

## Our Young Folks.

### A Sister's Tears.

A young man, not very long since, was on examination for ordination. In relating his Christian experience and call to the ministry, the question was put to him:—"What first led you to see yourself a sinner, and to feel your need of Christ?" His simple reply was:—"A sister's tears!"

He said he had been thoughtless and wicked, using the name of God profanely and giving himself up to infidel sentiments. He had a pious sister, and he would argue with his sister on the claims of the Christian religion, the genuineness of the Scriptures, and argue her down, but the sister would not yield. She was in earnest in seeking the salvation of her brother. So she brought in her minister. But the young man would be infidel disposed of the minister as easily as he did of his sister, and came off victor.

At length, on one occasion, he sought an argument with his sister, but she was silent; she had nothing to say. But he only stormed the more. Still she said nothing; and when he spoke ill of her God, her Saviour, her Bible, her religion, she made no reply, but burst into a flood of tears; "and those tears of my sister," said the young minister, "reached my heart and melted it. I then saw myself a sinner, and fled to Christ for help."

What a lesson of encouragement is this to those who are striving for the salvation of the souls of beloved friends. Jesus wept over sinners, and when we are so earnest for the souls of our loved ones that we weep over them, then they will be won to Christ. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, having precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

### Fast or Slow.

A little golden butterfly flitted merrily along the margin of a pond graced with fragrant water-lilies, rejoicing in the sweet summer air and sunlight, and dancing minuet on the dark, gloomy leaves that lay on the water. When weary with play she perched herself on a spear of grass lay her little plans for the future—how little a butterfly's plans must be!

While here she heard an old mud-turtle giving her son directions for a journey. "The gay soldiers will be there, and the flag will be flying; but after you have seen all that and eaten as many worms as you can hold, hurry home, and don't stop to play with bad little turtles by the way."

Then the little butterfly said:—"I'll go to. Maybe I can perch on a soldier's plume, and flit round among the stars on the flag, for somehow I can never manage to get up to the other kind of stars."

So she brushed up her tired little wings, so as to keep pace with this big black fellow that was to hurry so fast.

So off they set, he crawling slowly through mud and mire, and she floating over him like a topaz in a sapphire sea.

She found it rather slow travelling after her slow guide. So she would stop now and then to dance on a flower, or to rest on the down of an early thistle. Soon she met a party of gay friends, and joined them in a dance and a frolic, saying, "There's no danger. I can easily overtake that slow fellow. He only crawls." But, alas, she lingered too long this time! When she flew back to the place where she had left him, he was gone, and she had no guide but the ugly toads he had left behind.

As she went on she met another friend, and they had a walk on a spire of golden rod, till she was weary. She sat down on a bright green leaf to rest her wings, and when she rose up what should she see but the turtle on his way back!

"Why didn't you go?" she asked.

"I have been and seen the soldiers and flag, and have eaten all the worms and tadpoles I can hold, and am hurrying back, as my mother bade me. Follow my tracks, and you will see the show yet, if you hurry," and the turtle was crawling on.

"Do you call that gait 'hurrying'?" and the butterfly laughed as loud as ever a butterfly did, "I'll show you what hurrying is!" and off she flew.

Alas, the sun was down, and so was the flag, when the tiny idler reached the place. The night was falling and the dew chilled her golden wings, and she turned homeward without flitting among the stars or even lighting on a soldier's plume.

When near home, faint and chilled, she saw the turtle crawling along. She would gladly have passed him unnoticed; but he was victor now, and he ventured to rebuke the little boaster. Without stopping for a moment, he rolled around his ugly eyes and said, "It is as my mother always told me; the diligent and faithful outdo the idle; and the dull and slow, if persevering and obedient, will always excel the brilliant and trifling, who boast of their beauty and their power. I am black and slow, you are yellow and swift; but who saw the flag and the soldiers to-day?"

Our prayer and God's mercy are like two buckets in a well; while the one ascends the other descends.—*Bishop Hopkins.*

He must not only know that there is such a thing as the blood of sprinkling, but he must have it applied.

A morbid desire for sympathy is no doubt at the bottom of half the useless complaints in the world. It is sweet to be pitied, and the cheapest way to get pity is to tell over your troubles. So there are some who are forever retelling their afflictions. Some of them are real enough. It is an exceptional lot in which there is no croak. Few roses bloom which are not set round with briars. But in most cases there are compensations, unless we wilfully shut our eyes and refuse to recognize them. If speech is silver, silence is golden, as regards the inevitable vexations, defects and calamities of life. Even Job, with heaps upon heaps of distressing events to distract him, never really gave up till his three friends opened their mouths and tried to comfort him.—*Christian at Work.*

## Sabbath School Teacher.

### LESSON XXXIX.

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**GOLDEN TEXT.**—Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Prov. iv. 23.

