

be better to wash the sweat of honest labor off your face than to be smearing it into a blackamoors'. I will help you make a man of yourself if you are only willing and ready Billy.

The boy thought of dull days in the fields, with oxen for companions; then of foot lights, gay music, and laughter. He rubbed his boots on the grass, and muttered; "Such obliged, Mr. Ellery, but I ain't ready for that, nor willing either, in your way of doing it."

"Very well," I have said all I am going to say. I shall never ask you again." Billy trudged home rather soberly. He opened the cottage door a little later, and at his footfall Ben sprang from the pantry and stood anxiously watching his pockets. Billy knew exactly what it meant. Ben had gone to the cupboard: "And when he got there the cupboard was bare." This had often happened late. Billy pulled out of one pocket a few slices of bacon, and out of another a tiny paper of tea, saying: "Granny, I have got you some to-night—tea, granny."

"O yes. When you were in your cradle, I told my husband you would live to take care of me."

"She thinks you are father," stammered Ben, as he got out the frying-pan. Soon the whole place was filled with the welcome odor of bacon and tea. Billy cut some bread, and seizing granny's chair, pushed it to the table. He stared at her while she asked her blessing, and idly watched the sunbeams in the rusty lace of her old cap. When she opened her eyes, which were as blue as a baby's, she added, tenderly: "God bless you, dear: you brought us a good supper."

It was seldom that she spoke so coherently, but a bit of a prayer often seemed to clear for a moment her mind, as a precious drop might act in some unsettled mixture.

"What if granny should not have any supper some night when I am gone?" was the thought that rushed into the boy's mind, and into his eyes came tears. His heart was touched by the thought. What preachers and teachers and offers of help had never been able to effect, the trustful gratitude of a feeble little old woman had accomplished. He choked, spluttered, and pretended he had swallowed the tea the wrong way. Then he did like unto sinners the world over—he tried to harden his heart again. He reflected that this was Peter's home and Peter's mother. It was Peter's business to support his own family. It was Billy's business to rise in the world.

After supper he made ready for certain exercises very common in the cabin of late—exercises which he considered likely to improve him in his chosen "profession." He pushed granny's chair back into the chimney-corner, and waited until she dozed before he exclaimed, "Come, Ben!"

Poor Ben! His face grew more mournful than ever. It was no longer any fun for him, but he patiently consented, and arranged the stage "properties." He tied on his own and Billy's black masks and their stiff paper collars, wishing much that his own did not so sagely cut his poor little ears. He then sat meekly down at the end of the semicircle of seats and solemnly got off all the laboriously learned jokes that his stammering tongue could compass. He surrendered himself to Billy in a waltz that made every lock of his lint-white hair fly out straight, and which finally left him breathless under the table legs.

Well, after Ben had been, with some changes of costume, a giraffe, a Zulu, a Broadway belle, and a propounder of conundrums, he became so incapable of being anything else but a tired little boy, that Billy relented, and let him lie on the ragged old lounge. In the quiet that followed, the older boy's brain began to work upon a question that worried him much. Should he go on a farm, or should he follow his own fascinating plan? He waked up Ben, and told, in a most engaging way, of the wonderful minstrel career which opened before him, and he reported Squire Ellery's offer, but not his words of disapproval. Now Ben, who was but eight years old, had his own thoughts, and all the more of them, that he gave so few away in words.

"If it was me," said little Ben, promptly, "I would rather be out in the sunlight making th-things gr-grow. Wheat fields are so pretty, and I like ca-cattle. They always seem to know me, if I co-co-come near them. I never would allow until I got dizzy, if I

could help it. I think it is si-si-silly; it ain't being a man."

Billy gazed at Ben, somewhat surprised. Here were words almost like Squire Ellery's, coming as if they were quoted from out of this Hop-o'-my-Thumb.

"Ben," he said, "you don't really know anything about minstrel shows. Some day I will take you to the regular thing."

"I would rather stay here and read to granny. I should be afraid."

"Stay, then, you little coward!" said Billy, roughly.

Granny dozed and snored softly; the loan cat sprang into Ben's arms, and they slept peacefully together; while Billy walked the room, and peered out the window pained. He half decided that he would go to the farmer in the morning. Then he half decided that he never would go. At last granny awoke, and said, "Bring the Book and read good words; we have had enough of this day."

Ben would not wake up. He really could not do so after his hard evening exercises; and when Billy shook him, the cat took Ben's part, and scratched Billy resentfully.

