

RELIGIOUS READING.

Whoever wishes to accomplish much must labor earnestly for the attainment of his object. Earnest effort is necessary in obtaining riches, power, or learning. That degree of zeal which is productive of heartfelt perseverance is essential to the character of those who would gain a conspicuous place on the records of fame. It is equally important to those who would become useful in alleviating the sufferings of the poor and miserable. True philanthropy prompts to unostentatious, yet sincere and untiring efforts to promote the good of others. But, among the mistakes which attend the busy throng of existence, none has more need of an earnest, persevering character than he who would serve God. From the time when the mind first determines to seek freedom from the galling bondage of sin, the course of the faithful, humble Christian is ever "onward, and upward." It is his duty, following the example of his Divine Master, to toil and endure privation and suffering in his endeavor to promote the spiritual welfare of others. A cold, inactive spiritual life is exceeding inconsistent in one who professes to be a follower of Christ. It proclaims to the world (and thus does the world interpret its meaning) that religion is not worth living for. The great fault of such Christians does not consist in not believing in the invaluable worth of religion, but in not feeling, and in not showing by their conduct, that they realize the importance of living for eternity. A person of this character does but little good. An active Christian, on the contrary, however humble his sphere may be, is frequently instrumental in doing much good. None are required to do more than they are able, but each should be faithful in improving upon what talents he may possess. All should live in obedience to the divine command, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Such a course will secure the favor of Jehovah, while a contrary one will incur his displeasure. It is to the world which is pronounced against those who "are at ease in Zion."

Follow-Christians: permit me to inquire of you as an individual. Do you realize the importance of earnest, persevering Christian effort? If you do, may your heavenly Father encourage and strengthen you to pursue the narrow way which leadeth unto life. If you do not, O, look around you and behold the many who are your fellow beings, mortal and immortal like yourself, with you redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, destined with you to stand before the same judgment seat, and like you to exist in a state of eternal happiness or misery. Behold millions of immortal spirits groping in the darkness of heathenism and the various forms of religious error which abound. Consider the millions of angels who are blessed with the light of the gospel, and yet are making no preparation for the close of their earthly existence, and their entrance upon the realities of eternity. Remember that every setting sun, every vanishing hour, and every swiftly fleeting moment, is conducting you nearer to the portals of eternity; and that it is your duty to live while you can, and to bestow upon these things, and then ask your conscience, the Holy Spirit, and the word of God, if the Lord of the vineyard does not require your efforts for the salvation of these undying spirits. Is not the happiness of heaven a reward which will amply compensate the Christian for all that he can possibly do in the service of his Redeemer? If he cannot so largely as to bestow on the land of the living spirits whom he can instrumental in wakening from the spiritual slumber of sin, and in inducing to seek the "pearl of great price," would not this alone be a great reward? May the Lord help us to cease living chiefly for this world, and to spend our time and energies in preparing ourselves and others for a better.

THE LOSS OF THE SOUL. It is irreparable. It cannot be repaired in the cycles of eternity. If I lose health, I may recover it; if riches, I may retrieve them; but if I lose my soul the loss is irreparable. No sunbeam shall penetrate the abyss to guide the lost soul back to happiness; no rainbow shall descend from the gates of heaven to lead the lost soul to the land of the living. It is also an irreparable loss. There can be no compensation adequate to its magnitude and value. If one lose the sight of sense, an equivalent is frequently realized in the increasing sensibility of the ear; or if health forsake us, friends and books may diminish, yet the presence, the exhortations, the encouragements, and the aid of the Holy Spirit, will be to us a more precious possession than the loss of our sight, or the loss of our health. If one lose the sight of sense, an equivalent is frequently realized in the increasing sensibility of the ear; or if health forsake us, friends and books may diminish, yet the presence, the exhortations, the encouragements, and the aid of the Holy Spirit, will be to us a more precious possession than the loss of our sight, or the loss of our health.

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SABBATH SCHOOL.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON FOR JANUARY 6.

Lesson Text: "John the Baptist Beheaded." Mark vi., 17-29.—Golden Text: Matt. x., 28.—Commentary.

