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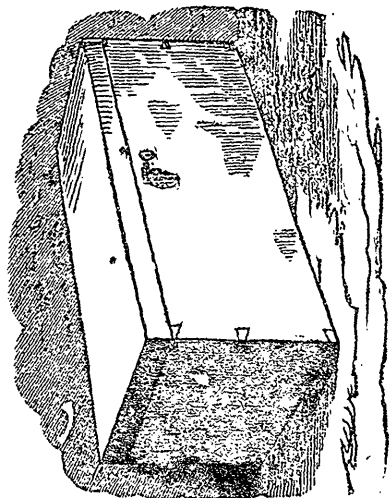
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THE
MISSIONARY
AND
SABBATH-SCHOOL
RECORD.

VOL. X.

MONTREAL, APRIL 1, 1853.

No. 4.



Missionary-box in the Coal-Mine.

There is a coal-mine in England several hundred feet under ground, into which a gentleman descended for the purpose of inspecting the interior. When he arrived below, he found a poor boy there who belonged to his Sabbath-school class.

The boy was rejoiced to see him, saying, "O, sir, I never expected to see you here;" and got permission to show this gentleman over the mine.

He was overjoyed at having this privilege, and skipped along so rapidly that every now and then left the visitor in great danger of falling into some of the holes with which the mine abounded. At last they came back to what the gentleman supposed to be the entrance, and glad enough the gentleman was to have the prospect of seeing day-light once more, when the boy said, "There's one place more that I must show you."

The gentleman being tired, said, "I do not much care about seeing any more; but if you wish me I will go."

The boy led him to a spacious, gloomy looking cavern, where the candle glimmered feebly in the dark space around them.

"Here," the boy said, "we have our prayer meetings," showing the gentleman the seats cut out of the coal, where they used to sit when the Bible was read; "and here," said he, "is our missionary-box," exhibiting a box cut out of a solid coal, into which they used to put what money they could spare.

See how *the way* is made where there is *the will*! Doubtless, God looked down upon these miner-boys as they put their farthings and half-pence into

this coal-box, with as much regard as he did upon the princes of Judah, when they "rejoiced and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end." 2 Chron. xxiv, 10.

A Short Fireside Story.

One evening an old man and his son, a little boy, sat by the wayside, near the gate of an old town in Germany. The father took a loaf of bread, which he had bought in the town, and broke it, and gave the half to his boy. "Not so, father," said the boy, "I shall not eat till after you. You have been working hard all day for small wages to support me, and you must be very hungry; I shall wait till you are done."—"You speak kindly, my son," replied the pleased father; "your love to me does me more good than my food, and those eyes of yours remind me of your dear mother who has left us, and who told you to love me as she used to do, and indeed, my boy, you have been a great strength and comfort to me; but now that I have eaten the first morsel to please you, it is your turn to eat."—"Thank you, father, but break this piece in two, and take you a little more; for you see the loaf is not large, and you require more than I do." "I shall divide the loaf for you, my boy, but eat it I shall not; I have abundance, and let us thank God for his goodness in giving us food, and giving us what is better still, cheerful and contented hearts. He who gave us the living bread from heaven, to nourish our immortal souls, how shall He not give us all other food which is necessary to support our mortal bodies."

The father and the son thanked God, and then began to cut the loaf in pieces to begin together their frugal meal. But as they cut out one portion of the loaf, there fell out several pieces of gold, of great value. The little boy gave a shout of joy, and was springing forward to grasp the unexpected treasure, when he was pulled back by his father. "My son, my son!" he cried,

"do not touch that money, it is not ours." "But whose is it, father, if it is not ours?" "I know not, as yet, to whom it belongs; but probably it was put there by the baker through some mistake. We must inquire; run." "But, father," interrupted the boy, "you are poor and needy, and you have bought the loaf, and then the baker may tell a lie, and"—"I will not listen to you, my boy; I bought the loaf, but I did not buy the gold in it. If the baker sold it to me in ignorance, I shall not be so dishonest as to take the advantage of him; remember Him, who told us to do to others as we would have others do to us. The baker may possibly cheat us; but that is no reason why we should try and cheat him. I am poor, indeed, but that is no sin. If we share the poverty of God's own son, oh, let us share, also, his goodness and his trust in God.—We may never be rich, but may always be honest. We may die of starvation, but God's will be done, should we die in doing it? Yes, my boy, trust God, and walk in His ways, and you shall never be put to shame. Now run to the baker, and bring him here, and I shall watch the gold until he comes."

So the boy ran for the baker. "Brother workman," said the old man, "you have made some mistake, and almost lost your money;" and he showed the baker the gold, and told him how it had been found. "Is it thine?" asked the father; "if it is, take it away." "My father, baker, is very poor, and"—"Silence, my child, put me not to shame by thy complaints. I am glad we have saved this man from losing his money." The baker had been gazing alternately upon the honest father and his eager boy, and upon the gold which lay glittering upon the green turf.

