

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N. S., MARCH 26, 1873.

THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1873.

NDAY, March 30th, 1873.

view of the past three months.

1. The Creation.....Gen. i. 1, 26-31.
2. In Eden.....Gen. ii. 15-21.
3. The Fall and the Promise.....Gen. iii. 1-8, 15.
4. Cain and Abel.....Gen. iv. 3-10.
5. Noah and the Ark.....Gen. vi. 13-18.
6. The Bow in the Cloud.....Gen. ix. 8-17.
7. Confusion of Tongues.....Gen. xi. 1-9.
8. The Covenant with Abram.....Gen. xv. 1-7.
9. Escape from Sodom.....Gen. xix. 15-26.
10. Trial of Abraham's Faith.....Gen. xxi. 7-14.
11. Jacob and Esau.....Gen. xxvii. 38-40.
12. Jacob at Bethel.....Gen. xxviii. 10-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scripture, might have hope." Rom. xv. 4.

REMARKS.—Lesson I.—The distinction between creation and formation. Men can change the form, position, etc., of that which exists, but cannot create. God's right to man and the whole universe, and God's sovereign power over all, are involved in the fact of creation. The doctrine of creation is thus at the foundation of religion. The Bible shows its divine origin by the way in which it begins.

Man, the highest being of earth, comes last. All else was made for him, and he needs all else. Geology bears witness to the same general advance, from chaos to completion, which is herein described. Says Hugh Miller, the eminent Scotch Geologist, "One of perhaps the most deeply interesting departments of the great British Museum—the wonder of the world—is that noble gallery, consisting of a suite of rooms, opening in line, one beyond the other, which forms its rich storehouse of organic remains. I ask whether (of course, making due allowance for the laxity of the terms, botanic and zoological, of a primitive language unadapted to the niceties of zoologic or botanic science) the Mosaic account of creation could be rendered more essentially true, than we actually find it, to the history of creation geologically ascertained. If, taking the Mosaic days as equivalent to lengthened periods, we hold that is giving their brief history the writers seized on but those salient points, that, like the two great lights of the day and night, would have arrested most powerfully, during those periods, a human eye, we shall find the harmony of the two records complete."

Lesson II.—Man the highest creature of earth, was made in the image of God, as to his rational nature, his sinless character, and his position of headship. Ch. i. 27. This kinship with God, as a moral being had its possibilities of evil as well as of good, but the state was itself good and only good. To the state of man corresponded his place, a park of pleasure, for such is the meaning of the phrase, "Garden of Eden." But pleasure for sinless man was not indulgence nor freedom from responsibility. "To dress it, to keep it," was the duty of action. There was also restraint, the duty of not doing all that inclination might dictate. Of one tree the fruit was not to be eaten. It is thus over, at least in this world. There is work to be done, there is restraint to be imposed upon action. And it is ever, as it was then, our bliss lies only in the path of duty,—of obedience to God's will, however pleasant it may seem to turn aside.

Lesson III.—What might have been, we may conjecture. What has been, and is, we know. The history of the world is only the story

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit Of that forbidden tree, And of the counter work of "that great Man" who became a new "Head of the race." Two problems, never yet settled, meet us in this lesson. 1st: Why does God permit evil in his universe? 2d: How came a sinless being to commit sin? But these are rather questions of speculation, not practical. Both facts, viz., that evil exists, and that sinless beings have fallen into sin, are taught us and are practical. And when we see that pure natures like our first parents under the most favorable outward conditions sinned, we ought to take the more earnest heed and feel more deeply our own need of divine grace, sinful by nature as we are, and living in an atmosphere of sin. Fallen in Adam, we rise in Christ.

Lesson IV.—In the story of Cain and Abel we see, in brief, what has been going on ever since the fall. On the one hand is the sinful fallen nature, the Satan part and

party, doing its hateful, wicked, ruinous work. On the other hand is the new redeemed nature, the Christ part and party, doing its lovely, holy, saving work. The world is divided into the Cain faction and the Abel faction,—the deepest, most thorough division that can be made, an eternal separation. And in this story we see how promptly God began to act in saving man. Though Christ did not die till four thousand years had passed, yet the effects of his death began to be known at once. Souls were redeemed, not by the blood of such animals as Abel offered, but by that infinitely precious blood of which the blood of animals was the appointed type.

