

Youths' Department.

BIBLE LESSONS.

Sunday, March 6th, 1864.

Read—Acts xxvii. 1-12: Paul's voyage to Italy. 1
 SAMUEL vi.: The Philistines send back the ark.
 Recite—ISAIAH lli. 7, 8.

Sunday, March 13th, 1864.

CONCERT: or review of the past two months' subjects and lessons.

CLARA'S MISSION.

"Have I been good to-day, mamma?" My little daughter Clara came and put her arm around my neck, and laid her cheek coaxingly against me.

"Pretty good, my daughter. What now?"

"Please read me a story, good mamma," kissing me, and clasping her arms closer about my neck.

She was only seven years old, a healthy, rosy, romping little busy-body, always talking and asking questions. "The most troublesome child in the world; always in everybody's way!" says her Aunt Lizzie; but never a trouble to me never in the way; to me, she was ever my own busy, bright-eyed, darling little Clara. I chose a book, called the "Little Missionary," a story of a little girl who had a mission, and went about doing good. All that bright spring afternoon, I read to the earnest little listener, only pausing to answer her quaint questions, and smooth back the golden brown hair from her upturned brow, and smile back upon her happy, smiling face. With her busy fancy, she eagerly drank in the spirit of the narrative, for she possessed a deep sense of religious duty, and when I finished, she asked, with all the seriousness of childhood, burdened with giant thoughts: "Don't you think I ought to be a little missionary, like Mary, mamma?"

"You might be a little home missionary, daughter, and when your brother George is naughty, you can be a missionary to him, and teach him better; and if he quarrels with his cousins, you can be a little peacemaker, and do all the good you can."

"Yes, mamma; but I feel as though I ought to be a missionary to everybody, like Mary—don't you think so?"

Ah, mothers need the wisdom of ten Solomons to guide aright these sweet human plants, that are so eagerly reaching after the light!

That night she added a petition to her usual prayer, that God would make her like Mary, the little missionary, and when she was laid in her crib, with her doll in her arms, I overheard her informing that bosom friend of her intention to become a missionary.

It was a sweet May morning; the cool air was fragrant with all the new and welcome odors of spring. My little spring blossom, my Clara, was up with the sun, sweeter than the May, and more beautiful than all the fragrant flowers that were breathing incense to their Maker. She was quite thoughtful that morning, and I saw her holding a very secret consultation with her doll.

The morning wore on, and the woodsawyer came to his work, and the steady creaking of his saw turned the stillness of the morning into the busy bustle of a working world. Clara wanted to go and see the man saw, so I tied on her bonnet and sent her out to breathe the health-giving air, while I performed my household duties. After washing up the breakfast things, I drew my chair to the open window, that I might enjoy the pure morning air, while I pared and sliced apples for pies. Presently, the sound of the saw ceased, and I heard my daughter catechizing her companion in this manner. "I asked you if you'd are always good."

"Not always, little miss," he replied.

"You don't ever swear, do you?"

"Wal, now I think on it, I shouldn't wonder'n I did sometimes. 'Tain't just the thing, is it now?"

"O, no! it is very wicked. The Bible says so. Don't you think you'd better leave off swearing?"

"I wouldn't be a bad idea. Swearing don't amount to much, any how."

"You don't ever get drunk, I suppose?"

"Not very often—say once a quarter."

"O! I'm dreadful sorry. You will leave that off, won't you?"

I did not wait to hear more, but hastened to the door, to call her in. She was carefully seated on the top of the logs, and the woodsawyer was sitting near her, looking half serious and half amused, but very much interested.

"Clara, come in, immediately."

I was half frightened at the boldness of her missionary practice. He lifted her tenderly down, over the logs, his face beaming with kindness, and when she was in the house, I hastened to apologize to her subject for my child's unwonted boldness.

"No harm at all, marm. She's a most an angel, I'm sure. I had a little tot once, just as big as her, but she's gone. I took to drinking after that—'t wasn't jest the thing, I know—but jest now, I kinder thought as how your little un mightn't be my Ella's angel come back, to tell me not to drink, and swear any more. I know it's wrong, and I believe I shall always think of my Ella, if I ever do so again. Never mind it, marm, let her come out again and talk; I'll take care of her, bless her heart!"

