

Our Young Folks.

A Boy's Sacrifice.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and truth."

A child had a beautiful canary, which sang to him from early morning.

The mother of the child was ill, so ill that the song of the bird, which to the boy was delicious, disturbed and distressed her so that she could scarcely bear to hear it.

He put it into a room far away, but the bird's notes reached the sick bed, and caused pain to her long, feverish days.

One morning, as the child stood holding his mother's hand, he saw that when his pet sang, an expression of pain passed over her dear face.

"It is no music to me," she said as he asked her if the notes were not pretty. He looked at her in wonder.

"And do you really dislike the sound?" "Indeed I do," she said.

The child, full of love to his mother, left the room. The golden feathers of the pretty canary were glistening in the sunshine, and he was telling forth his loveliest notes; but they had ceased to please the boy.

"But you loved it so," she said, "how could you part with the canary?"

"I loved the canary, mother," he replied, "but I loved you more. I could not really love anything that gave you pain. It would not be true love if I did."

Art of Reading

Mr. Anthony Trollope delivered an address lately in London on the "Art of Reading," in which he earnestly recommended his hearers to acquire the art—a never-failing source of enjoyment, but only to be obtained by practice, and not when middle life had come on them.

As to what they should read, we would say good books. Above all things, he would advise them not to deceive themselves in their choice.

If they could make poetry a delight with them, it had a charm which could not be found in any other literature; but, if poetry were distasteful, there was a world of prose.

They must read for amusement, but they need not on that account eschew acquiring information. Instructive books, indeed, were the books to get hold of.

Magazine reading, unfortunately, left too little behind it; and, as to novels, there were, of course, novels, and novels, but he did not think that Scott, Thackeray, or Dickens, ever wrote anything impure.

For Young Ladies.

Persons at your age, looking off upon life, are apt to think that if, by some stroke of what is called good luck, you could arrive in an elevated and affluent position, a little higher than in that which God has called you to live, you would be completely happy.

Infinite mistake? The palace floor of Ahasurus is red with the blood of Vashti's broken heart. There have been no more scalding tears wept than those which coursed the cheeks of Josephine.

More social position will never give happiness to women's soul. I have walked through the halls of those who despise the common people, I have sat at their banquets; I have had their friendship; yea, I have heard from their own lips the story of their disquietude; and I tell the young women of this Church that they who build on mere social position their soul's immortal happiness, are building on the sand.

The poorest god that a woman every worships is her own face. The saddest sight in all the world is a woman who has built everything on good looks, when the charm begins to vanish.

Culture your heart and you culture your face. The brightest glory that ever beamed from a woman's face is the religion of Jesus Christ. In the last war two hundred wounded soldiers came to Philadelphia in one night, and came unheralded, and they had to extemporize a hospital for them, and the Christian women of my Church, and of other Churches, went out that night to take care of the poor wounded fellows.

That night I saw a Christian woman go through the wards of the hospital, her sleeves rolled up, ready for hard work, her hair dishevelled in the excitement of the hour. Her face was plain, very plain; but after the wounds were washed and the new bandages were put around the splintered limbs, and the exhausted boy fell off into his first pleasant sleep, she put her hand on his brow, and he started in his dream, and said, "O, I thought an angel touched me!"

That woman is grandly dressed, and only she, who is wrapped in the robe of a Saviour's righteousness. The home may be very humble, the hat may be very plain, the frock may be very coarse; but the halo of heaven settles in the room where she wears it, and the faintest touch of the resurrection angel will change that garment into raiment exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth could whiten it.

The Jews are a long-lived people. A London medical journal commenting on this fact gives some of the causes as follows: They are obliged to keep two Sabbaths in the week, besides Jewish, Christian and political holidays. The circumstance of two out of every seven days being lost to business, gives them, by necessity, about twice as many days of leisure as Christians.

They do not engage in mining, mechanical and other hazardous occupations. The biblical and traditional prohibition of certain ailments is favourable to longevity. They rarely use alcoholic liquors, and almost never to excess; this is universally conceded. They seldom marry out of their own race, and have little hereditary disease.

Spinning.

"And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goats' hair."—Eccles. xxxv. 25, 26.

Was it but a winking dream, Formed by fancy's vivid fingers? Strongly clear the pictures seem Still in memory's ear there linger Music of a chanted song.

Echoes of a woman's voice Off are with me 'mid the throng, Bidding still my heart rejoice On the desert's level lone.