17. "For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John and bound him in prison for Herodias's sake, his brother Philip's wife, for he had married her." This statement is made in explanation of the fact that Herod, king of the Jews, was a guilty conscience, thought it might be John risen from the dead. The whole story of the lesson to-day is that of the apparent victory of an ungodly woman over a righteous man.

18. "For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." John lived before God, he was great in the sight of the Lord, he feared no man's frown and coveted no man's favor; hence he fearlessly rebuked Herod for his sin in this matter. With like courage Daniel rebuked Nebuchadnezzar to break off his sins by righteousness and his iniquities by showing mercy to the poor (Dan. ix., 27). The man who stands for God before men is expected to have the courage of Daniel's friends, who, knowing the right thing to do, did it and left the consequences with God.

19. "There'ore Herodias had a quarrel against him and would have killed him, but she could not." Both Herod and Herodias stand for the world, which will be good to do more than they are able, but each should be faithful in improving upon what talents he may possess. All should live in obedience to the divine command, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Such a course will secure the favor of Jehovah, while a contrary one will incur his displeasure. It is to the world which is pronounced against those who "are at ease in Zion."

20. "For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy and observed him, and when he heard him he did many things and heard him gladly." Of the two, Herod and Herodias, many would say that he was the best, but both were guilty before God and enemies of righteousness. All who are not saved are lost, but the lost shall be according to their deserts.

21. "And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains and chief estates of Galilee." The world can find convenient days for pretty much everything; they desire, and the man who has the power to make them so, will give it. John's friends will generally have plenty of friends glad to come.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

PLEASANT LITERATURE FOR FEMINE READERS.

TAN SHOES AT WEDDINGS. Tan shoes and stockings were worn by the bridesmaids at a smart London wedding last week, and this incongruous foot dressing has been noticed before with dressy gowns. The frocks of these bridesmaids were of white crepon, with yokes of pink satin covered with lace, and shoulder straps of pink velvet; large white chip hats, trimmed with pink roses, white lace and white wings. The gloves were tan.—Shoe Trade Journal.

HOW TO ARRANGE YOUR VEIL. A yard or a yard and a half of double-width veiling (according to the size of the hat brim) is required. Gather closely about a quarter of a yard of the upper edge in the middle (this also depends on the width of the hat brim); then after trying on the veil and drawing the extra length so it will fit nicely under the chin, gather the ends. This will be found much more convenient than arranging the ends each time the veil is put on.—Demorest's Magazine.

ONE WOMAN'S ODD OCCUPATION. An odd occupation has been thought out and entered upon by a Southern woman living in Alabama. She arranges school and Sunday-school entertainments, being able, when needed, to write an address or short dialogue, to instruct in the art of declamation and recitation, get up tableaux, or, in fact, do any of the irksome but most necessary things inseparable from such entertainments, and which usually fall upon some overworked committee.—New York Tribune.

WOMEN GET POSTOFFICES. Since the Fourth Assistant Postmaster-General has had to do with appointments he has been making women office holders in the fourth-class offices wherever there was a woman applicant that seemed capable of doing the work. It is observed by glancing over the list that many women have been selected. Probably during the rush when Congressmen were getting some of the spoils so many women were not selected, but during the summer when Congressmen were out of the city, and the service alone was to be looked after, General Maxwell has given the women the best of it, and if his plan is carried out the women will soon have a majority of the fourth-class postoffices.—New York Journal.

THE WIVES OF FAMOUS MEN. When the private life of Prince Bismarck comes to be written it will probably be found that he was one of the great men who have owed much of their greatness to the influence of their wives. It is always a question of curious interest how far the private life of a prominent man enters into his public career and how much influence it has upon his judgment and capacity. So far as the public sees the two lives are entirely apart, and there are instances of men who have kept them so, leading, in fact, a kind of dual existence. In the overwhelming majority of cases the life and works of the prominent public personage are influenced either for benefit or for harm by his home.

In the case of Prince Bismarck, who has just lost his wife, this was notably so. Almost unknown to the world at large, she was typical of the homely virtues of the housewife. She was the guiding spirit of a household when her husband was guiding the destinies of Nations. How far the efforts and the fruits of her work took part in those destinies the world will never know save through inference. But it is a safe proposition that no man, unless he be lost to better things, is ever entirely unmoved by the near and constant presence of influences for good. If Bismarck, the man, was better because of his sane and wholesome family life, Bismarck, the diplomat, was also better.

