

an unsafe one, and peculiarly unsatisfactory in Christian work. Hot-headed and inconsiderate young officers wish to work big reforms in the church and school, and seem crazy to do it quick. With them postponement means only failure. In point of haste they are like financiers who, in clamoring for cash, "want money, and want it now." But the Lord, with whom a thousand years are as one day, has no respect for impatience. Nothing is ever gained through smart ways, although things big often result, such as big failures, great shame, extended evil, and widespread confusion.

Teachers aim at big and quick results, the sudden conversion of their scholars, and with it their instantaneous development into the full stature of men and women in Christ; and when they find that such things do not occur they drop the plough and start for some shady spot in the vineyard. It is comparatively easy to supply our Sabbath-schools with teachers who enter upon work with the idea of making their term of service short, sharp, and decisive, while it is really difficult to find those who "will wear" and certainly teachers that have the lasting quality are the only ones of any value.

Ambitious pastors and people, expecting to do big things quick, often embellish their churches with heavy mortgages, and then, alas! (as I was told not half an hour since by a perplexed soul now passing through the trial) find "they cannot compete with other churches, and it seems best to sever the pastoral relation, because the church is running so fearfully behind, while Roman Catholics stand waiting to secure the property." Young men beginning life, and even those entering upon sacred offices, sometimes seek big salaries and high positions, and, considering their callow powers, seek them far too soon.

The "big and quick" frenzy is a fearful malady of these days, and frequently makes dizzy heads in the religious world, as well as in the world of business. New societies are organized and new prospectuses issued which clearly set forth a new way declared to be immeasurably superior to the old, and, on the strength of untried plans, extraordinary promises are made of doing marvellously big things wonderfully quick. If people would search records, they might find that the same spasms have been endured countless times before, resulting almost uniformly in a reaction of weakness and languor. The simple, straightforward, faithful, tried way is the one in which God delights; and who would not rather have His help than to have all the stimulus gathered from a delusive hope of results "big and quick"?—Working Church.

THE FORCE OF PRAYER.

Prayer does not directly take away a trial or its pain, any more than a sense of duty takes away the danger of infection, or the fever, so that the trial does not pass into the temptation to sin. A sorrow comes upon you. Omit prayer, and you fall out of God's testing into the devil's temptation; you get angry, hard of heart, reckless. But meet the dreadful hour with prayer, cast your care on God, claim Him as your Father though He seem cruel—and the degrading, paralyzing, bitter effects of pain and sorrow pass away, a stream of sanctifying and softening thought pours into the soul, and that which might have wrought your fall but works in you the peaceable fruits of righteousness. You pass from bitterness into the courage of endurance, and from endurance into battle, and from battle into victory, till at last the trial dignifies and blesses your life. The force of prayer is not altogether effective at once. Its action is cumulative. At first there seems no answer to your exceeding bitter cry. But there has been an answer. God has heard. A little grain of strength, not enough to be conscious of, has been given in one way or another. A friend has come in and grasped your hand—you have heard the lark sprinkle his notes like raindrops on the earth—a text has stolen into your mind, you know not how. Next morning you awake with the old aching at the heart, but the grain of strength has kept you alive—and so it goes on; hour by hour, day by day, prayer brings its tiny sparks of light till they orb into a star; its grains of strength till they grow into an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. The answer to prayer is slow; the force of prayer is cumulative. Not till life is over is the whole answer given, the whole strength it has brought understood.—Stopford Brooke.

GRANNIE'S RECIPE FOR PICKLING GRIEVANCES.

Take a quarter of an ounce of grievance. (N. B. Some say a grain is sufficient, as in this recipe everything depends on the cooking. I have been told it has been successful without any of the solid ingredient at all, but I only give what I have tried.) Bruise and pound it thoroughly, so that every particle of the fibre is laid bare. Season it with a good sprinkling

of your Own Merits. Let it stand some hours, adding from time to time alternately a pinch of the Unrequited Delinquencies of others, and their Undeserved Blessings. In the evening boil it in water from the well of Pride, leaving it to simmer all night. The next morning strain it from all remnants of your own Well-deserved Trials, bottle it, and cork it tightly from fresh air, which is fatal to it, securing the cork with parchment written over with the Generous Commendations of your acquaintances, and the Unjust Attacks of your best friends.

This pickle is warranted to keep for years. If it should fail, it must be either from some defect of care in the straining, or because the vessel in which it was boiled had not been previously carefully rinsed from all remains of your own Undeserved Blessings.

If it should lose any of its sharpness, you have only to boil the whole carefully over again in water from the same well, and you will find the flavor recover all its first acidity and pungency.

Let no cooks attempt this recipe to whom leisure is of no value, as all depends on the leisure bestowed on the preparation.—Our Own Fireside.

EDUCATIONAL ITEMS.

—Wang Chin Foo, the Chinese refugee, has been offered a professorship in the Asiatic Department of the University of Modern Languages, at Newburyport, Mass., and will probably accept.

