

No. 23.]

[Vol. I.

THE CHILD'S
BIBLE EXPOSITOR;

OR

Lessons and Records of the Sunday School.

BY MRS. LEONARD.

"When thy word goeth forth, it giveth light and understanding
unto the simple."—PSALM cxix, VERSE 130.

TORONTO, SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1841.

This Work will continue to be Published regularly every week as soon as a sufficient number of Subscribers is obtained to meet the expense of publication.

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NOTICE.

At the commencement of this publication copies were sent, *as specimens*, to a considerable number of persons who were thought likely to support a work of this description, and a notice was printed on the cover, requesting such as did not wish to subscribe, to return the numbers sent, with their names on the envelope. Very many have sent to direct their names to be placed on the subscription list, and the work has been continued to this time to all who have not expressed a wish to the contrary. It is now presumed that those who have not returned their copies, desire to be considered as subscribers, and on the cover of this number is printed a list of such names. Should there be any who are not desirous of becoming subscribers, they are requested to return their copies, *with their name on the envelope*, through the Post Office, to Toronto.

TORONTO:

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Notice for No. 23.

The writer of the *Child's Bible Expositor* solicits the indulgence of her subscribers for the irregularity with which the work has lately been published. Whenever a subscription list, sufficient to meet the expense of publication, is secured, there will no longer be any cause for complaint on this subject; but while so heavy a pecuniary responsibility rests on an individual, whose private resources are very limited, she feels it necessary to proceed with extreme caution in her undertaking, and trusts that her supporters, to whom she feels deeply indebted, will take those circumstances into consideration, and allow her such time for the fulfilment of her engagements to them, as may enable her to meet them without involving herself in pecuniary difficulty.

TESTIMONIALS.

From the Church, January 30.

We fear that we have been remiss in not punctually acknowledging the receipt of three numbers of "THE CHILD'S BIBLE EXPOSITOR," by Mrs. Leonard,—which have been issued, with characteristic neatness, from our Diocesan Press. We have already expressed our favourable opinion of this little work, in noticing the first number, with which we were some time ago favoured. It contains much instruction that must be peculiarly beneficial to Sunday School Teachers, and we should be glad to see a copy in the hands of every one who has engaged in this interesting department of Christian duty. The publisher will oblige us by transmitting two copies regularly to our address.

From the Utica Gospel Messenger.

We have received the first three numbers of this weekly effort to be useful. It is in the 12mo. form, neatly printed, each number having 12 pages besides the cover, and issues from the press of Henry Rowsell, Toronto, U. C. We judge that this little work will prove a useful addition to the means of religious training. The instruction is imparted in the way of familiar conversation, and from the specimen before us, is aimed as well at the heart as the understanding. We tender our thanks to the excellent friend who has sent us the numbers before us, and hope the effort will be duly encouraged.

THE CHILD'S
BIBLE EXPOSITOR.

NUMBER XXIII.

*Lesson, the tenth and eleventh verses of the sixth chapter
of St. Matthew.*

Mrs. Arnold.—Repeat the first verse of your lesson,
Lucy.

Lucy.—“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in
earth, as it is in heaven.”

Mrs. Arnold.—In our sense of the expression it might
be said at that time that the kingdom of God had already
come upon earth, for when our blessed Saviour came to
disperse the darkness of heathenism and idolatry, and to
preach the Gospel to the blind and ignorant, the kingdom
of his Father was first established in the world; and we
have already seen by a great many proofs from different
passages in Scripture that it is never to be conquered or
overthrown. But though “the people that sat in darkness
saw great light” at that time, there is still much to be
done before this petition can be a superfluous one.
Which of us, my dear children, when we put up this
prayer, have not great reason to pray that the kingdom
of God may be admitted to rule in our own sinful hearts,
and to desire fervently that by us His will may be done
on earth as it is in heaven? Think how inconsistent and

foolish we are, and how sinfully we trifle with the words of our Saviour himself when we daily use them with our lips, and yet have no earnest and sincere wish that our prayers may be answered, even as far as we ourselves are concerned. I have already called your attention to the astonishing extent of meaning which you may find in every sentence of the Lord's prayer,—and in these few words we are taught to pray that this kingdom of God may be set up in our own hearts, reducing all within them to obedience and subjection to Jesus Christ as our King and Governor: that all people and nations, as well as our own neighbours, relations, and friends, may be brought into the way of truth: that the Gospel may be every where preached, and that the Holy Spirit may cause it to be so understood and practiced that all the human race may become true and sincere and faithful Christians, serving God in holiness of life and purity of heart, so that there may not be found one servant of Satan in the whole world. All this meaning is contained in these three words, "Thy kingdom come," and yet how often are they spoken without any remembrance of the countless blessings the answer to them would bring upon ourselves and our fellow creatures; as a natural consequence of this state of things we are next taught to pray that the will of God may be done on earth even as it is in heaven. Now only imagine for a moment, my dear children, what a very different world this would be if this petition was put up faithfully, and in true sincerity of heart, even by all who call themselves Christians, and who have been taught to say these words day after day, as long, and perhaps longer than they can remember. If Christians were all in earnest in wishing

