

The Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N.S., JULY 7, 1875.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1875.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

SUNDAY, July 11th, 1875.—Following the Lamb.—John i. 35-46.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." Revelation xiv. 4.

ANALYSIS.—I. Testimony of Jesus. V. 35, 36. II. Two disciples follow Jesus. V. 37-39. III. Andrew finds Peter. V. 40-42. IV. Jesus finds Philip. V. 43, 44. V. Philip finds Nathanael. V. 45, 46.

HISTORICAL CONNECTION.—Eight days following his birth Jesus was circumcised. Forty days after his birth Mary presented him in the Temple. Luke ii. 22-38. Soon after the Magi of the East visited him in Bethlehem. Matt. ii. 1-12. To avoid Herod's hate his parents carry him into Egypt. Matt. ii. 13-15. After Herod's death he returns to Nazareth. Luke ii. 39, 40. At twelve years of age he converses with the doctors of the law in Jerusalem. Luke ii. 41-52. At thirty years of age he leaves Nazareth to enter upon public life, Luke iii. 23; goes to John at the Jordan to be baptized of him, Matt. iii. 13-17; thence is led by the devil into the wilderness (mountains of Judea) to be tempted, Matt. iv. 1; after which he returns to the Jordan, where John is still preaching and baptizing, and there once and again is heralded by John as "The Lamb of God." John i. 29, 35.

EXPOSITION.—Verse 35.—Again the next day after. The next after the events recorded in vs. 29-34. The first day of the reckoning is plainly that of the event recorded in vs. 19-28. Thus verse 35 speaks of the third day, verse 44 of the fourth, and ii. 1 of the seventh, as there "the third day" must be the third from that mentioned in i. 44. We have thus a week for the opening events of the gospel, as we have another for the closing events, as given in chapter xx. The events of these two weeks how unlike, and yet how like! What a history between the two! John [the Baptist] stood, and two of his [John's] disciples. The place was at Bethabara (another reading has "Bethany") on the east side of the Jordan, probably nearly opposite Jericho, where John was remaining in order to baptize those resorting to him. Vs. 28. Of the two disciples, one was Andrew (vs. 40), and the other unquestionably John, the writer of the gospel. He several times refers to himself without giving the name. xiii. 23; xix. 26; xx. 2 ff. There were doubtless many others than these two near John to hear his words, but the writer cared to speak only of these.

Verse 36.—And looking upon Jesus. His eyes were fixed in a steady gaze on Jesus. The name Jesus is the same as Joshua, the former being the Greek, and the latter the Hebrew form. It means "Jehovah help." As he walked. More exactly, "walking about." Behold the Lamb of God. John was a Jew, and was speaking to Jews. He regarded these sacrifices as typical. The very existence of the nation sprung from sacrifice, redemption through the paschal lamb. Ex. xii. Typically, therefore, the paschal lamb was the Redeemer of Israel. What prominence everywhere in the New Testament is given to the fact of redemption through Christ's blood. We remark here John's freedom from all spirit of rivalry, his fidelity to his trust as a witness, and his profound, adoring love of Jesus prompting the fidelity. iii. 30-36.

Verse 37.—And the two disciples. Andrew and John. Heard him speaking. Evidently implying that he spoke not to them only, but to a multitude present. And they followed Jesus. This was not unfaithfulness to their teacher, John, but the reverse. To follow Christ was to leave, but not to abandon and reject John. Inwardly they followed John much more closely than if they had outwardly staid with him.

Verse 38.—Then [and] Jesus turned [having turned]. Drawn by their persuasion that he was Messiah, they might well have felt and shown a want of assurance, a certain restraint and reserve, to be removed only by some word from Jesus himself. And saw them following. More for their sakes than his, to show they and their act were noticed and regarded. And saith unto them. Thus, he stopped, turned, stood, intently looked, and spake. What seek ye? He draws out into expression the

secret faith and desire of the heart, in order that the life may abound. Largely for this he caused churches to be organized. Christ would have us know and make known why we seek him. Rabbi. The Hebrew word Rab means great, or a great one—used sometimes in the Old Testament of judges or noblemen. Song of Solomon vii. 5; Nahum i. 12. Subsequently it became "a title of honor in the Jewish schools; as teacher, or master, in the sense of doctor." Rabbi meant my teacher or master, and was a higher title than simply Rab? while Rabboni (xx. 16) was the highest title, as "my great master," and was given only to seven persons, all of the school of Hillel. Where dwellest [abidest] thou? Showing a wish to be permanently joined to him.

