

Our Young Folks.

Room for a Little Fellow.

BY REV. HENRY G. McCOOK.

The following lines require this word of explanation. Last Thanksgiving Day I preached from the text, "The earth hath He given to the children of men."

"There floated through the daily press some time ago a touching story of 'Americus,' a somewhat notorious boy-musician, who died in Boston. The call came in the night. The silver cords were broken; and from under the trembling keys came forth this last note—'Merciful God, make room for a little fellow!'

Make room for the little fellows In the heart of our Christian land. Room on the earth that God gave, For the children of God's own hand.

Often, O Father forgive us! We have glanced with thoughtless eye On those sad, unheeded faces, And passed them carelessly by!

For one who was once a wanderer, With newness to lay his head, Watches his people's indifference To the limbs for whom He bled.

Yes, there I room for the children, And what robes to such to wear; Room in the heavenly City, Be it ours to them there!

The Heathen Boy.

Not many years ago, as a lady was sitting in the verandah of her house in Burmah, a jungle boy came through the opening in the hedge which served as a gateway, and approaching her, inquired with eagerness—

"Does Jesus Christ live here?" He was a boy about twelve years of age, his hair was matted with filth, and bristling in every direction like the quills of the porcupine, and a dirty cloth of cotton was wrapped in a slovenly manner about his person.

"What do you want with Jesus Christ?" asked the lady.

"I want to see Him and confess to Him."

"Why, what have you been doing that you want to confess?"

"Does he live here?" he continued with great emphasis; "I want to know that."

"Nothing, but come to Christ, poor boy, like all the rest of us," the lady softly replied; but she spoke this last in English; so the boy only raised his head with vacant look.

"You cannot see Jesus Christ now," she added, and was answered by a sharp, quick cry of disappointment.

"Tell me, O tell me! Only ask your master to save me, and I will be your servant for life. Do not be angry. I want to be saved. Save me from hell!"

The next day the little boy was introduced to the little bambu school-house in the character of "the wild Karen boy;" and such a greedy seeker after truth and holiness had been seldom seen.

Every day he came to the white teachers to learn something more concerning the Lord Jesus, and the way of salvation; and every day his eagerness increased, and his face gradually lost its indescribable look of stupidity.

He was at length baptized, and commemorated the love of that Saviour he had so earnestly sought. He lived, while to testify his sincerity, and then died in joyful hope. He had "confessed," and had found a Deliverer from those sins from which he could not free himself.

The lady also has since died, and she and the wild Karen boy have met in the presence of their common Redeemer.—*Moravian.*

Canon Kingsley.

A writer in Good Words tells this anecdote of the late Canon Kingsley:—"His sympathy with the sports of boys was naturally strong and keen. One morning he told me that some of his land in Hatfield were within reach of the boys of Wellington College when they were on road engaged in paper chases. 'Young rascals,' he said, 'they play the mischief with my fences, too. One day a great gap was pointed out to me in one of my fences, and I was told that it was made by those young fellows. So I got wind of their next paper-chase in my direction, and I went out to read my friends a lesson respecting the property of their neighbours. Scarce enough before long I saw the 'hares' coming straight toward me and my gap, and I prepared to meet them. But when they were close upon me the excitement of the chase, which had been for some moments coming over me, got the better of my resolution, and if I did not throw my stick and tear off with them as fast as my legs would carry me! In 100 yards or so I was dead beat, and when the pack came, a minute or two later, and set to work to break down my fences worse than ever, I had not the breath in me to remonstrate with them, even if had the inclination."

Danger of Opposing God's Work.

BY REV. J. S. BEEKMAN.

