

## MRS. BENSON'S TEA-PARTY.

Near the upper end of Grace-street, in a provincial town, stood the mansion of Mrs. Benson, a lady well known for her kindness and hospitality. When Mrs. Benson said a kind thing everybody knew she meant it, and a promise made by her was certain of fulfilment.

On the previous Friday, Mrs. Benson's friend and ally, Miss Bright, had taken to every cottage in Atlantic Terrace a printed circular, containing an invitation to the mansion for Monday afternoon, when, after a Bible reading, tea would be provided. It was added, "Everyone who comes will be made welcome."

From previous experience, Mrs. Benson knew that many of the invitations would not be accepted, but she made provision for all, if they chose to come. However, some read the invitation, then forgot all about it until too late to get ready; others never read it, while some said they were much too busy to go.

On the Monday many of those invited found a hearty welcome at Mrs. Benson's. Before they gathered round the tea-table, they engaged in the usual Bible-reading for an hour. The subject that afternoon was part of Matt. vii. 7, 8: "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "To him that knocketh it shall be opened." Mrs. Benson mentioned some of the expressions used in Scripture to describe prayer.

Calling upon God. Crying to Him. Pleading with God. Waiting upon Him.

"These," said Mrs. Benson, "are only a few out of many. But here our Lord compares prayer to knocking at a door—a very expressive figure. Merely saying prayers could not be described as knocking. We don't knock at a door unless we want something. Then, after we have knocked, we expect the door to be opened. Some of you, dear people, had never seen me, and the invitation you received was not in my handwriting, but was a printed one. But you believed it and the testimony of those who had been here before, and you came. You expected I would be waiting for you, and that the door would be opened when you came. And are we not told that our Heavenly Father 'waits to be gracious' (Isaiah xxx. 18), that He watches for us, and even meets us on the way? (Luke xv. 20).

"Then when you came to my house there was a knocker for you to take hold of; at some doors it is a bell; but some means of calling attention is provided by the master or owner of the house. So in prayer, just get firm hold of one of the promises of God, and knock earnestly with that, 'expecting to receive something' and the door will be opened. Here the Holy Spirit is needed to 'help our infirmities.' We have no power to grasp the knocker without Him; we are paralyzed. But if He has moved us to pray He has begun the cure. Our Father will 'give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him,' no matter who or what they are. There is no condition to that promise but asking.

"Speaking of the promises," continued Mrs. Benson, "I don't mean that you are just to dip into your Bibles anywhere, and take the first promise you find. I have read of an excellent woman who took the words, 'Thou shalt have plenty of silver,' in Job xxii. 25, as a promise for herself and the good work she was engaged in; but she often had not plenty of silver, and was sorely troubled when she had to give up some of her work for want of it. Now these words were spoken by one of Job's friends when exhorting him to repent of the great sins of which he had just accused him, so we can scarcely regard them as a promise from God, for we know that some of the things said by these friends were displeasing to God.

"A Christian friend of mine made a similar mistake. She took a promise of the future union of the tribes of Israel to signify that she would be married to the man she was attached to. You smile, but it was so. My friend was looking to God for guidance, and, happening to open her Bible at Ezekiel xxxvii. 17, she took it as a message to herself. She, too, was disappointed. But look carefully for a promise that suits your case. When you can say, 'That must mean me,' then take fast hold of it, and be determined not to lose your hold of the knocker until you get in.

"For instance, you may be in trouble; take Psalm l. 15. 'Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee,' another unconditional promise. Don't put 'perhaps' in the middle of it. 'I will' means

'I will,' though it may not be in the way you expect. If it is soul trouble—and God alone knows what sore trouble that is—there are scores of promises of deliverance.

"Are we burdened with sin? Take such a word as Isaiah xliii. 25, 'I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' Look carefully at the preceding verses, and you will see it is addressed to those who have wearied Him with their iniquities, and have even given up praying to Him (verses 22 to 24). But He makes this gracious promise, and only says, 'Put Me in remembrance: let us plead together' (verse 26). So if we plead this promise in the name of Him who died for our sins, it shall be fulfilled—nay, it is fulfilled, for it is in the present tense, 'blotteth.'

"Or is it our weakness we are feeling, that 'we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves?' Then look at such words as these: 'When we were yet within strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly' (Rom. v. 6). 'To them that have no might He increaseth strength' (Isaiah xl. 29); 'My strength is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor. xii. 9).

