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THE MISSIONARY AND SABBATH SCHOOL RECORD

FOR
JUNE,
1851.



THE
MISSIONARY
AND
SABBATH
SCHOOL
RECORD

TERMS: 1s per Annum, in advance, Exclusive of Postage. The profits of this publication go to the funds of the Canada Sunday School Union.

Montreal:

PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY JOHN C. BECKET.



THE MISSIONARY
AND
SABBATH SCHOOL RECORD.

Vol. VIII.

JUNE 2, 1851.

No. 6



Parables of the lost Sheep and Piece
of Money.

LUKE XV. 3—10.

The lost sheep, and the lost piece of money, are both intended to describe the condition of all sinners, whether old or young, who are still in their natural state; that is, the state in which they were born. There are many things in which sinners are very much like lost sheep, and in the Bible they are often compared to them. See Psa. cxix. 176. Isa. liii. 6. A sheep is more apt to wander than almost any other animal, and it scarcely ever finds its way back again, but continues to wander farther and farther. It is quite helpless; it has no strength to defend itself from wild beasts; if it gets fast among briars and thorns, it cannot disentangle itself again; if it fall into a stream, it is not likely

that it will be able to swim out; and if it does not happen to meet with pasture, it will not know where to seek it. Sooner or later, it will certainly be destroyed, unless it is found and brought back to the fold.

You would pity a poor sheep in such distress; but, my dear children, your souls are much more to be pitied, while you continue to wander from God. You all began to wander from him, (that is, to hate and to disobey him,) as soon as you were able to do anything. See Psa. li. 5. lvi. 3. You soon began to be passionate, and to cry and fret, when you were not allowed to have your own way. You soon began to disobey your parents; and if they talked to you about God, your Father in heaven, and tried to tell you how much you ought to love him, you were soon weary of hearing them. In-

stead of becoming better as you grew older, have you not learned to do many other wicked things? and are not prayer and reading the Bible more wearisome to you than ever?

As the wild beasts would destroy a poor wandering sheep, so "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour." He is a cruel enemy to your souls; he would rejoice in their everlasting destruction, and he has many ways of trying to destroy them. He is much stronger and more cunning than you, and you cannot defend yourselves from him. As you grow older, you will be more and more tempted to do wrong, and you will find that "the way of transgressors is hard." You will find that sin brings misery even in this world; and even if you wish to return to God, you will find it much more difficult than it would have been when you were young. Indeed, if you try to return by yourselves, without seeking the help of the Good Shepherd, it will be impossible. After wandering on this "waste howling wilderness," you will at last "stumble on the dark mountains," Jer. xiii. 16, and fall into that "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," Rev. xx. 15.

The reason why sinners are compared to a piece of silver which was lost, may perhaps be, that God considers the soul of every sinner to be of infinite value, Matt. xvi. 26: the soul of the youngest child will live after all the world has been burned up. Your bodies and souls, my youthful readers, belong to God. They are His property, for He made them; and they ought to be continually and entirely employed in serving and glorifying Him. But you have wandered from Him, you are lost. A piece of money that is lost, can be of no use to the person it belongs to; and so neither are you capable of being employed in the service of God, while you have no love to Him, and no wish to please Him. But your being lost, means something

more than this; it means, that unless you are brought back to God, you will be lost, that is, ruined and miserable for ever.

Now, Jesus Christ came "to save that which was lost;" to show lost sinners the way back to God. Observe, the man had ninety-nine sheep beside the one that wandered; the woman had nine pieces of silver beside the one which was lost. So God had multitudes of angels in heaven, who never offended Him; they serve and glorify Him continually. But so great were his love and pity to sinners who had wilfully wandered, and had no desire to return, that Jesus Christ left the praises and services of those holy beings, and came into this miserable world, on purpose to bring sinners back. Nay, he even paid a great price for them, nothing less than his own blood, that they might be his own. As the man and the woman, mentioned in the parable, searched diligently till they found what they had lost, so Jesus Christ is continually seeking your souls. He has given you the Bible to tell you of your danger. He gives you parents, and teachers, and ministers, to warn you what will be the end of your present wanderings, and to describe to you the happiness of those who return to God. Though you have forgotten or slighted many of their kind admonitions already, yet still they continue to instruct you again and again; and they do so, because they know that the Saviour commands them.

