

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

From the New York Observer.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

BY REV. HENRY M. GROUT, D. D.

MARCH 9. Paul at Corinth.—Acts 18: 1-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city.—Acts 18: 10.

Paul's stay at Athens could not have been long. It was not a promising field. The pride of worldly wisdom does not readily bow to the humbling claims of Jesus, nor often perceive that it has need of any divine Saviour. Besides this, he may have been threatened with persecution as the introducer of new gods, an offence for which Socrates was condemned and put to death. From the portion of Scripture to which we now turn, we learn,

1. What makes a desirable field of Christian labor.—Departing from Athens Paul "came to Corinth." As Athens was the intellectual centre of Achaia, Corinth was its commercial centre and political capital. Greece now being subject to Rome, it was the residence of the Roman proconsul or governor. It was the most populous city in Greece, diverse in the make-up of its inhabitants, the resort of traders from every part of the world. Christianize such a city and you have made it a "radiating centre of Christian influence." Such points are always to be secured for Christ, if by any means this is possible. It is better to lay out strength where it will tell most widely.

But Corinth was a wicked city, famed for its profligacy; a city of impurity, drunkenness and extortion. Nowhere did vice more abound; nowhere were the dissolute more open and bold in their wickedness. Such a field is full of difficulties; but it is not hopeless. The openly profligate know they are sinners, and that is at least one step toward a readiness to welcome a Saviour. Of the various hindrances to the gospel, pride is greater than open sins. The church at Corinth had a long and great fight with the vices for which the city was notorious. Nevertheless a church was planted, and lived, and grew, and did a great work there.

2. How the early Christians regarded manual labor.—Reaching Corinth, Paul found a home with Aquila and Priscilla his wife. These had been driven out from Rome with other Jews who had somehow incurred the displeasure of the Emperor Claudius. Quite likely they were already Christians; for among those who listened to the Apostles at Pentecost there were persons from Rome, who no doubt carried the gospel there. And being Christians they would readily welcome Paul to their home; and all the more as he and they were of the same craft.

This is the first allusion we have to the particular craft by which Paul earned his bread. His parents had not only given him the advantages of the best schools, but had taught him a trade. This was the Jewish custom. The Rabbinical laws required it. Rabbi Judah said: "He who teacheth not his son a trade, does the same as if he taught him to be a thief." Gamaliel said: "He who hath a trade in his hand, is like a vineyard that is fenced." They were right. A trade is a moral safeguard. Every rich and every poor man's son should have one. So should those who have the best education. Why should daughters not have the same? Who knows when it may be needed? There would be less gambling, and theft, and tramping, and poverty, and suffering, if every youth were required to learn some means of earning a livelihood with his hands. Jesus was a carpenter; Paul was a tent-maker. Manual labor is honorable. The present Crown Prince of Germany is a book-binder. The French historian and statesman, Guizot, was a carpenter.

3. What comes of great earnestness in Christian work.—When Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia "Paul was pressed in the spirit," or, as the New Version reads, "was constrained by the word." Whichever reading is correct, the general thought is the same. Silas and Timothy found Paul constrained, by that word which the Spirit sometimes impresses upon the heart in unwonted ways, to testify with new earnestness to Jesus as the Christ. Or, perhaps the coming of the brethren brought new cheer and incitement to his heart, oppressed as it may have been with a sense of loneliness. Or they may have brought contributions from the churches in Macedonia, releasing him in part from the need of manual labor.

Note, now, what came of this new ardor: (a) First there was opposition. How often is this excited when Christ's claims are earnestly presented! (b) Those who resisted the truth were faithfully warned that the responsibility of their spiritual destruction would rest upon themselves. Is it proper for us to use such language?

we have been faithful, and if we can do it in the spirit of humility and tenderness. (c) Then, there was a turning to others; an ardent soul will not give over because those first invited refuse the offered grace. (d) Finally there was fruit. Leaving the synagogue of the Jews, Paul entered the house of one Justus, hard by. He now gave himself specially to the Gentiles of the city. But his testimony to the Jews had not been utterly fruitless. The chief ruler of the synagogue believed, with all his house. And so did many of the Corinthians; that is, of the idolatrous inhabitants of the city. Patient and ardent seldoms fails of fruit; though it often gathers most among those who at first seemed less hopeful.

