

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N.S., SEPTEMBER 24, 1873.

THE TEACHER.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1873.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SUNDAY, September 28th.

REVIEW.

- 1 The Child Jesus.....Matt. ii. 1-10.
2 The Flight into Egypt.....Matt. ii. 13-23.
3 The Baptism of Jesus.....Matt. iii. 13-17.
4 The Temptation of Jesus.....Matt. iv. 1-11.
5 The Ministry of Jesus.....Matt. iv. 17-25.
6 The Beatitudes.....Matt. v. 1-12.
7 Teaching to Pray.....Matt. vi. 5-15.
8 The Two Foundations.....Matt. vii. 21-29.
9 Power to Forgive Sins.....Matt. ix. 1-8.
10 The Twelve Called.....Matt. x. 1-15.
11 Jesus and John.....Matt. xi. 1-11.
12 The Gracious Call.....Matt. xi. 25-30.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” 1 Timothy i. 15.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: John iii. 13-17.

SUMMARY.—“And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth.”

CHRIST'S MINISTRY.—I. Preparation for it. Lesson I. II. Entrance upon it. Lesson III-V. III. Explanation of it. Lesson IV-V. II. IV. Its exercise. Lesson IX-XII.

EXPOSITION.—Lessons i, ii.—1. The preparation for Christ's birth. This was in general all preceding history, and especially the Jewish history, for he came in the fulness of time. But in particular there were the Old Testament predictions as to the place, and his mother, and his lowly origin, and also the announcements made by the angel to Mary and Joseph, the birth of John, the development of the mother's and father's characters. 2. The circumstances attending the birth. Some of them were miraculous; viz. the appearance of the angels to the shepherds with their tidings and songs, and the appearance of the star to “the wise men” of the east. These events present each its own features of God's purpose in the raising up of this Jesus. Some of the remarkable circumstances were not miraculous; e. g., the lowliness of the condition, as contrasted with the nature of the child, and the world's ignorance of the event and its nature. 3. Of the early life of Christ we notice that but a brief history is given. We see him worshipped by some; hated, and his life sought, by others. He is religiously trained by his parents, and they are religiously honored and obeyed by the child. He shows, at the age of twelve, that he is conscious of a relation to God unlike that of others, and yet that he knows how to humble himself and wait. He is in his childhood and youth a pattern to children and youth, for his conduct reveals the true principles that should guide in the conduct of all who are of like age.

Lessons iii-v.—These three lessons, though most unlike each to the other, yet agree in presenting Christ as entering upon his work, passing over from one stage to another. They show him in the beginning of his public ministry, in the transition from a private to an official station. There are the baptism, by which he in shadow completes redemption, and in reality openly takes his place before the public as the Redeemer; the temptation, in which was gained the first great victory over the first great assault of the powers of hell upon him as being the Redeemer; and the first proclamation, in which he began his work of teaching and preaching, which he still carries on through the preached Scripture, and those who preach the doctrines of Scripture.

On the Baptism, Ellicott says: “It was now probably toward the close of the year of the city [Rome] 780, after more than the time allotted to the Levite's preparation for “the service of the ministry” had already passed away, that the Holy Jesus, moved we may humbly presume, by that Spirit which afterwards directed his feet to the wilderness, leaves the home of his childhood, to return to it no more as his earthly abode, save for the few days that preceded his removal to Capernaum, in the spring of the following year. Probably not far from Jericho, round which traditions yet linger, and to which the multitudes that flocked to the Baptist from Judea and Jerusalem would have found a speedier and more convenient access. There the great Forerunner was baptizing; when suddenly, unknown and unrecognized, the very Messiah mingles with those strangely assorted and expectant multitudes, and with them seeks baptism at the hands of the great preacher of the desert.

Overpowered and awed by the solemn words which he might not have fully understood, the forerunner desponds with his Redeemer into the rapid waters of the now sacred river, when, lo! when the inaugural rite is done, the promised sign at length appears; the Baptist beholds the opened heavens, the embodied form of the descending Spirit; he hears the Father's voice of blessing and love: he sees, and hears, and, as he himself tells us, bears witness that this is verily the Son of God.”

derstood, the forerunner desponds with his Redeemer into the rapid waters of the now sacred river, when, lo! when the inaugural rite is done, the promised sign at length appears; the Baptist beholds the opened heavens, the embodied form of the descending Spirit; he hears the Father's voice of blessing and love: he sees, and hears, and, as he himself tells us, bears witness that this is verily the Son of God.”

