

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. HARDON'S SAD FALL.

Mr. Ashburton's scholars had dropped in one at a time until he found his hands full. In summer there was an infant department, but the winter term had always been presided over by a gentleman; and such a thing as a paid assistant would have been deemed an innovation and voted down accordingly. Quince already taught one class in arithmetic. "Why not give him all?" questioned the master; and the next day it was settled: Quince would take entire charge of the classes in arithmetic.

"I don't think he ought to impose upon you in this way," Petties said, as Quince endeavored so to arrange the hours that the trustees ought to come in time. "The trustees ought to pay you as an assistant teacher."

"I am here to study, not to teach," answered Quince, dropping his pencil and then picking it up. "Mr. Ashburton says he has learned more of books by teaching than he ever did by study. I love arithmetic; only I want to push ahead in Latin."

"Do you mean to go to college, Quince?" Esther asked, letting her gaze fall on the boyish face.

"I cannot say that I have any plans. But I am here this winter, and I want to improve my time."

"I trust you will stay with us Quince. Father grows more feeble every day, and he depends upon you. It grows upon him. I can see it in the way he looks after you every morning, and for you at night when he thinks it is time for you to come in."

"You are both very kind to me—much kinder than I ever expected any one to be. I am only glad that I have succeeded in doing what was required of me."

"There was now no time for skating. Quince felt obliged to give his Saturdays to Latin, and his recitations came in at odd hours."

Coming from Mr. Ashburton's room one night at a later hour than usual, he stumbled over the prostrate form of a man lying across the pavement. Horror seized hold of him. Had the assassin done his work, or had the man fallen in a fit? One glance into the purple, bloated face told the story. It was Mr. Hardon. Staggering home at that late hour, he had fallen. While Quince was questioning the necessity of calling some one to help him to get the inebriate home, Isabel came up to get him.

"I have been to the saloon; they told me he had started for home. Oh, Quince, how am I to get him there?"

"There! don't cry. I will help you." "It is dreadful, Quince. Father would be a good man, if it was not for drink."

"I know he would," whispered Quince. "It was a difficult task to get the fallen man to his feet, and then he could scarcely walk, more than once sinking back to the pavement and denouncing them with oaths and imprecations, because they did not let him alone."

"I have to listen to this every night, but I would spare you," said Isabel, doing her best to appease her father.

"This won't do," exclaimed Quince. "Wait here; Bel; I will find some one to help us."

"No, no! I cannot bear to have any one look at him."

In the voice there was a wild passion far removed from tears.

Another attempt was successful. When they reached his house, Mrs. Hardon was standing in the door, while the faint light from a solitary lamp revealed the poverty to which they were reduced.

an offended God? With passionate tears he recalled the old life in Scarborough—the sorrow and the humiliation he had known there. Then he thought of his father, brought down through his appetite for strong drink and dying a miserable death, leaving his gentle mother to struggle with poverty and disease, conscious that she must leave her boy, but still keeping firm hold of her trust in God.

Mr. Petties was awake, and Esther was still watching by the waning fire.

"This is staying out quite too late, Quince," she said, with a touch of reproof in her voice.

"I did not intend to be out so late. I left Mr. Ashburton at the usual hour," was the reply.

"Something must have happened on the way, then?" questioned Esther.

"Yes;" and briefly Quince told of his finding Mr. Hardon, of his meeting with Isabel, and of their struggles to get the poor inebriate to his home.

"A fearful task for the young girl," mused Esther.

"I cannot comprehend how people can sit still and allow such ruin to come to the homes of their neighbors and their friends," cried Quince. "It is an evil that every man and every woman in Barnston should endeavor to put down."

"They condemn it, but there's the law. These men have licenses; their business is made legitimate," Esther said, with heightened color.

"But it is wrong, all the same. The Bible condemns it," Quince returned with vehemence.

"Yes, the Bible condemns it." Esther's voice was almost hopeless.

"But if everybody would condemn it! Why do not the people rise up and say there shall not be sold another drop of liquor—banish it! And if men will not be persuaded, treat them as insane, to be taken care of and protected from doing violence to themselves."