"Thou art an honest fellow," said the baker, "and my neighbour, David, the flax-dresser, spoke the truth, when he said, thou wert the honestest man in town. Now I shall tell thee about

the gold :—A stranger came to my shop three days ago, and gave me that loaf, and told me to sell it cheaply or give it to the honestest poor man I knew in the city. I told David to send thee to me, as a customer, this morning; and as thou wouldst not take the loaf for nothing, I sold it to thee, as thou knowest, for the last penny in thy purse; and the loaf with all its treasures—and certainly it is not small!—is thine; and God grant thee a blessing with it!”

The poor father bent his head to the ground, while the tears fell from his eyes. His boy ran and put his hands about his neck, and said, “I shall always like you, my father, trust God and do what is right, for I am sure it will never put us to shame.”

Sabbath School Fruit.

A few months after I began to take an interest in the Sabbath school at —, a little girl one morning made her appearance, who was unknown to me. She was about nine years of age, and so very ignorant, that there was no hesitation in at once placing her in the junior class of the school. I inquired her name and place of residence, and was told her parents lived in a secluded and distant part of the parish. They were very poor, and almost constantly out at day labour.

I was, however, determined to try and gain admittance to their dwelling, and it was not long before I prepared myself for the undertaking; and an undertaking truly it was, for my path lay along a lonely seashore, bounded on one side by high cliffs, on the other by the Solway, whose rapid tides completely covered the sands except for a short time of each day,

It was a stormy November day, but I succeeded in reaching the cottage, which I found to be a rude, ill-built hovel, its gray walls in perfect keeping with the scene around. One blasted thorn bush, the only mark of vegetation in the neighbourhood, grew by its side. I had recently returned from

England, and the remembrance of its rose-clad cottages forced itself on my mind, in vivid contrast with the scene before me. I stood for a few minutes before entering the house, and looked back on the way I had come. The wild waves were now dashing up against the rocks I had passed, and sending their white spray even to the spot where I stood.

I entered the cottage, and there stood before me a woman stern in form and feature. I entered into conversation with her, but her heart seemed cold and hard as the rocks which surrounded her, and her ignorance and self-righteousness were even greater than usual in that benighted corner.

When I left her house, I felt sad and dispirited. In such a visit there was indeed no pleasure, but I resolved to persevere in what I felt was duty, and hoped my next call might prove more welcome than this one appeared.

During the course of the winter, her little boy became ill, and it was soon evident that he could not long survive. I often went to see him, and the little fellow listened with interest to all I said, although he seldom spoke or expressed his feelings. His mother appeared, however, pleased with my attention to the child, and now always received me with civility.

After the boy's death, I went less frequently to the cottage, and I soon removed from the neighbourhood for some months.

On my return home the following summer, I was told Mrs. K—— was ill, and took an early opportunity of visiting her. Very different now was the scene from what it had been when I last looked upon it. A bright summer sun bathed the whole landscape in light, and the rising tide was undisturbed by a single ripple.

I entered the cottage, and was at once struck by its changed aspect. An air of order and quiet pervaded it, and cleanliness had taken the place of the dirt and confusion that had formerly existed.

I found the woman was better, and now being able to sit up, but there was little to be gathered from her manner, until I was rising to leave her, when I put a little book into her hand. In a moment the ice was broke. "I need not thank you," she said, "for the trouble you take, for I now know the Master you serve, and he is mine also."

I was rejoiced to hear her speak in this manner, but surprised also, for a few months before no one in the neighbourhood had appeared more ignorant or impenetrable.

In answer to my inquiries of how she had been led to the knowledge of Him, "whom to know is eternal life," she told me about the time of her child's death, she became deeply anxious about the state of her soul.

There was no place of worship near enough to her cottage to admit of her attending it, and she knew not where to seek the instruction for which she so much longed—the Bible was to her a sealed book, and for a time she remained in hopeless despondency.

But He who said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," did not long leave her to stumble upon the dark mountains. She soon discovered that her little girl understood more than she of the subjects that now filled her thoughts, and eagerly made the child repeat to her all that she heard at the Sabbath school. Week by week the mother and child thus learnt together—together they sought the scriptures for the proofs of each doctrine taught, and together they committed to memory the verses to be repeated.

At length the mother's interest became so great, that she could no longer wait the return of her child from school, but crossed the fields to meet her, and receive the words of instruction while yet fresh in her little Mary's mind. "Gather up the fragments that remain," said our Redeemer, "that nothing be lost." Here, of the

crumbs that fell by the wayside, were gathered baskets full for the provision of this hungry soul. I left the house with a thankful heart, and as I walked home by the quiet seashore, could not but praise His power, who not only stilleth the raging of the waves, but who can say to the wilder storms that war within the human breast, "Peace, be still; and immediately there is a great calm."

What Next?

A gentleman riding near the city, overtook a well dressed young man, and invited him to a seat in his carriage. "And what (said the gentleman to the young stranger) are your plans for the future?" "I am a clerk," replied the young man, "and my hope is to succeed and get into business for myself." "And what next?" said the gentleman. "Why, I intend to marry and set up an establishment of my own," said the youth. "And what next?" continued the interrogator. "Why, to continue in business and accumulate wealth." "And what next?" "To retire from business and enjoy the fruit of my labours." "And what next?" "It is the lot of all to die, and I of course cannot escape," replied the young man. "And what next?" once more asked the gentleman; but the young man had no answer to make—he had no purposes that reached beyond the present life.

