

...by mere traditions of a previous age—this also is a statement too obviously true to be called in question, though vastly important.

Our conclusions then, are:—(a) That the ill-will so frequently expressed towards theology must either be directed against the facts and truths of Scripture with which theology deals, or against a necessary process of the human understanding in dealing with those facts. (b) That the affirmation that every age must produce its own theology is either a harmless truism, or, if more significant, a statement at variance with the facts of history, with the oneness of spiritual life, and with the Lord's promise to send the Holy Ghost into the Church as its abiding teacher.

It is, I trust, unnecessary to remark that nothing said in this lecture is said in forgetfulness of the fact that God is bestowing upon His Church a process of education by which its life shall be progressively developed and enriched, and by which the wealth of meaning contained in Scripture shall be ever more and more fully realized. He who "at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," and "in these last days hath spoken unto us by His Son," has indeed been pleased progressively to reveal Himself to men; and whilst the canon of Scripture is now complete, and shall receive no addition, it is, nevertheless, permitted us thankfully to believe that the Church's theology, resting securely upon the basis of those great truths which the Scripture so clearly sets forth, and which, under the Spirit's teaching, have really entered into and sustained the life and consciousness of the Church since the day of Pentecost, will yet continue to gain in comprehensiveness, depth, and symmetry, as the same Spirit shall, with increasing clearness, "teach the meek His way" and "lead" the disciples "into all truth."

The lecture was listened to with marked attention, and the lecturer was applauded at the close.

The Chairman and Professors Gregg and McLaren then gave out some intimations regarding the meeting of the classes.

Rev. Mr. Fraser pronounced the benediction, and the proceedings closed.

The Marquis of Lorne's New Book.

The Nether-Lochaber correspondent of the Inverness Courier writes:—Some little time ago we took the liberty of advising the Marquis of Lorne not to meddle with the Psalms. Our warning and good advice seems not to have reached him, or, perhaps, they reached him, and he went on all the same. His Lordship has now published his edition of the Psalms of David, and Lord Lorne's Psalms are exactly what we looked for—poor and tame and wishy-washy, as unlike the Hebrew original as anything could well be. Of the Psalms he has, as we did not fail to foretell, made a terrible mess. Before, however, he could have done what he has done in a sort of way, he must have read and re-read and studied the Psalms, and that at least ought to be put down in his favor; for of the Psalms of David, Marquises and Lords are, we fear, as a rule, woefully ignorant. We must, therefore congratulate Lord Lorne on knowing the Psalms as few of his order know them, and that his Lordship will be the better for this knowledge all his life long we do not for a moment question.

Our Influence.

The stone flung from my careless hand into the lake, splashed down into the depths of the flowing water, and that was all. No, it was not all. Look at those concentric rings, rolling their tiny ripples among the edgy reeds, dipping the overhanging boughs of yonder willow, and producing an influence, slight, but conscious, to the very shores of the lake itself. That hasty word, that word of pride or scorn, flung from my lips in casual company, produces a momentary depression, and that is all. No, it is not all. It deepened that man's disgust at godliness, and it sharpened the edge of that man's sarcasm, and it shamed that half-converted one out of his penitent misgivings, and it produced an influence, slight, but eternal, on the destiny of an immortal life. Oh! it is a terrible power that I have—this power of influence—and it clings to me. I cannot shake it off. It is born with me; it has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength. It speaks, it walks, it moves; it is powerful in every look of my eye, in every word of my lips, in every act of my life. I cannot live to myself. I must either be a light to illuminate, or a tempter to destroy. I must either be an Abel, who, by his immortal righteousness, being dead yet speaketh; or an Achan, the saddest continuance of whose otherwise forgotten name is the fact that man perishes not alone in his iniquity.

Home and its Queen.

There is probably not an unperverted man or woman living who does not feel that the sweetest consolations and best rewards of life are found in the loves and delights of home. There are very few who do not feel themselves indebted to the influences that cluster around their cradles for whatever good there may be in their characters and condition. Home, based upon Christian marriage, is so evident an institution of God, that a man must become profane before he can deny it. Wherever it is pure and true to the Christian idea, there lives an institution conservative of all the noble instincts of society.

