

Youths' Department.

Lessons for 1871.

THE WORDS OF JESUS.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29th, 1871. Wicked Husbandmen.—Matt. xxi. 33-44.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The stone which the builders rejected the same is become the head of the corner."

SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS.—Psalm lxxx.; Mark xv. 1-20.

This parable is given in Mark xii. 1-11; Luke xx. 9-18. Is it given by the three writers in just the same words? Point out some of the differences in the three. Is there contradiction of one by the other? Why does Christ say "another parable?" Why say "hear?" When and where did he speak this?

What is a vineyard? Hedging? A wine-press? Why the tower? What are husbandmen? What was the "letting out?"

Explain what these represent in the application of the parable. Explain also what is meant by the planting of the vineyard. The going into a far country. The sending of servants. The receiving of fruits. The abuse of the servants. The son. The sending of the son. The enticing casting out, and slaying. What in the parable shows the richness and fulness of God's provision for his people? What shows God's forbearance? What shows the greatness of the wickedness exposed? What its advance from one degree to another?

What does Christ ask the Priests and Elders? vs. 40. Why does he ask them? What did they answer? vs. 41. Do you think they saw then just what was meant by the parable? Has that been done which they said would be? Explain how, e. g., destruction of the murderers, the transfer of the vineyard, etc.

Read Psalm cxviii. 22; Isaiah xxviii. 16. What is meant by "the head of the corner?" Why Christ's appeal to the Old Testament? When and how was the prophecy of verse 43 fulfilled? Explain verse 44. Does God govern us on the same principle that he did the Jews? Have you sinned as they did?

SUMMARY.—The rejecters of God's servants and Son are by the just judgment of God themselves rejected and destroyed.

ANALYSIS.—The Rejecters Rejected.—I. The Parable vs. 33-41. (a) Engagement, vs. 33. (b) Requirement, vs. 34-39. (c) Judgment vs. 40, 41.

II. The Explanation, vs. 42-44. (a) Old Testament prophecy, vs. 42. (b) Its interpretation, vs. 43, 44.

EXPOSITION.—"Hear another parable." After the excitement of the people there is a pause, and Jesus begins again. He says in general to "the people" "Hear," I am not yet done with you. The whole has not been told. He rivets their attention. They stay as though spell-bound. The proud authorities are under the power of a genuine authority for once.

Terms and definitions.—The word translated "hedge," means enclosure whether hedge, wall, or fence. The wine-press and "wine-fat" are not properly the same. The latter was a kind of underground trough for the juice of the grapes. The wine press was above, into which the grapes were thrown and the juice, trodden out by naked feet, flowed through a close grate into the lower trough or vat. Usually the press was above ground, but Dr. Hackett says it is sometime made in the ground. The wine-press, may mean the whole, both upper and lower parts, and the digging have been only for the lower. The tower, the villa where at once the fruits were kept and the husbandmen resided; or the tower of the watchmen. "Husbandmen," literally field-workers. "Let it out," i. e., in shares for a part of the fruits, while the householder was to receive also his part.

Terms and applications.—"Vineyard," God's kingdom on earth, especially in its visible form. Here first of the Jewish, national form, also of the subsequent Christian form. The kingdom is in substance one and the same in both eras, Hebrews x. The husbandmen or cultivators are specially those in religious authority as teachers, pastors, etc., like the men who were before him, but not to the exclusion of every other member. The provision of hedge, tower, wine-press, etc., may, as some claim, simply represent the ample provision in general which God makes for his church. See Isa. v. 4, and compare the chapter, vs. 1-7, with our parable. The servants sent for the fruits are prophets, specially empowered, and sent on special missions. The Son is of course Christ, God's "one," "own," "beloved" Son. The letting out "is" the solemn commitment, which the law made

of the instruction and care of the chosen people to the priests and Levites." Mal. ii. 7. The withdrawal to a "far country" for a "long time" was the long cessation of those special and miraculous manifestations attending the Hebrews from the call of Abraham to their settlement in Palestine, particularly at the Red Sea, Sinai,

Jordan, etc. Deut. xxxiv. 9-12. The fruits required are not merely outward obedience, but also spiritual service, humble believing, loving, pure hearts. The killing of the Son, Christ's crucifixion, "without the gates." Heb. xiii. 11-13. The destruction of the first husbandmen, the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews. The transfer to the husbandmen the commission of the apostles to preach the gospel to every creature, and the grace of God shown to the Gentile nations in their call and conversion.

