

Youths' Department.

Lessons for 1871.

THE WORDS OF JESUS.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1871.

A Speechless Man.—Matt. xxii. 1-14.

Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 345, 346.

SEA-LIGHTS.

"Very dark indeed it must be at the bottom of the sea," said Farmer Boyce, who is always in a "brown study" about something.

"Really," I said. "I'm sorry for the fishes if they have to go gliding around by guess, for I've heard of great ones that lie still with open mouths, waiting for the smaller ones to swim in; how very unsafe it must be to wander around down there in the dark!"

"Exactly! but it doesn't seem quite fair now, does it? Rather hard on the little fishes."

"I should think God might have some lamps lighted, so they could see to swim away," said five-years old Robbie. "mightn't he, Nettie?"

"Maybe he would, if the water wouldn't put them all out," answered my pet little girl.

George Boyce looked up at this, and instead of laughing as the rest did, said earnestly: "There may be some way of lighting fish-paths that we don't know about. When I went out hunting one night with Sam, we saw something shining in the darkest places of the woods that he called fox-fire. He said it was rotten beech-wood, that had a light of its own, and folks said, helped the foxes about finding their way in the dark. I don't suppose there is any rotten wood under the sea, but there may be something just as good."

"Pretty well reasoned for a youngster!" said Farmer Boyce, who was often a little proud of his grand-child. "Now, if the school ma'am had only been let down to the bottom of the sea when she crossed it on her way from Hindostan, she might be able to tell us something about the matter. But it isn't very likely we'll get much out of her, so we'll have to leave the question undecided, I'm afraid."

"Oh, it wasn't necessary that I should be let down into the sea to find out that there were lamps in it that water cannot put out," I said. "Captain Farnsworth made quite a pet of me, when father was ordered back to America for his health; he seemed to think that it would comfort the poor, sick missionary to keep his daughter amused and happy; so he often came and sat down by us as he stayed on deck, and answered all my questions. I remember how the waves used to glitter on dark evenings, sometimes, and I have even seen balls of fire rise from them and float above our vessel. I was afraid when I first saw that, and began to cry."

"Ho! ho! my little missionary!" said the captain, "how could you live among Hindoos and ride through jungle where tigers lived, if you were such a coward?"

"But I was never in danger of burning up there," I told him.

"No more you are here," he said; and then he told me that the lights were phosphorescent. I've no doubt your rotten beech-wood, Georgie, shone because it had so much phosphorus."

"If that is the case," Farmer Boyce argued, "I don't see why there wouldn't be phosphorus as well at the bottom of the sea, as on the top; and if it can give such a bright light, perhaps it is just as easy to see there as it is in this room, with a kerosene lamp on the stand."

"Now I remember what Captain Farnsworth told me about fishes one day," I said, beginning to get interested in the memory of my voyage home. "He said they are very phosphorescent creatures and throw out a light of their own which helps them to see through the darkness of the deep sea. I could hardly believe it until he brought a sailor to me who had been a diver, and made him describe some of those

lights. The sailor said there were some fishes that shone like colored lamps, or like wonderful stars of many hues; and when many of them were together they made great wreaths or bouquets of fire that kept changing and flickering, now fading almost away, then blossoming out again until the diver was quite astonished at their beauty.

"I told him, I recollect, how the swarms of fireflies used to flash about in India, till it seemed as though ten thousand stars were within reach of our hands; and how the ground used to shine with the red and green light of glow-worms, so that you hardly dared walk for fear of putting out some pretty little lamp. He said he had seen all that himself, in the hot countries where he had been, but it couldn't compare with the brightness of the bottom of the sea. There you might see every color of the rainbow, flashing and shooting around you, as meteors shoot through a November midnight. 'Why, miss,' he said, 'the sea is just full of what we sailors call starfish, and every fish is brighter than the brightest star in the sky. Then there are shell-fish and hosts of other kinds just as brilliant. They dazzle a poor diver when he is roaming about under water, and make him feel as though he wouldn't mind being a fish himself if he could always live where it is so pleasant.'"

"Would you feel that way, my boy?" asked Farmer Boyce.

