

Youth's Department.

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.

XXVII. BENHADAD.—CONTINUED.

232. When Ahab shewed clemency to this inveterate enemy of Israel, and suffered him to escape after that the Lord had given him into his hands, in what manner did one of the sons of the prophet reprove him for his conduct?—(1 Kings.)

233. When Benhadad, after this transaction, formed repeated plans against Israel, who discovered his intentions to Joram the king of Israel?—(2 Kings.)

234. What happened to the servants of Benhadad when he sent to take the prophet Elisha while in Dothan?—(2 Kings.)

235. When Benhadad besieged Samaria for the last time, what affecting incident is recorded shewing the distressing famine which in consequence ensued?—(2 Kings.)

236. By what providential interference were the Israelites delivered? and in what way were four leprous men implicated in this transaction?—(2 Kings.)

237. When Benhadad was sick, who happened to be at Damascus at the time? and who was sent by Benhadad to consult this individual on his recovery?—(2 Kings.)

238. By what violent means did Benhadad receive his death?—(2 Kings.)

CHURCH CALENDAR.

May 13.—Fourth Sunday after Easter.
20.—Fifth do. do.
24.—Ascension-Day.
27.—Sunday after Ascension-Day.

PASSING THOUGHTS.

BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

No. XII.
THE GIPSY.

"Do you want your fortune told, ma'am?" said one of this outcast tribe, as we met, a short time ago, on a broad heath. I shrunk instinctively from the bold, half-laughing stare of her brilliant eyes, and with a silent shake of the head, walked on. This was followed by a feeling of self-reproach, that I could not stifle: the circumstances were such, that I could not have spoken to the unhappy creature; for a number of carriages, donkeys, and disorderly persons, were there clustered together, on the occasion of some neighbouring fair or races; and I had difficulty in conducting two or three children over the disagreeable spot which we were obliged to pass. But the question forced itself on my mind, whether, if I had been so accosted under less unfavourable circumstances, I should have resisted the impulse of natural aversion, and addressed that poor depraved gipsy as an immortal soul, destined to an eternal, unchangeable state of being, and evidently hastening along the path of destruction. I could not satisfactorily answer my own query; there is no aptitude in the natural heart to such work; and it is idle to speculate on what we would do in circumstances merely supposititious. Many have, like Peter, vaunted, in the hour of safety, how boldly they would go to prison and to death for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, who, when the trial actually came, were made ashamed of their vain boasting, and denied their faith: others, shrinking with terror from the anticipated hour of temptation, in mistrust of their own experienced weakness, have, out of that weakness, been made so strong, that their names now stand enrolled among the boldest and brightest in the noble army of martyrs. The habit of fancying scenes and situations, with the part that we ourselves should take in them, is more hurtful than is generally supposed. "As thy day, so shall thy strength be," is the promise given; and we ought by no means to anticipate the day, seeing that we cannot anticipate or calculate the measure of strength that God may see good to vouchsafe.

But I must return to the gipsy. The rencontre with her gave rise to a long train of thought, which occupied me during the rest of my walk. I was near an abode of royalty, and could not but recall the touching anecdote of the beloved and venerated monarch George III.; who, when hunting near Windsor, with his characteristic tenderness of feeling, relinquished the enjoyment of the chase out of compassion to his exhausted horse, and, gently riding alone through an avenue of the forest, was led by the cry of distress to an open space, where, under a branching oak, on a little pallet of straw, lay a dying gipsy woman. Dismounting and hastening to the spot, his majesty anxiously inquired of a girl, who was weeping over the sufferer, "What, my dear child can be done for you?" "Oh, sir, my dying mother wanted a religious person to teach her, and to pray with her before she died. I ran all the way before it was light this morning to Windsor, and asked for a minister, but no one could I get to come to me to pray with my dear mother." The dying woman's agitated countenance bore witness that she understood and felt the cruel disappointment. The king,—O lovely lesson for kings!—exclaimed, "I am a minister; and God has sent me to instruct and comfort your mother." Then seating himself on a pack, he took the hand of the gipsy woman, shewed the nature and demerit of sin, and pointed her to Jesus, the one and all-sufficient Saviour. His words appeared to sink deep into her heart; her eyes brightened, she looked up, she smiled; and, while an expression of peace stole over her pallid features, her spirit fled away, to bear a precious testimony before the King of kings, of that MINISTER'S faithfulness to his awful charge. When the party, who had missed their sovereign, and were anxiously searching the wood for him, rode up, they found him seated by the corpse, speaking comfort to the weeping children. The sequel is not less beautiful: I quote the words of the narrative.—

"He now rose up, put some gold into the hands of the afflicted girls, promised them his protection, and bade them look to Heaven. He then wiped the tears from his eyes, and mounted his horse. His attendants, greatly affected, stood in silent admiration. Lord L. was going to speak; but his majesty, turning to the gipsies, and pointing to the breathless corpse, and to the weeping girls, said, with strong emotion, 'Who, my lord, who thinkest thou, was neighbour unto these?'"