He brushed his sleeve across his face, and my eyes were dim, as I spoke a few words of sympathy. I did not have the heart to chide

my daughter for her zeal in the missionary cause; for I began to feel that even our children are in the safe keeping of One far wiser than we, who will lead them by his truth.—*Youth's Temperance Visitor.*

AMUSEMENTS.

When Martin Luther threw his cares aside from time to time, and played on his flute, and jested with his friends, gambolled with his children, or gave himself up with delight to the songs of the birds and all the joyful restorative influences of nature, he thus kept his soul sweet and his powers fresh, so as to renew at the fitting time, and finish the work which had been given him to do.

Here we see the true place and office of amusements. They are not the business of life, but interludes, recreations, refreshments thrown in at intervals to save us from being utterly broken down by unceasing and perpetual toil. While we study or labor, while we do our part to work or prepare ourselves for work, we have a right, nay it is our duty, as well as our privilege, to give ourselves up from time to time to amusements.

But when amusements become the chief thing, when they take the place of the serious duties which God has imposed on every man whom he has created, then they undermine our principles, and impair our faith in whatever is noblest in virtue, or most holy in religion. The soul which lays upon itself no obligations and seeks no higher ends, is lost. Even poetry and music and art, so beautiful in their place as handmaids of religion, only lead into the paths of death when they withdraw from her guidance, and demand for themselves the worship which is due to God alone.

This, too, is the ruinous effect of an education of accomplishments. The education of taste, and the cultivation of the feelings, in undue proportion, destroy the masculine tone of the mind. An education chiefly romantic, or poetical, and not balanced by hard, practical life, is simply the ruin of the soul.

And when such has become the character of the community, when æsthetic tastes have greater influence than the love of truth, and amusements are allowed to stand in the place of better things, then, no matter what external show of prosperity or refinement there may be, the doom of that community is sealed.

For, in the language of an able historian, "Neither in sacred nor profane history; neither in the monarchies of the East, nor the free commonwealths of the Western world; neither in Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, Italian, Sardinian, nor any other chronicles could an exception be found to the law which dooms to ruin any people who, abandoning the duties for the delights of this transitory state, live only in the frivolities of life, and find only the means of a dissolute and emasculate self-indulgence in God's best gifts to man; in wealth and leisure and society, in erudition and art and science, in literature and philosophy and eloquence, in the domestic affections which should bless our existence, and in the worship by which it should be consecrated."

AMUSEMENT AND RELIGION.

NOTINGS OF A PEDESTRIAN MISSIONARY TOUR IN THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS.

There are few things, which, to my mind, afford a more painful proof of the low state of religion in the Eastern Townships—and the evil is very far from being confined to the Eastern Townships—than the miserable shifts to which the ministers of the Gospel, and all others, who feel an interest in the cause of Christ are driven in order to raise funds for religious objects, God in his Word lays claim to all property: "The gold is mine and the silver is mine saith the Lord." He lays claim to ourselves if we profess to be his believing people:—"Ye are not your own, you are bought with a price, therefore, glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are God's." Moreover, the professing people of God are distinctly informed that their possessions are simply given to them in trust, and that they are stewards of the Lord's bounty. We might reasonably expect, therefore, that if professing Christians realised these Scriptural statements as indeed emanating from God, they would cheerfully give of their substance to support His cause. When, for example, the church fabric was getting out of repair, or when it required to be enlarged, or when the parsonage required to be furnished or a debt required to be wiped off, we might expect that there would be a prompt response on the part of the church, and that the funds would be forthcoming,—the rich giving out of their abundance, and the poor out of their poverty. But this is not the case. Experience has taught the friends of the Gospel that it is vain to expect to raise funds for such purposes by a direct appeal to the Christian sympathies of the people. There is no response, or it is of such character as to convince the most ardent that that is not the way to raise the amount required. You must bring the world into the church, you must come down from the lofty platform of Christianity and bring inferior motives to bear upon the public mind, you must substitute a soiree, a picnic, a strawberry festival, an oyster supper, or a fancy fair for a "thousaith the Lord." Practically, amidst much talk in pulpit, platform and parlor about the onward progress of Christianity and the vast influence which it is exerting on the public mind, we are reduced to the humiliating confession that we cannot trust to that Christianity in order to carry on the work of Christ. Do not tell me of progress. I do not believe in it. Do not flaunt your lists of church members before my eyes.

