

Our Young Folks.

The Prayerful Mother.

The sweetest time that ever rose on bright... The brightest flower that ever bloomed for heaven!

The Faithful Prayer.

Two families lived in one house, and each had a little boy about the same age. These boys slept together. One of them said a prayer every night, and repeated some verses which his mother had taught him;

How He Began.

"Lend me a postage stamp, Hal," said Nicholas, as he was folding a letter to send home. "I am out of stamps and change. I will pay you back when my next allowance comes."

A Child's Prayer.

HOW NOT TO BE AFRAID IN THE DARK. I was very much interested last evening in a story told me by a lady, of her little boy, only four years old. She said he had always been very timid, and especially afraid in the dark, always requiring a light left in the room upon going to bed.

Sabbath School Teacher.

LESSON XI.

March 11, 1875. THE ALIEN OF WITNESS. COMMIT TO MEMORY, verses 26 and 47. PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Gen. xxi. 41-49; Acts vi. 1-4. For the events of which the knowledge is assumed in this chapter, read Num. xxv. 1-25; on the erection of the altar, see Ez. vii. 15; on the engagement of the two and a half tribes to Joshua, see Josh. i. 16-18; on the settlement of the threatened quarrel, see Matt. v. 22 and xviii. 16; and on the care for coming generations, P. lxxviii. 4-7.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Ye are all one in Christ Jesus.—Gal. iii. 28. GENERAL TRUTH.—One Shepherd and one flock.

The land, generally described for shortness, as Gilead (v. 16), on the east bank of Jordan, was well fitted for cattle (Numb. xxxi. 1). Gad and Reuben were possessed of cattle (v. 4), and begged Moses to give them this land. He regarded the request as alarming, looking to the ridding of the nation (v. 7-15); but his fears were allayed by a promise to share the hardships of the war in Canaan till it was conquered, and to return only when it was in possession of Israel (v. 16-19).

The land was now subdued, and it was proper for Gad, and Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh to return to the cities they had built (Numb. xxxii. 34-42). Accordingly, Joshua dismisses them honourably, and with a blessing (v. 1-8), and the warriors of the tribes set out, we may well believe, in the best of temper for their future homes and their families (v. 9).

Thinking of the future of these families, it occurred to them that there would be risk of alienation springing up, and of their being disowned by the majority of the tribes, on account of their being beyond the natural boundary of the land, the Jordan. They learn from their own report (v. 25). So they fell upon the plan—no doubt after some thought and discussion—of building a large monumental altar ("a great altar to see," v. 10). Whether it was on the east or west bank of the river is a disputed point among scholars. We cannot help deciding in favour of their own land, over which they had control, on their own (east) side of the river, "over against" Jordan. Had it been on the west side, the tribes could have overthrown it without more ado, as a trespass on their land, instead of going to war. But the purpose, not the place, is the main point.

The report of this roused the tribes to instant action—to preparation for war (v. 12). They felt that the unity of the nation must be preserved; and its unity of religious worship seemed a part of the nation's life. One God, one altar, one people—such was the genius of the Mosaic rule.

But, most properly, it was decided to send a deputation of men of weight, Phineas son of Eleazar, and ten princes (v. 13, 14). Phineas had already distinguished himself by efficient zeal against idolatry (Numb. xxv. 7), in the affair of Baal-peor, to which reference is naturally made (v. 17). He was able, courageous, and trusted. (See Numb. xxxi. 6.) They carried the remonstrance, and demanded explanations; and if the land seemed to them unclean, not consecrated and under divine protection, they offered to receive them on their side (v. 17), showing their conviction that religion was more important than land, and the favour of God than ample possessions (Ps. xxxvii. 16).

The answer of the "Children of Reuben and Gad and Manasseh was prompt and solemn, in the divine name (v. 22), oft repeated, "The Lord God of gods," (EL, ELOHIM, JEHOVAH), and with a solemn adjuration, "save us not this day!" equivalent to "so keep me God!" in an oath (which should have all the solemnity of an act of worship).

