

Teachers' Department.

Sabbath School Scripture Lessons.

AUGUST 22nd, 1858.

Subject.—THE EVIL CONSEQUENCES OF AN UNBRIDLED TONGUE.

For Repeating.

James ii. 14-17.

For Reading.

James iii. 1-8.

AUGUST 29th, 1858.

Subject.—EVANGELICAL WISDOM WILL CONTROL THE TONGUE AND TEMPER.

For Repeating.

James iii. 1-2.

For Reading.

James iii. 9-18.

THE QUESTIONER.

Bible Questions.

26.—On what occasions did Christ himself speak to the Apostle Paul to cheer and encourage him in trying circumstances?

27.—Give examples of the use of caves as places of refuge?

Solution to Mental Picture from the Bible No. 67.

The Syrophenician woman.—MARK vii. 24-30.

Boston School Celebrations.

MUSICAL FESTIVAL, &c.

This City has long been renowned for its superior Educational Institutions. Unusual interest attached to the late celebrations from the circumstance, that the festival which has usually been given with a collation in Faneuil Hall was superseded by a Musical Festival. It was an experiment, the success of which created some considerable amount of curiosity. The preparatory examinations of the various schools shewed that a high order of instruction is given to the pupils in these Common Schools.

There are, it appears, four hundred and fifty teachers employed in the public Schools, and, as was remarked by one of the speakers, they constitute a regiment of ladies and gentlemen, engaged in the management and instruction of the children of that city, and compose a body whose fidelity, ability and devotion to duty cannot be equalled elsewhere.

We extract the following description of the musical festival and report of the speeches delivered on the occasion from the Boston Advertiser, kindly loaned to us by a friend:—

"The Music Hall was fitted up with special reference to the festival. A spacious amphitheatre, to seat the choir of twelve hundred youth, had been built above the stage, with a space in the centre to accommodate the gentlemen who were to make addresses, and also the orchestra.

In the upper balcony, were the names of the Mayors of the city, from John Phillips to F. W. Lincoln, Jr., with the dates of their offices, the first and last on shields over the back of the balcony, and the others in ornamental arches over the doors. Over the recess in the back of the hall were arranged American flags, surmounted by the city seal. The fronts of both balconies were festooned with red, white and blue bunting, and the name of the several Grammar and High schools were inscribed on a light purple ground and encircled with green wreaths. Under the clock was the inscription, "Lawrence Prizes—1844," and on either side, "Franklin Medal—1792," and "City Medal—1821." The organ front was ornamented with a full-sized representation of a harp, in evergreen, and the combined effect of the decorations was extremely pleasing.

The spectator, entering the hall,—after some delay at the door, occasioned by the difficulty in seating all the children,—broke forth at once in a spontaneous exclamation of surprise and delight at the magnificence of the scene which presented itself upon the platform. The 1200 youth who had been selected from the different schools to sing the selections for the day, were arranged, tier upon tier, in a truly picturesque style. The girls in the centre, dressed in white, with blue sashes or ornaments of other colors, and the boys upon the sides, arrayed in darker hues, combined to form a magnificent living bouquet,—or rather resembled the petals of an enormous rose, of surpassing loveliness. The photographer's art was called in to transmit the beautiful scene to paper, so that those who were present will be able to obtain a memento of the pleasing sight.

The addresses which were made to the scholars and their friends were entertaining and met with a hearty reception. The Mayor addressed his large flock in a paternal and familiar manner, becoming the head of the city "fathers." Dr. Upham, who, we believe, is the originator of the festival, imparted to his hearers his hearty enthusiasm in the cause. Mr. Winthrop lent all the power of his eloquence to aid the muse of song. Mr. Philbrick, the ardent friend of learning, bore testimony to the importance of cultivating the musical faculties together with the mental. Gov. Banks made one of his most felicitous extemporaneous speeches, which none of our readers will omit. The little folks warmly applauded the efforts of their elders, in grateful return for the approbation extended to their own performances.

A voluntary upon the organ, opened the exercises, after which Rev. Dr. Blagden offered prayer.

The whole choir of 1200 children, then united, under direction of Mr. Charles Butler, in singing in unison, with organ accompaniment, the Lord's Prayer, to the music of a Gregorian chant. The children took up the music promptly and sustained it with fidelity, so that the effect was touching and powerful in a high degree. The same good training was manifested in the other songs, and the experiment of bringing together so large a choir from various sources, to sing in harmony, met with a flattering success. Besides the music of the organ, the Germania Reed Band were present in full force, to aid, as an orchestra, in some of the accompaniments, and to furnish music of a promiscuous character during the latter part of the afternoon.

After the chant of the Lord's Prayer, Rev. Chandler Robbins, D.D., chairman of the sub-committee of the school board, having guests of the festival, made the following address of welcome to the audience:—

REMARKS OF REV. DR. ROBBINS.

Having been appointed, by the favor of my associates of the School Committee of the City of Boston, to preside on this occasion, it becomes my grateful duty to extend, in their name, to this assembly, one and all—children, teachers, parents, fellow-citizens, invited guests esteemed and distinguished—a cordial welcome to this Festival.

