

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

(From "Robinson's Harmony.")

Sunday, December 18th, 1870.

MATTHEW xxvii. 51-56: MARK xv. 38-44: LUKE xxiii. 45-49: The veil of the temple rent, and graves opened. Judgment of the Centurion. The women at the cross.

Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 160, 161.

Sunday, December 25th, 1870.

MATTHEW xxvii. 57-61: MARK xv. 42-47: LUKE xxiii. 50-56: JOHN xix. 31-42: The taking down from the cross. The burial. The watch at the Sepulchre.

Recite.—S. C., 162, 163.

ANSWER TO BIBLE SCENES.

No. x.

What a fine example would this Scene from the history of Israel and Judah be to the modern nations suffering conflict! Here in 2 Chronicles xxvii. 5-15, are the captors giving clothes, and shoes and food to their captives and sending them home again, lest in detaining them they should add to their already great sins.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

No. LVII.

Find out the five names here described:—

1. A people to whom it was threatened that the children of Tyre and Sidon should be sold.
2. The first person whom we read as having prophesied.
3. A name by which our Lord was called.
4. One who was sanctified to keep the ark of God.
5. A king who obtained his throne by murder.

The first and the third letters of each word will give the names of two rocks, near which the Israelites obtained a great victory.

For the Christian Messenger.

APPROACH OF KING WINTER.

The Autumn winds are blowing,
The leaflets strew the ground,
And swollen brooks are flowing,
With rude and roaring sound.

The earth is bare of verdure,
The flowers and fruits are gone,
And now, the voice of nature,
Betokens Summer done.

The air is cold and chilling,
The snowflakes flit around;
And old Jack Frost is filling,
His place with looks profound.

He scales the hill and valley,
He haunts the forest drear;
He roves through street and alley,
And greets us without fear.

Proud ships upon the billow,
Must feel his icy breath,
And crews, instead of pillow,
On breakers meet their death.

May we, who far from danger,
Though in his cold domain,
Think often of the ranger,
Who ploughs the roaring main.

For wind and wave together,
Their iron strength expand,
And precious mortals sever,
From home and native land.

Bear River, N. S.

G. D. L.

THE GOOD-NIGHT HOUR.

Lily came fresh and happy from her evening bath to say—

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take;
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

All in one breath she called out, "O mamma, I went away in Frankie's room to-day and prayed all by myself."

"And what did you say, my darling?"

"I said, 'Dear God, please forgive me all my sins, and help me to be good, and everybody to be good; for Jesus' sake. Amen.'"

Mamma commended her, and then reminded her that it was not *always* necessary to go away, or to speak aloud to the kind Father, who is ever near with ready help. Lily nodded her bright head. "I remembered that a little while ago," she said. "When was it, pet?" "Did n't you see at supper-time?" she asked; and mamma recalled that naughty Tom Temper did come to Lily, and just as she was about to burst into a passion of tears, she bowed her head quickly and lifted it again, with eyes smiling through their wet lashes, and the quivering lips put up for a forgiving kiss. "I asked Jesus just so easy, and he helped me right away. Now, mamma, please sing,

"Take all my sins away."

"I have heard you sing it a good deal to-day,

Lily." "Oh, yes; but I do n't know the whole, and I want you to sing it over and over until I go to sleep."

"My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Saviour divine!
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my sins away;
Oh may I from this day
Be wholly thine!"

Very distinctly these words were sung to the little girl, until she fell asleep with God's benediction upon her.—*Child's Paper.*

Little Walton F—was visiting in the country. There were many guests, and the children had a separate table. While waiting for a blessing to be asked, he found the meal was commenced. "Why, do n't you pray?" he exclaimed, surprised out of his politeness. "Well, Wattie, suppose you pray."

It was an unexpected turn of affairs, but he was equal to the occasion. "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen," he said promptly and devoutly. Was it not beautiful? How direct and practical the application of a favorite verse. How close the connection between the provision for his comfort and the watchful care of the heavenly Shepherd, who is ready to feed the souls as well as the body.—*ib.*

A TRAVELLER'S REMINISCENCE OF A RECENT VISIT TO ITALY.