How many young men are in precisely the same condition?—their plans embrace only this life—what pertains to getting wealth and enjoying life. What pertains to the world to come, has no place in all their plans.

The Power of the Cross.

SAYS the Rev. George Buttle, a Wesleyan Missionary in New Zealand:—"Kemp, the principal native teacher here, is a fine man, firmly attached to our discipline, and one who looks well after his charge; hence the satisfactory

state of things which we invariably find on visiting them. And yet this man himself told me, in a recent conversation I had with him, what a monster he had been in years gone by. 'Without natural affection,' most unceremoniously, and free from the least relenting, he had murdered his own children, putting them into holes dug in the earth, placing large stones over them, and so crushing them to death. 'The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.' By what power are these works of the 'old murderer' to be destroyed? Kemp would say, 'By the preaching of the cross of Christ.'

Stephen Archer; or, Father says when he was a Boy.

"Well, Stephen Archer, I see that you are going home from your Sunday school, and I hope you are taking away something that will be of use to you. A sad pity it is that the parents of Sunday scholars do not help their children more than they usually do, by setting them a good example, and by carrying on the work of instruction;

That so many people adopt a bad rule,
And forget at home that they learn at the school.

"I know, Stephen, that your parents are of a different sort. I know that your father is an upright, thinking man, and your mother a pious woman; and that is one reason why, with God's blessing, you are going on so well as you are. If all parents were like yours, it would strengthen the hands, and be a cordial to the hearts of teachers; and they need it, for they have many discouragements. I dare say, Stephen, that your father often talks to you kindly, and points out the changes that have taken place in the world, as well as the only way to a better. Tell me, Stephen, in what way he talks to you."

"Father says when he was a boy—but that must be a long while ago, for his hair is grey now—their used to be bull-baiting, and badger baiting, and

cock-fighting at wakes and fairs; but these cruel sports have been long since set aside. He has not heard of a bull-baiting for many years."

"I dare say not. That is just the way that I should have expected your father to talk, Stephen."

"Father says when he was a boy, soldiers used to go about the streets beating up for recruits. The drummer and fifer made noise enough to be heard a mile, and the serjeant marched along at the head of his men, with a purse of gold, stuck on the point of his drawn sword. 'Now is the time,' said he, 'for all fine, spirited young men who wish to serve their king and country.' We hear but little about beating up for soldiers now."

"Very little, and the less the better."

"Father says when he was a boy, in many places they used to send out a pressgang to lay hold of those who had been at sea. Many a young fellow who was living at home with his mother and father, his sister and brother, was taken by force, hurried on board of a king's ship, and kept there for years against his will; but who hears of such things now?"

"Who indeed! We can hardly think now that such things could have ever happened."

"Father says when he was a boy, there used to be a great deal of flogging among soldiers and sailors, and that men used to be hung for highway robbery, housebreaking, forgery, and many other things; but now none are hung except for murder, and the cat-o'-nine-tails has gone out of fashion."

"That is true, and it would be well if it never comes into fashion again."

"Father says when he was a boy, it was a common thing to see a man stand in the pillory, or set in the stocks; but he says, common as it was then, it would be a very uncommon thing now."

"It would indeed, and attract great attention."

"Father says when he was a boy, the streets and shops used to be lighted up

with oil lamps, which gave us but little light; but that now the streets are lighted up with gas light, and, in some of the first-rate shops you may almost see to pick up a pin."

"Yes, that you may, and a good light by night, is not only a good comfort, but also a great protection."

"Father says when he was a boy, he once went up to London by the waggon in four days, and now he could go up by the railroad in less than four hours. He says he used to pay a shilling postage when he had a letter from his uncle, and that now a dozen letters would only cost him the same money."

"These changes are very much for the better, and very thankful should we be for them."

"Father says when he was a boy, the quickest way of sending a message a long way was to write a letter by the post, or to tie it under the wing of a pigeon, that had been brought from the place, and let the bird at liberty; but now you may send it by the telegraph in two minutes, and thereby save more than as many hours."

"Yes, the electric telegraph is a wonderful invention, and confers great benefits on mankind."

"Father says when he was a boy, Bibles were scarce, that Sunday schools were just beginning to show themselves, and as for a ragged school, you might have looked about from John o' Groat's to the Isle of Wight, and not found one after all. He says he should not like to be obliged to count the Bibles now, nor the Sunday scholars either."

"It would be rather a difficult task."

"Father says there are two texts in the Bible that ought to be written on every heart. 'All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,' Rom. iii. 23; and, 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' Tim. i. 15. And he says, too, that if he had a dozen young children, and was about to die, he would leave them all this piece of advice for a legacy, 'Remem-

ber now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,' Eccles. xiii. 1. Father is not a rich man nor a great man, but he is a good man, and that is worth the other two put together."

You are right, Stephen, you are right."

"Father says that now bull-baiting and pressgangs are done away, and hardly any soldiering going on; now hanging and flogging are so little practised, and the pillory and stocks so little used; that now the streets are lighted up with gas; now we can send a letter to the Land's End for a penny, and go there ourselves, if we like, for a penny a mile, to say nothing of sending messages by the telegraph; and while young people can get Bibles for a trifle, and go to Sunday school and the ragged school for nothing, there ought to be ten times more good boys among us than there ever were. I think so too, and what is more than that. I will try to make one."