Lay the tent in dark and bright, While the merry pillar shrouds, Israel slept beneath its light. But within one lighted tent Sit a woman, singing low, While her eger eyes were bent, And her busy hands intent On a thread as white as snow.

Sweet and low her murmuring song, For her children slept around, And the thread grew smoother and long, All in cadence with the sound.

"I am spinning for the Lord, Blessed distaff! Happy hand! Blest the ears that heard His word, For I spin at His command Not for daily bread I spin; Daily is the manna sent; House nor land I toil to win, Happy in this moving tent Far away to Canaan's land, Rich with olive, corn, and vine, Given by the Lord's own hand, An inheritance is mine.

Not my sins my work demand, Sacrifice the Lord provides. Even now my husband's hand Through the wild the scapgoat guides. On that guiltless victim laid, All my sins were borne away: One shall suffer in my stead On some far-off future day. I have toiled in days gone by For my children's raiment poor; E'en that need God doth supply, For their clothes wear out no more.

So 'tis love, 'tis love alone, Bids me spin with thankful song; Telling what the Lord hath done Makes His foolish ones grow strong.

From the desert shall His hand Judge our children safely home Through the ocean's depths we tread, Praised Him on the Red Sea shore; Saw, when awayed by Moses' rod, O'er our foes his billows roar; Tasted how his wondrous power Made salt Marah's waters sweet; Praised Him when to Egypt's bowers He had led our weary feet.

Heard the dreadful trumpet thrill, Shaking Sinai's mighty hill; Saw the cloud, the smoke, the flame, From its riven rocks that came; Shuddering knelt we to implore We might hear His voice no more. Yet that voice hath many a tone, Not in thunder, not in wrath Speaks He to the heart alone, Cheers me on the desert path; Tells me that His name is Love!

At the thought my eyes grow dim; Blessed proof, all thanks above, He will let me work for Him!

"He shall have my very best— Thread, thou must be smooth and fine So, while others round me rest, I am spinning for His shrine. Rougher work may well be done, While the sun is hot and bright, But the smoothest thread is spun In the dewy cool of night. And a pleasant thought will come: Not alone my work I do, Well I know in many a home, Sit my sisters spinning too. Out of sight, and oft unknown, Thus our separate work we ply; But when all our threads are spun, They shall mingle by and by. Differing threads, yet all unite: Blue and crimson blend their dyes, While my thread is stainless white, As the manna from the skies.

"Thou shalt go, thou favoured thread, Where no woman's foot may tread— Where the wondrous veil is hung, And the golden censur swung, Where the golden lamp is glowing, And the mystic oil is flowing, Where the priests alone may go, In their vestiture white as snow. In the High Priest's raiment fair, Thou, methinks, may'st have a place; Not for me to weave thee there, Nobler hands have won that grace. Bezaleel is wondrous wise; Trends to weave that we have spun Well he blends their gorgeous dyes, Like the clouds at set of sun. He may twine thy stainless white Where scarce venture Aaron's feet Where the inner veil is bright With the changeless holy light, Shining o'er the mercy-seat. Not for me thy place to choose; Only let my work be done, So that God may deign to use What his servant's hands have spun.

"Soon I know that eager groups Glad will bring their treasured store, When the women throng in troops Round the Tabernacle door. Scattered here, we there unite; Gladly there our hands shall bring Gold, and gem, and mirror bright, For the temple of our King. Soon the time for gifts is done; Quickly must my thread be spun, Ere God says, 'I need no more.' I am spinning, Lord for Thee, Thou wilt keep my hands from stain; Now I rest that I may be Ready for thy work again."

Exodus xxxviii. 3.

AURORA is progressing in the way of religious liberty. The Minister of Public Worship has authorized the formation of two Protestant parishes in the Tyrol, where there has been none hitherto.

It is a sad statement, but nevertheless a true one, which was made lately in a sermon by Dr. Broadus in Philadelphia, that "twenty-five years ago, scarce any respectable publisher would issue a book that had any infidelity in it. Now there is scarce a publisher who does not send forth works that have more or less of scepticism."

Sabbath School Teacher.

LESSON XVIII.

THE LAME MAN HEALED. (Acts iii.)

April 20. (1876.)

COMMIT TO MEMORY V. 6. SCRIPTURE READINGS.—With v. 1, read Dan. vi. 10; with v. 2, compare John ix. 8, with vs. 3, 1, 5, compare Heb. vi. 2, with v. 6, read Matt. x. 9; with v. 7, read Mark xvi. 17, 18; with v. 8, read Ps. cvii. 15; with vs. 9, 10, compare Ps. xl. 3; with v. 11, compare Acts v. 12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong.—Acts iii. 16. CENTRAL TRUTH.—All power is given to and by Christ.