for this blessed change in the state of the world, and would diligently seek to discover from the Word of God what is his will, and would pray fervently and constantly to be enabled to perform it, what a number of evils and miseries, and what an host of sins and offences would disappear at once from among us, and how little there would be left to make us unhappy. Thus all Christians would at once be admitted into so close a connection with our blessed Saviour, that all the snares and devices of Satan would have no power to separate them from his love; for when his mother and his brethren came to seek for him, and he was told that they were without, his answer was concluded in these words, "Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother." And now try to think and realise to yourself how very important it is that you should understand this prayer, which is left by Jesus Christ himself to guide all his followers in all ages of the world in what manner they may address their petitions to him; and when you repeat these words, think seriously and deeply upon the meaning of every sentence, and feel sure that your heart is praying as well as your lips, for you are speaking to God himself, and in the words of your Redeemer. If you ask a favour from your earthly parents, you are not careless or heedless whether they hear you or answer you or not; if you want some indulgence from them, or to make known some want which they have not supplied, and which you know they will relieve if you ask them to do so, you are quite in earnest in your petitions; you know exactly what you are asking for, and are anxious to receive a favourable answer from them: but my dears, you never yet asked

a boon from your earthly parents that was so precious as the very least of those that your Saviour has taught you to ask from your Father in heaven in this prayer. Let me hope that you will remember this in future, and when you pray that the kingdom of God may come, and that his will may be done on earth even as it is in heaven, you will think how great and extensive a blessing you are asking for, and renew daily your own resolutions to lend your own little aid to promote his kingdom and do his will, so that when you stand before the judgment seat of Christ you may be welcomed as the good and faithful servant into everlasting happiness. We know that if we are judged according to the strict requirements of God's holy law, there is no one who can say that they have uniformly done his will, but that the very best Christians and most acceptable servants of God are those who are most conscious of their own imperfect and unprofitable services. We will therefore look into the Scriptures, and see in what manner even in our present state of error and imperfection we may hope to be found at the last blameless and spotless, as if we had never been guilty in thought, word, or deed, of an offence against the will of our heavenly Father. Find the fifth chapter of the second Epistle to the Corinthians, Elizabeth, and read from the seventeenth verse to the end.

Elizabeth.—"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation:

“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Mrs. Arnold.—You learn from this passage of Scripture that those happy and favoured persons who have been brought to rest their whole hope of salvation on their Saviour, may hope to appear before his judgment seat purified from all their sins and infirmities through his atonement, and so clothed with righteousness by his merits, that there shall remain not one spot or vestige of sin to be brought to their charge. How shall we ever be sufficiently grateful for such mercy as this? and how shall we best shew our sense of it? It is impossible that in this life we should comprehend the greatness of the blessings purchased for us by our Saviour, but we may so far understand them that we may endeavour to shew our gratitude by studying to walk in his footsteps and imitate his example as far as poor weak mortals are able to follow so exalted a pattern. It is not the will of our heavenly Father that one of his creatures should be lost; therefore he has provided a way by which we may every one come to him, and be sure of forgiveness and acceptance for his Son's sake. Turn to the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel, Harriet, and read from the thirty-seventh to the fortieth verse.

Harriet.—"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day.

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

Mrs. Arnold.—If we had no hope of salvation to eternal life except through our own performances, the will of God and our irreproachable obedience to His laws, the most faithful and devoted of His servants might well despair of acceptance; but we may rest assured upon the authority of our Saviour, that if we are ready with humble and grateful hearts to come to Him and avail ourselves of His offered mediation, there is no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus. This is a subject on which I have again and again dwelt in my conversations with you, for it is the one great truth on which the Scriptures rest from the first verse of Genesis to the last of Revelations. It is the corner stone of the Gospel: and if you had committed every word of the Bible to memory so that you could repeat it all, and had failed to learn this great truth from it, your labours would be lost and more than lost, while to have learned it and applied it to yourselves in faith and humility, is to have arrived at the very greatest and highest degree of wisdom that human intellect is capable of reaching.

It is impossible for the hardest and coldest heart to have received this doctrine, without being softened and subdued by a sense of pardoning mercy, and filled with an earnest desire to "do the will of God on earth, even as it is done in heaven." But if we are convinced that our Saviour came on earth and led a painful and weary life in poverty and persecution, and died on the cross in mental agony, and all to save us from the consequences of our sins, and that without this merciful self-sacrifice we must all have been condemned by the justice of God to eternal misery, yet suffer this belief to render us careless, or indifferent, or presumptuous, we may be assured that our faith is not such as to entitle us to a share in the inheritance he has purchased for his own people. If our belief in our Redeemer does not make us more and more careful to avoid the sins which required such a costly atonement, and more and more penitent when through the depravity and infirmity of our natures we have offended against him, we may well fear that Christ is not in us, nor we in him. Our worship of our blessed Saviour, who has done so much for us, should not be one of fear or bondage, but of grateful love. His people must not, and cannot, look forward to his coming as to that of a severe and inexorable Judge, but rather as to the return of a benevolent friend and benefactor, to whom they are bound in the strongest ties of love and gratitude for benefits never to be repaid, even by the devotion of their whole hearts and lives. They know that "He is touched with a feeling for their infirmities, having been in all ways tempted as they have been," though pure from sin; and they will mourn over every thought, word or deed, that is contrary to his will,

