

commence to beam. She could not repress the joy of her heart, and she frankly told her teacher what the Lord had done for her soul. "When did you begin to experience this change in your feelings?" enquired the teacher.

"Last Sabbath evening," was the reply. "At what time?" And it appeared that it was the very hour when her teacher and the pious members of her class were offering up their united prayers for her salvation.

How strange it is that so many teachers, with all the encouragements held out to them in the Word and providence of God, take so little encouragement to pray.

This incident should encourage every teacher to pray—to pray for a definite object, namely, the salvation of particular individuals, and to enlist the united and the secret prayer of his pious scholars in the same object; and it should also encourage him to frequent, personal conversation with each scholar, both in class and at their homes.—*Non's Herald.*

A PURE LITERATURE THE NEED OF THE WORLD.

In an editorial a fortnight ago we had occasion to say, "The greatest peril of our times is the peril that threatens our youth from pernicious literature." That this is not an exaggerated statement there is fearful and abundant proof. The revelations made to our courts by Mr. Comstock, that fearless agent of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, and the frequent and severe penalties inflicted by them, indicate that the "peril" here at our doors is imminent and incessant. The morning papers of the day we write report the seizure by him of a widely-circulated weekly paper of this city, published in two languages, containing illustrations so inexpressibly vile as to excite amazement and indignation that reputable publishers in our city could allow them to issue from their press. It only demonstrates that so overpowering is the greed of gold that unceasing vigilance, such as Mr. Comstock applies, is needful to protect our homes from the "peril" that perpetually threatens them.

This "peril," we grieve to say, is one that is felt wherever our literature reaches, and the need of a pure and robust literature to counteract it is increasingly felt. There lies before us a late number of the *Edinburgh Daily Review* with a long editorial that ably discusses the influence of the English language and literature among the millions of the races abroad subject to British rule. From India and China, alone containing half the population of the human race, it says there is ever coming the cry for books of pure morality, lofty principles, and reverent faith to counteract the atheistic and obscene works that are circulating there so freely. "Our glorious English language," it says with much impressiveness, "which missionary and state schoolmasters are spreading with such rapidity, becomes a devil or an angel of light according as it is conjured with."

It goes on to show that in India the evil effects of infidel and obscene literature have become so startling that in 1873 educated natives besought the government to enforce the penal act prohibiting its circulation. A society similar to the Society in this city, of which Mr. Comstock is the efficient agent, has been formed in Calcutta, which is already a terror to evil-doers. It, however, has not yet the power to stop the nefarious traffic which all over the East is briskly pursued through the Custom House and the Post Office. One fearfully suggestive fact is brought out, that the strongest obstacle to female education in the East, is the fear of fathers and husbands that if their daughters and wives are able to read, they will become the victims of the priestly hawkers who disseminate vile literature "as a religious duty."

In China the evils of the infidel literature which is widely circulated among the English residents and the English-speaking natives are greatly deplored, and the importance of counteracting it by creating and fostering a Christian literature is profoundly felt. The *Review* exposes the fact that several daily newspapers, some aided by paid foreigners, have been commenced in Hong Kong and Shanghai, mostly adverse to divine truth, and some disseminating abominable stories about foreigners; while for years most obscene and licentious photographs have been imported and largely sold all over the empire.

From such facts as these the *Review* strongly urges the "high principled publishers" of Great Britain, and especially such institutions as the Scottish Tract and Book Society, to be more active in selecting and sending out the most suitable and valuable English classics, as an antidote to the bane. It is a fearful truth that the devil is wide awake sowing tares. It is no time for men who would have their country and the world seeded with the pure seed of holy and virtuous literature to be asleep.—*Christian Weekly.*

POLLY'S REPROACH.

My parrot was brought as a present to me some years ago. When he first came to live with us, he had been brought from a long way off across the sea; and having been for some weeks on board ship, he had learned to imitate all the sailors said, and to use some very naughty words; so much so, that after the first week of his arrival I was obliged to have him taken away from the dining-room until he should have learned better manners. I put him under the care of cook, who declared she had a little plan whereby she would undertake to cure Master Polly of saying words that were used on board ship by rude, rough sailors.