"That is the very thing, Stephen, I wish all fathers were like yours, and that we had in our Sunday school, a thousand scholars of the same mind as Stephen Archer."

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, and 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 neighbours, 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, 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 a 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 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, therefore, 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 land.

The History of a Plant.

CHAPTER IV.—HOW THE SEED BEGINS TO GROW.

You have heard what there is in the seed, and what makes it sprout; I am going to tell you in this chapter, *how it sprouts*, which is the beginning

of the "history" I have promised you. Every plant has some place which it likes better than any other; some choose the side of the mountain, others the warm and sheltered valley; some the dry hill, others the wet meadow; and about this I shall speak before I finish my tale. So you must suppose now, that the seed has found its favourite place, and has just the kind and quantity of air and moisture, light and heat, that it wants, and that its husk or shell is bursting, whilst it soaks up the water round it:—What happens next? How is the "seed plant," which we saw so snugly wrapped up, and so well provided for; how is it changed into a *real plant*?

But first, perhaps, you wish to know how long it is, after the seed is planted, before the sprouting begins? That depends, first, upon whether it has enough of each of the four things I said in the last, were so necessary to it. Too much of any one of them, also, is as bad as not enough, in keeping it from beginning to grow. Most of those which are scattered in the autumn lie without thinking of putting forth root or bud till next spring. But when there is exactly what is wanted of those necessary things, then the sprouting happens sooner or later, according to the strength and toughness of the coverings of the seed. Some kinds begin to grow in a day or two; others wait as many weeks; and some are months or even years before they sprout. Farmers "steep" their grain before they sow it, that the husks being more easily burst, it may spring up the sooner; and the seeds of wall-fruit have not waited so long as usually they do, when their hard and thick shells have been softened before they were planted.

And this is the way in which the seed is turned into a plant. When the coverings are burst by the swelling of what is within them, that little "beak" (as I called it) is pushed out, and as soon as it has become long enough, it bends downwards, and in a short time, you see that there is a root going to

grow out of it; and then the bud begins to show itself, looking upwards; or the two "seed-leaves" are drawn out of the husk, with the bud between them, and they become the first *real* leaves of the plant. By this time the root has appeared, and has forced its way into the soil, and the "larder" begins to look as if some of the "provisions" were gone; and the leaves spread themselves out broader, and the root strikes deeper, and takes firmer hold, and the "provisions" are soon finished; and the *seedling* plant is complete.

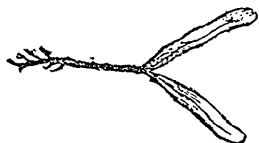
There are two different ways, then, in which the little "seed-plant" begins to grow, after the root has shown itself. One is this: the two "seed-leaves," as you can see in the drawings, from (11) to (19),* which are short and thick, and most frequently white, when in the seed, and which had been growing till they took up almost all the room inside it, spread themselves out, and become green; and though they are almost always of a different shape from the proper leaves, they answer the same purpose, and it is sometimes a long while before they wither and fall. This is the way in which those seeds grow, in which the "little plant" has its "provisions" stored up separately; but some of those which have their "provisions" in their "seed-leaves" grow in the same manner.

There is one curious thing happens with seeds that grow so; they *come out of the ground* when they sprout. As soon as the root has taken hold of the soil, the young stem begins to stretch itself, before the "seed-leaves" have been able to throw off the husk; so this covering, with the leaves yet in it, is pushed up by the growing stem, as far out of the earth as it was buried in it. If you have grown "mustard and cress," or kidney beans, for yourself, you must have noticed this.

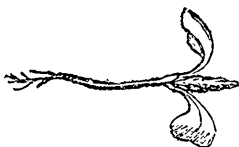
In those drawings of the seeds, the "little plant" seemed to be *in*, but not *joined* to, the store of food laid up for it; and it is not very well known how

See page. 36, 37, 38.

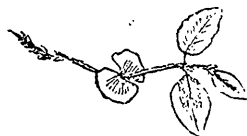
the nursling uses up its provisions, but it is certain that it does use them. There are many things in "the history of a plant" which, like this, no one knows at present. I shall point them out as I come to them; because I wish you to see how, in the commonest and least of the works of God, there is much that we do not understand, although they have been looked at, and searched into, and thought about, by so many persons, and for so long a time; and also, because I hope to persuade some of you, young friends, to try to know all that can be known about these beautiful things which God hath made, and which he always feeds and clothes with so much care; and if I show you that there is something in them *to be found out*, I think you will be more willing to set about it in good earnest.



26



27



28

But here is a woodcut to help you to understand what I have been speaking of. These are "seedling" plants. That marked (26) is a kind of sycamore which comes from North America; it has a root and two "seed-leaves," but the bud is not open yet. The next (27), as you could guess, is the common mustard, and the leaves are appearing between the "seed-leaves," as they do when it is getting too "old" to be nice to eat. In (28), which is a

beech, the stem and several proper leaves have grown, and yet the "seed-leaves" remain. I must tell you that (26) and (28) are drawn very much smaller than they really are.