When God's Spirit is exerting His power upon men for their conversion or sanctification, the danger of opposing His work, or of indifference to the work, or of refusing to co-operate therein, is a sin of no small magnitude, and one which especially God's professing children should dread to assume. In proportion to the activity of the Spirit is the degree of sin when He is opposed. God delivered the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, which is a type of spiritual deliverance from the power of sin. But how dreadful was the curse pronounced against the Amalekites, because they opposed the Lord's work! Exodus xviii. 11-16, and 1 Samuel xv. 3. And for indifference, and because the Moabites and Ammonites would not help and encourage the work, they were prohibited from entering "into the congregation of the Lord forever," Deut. xxiii. 3, 4. And the tribe of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, were threatened with a curse, unless they did help their brethren in war against their enemies, and solemnly were warned, in case they failed in this, "Do sure your sin will find you out," Deut. xxxii. Scripture history and divine precept amply show, that for men of the world, or professed Christians either, to oppose the work of God's Spirit, or to abide lookers-on as indifferent spectators, or to actually refuse lending a helping hand when the church calls upon them to co-operate in the labor, is a sin against God, heinous in its character and destructive in its tendency, to either the cause or the guilty actor.

But ministers of the gospel especially are guilty in such a time, if they do not co-operate actively in the work. And every living man can co-operate with the Spirit of God in His work upon the souls of men in the sphere of His influence, in the line of His calling, and according to the capacity of his gifts, physical, mental and moral. As co-workers with the Holy Ghost they are charged, under sacred vows before God, angels, and men, to deliver God's elect from the power of the enemy. It is their sin if they do not understand the signs of the times, or hear the voice of God, or acquiesce in whatever God does. Ignorance, then, is sinful, and is our sin when knowledge is obtainable. If in our churches every Christian man and woman were at his post, to labor in humility and trust, and simply for the glory of God and the salvation of men, a rich and abundant blessing would not be denied us, and the Church would make great advances against the powers of darkness.

Our Interest in Duty.

Sin is full of infatuations. It persuades itself that there is no law, or that law will not be enforced; that right living is a matter of fine fancy or moral policy only, no such thing as right living being possible; that there is no future, or that this life has no judicial relation to it; that there is no God, or only an indifferent and non-governing God. Without such infatuations one would be a too painful business carried on between the upper and nether millstone of fear before sin and remorse after sin. No one of these delusions is more strange or more powerful in average men than the one which makes duty a general and impersonal concern a matter of others' or public good, to which public good the man who does his duty sacrifices his own interests. The truth is, that a man's duty is his highest interest. Self-renunciation itself is "putting down of a low and mortal self and a setting up of a high and immortal self. The self we deny is the bitterest foe of our dearest interest; the self that renounces self is our best manhood, and to save it is to save our life.

It is not doing something for mankind merely, to do your duty to morals and religion. Your interest in doing right is large, it is the great stake of your life on earth. For, it is only through these duties that you can come to your best character and destiny. You complain that duty is hard, exacting, wearying, as a child complains of his lessons. You forget that to you, as to the child, there is no other discipline, no other culture. There is no royal road to the ends of life, if royalty mean ease and idleness. But real royalty means occupation, industry, burdens; and duty is royal. It alone wears a crown on earth and in heaven. The crown of Ease is a false one, and falls off at the touch of the light of eternity; the crown of Duty fades not away but brightens as the wearers view into the regions that need no sun.—*Methodist.*

LEGACIES to charitable institutions in Liverpool amounting to four million pounds sterling have lately been left by eight persons.

Sabbath School Teacher.

LESSON IV.

DAVID IN THE PALACE.

COMMIT TO MEMORY, VS. 14, 15. PARALLEL PASSAGES.—2 SAM. I. 20; 1 SAM. XV. 17.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.—With v. 1, read Deut. xlii. 6; with v. 2, compare v. 13; with vs. 3, 4, "garments," military dress, compare 1 Sam. xvii. 38-39; with vs. 5, 6, compare Ex. xv. 20; with v. 7, read 1 Sam. xvi. 11; with v. 8, read Ecc. iv. 3; with v. 9, read Prov. xviii. 6-8; with v. 10, 11, read Prov. xxvi. 4; with v. 12, Ps. xiv. 5; with v. 13, read 2 Sam. v. 2; with vs. 14-16, read Numb. xxvii. 16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.—Prov. xvi. 7.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Unity and peace go together.

The narratives of human lives in fiction or in history interest us from the display they make of motive, and the outward working of secret feelings, love, hate, envy, ambition, etc. But the writers may err in their estimate. Public men certainly have their motives guessed at, erroneously, even while living. It is reasonable to believe the same is true of the dead. But in inspired history, we are sure that the picture is true in every particular. This history ought to interest all. The boys of the Sunday school ought to study it carefully. It is one of the thousand and one charms of the Bible that it has something for every class. Joseph, David, Jonathan, Jo-ab, Daniel, the three "Hebrew children," and the disciple whom Jesus loved, ought to secure the careful study of boys and young men.

