

The Christian Messenger.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1875.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES. SUNDAY, November 21st, 1875.—Jesus the King.—John xviii. 33-38.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He is Lord of lords, and King of kings." Rev. xvii. 14.

ANALYSIS.—I. Questions and answers. Vs. 33-37. II. Decision of innocence. Vs. 38.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE.—After offering his sublime intercessory prayer, Jesus went across the Cedron to Gethsemane, where he had his terrible struggle (Luke xxii. 39-46) There it was Judas betrayed him with a kiss (Luke xxii. 47, 48.) It must have been about midnight. Then Jesus was bound by his captors and led to Annas, and shortly after to the residence of Caiaphas, before whom he had his first trial, resulting in his condemnation for blasphemy (Matt. xvi. 62-68.) Jesus was then given over to the crowd, for personal violence and contemptuous speech (Mark xiv. 65) Still later in the morning, but before sunrise, some think an hour, the assembled Sanhedrim take Jesus to the Roman governor, Pilate. Having in themselves no right to inflict capital punishment, they hope he will in their behalf. They fear desilement, and do not enter the judgment hall. So Pilate comes out to hear their accusation. They accuse Jesus of being a malefactor, but Pilate doubts its truthfulness. He has heard of no evil-doing on the part of the accused. Then they charge Jesus with sedition (Luke xxiii. 2). Whereupon Pilate re-enters the judgment hall, and, calling Jesus, examines him as to his kingly claims, the result of which was given afterward to the clamorous and blood-thirsty Jews: "I find in him no fault at all." But, alas for Pilate! he violated his best convictions, and finally gave warrant for Jesus' death. (Luke xxiii. 13-25)

EXPOSITION.—Verse 33.—Then. Or rather "accordingly," since the Jews gave such answer to his question (vs. 31), a particle not of time, but of consequence. Pilate. Holding the office of Procurator, appointed A. D. 25-6. Judea was attached to Syria upon the deposition of Archelaus (A. D. 6), and a procurator appointed to govern it, with Caesarea for its capital. Entered into the judgment hall again. Where he had been before. See vs. 28, which also explains why he had come out. "The judgment hall," the head-quarters of the Roman military governor [the praetor,] wherever he happened to be; the building occupied by him for the time being. And called Jesus. Pilate had not as yet examined him, but had only been out to learn on what charge and for what cause Jesus had been brought to him by the Jewish authorities. Vs. 29. The accusers were without; this interview of Pilate with Jesus was within. Art thou the King of the Jews? The Jews, we are told by Luke (xxiii. 2), asserted (doubtless in reply to Pilate's demand for the charge) that Jesus claimed to be a king, and thus stood in rebellion against the Roman government, one of those most abominable of all lies which are made up by an intentional twisting and misapplying of the truth. Pilate, in his question, laid the emphasis on "thou." It was perhaps simply to distinguish Jesus from other criminals, of whom each was under his own accusation. Pilate did not as yet understand in what different senses the title "the King of the Jews" could be and was used. Pilate had taken it as the Jews in their contemptible accusation intended he should, viz., in its political, civil sense; not in its spiritual, religious sense. The Jews understood this distinction, but Pilate did not. The fact is they were wroth with Jesus, just because he would not claim and set up to be political king.

Verse 34.—Jesus answered him. He was sometimes silent when questioned, but Pilate really wished to know about the case, and had asked his question in the spirit of candor, in a very different spirit from that of the mock examiners at the house of Caiaphas. Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? In this reply the emphasis in the first clause is on the words, "thou, of thyself," and in the second, on "others." Thus a contrast is drawn between the two parties. Jesus knew that Pilate had no independent evidence, no reason of his own, to regard him as a political aspirant and rebel, and he wished to bring this fact first of all to Pilate's consciousness, and secure from him its confession. This would fix upon the others, the Jewish party, all the re-

sponsibility for this accusation, and prepare the way for its explanation.

Verse 35.—Am I a Jew? This translation hardly brings out fully the meaning of the question. The force of it is this: I am not a Jew, am I? He proudly and contemptuously, like the Roman he was, denies that he is a Jew, and in this intends to deny, just as Jesus knew he could and should, that he of himself had brought the charge. He says, virtually, "This is all a Jewish matter. What do I know about Jewish questions and quarrels, such as this? What do I care about them? I am a Roman, and a Roman officer." And so he adds, completing his thought: Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me. This brings it out fully that the whole case was made up by the Jews, and that the Romans, whether privates or officers, had made no charge of political treachery, or disloyalty, and had no charge to make, and no evidence on which to make one. Hence Pilate's next question. What hast thou done [didst thou do]? He wants the act or acts on which is based the singular accusation. Matt. xxvii. 18.