God's part.—The parable brings out his long suffering and forbearance. He waited till insult after insult was offered, servant after servant was smitten down in death or rejected in disgrace. He even withheld not his son. The parable however, does not and cannot rise to the full reality, since God sent his Son, knowing beforehand that he would be insulted and crucified. This feature could not be shown because the householder of the parable is human, and unlike God ignorant of the future.

The contrast.—The parable as strikingly exhibits in contrast the awful wickedness of the religious teachers, the ruling part of the Jews. They cheat God of all his dues, they persist in adding insult to insult, waxing worse and worse, wickedness rising from one pitch to another till it smites down in violent death, with deliberate and selfish malice, the Son of God himself.

Self-judged.—Cunning never outwits God, but God always outwits cunning. 1 Cor. iii. 19, 20. Jesus knew the men before him, but they poorly understood him. They came to sit in judgment on him. They are made now this second time to sit in judgment on themselves. The characters and conduct of the two parties he sets forth vividly in parable. He does not himself say what ought to be, what must and will be. No, he looks at the priestly hypocrites, and to them says: What will such a lord do to such husbandmen? They could not have seen the meaning of the parable or they would not have said, as they did. God will judge men each out of his own mouth.

Luke says that some of the people, exclaimed in view of the declaration that the husbandmen should be miserably destroyed, "God forbid." They could not think it possible that their beloved nation was to lose its high position, and their religious rulers and teachers be visited with such doom. The builders, Jewish leaders, rejected the stone with God the supreme architect furnished and would make the chief corner stone.

Jesus, in verse 43, gathers up into one clear, emphatic, terrific statement the explanation of the parable; the self-condemnation of his enemies, the interpretation of the quoted Scripture, and his own independent and final authority as prophet. "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you,"—you shall be deprived of your position as the elect nation. It shall be "given to another nation bringing forth the fruit of righteousness,"—the true Israel taken from among many nations and constituted into God's "peculiar people."

The fulfilment.—As stated the wicked husbandmen perished in the downfall of the Jewish nation. That event of course points to the retributions of eternity, where not nations but individuals are punished for sin. The apostles and other disciples "went everywhere preaching the word."

Verses 44 states in a general form the reason why the Jewish nation was soon to be thus punished,—the reason why so many must perish hereafter. The fall upon the stone is not the final and desperate rejection, unbelief carried to its last degree. Mercy is then exhausted and the rock is no longer at rest, it moves and comes down on the criminal. He is ground to powder,—literally, "made chaff,"—and scattered to the winds as chaff. See how this has been fulfilled in regard to the Jewish nation.

Final remarks.—Here again we see the character of Jesus, and so of God in dealing with transgressors. We are to fear as well as love him,—love him in fear, and fear him in love, e. g., "reverence" the Son.

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher. Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 343, 344.

JUSTICE REWARDED.

BY HELEN BARCOURT.

There is related a legend of a great monarch of Tartary, so full of a beautiful truth, that it would be well for us all not only to read, but to remember it. This khan, unlike most rulers who possess absolute power, was a wise and good sovereign.

For many years he had resided in the old palace which had come down to him from his forefathers, but at length he resolved to build another, and to seek a more desirable site for its location. So taking his magnificent retinue with him, he set out on a journey through his kingdom, and after a long search, was rewarded by the discovery of the very spot he sought, but an old widow's hovel stood in the very midst of it.

"Ah!" exclaimed the khan, "this is just the situation I have longed for. I will build here if this old woman is willing that I should remove her little hut."

But the poor woman boldly replied, "Great khan, I was born in this lowly hovel, my whole life has been spent within it, and death alone shall tear me from it. Spare it in your justice, or destroy it if you will, I cannot defend it."

The astonished courtiers, wishing to please their sovereign, mocked her with cruel words and taunts. "It is but too evident," they exclaimed, "that she neither loves nor fears our royal master. Come, let us pull down her ugly hut about her ears!"

But to their utter amazement, the khan replied, "Do not fear these men, my good woman, they shall not harm you. Your cottage is your castle, and you shall live there in peace. The power is mine to destroy it. A hundred poets sing of my dominion, but power is not worthy of honor or homage when it condemns the poor widow's cause, or perpetrates acts of injustice upon those who are unable to defend their rights. No truthful tongue can yet say that I have ever wronged human being, weak or strong, nor shall it be said now. So hide in your home, old woman. I will build my palace beside it, and it will honor me, for my people who gaze on them standing side by side, will see that I do not hold a khan's convenience before a subject's rights."

