

AS THE TWIG IS BENT.

BY THE REV. CHARLES F. THWIN.

Macbeth is usually represented on the stage as an old man, but a tract has recently been written for the purpose of proving that he was young. For, says the writer, no grave crime, if it be the first, is committed by one over thirty years of age. After that time of life one is never guilty of a grave offence, unless before he has been guilty. One cannot have failed to notice that a large proportion of the crimes of breaking and entering are committed by young men; by even boys. The Fosters at Andover, who planned to rob and, apparently, if necessary to robbery, to kill, were boys. The New Hampshire courts have lately sentenced two lads to State prison for ten years for entering a house. Their intention was evidently to add the crime of murder to that of burglary. One was of the age of nineteen, one was eighteen. The man Mooney, just sentenced in Boston to imprisonment for life for killing his confederate in crime, has but just turned thirty. A young man of only eighteen has just been convicted in Dover, Maine, of killing a neighbor. A man in China, Maine, struck down and murdered his mother, without provocation, a few months since. He had hardly passed his majority. More than one-half of the women confined in the prison at Sherburn, Massachusetts, are under thirty years, and one-fourth are less than twenty-two years of age. The average age of the inmates of the Massachusetts prison at Concord is only twenty-seven. Of those received last year, one in every five was but twenty-one years of age. One in every three was between twenty-two and twenty-six. Two from every three were not above thirty years. It is the report of the warden of the prison that the large majority acknowledged they began "to be crooked" in early life, from the age of ten to fifteen. One inmate confesses that the thirty cents he took from his grandfather's table at the age of thirteen hurt him more than the breaking of a safe for which he is serving an eight years' sentence. It is seldom that boys enter upon evil practices after their twenty-first birthday.

Their characters are usually so formed at their majority that further development only confirms and strengthens the early growth. They remain what they are.

The permanence of character is also shown in the conservatism of age.

Old men are conservative, young men radical. Old men look back upon what they have done, young men forward to what they will do. As a rule the most fertile period in the lives of literary men is between thirty and forty. Although Herschel took up astronomy at forty-seven, and if Swedenborg had died at sixty he would have been remembered only as a good mathematician, yet Philip of Macedon, Addison, Sir William Jones, Nelson, Pitt, Dr. Arnold died at the age of forty-seven. Alexander had made all his conquests at thirty-two and Sir Isaac Newton all his discoveries before he was forty.

What one has written, what one has invented, what one has accomplished at the age of thirty-five, does not comprise all his writings, inventions or work, but the labor one has performed and success won at this age are indications of the labor he will do, and of the success he will yet achieve.

The moral character you have attained at thirty-five is as permanent as the intellectual. If you have been pure in thought you still will be pure; if you have been pursuing the noblest aims, you will continue to follow the highest purposes; if you have been just, temperate, charitable, these qualities will rest on you with a strength more potent and an interest yet more beneficent. If at the age of thirty-five you have been impure in thought or life, have pursued the lowest aims, have been dishonest, intemperate, hard-hearted, these qualities will, as the years pass, become more and more deeply imbedded in your moral character.

The permanence of character imposes the duty of working to form the character of those whose minds are as sensitive as a photographer's plate to every impression.

Carlyle eulogizes the influence of his father over him, and to his home training the great historian owed that strength and purity of character which command universal respect. Horace Bushnell felt he owed much of his success in life to a mother who watched over him, instructed him, inspired

him with her high hopes and noble examples from early years till he began to show the effect of her training in the pulpit. The home of David Livingstone made him the modest, intense, genial, strong character which moved and persuaded African savages. To his mother Abraham Lincoln ever confessed his deepest obligations. And it was at his mother's feet that our late martyr President laid down the honors of office which his character, trained by her, had merited and received. Children are usually what their father and mother make them. To a great degree parents form the bent and direction of the characters of their sons and daughters. The permanence of character places on them and on all who directly influence the young the most serious duty of forming in them characters pure and noble.—*Christian Union*.

CHINESE SOLDIERS FORBIDDEN TO SMOKE OPIUM.

