

Our Young Folks.

THE VOICE WITHIN.

A little Quaker girl one day
Paused in her busy round of play
As her dear mother came that way.

"May I?" she said, as soft and clear
She whispered in her mother's ear,
So low that no one else could hear.

Her mother answered, as she smiled:
"By nothing wrong be thou beguiled;
What says the voice within thee, child?"

The little Quaker went her way;
Soon back she came. I heard her say:
"The little voice within says, 'Nay.'"

Oh, children, heed the voice within;
The little voice your hearts would win,
And keep your feet from paths of sin.

PAYING BACK.

"Please, mother, call Jessie in; we want to go down to the mill and home by the race, and we don't want to be bothered with Jessie.

Netta Wallace stood at her mother's open window holding the little five-year-old by the hand; Virginia waited at a little distance.

"But I want to go, too," sobbed the little one; "I have walked to the mill often and often, and I want to go too."

"Why don't you take her, Netta?" asked her mother, stopping the whirr of her busy machine wheel to settle this little trouble.

"O, she is such a bother!" cried Netta fretfully; "she has to be lifted over the fences and led by the hand, and she is in the way."

"Come here, Virginia," called the mother turning away from the machine and leaning out of the window. "Sit down there on the grass, all of you, I want to tell you a little bit of a story, but it is a short one and won't keep you back long.

"Thirteen years ago there came into a certain house that I know of a wee little pink baby. She was a great joy to everybody in the house, but she was also a great deal of trouble. She was washed, and dressed, and fed, and put to sleep, and nursed and rocked and carried around, and nobody ever once complained of the trouble. In two years more another little baby came, and then, of course, the mother had her hands full. Then there were two little maids to be washed, and dressed, and fed, and put to sleep, and nursed, and carried round, and played with and sewed for. Still, nobody ever thought of complaining or once called them a trouble.

"When mother and father went to walk babies went too; their little hands were held, their little feet lifted over rough places, and everything was done to make them happy.

"As the years went by these two little maids grew tall and strong and independent, while other little ones took their places in the family to be cared for and helped. Now, if you had been those maids, my daughters, how would you have behaved to the little ones? Would you have said, 'Go away, children, and don't bother,' or would you have tried to pay back some of the care and love and trouble?"

"O, mother," said Virginia, "were those little maids named Netta and Virginia?"

"It is strange, but I think they were," said mother, smiling.

"Come, Jess," interrupted Netta, taking this way to answer her mother's question; "it's time we were off on our walk."

And dear little Jessie, who had not been able to make head nor tail out of the story, sprang from the grass with a happy bound, clouds all gone, rain-drops, too, and her sun shining brightly.

ONE PAGE A DAY.

One page of good literature a day, thoughtfully read, must produce beneficial intellectual results, even though the reader find it difficult to recall at will the full thought of the author, or to reproduce a complete sentence in which that thought, or any part of it was expressed. Even slight effort at "giving attention" will increase power of concentration. The world opened by that single page, may awaken a new intellectual interest, quicken curiosity, sharpen appetite, and suggest thoughts of his own to the mind of the reader. The simple passing of well-expressed ideas across his mental horizon will enlarge his world, enrich his mind, refine his tastes, increase his vocabulary, and give him new interest in the topics which obtrude themselves upon him in these days, when everybody is thinking, and when great events are crowding into the wonderful history now being made. One page a day guarantees so much gain of knowledge and power to the attentive and interested reader.

Of course, the results of one page a day will be scarcely appreciable. One day's toil will build no temple. But seven days make a week, and four weeks make a month, and twelve months contain three hundred and sixty-five days. One page a day will therefore grow in one year into a volume of three hundred and sixty-five pages. Now, at three hundred pages to a book, one may read in ten years twelve stout volumes. He who in a decade reads with interested and inquiring atten-

tion twelve volumes is no mean student; and if the reading in five minutes of a single page should stimulate thought that keeps hammering or digging or singing in the reader's brain during the day when he is at work and his book is shut, at the end of ten years such reader and thinker will deserve some reputation as a "scholar." He may be, in some sense, a master of twelve big books. And if they be the right books, no master of a larger library can afford to overlook the claim upon his recognition of this man who reads well one page a day.

THE BEGINNING OF WEALTH.

A writer in the *Treasure Trove* tells "How they Started;" that is, how some of America's millionaires began to get rich. And the lessons drawn from this chapter of humble beginnings are well worth repeating: Very likely some of these men did small things, and mean things, and disreputable things, that you would be ashamed to do, and I would be ashamed to have you do; probably some of these men haven't much of anything better to show for it than their money; and you and I know—as well as we know the earth turns—that all the dollars ever minted won't pay a decent man for just a little bit of his decency and honesty. But there is no need of any bargain with the devil; some of these men prove it, for they have been true to their principles as sunrise to the morning, and have kept that pure heart that is consoling beyond their money, and imparts a satisfaction which government coupons will not give.