Of this realm woman is the queen. It takes its cue and hue from her. If she is in the best sense womanly—if she is true and tender, loving and heroic, patient and self-devoted—she consciously and unconsciously organizes and puts in operation a set of influences that do more to mould the destiny of the nation than any man, unowned by power of eloquence, can possibly effect. The men of the nation are what mothers make them, as a rule; and the voice that those men speak in the expression of power, is the voice of the woman who bore and bred them. There can be no substitute for this. There is no other possible way in which the women of the nation can organize their influence and power that will tell so beneficially upon society and the State.—Scribner's Monthly.

Our Young Folks.

Little Savings.

"What a nice little penknife," said Charlotte to her friend Hattie, as she watched her sharpening a pencil at recess. "You always have everything handy. I never get money enough to supply myself with these little conveniences," and she slipped a confection into her mouth, as Hattie closed her knife and put it away.

"My knife was a very cheap one, but it answers my purpose well enough. I have very little spending money; but then I try to turn it to the best account I can. I really think, Lottie, you have twice as much money as I in the course of the year."

"Why, Hattie, my father never gives me a dollar at a time, unless it is for some express purpose, like a new hat or dress, and mother has the spending of it."

"I am glad of dimes, and half-dimes, and pennies even," said Hattie, smiling. "A dime wouldn't be much," said Lottie indifferently.

"But three of them bought my little knife, and two of them and a half-dime bought my little ivory sleeve buttons you admitted so much, those with my initials on them. Whenever I want any 'notion' of that sort, I just begin and save every penny that comes into my possession until I get it. And I generally succeed; but really and truly, Lottie, I shouldn't have a single thing of the sort if I ate candy the way you do."

"Why, Hattie, you know I only spend most trifling sums for these things. I like an orange with my luncheon, or a paper of candies, and father will always give me a bit of change to get it. They don't cost much."

"That is just what I am trying to show you. Come around to my room after school, and I will just show you what my little savings, and some very small earnings on the sewing machine, have bought for me. Then, maybe, you will adopt my plan, too. It will give you ten times the pleasure you get out of your sweets, and be of a lasting sort. The want of just three little things is often a very great inconvenience. I know a gentleman who said he would pick up a pin if he saw it on Broadway, for he remembered times when he would have given twenty-five cents for one. Convenience before luxuries, was always my mother's motto, and she carries out her principle all through the house. I don't believe any one in town, with as limited means, has a greater number of household conveniences, and she gets them, all, she says, by little savings."

There are some older people who could adopt this young school girl's system with great advantage to themselves and those connected with them.—Ethel, in Early Dawn.

"Only Five Minutes."

"You've been stopping on the way again, Tom," said a poor widow to her son as he gave her the article he had been sent for. "Why don't you come straight home, when you know my time's so precious?"

"I did so, mother, until I got to Mr. Gaskill's," he replied; "and then I stayed to have a look through the window for only five minutes."

"Only five minutes," repeated the widow, "means a great deal when you come to reckon them all up."

Tom Price looked at his mother as if he had not understood her.

"Just reach down your slate," added the widow, "and then you'll see what I mean."

Tom had his slate on his knee in a twinkling: "What am I to put down, mother?"

"Well, begin with five, and then tell me how many more minutes you waste in the course of a day."

Tom wrote the figures, scratched his head and looked into the fire.

"Would thirty be too many?" asked his mother.

Tom did not think so.

"Very well," continued Mrs. Price, "there are three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, and half an hour for each day gives you a total of one hundred and eighty-two and a half hours, or nearly eight days' time, lost in twelve months."

Tom Price put his pencil between his lips and stared at the sum before him.

"Suppose you put down two hours for each day instead of thirty minutes," added his mother; "that will show a loss of more than a month in the year."

Tom Price was a sharp lad, and soon proved the truth of the widow's statement.

"So it does, mother," he said.

