

Our Young Folks.

One Step at a Time.

"O dear! O dear! I shall never get there," sighed Charlie. It was a mountain side, and a path led from the valley below up to the summit. But it was not an easy path at all. It was rough and stony, sometimes steep, sometimes slippery; sometimes it went through boggy places, that were worse of all. At first there were so many things to look at that Charlie, who was climbing up with his father, had no thought about the steepness of the way. The huge gray rocks piled one upon another, with the purple heather growing here and there on the little ledges, as if some careful gardener had planted it there to make the most of room; the little stream gurgling and foaming, following the course marked out for it, and determined not to be turned aside, and leaping over the precipices as if it laughed at the grim old rocks, and said to them, "Down I go, you can't hinder me;" the graceful lady-lorn peeping from under the crags, and the outcrag, so white and feathery, covering the dark, boggy ground; the large bird that kept wheeling around them, and which Charlie thought was an eagle, though it was only a kite; the little mountain sheep, they were so small and so very white—all he had enjoyed very much, till his legs began to ache, and the top looked just as far off as ever; so that his courage faded.

"We don't get a bit nearer, father," he cried, as he threw himself down upon a mossy stone; "so we had better give it up."

"Come, come, my little fellow, cheer up, and don't lose heart," said his father. "Rest a few minutes, and then make another effort. I see you have not yet learned the best way up the hill."

"No, father; what is it?" said Charlie, looking around to see whether there was an easier path they might have taken.

"One step at a time, Charlie; that is the best way."

"But that is the only way anywhere;" and Charlie looked again rather puzzled.

"Quite true, my boy; but truer still is going up a mountain. What I mean is this: if you look at the difficulties before you, how high the summit is, and how far off it seems, you lose your courage; but if you only think of what is just beneath you, and take one step, and then another, then another, why, each one is taking you nearer and nearer; and little by little, step by step, you get to your journey's end."

"I see, I see," cried Charlie, springing up; "hurrah! then, here goes!" and in a very short time he was sitting on the pile of stones at the mountain's summit, rewarded for his toil, and refreshed by the breeze, and heartily enjoying the contents of the basket his father had carried up for him.

The holidays were over. The mountains were left behind with the heather and the streams, the free fresh air and the cloudy shadow and the every-day world, and the dull routine of school life had come instead.

Charlie was sitting at his desk, pouring over his Latin translation. It was what he called rather tough; it was much harder work than climbing up the Welsh hills; and Charlie, as you may have guessed, was not very fond of difficulties. He began any thing very eagerly, but it he found he could not jump to the end at once, he was apt to tire of it and throw it aside.

"O dear!" he cried again, "I can't see my way through it all. I never shall understand Latin."

"O Charlie, Charlie!" said his father; "have you forgotten the Welsh mountains already? Remember the best way up the hill is also the best way through Latin grammar. Step by step will carry you over harder things than this. Don't be thinking about the future at all; do, with all your heart, to-day's appointed task, that is one step; to-morrow will bring to-morrow's task, that is another; and though you may not see at the time that it tells for much, yet when you look back at the end of the half year, you will find real progress has been made, and that one step at a time has carried you a good way up the hill."

"Father," said Charlie, half an hour afterwards, when he met him in the garden, "I am afraid I have not much patience with my books. I wish I had. But there it is so dull and tiresome to go on plodding. How nice it must be to be clever, and then one might grow wise without all this trouble."

His father shook his head. "You have often heard me say there is no royal road to learning. It would do you very little good to be clever, unless you were persevering too. Nearly all the learned men in the world have gained their knowledge piece by piece, and little by little. They have all travelled the same road before you, if you would only believe it. A house is built one brick on top of another, and all our great discoveries and inventions have been made not all at once, but by slow degrees—a happy thought from one man, and then a bright idea from another. Paintings and sculptures did not spring out of people's hands by magic; but were the work of months and years of patient labor, such as you would call dull and tiresome. However, I hope you will learn better as you grow older."