Christ is waiting to be gracious to you. He is able to deliver you from Satan; he can give you power to resist temptation. His Spirit will teach you to love God, and hate every thing that is displeasing to him, and because of what the Saviour suffered, God is ready to receive you. "He is not willing that any should perish;" he entreats you to return to him, and if you do, he will rejoice over you. The persons mentioned in the parables, called upon their friends and neigh-

born to rejoice with them, when they found what they had lost: and the Saviour adds, that "likewise joy shall be in heaven, in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." Observe, that when sinners are brought back to God, they are said to "repent;" that is, they are grieved and ashamed for all their past sins, and they earnestly desire to be kept from sin for the time to come.

Let no one think that they have already wandered too far to return. It was the chief of sinners that Jesus came to seek and to save. He can make even liars learn to love truth; he can teach swearers to fear an oath; and even should you have been so wicked as to mock at good people, and to laugh at religion, yet he can make you to delight in it yourselves. Come to him just as you are; and he will put you among the "sheep of his pasture to-day, if ye will hear his voice." Your past wanderings will then no more be mentioned or remembered against you, because he has borne the punishment which they deserved: and you will wander no more, for he will lead and guide you, and make you "to walk in the paths of righteousness." Again, I would say, come to him *immediately*; for if you do not, there may be "but a step between you and death."

But some of my readers may perhaps be like the scribes and pharisees, imagining that they are "just persons, who need no repentance." They are not liars or swearers; they are very regular in their attendance at their Sunday school, and repeat their lessons correctly; they are in general obedient to their parents, and their friends think them very good children. But if they are proud of these things, and think that they have no sins to repent of, let them remember that they are not approved by God. "God resisteth the proud." If they suppose that by their good conduct they can deserve his favour, they are much mistaken, for he has said, that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh

be justified in his sight." "They, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God;" and this cannot but be very displeasing to him; because it is the same thing as if they said, that God need not have sent His Son into the world to save sinners, for they can save themselves. Let these parables teach them, that the repentance and conversion of one poor wicked child would be far more pleasing to God, than all the good behaviour which they boast of. They may despise those children who lie, and steal, and take God's name in vain; but if they should at last see some of them, converted by the grace of Christ, entering into the kingdom of heaven, while they themselves are shut out, O how dreadful will it be!

But, before I have done, I would fain try to convince them, that there really is less difference than they suppose, between them and those wicked children whom they despise. I feel anxious to do so, because I know that it is impossible for them to be happy, while they continue to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think.

Let them remember, that "the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart;" and the pride which he sees in their hearts is quite as displeasing to him, as lying or swearing would be. Besides, it is not enough only to behave well; he knows their *reasons* for behaving well; and if these are not good, the best outward conduct can never meet his approbation. They go regularly to the Sunday school; but it is because they love instruction, and are desirous to learn the way to heaven? Is it not rather that they may get praise, and perhaps a reward for regular attendance? They always say their lessons correctly, and even perhaps learn voluntary lessons; but is this because they love the Bible, and desire to have

their memories stored with its truths? or is it because they wish their teachers to think them more clever and attentive than their school fellows? They obey their parents; but do they obey them because God has said, "Honor thy father and thy mother?" or are they obedient, only because they know that they would be punished for disobedience?

Let me affectionately beg of all my readers, who are self-righteous like the pharisees, to put such questions as these to themselves. Let them sit down quietly and alone, and think over every thing they do, for which they are accustomed to be praised, or which they think deserves praise. Let them try to find out the true reason they have had for every thing they have done; and seriously ask themselves, if they should be willing that their parents or teachers should always know it. Let them try to imagine how they shall feel in that day, when "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." And I think they will find, that instead of needing no repentance, their very best performances need to be repented of. I am quite sure of one thing, that they never behaved well for the *right* reason. None can behave well from a proper reason, who do not love God. If they loved God, they would always try to behave well; but instead of being satisfied with themselves, they would be always grieving that they could not do better. O let them no longer trust in a refuge of lies, but humbly confess their sins, and trust in that compassionate Saviour, who came not "to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

The Clock of Life.

