ship, breaking up and going to pieces on a wintry coast. He knew what it was to be lashed to a spar, half naked, hungry, cold, benumbed, tempest tossed. He had heard the shrieks of the perishing. Yes, he well knew what being wrecked was.
"Wrecked forever!" said the old sailor slowly, "that is a long time, boy."
"Yea, sir," said the boy, "it is so."

Jem looked wistfully at him, and the old man turned away his head.
"Tha wrecking forever is a bad business," said he.
"Yea, sir," said little Jem, "it is so."
"An' there is no way of escape?" the old man asked.
"O, our minister that used to preach at the Bethel, I will tell you what he says. He says the Admiralty of heaven has got out a life-boat for poor souls. That life-boat is Jesus Christ. It was launched on Calvary, and has been round picking up poor souls lost in the stormy waters of sin ever since; and he used to tell us, Stretch out your arms to get in, and pray, 'Lord save me, or I perish.'"
"An' does he?" asked the poor old sailor.
"I know about myself," said the boy humbly. "I was going down, and I cried to the Lord, and he had mercy on me, and took me in; and I have shipped with him ever since. He is a good Captain, the Captain of our salvation, sir. Won't you ship too?"
"I should be a poor hand for that craft," said the old man feelingly.
"Besides saving you, He will fit you for his service," said Jem; "there is no difficulty on that account. He is good, very good."
"Thank ye, boy, a thousand times, the old man said, with a tear on his weather-beaten cheek. "I am afraid we old sinners are too water-logged and sin-soaked to be worth saving; but you young ones jump into the life-boat before it is too late, and ship for the port of heaven. It is a blessed chance."

EVILS OF FLUENCY.

The following article from the Boston Watchman and Reflector is worthy of careful attention. A little more fluency may sometimes be desirable but the want of sense and wisdom where it exists is a far greater desideratum.
Not altogether wrongly do Englishmen complain of our "everlasting gabble." Americans, they say, are always chattering, speech-making, engaged in some game of words. From one end of the country to the other it is talk, talk. Now John Bull has the reputation of being somewhat of a hard, hesitating speaker—he can't play the game as deftly as his "smart" co-Atlantic cousin, and so it may be that a spice of envy mingles with his criticism. Nevertheless Jonathan must plead guilty to a good share of the indictment. A glib tongue is a fortune in America.
Far be it from us to underrate fluency of speech. It is not all sham. It may be a great gift. If we have thoughts, we are to utter them; and what are words but the vehicles of thought, with the tongue for chariot? What if some persons drive like Jehu, and the swifter for being light-freighted? There are others who have "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," rightly named "goldenmouthed," whom it is a luxury to hear. Their words flow out from a full fountain. They carry you wherever they will. We like such fluency, the overflowing of a great heart. And what more desirable than that conversational power with which some are gifted, and by which they can at once instruct and delight? But save us from your brainless gabblers and tongue orators, boring us with their endless rattle of words. Motion, motion, but no progression. At the end of an hour you are just where you were at the outset, except that you are tired and vexed. Truly, "a fool's voice is known by the multitude his of words." What greater affliction in the prayer-meeting than such sort of fluency, which runs on, shallow and noisy, in endless repetitions of the same threadbare thought, and, for all that, might as well run on to the end of time. What pastor has not racked his brain with the question, How shall I shorten or silence such abuse of privilege? And what a sense of relief comes over you when the babbling stream dries up, and one of your solid, experienced Christians rises to speak, and in few words, gives utterance to his deep thoughts of God and redemption. You care not that he is slow of speech—so was Moses. His words are like richly freighted ships, which by reason of their very weight, come slowly into harbour. But how grandly. They bring in treasures new and old from a far country. You are filled and refreshed.
Fluency has sometimes turned a good mechanic into a poor minister. The young man was zealous and fluent. He must be a preacher, was the cry. But his pond soon ran dry. Fluency has its temptations. Rash statements, small jokes and stinging sarcasms often come of it. The fluent man has much to repent of. Take the preacher who has an excess of words, and can readily fill up, or, rather, spread himself thinly over an hour. He is in danger of hasty and meagre preparations. We once knew such a minister, a man of mind and culture, a natural orator, but whose lingual facility betrayed him into habits of indolence that told sadly upon his ministry. Every Sabbath it was the same tune with slight variations in the words. The tune was excellent, and was well executed, but we didn't exactly want to hear it every week. The proper inscription upon his tombstone would have been, "Died of Fluency;" and he died as a minister long before he died as a mortal.
So let our readers who have been envying the nimble utterance of some neighbor or brother, consider that the advantages are not all on the side of fluency. The law of compensation comes kindly into play here as elsewhere. Moses was "slow of speech," but a very considerable man for all that. The fluent Aaron was outstripped by the stammering Moses. Peter was flent, as he sometimes found to his cost. The man whose "speech" was described as "contemptible" was the "chief of the apostles." In our day we have had a notable specimen of fluency in high