Lesson V.—And now, behold, how the stream of sin has swollen into the tremendous flood. How dreadful is depravity, working such horrid, wide spread ruin, working on from bad to worse, till it threatens to drive God and goodness out of the world. But even in such a mass it is possible for a man on whom God has a hold, and who has a hold on God, to keep himself separate. Noah stands there preaching to the world, and to all generations, the doctrine that it is not needful to go with the multitude to do evil. One man against the world, having God on his side, can conquer.

Lesson VI.—The world is full of types and symbols of spiritual realities. The visible opens to sight the invisible eternal realities. Hence, the Bible all through it, lays hold of the things of nature to teach us by them the supernatural. And, hence, the bow in the cloud is God's pledge of mercy,—his covenant pledge. Standing related to the storm as it does, following it, and formed by the light which is the symbol of the pure, the true and the good, as it falls on the falling drops, it is a happy pledge to follow the wrathful flood, and a beautiful pledge of God's covenant mercy to his children.

Lesson VII.—No mere outward power can change the heart. The grace which the Holy Spirit working inwardly makes effective, this alone can cleanse the fountain. How clearly is this lesson taught us in the story of Noah and his descendants immediately after the flood. How quickly was God forgotten! How soon came another general stroke of judgment—a judgment made needful for the world's good! Surely, men were not in those old times unlike the men of these days. We boast of our advance, our enlightenment, civilization, and all that. But whatever else may be ours to boast of, we have no better natures than had they.

Lesson VIII.—God is merciful, ready to save! How he comes down, and meets sinful man, watches over his chosen one, takes him under his care, makes a way for him. Abraham believed God, and so became, not the Saviour, but "the father of the believing." His Saviour and our Saviour is one and the same. The blood of Christ, not of offered animals, saved him. We become God's people through no act of Abraham or our fathers but through a personal union with the Lord by an act of faith.

Lessons IX-XII are so fresh in mind that no suggestions can be needed.

QUESTIONS.—What is it to create? What has God created? What was man to do? What not to do? What institution now in existence was founded in Eden? How long did man continue sinless? What promise was made to Adam and Eve immediately after the fall? Were they saved through the promised Seed?

What is the story of Cain and Abel? Did they both inherit a depraved nature? Why was one accepted and the other rejected? Do such things still occur?

What was the flood? Why sent? Who was saved? What promise followed? Its token? Were men all holy after the flood? What was the confusion of tongues? Why was it? Are men better now than then? Who was Abram? What is a covenant? What has that covenant to do with us? Tell the story of Sodom. Of Abraham's trial. Of Jacob and Esau. What advantage have we over men of those times?

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher. Scripture Catechism, 107.

SUNDAY, April 6th.—Israel—The New Name.—Gen. xxxii. 24-30.

THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT.

A CONCERT EXERCISE FOR NINE GIRLS.

1. Love. "Let brotherly love continue."—Heb. xiii. 1. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love."—1 John iv. 7, 8.
2. Joy. "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."—Heb. xiii. 18. "I say unto you that joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that

repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance."—Luke xv. 7.

3. Peace. "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."—Eph. ii. 14. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you."—John xiv. 27.

4. Long-suffering. We do not cease to pray for you, that ye might be strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."—Col. i. 9-11. "And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation."—2 Pet. iii. 15.

5. Gentleness. "Thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great."—Ps. xlviii. 35. "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle toward all men."—2 Tim. ii. 24.

6. Goodness. "Behold the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness."—Rom. xi. 22. "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth."—Eph. v. 9.

7. Meekness. "Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save you souls."—James i. 21. "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom."—James iii. 13.

8. Faith. "The just shall live by faith."—Gal. iii. 11. "We walk by faith, not by sight."—2 Cor. v. 7. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."—1 Cor. xvi. 13. "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God."—Gal. ii. 20.

9. Temperance. "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled and said, 'Go thy way for this time, when I have a more convenient season, I will call for thee.'—Acts xxiv. 25. "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken."

All in Concert. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, and temperance; against such there is no law."—Gal. v. 22, 23. "If these things are in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. i. 5-7.

FIRST THREE.—(Joining Hands.) Love, Joy, and Peace you here behold, More precious far than purest gold.

SECOND THREE.—(Joining Hands.) Long suffering, gentleness, you see, And Goodness too, a heavenly three.

THIRD THREE.—(Joining Hands.) Here's Meekness, Faith, and Temperance joined, Worth more by far than silver coined.

