

and no doubt had spent a delicious afternoon in his stolen pleasure.

Poor little Johnny, he was nothing but a baby. There was no malice in his heart, and yet what damage he had done me! I was utterly overcome, and, heedless of his tearful supplications, I threw myself on the bed, and with my heels kicking ingloriously in the air, and my face buried in my pillow, I gave vent to my fatigue and disappointment in a good hearty cry.

Johnny ran screaming to father in his study, who upon hearing the cause of his grief came at once to my room. "Why Charley, my son," he said, laying his hand softly on my head, "what is the matter? Come, dry your eyes and tell me all about it." And then I told him my story from beginning to end, all my hopes, and aspirations, and the failure of my projects.

"My dear boy," said he, as I finished, "the energy and perseverance you have exhibited in this matter can be turned to much better account. How long have you been collecting these stamps?" "About two months," I replied. "And how many have you in all?" he enquired. "About four thousand," I said, "and father, you have no idea of the time it has taken to cut or soak them off, count them, and tie them into packages?" "Yes, Charley," said he, musingly, "and have you any idea how long it will take you to collect your million of stamps?" "Well, father," I replied, "I never thought, but perhaps a year."

"What would you say, my boy, if I should tell you that at the rate you are going on it would take nearly thirty-two years?" I looked at him incredulously.

"At the rate of one hundred a day," he continued, "it would take ten thousand days to collect a million, which, leaving out the Sundays, would be, as I said, nearly thirty-two years. Now twenty dollars for thirty years would amount to sixty-two and a half cents a year, or a little over five cents a month. Don't you think this would be very small compensation for so much hard work? Besides, who has offered to pay you this sum?" I did not know. I had expected to get my stamps, and then find my purchaser.

"It was very generous in you, my dear boy," said my father, "to wish to help your parents, but we had rather you would be an educated noble man, than have you a millionaire, a well-cultivated mind, and a firm trust in God, are better far than money. Now, suppose you put all your energy into your studies. Store your mind with knowledge, and your heart with true wisdom, and let all these matters alone."

My father's kind talk with me that afternoon changed completely my former course. I am now studying hard, and am striving to correct the weak points in my character, and by and by, I hope to turn my energy and business talents to good purpose.

I still hope to be able to make my father and mother comfortable in their declining years, and it may be that I shall, after all, take my sisters to Europe.—Demorest's Monthly.

A NEGLECTED SPOT.

Of all the lonesome and nightmareish creations of human hands, is there any thing to be seen, not excepting jails, to rival the usual country school-house! Probably the situation of the little building is chosen without any regard to fitness other than as a spot midway of the "district." It is usually, too, a hideous little box, sometimes painted red, sometimes yellow, sometimes not painted at all; once in a while, when a great step in refinement has been reached, painted white, and finished with green blinds, a last pitch of elegance being given by a small belfry and a big bell; but this is not of frequent occurrence. As you drive by this place on a summer day, you peer into a little closet of an entry, with its water bucket and rusty dipper, and its rows of sorry torn hats, of sun-bonnets, and dinner pails, and from inner depths comes a long-drawn buzz and drone that makes you think only of wretched little prisoners, and a young jailer as wretched as they, shut up at unwelcome tasks in that unlovely spot. Hot, dusty, dull, tedious, and altogether exasperating in summer, what is the place in winter? A great furnace of a stove is set up at one end of the room, loaded with logs of wood, or else a tall cylinder, full of coal, that makes the region round about it a little Tophet, but keeps the outer edges of the room still in a polar chill. From around this furnace arise horrid smells of burning boots, of scorching woollens, and vapors of snow-wet clothes sizzling as they dry. The room is full of narrow files of desks that have never been painted, and that are ornamented with a world of curious carving, done in jackknife, of the initials, ships, anchors, and hearts of several generations. Around the sides of this cheerful place runs a row of dirty blackboards, filling the interspaces of the great bare windows. Above the blackboards the plaster wall is bare and broken, and decorated, as well as the ceiling, by solar systems and galaxies of little lumps of pulp or chewed paper, whose generic

name, in default of any other, we will not be forced to use.