Verse 36.—My kingdom is not of this world. The word "my" is to be emphasized, as implying that his kingdom is unlike all worldly powers. He in this reply admits implicitly, what he soon after asserts explicitly, that he does claim to be a King. "Not of this world," means that in origin and nature it was not a civil, earthly kingdom, and hence that he was not aiming at civil, worldly power, such as Caesar's. Christ's kingdom is partly in the world, and truly over it. Its laws, its officers, its institutions, its aims, its sanctions—none of them are civil and political. Hence the possibility and necessity of the total separation of church and state. Jesus now gives the proof of this statement. If my kingdom were [had been] of this world, then would my servants fight [have fought], that I should not be [have been] delivered to the Jews. The words in brackets show the true meaning of the original, which refers exclusively to the past; and to Christ's consent to be taken. Pilate knew that Jesus had not made any tumult. But now is my kingdom not from hence. An emphatic repetition. Jesus wished to make this point clear, and impress it on Pilate's mind.

Verse 37.—Therefore. Because Jesus spoke of his kingdom. Art thou a king then? Or, "So then thou art a king?" A question implying an affirmative answer, an interrogatory assertion. Pilate, of course, saw that in claiming to have a kingdom he claimed to be a King, and hence he could ask the question in this form of assertion. Thou sayest, etc. Meaning, "Yes, I am a King." Notice how Jesus asserts his divine dignity. He comes out boldly, and yet in doing it shows a prudence which should ever attend boldness. He asserts his claim, but shows that the claim is not a crime. To this end, etc. To be just the King I am. The "being born," refers to the assumption of human nature; the "coming into the world," to his work in that nature. That I should bear witness to the truth. A positive statement of the nature of his kingdom as vs. 36 was a negative statement. This seems to describe him only as Prophet, but the witness borne by him was not by his words only, but by his nature, deeds, and official character culminated in his Kingship, or Headship, and kingship is here the point under discussion, his language is natural. Every one that is of the truth, etc. Has a truth-loving nature. Describing his subjects.

Verse 38.—What is truth? The Roman was too practical to understand or care for this question of mere doctrine. I find in him no fault at all. An honest and true statement, but one which condemns his course afterward.

QUESTIONS.—For what did the Sanhedrim condemn Jesus? Mark xiv. 64. What was the first accusation they preferred against Jesus to Pilate? John xvii. 30. What was the second? Luke xxiii. 2. Vs. 33. What was the "judgment hall"? Upon what is Pilate's question founded? Vs. 24. What did Jesus mean by "Sayest thou this of thyself"? What by "or did others tell it thee"? Vs. 35. Does Pilate assume to be concerned in Jewish religious questions? What does he wish to find out? Vs. 36. In what respects is Christ's kingdom not of this world? Is it any the less a kingdom? Luke xvii. 20, 21. Vs. 37. In what tone did Pilate ask "Art thou a king, then"? Did Christ deny his kingly character? Who sought him as "King of the Jews"? Matt. ii. 2. Vs. 38. When Pilate asked "What is truth"? Why did he not wait for an answer? Ans. He believed it unanswerable. What decision touching his criminal did Pilate arrive at? Has the world ever reversed it? Do the apostles ever speak of Jesus as King? 1 Tim. vi. 15; Rev. xvii. 14.

SUNDAY, November 28th, 1875.—Jesus on the Cross.—John xix. 25-30.

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Youths' Department.

TOO BIG FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Perhaps you say to me, "What's the harm of walking out on Sundays?" Well, I will tell you. I have seen some of the best lads I ever knew, whom I really hoped were converted, who have taken to this walking business, and not one of them is now worth a button, for any good purpose whatever. My hope was that by this time they would have been among my best workers, flourishing in business and happy in the service of God, but it is not so. The day they left the house of God for "pleasant strolls" was the day of their doom; they became by degrees careless, idle, boastful, loose in talk and loose in life, and made Satan more and more their lord. Whether a thing is bad or not, may be seen by its fruit and there's the fruit of being "too old for Sunday Schools and classes."—Spurgeon.

SAVED BY A FISH.

"A vessel bound for Dantzic sprang a severe leak during a gale in the Baltic, and the crew were all but exhausted in their efforts at the pumps to reduce it. One day the ship suddenly stopped taking in water, and in time the vessel reached Dantzic safely. After the discharge of the cargo a search was made for the leak, and a hole was found in the centre of one of the planks from the yielding of a knot in the wood; in this hole there was wedged a dead fish, whose collision with the vessel when alive had stopped the leak and saved the ship and crew."

A boy of five years was "playing railroad" with his sister of two and a half. Drawing her upon a footstool, he imagined himself both the engine and the conductor. After imitating the puffing noise of the steam, he stopped and called out "New York," and in a moment after "Philadelphia." His knowledge of towns was now exhausted, and at the next place he cried out, "Heaven." His little sister cried eagerly, "Top, I des I'll det out here."