God has promised us the help of His Holy Spirit, or we could do nothing with success; but in true piety He does not give us the victory all at once, only little by little. Life, you know, is a journey, and it is over up the hill, and very steep. The Bible tells us we are to "walk" in the way which leadeth unto life; and a walk is made up of steps. One step is very easy, and a very small thing; but a great many steps together lead from sin to holiness, and from earth to heaven. Every time we conquer our pride or anger or selfishness, that is one step. Every little act of love or self-denial, that is another.

And it is very pleasant to think that God takes notice of our "steps," for this is the psayer He teaches us: "Order my steps in Thy word." (Ps. cxix. 133); and this is the promise He gives us: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord," (Ps. xxxvii. 23).—*Early Days.*

Romanism and Crime.

The tendency of Romanism to foster social degradation and crime is strikingly evidenced by a recent Parliamentary return which has been published with reference to criminals in Scotland, and by which it is shown that in that country criminals belonging to the Roman Church are out of all proportion to the whole number. The following are the facts which appear in the return: "Of the Roman population in Scotland the criminals are over 37 per 1000; among the whole of the rest of the population the proportion is only a little over 7 per 1000. That is, Romanism in Scotland produces, in proportion to the number of its adherents, more than five times the amount of crime which is produced by the same proportion of all the rest of the population. If crime among the Romanists in Scotland were at the same rate as among the rest of the population, the number of their prisoners ought to be only 2,920. But it is 10,740; thus giving 7,820 in excess of what it ought to be, compared with others. Of Roman Catholics in Scotland, one in every 27 is a criminal prisoner. Of the rest of the population, it is only one in every 132."

The criminal statistics of other countries are equally strong in the evidence which they afford of the disproportionate prevalence of crime among Roman Catholic populations. Thus, the criminal statistics of various countries, Papal and Protestant, collected in 1852, by Rev. Hobart Seymour, relative to murder, show the following results: In Roman Catholic Ireland, the murders are 19 in the million; in Roman Catholic France, 31 in the million; in Roman Catholic Belgium, 18 in the million; in Roman Catholic Austria, 36 in the million; in Roman Catholic Bavaria, 32 in the million; in Roman Catholic Italy, 78 in the million; in Protestant England, 4 in the million. Mr. Seymour, writing in 1869, adds in a note: "The past year gives a still more horrible figure for the Papal States and for Italy. In the Papal States the number of murders reported by the French police at Rome is at the rate of 187 in the million, while in the rest of Italy they were 111 in the million. These figures," Mr. Seymour observes, "are eloquent. If it be said that this vast amount of crime is to be attributed to bad governments and defective institutions, it seems strange that such defects should be peculiar to Roman Catholic countries; and the remark is doubly applicable to the Papal States. In these territories the whole government is in the hands of the head of the Church of Rome; yet these laws, these wretched institutions, which admit of this frightful amount of murder, are all the creation of the Popes themselves."

On the same subject a letter was written, not long before his death, by the late Dean of Canterbury, after spending some time in Rome, and carefully studying the "Holy City," as it is preposterously styled by Romanists, which puts the whole matter in a nutshell. "Here," said the Dean, "we have the most absolute monarch in the world, ruling a capital by no means large, with a numerous staff of military and police, and besides, assisted by 20,000 French troops. And besides this, we have here a people whose state, physical, moral, and intellectual, is the result of accumulated centuries of a government and institutions, according to the advocates of the Papacy, the best in this world, and administered by infallible wisdom, unerring justice, spotless integrity, and unimpeachable truth. How, then, does it stand with Rome in point of security and good order? Unquestionably, in both these points, it is the worst city in the civilized world." Speaking at the same time of the moral and religious state of Rome, he says: "It is not too much to say that the present moral and religious state of Rome is a foul blot on modern Christendom, and hardly to be paralleled even among the darkest passages in the history of our race."—*N. Y. Christian Intelligencer.*

There is a rumour that Mr. Disraeli intends to make the elder Rothschild a Peer. There is no Jew, and there never has been a Jew, in the House of Lords.