—As an inducement to provide safety precautions, a reward of \$2,000 is to be given to that colliery owner in Belgium in whose pits the smallest number of workmen shall have been killed by explosions in the ten years ending in 1883.

—At the recent meeting of the Northeastern Ohio Teachers' Association, Superintendent I. M. Clemens, of Wooster, said that it was a fact that in the schools of that town the boys do not read as well as the girls, and the same was true of many other schools. The girls read ten times as much out of the school as the boys; and, as that reading was better than was afforded by the best text-books, they very naturally excelled the boys.

—Boston spent during the last school year \$1,866,720.29 for educational purposes. The salaries for teachers and officers amounted to \$1,041,376. The Boston Herald asserts that only a third of the graduates of the grammar schools, who are themselves but a fraction of those who enter, ever go into the high schools; while of the primary school graduates only half reach the second class in the grammar schools.

—When a scholar asks a question which the teacher cannot answer the teacher had better confess his ignorance and pass on to the next point. He is set to teach what he does know, not what he doesn't know. He doesn't know finding this out. The best way of meeting many a difficulty in Bible harmony or interpretation is by the frank admission that it is a difficulty which we lack the knowledge and ability to solve.

CLOSER TO CHRIST.

The sole remedy of all our woes, all our apprehensions, all our sorrow, is just to come closer to Christ—closer to Christ in personal experience, closer to Christ in daily communion, closer to Christ in perpetual reliance, closer to Christ in importunate prayer, closer to Christ in honest and hearty work! When the good Dr. Alexander, of Princeton, in New Jersey, lay a-dying, some one came to him and quoted a passage for his comfort as he lay half unconscious—"I know in whom I have believed!" A fire lit up his glazing eye, and the old Christian warrior roused himself as for an utterance of latest testimony, and he said to his startled listeners, "No, I can not allow even a preposition between me and my Saviour: 'I know whom I have believed.'" Let us go up to that level; let the great, baptized heart of the Church get up to that level of intimate, close, faithful union with Christ, and we and our cause are safe. No fear of the Confessional then. Assuredly those who will not bear an intervening preposition will never brook an intervening priest. No fear of over-weening sorrow then, for we shall remember that, although God buries his workmen, he carries on his work. No fear of relaxed efforts then, for idleness will be seen in its hatefulness as a sin against boundless love. No fear of straightened means and empty exchequers, and niggard doles, and small-hearted liberalities then, for the frost of every heart must melt that is so near the Saviour; and men putting away the large greeds and little giving of their childish days, will, like Arannah, "as a king give unto a king," pouring out their treasures as brave warriors their blood, and giving or striving to give, in some far-off and reverent manner, after the measure of him who, that we and the world might live, spared not his only begotten Son!—Rev. W. M. Punshon.

SELECTIONS.

—If thou seest anything in thyself which may make thee proud, look a little further, and thou shalt find enough to humble thee; if thou be wise, view the peacock's feathers with his feet, and weigh thy best parts with thy imperfections. He that would rightly prize the man, must read his whole story.—Quarles.

—While aught remains in us contrary to a perfect resignation of our wills, it is like a seal to the book wherein is written "that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" concerning us. But when our minds entirely yield to Christ, that silence is known which followeth the opening of the last of the seals. In this silence we learn to abide in the Divine will, and there feel that we have no cause to promote except that alone in which the light of life directs us.—John Woolman.

—To encounter death, to go forth to the last dread scene with no strength but that of nature, is hopeless work. There must be the living might of faith to make the soul victorious. To millions of men the fear of death has cast a dark shadow over life, but faith has made the soul victorious over it. The marvels which this faith has wrought in various departments of life are written for our encouragement. It has shut the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, turned back the edge of the sword, and subdued kingdoms. But nowhere do we see its conquering force more than in life's last scene. It makes timid men bold, and feeble men more than conquerors. It brings God to the soul's help, opens to it the prospect of a better world, and gives it foretaste of the future.

—God's grace brings out of old practices into new ones. Conversion, if it is genuine, makes a radical change of conduct. The profane lips stop swearing, and the tipping lips stop drinking. The Sabbath-breaker seeks the house of God, and the lover of pleasure finds a higher pleasure in trying to please Jesus. Old habits are sloughed off; there is a new hand at the helm, steering the life into new channels. This is the only religion worth the praying for—a religion that purges, cleanses, sweetens, and regulates the whole life. When stingy A—begins to send loads of coal to the poor, and churlish B—begins to take his children on his lap and treat his poor relations kindly, when alippery C—begins to practice honest dealings, and godless D—sets up a family altar, there is pretty good evidence that God's grace is at work. They have come out of the old paths. They have taken a new departure.—Cuyler.

STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURES.—I have observed that Christians in the present day are a little disposed to lean upon books and authors, and then to slight the Word of God. They peruse the doctrines of the Gospel clearly, and this saves them trouble, and so they prefer it to God's Word. Ah! we may get a smattering of truth in this way, but this is not drawing water from the deep wells of salvation. Take the bucket yourself and fill it at the clear spring. Dig deep into the Scriptures, and there you will find solid gold. Thus you will become a sound and settled Christian.—Bishop Ozenden.

