

The Christian Messenger.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1875.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

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

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah liii. 6.

ANALYSIS.—I. The group at the cross. Vs. 25. II. Mother and disciple. Vs. 26, 27. III. "I thirst." Vs. 28, 29. IV. "It is finished." Vs. 30.

CRUCIFIXION was made familiar to the Jews by the Romans. It was the most horrible form of death, worse even than burning, and applied only to the vilest of criminals. But it was demanded for the Lord by his countrymen. It was a Roman execution, upon a Roman cross, the feet of the sufferer being not nearly as high as the pictures represent, but a foot or two only from the ground. The place of the crucifixion was outside of the city, and near to one of the gates. It is a tradition only that calls Golgotha a hill, and the expression "Mount Calvary" has nothing to support it. To this place Jesus bore his cross, until from exhaustion Simon of Cyrene was compelled to bear a part of it (Matt. xxvii. 32). Then, being stripped, his dress was given as a perquisite (Matt. xxvii. 35) to the soldiers, and his hands and feet were nailed to the cross, either as it lay upon the ground, or stood in its socket of earth. It was at 9 A. M. (the third hour), and his life lingered until 3 P. M. (the ninth hour.) He was taken from the cross later in the day. Over him, according to custom, Pilate placed an inscription, meaning more than he knew, and greatly to the mortification of the Jews, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Two thieves were crucified with him, on either side one. The order of the words spoken by our Lord on the cross may be thus given: 1. "Father, forgive them," just as he was lifted on the cross. 2. "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise," during the forenoon. 3. "Behold thy son," about noon, and just before the darkness. 4. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" while the darkness lingered. 5. "I thirst," as the darkness passed away. 6. "It is finished," just after the darkness. 7. "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." "And gave up the ghost."

EXPOSITION.—Verse 25.—Now. A conjunction, contrasting to the soldiers of the preceding clause the women of this clause. The soldiers did thus, but the women stood at the cross. There stood by the cross of Jesus. This was on Golgotha, a Hebrew name, of which Calvarium [whence our Calvary] is the Latin equivalent, each meaning skull, or "place of a skull." Luke xxiii. 33; Matt. xxvii. 33. According to Mark (xv. 40, 41) the women were far away from the cross; but according to John, near. The two evangelists refer doubtless to different points of time. His mother, and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas [Clopas], and Mary Magdalene. It has recently been considered doubtful whether three or four women were here specified, and that the "Mary, the wife of Cleophas," is the sister of Jesus' mother. If the sister of Mary was Salome, the wife of Zebedee, as Lange and others hold, then John and James were natural cousins of Jesus. Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40. "As to Mary Magdalene, she was not the reformed prodigal, as so many have supposed, nor the sister of Lazarus. Seven demons had early been cast out of her, and this restoration from a dreadful malady was a special tie of gratitude binding her to Jesus and to the other noble women, whose custom and delight it was to minister to the Lord. Mark v. 9; xv. 41; xvi. 2, 9. We must admire the strength of faith and love shown by these women, the courage, more than manly, born of their faith and love, and manifested in this dark hour.

Verse 26.—When Jesus therefore saw his mother and the disciple, etc. "Therefore" refers to the fact just recorded, that the women were near the cross. It is thought that the time here referred to was just before the coming on of the darkness, which began about noon. Matt. xxvii. 45. Notice John's designation of himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He never mentions his own name in referring to himself. He saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son. We found Jesus addressing his mother by the title "woman" at the marriage in Cana. It was then to indicate that as her Redeemer and Lord he held to her another relation than that of mere

natural sonship. What filial fidelity is this in which Jesus so forgets his own woes as thus to care for his mother. What an example for children of every age to honor their parents. Joseph was doubtless already dead. This would seem to follow from the absence of any notice of him as being present, and also for the provision made for Mary. It would seem that hitherto Jesus had looked after her wants, and she had looked up to his counsel. In such relation his final word would be to her final authority. There is evidence that John had means, and could easily maintain her.

