

Youths' Department.

Lessons for 1871. THE WORDS OF JESUS.

SUNDAY, MAY 28th, 1871. Who shall be greatest?—Mark ix. 33-42.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. ii. 5.

SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS.—Parallel passages, Matthew xviii. 1-14; Luke ix. 46-50. Also Matt. xxiii. 1-11; Luke xxii. 24-30.

Where did the events of this lesson occur? vs. 33. Where is Capernaum? What did Jesus ask the disciples? vs. 33. About what had they disputed? vs. 31? About being "greatest" in what?—Matt. xviii. 1, 4. What did they do when Jesus questioned them? vs. 34. Why did they do this? What does this teach us?

What three acts of Jesus are mentioned in vs. 35? What did he say to them? vs. 35. In what way do people generally seek to be great? What does Paul say about it? Phil. ii. 5-8. Which way do you think right? How then can you be really great? Will you try to be?

What did Jesus do after telling how to be greatest? vs. 36. What did he say? vs. 37. What is meant by "one of such children"? vs. 37; Matt. xviii. 2-5. Are you such a child? What is it to "receive" one of these? vs. 37; Luke viii. 40; xv. 27; xix. 6. In receiving one of these, whom else do we receive? vs. 37. What does this mean? Do you enjoy it? Will you ever?

Why did John speak the words in vs. 38? Why did Jesus reply as in vs. 39, 40? Why as in vs. 41 and 42? What do you suppose the disciples learned from all this? What may we learn? They afterwards forgot it; shall we?

SUMMARY.—True greatness consists in true Christian humility. The truly great will be constantly cared for by Jesus.

ANALYSIS.—I. Controversy and its Rebuke. vs. 33-37. 1. The controversy. vs. 33, 34. Where? between whom? about what? etc. 2. The rebuke. vs. 35-37. (1) By precept. vs. 35. (2) By pattern. vs. 35, 37.

II. A Confession and its Improvement. vs. 38-42. 1. The confession. vs. 38. By whom made? for whom? about what? reason why. (1) By precept. vs. 39, 40. (2) By encouragement. vs. 41. (3) By warning. vs. 42.

EXPOSITION.—Capernaum.—The scene of many acts of our Lord. "Being in the house," illustrating the propriety of rebuking and reproving in private, rather than in public, according to his own words. Matt. xviii. 15. Capernaum is situated near the northwest part of the sea of Galilee.

The question Jesus asks to clearly convict them.

The dispute.—The issue is stated in vs. 34. We regard vs. 38 as a confession concerning the dispute. The forbidding of which John speaks shows they considered themselves as a superior and select few. From Matt. xviii. 1, 4, we learn that the question concerned their standing "in the kingdom of heaven." The disciples were slow to comprehend, they looked persistently for a temporal kingdom. In this they were ambitious of place, and hence were jealous of all others who seemed candidates for rank. See Matt. xx. 20, 21, 24; Mark x. 35-37, 41; Luke xxii. 24.

Held their peace.—Doubtless because ashamed of themselves.

The acts.—1. "He sat down," which illustrates his composure. He did not fly into a rage. 2. "And called the twelve," making no discrimination as to the more or less guilty, but with pity for the infirmities of all, he lays down the law of the case. 3. "And saith unto them," in kindness instructing them in better ways. Blessed model for parent, teacher, and all.

His saying.—His statement, in vs. 35, may be understood in either of two ways, viz: 1. "If a man desires to be first, with this bad spirit of rivalry which appears in you, he shall be sadly disappointed, he shall be last of all and servant of all." Or, 2. If he desires this in a holy ambition, this is the path he must tread, viz., let him "be last of all and servant of all." Matt. xx. 26-28; xxiii. 12. Jesus means to say, "Would you be greatest, then be the least." John xiii. 4, 5; Phil. ii. 5-8. Before God, nothing is more appropriate and acceptable than a lowly mind.

He took a child.—Not one of these distortions of childhood which illustrate the "young America" idea, nor a burly, bullying, brutal specimen, such as we occasionally find among the abodes of vice;

but it was a model child in the matter of childish humility.

His saying.—Matthew only reports this in full. His whole address urges, 1. Conversion, and conformity in spirit to little child, else they cannot enter his kingdom, much less can they be great in it. Matt. xviii. 3. He states, 2. That the greatest are most like this little child, Matt. xvii. 4.