The old Chancellor, who is now bowed before the deathbed of his wife, is instinctively paying a tribute not only to her memory but to the memory of all women who fulfill their highest destiny as wives and mothers.—Chicago Record.

HOW TO BE BEAUTIFUL. Some dainty-minded poets and novelists of peculiar taste have shown a marked preference for the lily-skinned maiden, and openly deplored the vulgarity of hearty red cheeks as becoming only to milkmaids and the gardener's daughter. That may be all very well in poems and novels; but among the stern realities of her life the smart young woman prefers a high, clear color, that owes nothing to art, but everything to nature. Now unhappily it has been found that the more fashionable the life young women live the more quickly they lose their school-girl rosy cheeks, a phenomenon that has caused serious consideration among the afflicted. Electricity, massage, etc., have all been tried in vain. In no instance has the cure for pallor proved permanent; and it was in something of despair the more energetic and hopeful resorted to a famous specialist just come to town. He is a tiny, mild-mannered, but iron-willed little German doctor, to whom the secrets of nature seem wholly revealed. He contemplated his wan-checked patients and remarked, calmly, that sweets and ice-water were at the root of the trouble, augmented by too much driving in victorias, bromians, coaches, etc.

"Not enough honest walking exercise," he said, firmly, and proceeded to draw out a daily course of exercises that made the poor patients shudder.

"Walk!" he ejaculated. "Never put your feet in horse-cars, cabs, or carriages, if you can help yourself. Walk five or six miles a day; and—let me see your shoes?"

A dainty foot encased in a pointed patent-leather shoe was put out for inspection.

"Bosh!" was this unkind comment. "Get these feet into high-buttoned, round-toed, heavy-soled calf-skin shoes; and not only don't be afraid of rain and snow, but go out in the

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EARNEST EFFORT.

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CURIOUS FACTS.

The earliest form of the glove was a mere bag for the hand. The water lily is largely used in some parts of India as food. The African ostrich has but two toes on each foot, and one of them has no claw. Charles II. was the mutton eating King from his fondness for spring lamb. Soldiers in the United States Army lose on an average twenty-one days every year from illness. The first building and loan association in the country was organized near Philadelphia in 1831. The two fields of Waterloo and Linden are each covered with a crop of crimson poppies every year. Tobacco seeds are so minute that it is said a thoughtful will furnish enough plants for an acre of ground. According to Muller the total number of words, or rather ideas, expressed by Chinese characters is 43,596. Taxes on clothing above a certain grade of excellence were levied in France for nearly two centuries. A New York florist is selling flower pots and "ground to fill them." They are for window gardeners who live high above the ground. Emperor William has just sent Widow Johanna Simpel \$25 in recognition of her 100th birthday. She is oldest woman in Berlin. A colony of stingless bees from Honduras is now under observation at the Department of Agriculture at Washington, but the climate is too cold for them and they will die. Orchids are becoming cheaper in Paris. The cut flowers can be had now for a franc or two apiece. They are used for table decorations, with fruit in dishes or strewn upon the table cloth. The orchid is supplanting the gardenias as a button-hole flower. The common bread of Sweden is a rye cake, about the size of a batter cake, and with a hole in the middle. These cakes are baked twice a year, and after baking are hung up to dry. They are said to be nourishing, and are about as easy to chew as disks of mortar. The fact that an English nurseryman sends to this country, and pays \$500 for a small plant of the yellow-flowered variety of cypridellum insignis, shows that the trade still believes that the market for extraordinarily rare and peculiar orchids is likely to be maintained. In Japan the family never gathers round one table, as the Europeans or other Asiatic peoples do, but each person has his or her own separate small table, a foot square and a foot high, and always highly decorated. When they take their meals they kneel upon the mat, each taking his table before him. Land of Low Salaries. Japan is a land of low salaries, writes Frank G. Carpenter in the New York Press. The officials do not get one-tenth as much as ours. The members of the House of Peers and of the House of Representatives receive 800 Japanese yen, and their traveling expenses. The yen is now worth about fifty cents, so they receive in reality only \$400 a year. Our Congressmen, you know, receive \$5000. The Presidents of both houses receive 4000 yen. The Emperor appoints the officers of the House of Peers, selecting those of the House of Representatives from three candidates who are elected by the House. All of the voting in the Japanese Parliament is done in secret ballot. There is a great deal of speechmaking, and the representatives grow very excited when they discuss the measures relating to the Government. The Emperor has the right to dissolve Parliament, and he has dismissed the last two houses because they seemed inclined to cut down the expenses beyond the possibilities of running the Government. The dissolution caused a great deal of excitement over the country, and the new election was much feared by the administration. The country seemed to be torn up by the different factions, but this has been all done away with by the war with China, and the Emperor will get all the money he wants from now on. The Emperor has great power over Parliament, and the constitution is so admirably worked that he can act independently of it. The laws provide that Congress shall vote all the money, but that the last budget shall be in force in case a Congress is dissolved without passing new appropriation bills. The Emperor can veto all laws and he can proclaim a law when Parliament is not sitting. He still holds the chief command of the army and navy, the right to make war or peace, and to conclude treaties, and he can confer such titles and pardons as he pleases. Parliament has no right to interfere with his household expenses, and his Cabinet goes before the different houses and defends the administration. I don't know that the laws provide where Congress shall meet, but the fact that the Emperor has called them to Hiroshima, which is, I judge, nearly 400 miles west of Tokio, shows that he can do as he pleases in this matter. Russian Sable. The Russian sable has had a great vogue for some years, after a long period of unfashionableness, and has once again become scarce. It is possible that this very beautiful fur may be driven out of fashion once more by inferior dyed skins that are sent to market under the name of sable. A real sable of best quality brings very nearly as much as a best quality silver fox, taking size and price into consideration. Indeed, the value may be considered nearer that of the sea otter, for a sable may bring from \$175 to \$200 and be only about the fifth of the value of the sea otter. The very best sables are accounted a sort of imperial prerogative, being paid as tribute by some of the Asiatic peoples to the Czar, and therefore called "Czar's sables." Now and again a parcel of these extra superlative sables reaches the London market, and is eagerly competed for by English, American and French furriers, who know well that they are certain of a good profit for dexterous dressing.—Chambers's Journal.