A SOFT ANSWER.—How a soft answer can turn away dissatisfaction, as well as wrath, is illustrated in the following anecdote of the late President Wayland:—"Deacon Moses Pond went to Dr. Wayland once, with the complaint that the preaching didn't edify him. 'I'm sorry,' said the pastor, 'I know they are poor sermons. I wish I could make them better. Come, let us pray that I may be able to do so.' The deacon telling the story, used to say, 'Dr. Wayland prayed, and I prayed. He cried, and I cried. But I have thought a hundred times that it was strange that he did not turn me out of the house. I tell you there never was a better man nor a greater preacher than Dr. Wayland.'"

THE JORDAN.—Get clearly in the children's minds the location of the Jordan between the two seas, north and south; its average breadth sixty feet, and depth nine feet; direct distance between Sea of Galilee and Dead Sea, sixty miles. The course of the Jordan, however, is so crooked, constantly doubling on its track, that Lieut. Lynch, the first man to go down the Jordan in a boat, found its length at some 200 miles, and its current very swift and dangerous. It is almost the only river of Palestine, the others being little better than torrent beds to carry off the waterfall of the rainy season. Lieut. Lynch speaks of the Jabbok as a small stream trickling down a deep and wide channel; and Dr. Robinson found even the bed of the Kishon dry, so far as the eastern plain of Esdraelon was concerned. The Jordan has a fall of 650 feet along its course, from the Tiberias to the Dead Sea, which accounts for its swift currents, numerous rapids, and significant name, "The Descender."—N. Y. Evangelist.

SCHOLAR'S NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1876, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON VII.

FEB. 14.] EBAL AND GERIZIM.—Josh. viii. 30-35. About 1446 B. C. (?)

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 34, 35.

30. Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in Mount Ebal,

31. As Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron; and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace-offerings.

32. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

33. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger as he that was born among them; half of them over against Mount Gerizim and half of them over against Mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.

34. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings according to all that is written in the book of the law.

35. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.

GOLDEN TEXT.—I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.—Deut. xxx. 19. CENTRAL TRUTH.—Righteousness exalts, and sin degrades, a people.

DAILY READINGS. M. Deut. xxvii. 1-26. T. Ex. xxxiv. 1-5; 27-32. W. Deut. xi. 1-5; 21-26. Th. Deut. xxi. 9-30. F. Deut. xx. 2-35. Sa. Deut. xxx. 19-29. S. Josh. viii. 30-35.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—First read the directions Moses gave in regard to this event as recorded in Deut. xxvii. Imagine two high mountains so near together that a person speaking upon the side of one could be distinctly heard on the other mountain across the valley. Then study the passages.—Lesson noted under "Tentative Exercises."

ORDER OF EVENTS.—(14.) At Ta... (15.) Ebal and Gerizim.

NOTES.—This event, some suppose, took place at the close of the war, ch. xi. xliii. EBAL and GERIZIM, twin mountains, about one thousand feet higher than the valley between them, and twenty-six hundred feet above the sea. The town of Shechem, now Nablous, was in the valley. The mountains are upwards of thirty miles from Jericho, too far for an army to march through an enemy's territory safely, hence it is supposed that these verses are out of their proper and original place. (Speaker's Commentary.)

EXPLANATION.—(30.) Ebal, mountain near Samaria. (31.) as it is written (Deut. xxvii. 4-6); whole stones, unhewn stones; lift up, etc., so the Lord had directed, Ex. xx. 25. (32.) wrote there upon the stones, probably a pillar of stone (not the altar), covered with plaster, as directed by Moses. Deut. xxvii. 2, 3. (33.) half... Mount Gerizim. Deut. xi. 29; xxvii. 12 (34.) blessings and cursings. (see Deut. xxvii.) (35.) not a word, all the commands faithfully repeated; were conversant, or "walked among them"—i. e., those who had accepted their religion.

ILLUSTRATION.—Imagine... the tribes crowding the slopes on either side (of the valley). A single voice might be heard by many thousands. In early morning, says Mr. Tristram, we could not only see from Gerizim a man diving down a path on Mount Ebal, but could hear every word he uttered.... Afterwards two of the travellers on different sides of this valley recited the ten commandments responsively with perfect ease.

TOPICS AND QUESTIONS.

- (I.) THE ALTAR BUILT. (II.) THE LAW WRITTEN. (III.) THE LAW READ. I. Where did Joshua build an altar? To whom? At whose command? Where given? Deut. xxvii. 5. Of what was the altar built? For what purpose? II. What else was Israel to set up? Deut. xxvii. 2. What was written on these stones? Who saw this? Why called "the law of Moses"? III. State how the people were arranged on the two mountains. By whose command? Deut. xxvii. 11, 12. To what were they to listen? Who read the words of the law? State what the law promised and what it threatened.