A father one day went with his son to the old clock that stood in the hall, to teach him how to find out, at any time, the hour of the day or night. He explained to him that the broad hand marked the hour; the long finger the minute; and the quick-moving, small, thin finger, the seconds.

Again and again the father repeated his instructions to little Lewis, and was very patient and forbearing with him in the mistakes that he at first made in naming the time. At last little Lewis, to his great joy, was perfect in his lesson, so that he could tell what o'clock it was almost as well as his father.

"And now, Lewis," said his father, "that you have learned to know the hour by the clock in the hall, I must draw your attention to another clock,—the clock of life: I mean the beating of your pulse; for it may often remind you of the value of time, and the necessity of turning it to good account. Time is worth more than the finest gold.

"My pulse is the clock of my life,
It shows how my moments are flying;
It marks the departure of time,
And it tells me how fast I am dying."

"He who lives a day without doing good, loses a day; and he who makes another happy, is sure to be all the happier for it himself.

"I will show you how to lay your fingers on your pulse properly; and you must remember that every beat you have lived a moment longer in the world, and have a moment less to live in it. Truly may we all say, 'Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am. Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee.'" (Psalm xxxix. 4, 5.)

Little Lewis felt that his father had made him much wiser than he was before; and, when he was left to himself, he did not fail to go over, again and again, the lesson which had been taught him. A dozen times in the course of that day was he seen running into the hall to look at the clock-face; and almost as many times was he heard to repeat the words, while his fingers were on his wrist,—

"My pulse is the clock of my life,
It shows how my moments are flying;
It marks the departure of time,
And it tells me how fast I am dying."

—Wesleyan Scholar's Guide.

Entering Life.

Your future history and character will be in great measure of your own making—therefore pause and consider what you will make yourself.

What you would be in future, that begin to be at once, for the future is not at a great distance, but close at hand; the moment next to the present is the future; and the next action helps to make the future character.

While you consult your friends on every important step, which is at once your duty and your privilege, rely less upon them than upon yourself; and ever combine self-reliance with dependence upon God, whose assistance and blessing come in the way of your own industry.

If setting out in life in the possession of property, let your dependence for success, after all, be less upon this than upon industry. Industry creates capital, but capital to begin with, has in many cases impaired industry and made a man careless and improvident.

Consider the importance of the first wrong step. The first leads to many others, and may be more easily avoided than every one that follows.

True religion, which means the habitual fear of God and sin, is your best friend for both worlds; multitudes owe their all to it; and multitudes more that have been ruined by vice, folly, and extravagance, would have been saved from all this, had they lived in the fear of God.

They who would live without religion would not die without it; but to enjoy its comforts in death, we must submit to its influence in life; and they who would have it in life, should seek it in youth.

The perfection of human character consists of piety, prudence, and knowledge. Make that noble triad your own.

Whatever specious arguments infi-

delity may put forth in defence of itself, and whatever objections it may bring against Christianity, hold fast the Bible till the infidel can furnish you a more abundant evidence of truth—a better rule of life—a more copious source of consolation—a surer ground of hope—and a more certain and glorious prospect of immortality. And remember that spiritual religion is a better defence against the seductions of infidelity and false philosophy than the most powerful or subtle logic.

Enter upon life as you would wish to retire from it, and spend time on earth as you would wish to spend eternity in heaven.—*John Angell James.*

The Sabbath in Iona.

