

till it is now more of a time-stained relic of the past than an assistance in present geographical research.

The literary and intellectual furniture of this concern is of much the same order as the stove, the windows, and the walls. The shabby hymn-books, out of which the children sing very shabby music, suggest the idea of an economy which has not found its way into the choir of the church, where the stately organ, with several rows of gilt pipes, makes harmony with vocal praise from golden-edged hymn-books. The school is now studying the same lessons that were studied last year—not from a desire to clinch the nails of truth then driven, but from the fact that it has not been deemed best to incur the expense of new question books. The idea of uniting with other schools in the study of a uniform series of lessons does not occur to these good folks. The library books, few in number, are broken-backed, torn, and smeared, presenting, in their appearance on the shelves, no inducement to any ambitious child to take and read. No Sunday-school papers are taken for the children or teachers, for it would cost several pounds a year to furnish them.

It has already been remarked that the singing is poor—a kind of rusty singing, which refuses to get new music, new hymns, new instruments, or new helps of any kind. There is no enthusiasm about it, and there is very little real music. Enthusiasm is costly. The better we sing, the more new music we need to buy. The hymn-book used is one published thirty years ago, excellent in its way, but not up to the times. Three children crowd to look over each hymn-book, for there are not enough to go round the school.

But somebody will say that, notwithstanding all these deficiencies, the Gospel is taught in truth and simplicity. If it be so, well. But when the surroundings of religious teaching are as beggarly as these, the religious teaching itself is generally weak stuff. It is true that the Gospel can be taught in a barn, or a cave, or an old railway car, or even in the open air, which is cheaper than all. But we do not seek a barn if we can get better accommodation, nor do we go down into a cave if we can be provided with quarters above ground. Open-air preaching is praiseworthy in season; but when the ponds are frozen, and snow lies a foot deep on the ground, a comfortable church, with heating apparatus in full blast, is desirable.

Had there been a Sunday-school department in Solomon's temple, it would have been gotten up in good style. Solomon would not have crowded the little Israelites into a damp, uncomfortable cellar, or into a mean upper story, destitute of the comforts of life. He would not have calculated how many shekels of gold he could have saved by making the young folks put up with mean accommodations; nor would he have contracted with Hiram, king of Tyre, for a lot of knotty and unseasoned timber, "just to finish the Sunday-school." The Sunday-school is worth all it costs. Out with that pinching parsimony which closely calculates the lowest penny for which it can be managed!

Love in a woman's life is a history; in a man's an episode.—*Madame de Staël.*

I would rather dwell in the dim fog of superstition than in air rarified to nothing by the air-pump of unbelief, in which the panting breast expires, vainly and convulsively gasping for breath.—*Richter.*

Henry Melvill beautifully says:—"How often has that to which we looked forward with hope wrung from us tears! And how often has that which we awaited in fear made the countenance sunny with smiles!"

She certainly is no true woman for whom every man may not find it in his heart to have a certain gracious and holy and honourable love; she is not a woman who returns no love and asks no protection.—*Bartol.*

Christian faith is a grand cathedral, with divinely pictured windows. Standing without, you see no glory, nor can possibly imagine any; standing within, every ray of light reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendours.—*Hawthorne.*

Health comes of itself; but we are at great pains to get our diseases. Health comes from a simple life of nature; disease from an artificial life of civilisation.

There is no joy so great as that which springs from a kind act or a pleasant deed, and you may feel it at night when you rest, and through the day about your daily business.

We are sent to the ant to learn industry; to the dove to learn innocence; to the serpent to learn wisdom; and why not to robin redbreast, who chants it as cheerfully in winter as in summer, to learn equanimity and patience?

JESUS THE SHIELD.

Genesis xv. 1.

BY REV. R. NEWTON, D.D.



JESUS is the best shield, because He is a shield always ready.

A dear little English boy, named Benuie, lay sleeping in the shady v. randah of his Indian home. The nurse who had been trusted with him had neglected her charge, and left him while he was asleep. A great, fierce tiger, prowling in search of prey, finding the village very quiet, had ventured in among the dwellings. The English gentlemen were all absent, the natives were in the rice-fields, and the ladies were taking their rest during the heat of the day.

The tiger crept noiselessly past the quiet house, until he saw the sleeping child. Then with one bound he sprang upon him, grasped the flowing white robe of the child in his teeth, and darted off with it to his native jungle. Having secured his prize, he laid it down, and, as a kitten often plays with a captive mouse before devouring it, so the tiger began sporting with the child. He walked round and round him, laid first one paw and then another gently on his plump little limbs, and looked into the boy's beautiful face as if his savage heart was almost melted by its sweetness.

There was a brave little heart in Benuie, for he did not seem to be at all alarmed by his strange companion. He was used to Nero, the large, black house dog; the ponies were his chief favourites; and he felt inclined to look on the tiger as if he were only Nero's brother. And when the tiger glared at him with his great fiery eyeballs, or when the sight of his dreadful teeth made his heart beat for a moment, he only returned the gaze, saying in baby language, "I'm not afraid of you, for I've got a father! You can't hurt Benuie—Benuie's got a mamma!" Oh, if we could only have the same trust in our heavenly Father, how well it would be for us!

All this time, while her daring boy laws in such dreadful danger, his mother was sleeping. The faithless nurse returned by-and-by, to find the child gone. In her fright she flew from house to house in search of him. But the eye that never sleeps was watching that dear child. The best shield was stretched over him. An aged native had heard the tiger give a low, peculiar growl, from which he knew that he had seized some prey. Taking his gun, he followed in his trail till he came near him. Then he hid himself carefully behind the bushes. He saw the terrible creature playing with the