

Read that, sir! read that!" And the old city man points to a paragraph in a paper which has just come to him across the seas.

"In the recent election of our worthy fellow-townsmen to the highest office, save one attainable in the township, we have a fresh proof of the power of individual effort unassisted by extraneous circumstances. It is within the memory of many, not our oldest subscribers, when he arrived in the colony a friendless youth, &c., &c., &c."

"That, sir, is the young fellow I gave his first job to; cleaning that very doorplate for threepence!"

"And he went out without interest, without capital?"

"Capital, sir! He loved work for its own sake! I tell you that, it—he, just loved work. That was his capital!"—Boy's Own Paper.

TWO GIRLS' PLEDGES.

"See here, Ruthie, Ringgold, I've signed the pledge!"

The girl of twelve years who answered to that name in the village of Ottercreek halted and looked back at her playmate's call and said, as the other overtook her, panting—

"Pshaw, Lilla Brown, you don't say so! I hope you'll be strictly temperate now."

"I hope to be strictly total abstinent."

"Were you ever anything less, I'd like to know? What does it amount to for one to sign the pledge who never drinks anything stronger than water, or a swallow of tea or coffee sometimes?" The girls were walking on in the old way together.

There was a peculiar light in Lilla's eyes as she said, "The lecturer told the audience last evening, you recollect, that all temperance people ought to put down their names by way of example."

"But my father says that is all nonsense," Ruth interrupted. "Because, you see, it's no self-denial to men to pledge themselves not to drink, when they haven't any love of drinking. My father says he would make no such sacrifice as Mr. Wright, for instance, makes in signing; so there's no comparison and no example in it."

"Then the lecturer was correct in saying it is often more difficult to obtain the names of temperate men to the pledge than the names of drunkards. But now, Ruthie," Lilla continued, "the pledge I meant isn't that kind at all. Let us sit down on this bank in the shade, and I will show you my secret pledge that I wrote for myself, and that nobody is to sign with me. Maybe you will see what need there was. Maybe you'll admit it costs self-denial. Maybe a good many people wouldn't do a bad thing to get up for themselves such a sort of a pledge."

"Oh dear, how serious you grow! I am afraid you're pledged to become a nun and want me to be another."

"No nun, Ruthie; here, read; you see it is very short."

"Rose Cottage, June 1, 1880. 'I, Lilla Brown, do herewith make my pledge not to have any discounts for one month from date—asking Our Father to help me keep this resolution.'"

"There is only one 's' in resolution," returned the reader in gentle criticism.

"That's true; I saw my mistake before you mentioned it. The wording gave me so much trouble that I forgot to attend to the spelling."

"Discounts," repeated Ruth, and raised her eyes from the slip of paper enquiringly.

"That is where I was puzzled," Lilla replied. "First I wrote it 'fidgets,' for that's what grandma says ails me; but mamma calls me 'nervous.' I don't like that word any better. I put it 'discounts,' and I know most too well what I mean by it. Drinking men are apt to get worse and worse, and it's the same with all bad habits, isn't it?"

"I expect so," said Ruth in a low tone, while twisting her sickle end. "But what was it made you do this?"

"Well, the temperance folks last night, you know, got some of the worst drinking men of the village to attend the meeting, and finally to sign the pledge. Brother Ed did not go with the rest of us, because he had his Latin lesson to study; but at the close of the lecture, just when two or three that most needed to went up to the desk one after another, and put their names to the pledge, and each time there was great cheering all over the hall, he came in and

took his seat with me and began to clap with all his might, seeing Jimmy Wright with his bloated red face stooping over the book with the pen in his hand, trying to steady his nerves enough, so he could write his name. It was real exciting, and I whispered, 'Ed, why does anybody wait to be persuaded? why don't they rush and sign, when it will make men of them? If I was a drunkard, I'd rush!' Ed looked down on me and answered, 'Humph!' He sat back then, put his thumb in the armhole of his vest and added, 'Better try it on with something you're addicted to.' Ed always uses his biggest words on me.

"He meant only just what he said—no more—but I felt my face grow hot, for I knew of a fault I was addicted to that made us all uncomfortable pretty often. It was in my mind as we went home, and after I was in bed, and as soon as I waked this morning. And this is what has come of it. But I'm not going to tell any one, else at present."

"Your pledge is to last only a month," criticised Ruthie again. "Anybody could keep any kind of a pledge, one month."

"That's what I hope," Lilla replied. "Why I put it so, was because I have meant over and over to quit acting out my discontent—to quit it forever and always, and I didn't do it! I have got almost discouraged. This time it came to my mind to try it as a man might make a journey on foot, a step at a time, or as a pendulum marks off the seconds one by one, through the whole twenty-four hours. We have heard of things being done in that way that were too discouraging if undertaken in a lump. When the month is out I will pledge myself for another, and so on."