The following narration of a scene witnessed in China practically illustrates the views of the Chinese authorities with regard to the hurtful effects of the use of opium:—Retracing our steps toward the north, we see close to the eastern walls, and not far from a one-storied European house which is the residence of the Protestant missionaries, a camp established, as at Sung Kiang, in the middle of the city. At the southern gate a soldier beats a drum with two large drumsticks, while two others blow long trumpets, causing a terrible discord. It seems that it is the hour for parade. The soldiers issue pell-mell from their barracks and arrange themselves in a disorderly manner in the court. Soon the commandant arrives, a great fat mandarin. He holds in one hand an umbrella of oiled paper, to guard him from the rays of the sun, and in the other a fan with which he continually fans himself as he inspects his somewhat irregular troop of warriors. At his command a corporal comes out of the ranks, and placing himself in front gives certain orders in French, which are tolerably well obeyed by the soldiers. This is the result of the instruction given by our officers to the Franco-Chinese troops at Kiangsu. At the gate is a large proclamation ornamented with a red official seal. It is an order of the day from the general in command, forbidding the soldiers to make use of opium. Opium, it is there said, is hurtful to the health and constitution of those who smoke it, and soldiers above all others ought to abstain from giving way to this vice. Already the preceding viceroys had given strict injunctions to prevent the troops from smoking opium, but the present viceroys having heard that if the soldiers were not allowed to smoke opium in the camp, they would find means to do it in private houses, considered himself bound to issue fresh orders on the subject. Beyond the measures already taken, the general announced that from time to time the soldiers would be individually examined, and all whose countenances betrayed signs of opium-smoking would be replaced by others.—*An Excursion to Soochow, by C. Imbault Huart, North China Herald*.

RECAPITULATION.

Glass number one, only in fun,
Glass number two, other boys do.
Glass number three, it won't hurt me.
Glass number four, only one more.
Glass number five, before a drive.
Glass number six, brain in a mix.
Glass number seven, stars up in heaven.
Glass number eight, stars in the pate.
Glass number nine, whiskey, not wine.
Glass number ten, drinking again.
Glass number twenty, not yet a plenty.
Drinking with boys, drowning his joys;
Drinking with men, just now and then.
Wasting his life, killing his wife,
Losing respect, manhood all wrecked,
Losing his friends; thus it all ends.
Glass number one, taken in fun,
Ruined his life, brought on strife,
Blighted his youth, sullied his truth,
In a few years brought many tears;
Gave only pain, stole all his gain,
Made him at last friendless, outcast.

Light-hearted boy, somebody's joy,
Do not begin early in sin;
Grow up a man brave as you can;
Taste not in fun glass number one.
—Selected.

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Peloubat's Select Notes)

June 17.—Acts 14: 19-28.

ILLUSTRATIVE.

I. In some of the most delicate manufactures of this country, the web, in a rude and unsightly state, enters a vessel filled with a certain liquid, passes slowly through, and emerges continuously at the opposite side. As it enters, the cloth seems all of one color, and that one dim and unattractive; as it emerges, it glitters in a variety of brilliant hues arranged in cunning figures like a robe of needlework for the adornment of a queen. The liquid through which the fabric passes is composed of certain fiery, biting acids; and the reason why it is strained through such a bath is that in the passing all the deforming and defiling things that have adhered to its surface in preceding processes may be discharged, and the figures, already secretly imprinted, may shine out in their beauty. Thus the disciples of Christ are in this life drawn through great tribulation, that in its bitter waters the manifold iniquities that defile their beauty may be discharged ere they appear before the great white throne. Already, and by the ministry of the spirit, the various features of their Redeemer's likeness have been secretly imprinted on their hearts; but these features have been so overlaid by manifold corruptions in actual life, that the new nature can scarcely be recognized. Hence the necessity of providing a searching medium, and making even those who are "his workmanship" pass through it for their own good. I have been informed, as I looked curiously on the web in perpetual motion passing through, that if it were allowed to remain one minute too long in the bath, the fabric itself would be destroyed. The manufacturer, careful and skilful, has so tempered the ingredients on the one hand, and tried the passage on the other, that while the impurities are thoroughly discharged, the fabric comes out unimpaired. In wisdom and love, both infinite, the Lord has mingled the ingredients, and determined the duration of the baptism; so that, on the one hand, none of his should be lost, and, on the other, every grace of the spirit should be brought out in its beauty upon all his own.—*Arnot*.

PRACTICAL.

1. Verse 19. Note the strange activity of bad men in a bad cause.
2. Note also the strange retributions of history. The one who aided in stoning Stephen is himself stoned, though he had repented long before.
3. Verse 20. God preserves in all dangers those for whom he has still work to do.
5. Verse 22. When men are converted the work is but begun.
6. Men are confirmed in the faith: (1) by exhortation and example; (2) by continuing in the life and work they have begun; (3) by enduring trials; (4) by organized work and worship.