One of such children.—Conversion, which comes by faith in Jesus Christ, is first necessary; then an establishment of the child-like Christian character. Every Christian, and especially every highly Christ-like one, is such a child.

Receive.—The reception is "in my name." Not, because they are our kindred, or our friends, or even our classmates, or fellow church members, but for Jesus' sake; 1 John iii. 14.

Receive me.—Kindness to Christ's people is kindness to him; Matt. xxv. 34-40. Jesus goes as a happy, helpful guest, wherever his people go. John xiv. 23.

John's words.—They had been wrong in not receiving one who gave evidence of being a follower of Jesus. Their views and their feelings were narrow, they see it now and through John confess it. At first they were not ready to confess. vs. 34.

The reply of Jesus.—1. In vs. 39, 40, he makes a special application of the lesson just taught. So we may apply it to individual cases. 2. In vs. 41, he states the richest encouragement to receive and help all who belong to Christ. Caution: He does not speak of children simply as such. They are "children of wrath, even as others;" (Eph. ii. 3) except they "believe." Such Jesus defends. vs. 42. Such are cared for by angels. Heb. i. 14; Matt. xviii. 10.

There is here no allusion to, or ground for infant baptism. Neither here, nor in Matt. xix. 13-15, is the matter named, or hinted at.

ILLUSTRATIONS.—There is a tradition, though a vague and unreliable one, that this child was Ignatius, who was pastor at Antioch from about 69 to 107 A. D. He was finally martyred.

A good man, John Falk, who lived across the ocean, used to give suppers and lodgings to poor boys. At the table, they always asked this blessing, "Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and bless what thou hast provided." A little fellow, who had often heard this, asked, one night, "Do tell me why the Lord Jesus never come?" "Dear child," said John Falk, "you may be sure he will come, for he hears our prayers." Just then a knock came at the door. A poor, ragged, half-frozen boy came in. The little fellow, who had been asking for Jesus, looked disappointed for a moment, and then ran to Falk, saying, "Jesus could not come himself, and so he sent this poor boy in his place, didn't he?" "Yes, dear child," said Falk, "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

Go where the sick recline, Where mourning hearts deplore; And where the sons of sorrow pine, Dispense your hallowed lore.

So shall you share the wealth That earth may ne'er despoil, And the blest gospel's saving health Repay your arduous toil.

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher. Recite.—Scripture Catechism, 207, 208.

SCRIPTURE BIOGRAPHY. ANSWER TO No. 3.

"The gracious woman" was a dweller in the city of Shuncem. Her acts of kindness faith and the blessings which came upon her, may be found recorded in 2 Kings iv. 8-37; vii. 1-6; Matt. x. 41.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA. No. LVI.

Who Paul's epistle to the Romans penned? What mother fear'd to see her child's last end? Who, from his love to God, the prophets fed? Who was it David wish'd to hear was dead? Who with three hundred men a victory wrought? Whose house was bless'd when there the ark was brought? Who daily in his chamber three times pray'd? Who found a kingdom seeking cattle stray'd? Who slew a heathen king with his left hand? Whose pray'rs brought rain to cheer the drooping land? What soldier brave was slain through woman's guile?

Where lit a seven days' king his funeral pile?

What busy housewife did our Lord reprove? Who saw a sight which all his bones did move?

A text which old and young should bear in mind, Each name's initial take, and you will find.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

3. Mention all the instances recorded in the Old Testament of the dead being restored to life.

4. Give all the instances recorded in the New Testament.

POISONED FUN.

Young readers, you know there are poisoned drinks for sale in abundance, and foolish persons, old and young, buy them, and poisoned candies, too. But did you ever notice that a great deal of the fun we see is also poisoned? I have seen four kinds of poison in it.

1. Falsehood. The talk of many fun-makers is very highly seasoned with this. They seem to think the more false the more funny. Some of it they call jesting or joking; or they tell you they said it only in fun. Nevertheless, it is really falsehood, and as such it is poison. The destroyer, Satan, has used it to injure men ever since he deceived our mother Eve in the Garden of Eden. I do not think that you can find a single person that uses it, or is fond of the fun it makes, whose soul is in good health. This poison is injuring any such persons, and to many of them it will soon prove fatal.