I shall be permitted (says an American Clergyman) to mention a circumstance that occurred the other day, and which must be considered as remarkable, when the extreme poverty of the people is remembered. A Frenchman was here on Sunday, June 24th, and wishing a boat to convey him to Staffa, found it impossible to obtain one on that day. The usual price is six or seven shillings, and he actually raised his offers until the bribe of three guineas, or *nine times* the common hire, became too strong for a couple of the boys. But, after they had put off in their boat, a relative stood upon the shore, and, assisted by the poor fellows' own conscience, persuaded them to return. When it is recollected that employment at one shilling per day is eagerly sought, and obtained with difficulty, and that these poor lads sacrificed *sixty days' wages* for a few hours' work on the Lord's day, I must say it is an example which deserves to be quoted and remembered. The man's name who called the boys back was Neil M'Donald. Not a boat could be obtained at any price in Iona, though the foreigner finally succeeded in getting one from the Ross of Mull.—*Wesleyan Scholar's Guide.*

SPRING. C. M.

Full and Glowing

1. When ver - dura clothes the fer - tile veld,
 2. Hark! how the fea - ther'd warb - lers sing
 3. O God of na - ture and of grace,

And blos - soms deck the spray, And fra - grance
 'Tis na - ture's cheer - ful voice; Soft mu - sic
 Thy heav'n - ly gifts im - part; Then shall my

breathes in eve - ry gale, How sweet the ver - nal day!
 hails the love - ly spring, And woods and fields re - joice.
 med - i - ta - tion trace, Spring blooming in my heart.



CARRIER DOVE.

This description of the dove was known and employed in very ancient times throughout the East for conveying intelligence. Bochart furnishes so many ancient and great authorities, that there can remain no doubt upon the subject.

Hirtius and Brutus at the siege of Modena, held a correspondence with one another by means of pigeons. Ovid and Ælian informs us that Taurosthenes by a pigeon stained with purple, gave notice to his father of his victory at the Olympic Games, by sending it to him at Egina.

Linnæus calls this most interesting, far-famed, gifted bird by the name of *columba tabellaria*. The name is derived from a word signifying a letter. This dove is a larger size than the greater part of pigeons, being 15 inches in length, and sometimes weighing twenty ounces. The symmeter of its form is more superior and complete. Those which are of a blue or of a blue-piebald color, are most esteemed by pigeon fanciers. We know not the country to which the carrier originally belonged. It is said to have been im-

ported from Bussorah into Britain, where it is now completely naturalized.

If carrier pigeons are hoodwinked, and in this state conveyed from twenty to one hundred miles, they will find their way back to the place of their nativity. They are regularly trained to this service in Turkey and Persia.— They are carried first, while young, short flights of a mile, afterwards the distance is gradually increased, till at length they will return from the farthest parts of the kingdom, and even from foreign lands across the sea. It was customary, and it is probably the case now, that every Bashaw had a basket of these pigeons bred in the seraglio, which were used in cases of pressing emergency, which require urgency and expedition. It is said that while an army was besieging Tyre in the Crusades, intelligence from a distant quarter was suspected from a pigeon being frequently observed hovering above the city. The besiegers obtained possession of the bird, removed the billet, containing useful intelligence to those

who were within the city: this billet was replaced by another containing deceitful intelligence; the bird was liberated, and by the false information the besiegers got possession of the city.

The Negro Sailor-Boy.

Edward Sargeant, a young negro, came to this country as a sailor-boy. Soon after his arrival he was visited by sickness, and on the vessel again leaving port, being still very ill, he was left behind, when some kind friend got him admitted into an infirmary in the south of England.

At our first interview I learned that his father was dead, and his mother so poor, that he was obliged to go to sea to support himself. He was now in a strange land, far away from his mother, of whom he often spoke with much affection. On my asking him if he had any friend here, he answered, in his broken English, "Massa, me know no man."

We soon became very much attached to each other. He could not read God's holy Word, but was always most anxious to hear about Jesus—and faith did come by hearing.—Rom. x. 17.

I remember one morning I told him that I was going from home, and perhaps I should be absent some weeks: with a look of much affection and deep sorrow, he took me by the hand and said, "Massa, me die before you come back, me meet you in heaven." God was pleased to spare his life yet many months; and on my return I found him much weakened, but still, as usual, contented, and even happy.