**GENERAL TRUTH.**—"Godliness hath the promise of this life, and the life to come." From the nature of the lessons of this quarter, the best assistance we can give to a reviewer is in suggesting questions, and so framing them that the connection of subject shall, as far as possible, be kept in mind.

**LESSON XXVII.**

Name the first three kings of Israel. State the relationships among them. Mention their features of character. For what was David notable. Solomon for what? Their great joint work? David's charge to Solomon? How given? How is God to be sought? How to be served? Solomon's special work? How was he designated thereto?

**LESSON XXVIII.**

How did Solomon's reign promise at first. His regard to divine service? The divine favor to him? When shown? Solomon's request? The propriety of it? The gift promised him? The evidences of his greatness? The highest kind of greatness? The places and people reached by his commerce? Was the desired wisdom bestowed?

**LESSON XXIX.**

The site of the temple? The interest of the place? The general shape of the Temple? Number of apartments in it? The ornaments? The material used? Difference between the holy place and most holy? The place of the cherubim? Their appearance? And their attitude? The veil—its material and use? The pillars and their names? Why is all this detailed?

**LESSON XXX.**

What is dedication? By whom was the Temple dedicated? With what rites? Where was the ark placed, and by whom? Its contents at this time? How was the Lord's presence shown? The king's works of acknowledgment? Why a settled place for the ark now? The Lord's living temple? The one temple on earth? Who lays its foundation? Its head? Who are living stones in it?

**LESSON XXXI.**

Meaning of intercede? The great intercessor? How Solomon a type of him? Where he took his place? His attitude in prayer? The adoration? Its place in prayer? The divine attribute magnified? The place of the promises in prayer? The glory that cannot be confined? In what sense God can dwell with men? The means of our communion with God? The value of a nation's fearing God?

**LESSON XXXII.**

Why Queen of Sheba mentioned New Testament allusion to her? Her object? The lesson to us? Her queenly dignity? The impression made upon her? Her gifts? Their peculiarity? Her general character as here shown? Influence of Israel on the nations? Superiority of Israel over them, and its causes? The lesson to nations now?

**LESSON XXXIII.**

The peculiarities of "Proverbs?" The Bible writer of Proverbs? Meaning of "wisdom" in the book? What is the cry of wisdom? And to whom? Where is it uttered? And how? What is the penalty of despising her call? The gain of hearing and obeying? Who now represents true religion to us? When will he call men to account for what they have heard? The two kinds of hearing? The results?

**LESSON XXXIV.**

The gain of early godliness? The way to success in life? How is the Lord to be trusted? And owned? The evils of self-sufficiency? How is money to be used? The gain of rightly using it? The true nature of sorrow? Why is it sent? How is it to be received? The ways of wisdom—how pleasant? The true tree of life?

**LESSON XXXV.**

How is the ant distinguished? What the ant teaches? The evils of idleness? When is poverty a curse? The secret signs of the wicked? The swift punishment of the sinner? The six things God hates? The claims of parents on their children? The gain of obedience?

**LESSON XXXVI.**

What is intemperance? Example? The signs of it? The way of it? The safe way of resistance? The fatal bite? The deadly sting? How it brings other sins? How it hardens the heart and penetrates itself?

**LESSON XXXVII.**

Meaning of "virtuous." A virtuous woman? What to her husband? How employed? What to her household? What is she to the poor? How she grows rich? How she gives?

Her character in the gates? (Meaning of?) Her memory among her children? The value of good looks? The woman to be praised?

**LESSON XXXVIII.**

How is the Creator to be remembered? When? The danger of forgetting Him? The mark of old age? In the feelings? The signs of bodily decay? The doom of the dust? The way of the spirit? The uses of the Proverbs? The conclusion of all? The whole of man? The judges and the judged? The only way of life? The preparation for death? The way of peace? How Jesus is the way? How does faith work? What does it produce?

**Immersion or Sprinkling.**

A recent conversation presents an original and rather striking aspect of the immersion question, and one which, at least, has the merit of being an actual occurrence.

Rev. Dr. B. was introduced by a friend to a highly intelligent lady, who was a decided and earnest Baptist, the friend remarking pleasantly to the Dr., as he introduced him, "But you must be careful, Dr., or she'll make a Baptist of you."