Verse 39.—Come and see. A ready, cordial welcome, as was doubtless made still more evident by tone, and look, and bearing. They came and saw where he dwelt [abides]. A quick and grateful response to the invitation. And they abode with him that day [the remainder of it.] This gave them opportunity to hear something of his teaching, and form his acquaintance. The tenth hour. Four o'clock in the afternoon.

Verse 40.—Andrew. Whether older or younger than Simon, is not known.

Verse 41.—He first findeth his own brother Simon. It is almost strange that Simon, so constantly first, was not the first to find Jesus. It was natural for Andrew to seek first his own brother, and bring him to Jesus. Messiah (Hebrew), Christ (Greek); both mean anointed. The prophet, the high priest, and the king were each anointed in Israel; and Jesus, the Redeemer, was to be Prophet, Priest and King.

Verse 42.—He [Andrew] brought him [Simon Peter] to Jesus. This was a turning point in Peter's life. Much more so is it in the life of a friend when, in conversation, brought to follow Jesus. Thou art Simon the son of Jona. Thou shalt be called Cephas. It was usual for men at the time of a great change in life to take a new name, or change their old one, partly as a memorial, partly to suit their name to the new relations. Cephas is Hebrew; Peter, Greek; and the two have the same meaning, viz., a stone. See Matt. xvi. 18.

Verse 43.—The day following. The next after that mentioned in vs. 35. Follow me. Literally and bodily, as he went to Galilee, and thenceforth.

Verse 45.—Philip findeth Nathanael. The power of Christian influence.

Verse 46.—Nazareth. A despised city of a despised province. Come and see. The Gospel asks to be tested.

QUESTIONS.—How old was Jesus now? Where was he walking? Why there? Whence come?

Vs. 35. What had taken place the day before? See vs. 29. What two days before? See vs. 19-28. Who were the two disciples? Why do you think one was John?

Vs. 36. Who had prophesied of this Lamb? Isa. liii. 7. Why was it slain? Heb. ix. 22. Where was the Lamb of God slain? Col. i. 20. For whom? ch. iii. 14, 15. What do we mean by saying "Jesus died for us"? Ans. In our stead. See Rom. v. 6; 1 Peter iii. 18.

Vs. 37. Do you think John was jealous of Jesus? John iii. 28-30.

Vs. 39. When was the first hour of the Jewish day?

Vs. 41. What do you think of Christian life that is not faithful at home?

Vs. 46. How do you account for Nathanael's prejudice against Nazareth? What was its remedy? How many followers has Jesus already? What must his followers do? Matt. xvi. 24.

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, July 18th, 1857.—Jesus at the Marriage.—John ii. 1-11.

It is estimated that the expenses of the services held by Moody and Sankey in London amounted to \$150,000. To defray these only about \$80,000 had been raised. It is stated that neither of the preachers has received any pay for his labors.

JOHN BILLINGS says: "If you are going to give a man anything, give it to him cheerfully and quick; don't make him go down on his knees in front of you and listen to the Ten Commandments, and then give him five cents."

The greatest thing, the first thing, the last thing, the most important thing, we can all do—we can all pray. Let us do this as a preparation for every other duty, and God will hear and bless.

Christ, and everything in Him and with Him, is an incomprehensible mystery; fail but to explore it, and thou art but a fool; but believe what is revealed to thee of it and it is enough for thy salvation.

Youths' Department.

POETRY FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

MISTRESS MOUSE. Mistress Mouse Built a house In mamma's best bonnet; All the cats Were catching rats, And didn't light upon it.

At last they found it, And around it Sat watching for the sinner; When, strange to say, She got away, And so they lost their dinner. —Methodist.

IN THE SWING. BY L. M. W.

Baby and I Are going to swing; Boys, come and push us! That's just the thing! Now we go up! Now we come down! Up in the apple-tree— Down to the ground. Dear little head Lies on my breast, Trusting and safe As a bird in its nest. No matter how swiftly, How low, or how high, We're pleasantly swinging— Baby and I!

Up in the apple-tree, In a snug nest, Light winds are swinging The robins to rest. Four baby-robins Are swung to and fro— Backward and forward— Now high, and now low. The mother broods o'er them, And close to her breast They are pleasantly swinging, Secure in their nest!