A Traveller gives the following in the *Freeman* as the result of his own observation of religious matters in Italy:—

Having lately returned from a visit to Germany and Italy, I think a word or two of what I saw with reference to the work of the Lord in the latter country may not be uninteresting to some of your readers.

In that "glorious city in the sea"—Venice, during the last summer I spent ten very pleasant weeks, and that which contributed to the enhancement of my pleasure was the opportunity afforded me of attending the religious services conducted by a Vaudois minister, Sig. Comba, who has gathered out of the superstitious population surrounding him a church of about eighty members, and preaches twice on the Sunday to a congregation of about 200. This is, I believe, the largest Protestant congregation in Italy. Foreseeing the opposition which would be raised by the priests, a friend purchased the palace (Palazzo Cavagnis), or otherwise the whole congregation would by this time have been scattered to the winds. At this Protestant meeting-place I met celebrated Scotch divines and English gentlemen and ladies, who most thoroughly enjoyed the ministry of an earnest and eloquent Italian preacher.

Passing on from Venice to Pisa and Spezia, I was detained at the latter place for several weeks, and enjoyed the visit much. Having spent a winter there, I can testify to the beneficial effects produced on my health. A few years ago, Spezia was a small town, it is now fast becoming the Portsmouth of Italy, having immense naval docks and arsenals, and of necessity the place will grow to a large and very flourishing city. Here our missionary, Mr. Clarke, is actively engaged in preaching the gospel to the Italians, and though mightily opposed (as every active worker for Christ will be) by the Romish priesthood, he has convincing evidence of good done, of souls saved; with some of the converts I have had long and pleasing conversations.

Mr. Clarke has taken a large room in a good situation, in which five Italian services are conducted weekly. There I have seen tradesmen and their wives, sailors and soldiers, attentively listening to the good news of salvation, joining heartily in the singing, and often remaining after the service for spiritual advice and instruction.

In an adjoining village a day-school is conducted by a young Christian, who is entirely dependent on Mr. Clarke for support. This effort has been crowned with success, and of course provokes opposition.

In addition to these evangelising efforts, a work has been begun in a city about twenty miles from Spezia, a very stronghold of Romanism. Thrice the house in which our friend has preached has been attacked, stones hurled against the shutters, the pieces of which have been driven half across the room, and but for the timely appearance of the captain of the troops, life would have been in danger.

Amidst contumely and misrepresentation, Mr. Clarke is earnestly labouring to plant a church in Italy which shall in all respects be a witness against the errors and abominations of Romanism. This would be hard work for one having a guaranteed support; but what shall we say when a man has to bear the responsibility himself, unsupported by any committee? We have but too few who will go forth to fight the battles of the Lord in this way.

The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol is said to correspond in Latin on postal cards to his clergy. We ourselves have had messages in the same way, in Latin, Greek, and French.—*Freeman.*

Protestant classes are being organised by the Nonconformist ministers of Sunderland.

The theatre services in London are as popular as ever.

Railways in Ceylon promise to be most remunerative. We observe it stated that the line open cost £2,000,000, and is already returning 7½ per cent. on the original outlay.

"SALT IS GOOD."

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D. D., NEW YORK.

Salt is the one mineral that men eat. Its use is nearly as ancient and as general as the race. The Hebrews had it in abundance from the Salt sea, and if they chose from the Mediterranean, as well as from fossil salt near the Dead sea. It had a peculiar meaning to them from its place in the sacrifices. An indescribable longing for salt comes over any one who has long been without it. In most countries the cattle are very fond of it, and eagerly lick the rock salt. In Africa, the children suck a piece of salt rock as American children do sugar. A mixture of salt and water will sometimes be sweet enough to the delicate palate of the bee to attract it. Salt is good.

Nor is it savory only, but necessary. It is a part of the blood, and the blood is the life. While it seasons the food, it preserves for future use what is not needed for present wants. What would otherwise rot, is kept sweet by its presence. Hence it suggests purity, and perpetuity.