But the point is just here: They, all of them—who have made a "pile,"—in whatever points they differed, have united on hard work, attention to business, and patience with small beginnings. Now, my boy, stick three pegs in right there. Begin where you are; do it well; make an honest nickel or two out of it, and then save; then if you see a good square, legitimate way to turn those nickels into dollars, go ahead and do it, but don't play policy, or lottery, or dark horse no, not at twenty for one. Whatever your business is, attend to it. Don't play with it, or it will play with you. And don't be afraid of work. I have been twenty years looking for an easy way to get rich, and I have come to the conclusion that there isn't any.

EYES OPEN OR SHUT.

Two boys one morning took a walk with a naturalist. "Do you notice anything peculiar in the movements of those wasps?" he asked, as he pointed to a puddle in the middle of the road.

"Nothing, except that they seem to come and go," replied one of the boys. The other was less prompt in his reply, but he had observed to some purpose.

"I notice that they fly away in pairs," he said. "One has a little pellet of mud, the other has nothing. Are there drones among wasps, as among bees?"

"Both were alike busy, and each went away with a burden," replied the naturalist.

"The one you thought a do-nothing had a mouthful of water. They reach their nest together; the one deposits his pellet of mud, and the other ejects the water upon it, which makes it of the consistency of mortar. They then paddle it upon the nest, and fly away for more materials." And then, on the strength of this interesting incident, he gives this good advice: "Boys, be observant. Cultivate the faculty. Hear sharply—look keenly. Glance at a shop window as you pass it, and then try how many things you can recall that you noticed in it. Open your eyes wider when you stroll across the meadow, through the woods or along the brook. There are ten thousand interesting things to be seen, noted, wondered at and explained. Animals, birds, plants and insects, with their habits, intelligence and peculiarities, will command your admiration. You may not become great men through your observation, like Newton, Linnaeus, Franklin, or Sir Humphrey Davy, but you will acquire information that will be of service to you, and make you wiser and quite probably better.

CHERISH YOUR GIRLHOOD.

Dear Girls, don't be so often wishing you were grown-up women that you will neglect your girlhood. In the rush and hurry of these fast times there is danger that you will reach and strain after "young ladyhood" too much.

Be girls a while yet; tender, joyous, loving, obedient and industrious. Womanhood, with its privileges and power, its burdens and its trials, will come soon enough. On this point one has said:

"Wait patiently, my children, through the whole limit of your girlhood. Go not after womanhood; let it come to you. Keep out of public view. Cultivate refinement and modesty.

The cares and responsibilities of life will come soon enough. When they come you will meet them, I trust, as true women should. But oh, be not so unwise as to throw away your girlhood. Rob not yourself of this beautiful season, which, wisely spent, will brighten all your future life."

THE Rev. Mr. Sutherland, of the Free Church, Turfiff, who is applying for a colleague and successor on account of failing health after a ministry of over forty-five years, does not seek any retiring allowance, but only \$100 a year in lieu of the manse. He was for many years Presbytery Clerk, and is still Clerk of Aberdeen Synod.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

March 23, 1890.

CHRIST FORGIVING SIN.

{ Luke 5: 17-26.

GOLDEN TEXT. —Who can forgive sins but God alone?— Luke v. 21.

INTRODUCTORY.

After the miraculous draught of fishes near Capernaum, Jesus, accompanied by His disciples, went throughout Galilee preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. They had returned, after this missionary journey, to Capernaum, where He again speaks to the people so eager to hear him.