and condemn themselves for it in their hearts as offences against a benevolent, compassionate, and merciful Being, and they will confess every sin before him, and earnestly seek from him pardon for the past, and strength to overcome every future temptation. If such are our feelings and convictions, and such the practice that springs from them, we may humbly hope that when our Saviour comes to judge the world, he will mercifully accept our imperfect services, and purify us from all our imperfections by his own imputed righteousness, so that we may be among that happy number who shall be raised up by him at the last day, and received into everlasting happiness, through his intercession for us. Let these thoughts sink deeply into your hearts, my dear children, and believe that the more carefully they are cherished there, the more you will enjoy that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

The next verse of your lesson contains these few words: "Give us this day our daily bread." These words are intended for the rich as well as for the poor, so that not only the poor labourer whose daily subsistence must be earned by the sweat of his brow, but the prince and noble, who have all things provided for them, and who fare sumptuously every day, must ask their food as a boon at the hands of God; remembering that he who gave can also take away, and that without his blessing neither the possessions of the wealthy or the labours of the poor are of any value. Besides the supply of our daily temporal wants which this petition directs us to seek from God, our Saviour probably included the spiritual refreshment necessary for our soul's health, for this is often mentioned by him under the similitude of

bread. He says of himself, "I am the bread of life," and very frequently in Scripture the same expression is used with a similar meaning. When our Saviour made use of these words, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," he enabled us to understand their expression in its application to the wants of our souls as well as to our bodily necessities; so that in repeating these words, we may in our prayer include both supplies, which are needful for us every day of our lives. Find the thirty-fourth Psalm, Mary, and read the tenth verse, which contains a promise very closely connected with this portion of your lesson.

Mary.—"The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."

Mrs. Arnold.—By the use of the word bread in this petition, we should learn that with the most simple and moderate share of the things needful to support life, we should be content and thankful, for if any thing more had been desirable for us, our Saviour would have taught us to ask for it; indeed there is not a passage in the Scriptures that would lead us to suppose that worldly possessions or luxuries and indulgences are worth seeking for, beyond what are necessary for our subsistence. There is no difference made in the Bible between the rich and the poor, except in pointing out the different duties appointed for them to perform; and very little importance seems to be attached to the station of life in which Christians are placed, so long as those duties are performed. Our Saviour and all his apostles were in respect to worldly things mean and lowly, and their followers must be content to do their duty in that state

of life to which it has pleased God to call them; for their ambitions and hopes should all be of an higher nature than such as can be satisfied with earthly possessions or distinctions, which must all sooner or later be left behind, and may perhaps be found to have been the strongest snares of Satan to their possessors. King Solomon was one of the richest as well as the wisest man that ever lived, and he says, "Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasures and trouble therewith." And again, "How much better is it to get wisdom than gold, and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver." Be thankful then, my dear children, for such moderate supplies of daily food as your heavenly Father sees fit to send you, and do not repine because others may have many more luxuries and comforts than fall to your share. There is a very equal share of happiness distributed to all classes of people, and the rich have many cares and responsibilities which the poor are exempt from. When we come to our last hour, it will be of very little consequence whether our lives have been passed in a palace or in a hovel, if we have Jesus Christ for our friend; and when our souls are passing into eternity, it will matter little whether our bodies are extended upon a bed of down or upon a bed of straw, for then it will seem as if our whole existence was before us, and as if the past was nothing in comparison to the future, except so far as we have used it as a preparation for the hour at which we have then arrived; and it is very probable that if we were then surrounded by every luxury that wealth could purchase, we would exchange them all for a cup of cold water, such as is within the reach of the poorest beggar, and would think a very few

hours of life and health cheaply purchased by the sacrifice of all the riches and honours the world could give us. If people would think more frequently and more seriously upon this last scene of earthly existence, which is the only event we can count upon as absolutely certain to come to us in some shape or another, sooner or later, they would not expend so much time and thought upon provision for their temporal wants, and for enriching their families, very often at the expense of principle, and by means which can never be justified in the sight of God. It is indeed fearful to think how very few there are, even among professing Christians, who are under the influence of the fear and love of God sufficiently to resist temptation, when any worldly advantage is to be gained by sacrificing their duty to him. How few there are who hold the Sabbath sacred to his service, when by doing so they seem to resign the loss of time which may be profitable to themselves. How very few who do not devote themselves ten thousand times more to the pleasures or business of this world, than to securing a home in that "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," which has been purchased for them.

We are obliged to omit, this week, our usual printed list of subscribers, having room only to insert the names received since our last.

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