It disclaims any separatist intention "to turn from following the Lord" (v. 23), or any idea of using the altar for worship, or anything else than as a monument.

It declares the true intent, to perpetuate the sense, and fact, of oneness with the nation, notwithstanding the intervening Jordan (v. 24, 25), and so to keep up, to the service, the "your children make our children" sense from fearing the Lord.

It recites the history of the act (v. 26, 27) as already given, that it may be a witness, &c. Nor was it without a reason in the nature of things. This altar would testify to the kind of worship common to the people on both sides of Jordan (v. 28). The result, as will be seen, was satisfactory in the highest degree (v. 32, 33).

On this record the following remarks may be made, and illustrated at the will of teachers.

I. The aim of the two and a half tribes was natural and laudable. Why should they not wish to keep their places in the one Church of God of the time? Nothing can be more offensive or destructive of charity, than the attempt of any community, great or little, to unchurch others.

It is one thing to say—and true Christians will always say it with pain—"We cannot be joined with you in work and worship." It is another to say—"We do not recognize you as in the church of Christ." All Christians may be expected to resent such attempted exclusion.

This concern for their children was eminently laudable. A people who indolently say of institutions, "They will do well enough for our day," has gone far towards decay and ruin. So let us build up, strengthen and guard well all agencies that preserve religion for coming generations, and resist all that would make them "cease from the fear of the Lord."

II. Yet the best institutions may be misunderstood by brethren, as this was. Hence the need of caution, clear statement, candour, and openness to put ourselves in the place of other. We have not only to ask, "Will it be safe for me to do a thing?" but also, "How will it look to others?" And all matters not positively enjoined, this latter is an element in coming to a decision.

III. It was wise to send the deputation. Mutual explanations in a right spirit would avert many a strife. See Prov. xviii. 18. See also our Lord's rule in Matt. xviii. 16. How often the reply would be, "I am sorry you feel so. I never intended it."

This is a good element in the movement for abridgment in national quarrels to prevent wars; in the Evangelical Alliance, as promoting mutual knowledge and good feeling; in all union Christian movements, in all federation of Churches, and all joint action in which the tribes of Israel acknowledge one another as tribes, even a though natural obstacles lie between.

IV. It was proper for the tribes to meet in this matter. The maintenance of a Divine service was a chief end of the nation's existence. Beginnings of evil are best resisted; let alone, they are supposed to be condoned, and become precedents.

Zeal for God's worship is well pleasing in God's sight. See the praise given Phineas in Ps. cxi. 30, 31. Ministers of the gospel may be supposed to be prominent in defence of what seems to them fundamental, even though censured as bigoted or meddling. How far divergences and varieties of Divine service may be allowed in the same Christian Churches, is a matter for Christian wisdom, and probably would be as safe to go farther than we have yet done in this direction, so long as "the truth" is held in common. And as to the altar there was no question. One tabernacle, one mercy-seat, one priesthood, were fixed by the Lord absolutely. See Lev. xvi. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9. So the law taught men and checked idolatry. Nor was it enough that the actual sin was yet committed, as was forcibly argued (v. 18), "If you rebel to-day, to-morrow," from the evil spreading, or from our being regarded as one by Jehovah, "he will be angry with the whole congregation." Open evil endured by a community involves the community in its consequences.

V. How important that nothing should obscure our one mercy-seat (Acts iv. 12), altar, (Heb. ix. 11), and sacrifice (Heb. xiii. 20), or put away the idea of "one God and one mediator" (1 Tim. ii. 5). The union of men for the upholding and defence of this sacred truth is itself a sign of God's presence, and is pleasing to God, and to all His true people. See Eph. iv. 5, 6.

SUGGESTIVE TOPICS.

The two and a half tribes—why east of Jordan—name of their land—when given them—by whom—what understanding—when renewed—their fidelity—return—blessed—their fear—precaution—misunderstanding of it—preparation of the tribes—where they justified in (see Lev. xvii. 4)—deputation—its leader—his history—character—the remonstrance—the reply—the disclaimer of evil intention—the effect—the like cases among us—as to war—mutual explanations—guarding the truth—zeal for God's honour—and practical union in the fear and service of God.