And the Lord's people according to our Saviour, are the "salt of the earth." They are necessary to its continuance; keep it from corruption; and are finally to leaven and influence the entire human race.

There are many substances in the world that look like salt. They crystallize, are white, more or less heavy, and can be measured and weighed. But there is a subtle essence in the salt that is perceived by the taste, and which cannot be weighed and measured, but only tasted. This makes the value of the salt.

And it is so with professing disciples. They can be counted, and their influence or their wealth can be measured. But the savor, that which distinguishes them as Christians, is too fine and delicate to be declared in this way. It reveals itself to the judgment and conscience of men, and to the eye of God. The saltiness gives value to the salt. Real living godliness gives value to professing Christians. If we had salt without saltiness, according to our Lord, it would be "good for nothing." And so professors without true Christian life are good for nothing.

Indeed it used to be believed that exposure to the air took the virtue out of salt. Pliny thought so; and Maundrell speaks of rock salt of which the outside was tasteless. And so professing Christians need to take care lest they lose their savor, and become good for nothing, as Christians.

When the rock-salt is dug up from the heart of the earth, or when the salt is drawn from the spring or from the sea, a long process that requires care and skill is necessary to separate the foreign matter, and retain the pure salt. And how much pains and patience are needed to separate the worthless from the good in us, to rescue us from worldliness and selfishness, and to make us holiness to the Lord! Surely we should guard well what costs so much, and "hold that fast which we have." For however it may be in the natural world, it is certain that we, as Christians, are in great danger of losing our savor from exposure. The constant whirl of excitement, the round of pleasures into which some are drawn, the very crowd and pressure of lawful things—all these endanger our piety, and raise the fear that we may lose the savor. We can only keep it by having the Lord with us in fulfillment of His promise; and He will only stay with those attend to Him. Alas! how often we might say as the prophet in his appeal to the conscience of Ahab, 1 Kings 20: 40: "As thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone!" But there is no spiritual prosperity or power while the Lord is not with us. How much we need to remember the warning of Azariah to Aza, 2 Chron. 15: 2: "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you."

"Salt is good;" for see that young Christian girl, sweetening the life of her family, softening the hard language of her father when he is "bitter" against his wife, keeping good influences over the younger brothers and sisters, and by her love and gentleness making their home happy, and keeping one strong plea for Christ and religion constantly before their minds.

"Salt is good;" for see that salesman in the store, truthful in an air of falsehood, sober in his language where all the rest swear, and pure in his life where all else is vile; laughed at sometimes by the rest, when they are in a merry mood, but always sent for when they are sick and dying.

"Salt is good;" for see that little company in the village that has just grown up around "the works," gathering on Sabbaths for worship, collecting the children for Sabbath-school, drawing in the parents, one now and one again, living down the ungodliness of these roving and reckless workmen, and conquering the place for religion and virtue.

The Lord give us more and more of this salt, in homes, and villages, and cities; for it is the one healing element cast into the spring of the waters—as with Elisha at Jericho—that will keep away barrenness and death.—*Am. Messenger.*

Not the least of God's mercies is the apparent decay of the faculties by age, as a provision for death. It is the ripening of the apple, that it may fall without violence.

"Half the sorrows of women would be averted," says George Elliott, "if they could repress the speech they know to be useless; nay, the speech they have resolved not to utter."

Words learned by rote a parrot may rehearse, But talking is not always to converse; Not more distinct from harmony divine The constant creaking of a country sign.

For Sunday School Teachers.

ON GOVERNMENT IN A SABBATH SCHOOL CLASS.