In Spain, in spite of nine Roman Catholic archbishops, ninety-three bishops, 100,000 priests, 14,000 monks, and 19,000 nuns, out of 15,000,000 less than 1,000,000 are able to read and write.

Miss Howard, an Englishwoman living in Paris, has opened her rooms for religious and social conference, and invites to the French capital. A Bible-reading meeting is held every Tuesday evening.

The Quakers of Birmingham, England, conduct and sustain Sunday-schools for adults. Many of the scholars have reached middle life. Two thousand men and women are brought together by this agency for religious instruction every Sunday. The schools were begun twenty-seven years ago.

A remarkable meeting of foreign missionaries employed in city mission work was recently held in London. Grace was said in fourteen different languages. The London City Missionary Society employs four missionaries among the Germans, one among the Dutch, two among the Italians, one among the French, and two among the Orientals. They are always to be found in the great m. polls.

Subsidiary School Teacher.

LESSON VI.

Feb. 8 } DAVID SPARRING SAUL. 1 Sam. xxiv. 1-10.
1876. }

COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 14, 15.
PARALLEL PASSAGES.—1 Sam. xxvi. 8-11; also vs. 21-25; Ps. cxli. 4-6.
SCRIPTURE READINGS.—With v. 1, compare 1 Sam. xx. 11, 23; with vs. 2-4, compare Ps. lvii; with v. 5, read 2 Sam. xxiv. 10; with vs. 6, 7 and 8, read Matt. v. 49-55; with v. 9, read Prov. xvi. 29; with vs. 10, 11, compare Ps. xxxv. 7; with vs. 12, 13, compare Gen. xvi. 5 and Job v. 8; with v. 14, read 2 Sam. ix. 8; with vs. 15, 16, compare Rom. xii. 19-21.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Recompense to no man evil for evil.—Rom. xii. 17.
CENTRAL TRUTH.—We must show mercy as we expect it.
Some account of the place of the incident reported in our lesson, will at once help to the understanding of it, and be the explanation of v. 1-3.

The best authorities are agreed in fixing upon Ain-Djedy as the ancient Engedi, the name only slightly changed. It is a pretty bit of secluded scenery, two hundred yards from the Dead Sea, on the western side. It is fertile, with grove, fruit trees and wells. The approach to it is so rough and difficult, that De Sauley found numerous skeletons of unfortunate animals that had missed their footing, and himself felt the difficulty of reaching it. Robinson found many limestone caves all around, in which sheep and cattle (v. 3) could be sheltered, and in which outlaws—such as David then was—have hidden themselves in more modern times. Some of them easily hold a thousand men (v. 3). The ibex, or wild goat, and the common goat, are found here in numbers. The cave which Saul entered to sleep, as J. D. Michælis, Patrick, and the *Speaker's Commentary* read v. 3 (though this is not the common view), De Sauley thinks he identified, but this could only be a guess. Many broken walls and solid ruins are around, showing the importance the place has had at various times as a "stronghold,"

DAVID WAS HIDDEN.

Saul had emissaries; or if not, the tale-bearers—dangerous "friends"—who are always eager to oblige the great for their own gain (see 1 Sam. xxiii. 19), reported the fact, and Saul having the Philistines off his hands (v. 1), (how, we are not told, but probably by a victory, sets out in pursuit of David with three thousand men, his body-guard apparently (v. 2). He came to the very cave in which David and his men stayed. They, in the dark sides, could see any one entering, yet be unseen.

(V. 4.) Jonathan must have known (1 Sam. xx. 16; xxiii. 17) of the "prophecies that went before" (1 Tim. i. 18) concerning David. The words of 1 Sam. xv. 28; xvi. 1, 12, were often needed perhaps to encourage David's followers. They now conclude that the struggle is to end, that the Lord has sent his enemy into his hand. And it looked like it to common men—which David was not. Saul, like other persons of consequence, wore a long garment, like a dressing-gown. Men who live a life of hardy adventure become quick-witted and ready. Noislessly, and without disturbing Saul, David cut off the skirt of his garment, so providing evidence that he could, if so disposed, have killed Saul. Saul may have laid it aside for the time.