She carried him, cage and all, down into the kitchen, and there he remained until he was cured. Every time Polly began to talk, and say amusing little things he had learned, nothing was done to him, but directly he said what was not pretty, cook took some water in her hand, and throwing it over him in his cage, she said, "That's for saying naughty words!" At first, Mr. Poll did not like this at all, and he ruffled up his feathers and talked all the more; but after it was repeated several times, he seemed to understand it was meant as a correction, for he became very quiet, and after a week or two we began to think he might come again to the dining-room.

One day it was warm and sunny, and I thought Polly should be hung out in his cage at the back of the house, where he could feel the warm sun, and chatter and talk to his heart's content. Now, it happened that the only place for him to be put was a little way above a cistern full of water; so they hung up the cage, and left him there. I was sitting working at a window close by, also enjoying the sun and fresh morning air, and not thinking at all about Polly, when I looked up and saw our neighbor's tom-cat come creeping stealthily along the wall, looking earnestly at the cage hanging over the cistern.

I had no fear for my parrot for I knew he was out of the reach of pussy's claws, so I went on with my work, when suddenly I heard a loud splash, and then a mew, and almost immediately a queer, sharp little voice called out (which I knew to be Polly's), "That's for saying naughty words!"

I looked from my window, and saw puss struggling in the water, and Polly looking very wise. I could not help laughing, in spite of poor pussy's troubles, who no doubt fell into the cistern while trying to reach the cage, but I soon rescued him.

No doubt the noise of the splash of water reminded Polly of what cook had said when she punished him, but I am afraid pussy did not take a lesson from "Polly's reproach."—*Children's Prize.*

—So much is undoubtedly to be learned from books that we are perpetually in danger of forgetting that a very large and very important part of mental training is not to be had from them. It is so much easier to put an instructive book into a child's hands than to exert ourselves for his improvement that we readily come to believe that a book is his best guide. But this is not unfrequently a mistake. A young mind continually poring over books is apt to grow one-sided, impassive, and simply receptive; besides that, there is much practical knowledge that is no more to be had from reading books, than one can become a good cook by simply learning recipes by heart.—*Hearth and Home.*

—A bride accepted a husband, for whom she had no love, because of his wealth; and certain persons appear to enjoy the prospects of a home in heaven, with friends gone before, who manifest no real love to the Bridegroom whom they have professed to accept. Desiring a home "in the sweet by and by" is not the love that makes us delight in doing His will now.

SCHOLAR'S NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1876 by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON III.

PETER'S DEFENCE. [About 30 A. D.]
READ Acts ii. 12-28. RECITE vs. 17, 21.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.—1 Peter i. 10.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Salvation is by Christ.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—Acts ii. 12-28. T.—Joel ii. 21-32. W.—Ezek. xxxvi. 21-30. Th.—John xix. 1-22; I Thess. iv. 1-18. Sa.—Is. xvi. 1-11. S.—1 Cor. xv. 35-58.

NOTES.—Peter, one of the leading apostles; he was a fisherman of Bethsaida, on the sea of Galilee; called of

Jesus to be a disciple, then an apostle; is supposed to have died a martyr, being crucified, as Jesus prophesied (John xxi. 18), and with his head downward, because he did not count himself worthy to be put to death in the same way as his Lord. *New wine*, or rather "sweet wine;" it was not "new," for the Pentecost was in June while the first gathering of grapes came in August (*Alford and Hackett.*) *Third hour*, nine o'clock in the morning. It was the hour of prayer. The Jews regarded it unlawful to take food or drink wine before this hour; hence only wicked and dissipated persons would do it.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

Lesson Topics.—(I.) FALSE CHARGE BY SINNERS. (II.) TRUE CHARGES AGAINST SINNERS. (III.) SINNERS' SAVIOUR EXALTED.

I. FALSE CHARGE BY SINNERS. (12.) in doubt, as to the cause of these remarkable things. (13.) *mocking*, making sport of it; *new wine* (see Notes). (14.) *with the eleven*—that is, in their name, they concurring in what he said. (17.) *last days*, New Testament times as "first days" are Old Testament times; *my spirit* (see last Lesson). (20.) *notable day*, signal, terrible day.