To spread a fire, one scatters coal. To raise a crop, one scatters seed. To send Christianity over the world, persecution is allowed to drive the disciples out of Jerusalem. The occasion of the opposition is a miracle, one of many; but Luke is led to single out this one on account of the ferment it raised, and an address following it. Its being wrought at all is a fulfillment of a foregoing prediction (Mark xvi. 17, 18), and the effect that followed it another, namely, John xvi. 2.

We have our attention called successively to the disciples, the poor cripple, his miraculous cure, and the witnesses. They come in order.

I. THE DISCIPLES (v. 1), Peter and John, personally quite different, but in heart, principles and aim alike, with different gifts by the same Master. The original plan, "two and two" (Mark vi. 7), has great advantages. The early Christians did not break away from the temple or synagogue service in haste. They were driven away. The Christian system grew out of the Jewish, as the corn put off its husk, and the husk was to die, having done its part. But the Jews, ignorant and unbelieving, counted the husk the permanent thing, and broke with the Christians. Peter and John could look on the sacrifices as types fulfilled, and their prayers were offered none the less heartily because around them were persons who did not see and know all they did—a rebuke to the narrowness of many who call themselves Christians, but imitate the Pharisees. Jewish hatred, increasing light, and the divine providence in the destruction of the temple, gradually revealed the truth as to the Mosaic law, as it is in Romans x. 4.

The time was three in the afternoon, the third of the three periods of prayer, third, sixth and ninth hours (see Ps. lv. 17). Regular times of prayer are a great help to any one. What we do irregularly we come to do carelessly, and cease to do at all. Hence the value of regular family worship, regular morning and evening secret prayer, Scripture reading and attendance at divine service. Chance attendance is next to none.

II. THE POOR CRIPPLE (vs. 2, 3), well known, always for years at the same post, a remarkable gate of the temple; helpless, needing to be "carried;" permanently so, "from his mother's womb." The calculation is that persons prepared for or affected by worship, will be inclined to alms-giving, and corrupt churches are apt to make such deeds acts of penance, while corrupted worshippers will be apt to do them publicly. Hence mosques and continental cathedrals are usually besieged by mendicants, usually very worthless. Protestants escape this, not because they give less, but they give it in a better way (see Matt. xxiii. 5 and vi. 3). This gate of Corinthian brass (a most costly compound), and which led from the Court of the Gentiles into the Court of the Women (called so because women could worship there), is much praised in Josephus.

The fanciful writers make Jesus Christ the beautiful gate to God's temple, to which we in our helplessness are wrought. An incident may illustrate the truth, but we must distinguish between illustrating and teaching. Fancy often runs riot when it defines the meaning of Scripture, which is not dependent on a lively imagination. As we use "charity" to mean both the feeling of pity and the gift it bestows, so did the Greeks use the word of which "alms" (a singular noun) is a derived contraction. Hence, properly, it has "an" before it. The beggar, according to his custom, asked of them as they were going in.

III. THE MIRACLE. Peter and John, moved by the Holy Ghost, steadily gazed at the man, to fix his attention and raise hope. They directed him to look on them, i.e., they gave some formality to their act, so that it might be connected with them, and that neither he nor any one else should say that "he happened to gain strength when they were passing." Of this he had no idea; he only expected alms. We are always more expectant and eager about bodily than spiritual matters. Drawbacks that would not amount to anything elsewhere, will keep men from a church; pains and cost will be thought little for a dentist or a doctor that would be deemed absurd for spiritual teaching.

The words of Peter are instructive. He had not money, but he had pity, and God used his pity as the channel of a far greater blessing. This is an example to us. Let us give what we have—money, clothing, food, pity, counsel, influence. But let it be done wisely, justly, and "in the name of Jesus Christ." For so the cripple was to be healed. The name of the Redeemer is a name of power. Jesus of Nazareth wrought miracles in his own name, not so Peter; "in the name of," etc. (v. 6). This served to teach the man himself and the bystanders, and it glorified Christ. With the word went forth a double power, (1) on the man's mind, so that instead of counting himself trifled with, he expected some result and tried to walk; and (2) on the man's limbs, so that he could "walk and leap." Of this power Peter's act was an outward and sensible sign. "He took him by the right hand and lifted him up, as one would lift up a feeble or wounded person. An example is thus set to all Christian workers. Pity, giving what we have, reliance on Jesus, speaking the word in His name, and

stretching out the helping hand, in personal counsel, encouragement and wise drawing out, and lifting up the weak and helpless to whom God sends us, and finally, giving God all the glory. A grave mistake is often committed in reference to those who are being healed spiritually. It is supposed they come at once to their full strength, whereas they often require a hand to be stretched out towards them. The boys and girls who become Christians, do not become Christian men and women in a day; but they are Christian boys and girls, and are to be aided, taught, borne with and helped as such. The lambs are to be fed.