(V. 5.) Even for this
DAVID'S CONSCIENCE (1 John iii. 20, 21)
SMOTE HIM.

It was so disrespectful to the king, though the circumstances would seem to us to warrant special measures. But he retained his loyalty. This verse appears to be paranochial.

Vs. 6, 7 give us his reply to the suggestion of his servants that he should end the controversy by taking the king's life. Even as a matter of prudence, such a course would have excited sympathy for Saul and made enemies for David. The generous and right course is the wisest always. So he restrained the feeling of his followers, to many of whom the taking of a life probably, seemed a small matter.

(V. 8.) David knew the ground and if pursued could easily secure himself; so he boldly presented himself among the crags to Saul and his men after the king had gone out of the cave; and on securing Saul's notice, he acknowledged his rank by the usual bowing to the earth. The office is often to be respected, even when the holder of it is bad (Eccl. viii. 2; Rom. xiii. 1-6).

(V. 9.) David knew well how Saul's mind was kept in agitation by busybodies. Ps. x. xi, xii, and others allude to them. Hence his appeal to Saul, "Wherefore hearest thou," i.e., they tell thee I am in rebellion, and bent on thy ruin. They humor thee with falsehoods. Here is the proof of their lies.

(V. 10.) Provisionally,
SAUL WAS IN HIS POWER,

and the suggestion was to destroy him, but his eye spared him, and better counsels prevailed, for he remembered him as the "Lord's anointed."

(V. 11.) The skirt of the garment—a fragment cut off—was in David's hand. It was unanswerable. Whoever did that could, if so minded, have struck a fatal blow. But the highest consideration held him back.

(V. 11.) "The Lord judge"—I leave it to Him to deal with the case, and if He please, to punish the wrong. I shall not take justice into my own hand. If the Lord could tolerate Saul, well might David.

(V. 12.) Proverbs are of great account where books are not in use. They, as the wisdom of many concisely expressed by the wit of one, are memorable and influential. He quotes one, not otherwise known to us.

In v. 14, David remonstrates with Saul on the dignified course he pursued. This was conciliatory—made Saul appear great and himself little—the phrases "dead," "g," and "flea," being almost proverbial for work and insignificant. (We have phrases

concoiled in the same spirit—"dead-head," and "flea-bite.")
In v. 15,

DAVID COMMITS HIS CASE TO THE LORD, who had guided and kept him in this typifying Christ (1 Pet. ii. 23). To this reference may be found in Ps. xxv. 1, and xlii. 1

The fleck, unrollable king's character appears in v. 16 He is at one time "among the prophets" (see v. 20), at another among the violent, and attempting murder. He is easily touched on one side of his character, but easily turned round again. He was all too like men who weep at a religious meeting and utter devout sentiments with a great look of sincerity, and in a day or two are again wallowing in the mire. He lifted up his voice and wept, but those who know him realized (like David) that the tears proved no real change of nature. (See Gal. iii. 3, 4; iv. 15. Men will sometimes give their eyes to men, who will not give their lives to God.) Saul was soon back again in his old condition.

Taught directly or suggested by this narrative, the following lessons should be noted:

I. David's victory over Goliath is not so great as this over himself. Revenge is counted among many nations a sacred duty. The temptation to it is strong. David had real wrongs. Yet he overcame the temptation. He had his reward. Let us learn this lesson. Self-love, anger, "spirit," and other influences impel us to strike back. "Vengeance is mine," saith the Lord. We may judge unjustly. He does not.

In this case the temptation was strong—to be rid of an enemy—return from an outlaw's life to ease—to put on a crown—but grace helped him to resist all. Let the pupils learn this spirit from youth up (Prov. xxiv. 29.)

II. Trained self-control is here illustrated. The sudden and unexpected appearance of Saul—alone—the urgency of his followers, and the easy opportunity, tested his character severely, but he stood the test.

III. His conduct rested not on a generous impulse, but on settled convictions. Saul was the Lord's anointed. He could remove him when he ought to be removed, and the Lord is the judge—not David. We, too, must have convictions, if we would in trying times adorn the doctrine of our Saviour.