I. Christ Preaching in the House.—Jesus did not confine His ministry to the synagogue or the temple. Wherever opportunity presented itself He was ready to preach salvation to the people. From a fishing-boat, or a mountain-side it was all the same to Him. The ministry of Jesus Christ gives little countenance to the theory of consecrated places. He consecrated all places by His presence, and can do so still. In a private house at Capernaum He was teaching. The people were still deeply interested in the truth He presented. His audience was composed of different classes. The poor and the rich, the sick and the well, the ignorant and the learned were alike attracted by His ministry. The place was crowded; many people from a distance had come to hear Him. There were people there not only from remote parts of Galilee, but even from Judea and from the city of Jerusalem. Pharisees were there—the people who were exceedingly anxious to fulfil not only the strict letter of the sacred law, but even to comply with the traditions that had been handed down by successive generations of rabbis. In this observance of the outward form of religion, down to the most minute particulars, they thought that true religion consisted and that compliance with these requirements entitled them to salvation. There were also doctors of the law, most of them were also Pharisees. They are also called Scribes. It was part of their duty to make copies of the sacred books. In this they were exceedingly careful, and to their fidelity in this respect we are indebted for the correctness of the sacred text of the Old Testament that has come down to us. Being conversant with the law, they were the instructors of the people, and enjoyed to a large extent the popular confidence and respect. These hearers—the scribes and Pharisees—however, were not sympathetic listeners to Christ's teaching. His teaching was different from theirs. What at first they were chiefly concerned about was the retention of their own popularity, for if Jesus' preaching should be highly valued by the people, then their teaching would suffer in the general estimation. The teaching of Jesus was accompanied by miraculous power, for "The power of the Lord was present to heal them." The Gospel is in itself a healing power. It is saving health.

II. The Palsied Man brought to Jesus.—From the fact that Christ had on former occasions, while in that neighbourhood, healed the sick, many were no doubt anxious to go to Him for the cure of their bodily ailments. In this they were encouraged by their friends. At this time there was a man afflicted with palsy, or paralysis, unable himself to go to Jesus for healing, but four of his friends were willing to carry him. They got a bed, a light framework probably, on which a mattress or blanket was spread, and placed him upon it and brought him to the house where Jesus was. When they reached the place they found the crowd so great that there was no chance of gaining an entrance. They were not easily discouraged. They would not, without an effort, carry home the poor sick man without making at least an effort to bring him into Jesus' presence. "They sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Him." The low flat-roofed houses of Palestine, and the outside stairway leading to the roof, afforded the opportunity the friends of the sick man sought. They ascended with their burden, and soon made an opening in the roof through which they lowered the couch whereon the man lay, and he was soon in Christ's presence. The whole action was prompted by faith. The sufferer himself and the men that brought him to Jesus were animated by faith in Christ's healing power. There is great encouragement as well as instruction in the expression, "When He saw their faith." Wherever there is faith Christ sees it, and wherever there is real faith in Christ there is salvation. He will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. The Divine Healer saw at a glance the state of the man's soul as well as his great bodily need, and He says: "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee." There can be no salvation without the forgiveness of sin, therefore that is one of the soul's first necessities. Sin is not forgiven except it is repented of. To secure the forgiveness of sin was the object of Christ's coming, suffering and death. The announcement made to the palsied man by Jesus startled the scribes and Pharisees. Well it might. It does not follow that they spoke out their objections; it may be that they only thought them in their mind. He who saw the faith of the sick man and his friends also as plainly saw the unbelief of the scribes and Pharisees, and prepares to answer their cavils. In their minds they accuse Jesus of blasphemy—that is, speaking against God. In this instance it consisted in Christ's claiming a power that belonged to God alone. If Jesus has power to forgive sins then He is God. That alternative they did not see, and were unwilling to admit. Jesus places it before their minds in a way that they cannot gainsay. "Whether," he says, "is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?" The power that could do either was divine.

III. Healing and Forgiveness.—With that calm dignity which marked the ministry of Jesus, He says: "But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins (He said unto the sick of the palsy): 'I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch and go unto thine house.'" These words not only brought joy and hope to that sufferer who first heard them, but they carry with them their power to bless and save whoever in faith receives them to the end of time. He is the Son of Man—man's complete representative, and God who possesses the power of bestowing forgiveness. That power is exercised on earth. It is present here and now. Christ is as willing as ever to forgive the sins of all who come to Him. The faith of the sick man was tried by the command given him, and it stood the test, for he who was helpless when carried there, was able to walk home, carrying the bed on which he had been brought. As he departs he makes it evident to all that he has learned the lesson Christ's words and work were fitted to teach. He ascribed the power by which his sins had been forgiven and his body healed to God. The impression produced was striking on all who witnessed this manifestation of the Saviour's divine power and authority. They were filled with reverential awe, and said, "We have seen strange things to-day." The man who was healed and the people generally were deeply impressed by what they had seen and heard. How the Scribes and Pharisees regarded what was done is not here told. It is not likely that they were convinced, for they did not wish to be. The great majority of them, though unable to explain the teaching and miracles of Christ, on any other theory than that He was the Son of God, continued in their unbelief and only became more determined in their hostility to Him.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Christ's teaching never loses its power to attract.

It is the privilege of all who believe in Christ, of all who are deeply interested in the welfare of others, to bring the sinful and the suffering to Him who can heal and forgive.

Sin is a disease from which all suffer, and which Christ alone can cure.

Christ's healing and saving work is self-evidencing.