Lessons vi-viii.—Of the Beatitudes, Lange says: “The old arrangement into seven beatitudes, is perfectly correct. The seventh beatitude, Blessed are the peacemakers, marks the climax: They shall be called the children of God. In the eighth beatitude, the other seven are only summed up under the idea of the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven in its relation to those who persecute it, while the ninth is a description of the eighth, with reference to the relation in which these righteous persons stand to Christ. The seven beatitudes form an ascending line, in which the new life is traced from stage to stage, from its commencement to its completion. At the basis we have poverty in spirit, the grand final result of the Old Testament discipline.”

Of the Lord's Prayer, Wm. R. Williams writes: “The order in which its desires are ranged, teaches us that man's needs are never to take precedence of God's rights. Its earlier petitions are still of the Maker, and the Sovereign, and the God. Thy name, Thy kingdom, and Thy will. Then, when these have been dwelt upon, come, as in their train, man's wants and askings—our bread, our trespasses, our temptations, and our deliverance.”

Lessons ix-xii.—Christ's mission.—In the second century Celsus, a celebrated adversary of Christianity, distorting our Lord's expression, complained, “Jesus Christ came into the world to make the most horrible and dreadful society, for he calls sinners, and not the righteous, so that the body he came to assemble, is a body of profligates, separated from good people, among whom they before were mixed. He has rejected all the good, and selected all the bad.” “True,” says Origen, in reply, “our Jesus came to call sinners—but to repentance. He assembled the wicked—but to convert them into new men, or, rather, to change them into angels. We come to him covetous; he makes us liberal; lascivious, he makes us chaste; violent, he makes us meek; impious, he makes us religious.”

Who was the mother of Jesus? Where was he born? Was that the home of his parents? Who came from the east in search of him? How led? To what city did they go? Who was then king of the Jews? What did he attempt to do to the child Jesus? How did Jesus escape? Where was Jesus baptized? By whom? How? Why? Where did he go immediately after baptism? How long did he fast? How many temptations are mentioned? Name them. Was he ever afterwards tempted? Where was his early ministry? What did he preach? What is the name given to the discourse recorded in Matt., chapters v-vii? What are beatitudes? How many in Christ's sermon? Repeat them. Why is the prayer in Lesson vii called the Lord's prayer? How many things are asked for in it? Repeat it. What are “the two foundations” of which Lesson viii treats? Who are on the good? Who on the bad? Who alone can forgive sins? How did Christ prove that he could forgive sins? How many apostles were there? Name them. What is the gracious call of Lesson xii?

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher. Scripture Catechism, 743.

SUNDAY, October 5th.—Parable of the Sower.—Matt. xiii. 18-23.

Youths' Department.

QUESTIONS.

- Clover blossom, tell me true, Why was your perfume given to you?
That all might know, the flower confessed “How God blesses the lowliest.”
Robin Redbreast, let me hear, Wherefore your voice so sweet and clear?
“A thankful heart,” then whistled he, “Is the secret of all melody.”
Smiling corn field, speak me fair, How do you come by your yellow hair?
When the sun gave me kiss after kiss, What return could I make but this?
Brooklet, running away in the sun, Where did you gather your bubbles, each one?
God's snows and rains have lent unto me That which I hasten to give the sea.
Where did you find the colors seven That paint your picture, rainbow in heaven?
When first God said, “Let light begin,” These were the colors that entered in.
Genius makes its observation in shorthand—talent writes them out at length.
Pawn-brokers sometimes prefer customers without any redeeming qualities.

INEXPENSIVE HAPPINESS.

The most perfect home I ever saw was a little house into the sweet incense of whose fires were no costly things. But the mother was the creator of a home; her relation with her children was the most beautiful I have ever seen; even a dull and common place man was lifted up and enabled to do a good work for souls by the atmosphere that this woman created; every inmate of her house involuntarily looked into her face for the keynote of the day; and it always rang clear. From the rose-bud or clover-leaf which, in spite of her hard house-work, she always found time to put by our plates at breakfast, down to the story that she had on hand to be read in the evening, there was no intermission of her influence. She always has been and always will be my ideal of a mother, wife, and home-maker. If to her quick brain, loving heart, and exquisite face had been added the appliances of wealth and the enlargements of wider culture, hers would have been absolutely the ideal home. As it is, it is the best I have ever seen.—Helen Hunt.

REMEMBERED IN HIS WILL.

A certain man had a wayward son. His conduct brought down his father to a premature grave. On the day of his funeral the son was present, saw unmoved the pale face of his father in the coffin, stood unmoved on the brink of the grave. The family retraced their steps. Their father's will and Testament was read; in that testament was the name of the undutiful son. As his name was read his heart moved with emotion, his eyes were bedewed with tears, and he was heard to say, “I did not think my father would have so kindly thought of me in his will.” In the family of Christ some of us, in reading his Testament, and thinking upon his great love and marvellous gifts, feel our unprofitableness and unworthiness, and are filled with contrition and gratitude, with love and wonder.

IT IS BETTER.