Again our attention is fixed for a moment on the healed man (v. 8), in his outward acts and his inward feelings. The acts were natural in the circumstances. He had a new power, and perhaps used it awkwardly, if heartily; and he had a new joy. We ought not to criticize men if on first seeing the Saviour and themselves as safe, they are a little demonstrative, or even "odd" in their way of showing their gladness. "The Lord looketh on the heart." Nor let it fret us if they do not make much account of us who aid them. That they enter into the temple and "praise God" is the main thing. Peter and John with the healed man may stand for faithful labourers and their fruits at the last day. "Here are we and those whom thou didst give us to lift up in thy name."

IV. THE WITNESSES (10, 11); enough of them, "all the people; competent, "they know;" disinterested, they had no special interest in the beggar and no prejudice in favour of Christ; on the spot, there he was leaping; deeply interested, "filled with wonder and amazement." Any getting up of the case, or any collusion with the man, was out of the question. All men know him to be helpless, and forty years old (Acts iv. 22). This "Solomon's Porch" was a wide and long verandah, supported on marble columns, looking towards the valley of Jehoshaphat—a resort for those who waited around the temple, and in which Jesus walked (John x. 23) and the apostles often met.

Among many practical and timely lessons, in addition to those suggested, teachers may dwell on the following: (a) Christian pity takes note of the body, erects the hospital, asylum, and almshouse, and provides food, shelter, and medical care. It gives what it has. (b) This is not its utmost or its best. It does all in the name of Christ and to his glory, and is glad when a way is made to bring the suffering not only to health but to "praising God."

(c) Outward signs prove the inward and spiritual power. The miracle showed that these men had divine energy given from Him. Men were not left to find out by the quality of their doctrine, if God sent them. The miracles proved it.

SUGGESTIVE TOPICS.

The state of the public mind—the two disciples—whether going—when—why—their attitude towards the temple—the cripple—where laid—why—how old—how fit to be healed—his expectation—Peter's directions to him—the words of healing—the attendant act—the result—the man's movements—temper—course—the witnesses—their fitness—their feelings—and the lesson to us.

The Question Drawer.

The question box or question drawer is a familiar method at conventions and institutes of bringing out information as to ways of working in the Sunday-school field. A variation from the common plan of having all the questions answered from the platform is sometimes found to work well. At a recent series of institutes in New Haven County, Conn., the written questions asked by the audience were distributed again in the audience, that those who received them might write answers on the same slips. The questions thus asked and answered were a second time gathered up and read by the leader of the institute. A few of these are given herewith, as illustrating the success of the plan, and as covering important points in methods of work:—

Q. "Who should pay the expenses of the Sunday-school?" A. "The Church, by all means."

Q. "Do weekly Sabbath-school contributors tend to lessen the giving power of the Church?" A. "Not systematic weekly giving tends to develop the giving talent and power of the Church."

Q. "Should the pastor or the superintendent lead the teacher's meeting?" A. "The one who can do it best, and will do it best. Experience will show."

Q. "What shall be done with a teacher who will not attend the teachers-meeting, and who evidently does not interest his class?" A. "Let the superintendent kindly labor with him, to show him his duty and responsibility. If this is in vain, a better teacher should be supplied, if one can be found."

Q. "May a pastor teach a Bible-class in his own school?" A. "Yes, unless the Sunday-school follows the morning service, and another preaching service follows then. Then the pastor should be excused from this duty."

Q. "In a few words tell me how I can become a good teacher of young children." A. "Be Christ-like and child-like, Christ-loving and child-loving."—S. S. Times.

"WHAT one point did that superintendent try to impress on his school in his twenty minutes' talk?" was a question which one visitor might have asked of another, as the two came away from a Sunday-school room. "I am sure I don't know," would have been the only fitting answer. "Then what was the good of the address?" "There again I can't answer you," would have closed comment on that service.—S. S. Times.

BISHOP MACRORIE, of Maritzburgh, is shortly expected in England, and desires the use of a church or school, where he can set forth the needs and claims of his diocese.