Could you have seen him stretching out his thin black hand to welcome me, and heard him saying, "Massa, me so very glad to see you again, me very glad, for me do so love you," I think you would have been happy too.

On reading to him 1 Pet. i. 8, I asked him who was meant by "whom not having seen we love;" his reply was, "Massa, dat Jesus." And do you

really love Jesus? His answer immediately was, "Yes, Massa, me do."

Wishing to ascertain what he really meant by saying he loved Jesus, and why he did so love him, I said, "Edward, you told me just now that you loved me, and were glad to see me again?" "So 'me do, Massa." "Did you love me before you saw me?" "No, Massa." And on asking his reason why, his reply was, "I never heard any ting about you, or even saw you until you came to me here." "But Edward, you say that you love Jesus, and you have never seen him?" I wish you could have seen his happy and cheerful look when he exclaimed, "Ah Massa, me have heard of Jesus, dat he loved me, and died for me; and dat is why I do so love him."

His poor body became so diseased that it required to be surrounded with hoops, to prevent the bed-clothes from touching it; and his fellow-patients in the ward requested that he might be removed to the private one. He felt much distressed by this; and on my finding him there, and alone, he burst into tears, saying, "Massa, me so bad dat men cannot bear me, and send me out;" but instantly adding, "Jesus won't send Edward away." He was reminded that Jesus had promised to be with his people every where, and at all times; and he was again quiet and resigned.

He had learned many portions of Scripture, and also of hymns, which he would sing and repeat, when it was evident to the persons present that he was suffering intensely; and more especially whilst his medical attendant was obliged to subject him to great pain.

Finding that all hope of recovery was over, he was dismissed as incurable, and sent to the workhouse. His only wish to live was, that he might go home and "tell his mother all about Jesus." The nurses all said, that his patience was unlike any other person's they had ever seen, and that he was constantly singing or praying. His end was most

peaceful, and gave good cause to believe that he is now with Jesus.

I cannot leave the reader without reminding him, that although dear Edward is dead, he yet speaketh, and by this narrative is asking this question, "Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?" Can you say, in sincerity and truth—

"Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought—
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

R. J. C.

Weston Super Mare, Somersetshire.

Irish Heathen Islanders.

A clergyman writes from the West of Ireland as follows, in a letter dated Kilmore Glebe, August 19th, 1850:—

"I proceed to give you some information relative to the Inniskea Islands.—About six miles west of the coast of Erris, and forming the northern point of the entrance to Blacksod Bay, placed in, and exposed to the violence of the stormy Atlantic, the Islands of Inniskea are situated. The North Island, which is chiefly a low sandy plain, is about a mile and a half in length, by a mile in width. The South Island, which is somewhat larger, is hilly, with a precipitous iron-bound coast. The islands are separated by a narrow channel; the surrounding ocean teems with fish, and the arable portions of the land are fertile and productive. Here dwell 350 human beings, who support themselves by fishing and on the produce of their potato plots, with a little barley; the poorer subsisting on the contributions of their neighbors, eked out by a little sea-weed of a peculiar species, abundant on that shore. They all speak the Irish language, and among them remains a trace of that government by kings or chiefs, which, ages ago, existed in Ireland. The present king of Inniskea is an intelligent peasant. His authority is universally acknowledged in the islands; by him all disputes are settled; to his decision all submit; and his government appears both satisfactory and equitable. But his people are a rude uncivilised race