"But when I send you for anything I want, and you stay loitering in the street, my time has to be reckoned up as well as yours, hasn't it?"

Of course Tom could not deny that.

"Then try and remember," said the widow, "what a serious loss even five minutes are to me. You know, my boy, how very hard I have to work to pay rent, buy bread and keep you at school, so you should endeavor to help rather than hinder your poor mother."

"I'll run all the way the next time," said Tom.

"No, no; I don't want you to do that. I only want you to bear in mind that our lives are made up of those same minutes, and that we cannot afford to throw them away just as we please."

Like a sensible little fellow, Tom Price took his mother's lesson to heart; and it was a long, long time before he was again heard to use the words, "Only five minutes."

Lord! What Wilt Thou Have Me to Do?

"Lord! what wilt thou have me to do?" was the first prayer of Paul the apostle. He had been doing every ill within his power to the name of Jesus, but immediately upon being turned from darkness to light he sought the Lord's mind as to what he should do for his Lord. It is only those who know that the Lord has done all for them as sinners, that can cry to Him as servants to know what work they shall do for Him. An aged Christian once gave a young believer, who was not clear as to what special work he should engage in for the Lord, this advice: "If you are not quite sure what is your work, try something, and the Lord will soon show you what He would have you do."

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XLII.

Oct. 21; PAUL AND THE BICOTED JEWS. Acts xxii. 18-30.

COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 17-21.

PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Acts ix. 20-30; Ps. xxxvii. 5, 6.

SCRIPTURE READINGS.—With v. 17, read 2 Cor. xii. 2; with v. 18, compare v. 14; with v. 19, read Acts viii. 1-3; with v. 20, read Acts vii. 58; with v. 21, read Gal. ii. 9; with v. 22, read Acts xxv. 24; with vs. 28-30, compare Acts xvi. 37, 38; with vs. 27-30, compare carefully Acts xxiii. 25-30.

THE FOLLOWING PERSONS ARE TO BE IDENTIFIED: Stephen, Paul.

ALSO THE FOLLOWING PLACE:—Jerusalem. GOLDEN TEXT.—But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men.—Matt. xxiii. 13.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Christian courage wins victories.

The permission asked in the last lesson having been given to Paul, he proceeds to speak to his countrymen in the Hebrew, which secured marked attention. His opening words are the same as Stephen's, and his address is a singularly clear refutation of the charge that he had been the foe of the people, law and temple. He was a Hebrew, born, it is true, in Tarsus, but brought up in the holy city (verse 3) with the utmost strictness, of uncommon zeal (verse 4), as the high-priest, possibly then present, could testify. His conversion occurred when on a weighty mission in the Jews' cause, and the details show that he did not choose his path. This brings him to the point at which our lesson begins (verse 17).

His aim is to show that, so far from being a foe of the temple, after his conversion he came to Jerusalem, to the temple, was praying in it, and while so engaged fell into a trance, which differs from a dream in not implying sleep, and from a vision, in that in it objects are not ideal.

In this state he saw again (as the word is, verse 18), the same divine person, whom he does not needlessly name to provoke rage, and heard the direction to quit Jerusalem promptly (see Gal. i. 18, 23), as the people would not hear him. His intention was to stay. He did not mean to desert, but to stand by his own people. He had, indeed, his heart set on this, as he proceeds to show. For

Verse 19, he pleads with the Lord his view of things. There he had publicly and officially persecuted believers. There he had consented to the death of his witness or martyr (the later use of the word, see Rev. xvii. 6) Stephen, and taken a part in the process. There, accordingly, it seemed fit to himself that he should confess Christ and bear effective testimony to His name. All this Paul urged in his trance as a reason for his staying to labor in Jerusalem, and he states it for good reason, namely, in rebuttal of the charge that he turned his back on his own, and chose to eat in his lot with the Gentiles. He shows that he went to the Gentiles (verse 21) only in obedience to a direct, imperative command, against his own wish and plea, and that command came to him in the very temple itself. In Acts ix. the evangelist reports the action of the believers in Jerusalem at this time, but not this. (Gal. i. 21 contains another report by Paul.) But the two are in harmony. Paul in all likelihood only assented to their plan under the influence of this order of verse 21. God's revealed will is commonly worked out through the acts of His people.

