

WHAT'S THE GOOD OF IT?

Jack Thornbury was lying in one of the beds of a hospital ward, and he had been there for seven weeks. He was taken to it with a broken leg, an injured rib, and a badly-cut face, and on becoming aware of his condition had the vexation of knowing that these injuries were not met with in the fulfillment of his duty, nor brought about by any useful deed or generous effort to help himself or any one else, but were simply owing to a fall over a doorstep and an iron scraper as he was walking home with very uncertain steps after a "jolly" evening at "The Black Lion."

He was getting well now, and was allowed visitors, and by the side of his bed was sitting Henry Graham, a man employed in the same warehouse as Thornbury, but a very quiet fellow, who kept himself to himself more than was liked by the men in general. He was not popular with them, as a consequence, although they could but respect what they knew of his character, and it was evident that their employer put considerable confidence in him. He had never been more with Thornbury than their work in the same warehouse made necessary, but he had come to see him in the hospital several times, much to Thornbury's surprise, and showed more kindly feeling and geniality than Jack thought was in him, for he seemed a reserved, silent sort of individual.

"You'll soon be out and about again now," he told Jack, cheerily.

"I hope so," said Thornbury; "I'm pretty well tired of being here, I can tell you; and it is worse a great deal for the wife than for me. I haven't been much good to her, though she's been the best of wives to me. I couldn't keep myself from thinking about it while I've been here, and I've seen sometimes the look that used to be on her face when I came home of a night. I didn't think of it then, didn't notice it particularly, and she never said much. But that sort of thing won't go on any more."

"That's right; I'm glad to hear you say so," said Graham; "and I can't help saying, for you won't take it ill, I know, Thornbury, there's one matter would help you mightily; sign the pledge, man, and cut the old shop altogether."

"That's it, Graham; I've done it already."

"Done it!"

"Yes; I've seen it all clearer since I've been away from the public and forced to lie still all day, and I got the doctor—that young chap, Dr. Page, he's one of the right sort, he is—to bring me a pledge card; I've got it here beside me. And I said to myself, 'If, please God, I put on my jacket again—for I was pretty bad then—there shall be a bit of blue on it, and on it that bit of blue shall stop.'

Graham took his hand.

"You're a regular good chap," he said, heartily; "I'll do all I can to help you, for maybe it'll be a bit of a wrench at first. Perhaps the blue may help you too."

Thornbury smiled rather grimly.

"I've had pretty sharp teaching, Graham; I shan't forget it for a good while. No, I don't put on the ribbon for myself altogether, though I know it will be a reminder; but, besides that, there may be a few other fellows want a hand. You don't know who they are and you can't say anything, but you can show a bit of color that's like telling, I'm trying it on too; come along with me."

Graham made no reply.

"Look here, Graham," Thornbury went on, "This here's the truth. You don't know much about me, but you know very well I haven't always gone on as straight as I ought to have, and sometimes I've felt it and I've thought if I could break it off all at once like with some other chap, I'd do it; but to stand out when a pot of beer was in the way seemed like setting oneself up, or else like saying one daren't touch a drop for fear of taking too much."

"You could have done it easy enough if you'd once set your mind on it."

"Maybe, but I don't know; one doesn't like not to do as the rest do. If two or three more had joined me, just for company, and to have jogged one another on, well and good. But I couldn't begin; they'd have only grinned and said 'I was joking, and laughed me out of it, for you see I wasn't such a quiet, steady-going chap as you.'"

"Well," said Graham, "why didn't you

join in with me? I'm a teetotaler, you know."

"You don't mean that, never!"

"What, didn't you know? I've been one these three years!"

"Didn't I know? Man alive, how was I to know! You kept so silent and apart-like, and didn't seem to belong to us; never said nothing, and never gave us a chance of knowing anything about you. You never drank in the warehouse, that's true, but I thought that might be to get on with the governor, and we couldn't tell what you did at home or of evenings."

Graham winced slightly.

"I'm not a man for talking, you see, Thornbury. I didn't want to interfere with anybody else; it didn't seem as if I could do any good by it; I'm no speaker."

"But look here, said Jack, "if you've taken the pledge, why don't you wear the blue ribbon?"

"Well, I don't care to make a fuss, or, as you were saying, set myself up."

"Yourself! No; but you needn't have been ashamed of setting up your pledge."

"Nobody can say I'm ashamed of my pledge," said Graham, rather ruffled. "If anybody asks me, I tell him I'm a teetotaler, and I'm proud of the fact; but there's no good in a scrap of blue ribbon. What's the use of it?"