"Believing these promises, you can say, 'In the Lord have I righteousness and strength' (Is. xlv. 24); 'I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me' (Phil. iv. 13). Whatever our need may be, there is a full and rich supply in God. 'My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus' (Phil. iv. 19). Believe that 'all' means 'all,' every bit, and don't let the enemy or your own heart limit the promise of God.

"But now the time for our little Bible-reading has expired, and we will adjourn to the tea-table. Just let us all remember when we pray to grasp the knocker and expect the door to open."

After tea, Mrs. Benson's guests returned to their homes, each one receiving a pretty illuminated text card, with the words—

"If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him" (1 John v. 15).

"Let doubts and fears be banished,  
Knock boldly at the door:  
It surely will be opened,  
Then hesitate no more.

Listen no more to feeling,  
But look at His sure Word;  
Now claim the promised healing  
He's waiting to afford.

Lay hold upon the promise,  
And never let it go  
Until the rich fulfilment  
It is your joy to know."

—Cottage and Artisan.

## ONE-TENTH OF VITAL ENERGY.

If, as it has been defined, temperance means "a moderate use of things helpful and a total abstinence from things hurtful," then our temperance work in the Sunday school will not be done till we have had some things to say about the tobacco habit. It is true that in the Bible the word "tobacco" is not found. Indeed, the poisonous herb itself was not found by civilized man till 1,500 years after the last Bible text was written. Should we have another apocalypse or supplementary revelation, no doubt there would be important legislation on tobacco. Now we can only learn by inference, and apply the principles laid down in Scripture. It is a filthy habit, and this Word of God may apply: "Lay apart all filthiness." "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness." The text, "He that is filthy, let him be filthy still," is not in point except for the world to come, and may suggest the future dwelling-place of him who persists in tobacco using through this life. "It is an offensive habit." As soon would I delight in the odors of a tan-vat as in the breath of a veteran tobacco user, and as soon would I breathe the smoke of burning back-yard rubbish as to take tobacco smoke from the interior of some old stager. If to breathe pure air is not an inalienable right of earthly citizenship, what is? This writer would like to know. What an effrontery that any *genus homo* should take this right away, and how amazing that any one who lays claim to be a gentleman, if not to say a Christian, should so presume by puffing his offensive smoke to pollute the air in public places—places which other men must frequent. If we must be consumers of tobacco smoke, give us the privilege to

choose our brand and have first use of the "fragrant." We prefer not to take it second hand. It is offensive. And God's Word may apply in this: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God." And let it be remembered that Christ said: "Woe to that man by whom offence cometh." But filthy and offensive are not all that can be said against it. Prof. Palmer, of Michigan University medical faculty, tells his class of students every year that no young man acquires the tobacco habit but at the expense of one-tenth of his vital energy. Hence, tobacco using is personally injurious. It injures the body and the mind. It reduces their efficiency. Hence, tobacco-using is an evil, admitted so by its devotees themselves, and in this may the Word of God apply; "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good." "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." "Abstain from all appearance of evil."—*Michigan Christian Advocate.*

## Question Corner.—No. 13.

## BIBLE QUESTIONS.

1. Of what wood was David's house built?
2. What bark is spoken of in Revelation as among the merchandise of Babylon?
3. To what seed was the manna in the wilderness compared?
4. What vegetable was mentioned as being one of the good things of Egypt for which the Israelites longed?
5. What plant mentioned by Isaiah, does Christ class as one of the crops of which tithe was paid?
6. What valuable commodity besides ivory was imported into Tyre by the men of Dedan?
7. Of what wood were the musical instruments of David made?
8. What besides the barley of the Egyptians was damaged by the plague of hail?

## ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS.

1. Moses. Acts, 7: 23, 30. Deut. 8: 2.
2. Aaron. Lev. 10: 9.
3. Balaam. 2 Peter 2: 15.
4. Deborah. Jud. 4: 4.
5. Barak. Jud. 4: 10.
6. Samuel. 1 Sam. 9: 15.

## PLEASED AND SURPRISED.

TACOMA, W.T., June 23rd.

DEAR SIR,—Please accept my grateful thanks for the "prize" you sent me, which came to hand after some delay caused by changing address, passing customs, &c. I was not only pleased but surprised as I had given up looking for one. I am in a far country but shall think no less of the *Northern Messenger*, and shall try hard to send you a long list of subscribers next time.

Yours respectfully,

ELLENA HARRIS.

Tacoma, W.T.