places; but who, from the bottom of his heart, does not prefer the slow speeched Grant to his gabbling predecessor? A tall bump of "language" is not, of course a tower of strength. Both in church and State the fluent speakers are often the greatest workers.
There is fluency of pen as well as of speech—an agreeable, but sometimes dangerous endowment especially to a young writer. Joubert well says "He who writes with ease always thinks he has more talent than he really has. To write well there is needed a natural facility with an acquired difficulty." Especially let him who would write for a newspaper learn to hesitate and halt, to revise and recast, with merciless severity to drive out from his composition all superfluous words. Let him remember, as Joubert again and admirably says that "well-chosen words are abridged sentences," and that "the best literary periods have always been those when authors weighed and counted their words." Style may become fluent by the very labors put upon it, just as a stream will flow the smoother for the removal of obstructions. Superfluous words are obstructions to the clear flow of thought.

Prize Essay.

The following Essay was awarded a Prize of \$10, as the best Educational Tract by the Provincial Teachers' Association, at their Annual Session held in Halifax, December, 1869. It would be well if it were printed in Tract form and distributed broad-cast amongst parents throughout the country:

FIVE DAYS A WEEK:

OR, THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL.

BY MISS H. M. NORRIS.

Friend, will you turn aside for a few moments from the varied current of your daily life, to consider the life of a little child? You once were one, do you remember? It seems a long while, perhaps, since you first wonderingly looked out at this vast busy world, with its hosts of people that were years and years above you, who were managing everything, and nobody to tell them how.
There are dozens and dozens of such little wonderers-to-day, who do not belong to the great world at all, only to mother; but we had better have a care for them, for the great world will belong to them some day.
We will presume that the necessity for schools is a settled question, and that you have one, the best you can get; and that means not only a good teacher, but a suitable house, well-furnished, and trustees who have a good many children at school or else have taxes to pay, and so are not in danger of forgetfulness of duty? Now the question is "Are all the little ones there to-day?"
Probably no other reason for absence is so frequently urged as the need of aid at home. The boys must help their father, the girls must help their mother. This they certainly ought to do; yet, probably, in the majority of cases, a little forethought would prevent the necessity of adopting a course unjust to the child, and of no ultimate benefit to the parent. Careful expenditure of the time before and after school will generally leave school hours free. Indeed the parent should consider these as sacred to the children, and be as reluctant to deprive them of these as of accustomed food or sleep. It is during school hours chiefly that the foundation of future intelligence is laid, and in depriving the little ones of these we are enfeebling them for life. With all the press of our business we find time for Sunday, and few forego their necessary rest at night. It is admitted that the moral and physical natures must have time specially devoted to them; but the Sabbath for the intellect, when all other work is laid aside that its stores may be garnered, and preparations made for the long battle of life, this may habitually be broken, and none cry "shame!" From infancy we have been taught to keep holy the Sabbath day, and to say nightly "Now I lay me down to sleep," but not so have we been trained to a set time to "get understanding," a time when our mental faculties may receive that nourishment, and exclusive attention necessary to their perfect development.
Many say the children need to be trained to work, even more than they need schooling. Assuredly so, but they need to be trained before the work is pressed upon them. Is the farmer wise who harnesses a young colt to the plough that he may learn to work? Does not all experience say "Let his bone and muscle grow, give him time to develop his power, then he will be strong to labor for years to come?"
Again, children are not placed so long under parental control that the parents may have the benefit of their labor, but rather that they may be provided for while they are preparing to bear "the burden and heat of the day." The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. How many to-day look back upon a misspent childhood! They

