

Youths' Department.

Lessons for 1871.

THE WORDS OF JESUS.

SUNDAY, APRIL 9TH, 1871.

John's Message and the Answer.—Luke vii. 18-28.

Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 193, 194.

ANSWER TO BIBLE SCENES.

No. XVIII.

The ancient sea-port is Tyre, formerly a city of great commerce and wealth. The Apostle Paul, after staying there a week, on his journey to Jerusalem, has a company of the disciples to see his departure. After prayer on the shore, he and his companions go on board, and the disciples return to the city. Acts xxi. 3-6.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

No. LXIV.

Here is an opportunity for our industrious thoughtful young friends to exercise the knowledge they have already gained of the facts of the Bible, and so have it increased and strengthened. Here are fourteen words described:

- The friend whom St. Paul left ill at Miletum.
The original name of Shadrach.
The man who studied the Scriptures as he journeyed.
The Tetrarch of Abilene in the reign of Tiberius.
A slave who deserted his master.
The city where Onesiphorus sought for Paul.
The disciple who "loved this present world."
The material of which Solomon's throne was made.
The man who was called "Niger."
The token of God's covenant with Noah.
The fifth son of Leah.
The metropolis of Ahasuerus.
The warrior who slew Goliath's brother.
The captain by whom "the Lord gave deliverance to Syria."

The initials of these words form a sentence of four words which express a truth on which the Christian religion is founded. Now find them and see what it is.

HUXLEY AND THE BIBLE.

BY C. B. MACLEY.

"There must be a moral substratum to a child's education to make it valuable, and there is no other source from which this can be obtained at all comparable with the Bible."—Huxley.

Of course 'tis a myth of the ages,
The odds and the ends of tradition;
The wool of Egyptian saiges;
The warp of Arabian vision.
'Tis plainly all fudge,
As any may judge;
But then—as a moral foundation,
The Bible will do for the nation!

To teach that the world was created,
The moon and the earth and the sun,
That the waters from dry land abated,
By the word of Jehovah 'twas done—
Between you and I,
Is simply a lie;
But to inculcate a love of the truth,
It is just the thing for our youth.

There's the story of Adam and Eve,
Tell me who could a moment, indeed,
Bout the rib and the apple believe,
Or yet for a minute give heed
To that silly fable
Of Cain and of Abel;
But then, as a test of the right,
Its precepts are clear as the light.

And here is the tale of the staff,
Cast down before Pharaoh, the king—
'Tis enough to make one laugh—
Such a very ridiculous thing.
And the lice and the frogs,
The darkness and fogs;
But then, where else can we find
Such suitable food for the mind?

Time would fail us, from John back to Moses,
To recount half the fables we meet,
Or to show how true science opposes,
And clearly discovers the cheat;
Yet now at the last,
The Bible stands fast,
As the only sure ground on the whole,
To risk the fond hopes of the soul!

PRAYER.

When Christ taught His disciples the prayer of Matthew vi., it was not the design to give an unchanging form of prayer, but to teach the spirit of true prayer. This being the case, we may expect to find instruction in every part. The beauty and the completeness of the prayer teach that we should approach God with comprehen-

sive directness. This fact should not be forgotten. We do sometimes forget this, and do not give heed to the words of the wise man in Ecclesiastes, "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few."

Another thing in this prayer to notice, is the relative position which it gives to petitions for the honor and glory of God, and to those for our own personal wants. The prayer contains six separate petitions: first, are three referring directly to God, for the exalting of His name—the extending of His reign—the doing of His will. Then follow three petitions for the supply of man's own wants. In praying aright then, God is to be before all else. Our wants, feelings and desires are not to be first, and the glory of God last. Self is to be second. The glory of God and the doing of His will are to have the very first and highest place. When we are in the state of mind implied by this, we can pray acceptably, but not till then.

"Christ said, "after this manner," that is, with this spirit pray ye. The opening words of this prayer contain the first condition of acceptable supplication. Before we can pray in a manner pleasing to our Creator, we must have some just conceptions of that Creator and His relations to us,—just what is involved in the words, "Our Father, who art in heaven."