Show me the effects which their professed faith is producing in practically sustaining the work of God amongst ourselves without this debasing appeal to the lower sensibilities of our nature. If our faith is real it will be operative. If it is not let us realise our true position, acknowledge our defection, act up to our privileges, and discharge our duty. I confess that I never hear of any of these church festivals of whatsoever kind they be, without a feeling of sadness, for me they afford a proof that eighteen hundred years after the death of that dear Saviour who died that we might live,—our love to Him is so cold that we cannot even repair a house erected for the honor of his name or defray the incidental expenses of that house, unless we get a feast of strawberries or an oyster supper! Oh everlasting shame! Is it indeed come to this that, after all the benefits which guilty men have obtained through the blood of Jesus, it must be now said of them that they are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God! Imagine what would have been thought of such doings in the days of the Apostles, when "men sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need." I have in my possession an advertisement, cut out of a local paper in the Townships, announcing a church festival in the form of an oyster supper, with tableaux vivants, and music. Now, only think of the Apostle Paul presiding at an oyster supper, and gazing at a number of folks dressed in fancy garbs, exhibiting themselves in various attitudes before a grinning audience to the sound of fiddles and flutes! I suspect that the Apostle Paul would have done to them what he on one occasion did to the Apostle Peter: "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."

But how, it may be asked, are the funds to be raised? It is very easy to sit in the critic's chair and find fault, but tell us, Mr. Missionary, (methinks I hear an imaginary object or my), tell us, I pray thee, how are we to raise the funds? Show us a more excellent way. The request is reasonable, and I am bound to comply, with it, and so I will tell you what I saw with my own eyes. I once visited an institution near Bristol, in the West of England, erected for the maintenance and education of orphans of whom there were 300 in the receipt of its benefits. I also had the privilege of a lengthened conversation with its founder. That institution was God's Orphan House; that man was George Muller. In company with a number of other visitors, I walked through that large building, visiting every part of it, from the kitchen to the school-room. Everywhere I looked I saw the most conclusive evidence of an ample sufficiency of means. The pantries were stored with an abundance of provisions; the cloths' room contained an ample supply of clothing for the children; the bed-rooms were large, well ventilated and comfortable; the kitchen was furnished with cooking apparatus of the best kind; the school-rooms were large, commodious, and amply supplied with every educational requisite, and there was a large and efficient staff of teachers, servants and nurses. Everything about the place conveyed to the mind the distinct impression that nothing needful was wanting which money could buy. Where did all that money come from? The building itself cost £20,000 stg. Where did all this money come from? It came from God. What was the instrumentality employed in raising it? Believing prayer. George Muller does not believe in oyster suppers, nor strawberry festivals, but he believes in God, and while we, by dint of these instrumentalities, think we perform wonders when we raise a few hundred pitiful dollars, he, by means of putting trust in God's promises, raises every year thousands of sterling pounds! What a contrast! What a rebuke to our want of faith! "I saw that my Christian brethren had little faith," said Mr. Muller to me, "and so I commenced this institution to prove that the living God was still the living God." I think he has succeeded in his aim, and, while humbly endeavoring to take the advice myself, I would say to all my Christian brethren, who may read these lines, go and do likewise; cease to believe in the pecuniary efficacy of amusements in connection with religion, and put your trust in God.—*Montreal Witness.*

ROMANCE.

Riding in the country, for summer recreation, has suggested what we imagine to be the true definition of this often and ill-defined word. What is that peculiar and common charm which we call *romantic*, in wild passages, deep ravines, shady seclusions, sudden turnings and sweet surprises in the prospect, and which we call by the same name in the unfolding plot of a story, or in the eager flush of youthful loves and hopes? Is it not simply, and in all cases, MYSTERY? The bend in the road before you, where the boughs from each side arch over with a lovely shade, invites you onward by its promise of something unrevealed—its mystery. So does the awful and threatening gorge or cave. So does the blended expectation and unexpectedness in reading a romance. So, above all, does the charming mystery of untried experiences in the outset of life. Some are sweet, some exhilarating, some awful—but all have a common charm, which differences them from bare pleasure, pride or awe; and that charm lies in the partial apprehension of something yet unrevealed, which in one word is *mystery*.

Everything falls upon the mind as soon as its mystery is exhausted, and it becomes fully explored and known. And this stimulated activity is the peculiar essence we call youth. Considering youth in this light, we can see how necessarily it must be renewed and become immortal, in the freedom of a boundless universe of mystery, forever explorable and inexhaustible.