Teachers should take pains to make the pupils see the connection of verse 19, 20, and 21, that they report an interference by the Lord with Paul's own plan, in the face of Paul's reasons, and are used here to repel the Jews' accusation. The direct dealings of God with a man's soul may be reported in fitting occasion. (Verse 21.) Up to this point the crowd listened, but no further. His reference to "the Gentiles," and the claim of a Divine commission to them to set their minds back where they had been before, seemed to confirm their charges. They lifted up their united voices, shrieked and said, "Away with him," etc., adding "It is not fit that he should live." The English version gives the sense and spirit by "fellow." (Verse 22.) As they cried out, yelled, they added other signs of anger, not rending or taking off their clothes, but violently shaking them, and flinging dust in the air—an Oriental way of showing dissatisfaction to rulers. They could not vent their rage on Paul, but they showed the chief captain, in whose hands he was, the extent of their scorn and hate of Paul, whom he held, and gave him the idea that he must be no common criminal on whom they demanded punishment.

(Verse 24.) He accordingly directed the removal of his prisoner from the stairs to the inside of the "castle" tower or barracks, that by torture in the form of scourging he might extort from the prisoner a confession of his crime, whatever it might be, "that he might know," etc., i.e., find out. Probably he did not understand the "Hebrew" of Paul, or if even the words were familiar, he could hardly be supposed to understand the controversy.

Verse 25 calls our attention to the proposed process. Thongs or straps were used to fasten the body in such a form that lashes could be laid upon the back. A centurion, as in the case of our Lord's crucifixion, superintended the cruel work. He would naturally be more intelligent than common soldiers, and to him Paul put the question, "Is it lawful?" etc. There were two circumstances in the case, his citizenship and his not being yet even tried.

(Verse 26.) The centurion saw the point. A law of Augustus expressly forbade beginning a process by torture. He cautioned his chief on the ground of his prisoner's citizenship, of which Paul had made quite proper use at Philippi, and the value of which all men understood.

(Verse 27.) This brought the chief captain to inquire for himself. It is observable that Paul's word is respectfully treated throughout. His bearing inspired confidence. "Yes," Paul said to the captain's captain. He is a Roman. And

(Verse 28) the natural remark of the

captain in appreciation of the citizenship, "I bought that with a great sum," led Paul, in no boastful spirit, but as a natural rejoinder, which at the same time probably strengthened his claim to respect, to say, "I was born a citizen." This was not in virtue of being of Tarsus—the statement of Acts xxi. 39 would have been enough to show his standing.

(Verse 29.) The subordinates who were there to carry out the examination by torture, hearing this, as a matter of course desisted, departed, and Lysias was left to reflect on the light in which he should have to place the affair of binding (not the binding of Acts xxi. 33, but of verse 29) a Roman citizen for torture. To secure a prisoner for trial as at first was one thing, to torture him before it was another.

Verse 30 exhibits the result of his reflections. He must now get a case, and he does not doubt that the Jews will bring accusation enough. So he looses Paul's "bands," and calls the chief priests and other Jewish authorities to state their case against his prisoner. The teacher will see and point out to the pupils the politic way in which, in his letter to Felix (Acts xxiii. 27), he passes over his own original mistake, and dwells on the last part of the transaction, of which he could truly say he had rescued a Roman citizen from the frantic crowd.

From this lesson we may see,

- (1.) The direct way in which Paul was led to God.
(2.) The natural plan which he formed for himself, and on which many have acted since, namely, of laboring in the field in which they were known in opposite characters, and God's wiser overturning of the same.
(3.) The vindication of God's wisdom appears in the present hostility of the Jews.
(4.) The strictness and real value of Roman law.
(5.) The right of a Christian man to use his civil advantages.
(6.) The binding effect of prejudice and bigotry.
(7.) The sustaining power of a just cause and a good conscience.
(8.) The issue of all this—Paul's appearance before the council.

