

Youth's Department.

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.

XV. MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS IN A.—CONTINUED.

141. To what extent did Saul execute the commission of the Lord against the Amalekites?—(1 Sam.)
 142. On what occasion did David prevail against them?—(1 Sam.)
 143. Who smote the rest of the Amalekites, and entirely dispossessed them of their country?—(1 Chron.)
 144. What was remarkable in the Anakims or children of Anak?—(Deut.)
 145. Where did the disciples of our Lord first obtain the name of Christians?—(Acts.)
 146. What was the name of the mountain on which the ark of Noah rested?—(Gen.)
 147. For what does Araunah the Jebusite stand conspicuous?—(2 Sam.)

CHURCH CALENDAR.

- Dec. 17.—Third Sunday in Advent.
 21.—St. Thomas's Day.
 24.—Fourth Sunday in Advent.
 25.—CHRISTMAS DAY.
 26.—St. Stephen's Day.
 27.—St. John's Day.
 28.—Innocents' Day.

THE SUNDAY SCHOLAR.

In a retired village in the south of England, remarkable for its picturesque beauty, lived a little girl named L. T. She was admitted to the Sunday School in which the writer of this little memoir was a teacher, when about eight years of age, and formed one of the class committed to her charge. The superiority of this child's conduct to the rest of her companions soon began to be observable. Without some particular cause, she never absented herself from the school, and the uniform steadiness of her behaviour when there was remarkable: she always appeared to be impressed with the seriousness of the work in which she was engaged, and to feel that the instructions then given were not "a light thing," to be forgotten as soon as heard, but momentous truths, with which she needed to be experimentally acquainted. During the prayers offered at the meeting and dismissal of the scholars, she always manifested uncommon attention; and her teacher does not recollect a single instance in which it was found necessary to reprove her for that giddiness and thoughtlessness, which almost universally, it is believed, form a part of the cross a Sunday-school teacher must expect to meet with; and it is impossible to forget the fixed seriousness with which she invariably listened to the reading and explanation of the chapter in the Testament, which made part of the Sabbath morning occupations. When L. was between nine and ten years of age, the school, owing to peculiar circumstances, was obliged to be given up for about the space of three months, during which time, in the absence of the teachers, she undertook the charge of a few of the younger children, and they regularly assembled on the Sabbath morning at her mother's cottage. She also frequently employed her leisure hours in teaching during the week. But above all, it was the constant tenor of her daily life which induced the hope that something more than head-knowledge had been vouchsafed to her—a hope that God the Holy Spirit was inwardly teaching her the reality of those blessed truths which she had heard with her outward ears. Her mother, and indeed all who knew her, frequently bore testimony to her obedience and willingness to do any thing required of her; she was also very careful in endeavouring to set a good example to her little brother, whose impetuous disposition she endeavoured constantly to restrain.

Another evidence that a new heart had indeed been given her, was the pleasure with which she looked forward to the privileges and enjoyments of the Lord's day: it was truly unto her "a delight," and not, as it is to be feared it too often proves to multitudes, "a weariness." She was in the habit of rising earlier on that day, that she might have time for reading to herself and also to her mother before school-time; and when the public services of the Sabbath were ended, she never joined those idle wanderers who too frequently are induced to trifle away its valuable hours—those hours now in mercy lent us, to prepare, in a more especial manner, for eternity; and for the way in which we have used and improved them, all must shortly give an account before the awful judgment-seat of Him who "requireth that which is just." As is even to be expected, she was ridiculed for her strictness by her school fellows; but this did not move her; whatever others did, she determined to be on the Lord's side. She came out and was separate from them, only expressing her surprise that they could act in direct contradiction to all the instructions given them by their teachers, and wilfully neglect to keep holy the Sabbath-day. In the manner in which they received her justly merited rebuke, she found in her own experience the truth of Scripture—"all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