29

30



The second way in which the "seed-plant" begins to grow, you may see at (29), which represents a young oak-tree. The two "seed-leaves" of the acorn, you all know, fill up the whole of the shell, and are very thick and fleshy. When they swell and burst the shell, and the root has found its way into the soil, they do not spread out into curiously-shaped green leaves, but the little bud between them makes haste and puts forth, first one leaf, and then another, of its own; and the two "seed-leaves," which contain the first supply of food for the "seedling," keep their place until they have given it all the nourishment they can, and are shrivelled and brown, and quite dry; and at last they fall off. In the plant I made this drawing from, they had almost finished their work. It was, of course, very much larger than this drawing.

If you look at the woodcut marked (19), you will see the seed of a fir-tree cut open; and you cannot help noticing the short, thick "little plant" within. As soon as it sprouts, it becomes thin and long, like (30); and sometimes the husk will not fall off from the top of the "seed-leaves" till it is decayed, or the bud, growing out from the middle of them, pushes it off. This plant sprouts in the first way I mentioned.

Those plants whose seeds have but one "seed-leaf," begin to grow in the

first manner; that is the "seed-leaf" becomes a real leaf, and the "seedling" is nursed by the supply of food amongst which it lies. The drawing marked (31) shows the sprouting of one of our marsh plants. The single "seed-leaf" is represented coming out of a slit in the side of the stem. The next (32) is a kernel of wheat beginning to grow. The one "seed-leaf" is lifting itself upwards; and beside the first root, which comes from the end of the seed, there are two smaller roots on each side.

It is very strange that if one, or even both, of the "leaves" of the "seed-plant" of a kidney-bean be cut off before it begins to grow, it will sprout when sown, although it has lost

31 32



its proper supply of food; but the plant is not strong; and the root or bud of other seeds has been cut off as soon as it came, and the "seed-plant" has put forth another, and gone on growing. You will find it very amusing and instructive to watch the sprouting of seeds for your-elves. You need not dig up those planted for the sake of their flowers to do this; but if you have a little garden of your own, you can put a few of different kinds into the earth for the purpose. And if you have not a garden, you may make mustard and cress grow on a piece of flannel laid in a saucer of water, and see all that goes on, just as you could watch bees at work in a glass hive. Or you could make an acorn sprout and grow into an oak plant of some

size, by tying a piece of thin string round it, and hanging it over some water in a bottle with an open neck.

When I told you about the provision made for the young plant whilst it was yet in the seed, I said that it showed us God's wisdom, and love, and might. And now we have seen the "seed-plant," as soon as it was waked to life, send out, first, a little white fibre, downwards, as if it knew where the things that the root could make use of were, and afterwards as delicate a little stem upwards, as if it knew that there the air and light, which its leaves would need, were. *And it is always so.* If you turn the acorn round in the loop of string, so that the root-fibre should be upwards, and the leaf-stem downwards, each will bend round and grow in its old direction. Is this because the seed, or its root or stem, can see, or because the plant knows what it is doing? No; it has only *life*: it knows nothing. It is God's doing. In ways too wonderful for us to think, He enables each little plant to do exactly what is necessary for its growth and thriving. And we may learn, by noticing them, that God is always near, and always ready to help and guide us to all that is good for us; for He watches over them, and we are "much better than they."





The Caged Eagle.

There was a very large eagle that had been kept, in a cage for many years. The owner at length concluded to give him his liberty, and at the appointed time a large number of persons assembled to see him take his flight. The door of the cage was opened, and the noble bird stepped to the threshold, and after deliberately looking around on those who were standing there, he spread his wings, made two or three circles over their heads, and then darted directly towards the sun, and was soon lost sight of in the distance.

The time will soon come, my little readers, when each one of you will take your departure from the body in which your soul is caged; and perhaps some of your friends may then stand by to see you go, and bid you the last long farewell. O that God would grant that you, like the captive eagle, may, after a parting look at those you love, ascend heavenward in your flight, and stop not till you reach the throne of God. As you think of the holiness and happiness of heaven, may you have a heart to adopt this sweet language of the poet:

"I'm fettered and chained up in clay;
I struggle and pant to be free;
I long to be soaring away,
My God and my Saviour to see:
I want to put on my attire,
Washed white in the blood of the Lamb;
I want to be one of your choir,
And tune my sweet harp to his name;

I want, Oh, I want to be there,
Where sorrow and sin bid adieu,
Your joy and your friendship to share,
To wonder and worship with you."

Pictures from the Life of Jesus.

PICTURE IV.

THE PREACHER OF THE WILDERNESS.

You remember the gospel writer, says, "Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and man;" and though this seems but scanty information for eighteen long years, much may be inferred from it. Depend upon it the home at Nazareth was a happy place, for holiness was there, and holiness is only another name for happiness; and we can think how Jesus grew to be a man, and now, submitting to that good law of Palestine which made all parents teach their sons some trade, he toiled all day in the workshop of Joseph, putting honour upon industry, by being called the carpenter; and we can think of him, hidden from the world, yet making despised Nazareth a happy spot, by deeds of mercy and by words of love, and in his own person destroying the proverb, "No good thing can come out of Nazareth."