found themselves struggling in the battle of life before their weapons were forged. As they passed on they gathered scraps of knowledge here and there, and spare moments were given to what should have been the business of the hour. What avails the work the child's hands performed? Far more had been accomplished if they had been earlier equipped. The world is not wise in weakening its children.
Nor is it true that to keep the child at home one day can do no harm. It is one step aside—that is all,—and to be chased with only one glass to the drunkard, and only one apple to Eve. For the child has been turned aside from the path of his duty, and has lost ground; it is not merely the lessons he has missed, his attention has been diverted, and a thirst awakened for work other than his own; the zest has been taken from his pursuit of knowledge, to supply energy for the employment that has superseded it. The farmer cannot thrive who has no time to plough; the merchant cannot prosper who is too busy to attend his counter; nor can the boy succeed who is constantly called from his school.
It is a sad mistake to lead a child to suppose that he should go to school only when he has nothing else to do, that a day on the farm, or at the fisheries is more profitable than one with his teacher. A child's business is to learn, and to forestall the working time is to draw upon the principal which after a few years, would have yielded life-long interest. As it is children are far too eager to become men and women, and gaining this position too early are dwarfed for life. A child should never touch the chord "When I am a man," without hearing the refrain "While I am a boy." Indelibly fixed in his mind should be the idea that the work of today will determine the glory of to-morrow; that there is no place in life for idle waiting; that the gift of time for preparation though liberal, is not lavish, and shapes all the time to come. Let the order of longing for maturity spend itself in working out that fitting prelude, a noble childhood. Let the child understand or feel that school-time is of very great importance. Since to the teacher is given the charge of the children's education, let there be no half-measures about it. Let the time set apart for mental development be sternly kept. If parents are properly impressed with the vital importance of constant attendance, the children will readily catch the same spirit; but they can have no adequate idea of the worth of this time if it is used as a reserve fund, to be drawn upon when other interests demand more than their share. They will soon learn to place little value on what others so lightly esteem.
If you wish one to be diligent in business as a man, see that he perseveres at his books while a boy—constancy here, trains to steadfastness there: the punctual child will be prompt in years to come; and the influence of determinate persistence in carrying out school-work will certainly exhibit itself in the prosecution of the plans that pertain to maturer years and riper thought. Who has not felt the force of habit, or the strength of the tie that warps us to the routine of daily life? Let this be brought to bear upon the school boy, and we have thrown a strong safeguard around him, but if we readily break his engagement to suit our pleasure, we may be sure he will readily do it to please himself.
It must not be forgotten, however, that much absence from school is attributable to mere thoughtlessness, or a wilful disregard of the claims of life upon our early days; yet manhood knows no hours so precious as those of a little child. Then the bud is nurtured that shall form the future flower; then the twig is taught the inclination of the future tree. How culpable we deem those who fritter away their time, benefiting neither themselves nor others; yet we love to see the children enjoy themselves while they may! Forgetting that children's time is most valuable! Foolishly supposing that those who waste time are happier than they who improve it! Children are little men and women, and work makes us all better and happier. True, toil was given as a punishment, but Infinite Love knew the lurking sweetness for the diligent and obedient. Who that has done an honest day's work does not know that it yields infinitely more satisfaction than a day of idleness and ennui? The pleasure arising from work well done, is the sweetest earth can give. They are utterly mistaken who suppose that, even to children, holidays are the happiest days when they are not fairly earned.
The child better enjoys school hours when he is constantly there. One cannot "serve two masters," but he will "love the one and hate the other," and a child seldom loves a school he only half attends. Each absence checks his progress and damps his ardor. His unity with the school is broken, and it reluctantly knits again. He misses an hour there much the same as we miss a leaf from a volume. Many others may remain, but what a gap that leaf may make! Certainly we run great risk of losing the thread of the story. Would it not spoil the most interesting book for you if every few pages part of a leaf were gone? Just as completely do school hours lose their charm when they are continually broken in upon.
Then will you see to it that the little ones are with their teachers to-day? If old habits of carelessness in yourself and in them are not easily overcome, remember that the sooner we "cease to do evil," the easier we shall "learn to do well." It is not right to rob the children of their drowsy of time neither should we permit them to impoverish themselves. Let us strive, then, to aid them all we can, remembering that He who "took young children in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them;" said elsewhere, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."
CAPS CANO, N. S.