totally uneducated, and without the means of acquiring instruction in aught save the semi-barbarous customs of their forefathers. Occasionally they have been visited by itinerant preachers, but so casual have such visits been, so short their duration, and the good resulting so very slight, that the vast majority remain sunk in a state of ignorance hardly credible. In this dark spot the light of the Gospel has never steadily shone, and save during the short visits of the clergyman, seldom have these islanders heard of eternal life, as the free gift of God, by faith in Jesus Christ. They are nominally members of the Roman Catholic Church, but of its tenets they know little. There is no priest resident among them, and the sum of their religion appears to be the observance of a series of superstitious practices, in which their hopes for time as well as eternity are placed. But deep as is the social and religious gloom which surrounds this people, there is a yet darker shade spread over them. Here Paganism, as fearful as that prevalent on the banks of the Ganges, is openly practised. In the South Island, in the house of a man named Monigan, a stone idol, called in the Irish language "Neeroge," has been from time immemorial carefully and religiously preserved and worshipped. This idol, in appearance resembles a thick roll of home-spun flannel, which arises from the custom of dedicating to it a dress of that material whenever its aid is sought. This dress is sewed on by an old woman, whose peculiar office it seems to be. Of the early history of this idol I can gain no authentic information, but its power and influence appear to be immense; they implore its aid in time of need and sickness; it is invoked when a tempest is desired to dash some hapless ship on their coast; and again the exercise of its power is solicited to calm the angry ocean, to admit of fishing or visiting the mainland. The following instance may illustrate the faith reposed in their bit of stone by this deluded people.—

About eighteen months ago during a continuance of boisterous weather, a person in the South Island became so ill that his life was despaired of; and as the exercise of the idol's power did not seem to be vouchsafed to help him, his relatives became most anxious to bring him the priest from the mainland, that he might have a happy death. The case being urgent, they determined to go, but the storm being great, they dared not venture without their idol to protect them. It was taken into the boat, and their mission being successful, they declared to one of my Scripture readers, that their safety was attributable solely to the influence of their idol; afterwards on the unexpected recovery of the man, they expressed their firm conviction that his restoration was effected by the "Neeroge." This is one of many wonders said to be wrought by this god of stone, and will suffice to shew the extent of pagan worship in this wild and distant place.—*Juvenile Mis. Magazine.*

The Little Maid of Israel.

(Concluded.)

DEAR CHILDREN,—We left Naaman by the waters of Jordan, lost in wonder and thankfulness at the strange and delightful change which had so suddenly passed over him. One moment, a loathsome leper,—the next, his flesh clean and soft as the flesh of a little child. But Naaman did not tarry long by Jordan's banks. Ascending his chariot, he and all his company returned to the man of God. We can easily fancy the joyful feelings of the servants, who had so well and wisely reasoned with Naaman, and by whose persuasion he was induced to prove the beneficial effects of the waters of Jordan. And we can also well imagine the expression of grateful thanks from the affectionate master to his faithful and disinterested domestics. But we must hasten with Naaman to the house of Elisha, into whose palace the Syrian nobleman was now admitted, an humbler and a better man, struck by the miracle of healing of which he was the object. Suddenly convinced of the claims of the God of Israel to be the true God, and the only

God, in the fullness of his heart he exclaims, Now, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel. This was no small concession for the Syrian idolater, who up to this time had ranked the God of Israel 'no higher than the gods of Hamath and Arpad, the gods of the countries round about, and would have joined in the taunts and scorn at the foolhardy Israelites, for daring to believe that the Lord of Israel, was able to deliver them out of the hands of their enemies; but now the whole fabric of idolatry is taken down, the results of early education, the effects of habit and association, are in a moment effaced by the simple power of truth—truth not heard of, but seen, not discerned by the understanding, but felt in the heart. One thing he knew, a little while ago he was an incurable leper, now he was made whole of that disease.—

Dear children, listen till I tell you of a disease worse than Naaman's, it clings as closely—it interferes as completely with every healthful respiration—it is, by ordinary means, quite as incurable, but it is tenfold more dreadful in its character, because more enduring in its nature, and more virulent the longer it remains in the system. Had Naaman never plunged into the healing waters he would have carried his leprosy to his grave, but then, in common with all temporal calamities, it would cease; but this more fatal disease, if uncured, extends its tormenting influence far beyond the tomb, and pursues its victim into everlasting misery. You will at once perceive I mean sin—that disease which affects us all,—no child of Adam is unaffected by it. And just as there was appointed a healing water for the leper, so there is opened up a fountain for sin and for uncleanness; and just as the prophet pointed to the chosen Jordan, so Jesus stands crying, "if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink of the water of life freely."—