Black velvet collars with ermine edging are popular. Checked taffetas show cherry prominently for blouse waists. Tiny black boucle stripes appear on colored woollen grounds. Continental or cooked hats are used again for young ladies' wear. Alsatian bow effects in short plumes are among the novelty trappings. Three-cornered Napoleon hats are new and very becoming indeed to young, pretty faces. The collar form of necklaces prevails this season, owing doubtless to its greater becomingness. One of the favorites of hairdressing just now is flat-pointed curls, set in the middle of the forehead. Little pompon trappings standing upright over the forehead are much liked for stylish young women. Bluet continues to be a fashionable color, and is seen in the new field hats, as well as in hat trappings. A sealskin cape made in full ruffe fashion with a longer cape of ermine is new and stylish and expensive as well. Black steel watches have a certain vogue. The surface is frequently and effectively studded with tiny diamonds. Umbrella handles are sword hilt shape, that is to say, flat and slightly concave and overlaid with silver ornaments. Old Roman coins are mounted as medallions. Another manifestation is designs in metal, with legends in French or old English. The skirts of three-quarter length coats are not so emphatically rippled as they were last season, but still flare gracefully from the figure. The rose and reseda shades, used separately or in combination, have lost none of their popularity. On the contrary, they appear to gain in favor continually. There have been unusual displays of leather goods during the past week. Soft ivory tones prevail. These goods are abundant in silver, frequently touched with enamel. Plain wool skirts and blazers, with blouses of tartan silk, are fashionable, and a new dress has the waist and cuffs of plaid with the tops of the sleeves in black to match the costume. A genuine old-fashioned poke bonnet has a trimming of loops of ribbon at the side with plumes standing high up over the crown. It is tied under the chin with wide ribbons. White silk, satin and moire embroidered in beads are fashionable garments, and an entire costume in white brocade outlined with opalescent beads is among the newest importations. Accordion-pleated skirts in silk, liberty satin, chiffon, and net are still very fashionable. Some of these show two or three rows of rather wide moire ribbon carried in and out of the meshes as a border. Veil fasteners are new. A butterfly with graceful spreading wings, which clasp the veil, are made up in etched silver and aluminum. The little article does away with the heretofore vexatious bow-knot. Some smart-looking tailor-made walking coats formed of dark military-blue cloth are trimmed with a single row of flat gold braids and fastened with handsome buttons of gold and fastened with handsome buttons of gold and blue enamel. Among some stylish costumes from Paris exhibited this week was a model showing a Godet skirt of deep ceru Venetian cloth, with waist and mutton-leg sleeve of Russian-green velvet, with collarette and wrist trimmings of sealskin. The cloth skirt was edged with the same fur. Lace and embroidered chiffon are prodigally used for decorating the bodices of evening toilettes of every description. For young girls whose collarbones are too much in evidence, when they determine upon wearing a low-necked corsage, a dainty stock collar of velvet or silk, edged with lace, is a decided improvement. Remarkable Literary Workshops. Genius has frequently had remarkable workshops. Robert Burns once went galloping over a remote Scottish moor. His horse on this occasion was not much troubled with the guidance of the rider. Burns was busy, brooding over a glorious theme. His lyrical powers touched one of their highest points. The result of this journey was the impassioned national lyric, "Scots, Wha Hae W' Wallace Bled." J. S. Mill framed his "Logic" as he walked from his home to his office and back again. Sir Matthew Hale composed the "Contemplations" as he rode on horseback about country on his circuit journeys. While traveling in the same fashion on his numerous and prolonged preaching tours, John Wesley contrived to accomplish a vast quantity of literary work. Byron composed the larger portion of the "Corsair" in a London thoroughfare, as he walked up and down Albemarle street, between Grafton street and Piccadilly; and states himself that he composed "Lara," not in the study, but at the toilet table. "The Revolt of Islam" took form in Shelley's brain as the poet apparently frittered away summer hours lying in a boat on the bosom of the Thames at Marlow.—Chambers's Journal.