L. was never a robust child; but from the autumn of 1834 her health began to decline materially, though no doubt was then entertained of her ultimate recovery. From this time she was not able, on account of the fluctuating state of her health, to be a regular attendant at the school. Her complaint at length terminated in consumption, in which her chief sufferings were from excessive and long-continued weakness, which almost entirely incapacitated her from speaking; this, together with natural timidity, deprived her teacher of the pleasure of much conversation with her, though she ever evinced the most lively interest and thankfulness for religious reading and converse. Her lingering illness she bore with christian meekness and patience—fruits, no doubt, which the Holy Spirit had wrought in her. She, like all the children of God, had her doubts and fears,—the enemy of her soul sometimes suggesting that her sins were too great to be pardoned; though in general she indulged the hope that, through the blood of Christ, she was washed from all her sins, and should obtain an eternal inheritance in the man-

sions of her Father's house above. Constantly, through the whole of her illness, her frame of mind was, "thy will be done:" though she desired to depart and to be with Christ, yet she expressed her entire willingness to remain so long as her heavenly Father saw it to be needful. The evening before her death, the latter part of the 7th chapter of the Book of Revelation was read to her, which, though unable to utter a word, she heard with delight; and the following morning, after a night of great suffering from violent convulsions, which were borne without a murmur, she fell asleep in Jesus; and doubtless now forms one of the ransomed company, who, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb, dwell forever in the heavenly temple. When her body was committed to the dust, and the solemn and affecting burial-service of our Church read over her lifeless form, it was delightful to anticipate, in sure and certain hope, her resurrection at the last day unto eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Calling on her mother after her death, she mentioned that L. had been in the habit every evening of praying with her, and conversing on the love of the Redeemer, and frequently exclaiming, "I should never have known any of these things, if I had not heard them at the SUNDAY SCHOOL.—Church of England Magazine.

PASSING THOUGHTS.

BY CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

No. VII.

THE BRANCH.

One of those sudden and violent gales, that occasionally sweep over the fair face of summer to wrinkle and deform it, had blown so strongly during the night, that morning presented the unwelcome spectacle of a branch—the only one left by the woodman's axe on an aged elm before my window—broken from the trunk, and hanging suspended by a merely external connexion, which could convey no nourishment to it. During the day, I watched with regretful looks, the evident fading of those leaves that had formed so graceful a screen to the window of my study: while, tossing more wildly in every fresh gust of wind, the broken branch seemed hastening to its final fall.

Towards evening, a party of idle boys congregated on the open space; and, after trying various pastimes, took it into their heads to enjoy a swing, as they said, on, or rather with, the drooping branch. By turns they seized it, springing from the ground, or climbing by the trunk; and, struggling as high as they could, set the bough in motion by their weight, waving to and fro, in desperate glee, at such a distance from the ground, that had the slender strip of rind given way, the consequences must have been dreadful. Emboldened by impunity, each foolish lad, endeavoured to surpass his predecessor in this wanton exposure of life and limb; until, alarmed at the scene, I privately sent to a person sufficiently authorized, who, placing a ladder against the trunk, mounted, and with one blow of an axe rendered the separation complete. The withering branch, thus cut off, fell, and was borne away to be cast into the fire and burned.

Perhaps few seasons are more friendly to solemn thought than the closing eve of a summer's day, clouded over and ruffled by the stormy wind. Here was a text, that would require very little skill to spin it out to a long discourse: a similitude clear to the dullest apprehension, and fraught with humbling considerations. Likening my elm to the "True Vine," how could I fail to follow up the comparison? A fair professor, with much to invite the good opinion of men, unable to withstand the trial of trouble and persecution arising because of the word, and virtually broken off through unbelief; yet maintaining that outward hold, which includes no spiritual participation in the root and fatness of the tree; hanging on, with weak though vaunting tenacity, and pointing downward, while every living branch bears its head toward the sky; the very abundance of his leafy professions only rendering more conspicuous his progress towards utter corruption, and holding out a perilous temptation to thoughtless souls. They, perhaps, not stopping to investigate the reality of his union with the tree, and delighted to find him tending to their own earthly region, from which his fellows labour more and more to rise, catch at him as a sort of connecting link—professing to rely on the stock that he seems to spring from; clinging to him rather than to that stock; and, by the weight of their worthless fellowship, hastening the fall that may prove as fatal to themselves. I marked how the grasp of those climbers continually tore down the leaves, which lay heaped beneath, until a very rude, short gust of wind swept them off in a moment, amid clouds of dust. Here was the positive reality of the prophet's touching image, "We all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have carried us away."