"Not I!" answered Georgie; "I'd rather hunt oons with Sam, and only now and then catch sight of a rotten beech-log! I believe in dry land myself."

"Schoolma'am," said sober-faced Nettie, "then the fishes have lamps just as much as foxes, and more too. I thought God wouldn't let them float about without knowing how to get out of the way of those big mouths you told of."

"Yes," said Robbie, "they shine themselves, and no water can't put 'em out. Let's go fishin' and then we won't have to buy no kerosene; and we'll shine so bright after dark, some big mans'll come in and think we're all afire."—The Bright Side.

THE OBLIGING GOOSE.

The instinct of animals is sometimes really surprising. There was once in the possession of a farmer in Clonmel, a goose that by accident was left without mate or offspring, male or female. Now it chanced that the good wife had set a number of duck's eggs under a hen, which in due time were hatched, and of course the ducklings took to water, at which the motherly old hen was in a sad pecker—her maternity urged her to follow the brood, and her selfishness, to remain on dry land. In the meantime up sailed the goose with clack and clatter, which interpreted, meant, "Let me take care of them." She swam up and down with the youngsters, and when they wearied of their aquatic excursions, recommitted them to the guardianship of the hen. In the morning down came the ducks, there was the goose, and the hen in great frustration. On this occasion we do not know if the goose invited the hen for a friendly sail, but it is the fact that, being near the shore, the hen jumped upon her back, and in company they cruised up and down, as it were, conveying the feathered flotilla. Day by day the hen on board the goose might be seen, in perfect content and good humor. Numbers of people came to visit this extraordinary occurrence, which happened day after day until the juvenile excursionists arrived at the days of discretion, and no longer needed the services of "goose and hen pilots, instructors," etc.

KEEP STRAIGHT AHEAD.

Pay no attention to slanders or gossip-mongers. Keep straight in your course, and let their backbiting die the death of neglect. What is the use of lying awake nights, brooding over the remark of some false friend, that ran through your brain like forked lightning? What's the use of getting into a worry and fret over gossip that has been set about to your disadvantage by some meddlesome busybody, who has more time than character? These things can't possibly injure you, unless, indeed, you take notice of them, and in combating them give them character and standing. If what is said about you is true, get yourself right and once; if it is false, let it go for what it will fetch. If a bee stings you, would you go to the hive and destroy it? Would not a thousand come upon you? It is wisdom to say little respecting the injuries you have received. We are generally losers in the

end if we stop to refute all the backbitings and gossipings we may hear by the way. They are annoying, it is true, but not dangerous so long as we do not stop to expostulate and scold. Our characters are formed and sustained by ourselves, and by our own actions and purposes, and not by others.—Let us always bear in mind that "calumniators may usually be trusted to time and the slow but steady justice of public opinion."

BUDDHISM.

The introduction of Buddhism into Japan dates from B. C. 552. The 15th Mikado received at this time from the King of Pctsi, a statue of Saky Sinha, (the founder of this religion,) together with some banners, books, and other objects of worship. After considerable difficulty this religion was adopted.

According to the Japanese legend, Buddha came into the world in a miraculous manner. Soon after his birth he placed himself standing in the middle of the room, took seven steps in the direction of each of the cardinal points, and pointing with his right hand to the sky and his left to the earth, cried, "Around above and below, there is nothing that can be compared with me, or anything more worthy of worship." This is the position in which the ancient Buddha is represented when they celebrate his birth.

At the fete in which they commemorate his death they display the great picture painted by Toodenzu. In the centre of this great canvas, Buddha is represented extended under the trees, plunged in the rest of eternal unconsciousness.

The leading features of Buddhism, are the metempsychosis, the worship of a countless host of idols, that the grand Lama never dies, that the priests constitute a distinct order in the state, and that they are bound to celibacy.

Their five laws are, not to kill, or steal, to live chastely, to speak truth, and to abstain from strong drink.

The idolatry of the common people who are Buddhists is exceedingly gross, while among the learned the religion assumes the character of a high mystic creed, not wanting in some features that are tolerably pure. Its followers amount to 320,000,000.