HOW TO BE BEAUTIFUL. Some dainty-minded poets and novelists of peculiar taste have shown a marked preference for the lily-skinned maiden, and openly deplored the vulgarity of hearty red cheeks as becoming only to milkmaids and the gardener's daughter. That may be all very well in poems and novels; but among the stern realities of her life the smart young woman prefers a high, clear color, that owes nothing to art, but everything to nature. Now unhappily it has been found that the more fashionable the life young women live the more quickly they lose their school-girl rosy cheeks, a phenomenon that has caused serious consideration among the afflicted. Electricity, massage, etc., have all been tried in vain. In no instance has the cure for pallor proved permanent; and it was in something of despair the more energetic and hopeful resorted to a famous specialist just come to town. He is a tiny, mild-mannered, but iron-willed little German doctor, to whom the secrets of nature seem wholly revealed. He contemplated his wan-checked patients and remarked, calmly, that sweets and ice-water were at the root of the trouble, augmented by too much driving in victorias, bromians, coaches, etc.

"Not enough honest walking exercise," he said, firmly, and proceeded to draw out a daily course of exercises that made the poor patients shudder.

"Walk!" he ejaculated. "Never put your feet in horse-cars, cabs, or carriages, if you can help yourself. Walk five or six miles a day; and—let me see your shoes?"

A dainty foot encased in a pointed patent-leather shoe was put out for inspection.

"Bosh!" was this unkind comment. "Get these feet into high-buttoned, round-toed, heavy-soled calf-skin shoes; and not only don't be afraid of rain and snow, but go out in the

THE LARGEST COTTON CARGO. The big British steamship Maroa, Captain Adams, sailed for Havre, from New Orleans, La., with the largest single cargo of cotton that has ever left the city of New Orleans, or any other city for that matter. At the time of her departure the Maroa's cargo consisted of 18,299 bales of cotton. After denouncing the cotton trade for some time, she left the city with her surprising large total of 18,348 bales, together with 7800 pieces of stave. The Maroa's cargo of cotton is valued at \$550,000.

SAT ON A PRIZE STEER. The owner of the prize steer at the Chicago Fat Stock Show sat in a big rocking-chair placed upon the broad back of his exhibit.