4. The need the best saints sometimes have of cheer and help from above.—For some reason Paul seems to have fallen into temporary despondency. This is not strange. Remember "Abraham before Abimelech, Moses in the Wilderness, Elijah under the juniper tree, John in Prison, Jesus in Gethsemane." Weariness of body, ill health, loneliness in a strange city, may have produced this sense of weakness in the Apostle. Put in his need he was not forsaken. A voice of God cheered him with a twofold promise: "I am with thee" for protection; and "I have much people in this city." Here was assurance of divine sympathy and support, and of fruit sure in good time to be gathered. God does not speak to us in visions; but the promises here addressed to Paul are equally meant for us.

5. The strange but sure way God has of protecting his servants.—In this instance He did it by means of the Roman Governor, Gallio. This man was a brother of the celebrated moralist, Seneca. He was kindly in his nature; cultivated, polished and popular. It is not likely that he knew anything about Christ or the Christian doctrine. When, therefore, the Jews "with one accord," made insurrection against Paul, and accused him of persuading men to worship God contrary to the law—probably the Roman law—Gallio looked upon the whole matter as a strife between Jewish parties. He declared that it did not concern him. He drove Paul's accusers out of the court. The result was that the Gentile populace took courage to show their hatred to the Jews by an assault upon their leader. Sosthenes may have been at the head of Paul's accusers, and now his bitterness and violence returns upon himself; and Gallio looks on with indifference. He was willing that those who would do injustice should themselves feel its effects. Thus the assault of the Jews upon the Apostle was a failure. God made use of Gallio for his protection. Help came from a source whence it could not have been expected. Is not this often the case?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

- 1. The very worst places may be hopeful fields for Christian effort.
2. It is wise to lay out our best strength in centres of influence.
3. The necessity of working with our hands should not be regarded as a misfortune. It is often a great blessing. It is good for the body, mind and heart.
4. Those who live by manual toil can find time for Christian work.
5. There are sure to be precious results when God's people are pressed by the Spirit and Word to testify for Christ with new earnestness.
6. If we have been tenderly faithful to souls, in word and example, our responsibility for their salvation is at an end. But are we always thus faithful?
7. We have exceeding great and precious promises for every hour of despondency and need; in them we may hear God's voice, even though He grants to us no vision.
8. A natural sense of justice, as in the case of Gallio, sometimes goes with a fatal indifference to Christian truth. Just because he "cared for none of those things," he lost the grandest opportunity of his life.

A Wonderful Bell.

The temples at Kyoto, Japan, says a correspondent of the Philadelphia Press, are mainly of interest on account of their great bell, which swings in a monster wooden belfry half way up the hillside, back of the buildings proper. The bell is a huge bronze cup with nearly perpendicular sides and a flat crown, and, like all other Japanese bells, is sounded by means of a huge beam kept in place by ropes, but, when occasion requires, brought against the rim of the bell with great force. It requires twelve coolies to manipulate this beam. Formerly it was only rung once a year, but now it may be heard two or three times every month. It is one of the greatest wonders in Japan. It is 18 feet high, 9 1/2 inches thick, 9 feet in diameter, and weighs nearly 74 tons. It was cast in a monster mould in the year 1633. As the bell was cast with the rim up, the gold entering into its composition—computed to be about 1,500 pounds—sank to the crown. It has a magnificent tone, and when struck by the open palm the vibrations may be heard at a distance of one hundred yards.

Deterioration of Sight.

The causes to which this deterioration of eyesight has been attributed are alleged to be cross lights from opposite windows, light shining directly on the face, insufficient light, small types, and to the position of the desk, forcing the scholar to bend over and bring the eyes too close to the book or writing paper, etc.

But were all these defects remedied, the integrity of the eye would not be restored nor its deterioration prevented. There are the colors of the paper and ink. White paper and black ink are ruining the eyesight of all reading nations. The "rays of the sun," says Lord Bacon, are reflected by a white body, and are absorbed by a black one." No one dissents from this opinion; but despite these indications of nature and of philosophy, we print our books and write our letters in direct opposition to the suggestions of optical science.

