

THE MAN IN THE WELL.

BY MRS. F. D. GAGE.

It was one of those dark, dismal, murky days of February which follow the breaking up of a cold spell of weather. It did not freeze, but it was cold; as chilly, cold, wet, and disagreeable as one can possibly conceive a day to be. Everybody who could, shut the door and sat down by the fire, shivering. "Oh, how disagreeable it is!" Those who had to go out, buttoned up close, and hurried through the shower as best they might.

There was a man building a foundry in our village, and to supply his engine with water he was having a well dug beside his furnace, which was a heavy pile of stone work. This well was nearly completed, and the men engaged in digging it held a consultation whether they should continue their work.

The elder and wiser of the two said, "No, the earth is too full of water, the ground is too soft, the pressure of the stone too great; it will cave in;" and he refused to enter.

But the other laughed at his fears, descended in spite of all remonstrance, and began his work. In vain his brother entreated him to desist. His reply was, "No danger; I know what I'm about."

But he did not know. The burdened earth gave way, and he was buried many feet beneath an avalanche of sand and gravel.

Wild went the cry over the village, "Fisher's well has caved in and buried Custard beneath!"

The storm, the wind, the rain, the mud, were all forgotten. The merchant dropped his yard-stick; the farmer left his market wagon in the street; the lawyer threw down his book, the mechanic his tools, the minister his pen.

All rushed with throbbing hearts to the rescue. Women caught up their infants and ran amid the storm to sympathize with the frantic wife; and all looked into each other's faces, and asked in gasping whispers, "What can we do?"

Ropes, ladders, spades and shovels were wanted. No one stopped to ask, "Whose is this?" No one said, "That is mine;" but the cry was, "Take it! take it! make haste! oh, make haste!—he will die!"

Down they leaped into the dark abyss. None said, "It is not my business—do it thou;" but all were so eager that the police had to form a circle to keep off the crowd, lest they should shake down the surrounding earth and bury the workers.

Then there was the stone work; it was pressing heavily. "Tear it away," cried Fisher; "save him!" And with giant strength, aided by the other men, he hurled the huge rocks from their places.

"It will cost him a great deal," said one, more prudent than the rest.

"Don't talk of cost; we'll all give him something and help to rebuild. Save him; save him! don't let him die for a few pounds' expense."

They worked like giants, till the big sweat drops rolled from many brows, and strong hands trembled with fatigue; then others took their places, and thus the work went on.

A tin tube was forced down, through which they shouted, and asked the prisoner, if alive, to answer; and his voice came back to them from his grave, "Alive, but make haste; it is fearful here."

He was alive; and with a wild, joyous shout they redoubled their zeal to save him. No one said, "He went in himself—let him die;" no one bade the pleading, weeping wife "mind her own business; they had nothing to do with her perishing fool of a husband; let him die." No one urged the matter as to the legal liability of taking this man's spade, that man's ladder, and the other man's boards; or the penalty attached to destroying the masonry and despoiling the works.

No, no; there was a man to be saved. All else was forgotten, and in the full tide of human sympathy they risked themselves to save him. And he was saved.

"He is saved! he is saved!" went up with a shout of joy that seemed to rend the skies. "He is saved!" was echoed from every street and alley. "He is saved!" cried the young wife, as with streaming eyes she clasped her infant to her breast, and thought of his relieved wife and little ones. "He is saved—blessed be God!" murmured the aged mother, and the image of her own son flitted before her. "He is saved!"

burst forth as from one voice from the whole village. And yet this was but one man, a day laborer, famed for no extra virtue. Had he died, his would have been but a short agony. His wife would have shed tears of sorrow, but not of shame. His children would have been fatherless, but no dark stain would have sullied their lives; no withering memory would have blighted their young hearts.

Oh, men! oh, women! how strangely inconsistent we are. There are hundreds dying this very day in our Christian land; tens of thousands are being crushed beneath a weight more terrible than the ground in the well; dying a suffering lingering death, that will as surely come to them, if no hand is raised to save them, as it would have come to the man in the well.

Frantic wives are pleading—frantic mothers are imploring—"Save them, save them!"

Dig away the temptations that have covered them up. Tear up the masonry of law and public opinion that is pressing upon them and burying them still deeper, and endangering those who are now safe. Hurl those stones of selfishness from their places. Take this man's rope, that one's ladder; but help, help, in mercy help, ere those thousands die!—die in torments awful, terrible—die in misery, shame, and sin.