7. Verses 26, 27. Missionaries are not isolated and alone, but belong to the churches.

8. It is good for them sometimes to return and stir up the churches.

9. Great missionary meetings are necessary and valuable.

10. Every Christian should be interested in the work of missions.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

This lesson makes a good missionary lesson. We may call its subject: Foreign missions and the church at home. (1) The missionaries suffering for Christ's sake, vers. 19-21. Illustrations can be used from modern missions. Why should they suffer and we be at ease? (2) The missionaries confirming the churches, vers. 22-26. In the three ways pointed out in the notes. (3) The missionaries' return; a great missionary meeting, vers. 26-28. Enforce the duty of interest in missions. Show how children can become interested. Show the greatness of the missionary enterprise.

How TO CLEAN OIL-CLOTHS.—To ruin them—clean them with hot water or soap suds, and leave them half wiped, and they will look very bright while wet, and very dingy and dirty when dry, and soon crack and peel off. But if you wish to preserve them, and have them look new and nice, wash them with soft flannel and luke-warm water, and wipe thoroughly dry. If you wish them to look extra nice, after they are dry, drop a few spoonfuls of milk over them and rub with a small, dry cloth.

PUZZLES.

HISTORICAL P.

Sometimes in the best-ordered printing-offices, it so happens that a form (which is one or more pages of reading-matter, set up in type, and fastened in an iron frame ready for the printing-press) meets with an accident. The man who is carrying it trips and drops it, or he bangs it down in such a way that it is loosened, and out tumbles the type, helter-skelter. It is then "in pi," as the printers call it, and some one must pick up the scattered type, and examining each little bit of metal, restore it to its proper position. The printer who sits in the corner busied with this pi is not in the least like Little Jack Horner, but is generally for the moment a sad and sorely tried fellow. This is what has happened to this article. Fortunately, no one word is injured in the least; and the opening sentence is unharmed. But look at the rest of the Paragraphs! Even the names are divided and mixed up. Who can write it out correctly for us?

THE PL.

We propose to mention here a few of the world's great generals, inventors, discoverers, poets, and men of noted deeds.

George Stephenson was born at Carthage, which city was so hated by Goethe that he rarely made a speech without saying; and "Carthage must be destroyed!" Of other noted generals, Eli Whitney was a R. man; Shakespeare was a Prussian; James Watt was a Corsican; and Hannibal is an American.

It is believed that Charles Darwin invented Man; Newton the horse; Julius Caesar, the monitor; Napoleon, the blood; Frederick, the sewing-machine; Cato, the circulation of the earth; that Ericsson invented the satellites of Jupiter; that Bucephalus frequently discovered the law of gravitation and Dante the revolution of the steam-bomb; Galileo the Great, the telegraph; William Harvey Bonaparte, the steam-engine; Elias Howe and Blondin, the cottoning of the telescope and Dr. Tanner, the fastest, if not the most fiery, naturalist of ancient times, discovered the theory of the Descent.

Among poets, the greatest in all history is Samuel Morse, while Robert Fulton ranks highest in the poetry of Germany, and Ulysses S. Grant in that of Italy. John and Isaac are famous English poets of our day.

Many men have performed special feats. Alexander conquered and rode the locomotive; Tennyson crossed the Niagara River on a tight rope; and Browning claims to have lived forty days without eating.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES.

CHARADE.—Bread.
AMBIGUOUS.—A, Deat-h, 2, H-car-t, 3, S-tree-t, 4, Part-y, 5, S-eve-n, 6, T-aper, 7, C-ringe, 8, S-cow-L, 9, S-cribe, 10, C-rat-e, 11, S-car-f, 12, C-age-d.

LETTER ENIGMA.—M, ma, man, man's, man's.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

Correct answers have been received from Lillian Greene, W. R. Chesney, Lizzie, McCurdy and Sara Bell McKinnon.

THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONARY ADVENTURE.

During a visit made, with the sanction of the London Missionary Society, to New Guinea and the adjacent island, a band of missionaries and native teachers spent a night on Darnley Island, when a project was formed to establish a mission on another of the Islands, named Murray Island. Some of the natives of the island in question seemed especially intent on intimidating the teachers, and convincing them that a mission there was perfectly hopeless. "There are alligators there," said they, "and snakes and centipedes." "Hold!" said Tepepo, one of the teachers; "are there men there?" "Oh yes," was the reply, "there are men; but they are such dreadful savages that it is no use your thinking of living among them." "That will do," responded Tepepo. "Wherever there are men, missionaries are bound to go." A noble reply, worthy of a disciple of him who commands His followers to "go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."—*Journal of a Missionary Voyage to New Guinea*.

THE QUESTION, "Who shall lead the teachers' meeting?" at a recent conference was answered: "The sexton, if he be the best man for the place."