ALL TOGETHER.—(Joining Hands.) Nine pearls of price—nine jewels rare—Nine certain proofs of Heaven's heir—Nine fruits the Holy Spirit yields—Nine titles to Celestial fields—May we possess the complete nine, And in our souls such virtues shine!

A. F. Reynolds.

YOUTH'S DEPARTMENT.

BETTER BE HAPPY THAN RICH.

Better be happy than rich, If riches bring sorrow and pain; Better to sew and to stitch, And enjoy the little you gain.

Some people love to be thought The owners of thousands awhile, Aping what others have brought From the paths of honor and toil.

Better be happy than rich, If riches bring sorrow and pain; Better to sew and to stitch, And enjoy the little you gain.

Honesty ever can say, 'I blush to meet no man,' and why? With conscience clear as the day, He lives with contentment and joy.

Better be happy than rich, If riches bring sorrow and pain; Better to sew and to stitch, And enjoy the little you gain.

Wake up every morning to find Poverty grinning? How true That pride can overbalance the mind.

Better be happy than rich, If riches bring sorrow and pain; Better to sew and to stitch, And enjoy the little you gain.

A something more worthy than gold; Goodness of heart unto thee, Has heavenly joys to unfold.

SMALL SEED.

It is said that an old man named Cadmus, in an old nation called Phoenicia, invented letters. Letters formed syllables, and syllables made words and so reading and writing came into the world.

Cain and Abel, Noah and Lot never had to learn them, which, I hope, you think is a pity. But they did not refuse or neglect to learn them. There were no letters in their day. Between spoken language and written language was a long, long time. After letters were invented, words began to be written as well as spoken, and that was a great step forward.

Knowledge was then put into books and kept. The books were all written. At first with a pointed iron stick. Then quills were used. Now gold and steel pens take the lead of everything else.

But writing was a slow way of making books—so slow, that there were very few made. No child had a book. Children rarely, if ever, saw one.

Ever and ever so many years passed by; when at last it entered into a man's busy brain to print words instead of writing them. This man went into the woods one day, and whittled some letters out of the bark of a tree. He took the letters home in his pocket, inked their faces, and pressed a sheet of white paper on them. On taking it off there was the print of the letter on the paper. And this small and simple thing to do, as it seems to us, was the little seed from which has sprung up and grown all the great printing-offices of the world. We never know what the smallest act may lead to.

The man was a German. History quarrels a little about his real name. I think it was Gutenberg. Inventors had not the chance of becoming known then as now, when the printed sheet spreads the knowledge of everything good and useful far and wide, almost as soon as it is known.

HELPING.

Let's lend him a hand; the poor old fellow, he can hardly get along;" and so they did. And the old man, with the help of the two lads, soon got his truck to the top of the hill, and then it was easy work after that.

Are you a helper? Are there any who are the better for you? and whose load you lighten, and to whom you are a comfort? Are you trying to lead any to God? We can not tell what power our words may have, but one day we shall know; and, if we are faithful, we may find many souls won to shine as stars in our crown of rejoicing, who might have been lost if we had spoken no word for Jesus.

If you are not a helper, are you hindering? Does your course of life give gain to any heart? Does your example lead any into sin? Do those who are laboring for Christ find you a hindrance?

Learn from these lads. Help; do not hinder. Help the poor, the old, the ignorant, the ungildly; help all you can. Do not spend time and strength in sin or folly, or selfishness. Try to do good for Christ's sake. That is the true motive. They who feel what Jesus has done for them are the best helpers. He died to save sinners. May you be led by his help to be a helper for his sake!

GREAT QUESTIONS.

There are only two worlds, heaven and hell. There are only two societies. To which of them shall I be united? These are questions of infinite and everlasting importance; and yet how many there are who never put them to themselves, who refuse to consider their spiritual prospects, and who satisfy themselves with the flattering hope, "Perhaps I am in the way to heaven; perhaps I may go there when I die." Is it a matter which it is safe or rational to leave upon a peradventure?

"Perhaps God is my friend, perhaps my foe; perhaps I may be saved, perhaps be lost; perhaps I may sing with the redeemed, or perhaps howl with the lost." You would not take an earthly journey without a knowledge of the way, if you had not a map to direct you. The Bible is our map. Ask yourselves, Have you a title to glory? Have you a meetness for glory? Have you anything in taste, or temper, or deportment congenial with heaven, or anything that would render you unhappy there? Do not put this question away from you, do not give this question a hasty or superficial consideration; but never rest satisfied until you are able to "read your title clear to mansions in the skies," and to appropriate the apostolic doxology to yourselves.—Rev. Patrick Thomson, A. M.