Verse 27.—Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother. The Romanist idea that the Lord commended all his disciples, as represented by the beloved one, to the patronage of his mother, is simply absurd. We may be sure that the arrangement so delicately and touchingly made, was most cheerfully and gladly accepted by both. And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home. All the remaining years of her life. His home, after this time, if not at and before it, seems to have been in Jerusalem. Gal. i. 19; Acts xv. 4. For evidences of his worldly condition, see Mark i. 20; Luke viii. 3; John xviii. 16, 19, 28. Compare Acts iv. 6.

Verse 28.—After this. And after the darkness. All things were now accomplished. Brought so near to a close as to be regarded as completed. That the Scripture might be fulfilled. This refers either to the accomplishment of all things foretold in Scripture, or to the thirst also specially foretold. Whichever way one takes it, it could not be that the Scripture should be broken, and refers not to Christ's conscious motives, but to the necessity that prophecy proves true. For the special prophecy see Ps. xx. 15; lxxix. 21. The thirst was the natural effect of his sufferings—"the most distressing thirst torments the crucified."

Verse 29.—Now there was set, etc. The stupefying draught that was offered him at the beginning of his suffering (Matt. xxvii. 34; Mark xv. 23), Jesus had rejected. But the pure sour, soldiers' wine, vinegar wine, he now receives to his refreshment. "Saturating a sponge with it, the soldiers put the sponge upon a hyssop stalk (which in the East attains the height of from one to one and a half feet.) and thus convey it to his mouth as he hangs upon the slightly elevated cross."

Verse 30.—Received the vinegar. Accepted and drank it. It is finished. His atoning work, the provision for pardon and salvation. Hebrews ix. 12, and context.

Jesus died and paid it all. Yes, "finished," was his cry. Gave up the ghost. Expired. His dying words are given in Luke xxiii. 46. We are reminded of Stephen's death and final exclamation, Acts vii. 50. Thus to go out of the world, with such hope, such assurance, such vision, how unlike that which to most is suggested by the word death!

QUESTIONS.—What have you to say of crucifixion as a form of death? How high was Jesus lifted on the cross above the ground? What time of the day was he nailed on the cross? Where was the place of the crucifixion? How long did Jesus linger in life on the cross? What inscription was placed over him? What was his first saying on the cross?

Vs. 25. Who were the three Marys at the cross? Who beside them were probably there?

Vs. 26. Who was "the disciple standing by"? Where were the others? Matt. xxvii. 26.

Vs. 27. How long did Mary live with John? Ans. Tradition says, fifteen years.

Vs. 28. What time is to be understood by "after this"?

Vs. 29. What was this vinegar? What is meant by "upon hyssop"?

Vs. 30. In what spirit did Jesus say "It is finished"? What did he mean by it? Ans. That redemption was now accomplished.

Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, December 5th, 1857.—Jesus and Mary.—John xx. 11-18

It is planned to have a class of children between three and five years old, in one of the Philadelphia orphan asylums, taught by an able kindergartner, until the opening of the great Centennial Exposition of 1876, and that then she shall take it into a suitably prepared place on the Centennial grounds, for the daily session, where any who desire to see the genuine Kindergarten in operation, may do so.

No one can be happy without a friend, and no one can know what friends he has until he is unhappy.

Youths' Department.

WHAT TO DRINK.

The Lilly drinks the sunlight, The Primrose drinks the dew, The Cowslip sips the running brook, The Hyacinth, heaven's blue; The Peaches quaff the dawn-light, The Pears, the Autumn noon, The Apple-blossoms drink the rain, And the first warm air of June.

The Wind flower and the Violet Draw in the April breeze, And sun and rain and hurricane Are the tripple of the trees; But not a bud or greeting, From the Hyssop on the wall To the Cedars of Mount Lebanon, Is steeped in alcohol.