We are often told that the first thing essential to prayer is a knowledge of our own helplessness and necessities. A knowledge of these is essential to prayer. But hardly the first thing, for such knowledge is properly a result. We can hardly come to proper views of our sins, and hence of our necessity and helplessness, till we have some just conceptions of the Holy One. Or if without such knowledge of God, we could arrive at a consciousness of need or of sin, we should not be prepared for prayer; we might be prepared for agonizing cry to some unknown god, but should not be prepared for prayer till we attain to a just idea of God as our Father.

Hence one of the first things essential to prayer, is to apprehend the facts taught in the opening sentence of the Master's prayer: "Our Father, who art in heaven." This does not present Him, as He might justly appear to us, the stern judge. It does not hold Him up before us as the ruler or king whose laws we have transgressed. Neither does it bring before us the Infinite One clothed only in glory and majesty. The Savior does not seek to fill us with dread or shrinking, in teaching us to pray. He brings us before a Father. He shows us first of all that we have to do with parental tenderness and compassion. What a view this gives us of the condescension of the High and Holy One! Among the wonderful things taught in the Gospel is the one which shows us that sinners are permitted to enter the presence of God by prayer. And the most wonderful aspect of this is that we are taught to come into that presence and recognize a Father,—showing with one word the compassion, the pity, the tender love which will receive a penitent child. Then when we approach the mercy seat, openness, childlike trust and confidence become us.

There is so much instruction and so many thoughts connected with this, that we can hardly select. To call God, Father, implies that we recognize ourselves as intelligent beings. And we cannot truly call Him Father till we have the spirit of adoption. To call Him Father implies the obligation to bear a likeness to the parentage we claim. In reflecting on these things, we may find reasons why we are unfitted for prayer, and why what we have called prayer has not been answered.—Zion's Advocate.

ONLY ONE BRICK UPON ANOTHER.

Edwin was one day looking at a large building which they were putting up just opposite to his father's house. He watched the workmen from day to day, as they carried up the bricks and mortar, and then placed them in their proper order.

His father said to him: "Edwin, you seem to be very much taken up with the bricklayers; pray, what may you be thinking about; Have you any notion of learning the trade?"

"No," said Edwin, smiling, "but I was just thinking what a little thing a brick is, and yet that great house is built by laying one brick on another."

"Very true, my boy. Never forget it. Just so it is in all great works. All your learning is only one little lesson added to another. If a man could walk all around

the world, it would be by putting one foot before the other. Your whole life will be made up of one little moment after another. Drop added to drop makes the ocean. Learn from this not to despise little things. Learn, also, not to be discouraged by great labors. The greatest labor becomes easy if divided into parts. You could not jump over a mountain, but step by step takes you to the other side. Do not fear, therefore, to attempt great things. Always remember that the whole of that great building is only one brick upon another."—Sunday-School Visitor.

BENEFITS OF LAUGHTER.

Probably there is not the remotest corner or little inlet of the minute blood-vessels of the body that does not feel some wavelet from the great convulsion produced by hearty laughter, shaking the central man. The blood moves more lively,—probably is chemical, electric or vital condition is distinctly modified,—it conveys a different impression to all the organs of the body as it visits them on that particular mystic journey, when the man is laughing, from what it does at other times. And thus it is that a good laugh lengthens a man's life, by conveying a distinct and additional stimulus to the vital forces. The time may come when physicians, attending more closely than they do now to the innumerable subtle influences which the soul exerts upon its tenement of clay, shall prescribe to a torpid patient "so many peals of laughter, to be undergone at such and such a time," just as they now do that far more objectionable prescription,—a pill, or an electric or galvanic shock; and shall study the best and most effective method of producing the required effect in each patient.—Good Health.

A BRAVE WOMAN.