HOW TO GET TO SLEEP.

There is a general persuasion that sleep is not so ready to be wooed and won by the present generation as by our fathers. Children of a larger growth need some sort of soothing syrup now, and doctors are often heard declaring that sleeplessness is one of the most frequent, as well as one of the most distressing ailments, which the excitement of business produces. Now and then the newspapers, in their reports of coroners' inquests, and other inquiries into the causes of sudden death, bear out the charge against the nineteenth century. Men work quicker now than formerly, the waste in the system is more rapid; they toil under higher pressure. As a consequence, they are not able to cool down into the quiet restful condition of mind and body essential to sleep. We have met with exceptions to this rule, cases in which men have been able to pass out of a whirlwind of excitement and almost instantly sink to sleep; but these were the exceptions, not the rule. Wellington, it is said, could sleep upon a cannon if necessary; one of our judges had the reputation for napping on the bench, and summing up with admirable clearness afterwards; we knew of one popular speaker, who can leave a meeting, either amidst cheers or hisses, and be snoring in a way to terrify his adversaries within half an hour; and no doubt there are occasional instances of men who so happily unite the phlegmatic and the nervous in their temperaments, that they have sleep well under command.

On the other side, however, to this happy group, rise the anxious, weary, irritable host of the sleepless. The hours of their past day haunt them. How they might have put this point better; how they ought to have bought in or sold out on 'Change; how simple it would have been to have subbed Jones when he was impertinent; how they have done the things they ought not to have done, and left undone the things that they ought to have done; and how it is now too late to act but not too late to regret, are like so many mischievous sprites tossing and tumbling under their pillows, and laughing the fond delusion of sleep to scorn. This affliction has its tragic side too, although we may jest about it in our waking hours. Take this sentence from Dickens's life as a case in point: "I am sick, giddy, capriciously full of disquietude and anxiety; and am constantly haunted by the idea that I am wasting the morrow of a longer life." This was also the misfortune which hurried Mr. Justice Willes to his sad end. He could not sleep, and the dread of doing injustice to any case on which he had to decide swelled at last into a horror of great darkness, out of which he did not escape alive. We sigh in vain for the narcotic ease of mind and body which made our forefathers ready for their couches at half-past eight; the curfew now no longer tolls the knell of parting day; it is the signal which rings out just when pleasure is at its busiest, and when, by means of all manners of false stimulants, we are seeking to forget the toils or disappointments of business. Preachers suffer from sleeplessness, as it is said, more largely than any other class. Saturday and Sunday nights are to thousands of them rough and unkindly passages into and away from the quiet resting-place of the first day in the week. It has been wickedly suggested that it is hard indeed upon them who contribute so largely to sleep in others, that the blessing should be denied to themselves. Probably, however, those preachers who send their congregations to sleep most soundly have the least difficulty, when their own hour comes, in following suit. It is the minister who puts himself into his sermons, and speaks with every nerve in his head and every faculty of his mind, who finds it is hard to get the bow unstrung afterwards with ease and refreshment to himself. The charge against the preacher of delivering sleepy discourses is a very old one, but we believe never less deserved than at present. We cannot say what court preaching may be as a rule now, but the sermons of Dr. Macleod, Mr. Kingsley, Dr. Caird, and Dean Stanley, could hardly suggest that those divines are the modern representatives of Dr. South, when he stopped short in one of his sermons to expostulate with a nobleman for snoring so loudly, and thereby running the risk of waking his Majesty. One of the old Earls of Lauderdale, when he fell from want of sleep as to be threatened with speedy death, was cured at the suggestion of his son, a half-draft lad, as it was generally thought, who had the wit to cry out from beneath the table, "Sew! for that preaching man frae Livingston, for fither aye sleeps in the kirk!" "The experiment of 'getting a minister till him,' says Dean Ramsey, succeeded, and sleep coming on, he recovered." The Earl, out of gratitude for this benefit, took more notice of his son, paid attention to his education, and that boy became the Duke of Lauderdale, afterwards so famous or infamous in his country's history.

The story reminds us of Sydney Smith's recipe for sleep, which was to get his curate to read his own sermons by the bedside; and we are assured that this never failed to produce the desired result.—Freeman.