So the royal dwelling was erected upon the chosen site, and the palace and the hut stood very near together—strange neighbors, it is true.

Time passed on, and the fortune that had so long smiled upon the khan of Tartary began to frown. Envy ever pursues the high in station, and malice the good; and base ambition will ever lead those who cherish it to hate all that may stand in its way.

Thus it happened that two of the courtiers who longed to elevate themselves conspired to slay their royal master, and rule in his stead. Fearing, with that guilty conscience that ever makes men cowards, to be seen in conversation together, they sought a lonely spot beyond the palace, but, as it chanced, very near the poor widow's hut. She overheard their plans, and hastened to reveal the plot to the khan.

"Ah! I see now," he exclaimed, "that the just only are wise, and he who respects another's rights will thus guard his own. I spared this poor woman's home, and now she has saved my life and kingdom!"

CHILDREN'S EATING.

Whenever a parent sees a child come to the breakfast-table, nibble a little, then go away, death is in the distance, and may be near in a great many cases; in all there is solid ground for apprehension of coming ill in some form or other. This want of appetite for breakfast may come on very slowly; it may be weeks before it is decided enough to be remarked: so much the worse for the child, because greater will be the difficulty in righting things.

If children are going to school, eating should be made compulsory, or brain disease will follow, sooner or later, for the brain must be nourished, or restless sleep follows, and in its train dizziness, nervous cold feet and hands, with severe debility.

All school-children should have plenty of meat and bread for breakfast and dinner, with all the fruits and berries they can get afterwards as dessert; if not these, then no dessert at all. A speedy and easy way to remedy mealtime nibbling is to begin with a supper of bread and butter, and one cup of hot milk and water, and nothing else; allow not an atom of anything to be eaten between meals, and compel them to be in

bed by nine o'clock. Within a week a hearty breakfast will be the result, with an increasing vivacity, activity, life, and joyousness.—Christian Weekly.

AN INVOLUTIONARY AND PERILOUS RIDE.

A LESSON FOR BOYS.

A locomotive, running as an extra on the Hudson River railroad, arrived at New Hamburg from Poughkeepsie on Saturday, being stopped there by a telegram from that city in consequence of a singular and what might have been a tragic incident. Before the locomotive left Poughkeepsie, four little boys who were playing about the depot, supposing it was a switch engine, and only going a little way down the track, climbed stealthily upon the wooden guard just above the bumper on the rear of the tender. This guide is only six inches wide. One of the boys sat down upon the guard, with their legs hanging over, and the fourth got astride of the iron link which protrudes from the bumper. They could not be seen by the men upon the engine, which moved off and continued increasing its speed until it was going at the rate of forty miles an hour, as was ordered. The boys were in a terrible situation. They dared not climb to the top of the tender for fear of losing their balance, and their cries were drowned

by the noise of the engine. Over bridges and on the edge of precipices they were whirled, the tender surging to and fro, the dust filling their eyes and noses, and almost choking them to death, and entirely obscuring them from the view of the flagmen and trackmen who were passed. The locomotive was signalled at New Hamburg, Mr. Jas. Signor having seen the boys on the rear of the locomotive when it left Poughkeepsie. The poor little fellows presented a sorry sight, as they were covered with dust from head to foot. The boy who was astride of the link was unable to walk when taken off, his legs being awfully clafed by the motion of the engine. The hands of the other boys were blistered terribly, and the blood oozed out from under their finger nails, so tightly had they grasped the wood work of the tender. They were nearly exhausted, and could have maintained their position but little longer, when they would have been probably instantly killed by the fall. They were taken back to Poughkeepsie, where the incident had become noised about, and a large crowd of people was in waiting at the depot to see them when the train they were on arrived.—National Car-Builder.

A TRAGEDY.

How many acts are there in a tragedy? Five, I believe:

ACT I.—Young man starting from home. Parents and sisters weeping to have him go. Wagon passing over the hill. Farewell kiss thrown back. Ring the bell and let the curtain drop.

ACT II.—Marriage altar. Bright light. Full organ. White veil trailing through the aisle. Prayer and congratulation, and exclamations of "How well she looks!" Ring the bell and let the curtain drop.

ACT III.—Midnight. Woman waiting for staggering steps. Old garments stuck into the broken window pane. Many marks of hardship on the face. Biting of the nails of bloodless fingers. Neglect, cruelty, disgrace. Ring the bell and let the curtain drop.