"Have you a pencil and some more paper with you?" Ruth asked, looking away thoughtfully while smoothing out her sash. "I might take a pledge. What fault of mine do you think I shall put down?"

"You are not fussy and fidgety, like me," was the negative guess, as the other fished from her pocket and passed over to her friend a scrap of paper and a piece of pencil. Using a flat stone by her side for a writing-table, Ruth traced the following and handed it to Lilla, who read aloud:

"If God will help me, Ruthie Ringgold, I will not ridicule any person's peculiarities for one month."

Lilla glanced around quickly and saw, to her surprise, two great tears fall from Ruthie's blue eyes.

"But you're such a born mimic," said her friend exclaiming, "and so full of fun. Really, I don't believe ever any one thought hard of you."

"I have hurt people's feelings more than once," Ruth confessed, "so it cannot be innocent fun. We know in the fable the frogs said to the boys who threw stones at them, 'It may be sport for you, but it is death for us.' Now if any boys I know practised such cruel sport, they could not have me for a friend. But I am afraid I've often been crueler than that, because it was done to people you know, and not frogs. Last winter when I was visiting at Aunt Fanny's, a neighbor called one day whose face was almost covered with reddish-purple spots—it was a mark they said. He was hardly out of the house when I had my face painted with huckleberry juice to imitate his, and ran round from the kitchen to the front door, and rang, and when Aunt Fanny opened it I imitated the young man's speech, too—he stammered very much—and bade her good-morning. Instead of being amused she was sadly grieved. She quoted, 'Who makes thee to differ?' It's in the Bible, or words like those. I felt inclined to be vexed that I could not be allowed my fun, till she told me the young man's mother, now dead, had been her best friend, and that there was a sad story connected with his misfortune which she would tell me when I got older."

And last evening, Lilla, though you may not have noticed it, I left the hall making fun of Mrs. Tilson—saying she was as crooked as a rainbow, and at least a hundred and fifty years old; I did believe, I didn't remember at the moment the terrible hard lot she has had with her husband and two sons all now in drunkards' graves. She came out just before us, and I supposed she had gone on; instead of that she had stepped aside in the entrance way to wait for some one, as I saw to late! The poor woman must have heard me, and what will she think? I was ever so ashamed, and yet I

should be sure to do the same thing again, if I hadn't taken the pledge."

There was a pause. Then Ruth resumed—

"You said maybe such a pledge might not be a bad thing for a good many people to take. I have taken mine. There is Dora Jones told a lie to the teacher, and when the teacher went to her mother about it, Mrs. Jones said Dora told lies constantly, and she did not know what to do with the child. Do you think Dora is too young to take a pledge like ours?"

"And there is Miss Blossom," said Lilla, "who has been making a lot of mischief by telling all around that somebody said something about wanting to get rid of the minister—she better get rid of tale-bearing; and only a short time ago it was the same thing about another story she has told. She's what Brother Ed would call addicted to that. Do you think Miss Blossom is too old to sign a pledge like ours?"

"Perhaps we had best practise ours before we think about a pledge for others."

"I think we had."

It was just six months after, that Lilla's mother remarked to her father how much Lilla's disposition had improved, and that no parents in Ottercreek had a better daughter. At this praise, and feeling her papa's arm embrace her, Lilla shed some joyful tears, and drew from her pocket an envelope containing her half-dozen worn and crumpled pledges. Her happy secret was out.

"I was thinking," she said softly, "whether it was needful to renew my pledge again. I hope it is written on my heart now, as I am sure Ruthie's is on her's."—Lavinia S. Goodwin in Watchman.

WE ARE BEST OFF.

It was a pretty sight at Whitby last summer, to watch the herring-boats at their busy work. Many fishermen from Cornwall and Lowestoft were there to pursue their calling, and quite a fleet of boats might be seen setting sail about three or four o'clock in the afternoon, going off to the fishing grounds. All night they were at work, and about eight or nine o'clock next morning they returned with their load of fish.

This went on five days in a week, but on Saturday afternoon the boats were well washed and taken into the harbor, there to remain till Monday, the men losing—as we should say—two nights' fishing a week, in order to keep the day of rest. And it was a deeply interesting sight to see the boats moored close to the harbor-side, and the men in their nice clean jerseys listening to the service held for them on the quay every Sunday morning at nine o'clock, and then dispersing to the various places of worship.