A Christian city, like a wise and faithful mother, watches over her children with a sleepless vigilance, and trains and cherishes them with a generous and unwearied care. They are her pride, her hope, her brightest ornament. Their virtue is her strength; their intelligence her advancement; their success her riches; their honorable fame her glory. She grudges not the expense of their education. She relents not at the cost of their improvement. She scorns to weigh their characters with silver, or their welfare with gold. She esteems herself more than remunerated for all her sacrifices on their behalf, by their wisdom, integrity and usefulness. She knows that she will be repaid a hundred fold by their love, their public spirit, their enterprise, their manly worth, their womanly purity. Such, hitherto, to a degree not surpassed, to say the least, in any city, of any age or country, has been the relation, and such have been the sentiments of Boston towards the favored children born or adopted within her happy gates. So may it be!—in a constantly augmenting measure—henceforth and forever.

Among the many evidences of the lively interest taken by our city in the improvement of her youth, is the establishment and continuance of that series of annual school festivals, the 65th of which we celebrate to-day. From year to year, through such beautiful gates as this, of peaceful triumph, hung with garlands and significant mottoes and honored names; lined with approving ranks of elders—fathers, mothers, friends of education and virtue—encompassed with smiles and tears and blessings—our beloved city has led out each successive generation of her brightest and most meritorious children from the quiet preparation of the school, into the wide and various field of manly and womanly service and responsibility. Today she has gathered another of these bright bands, which have come, in their turn, to receive her smile and benediction, as, with hearts beating high with generous hopes, they are about to go on and up from study to action, from discipline to self-government, from promise to accomplishment.

Governor Banks, in the course of his speech, alluded to the introduction of vocal music into the Boston Schools, by the following appropriate remarks:—

The culture of that majestic organ, the human voice, of which it has been well said, that it seems alone, to have the power of

"Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony."

There is nothing more potent in ruling men. Neither the lore of the schools, the secrets of science, the cunning of the craftsman, or the skill of the artist's hand can so move the feelings and sway the minds of men as this most matchless organ that is given to man. Can it be possible that attention to the culture of this power is a departure from practical sense or the highest philosophy in any system that has relation to the education of youth?

I am sensible that I am overstepping somewhat the limits assigned me, in discussing so far the subject, but I cannot forbear the remark, as based upon my own experience, that this culture is especially needed by us. While no people can surpass those of New England in mental or moral development, it is possible that these high qualities may fail of their proper influence upon those who have less mental and moral, but more of physical development.

Various pieces of music were executed with fine effect alternately between the addresses of the various speakers.

The distribution of medals by his honor the Mayor and the presentation of a bouquet and a shake of the hand to each medal scholar rendered it a highly interesting occasion, and must prove a powerful stimulus to the pupils through the coming year.

Dr. South says: "The tale-bearer and the tale hearer should be hanged up both together—the former by the tongue, the latter by the ear."

An aged bachelor being asked if he had witnessed a public execution, replied, "No, but I once saw a marriage."

"Is it well for man to pray, cream, and to live skim milk?" says H. W. Beecher.

A Passage in the Life of a Country Pastor.

THE UNEQUAL MARRIAGE.

(Concluded.)

I contented myself with beseeching her to be watchful of her own heart, to beware of declension in the divine life, and to make the conversion of her husband her great aim. As there were no reasons for delay, the marriage speedily took place, and Jane Shafton became Mrs. Henry Gerard.

For the first two or three months after marriage all went on as usual. They attended services together, as they had been accustomed to do during their brief courtship, and no cloud cast its shadow over their happiness. She had been so unused to affection—the luxury of loving and being loved was so new to her, that she complained of being too happy. She cherished the hope, too, that her husband was seeking Christ. But his attendance at the week-night meetings grew less regular, and then ceased altogether. Soon after this he grew less observant of the Lord's day. Indisposition, or fatigue, or the state of the weather, often prevented his attendance at more than one of the services; and business, which I suspected to be arranged for the purpose, frequently occasioned his absence from home on the Sabbath. It became only too evident that the interest in religion, which love to his wife had caused him to feel or to affect, was rapidly passing away, and that its very forms were growing irksome to him. Though she never spoke of this to any one, she deeply felt it. A look of sadness crept over her, and as, time after time, she came to chapel alone, it was easy to see that she had been weeping.

It is inevitable that a process of assimilation should go on, for better or worse, between the husband and the wife. The nobler nature of the two either elevates the baser, or is dragged down by it. The doctrine of the mesmerists, that a balance of the vital forces is established between those who are placed in rapport with one another, is, to a certain extent, true in spiritual affairs. So the young wife, having failed to lift up her husband to her own level, began to sink towards his. Her attendance became less regular, her interest less deep. Having convinced myself that this was not merely fancy on my part, I spoke with her. In reply, she urged the increasing claims of home on her attention, and pleaded the impossibility of fulfilling her duties as wife and mistress if she were constantly engaged in religious services. I continued the conversation a little longer, and at last she burst into tears, and confessed that her husband could not bear her leaving him in the evening to take part in any religious engagement, and that in order to remove his dissatisfaction she had promised to be less frequently absent from him. "I afterwards found that he had taunted her with her fondness for spending her evenings from home, had charged her with neglecting him and her household duties, and had imputed the blame to religion. Was she right or wrong in yielding to his wishes, and in endeavouring to remove the stumbling-block out of his way? I hardly know. It is one of those insoluble difficulties—one of those painful compromises which are inevitable to those who are 'unequally yoked.'"