An English lady of talent, piety, and courage, with others, followed the armies of France with the word of God and Christian tracts, and distributed them with remarkable skill and success. Her narrative of experience, trial and victory is very lively and encouraging. It ought to stimulate others to work for souls, where obstacles are less formidable. Here is her story of being taken into custody:

In attempting one day to distribute Scripture tracts amongst the troops in a garrison town, at one of the barracks, I was suddenly arrested by a sergeant, and marched off through a court, up a winding staircase between two men with guns and bayonets, and incarcerated in a large room under charge of a sentry, till the commander had leisure to consider what discipline was called for in my case. I amused myself by firing off my ammunition, in various ways, first out of the window to the upturned and wondering faces beneath, who were disposed to be displeas'd with this manner of treating their "little English lady," as they called her. Noticing in the room sundry convenient receptacles for tracts, such as hats, pairs of boots, coats, etc., belonging to officers, who resorted hither, I thought it a favorable opportunity to let them have a good supply, as well as of slipping one under the door to the sentry outside, with a kind word. Soon I was marched down into the quadrangle between rank and file and ultimately brought into the centre of a square of soldiers, where the commanding officer stood with his staff, the men giving me a welcome recognition by a smile, and wishing me well out of it. In silence, I lifted up my heart to the Lord of Hosts, and felt sure that greater was He that was for me than all they that were against me.

The colonel, raising himself, twisting his his moustache, inquired:

"By whose authority do you dare enter here?"

"By the authority of the Lord," was my reply.

"And how do you presume to know that you have that authority?"

"By the inspired Word," I answered.

"But your God and mine are different," retorted the colonel, "and our Bibles differ."

"There is but one God and Father of all," I said, "who commands his gospel to be preached to every creature."

"But," replied the colonel, "your aim is to disseminate protestantism, and I, as a Catholic colonel, will not allow it."

I said, "I am a Catholic Universal, and I tell of Jesus crucified to every one who will hear me."

"I am responsible to a higher authority," said he, "and I must do my duty; and you can guess what that is."

"And I," replied I respectfully, "am also responsible to higher authority, and I must do my duty; and God will be the Judge by and by, whether I am right or you."

"I am afraid of propagandism, either political or that of the Jesuits, who send people sometimes."

"Here, please take this tract, colonel," I said, "and see if it is not the Gospel of Christ, for the salvation of your soul."

"Want," said he, "you dare offer it to me, be ore my men! You must be an Englishwoman?—and to suppose that it will do us any good!"

"A man accustomed to read God's word will be a better soldier," I replied: "you know that, colonel."

He appeared to relent, shrugged his shoulders, and with a peculiar look at his officers, said:

"I can do nothing with her. I do not want to bear the burden, if trouble comes of it."

Then turning to me, "Go to headquarters, and ask permission to distribute your books and papers."

"I will tell well alone," I said, "lest I may be entirely forbidden."

"But you must not come into those barracks," he replied; and gladly departing with a low bow, which he returned, said:

"I will not disobey your command; I will give them away in the street," where I found plenty of opportunities amongst his men, who seemed glad at the turn things had taken.

THE FEBRUARY MEETINGS AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

For the last few years, the month of February has been devoted to special services by the church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle; and the services have been attended with many blessings. Constantly upon this occasion, writes Mr. Spurgeon in his Sward and Trouel, have we heard brethren say, "I prayed for my wife at these meetings last year, and here she is at my side rejoicing in Jesus;" while others, with tears in their eyes, testify that they owe their own soul's salvation to the former series of services. We are most of us conscious of a marked quickening of spiritual life in ourselves, and we cannot help remarking and admiring it in our fellow members, while very general breaking down is taking place among sinners of the congregation, and a great tenderness of heart is notably observable.

This year the services began with a meeting of the pastors, deacons, and elders, with the distinct view of seeking a preparation from the Lord for the work and the expected blessing. One Lord's-day, Feb. 12th, the pastor came to his work with a peculiarly weighty message, and spoke at both services upon the Marriage Supper. After each service persons came forward who were pricked in the heart. In the afternoon a large prayer-meeting was held in the Tabernacle and another after the evening service. On Monday, February 13th, the threefold prayer-meeting was held. Many began at seven by uniting in supplication; a goodly band gathered at noon, and the whole area of the Tabernacle was full at night. Again inquirers were forthcoming, and some who had got beyond that stage pressed forward to avow themselves on the Lord's side. No excitement was manifest, but solemn earnestness revealed itself. The pastor having selected a band of "helpers," they met for prayer in the evening, and to arrange themselves so as to help at the meetings. The next day the pastors waited from eleven to one to see seekers. Many came of all classes. The invitation to the wedding-feast of mercy brought in, as of old, both bad and good. Objectors came with their hard questions, the lovers of the loaves and fishes with their hypocritical, the ignorant with their superstitious fears, the talkative with their presumptuous confidences; but there also drew near to the servants of God the broken-hearted, the desponding, the despairing, the believing, the rejoicing, the restored. It was a good day, and when the fishermen counted up the treasures of the net, after laying many aside, and assigning others to a course of further instruction, they found a residue of twenty-six whom they felt free to propose to the church for membership. At seven in the evening a very considerable number of inquiring persons came together, and were faithfully addressed by some of the elders and other friends.