In our Lesson, David finds a friend and a foe, both intense, and in the same family. Success is never an unmixed good. There is the thorn to every earthly rose.

DAVID'S FRIEND.

V. 1 describes the attachment, sudden, impulsive, and yet strong and enduring, formed by Jonathan to David. "Knt with the son of," describes in Gen. xiv. 20, the love of Jacob to Benjamin. Nothing could be stronger. He felt no envy, only admiration, the earnest sign of a noble nature. He was a kindred spirit; he had the most cause on other grounds for dislike of David.

(V. 2.) It was the habit of kings to gather round them the brave and noble, to bring them up in courtly ways, and to give them fitting employment. So Saul did to David. It was a dangerous elevation from the field to the palace. Sudden promotion is always perilous.

(V. 3.) The "covenant" means a pledge of mutual affection and friendship, of which the evidences appear in their subsequent lives, as they ought to do with those who have entered into covenant with God.

The goodness of God to David appears in giving him a friend at this time, such as Jonathan. A young man finding himself in new circumstances and under observation, is often embarrassed as to details of deportment and the ways of the place. How much it must have been so with David! Jonathan, at home in the palace, and the king's son was just the one to help him. He who obtains such a "friend in need" ought to prize the blessing.

V. 4 illustrates the foregoing. The shepherd dress would look ill at court, but Jonathan's robe and military outfit gave David all he required. Dress is more frequently made a gift in the East than among the less fervid and demonstrative Westerns. The word for "garments" means what we should call "regimentals" in Judges. 16, and other places. Graces were costly, elegant and useful, containing a purse (see Matt. x. 9), and often given as gifts, even now.

(V. 5.) David found employment. The struggle with the Philistines still continued. Against them David "went out," and his valor and discretion gained him promotion ("set him over") and public confidence.

V. 6 proves that warlike expeditions are meant in the preceding verse, for "the Philistines" is correct as in the margin. A triumphal reception was given him after such an expedition, in which, according to custom, the women sang in the dance or procession, as an audience takes up the chorus of a hymn (v. 7). "Saul hath slain," etc. We see how this was done in Exod. xv. 20, 21, and Judges xi. 34. This public honour shows how much David was appreciated. In the East, the "dancing" and the music were by one and the same parties, men by themselves, women by themselves (see Judges xvi. 25; 2 Sam. vi. 5, 16, 21).

SAUL'S ENVY.

(V. 8.) Saul's envy was aroused. He was "very wroth;" this encoly displeased him. It was all the worse to him from its truth. It foreshadowed to him the future. He remembered 1 Sam. xiii. 14. "What can he have more than the kingdoms?" (see 1 Kings ii. 22.) Even good men do not easily see their consequence diminished; but Saul had lost instead of gained. His good natural dispositions gave way before temptations as they always will, without grace. How many genial kind-hearted, generous, lovable boys go to ruin, the sweet wine of nature in them turning through sin into sourest vinegar! How expressive is v. 9, "eyed" with a true "evil eye" that distorts everything, sends glances of envy and hate, and sees nothing but evil. One may be a king and most miserable. One may have troops of friends and mean only well, and yet have deadly enemies.

(V. 10.) When we open the heart to evil passions, devils enter. So it was here. There was in Saul's nature a great tendency to wild spasms of excitement. The fear of God would probably have held this tendency in check; but the casting off of God left him to be the victim. Hence it is said "the evil spirit from God" not ex-

pressly sent by God, but permitted to come, in judicial dealing, from God, came upon him, and he "prophesied." The question will arise—Have we any of this now? Who can tell? We have not inspired prophets of men who did great and noble things, and of men, sometimes the same men, who seem driven of the devil to folly, violence, murder and suicide.

(V. 11.) Under such bad influence (for we must not count the lunacy) Saul meditated the murder of David, who twice escaped the intended weapon.