Encouraged, perhaps, by the remark, the good lady at once plunged deep into the views of the Immersionists, when the Dr. interrupted her by saying: "I have no time just now, my dear madam, to go into this subject at length with you; but (very significantly and seriously), 'but there is a matter on which I confess I have been troubled and in doubt, and perhaps you can enlighten me respecting it. It is as to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and the question that troubles me is, 'How much of the bread ought I to give to each communicant? Shall it be but a crumb, or a larger piece, or an entire loaf?'"

"Why," said the good lady, "I don't see that it makes any difference, so each takes some, whether it be much or little. It is the eating not the amount of eating which is the important thing."

"Well, so I have thought myself," said the Dr. "But then there is another thing. In receiving the cup, how much should each one be allowed to take—the whole cup or a large part of it, or is a mere taste sufficient? What do you think about it?"

"Why," said the good lady, "I should say just the same about this that I did about the bread—that it is the drinking from the cup, not the amount of drinking, that meets the spirit of the sacrament and of the command of the Saviour. I don't see how any one could think otherwise."

"Well," said the Dr. again, "just so I have thought myself. And now, my dear madam, why don't the same principle apply to the other sacrament—the sacrament of baptism? Why isn't it just as true here, that it is the application of water, not the amount of water that meets the full spirit of baptism, as that it is not the amount of the bread or wine, but the taking of the bread and wine, that meets the true spirit of the Lord's Supper?"

And the good lady, who now saw the clear drift of his questions, gave no reply; but at once changed the subject. And we do not see what reply could well be given by any one, except a reply that would be fatal to the views of immersionists.—*Congregationalist.*

### Book Learning.

We heard a curious colloquy between two persons the other day. One of them remarked of a certain person that he was a dolt. "How can you say so?" replied the other: "he is one of the greatest readers I ever knew." "Yes," said the first, "and he talks as if out of a book; throw him upon his own judgment and he is almost a fool. Book learning isn't always knowledge nor sense." No doubt, reading is a very valuable adjunct to culture, but many people greatly over-value it. It does not necessarily make a person intelligent, nor expand the reasoning powers. We have known great readers who seemingly never digested anything they read. There was no working over or carrying out, no assimilation of the thought to the reader's individual intellect. In conversation they talked the books they had perused, and not any thought originated by their reading or the practical observations of life. The healthiest minds are of another order; shrewd and intelligent, requiring the stimulant of practical contact with men and things to bring out their best; and these minds are apt to seek less after the written thought of others than to dig out their own. Much of the reading that is done is nearly worthless as regards intellectual growth. The only reading that does real good is that which takes the form of study and has some definite object. The truest lovers of books are not the most copious devourers of them. The million read for amusement, to kill care, to pass away heavy hanging time, and they get their reward in apathy, in habits of listlessness, and a less vigorous tone of body and mind than they would otherwise possess. It is not culture they get, but a miserable counterfeit that imposes on few. The truly learned are those who combine practical pursuits with study of books. A man can never become a great geologist by merely reading the works that have been written concerning it; but he may arrive at a very good knowledge of it by long continued practical observation without any reading whatever. Dr. Not used to tell his students to beware of the careful reader of one book in an argument. Another writer says: "A wise book thoroughly understood is a mine of wealth." It is not much reading, but careful reading, that does good.

Tax grace of God can enable the lame and the halt, the maimed and the blind, to go through the land and possess it. God gives food to every bird, but he does not bring it to the nest; in like manner He gives us our daily bread, but by means of our daily work.

**"Mother."**

It is the cry of the infant just from the cradle; it is the only balm that will heal the wounded heart in youthful days. "Mother, I'm hurt," "mother, I'm tired," "mother, I'm weary," "mother, sing to me, rock me, tell me stories." It is always "mother" with the child and the lad. No one like mother. No hand that falls on the favored brow so softly as hers; no words so sympathetic as those that pass her lips. The house would be a dreary, thorny road without her warning voice and guiding hand. A father may be kind, may love none less, but the wearied child wants the mother's arms, her lullaby songs; the carresses of her gentle hand. All childhood is a mixture of tears and joy. A kind word brings a smile, a harsh word a sigh, a fall is pain, a loss a joy. The first footsteps weak and trembling grow stronger by the guidance of a mother's love. The little wounds, the torn clothes, the headaches, and heartaches, the trials, all vanish at the words of a mother, and there is built up in the heart of every man an edifice of love and respect that no crime can topple down—no dungeon can effect. And a lad grows to be a man only to find that mother is the same. If he errs, she weeps; if he is good and manly, she rejoices. Hers is the only love that lasts—endures forever. The wolf of starvation may enter the door, but her love is only tried to shine the brighter. All the world may call her son a criminal, but the mother only believes it not. Trial may beset you, storms gather over you, vexations come, ruin drag you down, but there is one who ever stands firm in your cause, who will never leave you. The criminal on the scaffold has suffered in feeling because his bad deeds would cause a pang to his mother's heart. The low and wretched, dying in some dark abode of sin, have died with that name on their lips. There is no praise like her praise, there are no sad tears that pain us so much as hers.