There is much in the interior of a Buddhist temple resembling a Catholic church. There is a gilt image in a recess, two handsome lamps lighted, two large candles burning, artificial flowers, etc.; an abundance of gilding; also two side altars with lighted candles.

Before the principal altar, within an enclosure, are five priests, robed, and on their knees, the chief one striking a saucer-shaped bell, and the other with padded drumsticks beating hollow, lacquered vessels which emit a dull sound.

They keep time intoning their prayers and chanting, after which they kneel again and touch the floor with their foreheads, then repair to the side altars, and have a short ceremony before each of them.

All members of the Buddhist priesthood have their heads shaved and uncovered, except certain orders who wear wide-brimmed hats. Gray cassocks are the most usual costume but black, brown, yellow, and red are also to be seen, sometimes with the addition of a surplice.

Most of the large towns of Japan possess a temple dedicated to Hachiman, one of the great national kamis, who reigned 43 years, commencing in the year 270 of our era, and who was raised after his death to the ranks of the protecting spirits of the empire. The temple of Hachiman at Kamakura is distinguishable from all the others by the glorious trophies it contains, which no European has ever seen.

It is approached by long avenues of lofty cedars. Two steps lead to the first terrace, the sides of which are occupied by the houses of the bonzes or priests, while in the centre are two large ponds of oval shape, connected by a canal.

The second terrace is raised some distance from the first. It is upheld by a huge wall, and supports the principal temple, as well as the houses of the priests.

The first floor is square in plan and supported by pillars, while the second consists of a large round gallery, which though massive, is so light in form, that it appears to rest on a single pivot. A pointed roof, wider at the base, and ending in a high pointed spire cast in bronze, and ornamented with the same material, completes the effect of this strange edifice. The ornaments are principally on the pediments of the doors and cornices which support the roof.

The temple shelters underneath its high roof two monstrous idols placed one on each side of the door which communicates with the centre of the edifice. They are carved in wood and covered with vermillion; and their huge grinning faces and distorted figures are defaced with paper pellets, thrown at them by visitors in passing. The pilgrims, however, make vows to them and offer straw shoes of a suitable size for the idol—these are suspended by thousands to the bars of the railing.

Though the temple is consecrated to Hachiman, one of their great national worthies, it is quite apparent that religious customs derived from India have supplanted the ancient worship.

"If ever there was a religion going to decay and ruin," says a recent writer, "it is Buddhism in Japan. The temples and shrines are being deserted. The number of priests has decreased nearly one third within five years. Geography and chemistry are sapping its foundations. Sintoism, a cultured and intellectual atheism, with which Buddhism had blended for the sake of gratifying the Japanese, is in a transient flush of power. No one can move among the young men in Japan without feeling that he moves among the forecast shadows of coming events. They are studying the Bible; some of them have become Christians. The leaves of the tree of life shall be for the healing of the nation."

Buddhism is a very flexible religion, conciliating, insinuating, and accommodating itself to the taste and customs of people of the most opposite characters. The fact that nearly a third of the human race has no other religion but one "without God, composed of nothing, invented by despair," should stimulate those who believe in "the true God and eternal life," to spread among them the knowledge of the only Saviour, through whom the world can be saved.

SEVENTEEN CENTURIES IN THE OVEN.

We find the following article in the Leisure Hour: "One house in Pompeii had evidently been in a state of repair when the volcano storm buried it. Painters and decorators and cleaners were masters of the situation. The household goods were all in disorder, and the family, if not out of town, must be undergoing that condition of misery which spring-cleanings and other like infections inevitably entail. Painters' pots and brushes and workmen's tools were scattered about. Tell-tale spots of white-wash, starred wall and floor. Such domestic implements as pots and kettles had been bundled up in a corner all by themselves, and the cook was nowhere. Dinner, however, had not been forgotten. A solitary pot stood simmering (if ever it did simmer) on the stove. And (start not, for it is true) there was a bronze dish in waiting before the oven, and on the dish a suckling pig, all ready to be baked. But the oven was already engaged with its full complement of bread. So the suckling pig had to wait. And it never entered the oven, and the loaves were never taken out till after a sojourn of 1,700 years! They had been cooking ever since November 23d, A. D. 79. M. Florelli has them now in his museum at Pompeii, twenty-one of them, rather hard of course, and black, but perfectly preserved."