Reader, do you hold in affectionate reverence the memory of this English Hezekiah, now gone to receive a brighter crown than earth can give? Let, then, his eloquent example plead with you when God gives you opportunity of following it. You will occasionally meet a gipsy in your path, or some other poor wanderer from the ways of God, to whom you can deliver the message of reconciliation, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; and you know not but the Lord may even then be awakening in that outcast's mind a desire for the teaching, that you, if you know Christ as your Saviour, can certainly afford. Remember the good king's words, and the high authority whence he quoted them. Ask yourself, "Who is neighbour unto this wounded soul?" and strive to be that neighbour yourself, pouring in the wine and oil of Christian consolation, if the case be one of awakened conscience; and if the spirit be yet lulled in the fatal slumbers of habitual and allowed sin, sounding the call to awake, to arise from the dead, and receive light from Christ. However bright the eye, and ruddy the cheek, and active the frame, still the poor gipsy is *dying*, and so are you.—Work while it is day; for the night cometh, when you can work no longer.

THE PRAYER BOOK.

The Church had dropped her garb of mourning and humiliation, had arrayed herself in her garment of praise, and her faithful sons and daughters had come up to celebrate the festival of Easter—happy, holy Easter—the "day of days"—the "queen of feasts"—the "Sun of other days."

It was a bright and beautiful morning and the sun's light was very cheering, though it shone upon leafless trees and barren fields, for nature, with us, does not, as in our mother land, keep pace with the Church at this season, and tell by her bursting buds and blossoms the tale of hope and resurrection. But there was enough, without her echoing voice, to cheer the Christian's heart, to strengthen his hopes, and bid him go on his way rejoicing.

The solemn and interesting services of the morning were over in one of our village churches, and its worshippers had assembled for those of the evening.

"Chalice and plate and snowy vest" had been removed, and in their place stood the simple silver font. The memorable events of the day of Pentecost, contained in the second evening lesson, had been read, and the clergyman descended from the desk, and stood beside the consecrated basin. A mother approached the chancel, leading her only child, a boy of nine years. She was alone, and, in her dress of pure white, was a most interesting object. The ceremony of adult baptism commenced—the lonely parent knelt, and was received into the congregation of Christ's flock. The boy stood apart, watching the scene, with his eye intently fixed upon the clergyman. The service concluded, the mother took her son's hand, and presented him at the font. All are familiar with the beautiful rite of infant baptism. The young soldier was duly sworn into the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his maternal sponsor assumed for another the promises which she had just made in her own name. The ceremony was soon over—the mother and child quietly returned to their seats—the organ pealed forth the inspiring chant, and the regular service was resumed. It was a common and simple occurrence—the dedication of two souls to God—but a peculiar interest was excited by this baptism.

The circumstances that had thus drawn this mother into the holy precincts of our Church, were singular, and seemed almost accidental, unless viewed as links in that chain of providences by which an Almighty hand draws the wanderers, one after another, into his fold.

Some months since, three young men were walking together through the streets of one of our large cities. As they sauntered idly along, the attention of one of them was arrested by three books which appeared to have been dropped by some one, and were lying unclaimed upon the side walk. They were picked up, and proved to be three copies of the Book of Common Prayer. The brothers each took one, and placing them in their pockets, they proceeded on their walk.

Some time after, one of these youths visited his home in the country, where this sister, the subject of this little sketch, resided. He found her in circumstances of affliction, peculiarly distressing. She had lived without God in the world, and had no refuge in the hour of trial. When trouble came upon her, she began to consider her ways, and at the time of her brother's return, was anxiously seeking some new foundation on which to rest her broken hopes. In "all time of her prosperity" the Bible had been a sealed book: but now that the clouds had gathered, she occasionally opened its sacred pages: but the scales still obscured her mental vision, for they had not been touched by that Holy Spirit which is promised to all who seek it.