IV. The unreliability of mere emotion is seen in Saul. He wept, vowed, showed great tenderness. But a little later, under the influence of the old feelings, he was as spiteful and as treacherous as before. Let us beware of that "goodness which is as the morning cloud." "Be ye steadfast."

SUGGESTIVE TOPICS.

Saul's relations to David—feelings—actions—how occupied for a time—tidings of David—his counsel—David's hold—modern name—features—history—fitness—Saul's attendants—his exposure—advice to David—from whom—how regarded—David's act—object of it—his remorse—why—his appearance to Saul—language—motives—appeal—romonstrance—purpose as to Saul—proverb—appeal to God—its effect—and the four lessons to us.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN NEWS.

It is said that Mr. Bright's promised Licensing Bill will contain a clause suspending the future issue of licenses for public houses.

The great Sunday School at Stockport, England, is famous everywhere. The last report shows in its main school 501 teachers and 3,614 scholars. Including four branch-schools, the total membership is 424 teachers and 4,702 scholars. Since this school was founded 1,992 teachers and 80,821 scholars have been enrolled in its membership. This is surely the greatest record in this line.

A DEPUTATION from the Board of Congregational ministers in London waited on Dr. Moffat recently, and presented him with an address on the occasion of his 80th birthday. Dr. Moffat was deeply affected by the kindness of his brethren, and said it never occurred to him while working among the Bechuannas that his labours would obtain the applause of men. He never thought of anything but to do his work for his Lord, and for the souls of the poor Africans. Had he a thousand lives he would give them all over again in the same good and holy cause.

A Distinguished missionary in India of the Free Church, in Scotland, the Rev. John Wilson, D.D., has just died. Dr. Wilson began missionary work in Bombay, under the auspices of the Established Church of Scotland, in 1828. At the time of the disruption he joined the Free Church party. In 1832 he founded a school for the higher education of the natives, which is now a part of the University of Bombay. While in Scotland, in 1870, he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly. He afterwards returned to India.

The English Wesleyans have sent the Rev. G. T. Perks, a distinguished Wesleyan clergyman, to South Africa to visit the various Wesleyan mission stations, and to preside at the first South African Wesleyan Conference, which is to be held in Natal. At the training school for native Christian teachers at Heald Town, Graham's Town District, thirty-eight young men and seven young women have been sent out to take charge of Schools since 1869. A short time ago, when seven students finished the course of studies, twenty-eight applications were made for the vacancies.

The Rev. S. H. Kellogg, of Allahabad, affirms that statistics, deducible from the recent carefully prepared census of the Indian Government, demonstrate "that with only 517 Protestant missionaries to 200,000,000 people, with all the inveterate hatred of fraternal Misommedanism, and all the power and prestige of a venerable Brahminism against them, the Church of Christ is, as a matter of fact, gaining at least as rapidly in India as in the most favored sections of Christendom."

The question—Shall Cromwell have a statue?—has been answered in the affirm-

ative in Manchester. Mrs. Abel Heywood has presented to that city a bronze statue of the Protector. It stands nine feet high, weighs upwards of a ton, and has cost about £1,600. The pedestal is a solid block of rough hewn granite. Cromwell is represented in the military costume of the period, and the features are dignified and expressive. Mr. Thomas Carlyle was invited to the inauguration, but he replied that feeble health will prevent his doing so.

The growing wealth of Liverpool and of the citizens is exemplified by the sums bequeathed by some of the leading men of the town who died during the past twelve months. It will be seen from the following list that the legacies of eight of these gentlemen represent in the aggregate upwards of £4,000,000.—Robert Gladstone, £300,000; James Houghton, £500,000; Richard Houghton, £500,000; Charles Turner, M.P., £700,000; James Tyrer, £250,000; R. L. Jones, £350,000; J. J. Ryvo, £400,000; and H. Dawson, £1,500,000.

