

The Highway.

The highway lies, all bare and brown,
A naked line across the down,
Worn by a hundred hurrying feet.
The tide of life along it flows,
And busy Commerce comes and goes,
Where once the grass grew green and sweet,
The World's fierce pulses beat.

Well for the highway that it lies
The passageway of great emprise!
Yet from its dust what voices cry—
Voices of soft green growing things
Trampled and torn from earth which clings
Too closely, unperceiving why
Its darling bairns must die!

My heart's a highway, trodden down
By many a traveller of renown
Grave Thought, and burden-bearing Deeds,
And strong Achievement's envoy fares,
With laughing Joys and crowding Cares,
Along the road that worldward leads—
Once rank with foolish weeds.

Glad is my heart to hear them pass;
Yet sometimes breathes a low Alas!
The tender springing things that grew—
The nursing hopes their feet destroyed,
Sweet ignorant dreams that youth enjoyed—
And blossomed there the long year through—
Would I could have them too!

—Louise Betts Edwards, in Harper's Magazine for February.

The Boy Who Wouldn't Fight.

The little boys in class-room number four thought the noon recess would never come. Their copper-toed shoes scraped the bare floor, until Miss Edith felt like jumping out of the third-storey window to get rid of the sound.

But at last the big gong struck twelve, and at the signal twenty-four children tumbled down the steep steps into the paved court behind the school building. The school was so big and the play-ground, so small that the rooms took their recess by turns. It was number four's turn at twelve.

And now you will see why they have been so eager to get out; there is a new scholar to-day, and they want to "size him up," as the boys say.

"Where are you in arithmetic?" asks one.

"Partial payments," replies the newcomer, promptly.

He had been using his ears in the class-room, and he knows his arithmetic will give him rank among these new comrades.

"How many blades has your knife got?"

"Four!" The new boy's head is still up as he produces a beauty of a knife.

"Whew!" whistles round the crowd. This beats partial payments out of sight.

"Let's have a fight," now says the stoutest little rascal of the party; and this is the supreme test in number four. A boy who can do partial payments, has a four-bladed knife, and will fight, can take any place he wants among them.

There was a dead silence for an instant. The stranger's face gets red, his eyes flash; but he stuffs his hands in his pockets, and says, with an effort, "I don't fight."

Did you ever see a gay-colored little balloon floating in the sunshine above your head, so light, so buoyant, you think it could touch the clouds? But a tiny rift appears, and the balloon is a piece of shriveled rubber at your feet. That was just the way with the new boy of number four when he refused to fight. Partial payments went for nothing; a four-bladed didn't count. He was a scorn and a by-word.

A week has passed by, and it is noon recess again. Miss Edith sits at the window pretending to eat her luncheon, but she has forgotten her sandwich and jelly-cake.

"What am I going to do about Charley Graves?" she says to herself. "I can't let him fight, and yet—"

Suddenly the noise of battle comes up from the paved court. The teacher looks out of the window, but seeing only a confused mass of tossing arms and legs, and hearing only a confused sound as of Kilkenny cats on the warpath, she rings her bell sharply, and recess comes to a sudden end.

Up comes the panting, dusty crowd.

"But what is this?" she cried; for the new boy's lip is bleeding and his forehead is swelling visibly. "I thought you wouldn't fight."

"I promised my mother," said the hero, proudly, "that I would never fight unless I was obliged to; but when Micky twists little Tom Poague's arm, and won't stop, I am obliged to!"

Miss Edith bound his head with a wet handkerchief, and stuck his lip up with pink court-plaster, and tried to look sorry, but it was easy to see that she was pleased with her new boy's idea of when he was obliged to fight—not when twenty-four boys were looking black at him, but when a boy twice his size was teasing a little one!—Elizabeth P. Allen, in The Presbyterian.

The Young People

EDITORS, - - - - - (REV. E. E. DALEY,
A. H. CHIPMAN.)

Kindly address all communications for this department to A. H. Chipman, St. John.

Prayer Meeting Topics for February.

C. E. Topic.—Our little worries, and how to get rid of them, Ps. 121:1-18; John 14:1.

B. Y. P. U. Topic.—Christ before Pilate, John 19:1-16.

B. Y. P. U. Daily Bible Readings.

(Baptist Union.)

Monday, Feb. 22.—Psalm 191:1-24. How to triumph over self, (vs. 11). Compare Psalm 37:31.

Tuesday, Feb. 23.—Psalm 119:25-48. The right way to run, (vs. 32). Compare Heb. 12:1.

Wednesday, Feb. 24.—Psalm 119:49-72. Triumph over derision, (vs. 51). Compare Psalm 44:16-18.

Thursday, Feb. 25.—Psalm 119:73-96. Thy word is settled in heaven, (vs. 89). Compare Matt. 24:35.

Friday, Feb. 26.—Psalm 119:97-120. Triumph over enemies, (vs. 98). Compare Prov. 16:7.

Saturday, Feb. 27.—Psalm 119:121-144. Triumph of thy words, (vs. 130). Compare John 8:12.

Daily Readings on the Life of Christ.

No. 22.—The Sin of Man.

Monday.—The Root of sin. War in heaven, Rev. 12. Tuesday.—The Fruit of sin. Man in ruins, Rom. 1:18-32; Gal. 5:19-21.

Wednesday.—The Speech of sin. "Go to now, ye that say," James 4.

Thursday.—The Wealth of sin. "Your gold and silver, etc." James 5.

Friday.—Judgment of sin. "The books were opened," Rev. 20.

Saturday.—The end of sin. "The former things are passed away," Rev. 21.

H. F. ADAMS.

Hopewell Hill, N. B.