PRETTY IS THAT PRETTY DOES.

BY ALICE CARY.

The spider wears a plain brown dress, And she's a steady spinner; To see her, quiet as a mouse, Going about her silvery house, You would never, never guess The way she gets her dinner;

She looks as if no thought of ill In all her life had stirred her, But while she moves with careful tread And while she spins her silken thread, She is planning, planning still The way to do some murder.

My child, who reads this simple lay With eyes downcast and tender, Remember the old proverb says That pretty is which pretty does, And that worth does not go nor stay For poverty nor splendor;

'Tis not the house, and not the dress, That makes the saint or sinner, To see the spider sit and spin, Shut with her webs of silver in, You would never, never guess The way she gets her dinner.

THE SONG OF THE PRINTER.

Pick and click Goes the type in the stick, As the Printer stands at his case; His eyes glance quick, and his fingers pick The type at a rapid pace; And one by one as the letters go, Words are piled up steady and slow, Steady and slow, But still they grow, And words of fire they soon will glow; Wonderful words, that without a sound Traverse the earth to its utmost bound; Words that shall make The tyrant quake, And the fetters of the oppress'd shall break; Words that can crumble an army's might, Or treble its strength in a righteous fight. Yet the types they look but leaden and dumb, As he puts them in place with finger and thumb;

But the Printer smiles, And his work beguiles By chanting a song as the letters he piles, With pick and click, Like the world's chronometer, tick! tick! tick! O, where is the man with such simple tools Can govern the world as I; With a printing press, an iron stick and a little leaden die, With paper of white, and ink of black, I support the Right, and the Wrong attack, Say, where is he, or who may he be, That can rival the Printer's power? To no monarchs that live the wall doth he give— Their sway lasts only an hour; While the Printer's still grows, and God only knows When his might shall cease to tower!

—Clifton Chronicle, Eng.

WILLING TO DIE FOR HER FATHER.—Rev. A. G. Brown of London relates the following:—Some years ago I was called upon at my house, and requested to see a little girl, seven years of age, who, I was told, was dying. She lived in a little back street. When I got there a woman showed me to where this child was, and I sat down. "What do you want, darling?" I said. "Well, sir," said she, "I want to see you before I die." "Why," said I, "are you dying?" "Yes, sir." "Would you not like to get well again?" "I hope not, sir." "Why not?" "Why, sir," said she—and, remember, she was only seven years old—"ever since I became a Christian, I have been trying to bring father to the Tabernacle, and he won't come; and I think if I die—you will bury me, won't you?" I said, "Yes, darling." "Well, I've been thinking, if I die, father must go to the funeral; then you would be able to preach the Gospel to him; and I would be willing to die six times over for him to hear the Gospel once." This was wonderful love that filled her little heart. She would die six times that her father might hear the Gospel once. Well, she went home as she had anticipated, and just as she was to have been buried, strangely enough, I was taken seriously ill myself. I was so grieved. I thought of the poor little thing; and I should so like to have buried her. Some time passed on; and a rough-looking fellow called upon me, and held out his hand. "You do not know me?" "No, I do not." "I am the father of Mary, the father she died for; for I heard as how she said, she would die for me six times, if I could only hear the Gospel once. It nearly broke my heart, and now I want to join the inquirers' class." He did join the inquirers' class; and was, I am happy to be able to say, brought to Jesus.

BUSY MILLIONAIRES.—A. T. Stewart declined a social invitation from Governor Tilden because he was so busy. This man of 74 years, and nobody knows how many millions, in his devotion to hard work, is like several other old New York millionaires. Moses Taylor is always laboring. Vanderbilt, now 80, is at his office daily, and is harder pushed than any of his clerks. Wm. B. Atsor, who is over 80, attends closely to the business of his vast real estate. George Law and Daniel Drew are each 76, but do not abate a jot of their daily work. Peter Cooper, aged 81, is regularly at his office in the institute building. Edward Matthews, who has reached 75, keeps a close eye on his Wall street reality. At 78, Charles O'Connor is up to his ears in legal papers, though he avoids when possible, attendance upon the courts.

"WON'T HE KILL THEM AGAIN."—The following is told as a genuine true story. It appeared in a Halifax paper a few weeks ago and caused some uneasiness in certain quarters. Whether it be true or not its teaching is the same—

A Universalist minister was once relating to his little son the story of the "The Babes in the Woods," when the boy asked, "What became of the poor little children?" "They went to heaven," was the answer. "And what became of their wicked old uncle?" "He went to Heaven, too." "But, father," he asked, with a child's anxiety, "Won't he kill them again?" This simple and most natural query proved one of God's chosen arrows to the man's heart, and swept away at a breath whole volumes of sophistry, with which he had fortified his belief. He was led into the true light.