The Dublin Christian Convention who's was held on the anniversary of that of 1874, over which Mr. Moody presided, was remarkable for the number of Christians brought together from widely separated points. America was represented by the Rev. Dr. Asa Mahan, the Jubilee Singers, and the President of Fisk University, George Muller, of the Bristol Orphanage, was present. At the closing meeting the Metropolitan Hall of Dublin was crowded. The following communication was read by the Chairman:—"This day is the anniversary of the thanksgiving service held in the Exhibition building, at which about 2,000 professed to be commencing what was to-day, the first year of their life in, and with, and for Christ."

A STATEMENT having been made some time since that there was an LL.D. an inmate of the Newcastle Workhouse, a gentleman resident in the country visited that institution, and found the inmate, Mathew Collins, an LL.D., of Trinity College Dublin, First Science Sizar, Lord Exhibitioner, Senior Moderator and Gold Medalist in Mathematics and Physics of the British Association, and Honorary Member of the Societe des Sciences Physiques et Naturelles de Bordeaux, Bishop Law's Mathematical Prizeman, T.C.D., and author of Mathematical Tracts. He is aged about seventy years, and states that by some unhappy affair his valuable library, consisting of some 2,500 volumes was made away with, besides a sum of money, including a sum of £50 sent to him by the Royal Society of London, to reward some scientific works and writings he published in the "Memoirs de la Societe des Sciences Physiques et Naturelles de Bordeaux," and also a sum of £10, kindly granted to him by Mr. Disraeli.

At the special services in Westminster Abbey on Tuesday, Dean Stanley preached in the afternoon, and the Rev. Dr. Moffat, the well known African missionary, in the evening. As being the first time that a Nonconformist minister had officiated in Westminster Abbey, the event created much interest. The Dean took for his text two verses; the first was Psalm xlv. 16—"Inward of thy fathers shall be thy children, who a thou mayest make princes in all the earth." The second was John x. 16—"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." In the course of his sermon he said—"Church people rejoiced, and Nonconformists might rejoice, that the prayers of the Church of England were enshrined in a Liturgy redolent with the traditions of a glorious past. But that was no reason why there should be no room where good work was being done for men who preferred the chance of extemporaneous prayer—a custom which was of apostolic origin, and which perhaps appeared fittest for the exigencies of special occasions. If some of the extorter Nonconformists, desirous of wrapping themselves in the mantle worn by Churchmen, and possessed by a love for uniformity so exaggerated that they would tear down ancient institutions and reduce all churches to the same level, there was no reason why churchmen should return evil for evil and repay contumely with scorn. There was a nobler mission for Christians than that of seeking to exterminate each other, and a higher object than that of endeavouring to sow the seeds of vulgar prejudices either against new discoveries or ancient institutions." Dean Stanley preached his sermon within the chancel, and it formed part of the customary afternoon service of the Church of England. Dr. Moffat delivered his lecture in the nave, its simple preface being the singing of the missionary hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains." This distinguished pioneer of missionary labour in South Africa is now close upon his eightieth year, but he showed no signs of physical weakness. His tall, rich voice, musical with a northern accent, which long residence in South Africa has not robbed of a note, filled every corner of the long aisle, and no section of the vast congregation was disappointed by reason of not hearing. Wearing a plain Geneva robe, with the purple hood of his academic degree, Dr. Moffat stood at the lectern, which is situated not many paces from the grave where his friend and son-in-law, Dr. Livingstone, lies. Dean Stanley was one of many clergymen present, and occupied a seat just in front of the lectern. Dr. Moffat began by protesting that he was very nervous because, having been accustomed for fifty years or more to speak and teach and preach in a language altogether different from European, he had contracted a habit of thinking in that language, and sometimes found it momentarily difficult to find the exact expression of his thoughts in English. "If I might," he said, with a touch of dry humor that frequently lighted up his discourse, "speak to you in the Bechuana tongue I could get along with ease. But, however, I will do what I can." The lecture resolved itself into a quiet, homely, and exceedingly interesting chat, chiefly about the Bechuannas, with whom Dr. Moffat longest laboured. On both occasions the respective portions of the Abbey building were crowded, though of course Dr. Moffat, speaking in the nave, had the largest congregation.