I. Questions.—Whom did Peter address? How did he show the charge to be false? v. 15. Up to what hour did the Jews abstain from eating on fast days? Who had prophesied of this day of Pentecost? In what times had Joel said these things would happen? What is meant by "last days"? (See Notes.) What had God promised to do then? State the four classes of persons his Spirit would reach. Give the three effects he would have on them. What would appear in heaven and earth? State the three forms of these signs. Who should be saved in that day? How may men be saved now?

II. TRUE CHARGES AGAINST SINNERS. (22.) *Jesus of Nazareth*, so the Jews called him. (23.) *wicked hands*, Peter now charges them with an awful crime.

II. Questions.—Whom does Peter again address? v. 22. Of whom does he speak? State the three proofs given of Christ's mission. Who performed these wonders through him? Who knew these facts? What had they done to Jesus? Why were they guilty of this great sin? For whose sake did Jesus die?

III. SINNERS' SAVIOUR EXALTED. (24.) *raised up*. Luke xxiv. 5, 6. (25.) *David speaketh*. See Ps. xvi. 8-11. (26.) *shall rest*—that is, in the grave. (27.) *in hell*, here means "among the dead" (*Barnes*); *corruption*, not suffer his body to return to dust.

III. Questions.—What had become of Jesus? Who had raised him up? From what was he made free? Why? Who had spoken of this? v. 25. In which Psalm? How had David foretold the resurrection and ascension of Jesus? What do his resurrection and ascension prove? Do you believe these truths? What effect have they upon your life?

CONNECTED HISTORY.—After Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, three thousand were baptized and united with the disciples of Christ.

LESSON IV.

APRIL 23.]
THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH. [About 30 A. D.]
READ Acts ii. 37-47. RECITE vs. 38, 41.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.—Rom. x. 13.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Christ is the life of men.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—Acts ii. 37-47. T.—John xvi. 1-15. W.—Matt. iii. 1-12. Th.—Acts ii. 19-30. F.—Gen. xvii. 1-22. Sa.—Acts v. 29-42. S.—Isa. lv. 1-13.

NOTES.—*Holy Ghost*, or Holy Spirit. Ghost is an old English word for spirit.—*Apostles* (sent forth), the twelve disciples whom Christ chose to be his special companions and witnesses. After Christ's death, Matthias was added to take the place of Judas the traitor, and Paul was also counted an apostle. *Temple*—The disciples forsook not the morning and evening prayers and sacrifices in the temple; they appeared to the rulers as true Jews, with only a special sort of piety and zeal in the belief that the Messiah had come. *Breaking of Bread*—The bread of the Jews was made into thin, hard, brittle cakes, so that it was "broken" instead of being cut. Having "all things in common," the early disciples had daily meals in common, often followed by a love-feast or as many think, by the Lord's Supper.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

Lesson Topics.—(I.) SINNERS' ENQUIRING. (II.) SINNERS' BELIEVING. (III.) BELIEVERS' LIFE IN THE CHURCH.

I. SINNERS' ENQUIRING. (37.) *heard this*, story of Christ's death and resurrection; *in their hearts*, felt they were sinners; *what shall we do?* so Paul asked Acts ix. 6, and the jailer, xvi. 3. (38.) *repent*, etc., Matt. xxviii. 19; *remission of sins* Mark i. 4. (39.) *the promise*; God's promise; *your children* (see Joel ii. 28; Isa. xlv. 3; lix. 21); *afar off*, in other lands; probably Jews only are meant by Peter. See chap. x. 34. (40.) *testify*, to bear witness, exhort, entreat; *untoward*, perverse, sinful.

I. Questions.—What effect had Peter's sermon upon his hearers? Why did they ask, "What shall we do?" State the two things Peter said they must do. What would they receive? Who had promised this gift?

II. SINNERS' BELIEVING. (41.) *gladly received*, freely, joyfully believed; *were baptized*, as Peter directed and Jesus had commanded; *same day*, Peter's sermon began about 9 A.M.; at its close the three thousand were baptized and united with the church.

II. Questions.—How did the people receive Peter's advice? How many received it gladly? What did they

do that day? When we believe in Christ, how should we confess him?