As she was arranging her brother's trunk, she found one of the volumes of the Prayer Book of which we have spoken.—Being the only book there, she was curious to see what it was, and sat down to look it over—she became interested, and took it to her room. The next day she resumed her examination, and, to use her own language to the clergyman who baptized her, "found in it every thing she wanted." It pointed her to God, her Creator—to Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of her faith, and to the holy Scriptures, which revealed that God and Saviour's will, and it taught her to pray for grace that she might "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them." She now made the word of God her daily study, and in the light of its hallowed pages became sensible of the sinfulness of her heart, and was brought a weeping penitent to her Saviour's feet.

In a town about eleven miles from her home, there was an Episcopal church. Thither with her son and her prayer book she went, and found in its scriptural services all that her heart desired. At long intervals she was enabled to visit the sanctuary of her choice. She sought an interview with the clergyman, and made known to him the state of her feelings. He guided, counselled, and encouraged her, and she went on step by step, adding to her faith knowledge, and to knowledge the graces of a Christian life; and when the sweet festival of Easter came, she

stood at the baptismal font, and dedicated herself and her child to the service of their risen Lord.—*Episcopal Recorder.*

HUMILITY.

In the early part of Hervey's ministry, there lived in his parish a ploughman, who was well instructed in the doctrines of grace: Mr. Hervey being advised by his physician, for the benefit of his health, to follow the plough, in order to smell the fresh earth, frequently accompanied this ploughman in his rural employment. Understanding the ploughman was a serious person, he said to him one morning, "What do you think is the hardest thing in religion?" to which he replied, "I am a poor, illiterate man, and you, Sir, are a minister; I beg leave to return the question."—"Then," said Mr. Hervey, "I think the hardest thing is to deny sinful self." grounding his opinion on that solemn admonition of our Lord,—"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself."—"I harangued," says Mr. Hervey, "upon the import and extent of the duty, shewing that merely to forbear the infamous action is little—we must deny admittance, deny entertainment, at least, to the evil imagination, and quench even the kindling sparks of irregular desire. In this way I shot my random bolt." The ploughman replied, "Here is another instance of self-denial, to which the injunction extends, and which is of very great moment in the Christian religion: I mean the instance of renouncing our own strength and our own righteousness—not leaning on that for holiness, nor relying on this for justification." In replying the story to a friend, Mr. Hervey observed, "I then hated the righteousness of Christ, I looked at the man with astonishment and disdain, I thought him an old fool, and wondered at what I then fancied the motley mixture of piety and extravagance in his notions. I have seen clearly since who was the fool—not the wise old Christian, but the proud James Hervey. I now discern, sense, solidity, and truth in his observations."—*Brown's Memoirs of Hervey.*

INTERESTING FACTS.

Gibbon, who in his celebrated history of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, has left an imperishable memorial of his enmity to the Gospel, resided many years in Switzerland, where, with the profits of his works, he purchased a considerable estate. This property has descended to a gentleman, who out of his rents expends a large sum annually in the promulgation of that very Gospel which his predecessor insidiously endeavoured to undermine, not having had courage openly to assail it.

Voltaire boasted, that with one hand he would overthrow that edifice of Christianity, which required the hands of twelve Apostles to build up. At this day, the press which he employed at Fery to print his blasphemies, is actually employed at Geneva in printing the Holy Scriptures. Thus the self-same engine, which he set to work to destroy the credit of the Bible, is engaged in disseminating its truths.

It may also be added as a remarkable circumstance, that the first provisional meeting for the re-formation of an Auxiliary Bible Society at Edinburgh, was held in the very room in which David Hume died.

The nettle mounteth on high; while the violet shrouds itself under its own leaves, and is chiefly found out by its fragrance. Let christians be satisfied with the honour that cometh from God only.—*Dr. Mantou.*

"I am leaving the church in a storm," said Dr. Owen, but two days before his death, "but whilst the great Pilot is in the vessel, the loss of a poor under-rower will be inconsiderable!"

If you would not fall into sin, do not sit by the door of temptation.—*Gurnal.*

PRIVATE TUITION.

A MARRIED CLERGYMAN of the Church of England, who has taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and whose Rectory is situated in one of the healthiest parts of Upper Canada, is desirous of receiving into his house four young gentlemen as pupils, who should be treated in every respect as members of his own family, and whom he would undertake to prepare for the intended University of King's College,—or, if preferred, give such a general education as should qualify them for mercantile or other pursuits. The strictest attention should be paid to their morals and manners, and it would be the endeavour of the advertiser to instil into the minds of his pupils those sound religious principles, which form the only safeguard in the path of life.

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