When we read a book printed in the existing mode we do not see the letters, which, being black, are non-reflective. The shapes reach the retina, but they are not received by spontaneous, direct action of that organ. The white surface of the paper is reflected, but the letters are detected only by a discriminative effort of the optic nerves. This effect annoys the nerves, and when long continued, exhausts their susceptibility, the human eye cannot long sustain the broad glare of a white surface without injury. The author of "Spanish Vistas," in "Harper's Magazine," says of Cartagena that "blind people seemed to be numerous there, a fact which may be owing to the excessive dazzle of the sunlight and the absence of verdure." Mr. Seward, in his tour around the world, observed that "in Egypt ophthalmia is universal," attributing it to the same "excessive dazzle," of the wide areas of white sand; and the British soldiers in the late campaign in that country exhibited symptoms of the same disease. In the Smithsonian report of 1877, it is stated in a paper on "Color Blindness," that "M. Chevreul has produced 14,420 distinguishable tints of the elementary colors, from which the paper manufacturers could select colors more agreeable to the eye than the dazzling white so weakening and lacerating to the nerves of that delicate organ."—Science Monthly.

The Bethlehem Times describes a wonderful discovery in metallurgy, by which a new metal is produced from pulverized furnace slag mixed with an explosive substance and heated. After a due degree of heat is obtained an explosion occurs and the new metal is deposited at the bottom of the crucible. It is silvery white in color, of fine, smooth texture, and on trial proved to be susceptible of a brilliant polish, which no exposure will tarnish it. It was also found to be malleable, ductile and of great tenacity, showing a tensile resistance of 140,000 pounds to the square inch." Nine ounces of metal were obtained from five pounds of slag. Of course, a stock company is to be formed and the nickel hereafter dispensed with.

A BALD eagle, measuring nearly seven feet from tip to tip of wings, was captured by P. Brewer Carter, on the old Bullock farm, near Rocklesstown, the other day. A steel trap had been set and baited to catch crows. One unfortunate blue black corn stealer pounced down on the "liver" in the trap and got fastened. The soaring eagle looked on and with a graceful swoop swept down upon his victim, and fastening his hooked bill on the crow's body, spread his wings for flight; but, alas! the cruel teeth of steel held him captive. He was brought to Bordentown on Wednesday, alive and uninjured, and purchased by H. H. Trout, of the city hotel, where he can now be seen in all the majesty of eagle-dom.—Bordentown Register.

A YOUNG man of Kansas City had an interesting experience while journeying on a railroad last week. Entering a car he found all the seats occupied but one, beside a lady. Seating himself here, he sat reading a paper until he noticed that the lady, who was a fine looking, neatly dressed person, began looking at him, occasionally winking and smiling. The young man turned red in the face and was in the act of leaving the seat when she threw her arms about his neck and declared, in a voice loud enough to be heard a block, that he was the only person she ever loved. The two men who were seated opposite, succeeded in calming the woman and then explained that she was being taken to an asylum.

A Husband's Tribute to his Dead Wife.

The wife of George J. Holyoake was buried two weeks ago at Hightgate, and as Mr. Holyoake had often spoken at the grave of others his wife had wished—the only public one, it is said, that she ever expressed—that a few words should be said at her own. Mr. Holyoake, in respecting this request, spoke of "the three qualities which distinguished Mrs. Holyoake—that of service of others, in which she had so clear a sense that the

absence of it in others was not concealable from her; that of pride, which was more than self-respect, it was indebtedness—an independence of obligation which was not a second nature, it was her first, and she had no other. Though called upon early in life to confront alone the death of her first child, to be the sole watcher, the sole sympathizer, and sole mourner at an unattended grave, she brought away no murmur. During more than forty years she never forgot it, and never complained."—New York Tribune.

A Story of California's Early Days.

A San Francisco paper tells this story: Before the Hale & Norcross fight came on—this is tradition, almost—there arrived in town a dissipated miner who had worked in the mine. He was pretty badly down apparently, but he went into a broker's office, and after being told to get out as a tramp, he said he thought a good deal of Hale & Norcross and wanted to invest a trifling sum in it. Two feet at \$175, were bought for him, and he gave the certificate to the broker, saying that he was going down to Mexico prospecting, and he would like to leave it behind to be dealt with as the broker saw fit. He was not heard of for months. Hale & Norcross were up to \$12,000 a foot. One morning the broker found the dilapidated miner on his doorstep when he came down to business. The miner rose and said: "Well, I'm here. I thought I'd come and see you. I s'pose there ain't nothing left of that Hale & Norcross. I guess you must a sold it out, but I'm down an' I ain't got a cent. Maybe you'd lend me four bits to get a bit of breakfast?"

The broker looked at him and gave him \$5 to go and get a bath and a breakfast, and presently he returned.