"Well, I would as soon read as to hear him stammer over it," said the older boy, getting the Bible, the cover of which had been bright and fresh when granny had been so herself. Now it was as nearly out of its binding as was her soul.

"The children of Ephraim, being armed and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle," read Billy, just where he opened the Book. Then he asked "wouldn't they fight?"

"Able, but not willing to do what a body ought to do. I don't remember about the fighting. Perhaps it was only to endure something. Now I will go to bed," said granny, forgetting that Billy had read but one verse.

When he was left alone, he sat and pondered on those children of Ephraim until Peter tumbled into the house in his usual state. Then he let Ben sleep on, and he himself helped the tailor to bed, doing it with much less ceremony than the latter approved of.

(To be continued.)

POOR JOHN WITHERS!

John Withers had been only a week in London, but he was not now feeling so strange as he had done, because a young fellow in his department, a smart fellow, too, had taken him in hand that very day, and had promised to show him what "life" is like. So John went after business—he was in a wholesale drapery house in the city—with his new friend, and they paid for seats in a theatre. John had never seen anything like this in his country home; he was dazzled and dazzled, but his conscience was not all right. His mother seemed to be somewhere near him, and he could not turn his head to look at her, because he felt his eyes were hardly fit to do so.

"Snelling," he said to his companion, "if my mother were here!"

"Ah, I daresay she would like to see you enjoying yourself—women do like a fellow that's seen something of life, you know!" The specious tempter! It was half a lie, and half a shameful truth, but it told with John; and when the curtain fell for the last time, the victim was led to the refreshment bar, his throat parched with excitement, and he drank as bewildered brain and the fever of excitement will make men drink—drank and talked until he could no longer do either, and was dragged insensible, to see more of "life" in its worst and vilest forms.

His face next morning told the tale—to drown remembrance he did the same thing again at night, and in the morning had not such stings of conscience. So he went on, till mind and body craved what at first had seemed a wild dream—drink and sin. No letters are written home now; his mother would not be able to sympathize with a man's pursuits; better tell her nothing about it, though "women do like a fellow that's seen something of life." And his sisters? Well, they are such a contrast to the girls he meets, that somehow he cannot think of the two together. And so he goes on to the bitter end.

A Christian young fellow in his business house one day button-holes him: "I say, Withers, is it all right with you?"

"Never righter! Why do you ask, Graham? Don't I look it?"

"No, dear fellow, you don't. Come to our Y.M.C.A. meeting to-night."

"Can't Graham, I'm going out particular-ly, or I would."

Poor Withers! God alone knows where thou standest to-night!

In the morning Withers' place at table was empty, and some one was reading a paragraph headed "Found Drowned," but none imagined it was Withers, until a note was found in his room saying that he had become a hopeless drunkard, ruinous entanglements made life a burden, enfeebled energies made work impossible. God pity his mother! but he meant to die! A bright young life, his mother's pride, ending in ruin! A soul, capable of the highest and best hopes and cultivation, lost!

Oh, let us unite to win these young brothers from "the snare of the fowler"—let us agitate against drink and while we agitate let us pray!—Herald of Mercy.

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Peloubet's Select Notes.)

REVIEW.

Spt. 13. 2 Kings 4: 13-37.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Call attention to the beauty of the story. In simplicity, in fidelity to life, in delicate description of character, and powerful appeal to human sympathies and feelings, it is unsurpassed by anything in ancient or modern literature.—Todd.

Make clear the nature of Elisha's missionary tours throughout Israel, among people far from the temple worship, and corrupted by calf-worship. Picture the childless home of the strong, prompt, wise, devout, affectionate Shunamite, and her hospitable plan, resulting in the preparing of an upper room, furnished as befitted her wealth and the prophet's position. She rejoices in the birth of a son, but through his precious gift she is to be taught that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and in her experience is to show, The power of a living faith.

I. The trial of faith (vers. 18-20). The story of the child going out to his father in the great harvest fields, and being brought home to die in his mother's arms, is best told in the simple, familiar words of the Bible.

II. The work of faith (vers. 21-35). This mother showed her faith by her works. (1) By laying the child on the prophet's bed until he should come. (2) By concealing his death. (3) By setting forth on the wearisome journey to Mt. Carmel. (4) By her promptness of action. (5) By her half-uttered appeal to the prophet. (6) By her persistence. (7) By her gratitude. Faith without works is dead, and would never have saved her child.