Help, help! they were once the wise, the good, the great; the artisan, the mechanic, the merchant, the farmer, and the student. Save them, oh! save them from the drunkard's tomb. Let them not be buried alive in passion and temptation. Up through the dark aisles of life, with the hollow voices of despair they are calling you to save them or they perish! Oh! lift that load that is crushing them, and that they have no power to resist.

Look into the faces of the loved ones, growing pale with anguish. Look at the deep furrows which tears have worn in the sister's cheek. Look at the swollen eye and wan lips of the wife. Look at the bowed form and gray hairs of the mother, and let your hearts be moved. Stand no longer idly watching, while yon victims perish day by day.

What if the jeopardy is self-imposed? So was that of the man in the well; but did you withhold your hands? What if property will be destroyed and the rights of others interfered with? So was it with the property that covered the man in the well; but human life demanded the sacrifice, and it was cheerfully made.

Up, then, men and women! Work to redeem the drunkard as you would your neighbor from other danger. Save him by force. Take him from the mire of intemperance. Drag him from the horrible pit and place his feet upon firm ground:

REMOVE TEMPTATION!

—British Workman.

EMPTYING OF THE WHISKEY.

We know of a little boy in Pennsylvania who signed the temperance pledge at one of the temperance meetings held for children. A short time afterward his mother was busy in her kitchen preparing cakes and pies. "Dave," she said, go up to the closet and bring down the whiskey jug; I want some for these mince pies." Dave, as was his habit, instantly obeyed. But as he was dancing up the stairs the thought came to him, "Can you, a temperance boy, carry the whiskey jug?" He stopped right there on the steps and decided the question. Then hurrying back to the kitchen he said, "Oh, mamma, I can't carry the whiskey jug—I've signed the pledge—but I'll stir the latter while you go."

Without a word the mother gave into his little hands the spoon with which she was stirring the latter, and went herself to bring the jug. She felt a strange choking sensation in her throat, but she walked up those stairs with a firm tread and seized the jug. When she came down the dear little fellow was beating away at the dough with all his might. His eyes followed her as she went to the sink and began to empty out the contents of the jug.

"What are you doing, mamma?" "I'm emptying out the whiskey. We'll not have any more in our mince pies." "Oh, mamma, do you mean it?" "Yes, I mean to use lemons instead." "Goody, Goody! I'm glad then I can eat them too, can't I, mamma?" "Yes, my dear; and mamma will never make anything again that her dear little

boy cannot eat." "Goody, goody, we're going to have temperance pies." And Dave fairly danced up and down in the kitchen, as the whiskey gurgled in the sink. Don't you think Dave is a real good temperance boy? Then follow his example. Touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean thing.—*Everybody's Paper.*

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Peloubet's Select Notes.)

May 6.—Acts 10: 30-44.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. "The visit of the angel." When there is a great illness in a family, a loving neighbor comes in; but he does not presume to prescribe. He will run for the physician. So do angels minister to "the heirs of salvation."—*Amos.*

II. "Sending the Gospel to the heathen." In 1812, and on the floor of the Senate of Massachusetts, an objection was raised to the act incorporating a certain missionary society, organized to send the Gospel into foreign lands. The senator who contested the act did so on the ground that the design of such an organization was to furnish the means of exporting religion, and he thought there was no religion to spare from the country. Another senator sprang to his feet, and cried out: "Sir, religion is a commodity of which the more we export, the more we have remaining." "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than he meet, but it tendeth to poverty."—*Congregationalist.*

III. "What the gospel does for good men like Cornelius." (1) It is like coming from moonlight—which is yet real light, and reflected from the sun—into the clear light of the sun, growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. (2) Goodness in those who have never known the Gospel is like a flower in some sunny nook in winter—beautiful; but restrained, undeveloped, surrounded by cold winds. The Gospel brings the cheer of spring and the free growth of summer. (3) The one sees the divinely-pictured windows of the cathedral from without in dim outlines and faint colors; the other stands within, and beholds all pictures and colors transfigured by the light of heaven shining through.

PRACTICAL.