- Better to wear a calico dress without trimming, if it be paid for, than to owe the shopkeeper for the most elegant silk, cut and trimmed in the most bewitching manner.
Better to live in a log cabin all your own than a brown stone mansion belonging to somebody else.
Better walk forever than run into debt for a horse and carriage.
Better to sit at a pine table, for which you paid three dollars ten years ago, than send home a new extension, black walnut top and promise to pay for it next week.
Better to use the old cane-seated chairs, and faded two-ply carpet, than tremble at the bills sent home from the upholsterer's for the most elegant parlor set ever made.
Better meet your business acquaintances with a free “don't owe you a cent” smile than to dodge around the corner to escape a dun.
Better to pay the street organ-grinder two cents for music, if you must have it, than to owe for a grand piano.
Better to gaze upon bare walls than pictures unpaid for.
Better to eat thin soup from earthenware, if you owe your butcher nothing, than to dine off lamb and roast beef and know that it does not belong to you.
Better to let your wife have a fit of hysterics than to run in debt for nice new furniture, or clothes, or jewelry.—Christian Advocate.

WHICH!

“Yes, mother, I know; but then, you see, my good feeling lasts only half a jiffy.”
So said my boy to me last evening in answer to my appeal.
“F-know it, Henry,” said I; “but how long does it take to switch off a locomotive on to the wrong track? Once started on the wrong track no matter how smoothly and swift it may run, it is running to destruction. On the other hand, a moment only and the switch-tender will have put the locomotive on the right track and the cars will go on safely.
“So with the heart. It takes only a moment to pray sincerely, ‘Lord save me.’ It only takes a moment to say, ‘Keep me from this sin, O Lord.’ It takes only a moment to say, from the heart, ‘Lord, give me thy Holy Spirit; make me thy child; do not leave me; let me not leave thee.’
“On the other hand, it takes but a moment to say, Pahaw! what's the use?

I don't care. It takes but a moment to say, ‘I'm not going to be laughed at for being a Christian, I know.’ It takes but one moment to drive the Spirit of God away by simply diverting the mind, which may be done in a number of ways.
“And so the soul may be switched on to the right track or on to the wrong track in a moment of time, and either run safely to the end of life, by God's grace, or run swiftly and surely to destruction.”
Is my soul on the right or wrong track?

“GIVE ME A BAIRD'S HYMN.”

When the late Dr. Guthrie lay on his death-bed, he said to those about him, in his own touchin' Scotch language, “Give me a bairn's hymn.” And they sang for him that little hymn which few hearts have ever yet heard unmoved:
“'There is a happy land”
Christ knew when he set a little child in the midst of the people as a type of Christian life that though so simple that man might at first scorn it, yet was this very simplicity of childhood the most difficult thing for man to attain to.

HINDOO WOMEN.

Our journey was accomplished in a dog-cart, with a fresh horse for every five miles, as was needful in view of the terrible state of the roads. They were so bad as to render the statement “No, I can't ride, but I can sit tight in a shay,” no such very contemptible boast; but the first three miles lay along the great Calcutta road which is, I believe, the finest in the world, and runs all the way from Peshawur to Calcutta. The moment we left it, we were bumped and battered and jolted; now toiling through deep sand, now wading through a portion of the road which lay under water, and then straining the springs of the dog-cart by a sudden jolt over a miniature mud-canal which carried water across from one field to another. Whenever the instinct of self preservation left me free to look anywhere but on the road, I took in all the unfamiliar objects with keen delight. Carts made like the old Roman chariots, with thick, clumsy wheels, drawn by oxen, and surmounted by little howdahs made of scarlet cloth, with one or more natives inside in gayly-colored turbans, and dresses, sitting cross-legged in a cramped position impossible to Europeans; great heavy-footed camels, with stupid, ill-tempered looking faces, one of them with a tiny little one lying in a basket on its mother's back, and followed by another young one, the most ungainly creature imaginable, like a badly-made ostrich on four legs; patriarchal-looking groups of men, women, and children, driving flocks of bullocks and goats, and looking as Abraham and Isaac might have done. What is this these two long-legged natives are carrying between them suspended from a pole? It looks like a scarlet bomboniere, a sort of bag, the bottom of which is flat, and about the size of a five o'clock tea-table. And it contains?—a Hindoo lady, probably on her way to pay a visit, though how that bag can contain her is a mystery to me, unless, indeed, she is lying coiled round and round, as only these little dark-skinned daughters can coil themselves, and in this position they sometimes perform long journeys without fatigue.
One is disposed at times to suppose that their bones must be gristle, and their joints india rubber. They never sit in any position except on their heels, which seems to afford them perfect rest, and it is marvelous to see the rapidity with which they move up and down, their feet touching each other, without putting their hands to the ground—all the strain and spring being in their backs and knees. The women attracted me most, by their graceful carriage, their picturesque drapery consisting of a full skirt and a sort of bournous, which passes over the head, almost completely veiling the face. These vary in color, being sometimes bright blue and pink and yellow, the skirt often bordered with a hem of some other color, often very gaudy, but the dark skin harmonizes it all. The most artistic to my mind is the deep indigo blue, but it is more rare in the north-west than in southern India, where almost all the lower class of women wear it. It is pleasant to watch the easy grace with which they walk, bearing round red earthen-ware or bright copper water-jars on their heads, steadying their burden with one well-shaped, small-wristed dusky arm stretched up to its full length, and covered almost to the elbow, and sometimes above it, with numbers of brace-