The song of the angels, the shining star, the words of Anna and of Simeon, have been forgotten by all but a few: the wonder has gone by—the glory which shone round him when he came, has died away, but only for a season. He stands amid the throng, a poor Galilean peasant; the hopeful, the fearful, the devout, the envious, the curious, the anxious, the oppressed, are about him, and John, in his solemn, fearless strain is bidding them repent, and take from him the pledge of baptism, that as soon as the expected Saviour comes, they may be his followers. While his voice is yet ringing in their ears, and their expectations are at the highest, his eyes fall upon the man of Nazareth, and the tone of his voice is changed, and his speech is altered—

"This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me! There standeth one among you whom ye know not."

Jesus Christ himself has come to the baptism. He will put honour upon him whose voice has echoed through the streets and palaces—through the plains, in the deserts, on the mountains, in the valley, by the great sea-shore. He will receive that rite which is the pledge of obedience to the coming kingdom of God. In vain does John forbid him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" The answer is at once a reason and command, "Suffer it to be so to us, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

And Christ went down into the water, and John baptized him in the river Jordan.

Lowly Jesus! King of kings, and Lord of lords! great maker of the world! the deep, deep sea, the sky, the sun, the shining stars—every flower, with its sweet perfume—every lofty forest tree—every murmuring stream—every high grey mountain—every valley, every creature, call Thee Lord, and yet thou art so humble, so meek, so lowly that thy light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness knoweth it not.

"Did not the earth tremble at his footsteps? Did not the sun die out before his brightness? Did not the hills rejoice, and trees of the forest clap their hands? No; but the sky above him opened—the clouds rolled back—the shining glory of the Lord was seen, and from the throne of God the Holy Spirit came, and, fluttering like a dove, descended on him; while from the hidden depths of that great glorious world of light, God's kingdom in the sky, the angels' home, a voice was heard, and solemn words were uttered, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED."

Thus Jesus entered on his glorious work. Thus John gave place to Jesus. He had proclaimed his coming—he

had smoothed the way, and along the path of prophecy the Saviour was now to go: the Baptist's work was ended. Just as the gray shadows of the evening fell—just as the twilight deepened into night, did his greatness decline; for true was the saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

The Jordan still flows on, a fine noble river. We may stand on Jacob's Bridge, as a three-arched bridge which spans the stream is called, and look on the flowing stream. Numerous reeds, rushes, canes, thorns, oleanders, and other plants, line its banks. We may follow the course of the river, and look on the goodly land that bounds it on either side—the grassy plains, where the cattle of Bashan fattened, and where the children of Manasseh grew rich in flocks—on the towns and villages, rich gardens, meadows, and fruitful fields. We may notice the reed huts and the Arab tents. It is a romantic sight to stand beside one of the river-falls; to watch the spray in the moonlight; to hear the deafening roar of the waters; the whooping of the owl, and the song of the bulbul: every thing connected with it wakes up old Bible thoughts; and there are none more cheering, none more interesting, than the thought of Jesus and the voice from heaven.

Most likely we shall never see the Jordan—most likely the Land of Palestine will only be a Bible-land to us; but we love its name, we love its scenes, we think of Jesus, of John, of the opening heavens, the descending dove; we think of Jesus in the wilderness, and the strange temptations of that place, and looking up to God, we pray that he would give to us his spirit, that we might serve the Lord, and be his own dear children.

"LORD, teach a little child to pray,
Thy grace betimes impart;
And grant thy Holy Spirit may
Renew my infant heart.

"A sinful creature I was born,
And from my birth have strayed;
I must be wretched and forlorn
Without thy mercy's aid.

"But Christ can all my sins forgive,
And wash away their stain;
Can fit my soul with him to live,
And in his kingdom reign."

B. K. C.

"I Never Hark to Him."

I know a little boy whose name is Frank Waters. He is a very good little boy—has blue eyes and rosy cheeks, and is very stout and active. But yet he is gentle and obedient. He tries to learn to read, and learns texts for the Sabbath school. There is one thing I have always noticed about Frank, that is, he never uses naughty words, always speaks kindly to every one. And I learned the secret of this, from a little anecdote his mother told me of him.

This summer Frank's mother has had a good deal of company visiting her, and among others there was a little boy about Frank's age, who came with his aunt. The little boy was an orphan—had neither father nor mother—but I am sorry to say he was not a very good boy. He often spoke in a very impudent manner to his kind aunt, and was in the habit of using naughty words, which no good child would ever do. One day this little boy (who we will call John,) had been a very bad boy, and was punished severely. It grieved Frank's mother very much; she feared lest her little son should learn and repeat the bad words Johnny had been using. She called her little boy to her and said,

"Franky, I hope you will never learn to talk in the manner John talks, and use such wicked words. You know poor John has no mother to teach him now."

"Oh," said Frank stoutly, "when I hear Johnny or any other boy say naughty words, I never hark to them." Here is the secret, my child; as little Frank said—he would not hark to them. That is the reason why he never has learned these naughty words.