"Sit down and wait a minute. I will make up your account presently. I left the dilapidated man on the edge of a chair. He came back with a check and sent his clerk down to the bank. The clerk returned with a big bag of gold. The poor devil watched the proceedings with a miserable indifference. The gold was stacked upon the counter.

"Look here. I've sold your two feet of Hale & Norcross for \$25,000, and here is your money." The miner fell on the floor and cried like a baby. He could not read or write, and had no idea what the market was. He sent a draft of \$2,000 to his mother. The broker bought for him \$20,000 worth of registered bonds, and gave him \$2,400 in coin, which he spent in three days. Two bunco men brought him in drunk and tried to get his bonds, but the broker drove them out, and when the man got sober he came and had the bonds sewed into his clothes and was dispatched east. He has never been heard of since.

A Battle with Whales.

About a week ago Mr. Peter Warner, the well-known contractor, and a veteran fisherman, started out on a fishing excursion in a small boat, carrying with them a Winchester rifle and a shot gun, in order, possibly, to bag some game, abounding in the lagoon, which extends some three miles inland from the shore. They had rowed out but a few miles when two whales, of the bottle-nose species, were espied a short distance from the boat. Warner immediately grasped his rifle, fired, and, apparently, wounded one of them. Infuriated the monster lashed the water into foam, and made a desperate effort to reach them. After a second and third shot a vital spot in one of them was reached, and only one of them was left to combat with. They then began firing at the remaining one, but though wounding it several times, it seemed utterly impossible to seriously disable it. It made the most furious attack upon them, and with distended jaws, it seemed at times as if about to engulf boat and all. Twelve shots were fired into it and still it continued its onslaughts. It splashed and foamed, spreading heavy sprays in all directions, and nothing but the most skillful management kept the boat at the safe distances from its fury. Now and then it would plunge under the water, endeavoring to get under the boat and send it away skyward but the steady "old salt" managed each time to whirl the boat beyond its reach. The situation was growing serious, as the cartridges in the rifle were exhausted and it seemed well nigh impossible to reload while the monster was making such furious attacks. While attempting it a sudden onslaught made it necessary to use the shotgun, and Mr. Warner fired hastily, discharging both loads, right into its face. It was a most fortunate shot, as it took effect in the eyes of the whale, and must have totally blinded it. The pain served to increase its ferocity, but its efforts were now futile, and it was an easy matter to row to a safe distance when the rifle was re-loaded and the monster killed at leisure. The two whales were then towed ashore, and quite a large quantity of oil has been tried out.—Los Angeles (Cal) Times.

Some Very Old People.

Rhoda Howard, of Owingville, Ky., is 112 years old. W. J. Barlow, of Ave Oak, Fla., is 103 years of age. Amos Dennis died recently at Ridgeville, S. C. in his 108th year. John Riley, of Frederick county, Va., was 107 years old on the 25th of January.

Charles Barber, of Staten Island, professes to be 106 years old. He has a son aged 80.

Every communion Sunday Mrs. Annie Gordon, of Bluffton, S. C., walks four miles to church. She is 111.

After being blind for twenty years Mrs. Josephine Lepatria died at Watertown, N. Y., aged 104. Her husband recently died at the age of 103.

Miss Sabra Phillips, of Norwood, R. I., is 100 years old. She does her own housework, brings her fuel from the woods on her back and saws it herself and reads without glasses.

For seventy years George Kilmer, of Rock city, N. Y., lived with his wife in the house where they began house-keeping. He has just passed his 95th birthday. Mrs. Kilmer, died recently aged 89.

Jacob Miliken, of Danston, Me., on the anniversary of his 100th birthday made a singular confession: "I got to be Thoms Jefferson for his second term, although I lacked two months of my majority."

East Glastonbury, Conn., has four citizens who are over 90 years of age. Miss Eunice Hollister will be 100 years old in August at this year. Mrs. Caroline, Strong is 65, and Halsey Buck reached his 90th year in August last.

B. De Prare of Marshfield, Wis., is 106 years old. For fifty years he never slept under a roof. His father was a french fur trader and his mother an Indian. He was with General Jackson at New Orleans.

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This is to certify that the Rockford Watch bought Feb. 22, 1879, has run very well the past year. Having set it only twice during that time, its only variation being three minutes. It has run very much better than I ever anticipated. It was not adjusted and only cost \$20. R. P. BRYANT.

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