ACT IV.—Three graves in a very dark place. Grave of child who died from lack of medicine. Grave of wife who died of a broken heart. Grave of husband and father who died of dissipation. Plenty of weeds, but no flowers. O, what a blasted heath with three graves. Ring the bell and let the curtain drop.

ACT V.—A destroyed soul's eternity. No light; no music; no hope! Despair coiling around the heart with unutterable anguish. BLACKNESS OF DARKNESS FOREVER! WOR! WOR! WOR! I cannot bear longer to look. I close my eyes at this last act of the tragedy. Quick! quick! Ring the bell and let the curtain drop.—Rev. T. De Witt Talmage.

The sting of a bee carries conviction with it. It makes a man a bee-lover at once.

A youngster of literary tastes lately described Darwin as the one who believed "we degenerated from a monkey."

A new treatise on precious stones declares that after all mankind, if wise, will say of precious stones, the most valuable as well as the most useful stone in the world is the grindstone.

REFORMS IN JAMAICA.—At a Baptist missionary meeting held in Liverpool, Eng., Dr. Underhill dwelt on the results of Sir John Grant's rule in Jamaica. Sir John Grant had destroyed many abuses in the island. He had destroyed the Church Establishment of Jamaica, or at least it was in the process of extinction, and the money saved from the Church Establishment was spent in the education of the people. During Mr. Eyre's administration of Jamaica they were always borrowing money—he was running the island deeper into debt, at the rate of £40,000 per annum. The present Governor had reversed this—not by raising the taxes, but by levying the taxes so that no one could complain of it. The common people, instead of refusing to pay the taxes, frequently brought them of their own accord, and the result was that the balance was brought to the right side, and the balance was to the credit of the treasury of Jamaica to the amount of £40,000.

The Waldenses, says the New York Observer, are suffering for want of spiritual teachers. The state of France has told seriously on the resources of the Lyons Committee, and so the work has depended almost entirely on the aid sent out from England. In consequence of the straitness of means all the agents retained have their salaries diminished fifteen per cent. as a temporary measure, and the committee do not guarantee salaries. Several posts have been abandoned.

PRaise MEETING.—The vestries of the Chestnut Street Congregational Church, in Chelsea, were crowded at a praise meeting on a recent Sabbath evening. The piano was accompanied by a cornet and a trombone, and the service of song was interspersed with prayers, remarks and the recitation of a number of verses of Scripture expressive of praise; and it seemed to be the universal feeling that an occasional service of this kind may be held with great interest and profit.—Boston paper.

IN THE WRONG PLACE.—At one of Peter Cartwright's camp meetings he was much annoyed by a noisy sister, who "took part" more frequently than was acceptable. He had called on all to kneel while some one should lead in prayer. She struck off at once with much feeling and power. Cartwright, not recognizing her voice, shouted out "Amen!" A brother kneeling close by whispered: "It's Ann Jordan praying." Cartwright, looking round and seeing that it was so, cried out: "I take that amen back!"

ANCIENT RELIC.—On the eastern slope of Clark mountain, Nevada, near its summit, there is a perpendicular cliff two hundred and fifty feet high. At about one hundred feet from the base of the cliff on its front are engraven the characters I L D. The cross and letters are of immense size, being fully sixty feet in height, and cut into the cliff two and a half feet deep—so that they can be plainly seen at a distance of five miles. This strange workmanship was done, it is supposed, by the Jesuit missionaries, many years ago.

THE BENEVOLENT CONTRIBUTIONS of the four religious denominations in the United States are thus represented by The Presbyterian:

Table with 2 columns: Denomination and Benevolent Contributions. Rows include Baptist, Methodist Episcopal, Protestant Episcopal, and Presbyterian with their respective contribution amounts.

The meaning of these figures is that the "Presbyterians contribute nearly six times as much as the Episcopalians, nearly three times as much as the Baptists, and half as much again as the Methodists, for their benevolent purposes." Or, stated in another form, "The Baptists averaged 36 cents a communicant; the Methodists 74 cents; the Episcopalians \$1.37; the Presbyterians \$3.17." To what is this excess in contributions to be attributed? To greater wealth, greater benevolence, or a better system of collections?—Era.

THE ERUPTION OF MOUNT VESUVIUS, which has been more or less continuous during the past six months and which has lately increased considerably in violence, is causing great apprehension as to the safety of the Italian observatory of Vesuvius. The lava has already partially submerged the hill of the Canteroni, on which the observatory stands; and the immediate erection of a strong dyke of scoria, so as to divert the stream of lava, is urgently asked for.