WISDOMS.

Those inactive and dilatory creatures who are still essaying and proposing, but never acting and proceeding, resemble St. George, who is always on horseback, but never rides forward. King Lewis XI used to say, "When pride rides in the saddle, mischief and shame sit upon the crupper." Aristotle, observing a proud and self-conceited empty youth strutting along with an affected gait and lofty looks, stopped up to him and whispered these cutting and heart-humbling words into his ear:—"Friend, such as thou thinkest thyself to be, I wish I were; but to be as thou art I wish only to mine enemies."

Envy is a fiend who never totally dies out of this world, and but seldom sleeps; however, as it sometimes falls into slumber, it is highly imprudent to awake it, either by loudly trumpeting forth our own or by doing commendable actions with bustle and noise.

Be as deaf to the flatterer as to the railer, for if the latter occasions more smart the former often causes more hurt.

Make Children Useful.

The energy which some children manifest in mischievous pranks may be made to subserve usefulness and instructive purposes. Little odds and ends of employment may be given them—work suited to their small capabilities may be assigned them—and under judicious direction and considerate encouragement, their little heads and hands can accomplish much, and that gladly. The bright little ones who would "help mamma" should not be repelled with a harsh word, but some simple task should be devised for their occupation, and some trifling thing—so very great to them—should be the reward of its performance.

As a general rule, give your children something to do. A daily employment of some sort will exercise their minds healthfully, and develop elements of usefulness and self-reliance which may prove incalculably valuable to their manhood and womanhood. Miserable is the plea urged by some that they "have no time" to look after their children. No such pretext can defeat them of the grave responsibilities which the having of children imposes. The laws of God and of humanity demand of parents the best care and training for their children they can bring into exercise. How many poor wretches there are, taxing society with their maintenance, who owe their worthlessness and sins to the negligence of their parents in developing and directing good natural endowments for lives of industry and independence! Large firmness in a child is a good thing; it contributes to steadiness of thought and deed. Large Self-Esteem is desirable, in that it confers the sense of personal worth and dignity. Large Appropriateness is most serviceable in its restraining and stimulating ministrations. Large Destructiveness is a good heritage, under proper control it contributes to activity and achievement. Large Combativeness is a good quality; it contributes courage, boldness, and progression to the character. Large Acquisitiveness, rightly trained, supplements industry with economy and thrift. But such qualities in children need the guidance of a discreet parent. Mismanagement, neglect, or any lead to their perversion and the ruin of a life which, otherwise, might have been a splendid success.—Annual of Phrenology and Physiognomy.

SOMETIMES the best way to check a scandalous report is to dispute it; if we go about to stop it, it will but run the faster.

Messrs Moody and Sankey in Birmingham.

The meetings in Birmingham held by Messrs. Moody and Sankey have uniformly been crowded, and the interest and excitement are as great, perhaps greater, than in any place they have visited. The requests for prayer in the noonday meetings are unusually numerous and varied. On Friday week there was a request for prayer for the policemen, railway servants, postmen, bus drivers, guards, cabmen, and commercial travellers of Birmingham. The ministers in the town take part in the meetings and are very zealous and zealous.

The meetings on Sabbath were something wonderful. Four times was that vast building, Bingley Hall, filled. In the afternoon and evening the numbers that met were extraordinary. In the afternoon and evening meetings the numbers that met were extraordinary. Altogether, there must have been at least 45,000 present at the meetings on that day. At his morning meeting for Christian workers, the hall was not quite full, owing probably to the wet morning. The meeting was most enthusiastic in response to Mr. Moody's appeals to work for the Lord. At eleven o'clock a meeting was held for those who do not attend any place of worship. It was quite evident at a glance that at least half of the audience were not of this class, but still there was a great gathering of the lowest class of working people. At first the predominant feeling seemed to be curiosity, and as one after another gentleman stepped on the platform the whisper would pass from mouth to mouth, "Is that Mr. Moody? However, Mr. Sankey's singing of "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by" soon arrested their attention; the silent attention with which Mr. Moody's address was heard seemed somewhat remarkable. His address was on the plan of salvation and the free offer made of it. Many strong men might be seen weeping, and when towards the close of his address he made a fervent appeal, asking who would accept Jesus, a perfect shout arose from many "I will!" At the meeting at three o'clock, for women only the hall was densely packed. Such a gathering of women was never witnessed. In the evening a meeting for men only was held in the same hall; this also was crowded—every inch of standing space was occupied. Mr. Moody's discourse made a deep impression on his hearers.