SUGGESTIVE TOPICS.

Paul's address—in what tongue—the attention—the drift of his statement—his personal aim—how thwarted—where—by whom—with what command—the effect of this word on the people—their cry—their gesture—the course of the chief captain—mode of "examination"—how interrupted—effect on Lysias—his own citizenship—Paul's—his new plan—Paul's accusers, and the lessons of all these.

Are Lesson Helps a Hindrance?

A very strange and yet a not uncommon objection to the use of modern "lesson helps" is the charge that they interfere with Bible study; that teachers and scholars learn to depend upon them as a means of instruction instead of going directly to the Bible for a knowledge of the word of truth. There are pastors who are so firmly convinced that this is the tendency of these "helps," that they oppose the circulation of lesson periodicals in their Sunday-schools, and urge that the Bible be not only the exclusive text-book, but its sole commentary, for the teachers or scholars of their charge.

But what do these men mean by unaided Bible study? What are we to understand by their statement that lesson helps are hindrances to lesson study? If a teacher is in doubt about the meaning of a word in the English Bible, is he harmed by looking into "Webster's Dictionary," or Swinton's "Bible Word Book" for its definition? If he would know more about an Oriental custom which is referred to in the Bible, does it lessen his zest for the Scriptures if he turns to Van-Lennep's "Bible Lands," or Thomson's "The Land and the Book," for its explanation? If he wants fuller information concerning the locality of a Bible incident, is he made a less faithful student of the Bible by reading a description of the place in "Smith's Bible Dictionary," or Stanley's "Sinai and Palestine"? Does a reference to a concordance or to a Bible atlas necessarily diminish a Bible student's apprehension or appreciation of the spiritual truths of the sacred text? Will interest in that text be surely destroyed, if a searcher into its richest teachings seeks to know how its more diligent and faith-filled Bible scholars of the ages have come to understand it? If not, and all these helps are allowable, how does it happen that there is so much trouble when the substance of them, for the elucidation of any single lesson, is brought into one publication, so as to put at the disposal of a person of limited means the advantages of a large and expensive library?

As a practical fact, there is less Bible study in those homes or Sunday-schools where the Bible alone is studied, without the modern helps to its searching and understanding? And the thorough and intelligent study of the Scriptures has kept pace in the community at large with the multiplication and diffusion of well-planned lesson helps. There was never so much of Bible study as at present. This study was never so richly blessed to the growth in knowledge and grace of its participants. Bible study is at its lowest today where lesson helps are excluded.

Of course there may be such a thing as studying the Bible commentary or the Bible dictionary to the neglect of the Scriptures. This evil is to be guarded against; but in some other way than by refusing the use of that which has been misused. There may be such a thing as reading the Bible too many hours in the day; or as going too often into one's closet for secret prayer; or as giving away too large a share of one's income to charities; yet, after all, it can hardly be said that the tendency of Bible reading and private prayer and charitable giving is to the lessening of a man's efficiency in business; nor should we think of wholly forbidding a man to read the Scriptures, or to pray, or to give of his means to the call of the needy, because he had gone to an extreme in either of these things. This would be as foolish as the proposition to forbid all lesson helps to the teachers or scholars of a Sunday school because some one there or elsewhere had misemployed these aids to intelligent Bible study.

The Prayer of the Sower.

Day by day, and year by year, Late and early, far and near, At thy bidding, O my Lord, I have sown Thy precious Word.

Give the increase! let me know Thou hast chosen me to sow; Bid me come with joy again, Bringing sheaves of ripened grain

For the earnest Thou hast given, For souls garnered safe in heaven, Lord, I praise Thee, and I pray Thee to meet them in that day.

In me hearts if had there life God cast stow to fruition, This Thy power can quicken still, And the reaper's bosom fill.

Long millenniums wheat bath lain Idle, thou hast sown again: Broad upon the waters cast—Eh! it met be found at last!