The habit of regular attendance on the means of grace having been broken through, she became less and less constant. From being present at only one service in the week, she gradually came to attend neither. Some trifling hindrance, which might easily have been brushed aside, was allowed to intervene, and at last the weekly services were altogether forgotten. Of course a corresponding declension of the divine life was the result. When the whole week is spent in forgetfulness of God, the Sabbath must lose much of its power to bless. My words of affectionate warning and reproof began to be taken in a less kindly spirit, and at last they were so resented that I judged it better to discontinue them.

About a year and a half after the marriage she became a mother. I had great hopes that this event might recall her to her "first love." It seemed for a while to have this result, but the influence of her husband counteracted it, and after a time she relapsed into her former state of declension. Soon another child was born; and I wrote her an earnest, affectionate letter, pointing out the sad and dangerous course upon which she had entered. I warned her of the inevitable result of this career of apostasy in heart, and implored her, for the sake of her children, to remember from whence she had fallen, and to repent, and do her first works. To this letter I received no answer; but the next time we met, her eyes filled with tears, she was

unable to speak, and turned away. For some months I watched with intense anxiety the struggle which was evidently going on within, but little thought of the mode in which it was to be brought to an issue.

One cold, cheerless November morning I received a message, requesting me to go to Mrs. Gerard's as soon after breakfast as I could. Of course I did not lose a moment. On reaching the house I was startled to see the blinds down, and learned from the servant who admitted me that the eldest child had died of croup in the night, and that baby was so ill that it could scarcely live through the day. "Missis is in an awful way," added the girl; "we are afraid she'll go out of her mind. She says it's God's curse upon her." After waiting a short time, the physician in attendance came to me, and said that he had just succeeded in drawing the poor mother from the room in which the youngest child lay at the point of death. He thought that a few words of prayer might tend to soothe and tranquillize her, and thus prepare her to receive the second blow, which, he said, must fall in the course of an hour or two. I at once went to her. The storm of grief had for the time exhausted itself. She refused at first, however, to kneel in prayer, saying that prayer was not for her, but a life of hopeless remorse and despair. At length she yielded, and I prayed with intense earnestness that God, the all-merciful Father, would have pity upon her. She arose from her knees, calmed and strengthened to bear what still awaited her. Oh, blessed consolation to the sore and troubled heart! What solace prayer can give! Without it we were "of all men most miserable."

Though warned of the dangerous condition of her youngest child, she had not admitted the possibility of it, too, being taken from her, till it lay at the very last gasp. Her grief then became frightful. As the conviction that her husband was not worthy of her love had been slowly forcing itself upon her mind, her whole being had seemed to concentrate itself in her two babes. I had sometimes trembled for her, as I noticed her idolatrous attachment to them. And within twelve hours both were taken from her! What wonder, that for some days reason tottered upon its throne, and that she trembled upon the verge of insanity. Her husband, who was from home at the time, hastened to return, and I only do him justice in saying that he did all in his power to mitigate her grief, and lavished upon her the most affectionate attention. But this terrible trial rendered the gulf between them the more obvious. He felt the blow very painfully, for he was an affectionate father; but, as a voice from God he could not understand it. With his purely human feelings no divine element blended. With her, however, the case was altogether different. She regarded it as a direct judgment of God upon her. She felt that she had sinned, first, in marrying an unconverted person, and secondly, in neglecting religion in conformity with his wishes. It was this which made the cup so bitter, and yet he not only could not assuage its bitterness, but she could not even tell him of its existence. I draw a veil over my interviews with her. They were most painful; for nothing could shake her conviction that the death of her children was the immediate punishment of her sins. Failing to "pluck from her heart this rooted sorrow," I endeavored somewhat more successfully to turn her affliction to some useful purpose. By slow degrees she found peace in believing. Humbled by experience of her own feebleness, chastened by sorrow, and drawn nearer to heaven by the belief that her two little ones were awaiting her there, she became one of the most eminent Christians it has ever been my privilege to know.

Her earthly trials, however, were not yet to an end. Her husband's distaste for religion grew only more and more confirmed; and as his gentle, loving wife, so ready to yield in everything else, was now firm and uncompromising where Christian principle was involved, his home grew wearisome to him, and he began to seek his pleasures elsewhere. Not that he was ever unkind to her, but the gulf between them widened as their habits of feeling and of life receded farther and farther from one another. In a few years three more children were born to them. It is very touching to see the wistful tenderness with which she watched over them, and to hear her speak to them of their brother and sister in heaven, which she did so constantly and familiarly, that they were still regarded as members of the family for a little while absent from the rest. I never felt the full force of Wordsworth's exquisite ballad, "We are seven," till in reply to an inquiry as to how many children she had living, I once heard her answer, "Five—three on earth and two in heaven."