Bingley Hall having been engaged, the committee who were arranging for Mr. Bright's address, had resolved to hold the meeting in the Town Hall. Messrs. Moody and Sankey having heard of the difficulty promptly relinquished their right, and gave up the use of Bingley Hall. This has given great satisfaction in Birmingham to all classes. Messrs. Moody and Sankey spent Monday in Manchester.

A convention of Christians was held on Tuesday, the entire day being devoted to consider how the work of revival might best be carried on in Birmingham. It is estimated that at no time were there less than 5000 present, and at certain periods of the day this number was largely exceeded. The conference was opened by a service of praise. Mr. Sankey delivered an address on the subject, in which he maintained that prayer would be more availing if there were more praise in it. Addresses were also delivered by the Rev. Mr. Stevens, Dublin; the Rev. H. Morgan, Manchester; and the Rev. F. K. King, Manchester; hymns were sung at intervals. The second meeting was devoted to addresses on Christian work. Mr. Moody delivered an address on the subject, several speakers following. The next subject was on prayer-meetings and how to conduct them. Mr. Moody opened the subject, and some interesting information was afterwards given on the question of the best way of drawing out the masses. The last hour of the convention was entitled "question hour," when Mr. Moody answered a number of questions put to him on various subjects.

The meetings have been continued, the attendance an interest continuing to increase. We learn that previous to commencing their labours in Liverpool, Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey intended to take week's rest. This brief period of well-earned repose, will, we trust, invigorate the American Evangelists for the great work that is before them in Liverpool and London. The services in Liverpool will commence (D.V.) on Sabbath, 7th prox.—The Weekly Review.

Protection by Prayer.

A little girl, about five years old, lived with her parents, who were very poor, in a small cottage in a village of Prussia. One day, when her father was out, little Rosa was sitting by her mother, who was just recovering from an attack of fever, which had weakened her very much. She was singing a hymn when the door opened suddenly, and six soldiers walked into the room. The poor child was so terrified at first that she fell from the bench on which she had been sitting. A few moments afterwards, however, she rose to her knees and in her own simple, childlike words, which the big tears trembled in her eyes, she prayed that God would pity them and help them; that he would make the soldiers kind to her mother, and tell them to go away to some other house where they might get something to eat and drink, and ending with these words, "For thou knowest, Lord, that we are very poor."

One of the soldiers patted the child's head kindly, and said: "Was taught you to pray so nicely, little one?" "Jesus did mother," was her simple reply.

The soldier, a tall, strong, rough looking man, turned aside his head, and brushed a tear from his cheek, then, putting a piece of money in her lap, he kissed the little girl, and said so her kindly: "There is something for your mother, my child. Pray for us soldiers also something, like a good little girl, for we need prayer very much."

A few moments later little Rosa, who had rushed to close the door after the soldiers, was clasped in her mother's arms. And how gladly that mother thanked the Lord, who had so kindly protected them from harm and danger, in answer to the prayer of her child.

A Word to Mothers.