2. Obscenity. This a filthy poison, and I do not like to say much about it; but I know that, vile as it is, many mix it with their fun, and so poison themselves and others by it. Beware of it!

3. Profanity. Quoting Bible expressions in a trifling or sneering way, or using uncommon forms of swearing or cursing, or ridiculing religious people or their practices, seems very funny to many persons, both old and young. When they want to make fun, they put in some such profanity to season it.

4. Cruelty. One boy knocks off another's hat and runs away with it, or spatters his clothes. One girl snatches another's pencil or comb and hides it; or one vexes another about a poor dress, or an old bonnet, or about some awkward action or mistake in speaking; or one laughs to another about some friend; in these and many other ways, some persons take pleasure in injuring or vexing others. They delight in making others feel bad. They make their fun almost wholly of such cruelties. But it is dreadfully poisoned fun. It makes those that love it like the enemy whose delight it is to do evil.

Now I like good fun, and like to have other people, especially the young, enjoy it, and plenty of it; but poisoned fun,—young readers, what do you think about it? Is it best to make it? If we eat poison, it commonly harms only the body; but we can take of these poisons without harming our precious souls? Then, when you make fun, do not mix any of these things with it; and when you seek to have fun made by others, go where they do not mix poison with it.

THE SWEARER'S PRAYER.

The Rev. Mr. Kilpin one day passed a very profane man, and, having omitted to rebuke him, he waited for him the next morning at the same place. When he approached, Mr. Kilpin said, "Good morning, my friend; you are the person I have been waiting for."

"Oh! sir," said the man, "you are mistaken, I think."

"I do not know you; but I saw you last night when you were going home from work, and I have been waiting some time to see you."

"Sir, you are mistaken; it could not have been me: I never saw you in my life before that I know of."

"Well, my friend," said Mr. Kilpin, "I heard you pray last night."

"Now I'm sure that you are mistaken; I never prayed in all my life."

"Oh!" said Mr. Kilpin, "if God had answered your prayer last night you had not been seen here this morning. I heard you pray that God would destroy your eyes, and ruin your soul."

The man turned pale, and, trembling, said,—

"Do you call that prayer? I did; I did."

"Well, then, my errand this morning is

to request you from this day to pray as fervently for your salvation as you have done for your ruin; and may God in mercy hear your prayer."

The man from that time became an attendant on Mr. Kilpin's ministry, and the attendance ended in his early conversion to God.

WANTING FRIENDS.

"I wish that I had some good friends to help me on in life!" cried lazy Dennis, with a yawn.

"Good friends! why you have ten!" replied his master.

"I'm sure I haven't half so many, and those that I have are too poor to help me."

"Count your fingers, my boys," said his master.

Dennis looked down on his big, strong hands.

"Count thumbs and all," added the master.

"I have,—there are ten," said the lad.

"Then, never say you have not ten good friends, able to help you on in life. Try what those true friends can do before you go grumbling and fretting because you do not get help from others."

BIBLE ARITHMETIC.

Addition.—Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. 2 Peter 1: 5-7.

Subtraction.—He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 2 Peter 1: 9.

Multiplication.—Grace and peace be multiplied upon you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. 2 Peter 1: 2.

He that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness. 2 Cor. 9: 10.

Division.—Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things; and I will receive you, and will be Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. 2 Cor. 6: 17, 18.

TOO MUCH DRESS.

It is sometimes found difficult to induce pupils to go to Sunday-school because of a fancied lack of suitable clothing. A young teacher makes a valuable suggestion in the Independent. It is to the effect that wealthy parents should send their children to Sunday-school dressed in every-day clothes, and teachers should go plainly dressed. We may add, that fine clothes, rustling silks, furbelows and furbelows are out of place in church or Sunday-school. Extravagant dress in church is a vulgarism peculiar to Americans. Wise teachers, if they discover that their dress absorbs the attention of their pupils, very soon learn to leave their superfluous finery for full dress occasions.

A little girl seeing a gentleman on the piazza of a hotel, smoking, ran to her mother, exclaiming, "Mr. B. isn't a minister, is he?" "Certainly he is," her mother replied; "but why do you ask?" "Why," said the child, "he sits there on the porch smoking a cigar; and if he is a minister, he has no right to do that, anyhow."