And just as Naaman returned humbled, grateful, rejoicing to the prophet—so does that soul which has drunk of the water of life come forth a new creature, praising God, and seeking to show forth that love which has so wonderfully met and saved him. Naaman's gratitude was not all words, he wished to leave a substantial proof of it, probably in the shape of some splendid donation to the prophet himself—but this Elisha declined, perhaps Elisha

washed Naaman to feel the difference between a prophet of the God of Israel, and a priest of Rimmon, who, doubtless, would not have been indifferent to the proffered gift. Prevented from leaving his thank-offering, as he desired, Naaman requested permission to carry with him a portion of the soil of that land where he had found deliverance. He, doubtless, intended building an altar to the God of Israel, and desired to have what seemed to him holy ground for this sacred purpose. His vow was recorded, "I will henceforth offer neither burnt offerings nor sacrifices unto other gods, but unto the Lord."

The Syrian noble was not without his difficulties, and anticipating the future from his new position and with his new feelings, he remembers it had been customary for the king of Syria, his friend and benefactor, when he went into the house of Rimmon to worship, to lean on the arm of this his favorite courtier, and remembering the past, he figures to himself circumstances which would seem to compel an obeisance in the house of Rimmon, an apparent compliance with the idolatry of the worship practised in Syria, should he be placed in such a dilemma, he prays for forgiveness in this thing—it is not for us to sit in judgment where Elisha said "go in peace." We must therefore suppose there were circumstances which are not related, and that God, who knoweth the hearts of all men, gave testimony to the sincerity of Naaman.—Some commentators suppose that this passage ought to be read as in the past tense, not the future. That the sin weighed on Naaman's conscience, and he was seeking special pardon for a special offence. We have but one further notice of Naaman, and that not in connection with the prophet, but with his unprincipled servant, Gehazi who had seen, with a sullen regret, his master decline all the costly gifts so earnestly pressed upon him, contented as he thought a skilful plan to gratify his avarice, and retain a portion of what he was so unwilling should escape him. A well got up story—a pretended message from Elisha, reaches the Syrian noble before he is far from the house of the prophet. Naaman's first impression on seeing him running from that much to be remembered house, was that something was amiss. He alighted from his

chariot, and said, "Is all well." He appears to have given ready credence to Gehazi's story, and pressed upon him more than he had dared to ask. So far the deceit seemed to prosper; the wealth was safely conveyed to the tower, and bestowed in the house, and all unconscious that an unseen eye had regarded every act, he stood before his master; fearless and hardened, he entered the presence of the prophet. But not so, he withdrew from that presence, a change—sudden and fearful—had come over him; he was a leper, white as snow. The leprosy of Naaman, whose credulity he had abused, whose beneficence he had taxed for an unworthy purpose, clung unto him and unto his seed.

This little story, so simply and beautifully told us in the Bible, contains many lessons.—We have the little Maid's remembrance of the God of Israel, and his prophet, turned to good account. We have a rare example of the benefit a pious and wise servant may prove—of the efficacy of simple child-like faith—of the spirit of grateful liberality that ought to mark a great deliverance, and lastly, of the fearful consequences of indulging in covetous desires, and bringing to the aid of avarice, cunning and deceit.

China.

We take the following extract from a letter which we find in the London *Juvenile Missionary Magazine*, from the Rev. W. Young, and surely it contains enough to satisfy all of the necessity of Christian effort, which the "God of all grace" has promised to bless and to dispel the cloud which has long hung over this as well as other dark places of the earth, and to give the heathen as an inheritance to him who died the just for the unjust.

You must know that on the 24th day of the twelfth month of the Chinese, every year, all the idols have to go to heaven, to appear before Siung-te, or the supreme ruler to grant favours to those families over which they preside. But when the gods are to go to heaven, the Chinese think they ought not to be allowed to go alone, so they prepare horses, and sedan-chairs, and chair-bearers, for the use of the gods. At the same time they offer incense, burn candles, and large quantities of gilt paper in honour of them.