Little children who read this, think upon it. Do not listen when you hear wicked language; turn away and you

will not catch it—"do not hark to it," as Frank says. If we listen we learn it; and if we learn we are very apt to speak it. God will not love those who take his name in vain. Those who offend in tongue, soon offend in action. When you hear stories told around that may do harm to your neighbors, never hark to them, and you will never repeat them. Remember God hears every word you say, and will not overlook one naughty or sinful word you say.

A Young Gideon.

"A boy belonging to one of the schools established by the missionaries in the South Seas, had heard so much of the sin and folly of idolatry, that his confidence in idols was shaken, and he longed to know for a certainty whether the images he had been accustomed to worship were really possessed of power or not. One day his father and mother went out, and left him at home alone. He had spent some time in reading his task, and thinking over what he had been taught at the school the day before. At last the idea came into his mind that it would be a good thing to burn the idols. He was, however, afraid, partly on account of his parents, and partly from the dread he had of offending the gods, and bringing down upon himself swift destruction. In this difficulty he knelt down and entreated the God of Christians to take care of him and help him. He then rose, and taking up one of the smallest idols, he put it on the fire; the flames kindled about it, and in a short time not a vestige of it remained. The terrified child looked on with astonishment; but no sooner was the first consumed than he threw on another, and another, and another, till, like Gideon of old, he had thoroughly cleansed his father's house. When, however, the flames had subsided, and all was over, the boy became alarmed at his own temerity. He had no more fear of the gods of wood and stone, but he trembled at the thought of what his father might say, and he was

half inclined to repent of his rashness. In this extremity he shut up the dwelling and went into the woods; and the best way he could, devoted himself to God, promising that if God would befriend and be his God, he would serve him all the days of his life. While he was there his father and mother returned, and missing at once the idols and the boy, they feared some spirit had come and taken them away together. As soon as they could recover themselves a little, they went to the missionary and asked him if he knew any thing about their son. He said he did not; but suspecting what had been done, he offered to accompany them and find him out. After going in various directions, they bent their steps to the wood, and there at some distance, under the shadow of a large tree, they saw the lad kneeling before God. The parents were so thankful to see him again, and to find that not a hair of his head had been hurt, that they forgot their rebukes, were persuaded to renounce their heathenish customs, and henceforth to give themselves up to the study of the Holy Scriptures. The boy, encouraged by the Divine goodness, was confirmed in his resolution to be the Lord's, and afterwards became a zealous teacher in the schools, and a teacher of the Gospel among his brethren."

Entering Life.

Your future history and character will be in great measure of your 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 friend 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, it 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. That 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 th worlds; multitudes owe their all to ; 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 trial your own.

Whatever specious arguments infidelity 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.*

Luther and his Maid-Servant.

Luther had a domestic residing in his house by the name of Elizabeth, who, in a fit of displeasure, left, without giving the family any notice. She subsequently fell into habits of immorality, and became dangerously ill. In her sickness she requested a visit from Luther. On taking his seat at her bedside, he said:—

“Well, Elizabeth, what is the matter?”

“I desire,” she replied, “to ask your pardon for leaving your family so abruptly; but I have something else weighing very heavily on my conscience; I have given away my soul to Satan!”

“I have,” continued she, “done many wicked things, but this is what most oppresses me, that I have deliberately sold my poor soul to the devil; and how can such a crime ever find mercy?”

“Elizabeth, listen to me,” rejoined the man of God. “Suppose, while you lived in my house, you had sold and transferred all my children to a stranger, would the sale or transfer have been lawful or binding?”

“Oh, no,” said the deeply humbled girl, “for I had no right to do that.”

“Very well, you had still less right to give your soul to arch-enemy; it no more belongs to you than my children do. It is the exclusive property of the Lord Jesus Christ; he made it, and when lost, also redeemed it; it is *his*, with all its powers and faculties, and you can't give away or sell what is not yours; if you have attempted it, the whole transaction was unlawful, and is entirely void. Now do you go to the Lord, confess your guilt with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and entreat him to pardon you, and take back again what is wholly his own. And as for the *sin* of attempting to alienate his rightful property, throw that back upon the devil, for that and that alone is his.”

The girl obeyed, was converted, and died full of faith and hope.

A Pocket Piece.

Most of our readers have heard of the terrible disaster connected with the loss of the Steamer Henry Clay. Among the multitudes that perished, was an ex-Mayor of New York, STEPHEN ALLEN, Esq. He is said to have been esteemed and loved by all who knew him. In his pocket-book was found a printed slip, which he had probably cut from some newspaper. It is a good *pocket piece* for all. It is as follows:

“Keep good company or none. Never be idle, if your hand cannot be usefully employed, attend to the cultivation of your mind. Always speak the truth. Make few promises. Live up to your engagements. Keep your own secrets, if you have any. When you speak to a person, look him in the face. Good company and good conversation are the very sinews of virtue. Good character is above all things else. Your character cannot be essentially injured, except by your own acts. If any one speaks evil of you, let your life be so that none will believe him. Drink no kind of intoxicating drinks. Ever live (misfortunes excepted) within your income. When you retire to bed, think over what you have been doing during the day. Make no haste to be rich, if you would prosper. Small and steady gains give competency, with tranquility of mind. Never play at any games of chance. Avoid temptation, through fear you may not withstand it. Earn money before you spend it. Never run into debt, unless you see a way to get out again. Never borrow if you can possibly avoid it. Do not marry until you are able to support a wife. Never speak evil of any one. Be just before you are generous. Keep yourself innocent, if you would be happy. Save when you are young, to spend when you are old.

