

QUESTIONS IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

It is not enough to tell children in advance to "study the lesson." That phrase means much or little, according as it is intended by the teacher, or as it is understood by the scholar. Possibly you know what you mean when you use it. Probably, you do not. The chief cause of the common complaint that scholars do not study their Sunday-school lesson, does not study the fact that the scholars do not know what is meant by studying that lesson, and that the teacher has no better defined idea on that point than the scholars have. Is it memorizing the text, that you mean? Is it fastening in memory the "title," "topic," and "golden text" of the lesson? Is it finding the answers to the questions in the lesson-help? Is it looking up the connection of this lesson with other portions of the Bible? Is it searching into the principles involved in the statements of the text, and considering their applications to life and conduct? It might be any one of these, or of half a dozen other ways of studying, that you are thinking of, or that suggest themselves to the scholars. It is not enough to leave the subject in this vagueness.

If, however, you point out to a child some one thing that he sees in the study line, and ask him to do that, he knows what is wanted of him, and he is quite likely to be ready and glad to attend to it accordingly. Children love to be helpful and to show that they are bright. Their brightness and their helpfulness can be quickened and made available by the wise notice and direction of a Sunday-school teacher. There are many who remember the gain in interest to the young scholars of a generation ago, through the introduction, into the house and the common schools, of Gallaudet's Picture Defining and Reading book. Each section of that book started out with a picture. Underneath this was a series of simple words, indicating objects to be seen in the picture. The child was to point out those objects, as he read those words, or as his teacher called them to him. For example: "An old man." "A black hat." "Small sticks." "A short pipe." "A lively dog." "A small house." "One door." "Dark clouds." "A tree." Each of these objects was looked up and pointed out, by the child, in the one picture which included them all, as that object was called for by the text. The child was thus kept attentive and active throughout. The work assigned to him was a work within his capacity, and he was led along in it pleasantly. When the words and their meaning, and their connection with that picture, were thus fixed in his mind by his own co-work with the teacher, the child was ready to take another step, in following a brief story in which these words formed an important part. This method of securing a scholar's co-work in lesson study is equally applicable to Bible teaching.

Take, for illustration, the lesson on "Gehazi the Leper," from 2 Kings 5: 20-27. In an effort to secure the co-work of scholars who have been backward in taking part in the lesson exercise, the teacher might begin with calling the attention of the class to the first verse of the lesson (v. 20): "But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought; but as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him." "Three men are named in this verse, and each one of the three is described. Name the first man; the second; the third." "Now notice, one thing that had been done; one thing that had not been done; two things that were going to be done. What was the thing that had been done? What was the thing that had not been done? What were the two things that were going to be done?" Very simple questions, these are; but they are all the more likely to be responded to because they are so simple; and they demand attention, and quicken interest, on the part of the scholars. From such questions, which can be asked about almost any verse in the lesson, it is easy to go on step by step, carrying the scholars with you in co-work, until the main teachings and applications of the lesson are brought out in the scholars' answers to the teacher's well-considered questions. When it comes to the teachings and applications of the lesson, the scholars can be led on, by specific questions, to see and to say, that the sins of Gehazi included his parleying with

evil, his deciding to do wrong, his starting out on a bad mission, his lying, his misrepresenting his master, his obtaining money on false pretences, his embezzling trust funds, his adding lie to lie; and that in his sinning he risked his own soul, he endangered the faith of Naaman, he betrayed the confidence of his master, and he dishonored the cause of God. While the beginning of such specific questioning is very simple, it can be carried on indefinitely in the direction of thorough and exhaustive lesson-study. Some of the points to be questioned about can be assigned to the scholars a week in advance; others of them can be taken up for the first time in the class at the hour of lesson study.—S. S. Times.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT.

There are Sunday-schools where one man has to be superintendent and secretary and librarian and singing-leader; and sometimes he has to teach a class in addition to all this. Such a man—God help him!—must do all he can, as well as he can; but at his utmost and at his best, he cannot superintend a Sunday-school as a Sunday-school ought to be superintended. All the time and all the ability of any one man can be well employed in the superintending of a Sunday-school; and even then there will be things beyond that man's utmost reach which might be done to the school's advantage. When a Sunday-school can afford an assistant superintendent, where there are men enough to justify the setting of a man apart for such a work, there are always fine possibilities in the sphere of an assistant superintendent.