Quince was greatly moved; he had himself felt the torture. The agony on Isabel's face recalled it, and the weary, patient look on the features of her mother as she stood outlined in the door thrilled his heart with strange force. Why must all this be! Why must the innocent suffer! By what law! By what right!

Esther raked the ash film from the fading embers. There was a faint glow; then a red flush swept over the room. In the brightness her face did not look so pallid.

"There's a feeling abroad that something must be done," she began. "Already temperance societies are organized, and in many places the sale of strong drink is notably less. We must try it here. Mr. Hardon once stood well in the community; possibly he can be saved. And if he cannot, others can be kept from following his example."

"And the children can be saved," "And yes, the children can be saved," echoed Esther.

Quince did not reply. Perhaps he could not have explained that it was not solely to save them from strong drink, but from the curse "unto the third and fourth generation."

(To be Continued.)

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Peloubet's Select Notes.)

February 3.—Acts 15 : 35-41 ; 16 : 1-10.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. Imperfect instruments. Mrs. G., in her parables of nature, gives a beautiful illustration of God's use, and our use, of imperfect instruments in doing His work—imperfect apostles, imperfect churches, imperfect Christians, and yet really good work is done. She relates the story of a young minister, who insisted that every thing must be squared according to his ideas of perfect right. On one occasion he undertook to tune the church organ in an emergency. He took the scale of notes used, and tuned the organ perfectly according to it. Then he struck the notes of Haydn's Mass in five flats, and was astonished at the terrible discords he made. An organ-tuner explained afterwards to him that his scale was right, his system was right, but if you stick too close to it, it sets you wrong. Most fifths must be left flat, some few made sharp, the octaves alone tuned in unison, because the organ is an imperfect instrument. But

by making proper allowance for this imperfection, wonderful and harmonious music may be produced by it.

II. The need of missionary work. (1) The heathen are conscious of sin. Their religious works contain affecting confession of sin, and yearnings for deliverance. (2) The heathen feel the need of some satisfaction to be made for their sins. They have devised many penances, asceticisms, and self-tortures. These do not give the conscience peace. (3) The heathen need a Divine Deliverer, one who can make the satisfaction and inspire the peace. (4) There is a command in the New Testament to go and disciple all the heathen nations in the name of this Deliverer. (5) This command emanates from the supreme authority. (6) This command is addressed to all Christians in every age, until every human being is converted. (7) The missionary spirit is the spirit of Christ. The soul of the church that does not possess it is dead. (8) If we love the person of Christ, we shall desire that His glory shall fill all lands. (9) If we love the truth of Christ, we shall be intent upon its proclamation, till every false religion is vanquished by it. (10) We are not Jews, but Gentiles. Our lineage is heathen. The missionary enterprise rescued us from paganism. Gratitude for our emancipation, and love for our brethren, the heathen of all countries, should move us with a mighty impulse to engage in the missionary work.

(11) Success is certain. The Lord has promised it. The apostles illustrate it. (12) We ourselves are the offspring of the missionary enterprise. To turn against it is like a man's turning against his own mother. (13) Duty, Love, Success—these are three magic words. Let us grasp the ideas they suggest, and pray and work for all men, at home and abroad, until the church absorbs the whole world and rises up into millennial glory.—Henry M. Scudder, D.D., in the Advance.

PRACTICAL.

1. Ver. 36. People must not only be converted, but trained and established in Christian life and doctrine.

2. Ver. 37-39. God uses imperfect instruments in the advancement of his kingdom.

3. The Bible gives true pictures of its believers. If only perfect men had served God in early times, modern Christians would be in despair.

4. The faults of these men would scarcely be noticed in persons of ordinary goodness. They seem great only by contrast with their great purity, goodness, and virtue.

5. Let us not imagine we are great and good, when we find in ourselves only the faults of the great and good.

6. Ver. 1, 2. Faithfulness in small fields is the only true way to greater usefulness.

7. The blessedness of early family training in the Scriptures.

8. Ver. 3. In matters indifferent, yield to the prejudices of others; in the essentials of salvation, stand firm as a rock.

9. Ver. 5. Churches established in the faith increase in numbers.

10. Ver. 6. Even those in poor health, and sometimes even through their sickness, may aid the kingdom of God.

11. Ver. 7. God often hinders us from certain ways of usefulness we desire, because He has larger and better ways for us.