In this stifling and disgusting place, and in this company, days and weeks go by, while the young human being is taking the mould of his surroundings; and the community takes no notice of any thing but the fact of recitation and its degrees of imperfection. To paint the walls, to shape the painful seats, to improve the desks that the users would presently reduce to their original condition, and expect it to do any good additionally, would seem to every tax-payer in the district as idle as to send satin christening gowns to the South Sea Islanders, hoping to make them the better Christians, and as wanton a waste of money as if they shoved so many bank-bills into the furnace, hoping that the combustion would better warm the great room.

We wonder, under these circumstances, with the impassibility of committee-men, selectmen, and the rest, that it never occurs to the larger girls, whose instincts, as a rule, beauty finds more accessible than it does those of the other sex, or those of older people, to change, as they can, the appearance of things within and without this place in which they pass so many hours. If, for instance, they only determine, to begin with, to paper the wall above the blackboards, the cost of a cheap paper, divided among them all, will be but a mere trifle, and they can make a frolic of putting it on themselves, or of directing the big boys how to put it on. Then they can conspire to put neat shades and rollers at the windows that hitherto have been shaded at need by nothing better than a piece of green paper. Flowers, probably, would not live in the windows in winter; or, indeed, in the room at all; but there are a multitude of plaster casts and vases going about the land, on the image vendors' heads, and selling for little or nothing, from among which there may often be chosen really fine copies of good things, and which could be of vast service, with their silent speech, if set in the window spaces against the light, to teach beauty of outline when the tired eyes look up from the tedious study. If there is not among them money enough for this, small as the outlay would be, there are ways of raising it—by subscription, by "fairs," which they can carry through themselves, by harvest feasts and strawberry festivals, and which, indeed, may give them the further means of doing something larger, such as improving the teacher's desk, hanging maps behind it, buying globes for it, and shaming the committee into new desks and new floors. And if this may not be, something can be effected by individual effort—by knitting socks, or setting one's own particular hen, or any of the small ways in which determined girls can get a little money; and the individual effort of a dozen girls, when put together, will amount to no small matter.

Flowers and vines cost no money; they are freely given; they pass from one hand to another; they need only forethought and a little time. Virginia Creeper—or, as we commonly miscall it, Woodbine—can be brought from the woods; set out in five minutes, requires but a little watering at first and a little training, rots no wood, hurts no paint, and hides the want of it; and this once started, before the girl who transplanted it has left school she may see it making a bower of the ugly little building. Clematis, too, may come from the woods, sweet-brier, wild smilax, and countless other things of beauty. While, to say nothing of rarer things, a few cents will buy a handful of morning-glory seeds, a few moments will plant them, and a few weeks will cover the side of the place with a screen of brilliant greenery all day, and with a perfect rainbow of blossoms every morning, that shall not only gladden the eyes of scholars and teachers, but shall soften a thousand asperities in the conduct of the day, and shall cause an ejaculation of blessing to escape the lips of every passer-by.—Harper's Bazar.

A LESSON FROM THE PHONOGRAPH.

We had in our hands the other day a bit of the tinfoil upon which a phonograph had imprinted "Comin' thro' the rye." To the unaided eye there was simply a series of parallel lines, which varied almost unappreciably in depth or width. And yet that foil, placed upon the machine, would give out again the notes of the favorite old song, just as the performer had sung it, with all the accents, inflections, cadences, complete—an exact reproduction in miniature. It is almost too marvellous for belief. But we have had the testimony of our own eyes and ears as to the wonderful powers of this wonderful instrument.

The phonograph is in its infancy. What may be accomplished by it, to what practical uses it may be put, it is yet too early to tell. We do not see any insuperable difficulties in the way of its being made capable of giving a verbatim report of a speech, for example. And there are doubtless other practical purposes it may yet serve. But we allude to it here to speak of the lesson that that bit of foil impressed upon us

It was the old lesson of the importance and the enduring effect of even of little things. Important in many cases because enduring.