To begin with, in the responsive or alternate or simultaneous Bible readings of the opening and closing exercises, the assistant superintendent can stand at the opposite end of the room and lead the school in its reading. This one thing may be a means of unifying the school in its Bible reading, and so in its exercises of worship. Then, again, the assistant superintendent can study the school from another direction than the superintendent's, during other portions of the opening and closing exercises. He can observe which teachers and scholars are prompt and attentive, and which are sluggish or careless, in these exercises. And to know the needs or faults of particular members of the school is, with a faithful overseer, but a step from the attempt to correct the error or to supply the want observed. During the class hour, also, the assistant superintendent can be watchful to attend to one duty or another which the superintendent is hindered from doing through his occupation elsewhere. If the one is looking over the classes to see which of them are without teachers at the opening of the school, the other can be greeting strangers who enter the room, or speaking a kind word to new scholars who need to be made at home there. Or, these duties may be reversed for a moment. A careful study of the school by any overseer, can always be made advantageous to its interests. There is something which just now needs fresh attention in every Sunday-school, if only it be watched for intelligently. And if the assistant superintendent is looking after such things as these, in order to report them to the superintendent, with his suggestions for the remedy, he can be a power for good in the Sunday-school. Why, every gang of men in the street, or on the wharves, or in the factories, is found to be the gain by an overseer who has nothing to do but to watch and suggest; and the closest-fisted contractor or the narrowest-gauge corporation recognizes the economy of paying a man for this watchful oversight. Two or three such overseers could be employed to advantage in every Sunday-school of a hundred members or more. And this is without taking into account the division of labor which might fairly be made between a good superintendent and a good assistant in the ordinary conduct of the Sunday-school. One might attend to the exercises from the desk, and the other might look after the classification and class direction of the school. One might take one side of the room, and the other the opposite side, in close oversight during the session of the school. And so on, indefinitely. What can an assistant superintendent do to advantage? What can't he do!—S. S. Times.

To follow foolish precedents, and wink with both our eyes, is easier than to think. Cooper.

HINTS TO TEACHERS ON THE CURRENT LESSONS.

(From Peloubet's Select Notes.)

Nor. 9.—1 Kings 10: 1-13.

PRACTICAL.

1. There is another kingdom of which a greater than Solomon is king. A kingdom more full of glory and wisdom, with a nobler temple, and richer palaces, and greater works than any which Solomon builded. Every one has heard of this kingdom, and some make the journey to prove its glories, and satisfy the "hard questions" of their hearts. And every one who thus visits this kingdom of Religion joins with the queen of Sheba in saying that they did not believe the half that was told them; but they now find that all that was told them was not half of the truth. Irreligious men do not and cannot conceive the full blessedness of the religion of Christ. They do not believe what Christians say of it. It seems to them the exaggerated utterance of excited feeling. And yet Christians cannot express to them one half the true glory, and peace, and heavenliness of Christ in the soul. It is impossible for those who have not experienced religion to understand half its blessedness.

2. Learn (1) The nobility of a simple earnest, restless search after truth. (2) The grateful respect which a teachable spirit will feel toward one who can unveil the truth to it. (3) The joyous satisfaction of soul that springs from the discovery of the highest truth. How much does such an example as this in the realms of heathen darkness rebuke the spiritual dullness and indifference of those who, with the Light of Life shining gloriously upon them in the person of Christ, refuse to welcome it and walk in it (Matt. 8: 11, 12)!—Watts.

3. Great as Solomon was, Christ is far greater. (1) In glory, riches, fame. (2) In wisdom, which is divine, not human; spiritual as well as worldly; he renews the heart, not merely guides the conduct. (3) In generosity. 4. In power.

4. The queen of Sheba went to Solomon (1) in order to hear his wisdom. (2) She finds more than she expected. (3) She worships and praises God. (4) She returns in peace with rich gifts. So, in much higher degree, our going to Christ.

5. Solomon receiving the queen of Sheba a type of Christ. (1) He did not reject her. (2) He solved her questions, as Christ will solve all the mysteries and life questions we bring to Him. (3) He showed her his glory. (4) He accepted her gifts though he was far richer than she. So Christ accepts our poor gifts, which are a token of our love and regard. (5) He gave her far greater gifts in return. So Christ loads us with benefits. Pardon, peace, strength, joy, etc.—of greater worth than gold or precious stones.