"There's this good in it," answered Thornbury, "and you'll see the sense of it, quicker than what I did: that if you had worn it I shouldn't have been here to-day. If I'd seen your bit of blue every day there'd have been a bit on me long ago; it would have said to me what you never said yourself."

"How could I tell?" began Graham.

"Of course you couldn't tell. You thought I was a bad lot; but I'd have known, and that bit of blue would have found me out. You've done a good thing for yourself, I daresay, by being an abstainer."

"I know that," said Graham.

"But I can't help looking at my side," said Thornbury; "I shouldn't have had a broken leg, and I shouldn't have lost seven weeks' wage, and a good deal besides that I can't reckon up, if you had been wearing the blue ribbon."

"My wife shall put it on for me this very day," answered Graham.

She did, and he wears the blue to this day, and so does Jack; but if you go to Messrs. Parkins and Morgan's warehouse you won't find them by their blue ribbons, for there are half a dozen other bits of blue there now.—*British Workman.*

TWO WAYS OF DOING.

One of the heroic tract distributors we sometimes meet in the cars shuffles his tracts, glances around at his fellow-travellers, and at last hands a certain tract to one individual, a second to another, and a third to still another. Each recipient looks at the title, and at once begins to inquire, "Why did that man give this particular tract to me? Does he think I need a sermon on that topic? There is no appropriateness about it. What a nuisance these tracts are!" And the man throws it down or thrusts it into his pocket with a feeling of antagonism. He may get good from it yet, but he will be much more likely to do so if we do not first make it repulsive to him.

Suppose, instead of this, a man meets a group of his neighbors, and says: "There is so much profane swearing in this community that I am actually afraid for my boys, and I have been studying up what can be done about it. How do you think it would do to give out this tract to everybody? It will rouse the Christians to notice the prevalence of the sin, and perhaps set them to work to reprove it. It will help make habitual swearers think when they utter an oath, it will make Sunday school teachers talk to their classes about it, and it will rouse up the conscience of the entire community if it is thoroughly distributed. Just look it over, and tell me what you think of its appropriateness; for it seems to me something ought to be done."

So he begins his distributing then and there, and perhaps gains their co-operation, and goes on with equal common sense through the rest of it, talks about it in the papers, prays about it, perhaps secures a sermon on the subject, and so makes tract distribution successful, not for its own sake, but as a help in driving out sin and wickedness.—*Christian Advocate.*

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From *Peloubet's Select Notes*)
July 27.—2 Sam. 9: 1-13.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. "Cast thy bread upon the waters." Some years ago the scholars in a Philadelphia Sunday school contributed for the support and education of a girl in a mission school in Syria. This is just the kind of work that the scoffers—especially the stingy scoffers—are in the habit of making sport of; this asking children to give their pennies for some far-off, vague, and possibly useless missionary enterprise. But, the money was faithfully applied,—as money is more likely to be through a missionary society than through a bank,—and the Syrian girl was educated. She married a Syrian Christian, and the young couple went on missionary service up the Nile. When the recent uprising in Egypt came, these Christian workers, with many others, were hurried down the Nile and over to Malta. While huddled there with the seething mass of refugees, those homeless Christians asked themselves to whom they could turn for help or sympathy. The strongest tie of earth was to them the blood-tie of Christianity. Their nearest friends in that hour of need were those far-off Philadelphia Christians with whom they were one in Christ. So uninvited and unadvised they started over the sea to England, and thence over the ocean to America. Utter strangers in this land, they here patiently sought out their way to the superintendent of that Sunday school, and when they found him they said they were sure he had not lost his interest in them, and now they were ready to take his counsel as to their better course of future action. The next Sunday the two Syrians were in the Philadelphia Sunday-school; and one who had been a scholar there said he had never before so realized the truth of the promise, "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days."—*S. S. Times.*

II. The need of friends.

The man who has a thousand friends
Has not a friend to spare;
But he who has one enemy
Will meet him every where.—*R. W. Emerson.*

PRACTICAL.

1. The true spirit of friendship seeks out occasions for kind offices.
2. It is good sometimes to bethink ourselves whether there be any promises or engagements that we have neglected to make good.—*Henry.*
3. Treat orphans as a father, and thou shalt be the son of the Most High (Eccles. 4: 10).
4. Children may reap where their parents have sown.
5. He that watereth shall be watered also himself (Prov. 11: 25).
6. "For Jonathan's sake" illustrates for us the meaning of the words "For Christ's sake," and "In His name."