But perhaps some of you will ask, In what way do the gods go to heaven? Well, I will tell you. The Chinese print the pictures of all their gods and goddesses, and they print the pictures of horses, and sedan-chairs, and men; and then, on the appointed day, they

take all these pictures and put them into a sieve, and when they have done that, they set fire to them, and keep shaking the sieve round and round until they are all burnt to ashes. And what do they do with the ashes? Why, they throw them up into the air, and they are blown away by the wind in different directions, and in this way the gods are said to go to heaven, and their horses, chairs, &c., follow them. The gods do not remain long in heaven, but come back on the 4th day of the Chinese new year, so that the whole of the time that they are away from the earth is exactly ten days. On the night of the 3rd day of the new year, just before the gods come back, the Chinese prepare a great many things to welcome their return, such as dragon-chariots, sedan-chairs, retinues of servants, &c.; but you must remember that these are not real things, but mere pictures of them. They are burned in the same manner as those pictures that I have spoken of before, and the ashes are thrown up into the air, to be also blown away by the wind. This ceremony is called escorting and welcoming back the gods. It takes place every year, on the day that I before mentioned. The pictures are always printed on yellow paper, which is very coarse, and the pictures themselves are not at all pretty, so I am sure you will think the Chinese very foolish for believing that such worthless pieces of paper, when burned to ashes, can be turned into gods. But, my dear children, wherever the light of God's holy Word does not shine into the hearts of the people, they believe very foolish things,—and when foolish things are believed, people will do foolishly. Ought you not, then, to be very thankful that you have God's holy Book put into your hands, and that you have kind teachers to explain it to you? Oh! make good use of all the privileges you have, and pray to God that, as you grow in years, you may also grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. So that when you grow up to be men and women, you may be able to teach others who are ignorant, and help to bring them to Christ.

Montreal, April, 1851.

Dear Sir,—In your *Record* for this month I read with pleasure the report of a speech you copy from the *London Juvenile Missionary Magazine*, and fully agree with you when you say that we should not allow the season of youth to pass away without enlisting it in the cause of missions.

My object in addressing you on the present occasion is not only to answer your question, "What are we doing in Canada to help on the car of the Gospel in heathen lands?" but also by making known what is doing by some to encourage and stimulate others to do

a little towards furthering the coming of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sunday School connected with the church in this city to which I belong (St. George's) has regular Sunday collections, a large portion of which is devoted to the cause of missions, and I have seen many a young eye brighten as the little hand dropped a half-penny or a penny into the box, when the collector came his rounds, exemplifying what the donor experienced something of the "truthfulness embodied in the words of our Lord Jesus, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." In giving publicity to those facts, I trust many of the young will be induced by them to do some missionary work, such as it is in their power to do, for I feel sure that no work will more largely call down God's blessing than working in or for the cause of missions.

A SUBSCRIBER.

As an encouragement to teachers, and as an evidence of what is "going on in our midst," we give insertion to the following, which has been handed us for publication.

The senior class in the Sunday school connected with the Episcopal parish church in this city, took occasion on the return of their teacher from Europe to present him with an elegantly bound polyglot Bible, and a suitable address as a token of their feelings towards him.

The address is as follows:—

We, the undersigned, members of your class, beg leave to present you with this Bible, as a small token of the importance we all attach to the nature and earnestness of your instructions, and of the high esteem in which you are held by us.

The substance of the Teacher's reply was as follows:—

My dear young friends—for I must no longer call you scholars, your ages and past conduct alike forbid my doing so—I am very much gratified with this evidence of your regard for me, and the mode in which you have shewn it. There is to my mind no other book more appropriate than the one you have selected for a class to present to their Sunday school teacher, and there is nothing, I assure you, that you could have chosen, that I could in an equal measure appreciate. I hope and pray that both you and I may so govern our conduct by its precepts, that its promises, by the help of God's Holy Spirit, may be our comfort not only through life but also when the pains of death take hold of our mortal bodies, and so long as it pleases God to grant you health and strength of body and of mind, I hope to see ye all, one after another as time draws on, as useful Sunday school teachers. ye have been attentive Sunday school scholars.

Montreal, May, 1851.

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