III. BELIEVERS' LIFE IN THE CHURCH.

(42.) *steadfastly*, firmly; suddenly converted, they prove firm in faith; *doctrine*, or teaching; *breaking of bread* (see v. 46 and Notes); *in prayers*. See chap. i. 14. (44.) *in common*—that is, held all their property or possessions for the use of all as needed; *parted them*, distributed or shared them. (46.) *singleness*, simplicity, evenness. (47.) *daily*, conversions in the church every day; why not so now? *should be saved*, or literally, "those being saved."

III. Questions.—What shows that these three thousand new professors were real believers? How did they strive to strengthen their faith? v. 42. What effect did this day of Pentecost have on the multitude? v. 43. Why? How did the believers in the early Church use their property? What shows that they did not forsake the old place of worship? v. 46. How did the people look upon them? How often were new converts added to the church? Why is this not the experience of every church now? What prevents it?

CONNECTED HISTORY.—The apostles and disciples continued to go up to the temple for worship; Peter heals a lame beggar as he was entering the temple for morning prayer.

LESSON V.

APRIL 30.]
THE LAME MAN HEALED. [30 to 33 A. D.]
READ Acts iii. 1-11. RECITE v. 6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—And his name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong.—Acts. iii. 16.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—All power is given to and by Christ.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—Acts iii. 1-11. T.—Ps. lv. 1-23. W.—Mark ii. 1-12. Th.—Matt. x. 1-15. F.—Isa. xxxv. 1-10. Sa.—Mark xvi. 12-20. S.—Ps. cvii. 31-43.

NOTES.—Peter. See Lesson III.—*John*, [called also the "beloved disciple," a fisherman of Bethsaida (as was Peter), and writer of the Gospel and Epistles of John and of the Book of Revelation; he lived the longest of any of the apostles, and is supposed to have died in exile on the island of Patmos. *Beautiful gate*—Some think the gate Susan is meant and some that it refers to two other gates on the west side, but others refer it to *Nicanor's gate* on the east side. Josephus says it was of Corinthian brass, and far surpassed any of the nine silver and gilded gates in its splendor. It was on the east side of the court of the Gentiles, and close by Solomon's Porch.—*Solomon's Porch*, called also the great court, formed by rows of pillars supporting a roof of cedar and adjoining the inner side of the wall of the court of the Gentiles. It was called Solomon's either from being the only portion of the original temple which was not destroyed, or from standing on the same ground as the porch built by Solomon.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

Lesson Topics.—(I.) THE LAME MAN'S REQUEST. (II.) THE HEALING. (III.) THE PRAISE AND THE WONDER.

I. THE LAME MAN'S REQUEST. (1.) *went up*, the temple was on Mount Moriah; *ninth hour*, about 3 P.M. (2.) *carried*, too lame to walk even with a staff or crutches; *gate*. . . *Beautiful* (see Notes); *laid daily*, common now to find beggars at temple doors in the East; *alms*, money. (4.) *fastening*, looking sharply or closely. (5.) *expecting*, some unusual gift of money.

I. Questions.—Who went up to the temple together? At what hour? At what time of the day? Who was brought there at the same time? Where laid? For what purpose? What did he ask of Peter and John? Which of the two spoke to the lame man? What did Peter ask him to do? What did the man expect of Peter?

II. THE HEALING. (6.) *have I none*, I am not rich in money; *such as I have*—that is, the gift of healing; *in the name*, by the help or power of Jesus; Christ worked miracles by his own power; his disciples in his power. (7.) *took him*, to encourage the man.

II. Questions.—What did Peter not have to give the man? What was he able to give unto him? By whose power? Why did he take hold of the man's hand? What came into his feet at once?

III. THE PRAISE AND THE WONDER. (8.) *leaping*, for joy that he could now walk; *amazement*, at the wonderful healing; *held Peter and John*, in great joy and thankfulness, as the two Marys did Jesus, Matt. xxvii. 9.

III. Questions.—Where did the lame man first go? Who with? How? What did he do in the temple? Who saw him there? Why were they sure this man had been healed suddenly? What effect did it have on the people? How did the man show his gratitude to Peter and John? Where did the crowd gather? Why? Where was the lame man when his great blessing came to him? Where would we be to gain the richest blessings from God?

Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.