Cheer Thy servant's heart, O Lord, Give large blessings on Thy Word Multiply the scattered seed, Then shall I rejoice indeed

But if this I may not see, Lo! my work is yet with Thee, And my day of joy shall come In the final Harvest-home!

—Sunday Magazine

Observance of the Sabbath.

We never, in the whole course of our recollection, met with a Christian friend who bore upon his character every other evidence of the Spirit's operation, who did not remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. We appeal to the memory of all the worthies who are now lying in their graves, that eminent as they were in every other grace and accomplishment of the new creature, the religiousness of their Sabbath-day shone with an equal lustre amid the fine assemblage of virtues which adorned them. In every Christian household it will be found that the discipline of a well ordered Sabbath is never forgotten among the other lessons of a Christian education; and we appeal to every individual who now hears us, and who carries the remembrance in his bosom of a father's worth, and a father's piety, if, on the coming round of the seventh day, an air of peculiar sacredness did not spread itself over that mansion where he drew his first breath, and was taught to repeat his infant hymn and his infant prayer. Rest assured that the Christian having the love of God written in his heart, and denying the Sabbath a place in his affections, is an anomaly that is nowhere to be found. Every Sabbath image and every Sabbath circumstance is dear to him. He loves the quiet of that hallowed morn. He loves the church-bell sound which summons him to the house of prayer. He loves to join the chorus of devotion, and to sit and listen to that voice of persuasion which is lifted in the hearing of an assembled multitude. He loves the retirement of this day from the din of worldly men. He loves the leisure it brings along with it; and sweet to his soul is the exercise of that hallowed hour, when there is no eye to witness him but the eye of heaven; and when, in solemn audience with the Father, who seeth him in secret, we can, on the wings of celestial contemplation, leave all the cares, and all the vexations, and all the secularities of an alienated world behind him.—Chalmers.

Bible Chronology.

At one of the meetings at the recent Chautauque Assembly the following valuable compendium was presented: "1. Bible chronology has suffered at the hands of two classes of persons: (1.) Of those who want to be excessively particular, and who seek for years, and months, and days, or even hours, in cases where no particularity can fairly be expected; and (2.) of those who gave up the investigation, and say at the outset, 'There is no hope of attaining to any valuable definiteness.' The truth lies between these extremes. There is a satisfying and valuable measure of particularity, though it may not descend to days, or even exact years.

"2. The Bible chronology is arranged under several heads. (1.) The long chronology, which is supported by Jackson, Hales, etc., is based upon the dates in the Septuagint, rather than upon the Hebrew Scriptures. (2.) The short chronology, which is supported by Usher, and which is used in our English Bible. This follows the Hebrew Scriptures, though some claim the Septuagint as preserving the accurate dates, and that those of the Hebrew are corrupted. (3.) The rabbinical chronology, which the German scholars largely follow, abounds in very arbitrary corrections of dates. (4.) The Bunsen chronology discards the dates given in the Bible, and seeks a system conformed to scientific disclosures.

"According to these various chronologies, the date of the creation of man is fixed respectively thus:

Table with 2 columns: Chronology and Date. Bunsen... B. C. 20,000; Hales (long)... B. C. 5,411; Usher (short)... B. C. 4,004; Rabbinical... B. C. 3,983.

"3. The chief differences between the long and the short systems of chronology are in the period between the creation and the deluge, and from the deluge to the birth of Abram. For example the long gives the first of these periods 2,262 years; the short gives it 1,656 years, a difference of 606 years. The long gives the second of these periods 1,072 years; the short gives but 292 years, a difference of 780 years, a total difference, from the creation to the birth of Abram, of 1,888 years.

"4. Minor disagreements arise in some cases from the overlapping of years.

"5. General accuracy is all that we need seek.

"6. As new information may be secured, we should be ready to modify our chronological tables."

A HOLY life will produce a powerful influence for good in the world. In every relation in life, in every position we occupy, we may manifest the grace of God. The spirit of humility, meekness, and love, filling the heart, will be clearly seen, and will render our life a hymn of praise to God, while it will remove sin, and encourage piety among men.