Our Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor now holds its meetings fortnightly, and on Sunday evening, except once in six weeks, when the church service is in the evening, then the Endeavor meeting is held the following Monday evening. These meetings of late have been well attended. A Normal Class in connection with the Endeavor Society has been lately organized. It also meets fortnightly, alternating with the prayer meeting, but always on Monday evening. Dr. J. L. Hurlbut's text-book is used. As we increase in knowledge of the Word of God, we hope also to grow in admiration and love for His holy law, and to run the way of His commandments with enlarged hearts. The lessons thus far have been efficiently and pleasantly taught by Mr. A. C. M. Lawson, who is earnest in every good work.

February 7.

F. PRICK, Cor.-Sec'y.

Sacred Literature Course B. Y. P. U.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF CHRIST.

Auxiliary Notes, Prepared especially for the MESSENGER AND VISITOR

BY REV. H. F. ADAMS.

DIVISION THIRD.—Topical: A Study of Christ's Great Themes. SECTION I.—Man.

Lesson 22.—The Sin of Man.

Not original sin, nor general sin; not the nature of sin, nor its consequences; but THE SIN OF MAN. We are to speak of the sin of man not as Plato or Socrates viewed sin, but as it met Christ, as He described and treated it. The sin of man, as one of Christ's great themes, was, and is, essentially and peculiarly man's own sin. It is called in the gospels UNBELIEF. Neither higher nor lower beings have practised this sin. Whatever sins devils are capable of committing, they are not guilty of unbelief; for James says: "The devils also BELIEVE and tremble." This statement does not exonerate them from the sin that is as bad if not worse, the tempting of man to disbelieve God. Unbelief has sought many forms of expression, sometimes even disguising itself in the garments of religion, (as in the Pharisees) yet it is always the same God insulting, Christ rejecting thing. Dignified indifference, sharp criticism, a cold sneer, vituperative abuse, and violent opposition were, and are, the expressions of the sin of man towards the Son of God. While men are classified as different, by the world, because of social and financial inequalities, they are all unified before God, because of the one sin of which all are guilty. Unbelief is the mother of all other sins, countless and diversified, by whatever name known or called, because the law of affinity discovers them all related to a common origin.

I. What is unbelief.

In I John, 5:10, it calls God a LIAR. It openly and defiantly discredits the RECORD that God gave of His Son." This the most sweeping and indiscriminate treatment recorded of the sin of man concerning the authentic and complete gospel. But let us now study this sin in more insidious forms, and track it less concealed, till we

behold it as cold and studied scepticism, and blatant blasphemy.

(1) John, 1:11. "Received Him Not."

Probably in all Scripture this is the simplest and most colorless description of unbelief. Here is no statement of enquiry, refutation, criticism, or abuse. But simply a silent disowning of Christ's claims, and disregard of His promises. Alas! how frequently does this form of man's peculiar sin show itself to-day! Many read the word, hear it preached, and see it in Christian character, but give it a cool courteous non-reception.

(2) John 6:30. "What sign showest thou." Here unbelief passes from the passive to the active; assuming that attitude of the materialist, who wants to SEE to believe. This practically rules faith out of court. As soon as a man refuses to believe a fact on the testimony of such a one as Christ, he denies to his intellect the noble function of comparison and conclusion; and relegates to his sensuous nature the office of judge of things entirely outside its realm, which is purely material. The latter may know a joint of beef from a joint of moose, but is incapable of discerning the divinity of Christ through a material miraculous sign. This reason is in I Cor. 2:14.

(3) John 9:24. "We know that this man is a sinner." Here the sin of man, unbelief, has progressed (backwards) to the stage of agnosticism. "A sign" was granted in the opening of the eyes of a "man born blind." But in spite of it these "know-nothings" assume the audacity to label Christ a "sinner." Here unbelief pretends to "know" that such a miracle is a possibility, but that the worker of it can be a sinner. The reason for such "willing ignorance" is found in 2 Thess. 2, 10, 11, where this stage of unbelief is traced to "receiving not the love of the truth."

(4) Matt. 9:3. "This man blasphemeth." Notwithstanding that Jesus had proved by many mighty miracles that He was God and man, yet here we see how the sin of man gives birth to jealousy, which so completely tries to belittle Jesus as to view Him as an imposter. Thus depriving Him of courteous treatment, and branding Him as a mere pretender, and an arrogant blasphemer. This is an advance on No. 3, but the reason for this is found in 1 Tim. 4:2.

(5) Mark 3:22. "He hath Beelzebub, &c." Here "the sin of man" reached its climax. Christ it could not go, than declare that the miracles Christ wrought by the Holy Ghost, were the work of the devil, and the men who nursed unbelief in Christ, so that they willingly made such an awful, untrue and wicked statement, committed the UNPARDONABLE SIN. It was a slander upon the Holy Spirit, and hurled with fixed and premeditated defiance at the blessed Saviour. It was the fruition of that early form of unbelief "received Him not," the culmination of a series of acts of the soul that began with indifference.

Between indifference to Christ's claims and blasphemy there are a great variety of forms of unbelief. Non-belief, dis-belief, mis-belief and error-belief; Pantheism, Deism, Unitarianism, Universalism, Scepticism, Atheism and many more. Each of which has the possibility of maturing to blasphemy.

Rev. 21:8. The destiny of unbelief.

Unbelief may hide itself in refinement, conceal itself in scholarships, attire itself in science, or clothe itself with pauperism, veil itself in crime and disguise itself in secularism, but it is doomed: Doomed by the imperative, irrevocable decree of the Majesty of Heaven. There is no help or hope for it, its fate is unalterably sealed by the justice of God. Our Lord's language determining the end of the unbeliever is incapable of double interpretation.

John 3, 36. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." This is the sin of man. God's remedy for it is the uplifted Christ, on whom if we believe, we shall be saved from its DOMINION, its DARKNESS and its DESTINY.

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