A VEGETARIAN DIET.

T. B. Allison, a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians, London, contributes to the Dietetic Reformer, his experiences of a first year of vegetarian diet: "I did not like the idea of giving up my meat, not because I thought it necessary, but because I liked it. After my first struggle I went on well, and am now very well pleased with the experiment. I am better every way, both mentally and bodily. I have done away with my desire for alcohol and tobacco, both of which are now positively obnoxious to me. My senses are more acute; my mental power has greatly increased; I work better, for longer periods, and grasp ideas much more quickly than formerly. I have done more hard mental work this past year than for many years; in fact, than since my final medical examination, which was passed on vegetarian diet. My bodily powers are much better, and I can take long walks without much fatigue; my spirits are lighter, and I feel an almost continual flow of good humor. Bilious attacks, headaches, constipation, etc., left me soon after the adoption of this diet. I was threatened with rheumatism, but since my experiment no signs have shown themselves. I am so pleased with my diet that I hope to continue it all my life. My own results would give it a fair trial, and note the results. My friends say I am looking well upon it, and I have gained about seven pounds in weight. My food consists chiefly of whole-meal bread and fruit. I am always ready for my meals, eat them with relish, and I know I am not laying up for myself future disease."

LIVING FROM THE GARDEN.

Gardeners, and above all, farmers, have no business to live mostly or to think of themselves as obliged to drudge ceaselessly without the indulgences of other classes. One has no business to set town folk having early vegetables and berries a month before their tardy supply comes on, to be out of them in dog-days before the merchants and cheap boarding-house keepers in the city have begun to see the end of fresh things; he has no need to live on doughnuts and boiled dinners the year round, when others try the changes of spring lamb, fresh fish, boiled chicken, salads, ducks and green peas, capons and veal until turkey time comes again. He ought not to see town homes fragrant with flowers while his wife has only a bunch of syringas or cinnamon roses, with a turf of asparagus, to sweeten the parlor when she thinks to pick them. What better right have rich men to sit over deserts and choice pears, plums, grapes and apricots, while he must content himself with a Baldwin apple in mid-winter? Who should have a becoming home with its lawn in front and large borders of the richest flowers; his house, one story and small perhaps, yet hung with woodbine, wild grapes and roses against the background of orchard and nut trees, spreading their flanking boughs with good effect as if it were a cottage orney, with its acres of shrubberies. Why should he not have in his garden choice fruits of the season, strawberries, currants and gooseberries jostling each other in earliest perfection, red and black cherries, golden and purple plums, plenty of black caps to make up for the lost strawberries, and grapes as soon as raspberries are over, big blanchéd salads, peas in succession, as well as his town neighbor, who sells him groceries and cotton? Why should he not have fine pears, peaches, winter apples, and grapes at Christmas as well as the president of the Horticultural Society, and why should not his girls have big French roses and tuberoses as well as the solitary dahlia and China aster which decorate the yard, and the common geranium in-doors? Why doesn't he have an herb bed to make his plain dinner savory, and lavender to sweeten his sheets at night? A poor English cottager will have all these by thrift and contrivance. Why not an American farmer!—Chicago Herald.

Question Corner.—No. 20.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

- 1. What wicked man in the Old Testament uttered a true prophecy of Christ?
2. Which of Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, was the elder and which of their families grew to be the greater people?
3. When the Promised Land was divided among the twelve tribes where were the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh situated?
4. What evidence have we in the Old Testament that the different tribes spoke somewhat different dialects?

SCRIPTURE ENIGMA.

- The first Christian martyr.
1. The country of the woman who came to Jacob's well when Jesus sat there.
2. The disciple who said, "Let us also go that we may die with Him."
3. The city to which Jesus and His disciples retired when the Jews sought to slay Him.
4. He who said to Jesus, "I find no fault in Him," yet condemned Him to die.
5. He who bound John the Baptist and put him in prison.
6. The country to which Joseph was warned to take the infant Saviour.
7. The place where the Lord began His ministry.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS IN NO. 18

Table with 2 columns: Scripture Enigma and Answer. Includes entries for J-onna, O-ath, N-oth, A-nathoth, T-ooth, H-o, and N-athan with corresponding Bible references.

CORRECT ANSWERS RECEIVED.

Correct answers have been received from Annie L. Kennedy, Clara Folsom, and H. E. Greene.