12. Ver. 9. The whole world is calling to us, "Come over and help us."

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

It may be well to trace clearly on the map the whole route of the second tour of Paul. It was the beginning of a new impulse to missions. The general subject may be the progress of the Gospel. Through imperfect instruments (vers. 5-39.) The imperfections of Barnabas of Mark, and of Paul, are brought to notice. Paul's three contentions with his brethren. God uses imperfect instruments, or which of us could He use in His work? They were marked imperfections only in contrast with the brilliancy of their goodness. II. By establishing Christians (vers. 40, 41, 1, 7.) Through the fellowship of other Christians. (2) through increase of faith, (3) through increase of numbers. Timothy in his early training may be dwelt upon, and faithfulness in smaller fields fitting us for larger. III. By the call to new work. (vers. 8-10.) The call to Macedonia. How we are led. The call from all heathen, from the needy, the impatient. How we should answer the call.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' TEMPERANCE TEXT-BOOK.

BY H. L. READE.

(National Temperance Society, New York.)

LESSON I.—ALCOHOL AND PROPERTY.

What is property? Property is something which we possess, and of which we have the right to use or dispose of, for our convenience, comfort, and happiness.

Of what does property consist? Property consists of houses, lands, mills, stocks, bonds, notes, or the coin or currency of our own or some other nation.

How do persons acquire property? Most persons acquire property, by laying aside the little which careful industry enables them to earn over and above that required for food and clothing, and the demands of civilized society.

Is the average accumulation of property among common people in a civilized country, slow or rapid?

At the best among common people it is slow.

Why? It is slow because necessary expenses, usually, nearly equal earnings.

How is this little surplus of earnings over expenditures seriously lessened in this country?

By the direct and indirect support of those who do not earn their own living, or, earning, waste it, or, who, for other reasons, are a charge upon the general community.

Question Corner.—No. 2.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.—A SHORT PRAYER FROM THE PSALMS.

- 1. Some wise, some foolish waiting for the calling. Slumbering and sleeping, this they make in all. 2. Brave hearted, and unsuspecting, knowing not. Thy certain speedy death is but a plot. 3. He heeded not the counsellors that spoke— Sage elders saying, "Lighten thou our yoke."

- 4. Widowed and childless, forth I go to roam. If haply I may find my long left home. 5. A stream beside whose banks the prophet saw Visions and signs unknown to him before. 6. Thine ages belies the promise of thy youth. Thine heart is turned aside from God and truth.

- 7. Thoughtless of foot like some young roe is he. Speed cannot save from Abner's cruelty. 8. "Why callest thou me this?"—one little word That spoke a man's opinion of his Lord.

- 9. Ah, cruel king, the fate of misery Thy hands have often dealt, has come on thee. 10. One who in Rehoboam's reign was seer, Prophet, historian of vision clear. 11. This did the wise king make to traverse seas, And fill his land with foreign luxuries.

- 12. A kindly Jebusite who freely gave, An offering beside the people's grave. 13. Its place is number three in days of yore. Given to the Jews—then ceremonial law.

- 14. Amos before, and Jonah after me, A minor prophet, Lord—I speak for Thee. 15. The Lord is this when days of trouble come, Our very present Help, our spirit's Home. 16. O thou that livest in Sorek's verdant vale. Thou mak'st the strong man bow, his power to fail.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN No 21

- 1. The men of Jabesh: Gilead and the Ammonites. 1 Sam. xi. 1, 2. 2. Saul had forbidden them to eat any food until the evening. 1 Sam. xiv. 24, 25. 3. Saul. 1 Sam. xxviii. 8. 4. Ishboseth. 2 Sam. iv. 5, 6. 5. Athaliah, the grandmother, Joash and Jehosheba his aunt. 2 Kings xi. 2, 6.

OUR WONDERFUL HOUSE.—Ecclesiastes, xii. 1, 7.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED. Correct answers have been received from Carr Folsom, Dora Folsom, Albert Jessie French, Bertie A. Fair, et. c. a May McIntire, Walter G. Hay, Maggie Anna Miller, a Coburn