Each mother is a historian. She writes not the history of empires or of nations on paper, but she writes her own history on the imperishable tablet of her child. That tablet and that history will remain indelible when time shall be no more. That history each mother will read a zillion, and read with eternal joy or quivering awe in the face of eternity. This thought should weigh on the mind of every mother, and render her deeply reverent and prayerful, and faithful in her solemn work of training up her children for heaven and immortality. The minds of children are very susceptible and easily impressed. A word, a look, a frown, may engrave an impression on the mind of a child which no lapses of time can efface or wash out. You walk along the seashore when the tide is out, and you for a character, or write words or names in the smooth white sand which lies spread out so clear and beautiful at your feet, according as your fancy may dictate, but the sunning tide shall, in a few hours, wash it all efface forever all that you have written. Not so the lines and characters of truth and error which your conduct imprints on the mind of your child. There you write impressions for the eternal good or ill of your child, which neither the floods nor storms of earth can wash out, nor death's cold finger can erase, nor the slow moving ages of eternity can obliterate. How careful, then, should each mother be of herself in this treatment of her child. How prayerful, how serious, and how earnest, to write the truths of God on his sand—these truths which shall be his guide and teacher when his voice shall be silent in death, and her lips no longer move in prayer in his behalf in commending her dear child to her covenant with God.

Thoughts for the Thoughtful.

The distinguishing differences between great and small men consist in the superior power of observation and the accurate methods of thought, possessed by the former. Whoever we find a truly great mind we find these powers developed in an unusual degree. It is true that many who have acquired a just reputation for ability, may not be accurate observers in all departments of human knowledge, but they will be found such in the particular classes of facts pertaining to the fields they have cultivated, and in which they have acquired their eminence. Great politicians and diplomatists are close and accurate observers of men and the motives of human action. Historians train themselves to observe carefully social phenomena and statistics, and to scrutinize closely the evidence upon which the statements of historical facts are to be accepted as true or rejected as false. Scientists occupy themselves with the useful study of material things, and phenomena, and deduct as therefrom. Ordinary people observe things as though at a distance. They perceive outlines, coarse shades of color, general characteristics only. Minute details altogether escape their notice. Place in the hands of such observers a beautiful flower, or an insect, they see these things, as it were, without seeing them. They get only a general and very imperfect impression of them. The most important characteristics escape their observation.—Selected.

Miscellaneous.

Thou mayest be more happy than ever was Caesar or Solomon, if thou wilt be more virtuous.

He who receives a good turn should never forget it, he who does one should never remember it.

God's blessings are blessings with both His hands. In the one He gives pardon, but in the other He gives chastisement, and so man can have the one unless the other.—Spurgeon.

IGNORANCE AND VIOLENCE.—There never was any party, faction, sect, or cabal whatsoever, in which the most ignorant were not the most violent; for a booby is not a bunter animal than a block head.—Pope.

We may differ as to our mode of doing good, while our motives may be equally pure. Why then should we impose on others in lives? We may be equally anxious to serve God, why then should we be charged with selfishness when labouring to save souls?

Idleness.—It is a mistake to imagine that only the violent passion, such as ambition and love, can triumph over the rest. Idleness, languid as she is, often masters them all; she, indeed, influences all our designs and actions, and insensibly consumes and destroys both passions and virtues.

We are often weary in life. We want to lie down and rest; want to give up almost. We think our strength gone, and we simply pray for God's forgiveness of our sins and crave strength for the hour. Well we are surprised to find that we came out of our depression helped and strengthened. God hears our prayers. Our very trust in him reflects back on our life. His Spirit fills our own and we even feel thankful for a trial. The strength must be from on high only.

We have a painful conviction that there is far too little daily and earnest Bible reading, even among professing Christians. We once heard a pastor say to another, "How many of our church members do you suppose read their Bibles deliberately and attentively every day?" A thoughtful consideration of the answer came, to which both assented, "Not one quarter." We would fain believe their judgment over-estimated the deplorable fact to which we have alluded, but of its approximate correctness there can be no reasonable doubt. The Scripture reading of very many Church members is brief, hasty, and well-nigh fruitless, and many others have no daily habit of reading the Bible at all. In many Christian (?) homes the daily paper or weekly God's precious Word entirely out of the morning hour; and in some—Ed. it not in Gath.—out of the Sabbath afternoon.—Christian Advocate.