From all the earth's emerald basin, From the blue sky's sapphire bowl, No living thing of root or wing Partakes that deadly dole. I'll quaff the Lilly's nectar, I'll sip of the Cowslip's cup, I'll drink the shower, the sun, the breeze, But never the poisoned drop.

BIRDS' NEST SOUP.

Of the delicious birds'-nest soup eaten in China everybody has heard, but everybody has not been privileged to partake of that most delectable of all Oriental dainties. The nests are formed of the secretions of a species of swallow, called by naturalists Hirundo esculenta, because their dwellings are eaten. These birds are common on most of the islands of the Indian Archipelago, but their head quarters are Sumatra Java, and Borneo. They build their nests over shelving rocks, in places that would seem to be inaccessible to man.

But such is the demand for this dainty, and so high its market value, that hundreds of men spend their whole lives in the perilous work of collecting the nests from deep caverns, by torchlight, and overhanging rocks, frightful cliffs, and precipices, such as make the head grow dizzy even to think of, and whence the slightest loss of footing must prove fatal to the adventurer. Multitudes of others are constantly employed in separating with delicate tweezers the feathers and other impurities from the gelatinous portion of the nests, and in washing and drying them in preparation for the market.

The bird makes its first nest of a gelatine produced from its own body, without any foreign admixture; but when deprived of this, being unable to secrete a sufficient quantity of the gluten for another, he mixes in the second a considerable portion of sticks, feathers, and dried grass, thus rendering the nest far less desirable for edible purposes.

Again, however, the rapacious hunter, lying in wait for his prey, turns out the homeless bird, and bears off the prize; and when, for the third time, the little architect rears his home, it is composed almost entirely of stubble, with the slightest possible admixture of gelatine.

This last nest being comparatively worthless for food, the poor little builder is ordinarily allowed to retain possession, and rears its family without farther molestation. The nests are about the size of a small teacup, and an eighth of an inch in thickness, weighing scarcely half an ounce each.

The first nests collected are of a pure creamy whiteness, and bring readily twice their own weight in silver dollars. These require little cleansing, only to be dried and packed; but the second gathering must be carefully picked over, and thoroughly washed. The nests thus losing their original lusciousness, their market value is proportionately diminished, and they sell for about eighteen or twenty dollars per pound,—the poorest as low as six or eight. Even the third nests are occasionally taken, but they bring a mere trifle, and are only used by those whose epicurean tastes exceed the length of their purses.

Whole streets in Canton are occupied by the preparers and venders of birds'-nests; and about a million and a-half of dollars are annually expended by the Chinese in the purchase of this dainty, which, when rendered into soup or jelly, the Celestial regards as the most delectable of food.

The nests are first soaked in water, then boiled to a jelly, and finally, swimming in a rich gravy composed of the expressed juice of the cocoanut, with various spices and condiments, they are placed on the table,—a rich, pulpy mass, and truly delicious.—From "Some Queer Dishes," St. Nicholas.

A great proof of superiority is to bear with impertinence.

QUEER TEXTS.

Every one remembers Lorenzo Dow's "top-not came down;" and many will remember the preacher who took for his text "I feared thee because thou art an oysterman," Luke, xix., 21. Having himself been an oysterman, he was able to illustrate and enforce the text with wonderful power.

Another favorite text of his was "The double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." This, of course, refers to a horse without a stable. He is exposed to the elements, and goes ungrained, unfed, and without water. Whereas the stabled horse is amply provided for. The one is lean and weak, the other is in full flesh and good condition. Perhaps it was the same divine who found so much instruction and admonition in the text, "Thou makest my feet like hen's feet." It was a beautiful picture he drew of the motherly creature defly and industrious scratching the ground for the benefit of her offspring.—"Etching;" in Scribner.

ANECDOTES OF THE QUEEN.

A BAPTIST DEACON AND THE PRINCE CONSORT.