(V. 12.) How much misery sin brings! Envy, meditated murder, fear, consciousness of being God's enemy, and of being "forsaken of God." He who did not fear God with a fervent fear, feared David as God's appointed supplanter of him.

DAVID'S FRIEND.

(V. 13.) He could not do without him, yet could not bear the sight of him. So he removed him from his person, and gave him an appointment elsewhere. "Captain over a thousand" (1 Sam. xvi. 11), of which the chief was to bring David before the people apart from Saul, and so to increase his popularity. In this new position, David showed the (v. 9) same piety, "behaved himself wisely." There was no vanity; no mistake was made; he took no liberties; success did not spoil him. "The Lord was with him." Even wicked men can see this. It increases the respect for the good, but it is a respect which gives them pain. Saul feared David all the more (v. 15).

(V. 16.) But this contact with the people endeared David to them all the more. (Such is the force of "because" they loved David, from having opportunity to know him as he fulfilled the duties of his place in their presence and among them.)

The following lessons may be particularized.

(1) Young men are exposed to many dangers from which natural advantages are not only no protection, but are sometimes a snare in themselves. David was handsome, musical and spirited—all dangers. He had, besides, great success and good prospects. He needed to be "kept."

(2) It is good to have a friend a Jonathan, disinterested and sincere. Many are saved in this way. But Jesus is the best friend. His love can be relied on. He gives the best robe. He loves even to death. By his humiliation, we gain a crown.

(3) God with us is the pledge of wisdom and of safety.

(4) Even prosperity makes enemies, from whom God only can keep us.

(5) Saul's course in v. 1 we warn. Beware of envy and all kindred lusts. One sin prepares for another, and sin always breeds misery. Saul "gave place to the devil, and meditated murder;" a like crime would now be defended on a "plea of insanity," often a worthless plea (see our double use of the word "mad.") Men indulge in anger till it is madness. SCAECRIVE TOPICS.

David's need of a friend—the peculiarity of the friendship—how it was proved—cemented—expressed—Jonathan's place—character—David's bearing—prudence—the people's estimate of him—the popular praise—how Saul regarded it—his words—his treatment of David—his violence—his removal of David—the effect of it—his fear—why—David's strength—Saul's fall and sin.

Squandering Priceless Gifts.

Among the numberless marvels at which nobody marvels, few are more marvellous than the recklessness with which priceless gifts, intellectual and moral, are squandered. Often have I gazed with wonder at the prodigality displayed by nature in the cistus, which unfolds hundreds or thousands of its starry blossoms, morning after morning, to shine in the light of the sun for an hour or two, and then fall to the ground. But who among the sons and daughters of men—gifted with thoughts which wonder through eternity, and with powers which have the godlike privilege of working good and giving happiness—who does not daily let thousands of these thoughts drop to the ground and rot? who does not continually leave his powers to draggle in the mould of their own leaves? The imagination can hardly conceive the heights of greatness and glory to which mankind would be raised, if all their thoughts and energies were to be animated with a living purpose. But, as in a forest of oaks, among the millions of acorns that fall every autumn, there may, perhaps, be one in a million that will grow on into a tree. Somewhat in like manner fares it with the thoughts and feelings of man. What, then, must be our confusion, when we see all these wasted thoughts and feelings rise up in the judgment and bear witness against us!—*Julius Hare.*

The Assyrian History of the Creation.

Mr. George Smith has something more to say upon his great discovery of the cuneiform tablets which have recently imparted peculiar interest to the discussions of biblical archaeologists. The first tablet opens with the history of the world in the following lines:

- (1) When on high the heavens were not raised,
(2) And beneath, on the earth a plant had not grown,
(3) And the depths had not yet produced their seeds,
(4) The chaos thumut, (or the ocean) was the begetter of the whole of them.
(5) Their waters first were established, but
(6) A tree had not grown up, a flower had not unfolded.
(7) Then the gods had not founded anything.
(8) A plant had not sprung up, and order did not exist:
(9) There were made the gods only.
(10) And the demi gods they caused to exist
(11) And to grow.
(12) And the upper expanse and the lower expanse existed.
(13) And a course of days and long time had passed.

Truth Recognized.