On Wednesday evening, at seven, the church alone came together, that, as a

body, it might cry mightily unto God, and also seek preparation for the coming blessing. It was, without exception, one of the very best meetings we ever attended. The gracious words spoken to us by our brother, Mr. Gracey, and others, will remain with us while memory lasts. The meeting was open to all the members, both to pray and to speak, but no unqualified brother wasted the time, as is so generally the case in such meetings. The fittest men to speak did speak, and all rejoiced to listen to them. On Thursday, at four, the pastor met about 150 or 200 of the young ladies of the Tabernacle, and preached to them upon, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." The sacred feelings of that hour have, we are sure, left their permanent impress upon many a tender heart. That same night, in more than one house, friends were compelled to arise and administer comfort to young hearts in which the arrows of conviction had fixed. The audience was select, and consisted almost entirely of young friends of an educated class, just rising into womanhood. After the pastor's address, certain beloved matrons in the church mingled with the youthful company and conversed with individuals concerning their souls. Then followed the usual evening lecture, which partook of the spirit of the week's proceedings, and was blessed of God, so that again anxious souls waited to have conversation with the elders and other friends. Friday was spent in prayer by the students in the College, who were joined by some of the ministers of London, who were educated in our Institution. There was much hearty agonizing petitioning, a general personal renewal of consecration to God, and a holy warmth of soul. At its close, at seven o'clock, the workers of all sorts came streaming in to their meeting—city-missionaries, Bible-women, evangelists, tract-distributors, Sunday-school teachers, and others.

Monday, February 20, was a day of prayer all day long; commencing before the sun had risen, the people continued to come and go in relays all the day long. Just before the meal-times, when wives were bound to attend to domestic duties the numbers somewhat decreased; but there was never a pause in the unceasing intercession for nearly fourteen hours. Tuesday evening was a very happy one. About a thousand children came together to hear good words concerning Jesus. There was no tea, no music, no magic lantern to attract the boys and girls, but they came in eagerly, listened as attentively as a congregation of grown-up people, and rushed to shake the pastor by the hand with a loving zeal which made one think of the children in the temple of old. The law and the gospel, their own hearts, and the Spirit's work were faithfully spoken of to the children by the various speakers, and an evident feeling of interest and awe rested on the assembly. There had been much prayer for a blessing and it came, as time will show. While we were talking to the young folks below, their mothers were upstairs holding a prayer meeting that the Lord would help us. Thus prayer and effort went hand-in-hand. Wednesday evening's meeting was a very interesting one. Tea was given to the servants, and to the poor women of our mothers' meeting. Other meetings are still being held.

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THE BOTTLE OF OIL.

An old gentleman occupied a large house. He had a number of servants, and apparently every comfort that could be desired. But he was naturally peevish, and when things went amiss he became cross, and often flew into a passion. At last his servants left him. Quite out of temper, he went to a neighbor with the story of his distresses.

"It seems to me," said the neighbor, "it would be well for you to oil yourself a little."

"To oil myself!"

"Yes. I will explain. Some time ago, one of the doors in my house creaked. Nobody liked to go in or out by it. One day I oiled it hinges, and it has been constantly used by everybody since."

"Then you think I am like your creaking door," cried the old gentleman. "How do you want me to oil myself?"

"That's an easy matter," said the neighbor. "Go home and engage a servant, and when he does right, praise him. If, on the contrary, he does something amiss, do not be cross; oil your voice and words with the oil of love."

The old gentleman went home, and no harsh or ugly word was heard in his house afterward. Every family should have a bottle of this precious oil, for every family is liable to a creaking hinge in the shape of a fractious disposition, a cross temper, a harsh tone, or a fault-finding spirit.