Call attention to Gehazi, insolent and officious, vain-glorious in his commission, running swiftly with the prophet's staff, making frantic attempts to arouse the insensible child, then returning baffled and crestfallen to his master. Contrast with him Elisha, courteous and patient, anxious to comfort, easy to be entreated, going alone to the chamber, and manifesting his faith (1) by prayer, humble and fervent (2) by using the means that suggest themselves to him, or that Elijah used on a similar occasion.

III. The triumph of faith (35, i.e. 37). (1) The woman received her dead raised to life again, but before taking him to her arms fell on her face in an ecstasy of loving gratitude.

Illustration. Doubtless, if we are so happy as ever to reach heaven, we shall find ourselves so overwhelmed with wonder, love, and praise "that we shall not at first think of the social joys and lesser privilege to which we now look forward."

(2) Many years later this wonderful story was the means of her regaining lands that were forfeited by her absence.

Call attention to the truth that what neither a mother's love, nor Gehazi's efforts, nor the prophet-staff could accomplish, Elisha was enabled to do through the power of God, and Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and the Life, does for every believing soul. Illustration. In a quaint English book Daniel Quorn says, "It is wonderful, wonderful how we can stretch ourselves out 'pon the promises—lie down on 'em full length—and they begin to live, and speak, and bend words that somebody spoke a long time ago, but do come fresh and warm from the lips o' the blessed Lord, and all full o' his gentle love, and tenderness, an' power."

Question Corner.—No. 16.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

SCRIPTURE SCENE.

The subject of this paper is a place well known to all readers of the New Testament. Jesus was there so frequently, and did so many great works, that it is called His own city, rather than Nazareth, where He was brought up; indeed this very fact made the people of Nazareth jealous of their neighbors. There was a Roman garrison here, and one of its officers obtained from Jesus the commendation of showing greater faith in him than any one in Israel. The same Roman officer had endeavored himself to the Jews by building a synagogue. In this building our Lord delivered some of his most striking discourses. In the town itself He called one of His disciples from the receipt of custom; He attached another more closely to Him by healing a near relative; and here He taught His disciples humility, by putting a little child before them. It was here also that a sick man was brought before Jesus in a way which showed the determination springing from faith. These and other works caused our Lord to speak of the city as being "called unto heaven." He went on to add that it should "be brought down to hell," a doom which has been too sadly fulfilled.

Answers may be found to the following questions:

- 1. What is the name of the place?
2. How did the people of Nazareth show their jealousy?
3. Who was the Roman officer, and what did he ask Jesus to do?
4. How did he earn praise for his faith?
5. Which of the apostles was at the receipt of customs?
6. Who had a near relative healed by Jesus?
7. What did Jesus say to His disciples about the little child?
8. What sick man is meant, and how was he brought before Jesus?

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN No. 14.

BIBLE CLASS.—The following are some of the places in which the words occur:—

- 1. 1 Cor. 8:13.
2. John 2: 8, 9.
3. 2 Sam. 17:28.
4. 1 Sam. 28:24.
5. Num. 11:5.
6. Lev. 19:10.
7. Gen. 25:29.
8. 2 John. 9, 9.
9. Gen. 43:11.
10. Gen. 43:11.
11. Num. 11:5.
12. Num. 11:5.
13. Num. 11:5.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

Table with 2 columns: Word and Reference. Includes M-a-cchus, R-epuot man, A-ncles, C-ada, L-eprosy, E-yes, and their corresponding Bible references.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

Correct answers have been received from Albert Jesse French, Jennie E. Hannan E. Greene, Mary J. Macpherson, Alfred Gould, and George A. Riddell.

RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS.—The responsibility of moulding the minds of our youth, of both sexes, aright, cannot be overestimated; and the responsibility assumed in Sabbath-school enterprise is of the gravest order. What is taught there as the truth of God will not be easily effaced by after effort. It is a serious evil, and one readily taken cognizance of, when a minister from the desk teaches false doctrine, or whose department is glaringly at variance with the teaching of the church. But he is addressing people whose habits of thought are formed; while the flippant, thoughtless, worldly-conversation Sabbath-school teacher, or the intelligent, earnest one, whose conversation is in heaven, are impressing their thoughts and their acts upon very plastic material. We have seen the impress of feet of men and beasts that had been made upon the clay long years before. The clay had hardened into stone under the petrifying influences with which it was brought in contact, but the footprints were not removed thereby; but otherwise, were indelibly fixed. Thus the history and facts of other ages have been brought to us. A thousand petrifying influences will tend to induce fixity of mind in those who in their youth are now under our care, but it will be fixedness with the footprints there—in the impressions we now make.—The Methodist.