You utter a word into the mouthpiece of the phonograph. To-morrow, or next week, or next year, or a century hence, that word, with its every tone of love or hate, can be reproduced to the listener's ear. A little scratch on the foil, and the word is caught and held fast! There is no changing of its quality then. But you are uttering words all day long and every day, and they are impressing themselves somewhere, fixing themselves in the lives of your friends, your children. They are recorded before the throne of God. This tinfoil from the phonograph simply makes palpable to our senses the awful fact that we shall meet one day every utterance of our lives in the presence of the Judge. God is preserving our words not simply, but our deeds, and our very motives. All is down in His book of remembrance. What sort of a record is it we are preparing to face?—Christian Weekly.

TEACHING IN SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

There are two or three ways of teaching. You sit down before your class, and you observe at once that, though they are ready to give you a certain courteous attention, their thoughts are elsewhere than on the lesson of to-day. Their minds are preoccupied. This pretty girl is full of her new spring toilet. That one is trying to ascertain how many yards of material it required to make a certain plaiting on her companion's dress. The third has a lover, and last evening he whispered in her ear some words so silvery sweet that all day long they have been singing in her heart. You must first win their attention from the present which engrosses it, to the eight or ten verses on which you have been expending so much thought and force. Now this is really no hardship. It is what every preacher of the gospel has to do every Sunday of his life; and you, to some extent, are sharer of his office. Men and women go to church and sit there in outward propriety of behavior, while their minds are roving to the ends of the earth, and their imaginations are caught in the toils of the shop, the kitchen, or the spring house-cleaning. Their minister must somehow lift them up into a clearer atmosphere, and this is what you must try to do for your class before you fairly launch into the lesson.

You may do it in several ways. You may say, "I read a very wonderful thing about Ninevah, last week," and then you may tell it. You may invite somebody to define "attention." Your first and most imperative business is to exert your own personality in such a manner as to arrest the group and compel its going on with you. You can do this provided you have come prepared thoroughly on your subject, and fortified by trustful prayer.—S. S. Times.

We met a professed Christian, the other day, who was actually relying for future salvation upon an experience already twenty years old. At that time, he said, he gave up all. But judging from his outward life, the most of what he then gave up had since come back to him. No giving up, such as we refer to, is really effectual only as it is persisted in. You "gave up all" twenty years ago? That is excellent. But unless you have also given up all each day since and continue to do so each day to come, you can finally hope for but little from that twenty years old act. Consecration is not an act to be once attended to and then left forever to take care of itself. It includes all time as well as all possessions,—everything placed on the altar forever, and kept there. Do not risk your eternal possessions by relying upon an old title deed that may long since have become invalid.—Morning Star.

THE TIME for abandoning the use of tracts as helps in Christian work does not seem to have yet arrived—certainly not in Europe. To the owner of a well filled library, tracts may appear an antiquated device; but there are people glad to get any sort of reading, who welcome tracts as eagerly as in the early days of their use. Many reports from the Paris Exhibition, this year, show that tracts, especially in the French language, are much sought. One visitor writes that, in forty-five years' experience in tract distribution, he has never seen such a desire to obtain them. In London, tracts seem no less popular. At a recent annual meeting of the "Sermon Tract Society," connected with Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle, it was reported that the Society, during the past eight years, has circulated about eighty thousand sermons as loan tracts, to be returned after reading. The Society has no less than thirty-seven out-stations in different parts of England.