Calvinism is denounced, ridiculed, and shockingly caricatured, but accepted and proclaimed at times in quarters from which, at other times, the denunciation and ridicule come in full measure. The Church of Rome has always recognized the followers of Calvin as among her chief foes, she has banished those who held this form of theology from her altars and pulpits, and when she could, she sent them to the stake or the dungeon, but oftentimes in her history some of her most faithful and devoted souls have not been able to refrain from the avowal of the most extreme errors of this Creed. Fisher was a convert to the Roman Church, and wrote for it and spoke for it with all the zeal of a convert. But he believed in God's decrees with such an absoluteness of faith, as to write the following lines:

"I rather would (I have often) seen a Christian in this band, And I would not what it is than thy ban stand."

"Thou knowest what Thou hast decreed For me in Thy decree of Will; In my temples ignorance Must trouble and distress"

"Thou woe'st me no other, Lord! Thy Hell; hath us to be; The world lies open to Thy Will, Its victim and its prize"

And of "preventive grace" he writes as freely and simply.

"Gift of gift! O grace of Faith! My God! how can it be! That Thou, who hast all things loved, Shouldst give that gift to me?"

"How many hearts Thou might'st have had, More innocent than mine; How many souls, more worthy far, Of that sweet touch of Thine!"

"Ah, grace! into what helms of steel, It is thy boast to come, The glory of Thy light to find In darkest spots a home!"

In a very different direction, and from quite an opposite extreme, we have a very positive assertion that the world moves according to God's decree. Bishop Simpson, of the Methodist Church, has just returned from an extended tour in Europe, where he has been a careful student of the political and religious situation of the Continent. The struggle with Catholicism, in its modern and aggressive form, engaged his special attention, and in a speech lately made he said:

"In this struggle with Catholicism God seems to have decreed—and I have no objection here to that Calvinistic term, and the Calvinistic interpretation—that Germans should have a great part in this work. Certainly Luther was raised up for this special purpose, and the German Empire to-day seems to be raised up for this special purpose; and that noble man, Prince Bismarck—God bless him!—seems to have been raised up for the purpose of withstanding the intrigue and power of the Papacy."

This sounds very much like some of the proof-texts which Calvinists have gone wont to quote, as confirming the plain truth that in God's decrees are contained whatsoever comes to pass.

Recording Prayer.

Mr. George Muller says: "I would particularly advise all, and especially the younger believers, to use a little book, in which they may note down on the one side the requests which they bring before God. There are certain matters which God has laid on our hearts, and we should write them down. It would be helpful to us to write, 'At such-and-such a time I began to pray for such and such a thing; and then to continue to pray with regard to this matter. If we do so, we shall find that sooner or later the prayer will be answered. Then let us mark on the opposite side, that it has, at such a time, pleased God to answer that prayer. After some time, read over the memorandum-book, and you will find how again and again it has pleased God to answer your prayers—and perhaps regarding matters about which you little expected the answer to come; and soon you will find the wondrous effect of this on your heart, in increasing your love and gratitude to our heavenly Father. The more careful you are in marking what you ask, and what God has given, the more distinctly you will be able to trace how again and again it pleased God to answer your prayers, and more, you will be drawn out to God in love and gratitude. You will find precisely as the Psalmist found it when he says, 'I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.'"

Zanzibar.

The Sultan of Zanzibar doubtless needs support, or rather the considerable friendship of the great European Powers, to enable him to maintain and consolidate his possession he had inherited. Himself a just, tolerant, and frugal ruler, a leader of tribes which in their days of deepest depression have never sunk into barbarism, and which have shown in three continents their power to subdue and civilize inferior races—closely connected as he is with some of the great trading communities of the East, and ruling over a region of unsurpassed natural capabilities, he may reasonably hope for a great destiny awaiting his race in Eastern Africa. Something has been done, though it be but one step of many, to emancipate labour in his dominions. Christian missions, directed by noble-minded and devoted men, are at work to civilize as well as to baptize the negro races, and receive from the Seyyid quite as much favour and protection as our own missions received from our own Government in India forty years ago. All who feel for the deep degradation of equatorial Africa in every age of her history must bid such a ruler "God speed" in any undertaking which, like his journey to Europe, tends to bring him more intimately within the pale of civilized nations.—*Macmillan's Magazine.*