YOUR ACCOUNTS.

"What makes you so dull to-night, Harry?" said one clerk to another.

"I'm so bothered about my accounts I can't get them right. I have been to a great many places to-day collecting, and I have not as much money as I ought to have."

"Oh! never mind. Don't think about that now. What's the use of worrying over it any more? Put it by till to-morrow."

"It's all very fine to say that, but I can't put it by; I have got to give in my book to the governor the first thing in the morning. How can a fellow help thinking about it, when his accounts are not right?"

Are your accounts all right, reader? Are you ready to meet your Master? He never forgets anything; and he may call on you to give in your account before you expect it.

The most positive men are the most credulous; since they most believe themselves, and advise most with their fellow-flatterer and worst enemy, their own false love.—Pope.

Temperance.

FOR DECLAMATION.

Come near, all ye who have learned to think, And hear me speak of the drink, the drink; Come, male and female—come age and youth,

And list while I tell the simple truth. It's bad for the brain, it's bad for the nerves, For the man that buys, for the man that serves;

It's bad for the eyes, and its bad for the breath,

It's bad for life and its worse for death; It's bad for the pocket, it's bad for the fame, It's bad too when often it beareth no blame; It's bad for friendship, its worse for strife, It's bad for the husband, it's bad for the wife,

It's bad for the face, where the pimples have come,

It's bad for the children, and bad for the home;

It's bad when the tradesmen's bills are to pay,

It's bad—oh! how bad for a "rainy day;" It's bad when it nerves a man to do The crime he's not accustomed to.

It was bad for the culprit who sighs in jail,

It's bad for his wife—so pale, so pale;

It's bad for the strong, and it's bad for the weak,

For the sorrow tinge that it lends to the cheek,

It's bad when the social glass we take, And bad next morning when we awake; It's bad for the day when you've to pay the rent.

And bad for the child with the pitcher sent;

It's bad for the young who schooling lack, And bad for the clothes on the drunkard's back;

The ruffian's joy, and murderer's hope, The pasport oft to the hangman's rope;

It's bad, as myriads who moan below, Could they once return, would be fain to show;

It's bad in the morning, its bad at night, Though the talk is loud and the fire burns bright

It's bad, for it leads from bad to worse— Not only bad, but a giant curse;

The poor man's bane, destruction's gate, The Church's shame, the blight of the State;

A poison fly, with its venomous sting, That makes our glory a tainted thing.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN!

"Father, what does it mean to be a drunkard? Maggie Gray said you was a drunkard, and her father said so!"

Had a bomb-shell exploded at the feet of Mr. Weston, he could not have been more surprised. He stood mute, and one might have heard a pin drop, so silent were they all. But Katie, nothing daunted, after waiting what she considered a proper length of time, repeated the question; and it was answered.

"A man who drinks liquor and makes a beast of himself."

"Is that what you do, father?"

"It's what I have done sometimes," replied the man in a choked voice.

"It's bad, ain't it?"

"Yes child; the very worst thing a man can do."

"And that's what makes mother cry when there don't anything hurt her; and that's the reason I have to wear such drefful old shoes!"

Only one word in reply to this—"Yes."

"Then, I shouldn't think you'd do so any more, 'cause mother's a good, and I don't like to wear old shoes, a bit! You won't be a drunkard any more, will you?" said Katie; and she looked up to her father so confidently, that he caught her in his arms and hid his face upon her shoulder.

"Say, father, you won't, will you?"

"No, darling, I won't!" And raising his right hand, he promised never, never to drink another drop of intoxicating liquor. "God helping me," he added reverently. "Bless you, my darling; you have saved me!"

Then there were tears and sobs and broken ejaculation, all for the very joy, while supper was forgotten. It made no difference to Katie whether her shoes were old or new; but when, a few days after, she became the possessor of some long boots, with red lacings and tassels, she had a better appreciation of the change which had taken place.

Since then, she has often received beautiful gifts; and always she remembers with grateful heart that her father is not a drunkard.—Temperance Banner.