### Suicide.

The *British Medical Journal* publishes the following: "Considering the abnormal mental condition that produces suicidal mania, there is room for much speculation in the constantly steady proportion of suicides that occur year by year in the English population. In the reports of the Registrar-General the attempt to distinguish suicides from other violent deaths was made in the year 1858, when 1,275 cases of suicide were returned. It is true that the annual number of suicides in England and Wales have since 1858 slowly, but steadily, increased to 1,692 in 1874. If, however, the increase of population in these seventeen years be taken into account, we shall find that the proportion has been remarkably constant. The annual number of suicides to 1,000,000 persons living was equal to 67 in each of the three quinquennials ending 1864, 1869, and 1874. During the five years 1870-4 the annual suicide rate was equal to 70 per 1,000,000 persons living in 1870, and the lowest rate was 65 in 1873. The 1,692 deaths by suicide in 1874 included 1,204 of males and 488 of females; 697 resulted from hanging, 880 from incised wounds (principally in the throat), 280 from drowning, 140 from poison, and 193 from gun-shot wounds, besides 182 from other or ill-defined injuries. Suicides are generally more numerous in urban than in rural populations.

Taking the year 1873 as an example, this being the most recent year for which the Registrar-General has yet published his detailed annual report, the proportion of suicides to 1,000,000 person living in England and Wales averaged 65, whereas in London it was 88. The highest suicide rate occurred in the south-eastern counties—Surrey, Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, and Berkshire. Here, although the population is principally rural, suicides in 1873 were in the proportion of 88 per 1,000,000 persons living, and somewhat higher than in London. In the south-western counties of Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Devonshire, Cornwall, and Somersetshire, having also a population principally rural, the suicide rate did not exceed 61 per 1,000,000, and in Wales it was so low as 89.

Suicide, as a crime in England, is far more prevalent among the educated than the ignorant classes, and the proportion of suicides appears to be in inverse ratio to the education of the people. The frequency of suicide appears to be one of the penalties resulting from the progress of so-called civilization, leading to intense competition.

### What Does He Want His Paper For?

Occasionally a man may be heard to complain of his paper because it contains advertisements. What does that man want a newspaper for? He can want it only for the information it gives. Now, it matters not to him whether it comes in the shape of an advertisement or in the reading columns. The knowledge is what we are after. Where does the farmer get his first knowledge of farm implements and seeds? Did you not find the reaper you now use first described in your farm journal? That new cultivator that does the work several times better and cheaper than the old one, where did you find that? Among the advertisements! Those new sweet potatoes, that yield so finely and cook so mealy, where did you learn concerning them? That new machine, that does the work so nicely, was proclaimed through the advertising columns of the newspaper.

The advertising columns of the newspaper are of fully as much pecuniary value to the reader as reading matter proper. We are indebted to the advertising columns for cheap newspapers. They are the lubricators that run the machine. Few papers could live on their subscription alone. Out of the advertising, and nine-tenths of the papers in the United States would die, and the balance be obliged to raise their subscription price.

Blessings long desired are sweeter when they come; if soon given, they lose much of their value. God reserves for thee that which He is slow to give thee, that you may learn to entertain a supreme desire and longing after it.—*Augustine.*

## Thunder Storms in South Africa.

In a recent number of *Lippincott*, Lady Barker gives the following sketch of the delights of living in Natal:—"I don't think I like a climate which produces a 'thunder-storm' every afternoon. One disadvantage of this electric excitement is that I hardly ever get out for a walk or drive. All day it is burning hot; if there is a breath of air, it is sultry, and adds to the oppression of the atmosphere instead of refreshing it. Then about mid-day great fleecy banks of clouds begin to steal up behind the ridge of hills to the south-west. Gradually they creep round the horizon, stretching their soft grey folds farther and farther to every point of the compass, until they have shrouded the dark blue sky and dropped a cool, filmy veil of mist between the sun's fierce, steady blaze and the baked earth below. That is always my nervous moment. Horses and cows, birds and beasts know what the rapidly-darkening shadow means, and what sudden death lurks between those patches of inky clouds, from which a deep and rolling murmur comes from time to time. I am uneasy if the children are not returned, for the little river, the noisy Umsindusi, thinks nothing of suddenly spreading itself far and wide over its banks, turning the low-lying grounds into a lake for miles.