DOGS OR POULTRY.

How frequently we see from one to three worthless dogs about a poor man's door, and it takes more to feed them than twenty hens. For the benefit of your readers I will give my experience with poultry in small coops for three months, March, April and May. No. 1, one cock and five Dominique Leghorn pullets laid two hundred and fifty eggs; average fifty to each hen. No. 2, one cock and two Black Hamburg pullets laid one hundred and thirty-five eggs; average sixty-seven and one-half. No. 3, one cock and four Golden S. Hamburg pullets laid two hundred and twenty-nine eggs; average sixty-seven and one-quarter. No. 4, one cock and five Silver S. Hamburg hens four years old, laid two hundred and fifty-five eggs; average fifty one. My fowls, for the past five months, have been kept in coops made of laths, thirteen feet long, four feet wide, and two feet high. They commenced to lay about February 1. My fowls are in good health, free from vermin, and the eggs hatch well.—Charles Selser, in Poultry World.

ON ADMINISTERING BAPTISM.

The ordinance of baptism, when rightly administered, is wonderfully impressive. Many a congregation have I seen melted to tears as they have witnessed it. Many a heart have I known to be brought to repentance by its silent teachings. And pastors rejoice in it for its softening influence and for the quickening which it leaves in the hearts of the people. But it is easily, and, I fear, frequently marred in its effect, and even rendered repulsive by a careless or ill-judged administration. Some ministers neglect to instruct their candidates, and persons who are unaccustomed to appear in public, are brought before a large assemblage without a word of suggestion as to how they shall bear themselves. A minister would not perform a marriage ceremony especially in presence of a large audience, without some previous instruction to the participants. If he is to conduct a funeral service, especially where others participate with him, he will ascertain the wishes of the afflicted friends, and will carefully arrange to avoid every misunderstanding or contumelious. At the Lord's table, the pastor and the deacons will have their parts precisely arranged beforehand. Why should a preacher lead converts into the water without teaching them in a few words to keep their forms firm and passive, because a body which is all hinges or limp like a meal-bag is hard to handle; to clasp their hands, with fingers interlaced, that they may be easily grasped; and avoid all, to inflate the lungs with air to avoid unpleasant choking, gasping, and struggling. These few suggestions, which can be given in a moment, not only make the administrator's service easy, but give confidence and self-possession to the candidate.

After this, the one requisite to a successful administration of the ordinance, is a slow and deliberate manner. If the minister is quick in his movements he impairs the solemnity of the service. If he is nervous or hasty he puts his candidate in a flutter and his congregation in an excitement of uneasiness and anxiety. I have witnessed such a hurried, plunging, and nervous immersion as drew from bystanders the exclamation, "Horrible!" Baptism is burial and resurrection. We do not bury our friends with a hop, skip, and jump.

The gentlest trot towards the grave pains us. We bear them slowly and tenderly with solemn and thoughtful step. The bearers lower the dead form gently. The cords slip slowly through their hands as it sinks into the last resting place. A photograph of a bas-relief from the Vatican representing the entombment of Jesus, which hangs in my parlor, pictures every face subdued into tenderness. One line expressive of haste in laying that beloved form away would mar the whole. Shall you take your friend who is being buried with Christ and plunge him hurriedly into the tomb? Shall our haste say, We are glad to be rid of you? Calmness, slowness, and moderation are the requisites to give this ordinance its Christian meaning.—Dr. Sage, in Christian Era.

THE CISTERN.—I remember once hearing the story of a prisoner, who was told that the cistern which supplied him with water would never be refilled, when once he had emptied it, and that he would then be left to perish with thirst. Imagine how careful he would be not to waste a drop. He would know that every cupful he drank, left less behind, and he would not be able to tell, how soon the supply might fail. Like the prisoner's store of water, is our store of time. We daily use from it, and every day less remains. Then how careful we should be of it.

Mr. Moody does not like to be called a "revivalist." In a Bible reading on the Holy Spirit he said:

"How I hate that word revivalist!" "The world never has had, or needed, but one revivalist, and that is the Holy Spirit. You sometimes hear a man say that he is going to hold a revival meeting in such a place. What business has he to say that? How does he know it will be a revival meeting? He may go and preach the Gospel, and then if the Holy Spirit blesses the word, and touches the people's hearts, there will be a revival meeting sure enough; but it will be the Holy Spirit's, not the preacher's. And now I hope none of you young converts will ever call yourselves, or let yourselves be called, this or that man's converts. Give Him all the praise."

In is one thing, to have our sins worn away from memory, and quite another thing, to have them washed away by the blood of Christ.