"I suppose you do not really lose anything by giving up the two nights' fishing?" we asked of an earnest, intelligent Christian fisherman.

"No, indeed," he replied, with a smile. "Why, when we compare scores at the end of the year, we who keep Sunday are always the best off. God doesn't prosper those who break His commandments."

"I WISH YOU HAD YOUR WAY, SIR."

A gentleman was walking to his usual place of worship, one Sunday morning not long ago, and on the way he stopped to give a tract to an omnibus-driver, with the words, "I am sorry to see you there. If I had my way, there should be no Sunday driving, either of omnibusses or trains."

"I wish you had your way, sir," replied the man, as he stooped from his box for the tract. "Why, I don't know what Sunday is. I'm on this box fourteen hours every day, seven days a week. I tell you, I hardly know my children; I seldom see them awake. And as for my wife, I don't have half a dozen words with her in the week. I'm too tired when I get home at half-past twelve, or after; and then I'm off first thing in the morning after a hurried breakfast. I wish you had your way, sir."

Who will plead for these men?

A WORSHIP TEST.—When Fenelon was almoner to Louis XIV., his majesty was astonished to find one Sunday, instead of a numerous congregation, only him and the priest. "What is the reason of this?" asked the king. "I caused it to be given out, sire," replied Fenelon, "that your majesty did not attend chapel to-day, that you might know who came to worship God, and who so flatter the king."

Question Corner.—No. 12.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed: Editor, Northern Messenger. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place, where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 123. In what king's reign was Judah invaded by Ethiopians?
134. What king of Judah was buried in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David?
135. How old was king Josiah when he began to reign, and how old was he when he began to destroy the idolatrous worship that was practised in Judah?
136. What office did Nehemiah hold at the court of the king of Persia?
137. What king was reigning when the Israelites returned from the Babylonian captivity?
138. How many vessels of gold and silver belonging to the Jews did the king restore to them when they were returning from the Babylonian captivity?
139. What king first took these vessels from the Jews?
140. Who was the first king of the ten tribes of Israel?
141. During the reign of Solomon Jeroboam incurred his displeasure and fled from the country and took refuge in Egypt. What was the cause of Solomon's anger?
142. Why did the Jews keep the feast of Purim?
143. Why was Gideon named Jerubbaal?
144. In whose reign were the armies of Israel at one time without swords or spears?

SCATTERED SCRIPTURE.

Take one word from each of the following passages and form a quotation from the Psalms.

- 1. Neither shall they say lo here! or lo there! for the kingdom of God is within you.—Luke xvii. 24.
2. And they that heard it said, who then can be saved?—Luke xviii. 26.
3. And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in His own power.—Acts i. 7.
4. And as he was going down his servant met him saying Thy son liveth.—John. iv. 51.
5. And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.—John xiv. 13.
6. And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment.—John xvi. 8.
7. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.—Ezek. xxxvi. 27.
8. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them.—Matt. xxi. 2.
9. Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web.—Job viii. 14.
10. If ye shall ask anything in my name I will do it.—John xiv. 14.
11. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.—1 Tim. ii. 15.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 10.

- 109. The tribe of Levi. Num. xviii. 23.
110. Amasa. 2 Sam. xvii. 25.
111. Idolatry.
112. About three thousand. Ex. xxxii. 28.
113. By the Levites. Ex. xxxii. 28.
114. Eli. 1 Sam. i. 3.
115. Under the direction of Moses in the second year after the Exodus from Egypt. Num. i. Also by Moses in the fortieth year after the Exodus, not long before his death. Num. xxvi. and by David. 2 Sam. xxiv.
116. The Lord sent a plague among them for three days which destroyed seventy thousand of the people. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15.
117. At the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. Sam. xxiv. 16.
118. An altar unto the Lord. 2 Sam. xxiv. 25.
119. Solomon built the temple upon it. 2 Chron. iii. 1.
120. The city of palm trees. Deut. xxxiv. 8.
121. John 2: 15. Prov. 31: 15. Jas. 1: 13. Isaiah 3: 11. Eccl. 2: 4. Heb. 1: 15. Mat. 22: 39. 1 Cor. 7: 13. Jude 21. Col. 3: 8. 1 Thess. 5: 19. Rom. 13: 10. John 6: 48. Titus 1: 15. Gal. 3: 24. Rom. worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.—Rom. 13: 10.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 10.—James A. Donaldson, 11 ac; Arthur G. Donaldson, 11 ac; Peter J. Hunter, 7. To No. 9.—Mary E. Coates, 12 ac; Annie D. Burr, 12 ac; Alexander G. Burr, 12 ac; Emma Johns, 11; Edith L. Dewar, ac.