## CLUB RATES.

THE CLUB RATES for the "MESSENGER," when sent to one address, are as follows:—

1 copy, - - - - -	30 cents
10 copies - - - - -	\$ 2 50
25 copies - - - - -	6 00
50 copies - - - - -	11 50
100 copies - - - - -	22 00
1,000 copies - - - - -	200 00

JOHN DOUGALL & SON,  
Publishers, Montreal.

## NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS IN THE UNITED STATES.

Our subscribers throughout the United States who cannot procure the international Post Office orders at their Post Office, can get, instead, a Post Office order, payable at Rouse's Point, N. Y., which will prevent much inconvenience both to ourselves and to subscribers.

## A FOOD FOR DYSEPTICS.

Dyspepsia is failure to digest. When the stomach refuses to assimilate ordinary food, resort must be had to such forms of predigested food as are palatable and can be readily obtained and prepared. Nothing so fully meets this want as Lactated Food. It is a delicious preparation, perfectly adapted to every dyspeptic or invalid.

"WEEKLY WITNESS"  
Jubilee Prize List.

## CHOICE BOOKS GIVEN AWAY.

Read the following list of good, popular books offered, and see with what very little trouble a nice book can be obtained by any boy or girl.

We find from experience that books are always welcome visitors in the country, and we are giving a carefully selected list as prizes for the JUBILEE OFFER OF THE "WEEKLY WITNESS."

For THREE NEW SUBSCRIBERS to the "Weekly Witness" for the balance of 1887, at forty cents each, we will give the choice of any of the following books:—

"Jessica's First Prayer," Hessa Stretton's most popular story. 100 pages, beautifully illustrated.  
"Pillar of Fire, or Israel in Bondage," by Ingraham. 250 pages bound in red cloth.  
"Throne of David," by same author, in same style.  
"Foxe's Book of Martyrs." 250 pages, with colored illustrations.  
"Pilgrim's Progress." Bunyan's immortal book. Complete in one volume neatly bound in cloth.

For FIVE NEW SUBSCRIBERS to the "Weekly Witness" for the balance of 1887, at forty cents each, we will give the choice of any of the following books:—

"Uncle Remus, his Songs and Sayings." Paper.  
"Little Women," Louisa M. Alcott. The most interesting story.  
"Ben Hur," by Lew Wallace. The most popular book of the day. 150 pages.  
"The Queen's Life," as told by Mrs. Valentine. 350 Just the book every loyal subject should read this Jubilee year.

For SEVEN NEW SUBSCRIBERS to the "Weekly Witness" for the balance of 1887, at forty cents each, we will give the choice of any one of the following books:—

"Mackay's Grace and Truth." 250 pages.  
"Barriers Burned Away," by E. P. Roe. 350 pages.  
"From Jest to Earnest," by E. P. Roe. 350 pages.  
"Robinson Crusoe." Fully illustrated. 500 pages.  
"The Swiss Family Robinson." Fully illustrated. 500 pages.  
"Fear God," by Lew Wallace. A Mexican story of special interest.

For NINE NEW SUBSCRIBERS to the "Weekly Witness" for the balance of 1887, at forty cents each, we will give the choice of any one of the following books:—

A Revised Bible.  
"Pilgrim's Progress" and "Holy War" combined. A large work of 6-0 pages, illustrated.  
"The Saviour and his Saviour," by Spurgeon. 450 pages.  
"Longfellow's Poems."  
"Nuttall's Standard English Dictionary." 800 pages. Very complete and inclusive a copy should be in every house.  
"Ballantyne's Coral Islands." Over 400 pages, abounding in interest; just the book for boys.

Our friends throughout the country will please make known this offer. Sample copies and blank lists will be supplied free, on application, and those who begin work at once will secure a longer term for their subscribers. Remittances should be forwarded by Post Office Order or Registered Letter.

ADDRESS

JOHN DOUGALL & SON,  
"Witness" Office,  
MONTREAL.

EPPS'S  
GRATEFUL-COMFORTING.  
COCOA

DEAF.—A very interesting 80-page book on Deafness, Noises in the Head, &c. How relieved. Sent free. Address NICHOLSON, 177 McDougall st., New York.

90 LOVELY SCRAP PICTURES.—Agents' Canvassing Outfit Cards and Novelties, with private terms. Also, 25 large Rich Embossed Motto and Verso Chromos. Your name on each for only 10c silver. Address EUREKA CARD CO. Bolton, Que.

THE NORTHERN MESSENGER is printed and published every fortnight at Nos. 321 and 323 St. James street, Montreal, by John Dougall & Son, composed of John Redpath Dougall, of Montreal, and James Duncan Dougall, of New York.