



IN MISCHIEF.

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"Oh, dear! oh, dear! what is this naughty fellow about? Surely he cannot be thinking of gathering a bouquet. No he has no use for the pretty flowers; it is merely in play, because it amuses him, that he so ruthlessly destroys them. Now all this was not so very bad for the playful, unthinking puppy; but what do you think, dear young readers, of boys and girls who act in this way? Is not such conduct on their part very sad and wicked? And yet children, and sometimes not very young children either, will often be guilty of just such conduct, and when called to account declare they "meant no harm by it." But see, dear young friends, what an idle excuse. We have reason and good sense to direct us, and it will not do to go stumbling through life doing things unintentionally, harming where we ought to help and making a nuisance of ourselves generally. Annoying as puppy's antics are, we can afford to laugh at them, through he may be brought to grief for them by some one by-and-bye. But when boys and girls perform such pranks, there is only one side to the picture and that is a pretty serious one, which should be seriously held up to their view.

RUSSIAN PERSECUTION.

The dreadful persecution of the Stundists, a body resembling the Methodists, continues in Russia. A Commission was appointed to consider the best means of checking the growth of Stundism, and the recommendations of that Commission, which have just been published, are of incredible and almost unparalleled atrocity. In addition to all the ferocious methods with which we are already painfully familiar, it is actually suggested that "those who have exhibited mental aberration as the result of religious teaching" are to be placed in lunatic asylums, and

that the ecclesiastical authorities are to compel those suffering "undue religious excitement" to enter a monastery until they are restored to a healthier and more normal state. So far as we are aware, there is nothing in the darkest records of the Romish Inquisition quite equal to this. We cannot imagine how any Government which makes the least pretence to civilization can calmly and unblushingly sanction such atrocities. The Czar of Russia will not succeed where Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar failed. We shudder when we think of the Divine wrath which the Czar and his advisers are heaping up for themselves and the unhappy people of Russia. May God open their eyes before it is too late.

LESSON NOTES.

SECOND QUARTER.

OLD TESTAMENT TEACHINGS.

B.C. 397.] LESSON XII. [June 18.

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM.

Mal. 3. 1-12.] [Memory verses, 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.—Mal. 4. 17.

OUTLINE.

1. The Messenger, v. 1-4.
2. The Witness, v. 5-9.
3. The Blessing, v. 10-12.

TIME.—Perhaps about B.C. 397.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

CONNECTING LINKS.

Malachi lived in or after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. He was the last of the prophets, and the last lesson of this quarter points us to the Messiah.

EXPLANATIONS.

"My messenger"—John the Baptist. (See Mark 1. 2.) "The messenger of the covenant"—The angel of the covenant. "The day of his coming"—Here, as elsewhere, the results of the first and second advents are presented together. "A refiner's fire"—A fire which is so hot as to melt silver or gold, and enable the dross to be separated from the pure metal. "Fullers' soap"—Substance that removes all filth and traces of impurity from the garment, and bleaches it white. Soap of the modern sort was unknown in Bible times. "Sit as a refiner"—The refiner must watch his precious metal, and be ready to remove the dross and impurities at just the right moment. "The Levites" were the leaders of the religious life of Israel. "Sorcerers"—Wonder-workers, who pretended to have superhuman power. "Magicians," "witches," necromancers, clairvoyants, "seventh sons of seventh sons," spiritualistic mediums, and all who by trickery and fraud impose on weak intelligence and immature conscience are the modern counterparts of those men and women. The word "adulterers" here refers, probably, to those who hazarded the purity of their faith by intermarriage with heathen. "False swearers"—Those who bear false witness against men for gain. "Hireling"—Employee. "Tithes"—The tithe was a tax of one-tenth of the fruits of the farm and of the increase of flocks and herds, which was applied for the support of the Levites, for the public worship, and for the poor. "The devourer"—The locust.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. The need of the natural heart?
2. The final doom of the wicked?
3. That robbery of God brings a curse?
4. That consecration to God brings a blessing?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. Who was Malachi? "The last of the Old Testament prophets."
2. What did he foretell? "The coming of the Saviour."
3. What did he say in the Golden Text? "They shall be mine," etc.
4. Who was the messenger sent before the face of the Lord? "John the Baptist."
5. By what other name did Malachi call the Messenger of the covenant, the coming Saviour? "The Sun of Righteousness."

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The unchangeableness of God.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

What do you call this mystery? The mystery of the Holy Trinity.

What do you mean by mystery?

A truth which man's reason could not discover, and which God, by degrees, makes known.

POLICE MONKEYS.

In Hindostan, where three varieties of sacred monkeys enjoy the freedom of every town, these four-handed pensioners often assist the police in enforcing the riot laws by charging *en masse* for the scene of every dog fight and schoolboy scuffle. They will rescue worried cats, and for greater security will deposit them on the next roof, or will suppress rowdiness in general. The stout Rhesus baboon, for instance, is physically as well as morally qualified to quell the aggressive disposition of the fiercest cur.

On the platform of a public warehouse the British residents of Agra a few years ago witnessed a scene which put that character trait in even a stronger light. A little street Arab had spread his pallet in the shade of a stack of country produce, and had just dropped asleep, when the proprietor of the Planter's Hotel strolled up with a pet leopard that had learned to accompany him in all his rambles. A troop of tramp monkeys had taken post on the opposite end of the shed, and, like the beggar boy, seemed to enjoy a comfortable *siesta*; but at sight of the speckled intruder the

whole gang charged upon the platform like a squadron of *spahis*, and instantly forming a semi-circle about the little sleeper faced the leopard with bristling manes, evidently resolved to defeat, at all hazards, the suspected purpose of his visit.

The Heart of a Tree.

WHAT does he plant who plants a tree? He plants a friend of sun and sky; He plants the flag of breezes free; The shaft of beauty towering high; He plants a home to heaven anigh For song and mother-crown of bird In hushed and happy twilight heard— The treble of heaven's harmony— These things he plants who plants a tree.

What does he plant who plants a tree? He plants cool shade and tender rain, And seed and bud of days to be, And years that fade and flush again; He plants the glory of the plain; He plants the forest's heritage; The harvest of a coming age; The joy that unborn eyes shall see— These things he plants who plants a tree.

What does he plant who plants a tree? He plants in sap, and leaf, and wood, In love of home and loyalty And far-cast thought of civic good— His blessing on the neighbourhood Who in the hollow of his hand Holds all the growth of all our land— A nation's growth from sea to sea Stirs in his heart who plants a tree!

A CINDERELLA COACH.

A RANCH owner in Goleta, Santa Barbara Co., Cal., had growing upon his place some enormous squashes, one of which was so large that he had it hollowed out to make, as he said, a Cinderella coach for his little girl. He was expecting a visit from an eastern friend, and, after the guest came, accompanied by his little girl, was showing him over the ranch. Giving his daughter a sly look which she understood, she slipped away and ran and got into the squash. As he was going over the field he said to his friend, "You may not believe it, but sometimes we have little girls in our squashes, and I shouldn't wonder if there is one in this one." So saying he tapped the squash, the sides fell apart, and out from the middle sprang his little girl. It is said the eastern gentleman was so astonished that his hair turned white! Probably it was white before, but the rest of the story is true. This squash was over three feet in length and weighed two hundred and fifty pounds.—*Congregationalist*.

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