Were we as eloquent as angels, we should please some more by listening than by talking.—Colton.

He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping.

Factories and machine shops should not be allowed to run a day without Johnson's Anodyne Liniment.—In case of sudden accident, an immediate use of it may save weeks of suffering, and perhaps a limb or even life.

There are several kinds of worms which trouble horses; the pin-worms, (pointed at both ends) are the most common and most dangerous. Sheridan's Cavalry Condition powders will in a few days eject the worms, and the horse will begin to thrive.

A Temperance Column.

ELOQUENT EXTRACT.

But the half cannot be told. The half, did I say? Nay, the man does not live that can tell half of the story of its woes. Exaggeration there, is impossible. The fatigued fancy falters in its flight before it comes up to the fact. The mind's eye can not take in the countless miseries in its train. No human heart can put into that picture shades darker than the truth.

Put into the picture every conceivable thing that is terrible or revolting; paint health in ruins, hope destroyed, affections crushed, prayer silenced; paint the chosen seats of paternal care, of filial piety, of brotherly love, of maternal devotion, all, all vacant; paint all the crimes of every stature, of every hue, from murder, standing aghast over a grave which it has no means to cover, down to the meanest deception still confident of success; paint home a desert, and shame a tyrant, and poverty the legitimate child as well as the prolific mother of vice; paint the dark valley of the shadow of death, peopled with living slaves; paint a landscape with trees whose fruit is poison and whose shade is death, with mountain torrents tributary to an ocean whose very waves are fire; put into the distant background the vanishing vision of a blessed past, and into the foreground the terrible certainty of an accursed future; paint prisons with doors that open inward; people the scene with men whose shattered forms are tenanted by tormented souls, with children upon whose lips no smiles can play, and women into whose cheeks furrows have been burnt by tears, wrung by anguish, from breaking hearts—paint such a picture, and, when you are ready to show it, do not let it be the rays of the heavenly sun, but illumine it with the glances of the infernal fires; and still you will be bound to say that your horrible picture falls short of the truth.

Who, then, will tamper with this accursed thing? Who will not restrain himself? Who will not keep his family and his children from it by his admonition and example? Who will not warn them against its evil effects? Remember, "The drunkard shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

SPECIMEN OF THE WORK DONE INSIDE.

One of my friends is a very earnest, shrewd man, who seems to always know how to do the best thing at the right time. One day he was passing a gin-shop in Manchester, when he saw a drunken man lying on the ground. The poor fellow had evidently been turned out of doors when all his money was gone. In a momentary friend hastened across the street, entering a grocer's shop, addressing the master, said:

"Will you oblige me with the largest sheet of brown paper you have?"

"What for, my friend? What is the matter?"

"Oh! you shall see in a minute or two. Please let it be the very largest sheet you have."

The sheet of paper was soon procured.

"Now, will you lend me a piece of chalk?" said my friend.

"Why, what are you going to do?"

"You shall see presently."

He then quickly printed, in large letters,—

SPECIMEN OF THE WORK DONE INSIDE.

He then fastened the paper right over the few moments several passers-by stopped and read aloud, "Specimen of the work done inside."

In a very short time a crowd assembled, and the landlord, hearing the noise and laughter outside, came out to see what it was all about. He eagerly bent down and read the inscription on the paper, and then demanded, in an angry voice, "Who did that?"

"Which?" asked my friend, who now joined the crowd. "If you mean what is on the paper, I did that; but if you mean the man, you did that! This morning, when he arose, he was sober; when he walked down this street, on his way to work, he was sober; when he went into your gin-shop, he was sober, and now he is what you made him. Is he not a true specimen of the work done inside?"

BE SOBER.

It is not merely against "excess of wine" that the apostle warns us, but excess in every thing;—against all extremes, excitements, feverishness—fruits of an unbalanced mind and an uncontrolled, unregulated spirit. Self-restraint, self-denial, moderation in all things, calmness,—these may well be included under the words "Be sober." Non-conformity to the world, rejection of its vanities, follies, feasts, pleasures, revellings, these are also included. Be temperate in all things. Mortify your members which are upon the earth. Beware of any temptation that would betray you into an unsteady, feverish state of mind, and throw you off your balance and your guard. For the Lord is at hand!