It is true that this may only last for a few hours, or even moments, but five minutes is quite enough to do a great deal of mischief when a river is rising at the rate of two feet a minute—a mischief not only to human beings, but to bridges, roads and drains, as well as plantations and fields. Yet that tropical downpour, where the clouds let loose the imprisoned moisture suddenly in solid sheets of water, instead of by the more slow and civilized method of drops, is a relief to my mind, for there are worse possibilities than a wet jacket behind those lurid, low-hanging vapours. There are hail-storms, like one yesterday morning which rattled on the red tiled roof like a discharge of musketry, and with nearly as damaging an effect, for several tiles were broken and pulled down, leaving melancholy gaps, like missing teeth, in the eaves. There are thunder-bolts, which strike the tallest trees, leaving them in an instant gaunt and bare and shrivelled, as though centuries had suddenly passed over their green and waving heads. There are flashes of lightning which dart through a veranda or room, and leave everything in it struck down dead—peals of thunder which seem to shake the earth to its very centre. There are all these possibilities—nay, probabilities—following fast upon a burning, hot, still morning; and what wonder is it that I am anxious and nervous until everybody belonging to me is under shelter, though shelter can only be from driving rain or tearing gusts of wind? No wall or window, no bolt or bar, can keep out the dazzling death which swoops down in a violet glare and snatches its victims anywhere and everywhere. A Kafir washerman, talking yesterday morning to his employer, was in the act of saying, 'I will be sure to come to-morrow,' when he fell forward on his face, dead from a blinding flash out of a passing thunder-cloud. An old settler a little way up-country was reading prayers to his household the other night, and in a second half the little kneeling circle were struck dead alongside the patriarchal reader—dead on their knees. Two young men were playing a game of billiards quietly enough; one was leaning forward to make a stroke when there came a crash and a crackle, and he dropped dead with his cue in his hand. The local papers are full every day of casualties, but it is not from these sources I have drawn the preceding examples: I only chanced to hear them yesterday, and they all happened quite close by.

"As for cattle or trees being killed, that is an every-day occurrence in summer, and even a hail-storm, so long as it does not utterly bombard the town and leave the houses roofless and open to wind and weather, is not thought anything of. The hail-shower of yesterday, though, bombarded my creepers, and reduced them to a pitiful state in five minutes. So soon as it was possible to venture outside the house, F— called me to see the ruin of leaf and bud which strewn the cemented floor of the veranda. It is difficult to describe, and still more difficult to believe, the state to which the foliage had been reduced. On the weather-side of the house every leaf was torn off, and not only torn, but riddled through and through as though by a charge of swan-shot. All my young rose-shoots, climbing so swiftly up the roof of the veranda, were snapped off and stripped of their tender leaves and pretty buds. The honeysuckle's luxuriant foliage was all gone, lying in a wet, forlorn mass of beaten green leaves around each pillar, and there was not a leaf left on the vines. But a much more serious trouble came out of that storm. Though it has passed with the passing fury of the wind and rain, still, it will always leave a feeling of insecurity in my mind during similar outbursts. The great hailstones were forced by the driving wind in immense quantities beneath the tiles, and deposited on the rude plank which, painted white, forms the ceiling. This plank has the boards wide apart, so it is not difficult to see that so soon as the warmth of the house melted the hailstones—that is, in five minutes—the water trickled down as through a sieve. It was not to be dealt with like an ordinary leak; it was here, and there, and everywhere, on sofas and chairs, beds and writing-tables; and the moment the sun shone out bright and hot as ever, the contents of the house had to be turned out of doors to dry. Drying meant, however, warping of writing-tables, and in fact of all woodwork, and fading of chintzes, beneath the boiling glare of a midday sun. Such are a few of the difficulties of existence in South Africa—difficulties, to be met as best they may, and to be laughed at once they are passed and over, as I am really doing in spite of my affectations grumbling."

Only one arm is all-powerful, one heart ever-loving, one ear ever open, only one eye never closed; and there are inner depths in our soul where only one voice can be heard.—*Mrs. Charles.*