lets. These are sometimes silver, but oftener plated metal or red and green lac. I once heard of a school, the pupils in which were trained to walk about with tumblers of cold water on their heads; and when I saw the firm-footed, easy grace of these burden-bearing women, I regretted that the practice was not universal. The pale-faced race may perhaps pride itself on its superiority in the use of the contents of its head, but these dusky daughters of the sun certainly outdo their more favored sisters in the use they make of the outside of theirs. They carry everything on their heads; jars of water, pieces of cloth, baskets of vegetables, huge bundles of sugar cane, fuel, anything and everything, leaving their hands free for any additional burden. They do not carry their little black babies in their arms, but either balance them astride on their shoulders, with their little hands on their mother's head, or else astride on one hip, encircled with a strong arm. I have seen a woman with four water jars towering on her head and her little baby on her hip, walking along with springy grace, jingling her silver anklets and toe-bells as she went.

DYING IN THE DARK.

An item in the newspapers says:—
“Ludwig Feuerbach, the German philosopher, who died at Nuremberg of September 13th, expired in saying, ‘Truth, O truth—where is it?’ The man who died in this bewilderment, and with the confession of despair on his lips, had professed to seek truth all his days. At times in his life he must have thought he had gained what he was seeking for, for he wrote on such themes as ‘The Essence of Christianity’ and ‘The Essence of Religion,’ and what he propounded on subjects so vital and comprehensive must have been what he saw as ‘truth.’ How came it, then, that he died with the acknowledgement that what he had sought he had never gained, and knew not where it was to be found?
Feuerbach was through life a student and teacher of philosophy, and a student, as he would say, of ‘religions.’ If any truth is in the world, or may be discovered by man or revealed to him from heaven, this man in the course of a lifetime's studies in theology, science and philosophy might have fallen upon it or found it crossing his pathway. Why did he die without the light—die still pursuing, but gathering no satisfying result? Because he lost out of view, or discarded as unworthy of belief, the idea of a personal God. He believed in humanity and nothing higher. ‘Break the illusion,’ he says, ‘that God is a being distinct from man—restore the true conception that God is only a name given to the ideal nature of man himself, the grand personification of man's grander personality, and at once humanity straightens itself up to its full height, believes in its constitution, respects its law, trais its powers, educates its capacities, walks with uplifted countenance, enjoys the use of its faculties, and pushes out toward its perfection.’
These are brave and high-sounding words. But how they wilted in the presence of death. Humanity was no God to the poor human soul just passing out in the great unknown future. Pantheism was good enough in the lecture-room or the review, but it faded away like a dream when the vision of another life began to dawn. We have known that Atheism failed those who trusted it in the presence of death. But Pantheism is no better refuge for the human soul. Humanity deified is a poor God for humanity dying. Only the Christian, to whom God is a personal being, a divine Father, and Christ a present, loving Saviour, can die calmly, confidently, hopefully. To him truth has come in a Person whom it is his joy to trust, and no shriek of despair is heard as his soul goes up to God.—Presbyterian.

LORD SELBORNE IN THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

Sunday-school teachers all over the world, read with pride and thankfulness, that among their numbers is to be found the Lord Chancellor of England. His arduous duties do not prevent him from being with his class of twenty or more young men and lads, Sunday after Sunday, and setting an example of perseverance that should animate every fainthearted or weary teacher to fresh exertions. Says the Sunday School Magazine:—“Two features of Lord Selborne's work, as a teacher, merit universal imitation. In the first place, he does not rely even upon his well stored mind, or upon his long practice in the arts of clear exposition and effective appeal, and go to his class unprepared. Most thoroughly is every subject specially studied for the purpose. Then, he is not content with meeting and teaching his boys on Sunday. Each one has a place in his memory at other times; and those who have left are not lost sight of. A voluminous correspondence with old scholars, scattered all over the world testifies to the noble thoroughness with which the leader of the English Bar, and mentor of the House of Commons, has long fulfilled his part in the great work of tending the lambs of the Master's flock.”