Read over the above maxims at least once a week.”

A Royal Teacher.

The Queen of Tonga, Friendly Islands, loves the very name of her Britannic Majesty, and is ambitious to emulate her, little dreaming of the splendour and magnificence of European courts. At the examination the Queen herself conducted the school. — *Wesleyan Missionary Notices.*

COURSE OF SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR 1853.

FIRST SERIES.

- April 24.**—*Scripture to be read*—2 Ch. xxxiv. 1-8. *To be committed*—Ps. cxix. 113-115. *Subject*—Josiah. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—Josiah, king of Judah—(explain division of the kingdom since Solomon)—right in the sight of the Lord—when young began to seek God—Edward VI. of England—in 20th year began to purge Jerusalem—extent of the idolatry—when he had put down the idols, repaired the temple. It is the love of God's holy law, the Spirit's work in the heart, that is effective to put away evil from the actions of the life.
- May 1.**—*Scripture to be read*—Jer. xvii. 1-10. *To be committed*—Jer. xvii. 9, 10. *Subject*—Jeremiah. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—When the wickedness of Israel had become great, and the time of judgment was drawing near, prophets were sent to warn them—Jeremiah—the lessons of this chapter—their sin graven—children witnessed and remembered it—the curse and the blessing—the deceitful heart.
- May 8.**—*Scripture to be read*—2 Ch. xxxvi. 11-21. *To be committed*—Isa. lv. 6, 7. *Subject*—Captivity of Judah. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—King wicked—priests corrupt—God's compassion—the ingratitude of the people—they passed the limit which God had set to his own long-suffering, and wrath was allowed to fall—the captivity—prophecy fulfilled. (Spirit will not always strive—now the day of salvation.)
- May 15.**—*Scripture to be read*—Dan. iii. 13-26. *To be committed*—Luke ix. 24-26. *Subject*—The Jews at Babel. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—The image—the king's command—the three Jews faithful—their calm trust in God, when called before the king—the cruel persecution—the companion of these witnesses in the furnace—"I am with you always.") Their deliverance.
- May 22.**—*Scripture to be read*—Haggai ii. 1-9. *To be committed*—Luko ii. 27-30. *Subject*—Temple rebuilt. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—The captives had returned, Ez. i.—Temple built, see Ez. vi. 13-15—inferior—people sad—the encouragement; 1st, my Spirit remaineth; 2nd, the Desire of all nations shall come—the glory of the latter house.

SECOND SERIES.

- April 24.**—*Scripture to be read*—Matt. xv. 7-20. *To be committed*—Prov. xv. 11. *Subject*—The form and the power of godliness. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—Isa. xxix. 13. The Pharisees—the letter and the spirit—the religion of form—offended—state of the heart. Rom. ii. 28, 29.
- May 1.**—*Scripture to be read*—Matt. xxi. 1-11, 15, 16. *To be committed*—Ps. lxxii. 17-19. *Subject*—Hosanna to the Son of David. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—Approaching Jerusalem—ready to be offered—v. 3, whatever the Lord hath "need" of, dedicate to his service, Zech. ix. 9. The honor done to Jesus—some children's hands stretched out to strew a palm on the way, and some children's voices mingling in the hosanna. He smiled upon them—suffer little, &c., v. 15, 16; Ps. viii. 2.
- May 8.**—*Scripture to be read*—Matt. xxi. 33-46. *To be committed*—Isa. liii. 3-5. *Subject*—The vineyard, the husbandmen, and their Lord. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—The narrative of the parable—God gave the Jewish people a vineyard, Ps. xvi. 5, 6; Rom. iii. 1, 2.—Prophets persecuted. See Jeremiah, and Acts vii. 52; Heb. xi. 36-38.—The Son, best pledge of the Father's love, was crucified—(crucified afresh, Heb. vi. 6)—The Head of the Corner.
- May 15.**—*Scripture to be read*—Matt. xxiv. 36-46. *To be committed*—1 Cor. xv. 55-57. *Subject*—The Lord's coming. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—The Last Judgment and our death to us the same.—Sudden, unexpected—e. g., the deluge—one taken, another left—*watch*, every one—Lord, is it I?—(some instance of a neighbor's sudden death—and what if you had been called?) At peace in the beloved, you would be willing to wait, but ready to go.
- May 22.**—*Scripture to be read*—Mark xiv. 12-31. *To be committed*—1 Cor. xi. 27-29. *Subject*—Christ our passover. *Prominent topics of the Lesson*—The passover, Ex. xii.—the traitor—is it I?—the Supper—the hymn—the Shepherd—the sheep—the offence—the denial.

TERMS—1s. per annum, in advance, exclusive of postage. The profits of this publication go to the funds of the Canada Sunday School Union.

Printed and Published by J. C. Becket, at his Power-Press Printing Establishment, 22 Great St. James Street, Montreal.