Mr. Ralph Wells gives a little of his experience in the way of making mistakes, that other teachers may read with profit. He said:

When I first took hold of the work it was with the enthusiasm and earnestness with which teachers are wont to enter it. I went right at it. And my first difficulty was *too loud speaking in the class*. Of course I did not know it, so absorbed was I in teaching. I had a class of pretty rough boys, who of themselves used to make a good deal of noise, but I did not mind that! But then I *did* think that the lady teacher in the class next to me had a *very* loud voice, and if I had the courage to do it, I felt two or three times that I would like kindly to suggest to her that she had pitched her tone rather higher than she was aware, perhaps—but I could not muster the courage. One day, at last, as I was going out, the matter came to a crisis; I approached the lady, and she said to me, "Mr. Wells, will you excuse me?" "Why, ah, certainly!" I said. "It is not much, perhaps," she replied, "only, Mr. Wells, you do talk *so loud* in your class that my class can scarcely hear me, although I raise my voice higher than I should otherwise do, that I may be heard!" What a fall was there! It was a merited rebuke. It was one of my earliest mistakes, and that faithful lady teacher effectually cured me. It was not a small error, and one that is very common in the Sabbath School to-day.

The next wrong I committed was querulous entreating and scolding. "Jimmy! I wish you would brush your shoes any more on my pantaloons. Look what a plight you put me in, and just before going up into church!" "John! I wish you would stop whispering now. I have spoken to you twice this morning already." "Samuel! I want you cease your talking, and just give me your attention?" "Henry, what did I ask you just now?" "I don't know, sir"—for which reply, I felt very much like giving him a shake, as I have seen teachers do since then. My mistake was in trying to govern a boy's mind by laying hold of his body. After I saw Mr. Racey breaking a colt, I learned the secret of governing my boys. I found it was not by irritable appeals and nervous commands, or laying on of the hands, but by being calm and resolute. The calmer I got, the more my own mind was in order; and the more perfect my self-possession and reliance on God, the more I governed and controlled my class. I learned this, that many a teacher spends the whole time of the lesson in governing his class, and does not succeed then; because he has not learned the great truth that Racey taught us so impressively, that you can govern a horse's legs by getting hold of his brain. I learned that the controlling power was in the mind, the will, and not in the physical power, or the scolding power.

A TALK ABOUT GOD.

I believe there is a God; but I do not believe so because I ever saw him. "No man hath seen God at any time." God says, "No man shall see me and live." But we may all believe in some things which we never saw. We never saw the wind, and yet we know it blows. Therefore it is as foolish as it is wicked to doubt whether there be a God, simply because we never saw him. But I will tell you why I believe there is a God.

Not long ago, I went with four little children into a watch-maker's shop, and there a man brought out a little box, and put a key into a small hole in the side of it, and wound it up. He then set down the box, and touched a spring, and the top flew open, and a little bird, not as large as a humming-bird, hopped out, and flapped its wings, and sang, or seemed to sing, a pretty tune. It was very small, and very beautiful. The little boys and girls that were with me were much pleased. Mary said, "I wish I had it. I would give a dollar for it." She was told the price of it was six hundred dollars. Jane asked, "Who made it?" Mr. Smith the watch-maker, told her it was made by a man in Geneva, in Switzerland. We all left the store in good spirits, and went out to a grove. Here were many living birds. Every one of them could hop from tree to tree. They all could make some noise. The notes of most of them were very sweet. We all walked through the grove, found some pretty flowers. We then came to a cool spring, and took a drink of water. I thought it was a good time to talk. So I said, "If a man in Geneva made the bird in the box, how came all the living birds here? Did they make themselves?" Charles said, "How could they make themselves? I saw in my book the other day that nothing can make nothing." "Well," said I, "did the man in Geneva make them?" Jane answered, "No! he never saw them. He could not make such birds as these." I then said, "Did they just grow without any one making them?" Charles replied, "How could they?" Mary said, "I can tell you how they came here, God made them. I know there is a God, because there are so many pretty birds." I added, "You are all right, my children. There is a God. He has made everything good, and we ought to believe that he is. His works are all around us. They are many, and great, and wise. Let us never doubt that there is a God."

Rufus Chapman of Liberty, Maine, had a stiff leg bent at the knee, limbered and straightened by the use of "Johnson's Anodyne Liniment."

The proprietors of "Johnson's Anodyne Liniment," "Parson's Purgative Pills," and Sheridan's Cavalry Condition Powders, have published a readable and instructive pamphlet, which may be had free at the stores.