Ah, well! my baby Will soon leave my breast, And all the young robins Will fly from the nest! But never more happy Or safe can they be Than swinging to-day "In the old apple-tree!" God cares for the robins Wherever they fly, And we, too, will trust him— Baby and I! —Christian Union.

SOME HONESTY STILL LEFT.

There once lived at Oranienbaum, a little Russian town on the Gulf of Faland, a poor widow, nearly eighty years of age at the time my story begins. All her fortune consisted of the miserable inn she kept, and whose profits barely sufficed to keep her in even the necessaries of life; for few people came to her except sailors waiting at Oranienbaum for a fair wind to put to sea.

One day, however several seamen came to lodge at the widow's inn. Three of them were English; the fourth was a Dutchman. They took their places at the table, and began talking.

"Is this the first time you have been in Oranienbaum?" said one of the English to the Dutchman.

"Oh! no," he replied, "this is not my first visit. I know this miserable hole but too well, for it cost me nine hundred good florins. It was a good price to pay for knowing such a place, was it not?"

"Nine hundred florins!" exclaimed the astonished Englishman. "How did it cost you so much money?"

"In this way," replied the other; "I unhappily got rather drunk one day, and in going off in this state I forgot my bag of money, and have never heard of it since."

Without waiting for the end of the conversation, the old woman, who was waiting herself, came nearer the Dutchman and suddenly asked, "Was the bag sealed?"

"Ay, that it was," replied the mariner; "and to prove what I say, here is the seal which I used." At the same time he showed the woman a brass ring which bore the initials J. B.

"Ah! well, if the bag is sealed, you have some hope of finding it again," said the old woman.

"Of finding it!" exclaimed the sailor. "No, my good woman, I was not born yesterday, and I know too well how things go in this world to even imagine I shall ever lay hands on my good lost florins again. There is no longer any honesty in the world; and, besides, remember it is more than seven years since I lost my bag."

The woman did not reply; she left the

room, went to a cupboard, and, opening an old box, drew from thence a small bag of gray cloth; then raising her eyes to heaven, and folding her hands, she murmured:

"My God! I thank thee for having, in spite of many wants, kept me from touching this money during the seven years it has remained in this place. My Father! I bless thee that I have been kept from taking what was not mine!"

A few moments after she returned to the room where the sailors were seated, and, putting the untouched money upon the table, said to the Dutchman:

"You said just now there was no honesty left in the world. Well, here is proof that it still remains in some hearts."

STOP MY PAPER.

During the war there was a certain church, no matter about the denomination, in a certain town, no matter about the State, in which, singular to relate, there were developed some differences of opinion concerning slavery and the civil war. One Sunday morning, the minister who labored under the conviction that patriotism is a part of religion, and that even under a free republic it is the duty of the citizen to render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, namely, love, allegiance, and, in time of peril, military service, gave in a cautious way, for he was a cautious man, some expression to his sentiments. Thereupon one of the "pillars" of his church, who sat in the center aisle and paid a large pew rent, took his hat and, slamming his pew door behind him, stalked down the aisle, vehemently and noisily shaking off, for a testimony, whatever dust had by chance remained on his well-polished boots. The church, congregation, and even the town, were thrown into a ferment. Whether the minister would leave his pulpit or the "pillar" his pew, was the all-prevailing topic of the street on the following Monday.

Now it chanced that that week, that very Monday for aught we know, Mr. John B. Gough was to speak in the aforesaid town, and, if our recollection serves us aright, in that identical church, which, being the largest audience-room in the place, served as a lecture hall. And the parson and the "pillar" both occupied prominent seats upon the platform, when Mr. Gough, in complete oblivion of the recent small civil war in that community, arose to speak, which he did with an introduction somewhat after this fashion:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am a plain man; and I am accustomed to speak my thoughts plainly, without much weighing of my words, and without stopping to consider whether they are what will please my audience in all respects, or not. And if, in this evening's lecture, I should chance to say anything that does not please you, I beg that none of you will get up and march out of the house to mark your displeasure. I have known this to be done. I have even known a Christian man on the Sabbath, and in church, when the minister happened to say something that did not just please him, get up and slam the pew-door behind him, and stalk majestically down the aisle, as though the minister was hired just to say things to please him!"