Tyndall and the Hindoo.

The Brahmo, whom the upheavals of the time have made a lion, is Protap Chunder Mozoomdar. He is a preacher of the Brahmo Society in India, and Editor of the Indian Mirror in Calcutta. He has been preaching in various theistic pulpits throughout England—Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Bristol—and many times in London. He tells me that during his six months of sojourn in England he has been the guest of members of the Church of England, of Quakers, Baptists, and several other denominations; but only in one case—that of a Baptist lady in Liverpool—has any person shown the slightest disposition to make him a Christian.

Among the souvenirs of his sojourn in England it is probable that Mozoomdar, who left yesterday for India, has carried back none more remarkable than an interview which he had with Professor Tyndall. He appeared to have been profoundly stirred by the address of Tyndall at Belfast; and the Professor, learning the great desire of the Brahmo to converse with him, appointed an hour.

"Your address at Belfast," he said, "has awakened in me a desire to thank you personally for it and to see you." "That," said Tyndall, "I shall value among the crumbs of comfort which I have fallen to me among plentiful bestowals of things uncomfortable."

After we were seated, there was a little silence, which was at last broken by Mozoomdar, who said in low tones,—

"I feel the need of a few axioms of religion."

"I can quite understand that," said the Professor gently; "but is it best to call them by so precise a word as axioms? It would appear wise to keep our ideas on such subjects, as Emerson would say, fluent."

"Let us say, then, principles. We appear to need a few fundamental principles—such as God and the soul of man."

"You will easily see," replied the Professor, "that one in my position has to be very careful in using such terms as these. So far as the ordinary sense in which they are used is concerned, I fear I shall be found an Atheist, though I believe I should value as much, as any other, any realities associated with them. I remember once, when talking with Carlyle, he used the expression, 'That long paraphrase which we shorten into the word God;' but we have to know something of the paraphrase when we use the abbreviation."

"In what form, then," asks Mozoomdar, "would you express those ideas or principles?"

"That is a very difficult question. But is it necessary just at present to put them into definite form at all?"

"I think that in India we do stand in need of some strong and clear form, in which to embody our new religious ideas, and this for the sake of morality. Now that the old religious systems are breaking up, the young men emancipated from them disclose a tendency to cast off also the morality they enjoined, and which, though not the highest, was still able to supply important restraints. There have been some sad instances of young men who have come out of the Universities not only with their old beliefs gone, but with nothing to prevent their sinking into lives of mere self-indulgence. We appear to require some religious basis for morality stronger than that which has been abandoned."

"Your statement about those educated youths is surprising, and requires careful probing. It might be found that when young heretics are concerned, everything against them is brought to light which, while they were orthodox, is hushed up. But if, indeed they do sink into lives of mere self-indulgence, you may rely on it that those young men are not properly taught. I feel very certain that if they were properly appealed to, their heart strings would respond."

"It is true," rejoined Mozoomdar, "that they are not morally taught at all. Some intellectual instruction is given them for two or three hours each day, but they are then left entirely to themselves. But how shall they be appealed to?"

"Can you not cultivate in them the love of truth, the sense of honour, honesty, benevolence, charity? I cannot believe that the human being exists who requires theology to show him the superiority of an honest man to a rogue."

The conversation then turned upon a variety of other subjects, but it ended with this significant remark on the part of the Brahmo, "However much I may cherish my religion, it must be such as can undergo the strictest investigation, and it must conform to the highest scientific truth or I part with it."

THE S. S. Congress which met at Plainfield, the home of Dr. Vincent, was attended by a large number of the leaders in Sunday School work from the east and west. Considerable attention was given to the consideration of the qualifications which are needed in a good Superintendent. Rev. Dr. Lowry mentioned Christian character, and devotion to Christ as the first qualification. He should have enthusiasm, balanced by self-control; executive ability, free from egotism and an overbearing disposition; perseverance linked with patience and a strong will directed by a heart of sympathy. Among acquired qualifications were mentioned (1) habits of observation; (2) a holy ambition to excel; (3) acquaintance with the most recent helps; (4) knowledge of the mode of child thought. Much diversity of opinion was expressed as to the way in which the superintendent should be elected. Some thought he should be appointed by the teachers alone, others by the teachers and scholars, and others would have him appointed like any other officer of the Church, making the school simply a department of Church work.—The Working Church.

HE cares for them because they are his own. He knows what it is to watch over them in summer's drought and in winter's cold; by night as well as by day, in sickness as well as in health, in dying as well as in living hours.