IT HAS HAPPENED too often that when a rich man died, the only question asked about him has been, "How much money did he leave?" What a poor and impoverished life such a question suggests! It has utterly failed in all that makes the possession of wealth desir-

able. Men of wealth and social standing cannot free themselves from the responsibility of their position, and secure the approbation of their fellow-men and an honorable name, unless they use their wealth wisely. Wealthy Christians, as a class, do not realize, as they ought, how grand a career the possession of money opens to them. It should be their ambition, as it is their duty, to put themselves at the head of the benevolent and religious enterprises that the times demand. Communism has no argument against wealth rightly used. Christianity would command the faith of the world, did the rich men who confess Christ devote even half their wealth to benevolence and the elevation of society. They would have something to live for worthy of a man's best efforts, and worthily rank with men of genius and talents whose works have blessed the world.—Central Christian Advocate.

Question Corner.—No. 17.

Answers to these questions should be sent in as soon as possible and addressed Editor Northern Messenger. It is not necessary to write out the question, give merely the number of the question and the answer. In writing letters always give clearly the name of the place where you live and the initials of the province in which it is situated.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 121. What tribe was condemned to perpetual bondage, and by whose order?
122. What employment did Joshua give the Gibeonite bondmen?
123. With what people was the first battle fought by the Israelites after leaving Egypt?
124. Who hid one hundred prophets in caves?
125. In whose funeral procession do we find the first mention of horsemen?
126. Who prophesied that the Jews should eat their own children?
127. Who did the Lord make a terror to himself and his friends, and why?
128. Who prophesied that Judah should be carried into Babylon, and where is it recorded?
129. Where do we read of a collection being taken, and for what purpose?
130. What criminal in his confession said, "I saw, I coveted, I took?"
131. What old man is said to have felt none of the infirmities of old age?
132. Who expressed a desire to be "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest?"

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

- 1. A woman who guarded the bodies of seven slain men.
2. A Queen who was good and beautiful.
3. A Roman official who trembled under the reasoning of Paul.
4. A horned and untamable animal never used for sacrifice.
5. A climbing plant of rapid growth, under which the prophet Jonah once sat.
6. The name given to a force wind mentioned in Acts.
The initials give that which Christ promised to believers in time of trouble.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 16.

- 97. Moses to Hobab, Num. x. 29.
98. David, of Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 23.
99. Shangar, Judges iii. 31.
100. Pharaoh's daughter, because she drew him out of the water, Ex. ii. 10.
101. He held his peace, Lev. x. 3.
102. In the valley of Moab, Deut. xxxiv. 6.
103. Scer, 1 Sam. ix. 9.
104. One thousand and five, 1 Kings iv. 32.
105. The song of the well, Num. xxi. 17, 18.
106. Benhadad, King of Assyria, 2 Kings viii. 7, 15.
107. Jair, 1 Chron. xi. 22.
108. Tiglathpileser, first King of Assyria, 2 Kings xv. 29.

ANSWER TO ENIGMA.

- 1. P-nul, 1 Tim. i. 1.
2. A-bel, Gen. iv. 11.
3. T-inoth, 2 Tim. iii. 15.
4. I-sraelites, Exod. xix. 45.
5. E-sau, Gen. xxv. 33.
6. N-athaniel, John ix. 17-19.
7. C-maan, Ex. iii. 8.
8. E-phraim, Gen. xlvi. 20.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

To No. 15.—Hugh McKeeher, Franktown, O., 12; Harry E. Gowen, Kingsley, O., 10.
To No. 14.—F. Bromler, Cameron Mills, N. Y., 12; Hugh McKeeher, Franktown, O., 12; Walter E. Seelye, East Cornwall, Conn., 3; Constance F. Logie, Newentle, N. B., 1; Asa A. McDowell, Tison, N. Y., 11; Charles Arnold, Skeets Harbor, N. Y., 10; Jacob Kilham, Dresden, O., 12; Lina Sutherland, Angersville, O., 12; Stephen S. Sizemore, Howells Hill, N. B., 1; J. B. Ferguson, Franktown, O., 8; Andrew Dorby, Lurham, O., 4; R. D. Moore, Solway, O., 10.
Harry E. Gowen, Kingsley, Que., sends us a complete list of answers.
Lilly Mar Kirkland, New Westminster, B. C., sends the answers to No. 12, 10 of which are correct.