STRAWBERRY SHORT CAKE.

This favorite tea-cake is made out of layers of short cake, made in the usual manner, and sweetened with strawberries. The short-cakes, are baked in pie-plates, and should be about half an inch thick when done. As soon as they are taken from the oven they should be split, and buttered generously while hot. The strawberries should have been previously hulled, mashed smooth with a silver fork, and made very sweet, a little cream mixed with them being a great improvement. For seven or eight persons the following proportions would answer:

Short-Cake.—One quart of sifted flour, one teaspoonful of salt, one even teaspoonful of soda, or two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, a quarter of a pound of butter and lard, and a half-pint of milk.

Layers of Strawberries.—One quart of fresh, ripe strawberries, one teaspoonful of white sugar, and one gill of cream.

Arrange the layers thus: First on a large dish or plate put the split half of a short-cake, the buttered side up, then cover it completely with a layer of the prepared strawberries, then another cake, buttered side up, until the pile is complete, when the crust side should be on top, dotted over with fresh whole berries, sprinkled thickly with fine granulated sugar. A small glass of rich milk completes the feast.

NOBLE PRENTISS AND THE LITTLE CRIPPLE.

BY REV. E. FAYSON HAMMOND.

In Lawrence, Kan., Mr. Noble Prentiss attended the union meetings for the purpose of reporting them for a paper of which he was one of the editors. He listened attentively to the sermons, and wrote excellent reports of the meetings, but was entirely unmoved himself.

One day as he was passing out of the church during the inquiry meeting, a beautiful little crippled child, with large black eyes, lifted up her finger, as she stood exactly in front of him, and said, "Mr. Prentiss, won't you come to Jesus and be a Christian?" He tried to evade her question and pass on. But still she hedged up his way and with tearful eyes pressed him with questions still more pointed. At last he was also forced to promise her that he would be a Christian. That promise was faithfully kept. Mr. Prentiss not only became a Christian, but a most active one. He was a man of fine ability, well known in the region, able at once to command the attention of any audience, but he was sadly addicted to strong drink. After this great change, he went from town to town and city to city, addressing large numbers. I have no doubt that many, by his earnest words, were led to Christ. God grant that this fact may be the means of leading some to realize the great influence which converted children may exercise in winning souls to Christ. And may this truth, brought home by the Spirit of God, act as a stimulus to labor more earnestly in the Sabbath-school, by the fireside, and everywhere, for immediate salvation of the children.

Question Corner.—No. 14.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

BIBLE SCENE.

Lo, a multitude rejoices,
And the sound of happy voices
Rings through all the startled air,
While in solemn, slow progression
Winds along a grand procession,
Cymbals clash and trumpets blare.
Who is this with flowing drapery
Like the far clouds, white and vapory?
Who is this that leads the band?
In his earnest gaze upturning
Light of sacred joy is burning,
As he dances, harp in hand,
Thus with sounds of sacred pleasure,
Bringing home a priceless treasure,
Comes the goodly company,
One in heart, Jehovah praising,
Loud thanksgivings to him raising,
For his mercies large and free.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

1. O prophet, vexed about so small a thing!
2. This prophet did of Edom's future sing.
3. Fifth book in Scripture—last of Pentateuch.
4. *Unrighteous man*, O hear the strange rebuke!
5. Who, in the place of *this*, a scorpion gives!
6. Rescued by Christ to praise Him while *she* lives.
7. Now Israel's deliverer is *he*.
8. *This* do thou in the Lord; wait patiently.
9. The Spirit and the Bride say *one sweet word*.
10. A patriarch's best name given by the Lord.
11. Lo, in the midst of *this*, I see four men.
12. Through thy quick death, the king hath sinned again.
13. *This royal beast* obeyed God's stern behest,
Slaying the man, though not by hunger prest.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 12.

1. Egypt. They stayed there until the death of Herod. Matt. 1: 18, 19.
 2. Of John the Baptist. Matt. 3: 3.
 3. Behold I send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me. Malachi 3: 1.
 4. Isaiah 63: 31.
- BIBLE RIDDLE.—Elijah. He was taken up to Heaven in a chariot of fire. 1 Kings 17: 1, 24.
- CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.
- Correct answers have been sent by Jennie E. Hall, Wm. Traquair, A. E. Dodge, Hugh Patton, Janet Patton, Amanda E. Campbell and Bella F. Christie.