

ful, blindness presents itself as a condition of terrible privation and misery. Here is the teacher's starting point. After calling up to the minds and to the lips of the class the things missed, by the things withheld from the blind, he can proceed to show that there is a worse privation than want of bodily sight.

There are things strange and glorious, ancient and wonderful, yet ever fresh and new, which some people *have never seen*, because the eyes of their souls are closed. The love of God, the riches treasured up in Christ, the hope laid up in heaven—these things they cannot enjoy, for they have never looked upon them. And here the teacher must be ready to meet the objection that the children *do know* these things. Of course they know them in a certain degree—they may have learned them from infancy; just as a blind man may know the subject of every picture on the walls, and be able to describe the whole because it has been told him often. But this is not *seeing*. Who would be content to go into a picture gallery with his eyes bandaged, and have everything described to him? Would not such a one say, "Take off the bandage and let me see!" This idea of *privation* is, of course, but one aspect of blindness. There are the further ones of helplessness, danger, etc. But it seems to be the one specially pointed out in the Golden Text—"that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

The next point to be brought out is the remedy, which puts an end to the privation. In both the passage for reading and the Golden Text we have Christ presented not only as the source of light, but as the One who effects an entrance for it. We are reminded of Holman Hunt's famous picture, "The Light of the World," in which the Light-giver stands at the barred door which he alone can open, and which must be unclosed before the bright rays can penetrate it. The light is indeed come into the world, but the blind eyes must be opened before the healing beams can be received. In vain for the sightless beggar was the flood of light which must have lit up the streets of Jerusalem; it made no difference to him. So the light which glows in every page of the Bible makes no difference to one whose soul is yet sealed up in darkness. But Christ, the Light, is also the *Opener*. He could not pass that blind beggar without doing the work of love for him. Will we let him do it for us?

Even children may object that as they cannot

see unless Christ open their eyes, to continue in blindness is no fault of theirs. But here we come to the third point. Where Christ is present as the Light of the World, he will not as the Restorer of sight pass us by. He is willing to open the eyes of each child in our classes. When he stopped behind this blind beggar he made clay and put it on the sightless eyes. The man did not refuse; did not object; did not say, "How absurd to cover up my eyes for the purpose of restoring my sight." With the clay on his eyes he simply did as the Lord directed him, never pausing to inquire what good could possibly result from so doing. He believed Jesus meant to cure him; he believed Jesus could cure him; and the consequence was that he came up from the Pool of Siloam "*seeing*" the dark curtain lifted, the night passed away, the glorious morning risen for him. Just so the soul that will simply *yield* itself to Christ shall find that he opens the blind eyes, that where he is suffered to work "old things are passed away, all things are become new."

The remainder of the beggar's story is not included in the passage appointed for the lesson, and perhaps the teacher who desires to go fully and deeply into the truth intended to be prominent will hardly find time to dwell on the soul-enlightenment of the man who was healed. But it will be interesting for senior scholars to notice how the light which had entered his soul led him to confess Christ, and made him willing to suffer for Christ; how afterward a further revelation was granted him, and how joyfully he acknowledged his deliverer as the Lord and God. This last point particularly should be brought under the notice of Christian scholars. Have they had their eyes opened by Christ? He has yet more to show them, and in proportion to their faith and obedience he will reveal to them more and more of his glory continually. There is not one, teacher or scholar, who should not with the whole heart offer up the prayer, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of the law."

#### For Senior Scholars.

##### 1. THEMES FOR BIBLE READINGS.

1. DARKNESS. Gen. 1. 2; John 1. 5; 3. 19, 20; Matt. 27. 45; 10. 27.

2. BLINDNESS. John 9. 1; Matt. 6. 23; 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4; Eph. 4. 18; Mark 10. 46.