I turned from the window at length, overpowered by the thought—how awful is the responsibility of a branch, a recognized member of the visible Church! Either it is good, pleasant, profitable, doing honour to the stem that bears it; or a blemish, a disgrace to that stem, and to those who behold it a snare. And oh, how mysterious is the union which, abiding, gives life, strength, beauty, and fertility; but which may be destroyed without immediately breaking the outward tie. May not such a branch, under the power of self-deception, conceive that still it lives, though palpably withering in its place? It is an impressive call for deep searching of heart, when, for aught we know, the axe may be sharpening that is to lay us in the dust. As these ideas occupied me, I happened to glance on a favourite green-house plant, the principal part of which had once, by a fall been apparently broken as hopelessly as the elm-bough; but my anxiety to save it had prompted so many expedients, that, by dint of propping, binding, and other careful helps, the injury was repaired, and my plant stood as vigorously blooming as ever.—Sweet lesson! I mentally said; may it be mine to become a healer whenever I see a weak branch in danger of separating from the tree. Many a wounded spirit is utterly broken by the injudicious harshness, or unbelieving hopelessness, of those who might bind it up, if they would heartily set themselves to the work. Surely this, one of the blessed offices of the Saviour, well becomes his followers. To crush a weak brother is an easy, and, to our corrupt nature, congenial task; but to raise the fall-

ing, to support the wavering to dress the wound, and, by dressing, to hide it from unfeeling eyes—this is an acting of the new nature, which God the Spirit alone can create and sustain.

THE MOTHER.

There is something in sickness that breaks down the pride of manhood, that softens the heart, and brings it back to the feelings of infancy. Who that has languished even in advanced life, in sickness and despondency; who that has pined on a weary bed, in the neglect and loneliness of a foreign land, but has thought on the mother that looked on his childhood, that smoothed his pillow, and administered to his helplessness? Oh! there is an endearing tenderness in the love of a mother to a son that transcends all other affections of the heart. It is neither to be chilled by selfishness, nor daunted by danger, nor weakened by worthlessness, nor stilled by ingratitude. She will sacrifice every comfort to his convenience, she will surrender every pleasure to his enjoyment; she will glory in his fame, and exult in his prosperity; and if adversity overtake him he will be the dearer to her by misfortune; and if disgrace settle upon his name, she will still love and cherish him; and if all the world beside cast him off she will be all the world to him.—Washington Irving.

ANECDOTE OF ARCHBISHOP FENELON.

Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambrai, being told that his library was burnt down, immediately exclaimed, "Thank God, that it is not a poor man's cottage destroyed!" and on no occasion was a murmur ever heard to escape his lips, although he met with much opposition in the discharge of his episcopal functions. An intimate friend of his, who highly admired his virtues, one day asked the prelate "if he could communicate the secret of being always easy." "Yes," replied the good man, "I can teach you my secret with much facility: it consists in nothing more than making a right use of your eyes!" His friend begged him to explain himself. "Most willingly," returned the bishop, "In whatever state I am, I first of all look up to heaven, and I remember my principal business here, is to get there: I then look down upon the earth, and call to mind how small a portion I shall occupy in it, when I come to be interred: I then look abroad into the world, and observe what multitudes there are who are, in many respects, more unhappy than myself. Thus I learn where true happiness is placed, where all our cares must end; and then see how very little reason I have to complain."

AN OLD MAN'S PARTING.

The blessing of our Master be with you, young man. My hours are like the ears of the latter harvest, and your days are yet in the spring, and yet you may be gathered into the garner before me; for the sickle of death cuts down the green as oft as the ripe, and there is a colour in your cheek that, like the bud of the rose, serveth oft to hide the worm of corruption. Wherefore labour as one who knoweth not when his master calleth. And if it be my lot to return to this village after ye are gone home to your ain place, these auld withered hands will frame a stane of memorial, that your name may not perish from among the people.—Sir Walter Scott.

Self will bid some men confess themselves sinners, that they may be considered as saints; to take them at their word would mortify and displease them.—Serle.

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EDITOR for the time being, The Rev. A. N. Bethune, to whom all communications for insertion in the paper (post paid) are to be addressed, as well as remittances of Subscription.

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