1. There are good men outside of the Church and Christianity.

2. But as soon as they see Christ, they go to him, receive him, and confess him.

3. To those who improve their privileges and the light they have, God sends larger measures.

4. The best blessings come in answer to prayer.

5. It is Christ himself, in his person, character, and work, that saves men.

6. Christ gives new life, hopes, joys, goodness, comforts, beyond all that the best men out of Christ can conceive.

7. All who possess Christ should profess Christ.

8. Cornelius was an example in four things: (1) he did the will of God as far as he knew it; (2) he earnestly desired to know more; (3) he obeyed God's directions how to learn more; (4) he called his friends together, that all might receive more.—*Stock.*

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

It is necessary in this lesson to bring into the teaching the whole account given in the previous chapter, and compared with the first 18 verses of chapter 2. The subject may well be the story of Cornelius, or the reward of the Earnest Seeker, and use for the subordinate divisions, the seven headings given in the notes above.

A PIN A DAY IS A Groat A YEAR.—"A pin a day is a groat a year," said a mother to her son, as she reproved him for spending a penny he had got from his father a short time before. "And a glass a day is how much in a year, mother?" said the son, who had not yet learned to count. The mother made no reply. How appropriate was the boy's reply to his mother's quotation of that old saying! Can any of our little readers tell how much a glass a day is in the year at two-pence a glass? In five years? In ten years? Mothers, fathers, how much would all this sum do for the comfort of your children; and what will be the effects of your example?—*Temperance Worker.*

PUZZLES.

CHARADE.

My first is a title to young ladies given
When they make their debut on life's stage;
'Tis also a mistake, though hard you have
to drive
To erase it from memory's page.

My second a part of a verb you will find;
And in places not always most rural
I'm abused by many with treatment unkind;
By using me oft as a plural.

The bee when extracting the sweets from
each flower
To hoard for chill winter's use,
Is said of my third to use magical power
To absorb the sweet saccharine juice.

My fourth is a mess that printers all hate,
And has caused much wrath I do fear;
But a small vowel add, lo! the change is so
great
They'll eat it each day of the year.

If my whole you would find, then your atlas
bring out
And search with the utmost of care
On the map of America, and without doubt
You soon will discover it there.

PARALLELOGRAM.

Across: 1. Sober. 2. A petition. 3. To claim.
Down: 1 turf. 2. Before. 3. Obscure.
4. A name. 5. A weight. 6. To stop.

ANAGRAMS.

The following are a scientist, two poets,
and a historian:
"H. M. S."—Youth axle.
"It was a cast."
"Oh! I burn a rat so."
"B. do begin, draw!"

DECAPITATIONS.

1. Behead a belt, leave a tree.
2. Behead a fillet, leave an animal.
3. Behead one, leave an insect egg.
4. Behead custom, leave a wise man.
5. Behead to sell, leave to finish.
6. Behead a plant, leave to engrave.

ENIGMA.

In wine, not in beer.
In time, not in year.
In love, not in marriage.
In girl, not in carriage.
In ink, not in pen,
In hawk, not in hen.
In man, not in wren.
My whole, once royal,
Ruled England loyal.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.

POETICAL EXERCISE.—

1. Good little Molly by the gate;
Her cousin Arthur cried, "Please wait.
There's coasting by the river-bank,
Let's go for Bessie, Jean, and Hank."
Said Molly, "If the ice is thin,
There's danger lest we tumble in.
It really makes me creep and shake
The thought of colds we all would take."
"Oh, little coz," said Arthur, "why
To find objections do you try?
The snow is firm, the air is nice,
And glisters brilliantly the ice,
And on my word you may depend,
That soon our white, sports will end;
So hush the fears that stir your breast,
And hurry, dear; here come the rest."

2. Then skipping by, came Lou and Hal,
And Kittle, Minnie, Jack, and all;
And "do!" they cried, and pleaded oh!
With cheeks and lips like stars aglow.
Then Molly, laughing, answered, "Look,
There's Uncle Jim with bell and book,
And by his frown I fear we may
Expect to coast some other day,
Since some of us with little ease
Must coast through frosts, if you please."
At this they bade her go to school,
But said they could not be so dull.

DIAGONALS—Emerson. CROSS-WORDS—1. Ever. 2. Amen. 3. Tree. 4. Near. 5. Rest. 6. Foot. 7. Nest.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.—

"Heaven is above all yet; there sits a Judge
That no king can corrupt."
RIDDLE.—Parchment, pens and wax.

HIDDEN MONARCHS.—Victoria. Eberhart. Francis. Edward.

DIAMOND PUZZLE.—V

S A D
V A L I D
D N

CHARADE.—Carpel.

The best way to clean the inside of old pots and pans is to fill them with water in which a few ounces of washing soda is dissolved, and set them on the fire. Let the water boil until the inside of the pot looks clean.