"Ladies and gentlemen, it was an ancient notion that souls were transmitted from one to another, that no new souls were ever created, but that whenever a babe was born, some one else died, and the soul of the dying man was transferred to the body of the babe; and I have sometimes thought, when I have seen a man go stalking out of church to the disturbance of minister and congregation, because the minister happened to say something that did not just please him, that this theory of the transmigration of souls might be true, and when that man was born nobody happened to die!"

We do not know whether Mr. Gough knows to this day why his hit took so much better than it usually does, and was so rapturously cheered, with clapping of hands and laughter. It is to be presumed that he was not allowed to leave town in ignorance, however. At all events neither "pillar" nor parson left the church, and Mr. Gough proved an unconscious peace-maker.

MORAL. The man who cries "Stop my paper," because a journal whose general character he thoroughly approves differs from him in judgment on some single point, is second cousin to the man who stalks indignantly out of church, because the minister is bold enough to say something that does not exactly please him.—Christian Weekly.

The following account will be interesting to many of our readers, not only on account of the remarkable phenomenon it describes, but also because we have some of the Icelanders, so driven from their country, come to settle in this province:

THE EARTHQUAKE IN ICELAND.

Some weeks ago there was a heavy rain of ashes and cinders along the northern coast of Norway, covering the ground several inches deep. Investigation revealed the fact that these strange materials, coming from a northwesterly direction like immense clouds through the air, were of volcanic origin. It was at once thought there must have been an eruption of Mount Hecla in Iceland. A steamer was dispatched from Copenhagen, and that vessel having returned from Beikjavik, with news of an unparalleled disaster. It seems that the outbreak began on Christmas, and has continued ever since with scarce any interruption.

For seven weeks before Christmas the inhabitants were terrified by subterranean noises like thunder, which extended through nearly two-thirds of the island. Early in January followed earthquakes in all directions, and at last an old extinct volcano near Vatnaskud opened, and for four weeks continued to eject immense quantities of liquid fire, lava, ashes and a muddy fluid mass at boiling heat. The village and some smaller hamlets and farms within a radius of twenty miles were destroyed, and over a thousand people had to flee for their lives.

After four weeks this volcano ceased, but at that moment another extinct volcano nearly a hundred miles away, near Myvatn, sent its burning mass upon the peaceful habitations around. This eruption lasted for several weeks, the village of Myvatn became a prey to the fiery elements, and the whole country, for more than fifty miles around was devastated. More than eight hundred of the people are reported as having been rendered homeless. Early in March there seemed to be a general upheaval of the earth in the whole central portion of the island; new mounds, as it were, rose to the surface, some to the height of several hundred feet and over a thousand feet in diameter at the base, amid tremendous shocks beneath. They split open at the top and vomited forth their burning contents upon the surface around them, covering a distance of two hundred miles.

Ten thousand people are said to have lost nearly all their possessions, and the remainder, who live nearer to and along the coasts, some 40,000 in number, are themselves too poor to support such a vast number of needy people. Several hundred persons are also reported to have perished. The world-renowned Geysers have dried up since the terrible eruption began, and instead of water, these mysterious funnels emit immense quantities of hot smoke and ashes, which, during the night, rising several thousand feet into the air, appear like gigantic columns of flameless fire, visible for hundreds of miles. It is said that no historic record of any volcanic eruption anywhere in the world compares with this, either in territory over which it extends, the number of newly-opened craters, or the time of its duration. The Copenhagen Government has issued an appeal for aid to the sufferers.

THE NINETY AND NINE.

AS SUNG BY MR. SANKEY IN GREAT BRITAIN. There were ninety and nine that safely lay In the shelter of the fold, But one was out on the hills away, Far off from the gates of gold. Away from the mountains wild and bare, Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

"Lord, thou hast here thy ninety and nine; Are they not enough for thee?" But the Shepherd made answer: "This one mine Has wandered away from me; And although the road be rough and steep, I go to the desert to find my sheep."

But none of the ransomed ever knew How deep were the water crossed; Now how dark was the night that the Lord passed through Ere he found his sheep that was lost. Out in the desert he heard it cry— Sick, and helpless, and ready to die.

"Lord, whence are those blood-drops all the way, That mark out the mountain's track?" "They were shed for one who had gone astray Ere the shepherd could bring him back." "Lord, whence are thy hands so rent and torn?" "They are pierced to-night by many a thorn."

And all thro' the mountains, thunder-riven, And up from the rocky steep, There arose a cry to the gates of heaven, "Rejoice! I have found my sheep!" And the angels echoed around the throne, "Rejoice, for the Lord brings back his own!"