There is much probability that the vigor of youth is due to this stimulus, and that we fail, not because the machinery is necessarily the weaker for age, but because it has run down for want of winding up. A perfectly loyal and pure life, without inherited disorders, might, perhaps, lack nothing but a boundless field of new experience and progress here, to be immortal. "As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people;" when, in the absence of the smallest vices, the ever-unfolding knowledge of God, his works and ways, shall ever fill and reanimate the vigor of the soul. A mysterious and infinite God is the essential condition of immortal life in the creature.—*Examiner.*

Agriculture, etc.

DURABILITY OF WOOD.—The statement of facts below, which we copy from the *Country Gentleman*, and which we suppose to be correctly stated, shows that wood kept in a cold place, and fully saturated with water, if not everlasting, is very durable.

1. The piles on which the London bridge rests were driven five hundred years ago, and are yet sound. 2. Old Savoy Palace, in London, is supported on piles of oak, elm, beech and chestnut. These were driven six hundred and fifty years ago, and are perfectly sound. 3. The piles on which Trajan's bridge, over the Danube, was built, were driven one thousand six hundred years ago. The outside, to the thickness of an inch or more, is petrified, forming cylindric pillars of stone, while the inside is as sound as ever. These, and other facts of the like import, go to prove that wood, in cold situations where insects will not deplete upon it, as often happens with keels of ships, may be relied upon to last and retain its sustaining power as long as any superstructures of men will require. Probably the piles of the bridge built by Trajan, 1,600 years ago, would sustain a greater weight to-day than they would have borne at first.

Exclusion of air and a low temperature seems to be the conditions. Thus, the bottom of a fence post lasts much longer than the part near the surface, because it has less air and less warmth. If we were to imagine a post set three hundred instead of three feet deep, the lower part might last as long as the earth exists. Or, if it were set but the usual depth, and the sun's influence were to be withdrawn from our planet, it would last as long at least as the piles of Trajan's Bridge have, and then perhaps ten times as much longer; for if no decay takes place in the wood for the first 1,600 years, why should it in the next period of equal length, provided the wood remains in exactly the same situation, and exposed to the same influences, but to no other?

HARD COAL ASHES, says the *Manchester Mirror*, are much more valuable as an absorbent of the fertilizing elements in manures than is generally supposed, and may be worth something as a disinfectant. It will be found, upon mixing a moderate proportion of ashes with any offensive animal manure, that in a short time the offensive odor has entirely disappeared. It is not expelled, however, as by the use of chlorides, but held in combination until, by its use as manure the earth and roots of plants liberate and use it. Dry peat or muck, charcoal dust, and other like substances, have the same power. But nothing is so cheap as hard coal ashes, which have generally been considered only a nuisance.

TARTAR ON THE TEETH.—Washing the teeth with vinegar and a brush will in a few days remove the tartar, thus obviating the necessity for filing or scraping them, which so often injures the enamel. The use of powdered charcoal and tincture of rhubarb afterwards will effectually prevent its formation.

RATS.—An extraordinary rat hunt has just taken place in the sewers of Paris. Taking advantage of the frost, which drives this particular game into covert, the owner invited a Christmas party to partake of the sport of rat killing. All the great sewers were driven in one direction, till millions of rats, which fought among themselves like tigers as they were hunted along, were collected in the large drain by the bridge of Asnières. Forty dogs were then let down into the sewers, and after a fight which lasted forty-five hours, and in which four dogs were killed and some blinded, no less than 110,000 rats were dispatched.

LEMONS are recommended for dyspepsia in a Russian medical journal, and are said to be beneficial in the most hopeless cases. The first day one lemon was given, after taking the peel off, and cutting it up into small pieces, in sugar; the two following days three were given, and afterwards eighteen every day.—For nourishment meat was given. In every case the water came off the seventh day.

LOOK AHEAD.—Now is the time for farmers to put all their agricultural implements in order, so that no time shall be lost nor expense incurred in the spring, when time is money more than at this season of the year. This is also a season to invent and make new agricultural implements, because the time has not yet come when the farmer and gardener cannot get up something to aid him in the cultivation of the soil, that is not to be found on sale at the stores. The most of our new and valuable implements originated in this way, or at least were invented by men who were practical farmers.

Nitrate of Silver is said to be an effectual cure of Hydrophobia.