A FINE trait in the character of our beloved Queen has just received a new illustration by her attendance at the funeral of Mr. John Brown, farmer, Webster Micras, who was interred in the churchyard of Carbie on Thursday last. The old farmer was the father of John Brown, the Queen's attendant. Her Majesty and the Princess Beatrice, whose action must have been rendered all the more notable by the circumstance that women do not usually in Scotland take any part in funeral processions, followed the coffin from the house to the hearse, which was stationed some distance off, owing to the nature of the roads; and then the Queen returned and stayed for some time with the bereaved widow.

In this connection, we may give an anecdote which was related the other day by the Rev. Dr. Brock. In 1842 the Baptist Missionary Society was celebrating its jubilee, and all its friends were doing what they could to further its interests. There was then living in Norfolk a farmer named Smith, who was the deacon of a small Baptist Church. A man of constructive ability, he had invented a plough; and through his landlord the Earl of Aibermarle he procured an introduction to Prince Albert for the purpose of submitting a model of the plough to His Royal Highness. Most kindly was he received at Windsor Castle, where the Prince entertained him for several days; and after inspecting the model, His Royal Highness permitted Mr. Smith to call the plough the "Albert." As he was about to leave, the farmer said, "I am a little bit of a poet, and when your Royal Highness came here courting the Queen I wrote a little poem, and here is a copy of it." The Prince received it kindly.

"And when your Royal Highness was married," continued the deacon. "I wrote another poem, and here's a copy of that; and when the Prince of Wales was born I wrote another, and here's a copy of that." The Prince took them all, bade Mr. Smith good morning, and back to Norfolk went the deacon as happy as a prince. Within two or three weeks from that the Telegraph coach, running through the town of Attleborough, stopped before the residence of Mr. Smith, and left a parcel for him. When this was opened it was found to contain a handsomely-bound Family Bible, and with it a note from Prince Albert, asking him to accept it as a token of respect. Great was the joy of the deacon and his wife. "Now," said Mr. Smith, "if I could only get the Queen's signature and the Prince's to this book, I would show it for a shilling apiece, and send the proceeds to the Baptist Missionary Society." Again he betook himself to Windsor, and succeeded in obtaining the coveted autographs, Prince Albert, to whom the good farmer's purpose had been fully stated, assuring him that both Her Majesty and himself had had great pleasure in complying with his request. Dr. Brock, who was then settled at Norwich, had the pleasure of forwarding to the Mission House £28 in shillings obtained by the exhibition of the book. A gentleman present at a meeting in the Isle of Wight, at which Dr. Brock told this pleasant little story, stated that he had recently seen the Bible referred to, and that in addition to the autographs of the Queen and Prince Albert, it now contained those of the Royal Family. It has been the means of raising considerable sums of money for philanthropic objects in the East of England.—Christian World, Oct. 29.

HOW LANGUAGES GROW.

A lady who lives away in Washington Territory, upon the Skokomish Indian Reservation, sends this interesting description of how languages grow:

"Our language, Webster says, has many thousand words in it, and it is hundreds of years old, so that it is only as we get older and study the elements of English language that we understand about its formation; but here is a language with only about two or three hundred words, and about forty years old—so small and young that we can almost see it grow.

"This language does not belong to any single tribe of Indians, although it is understood by most of the tribes in Oregon and Washington. It was invented by the traders and trappers who first came to this country, as there were so many tribes who talked different languages that they found it almost impossible to learn them all. It is made up partly of French words, with some words from different Indian languages and some natural sounds.

"They call the sound made by the rattle of a wagon a *tchick tchick*; and a watch is naturally called a *tik-tik*. *Hoh-hoh*, pronounced as we do when we cough, means to cough; and a great noise is *po*. But when anything smells unpleasantly it is *pin pin*, as many not Indians often say. A duck is a *kweh kweh*, as a duck says it. Just so, we are told, some of our English words came into use, as buzz, whiz, and hiss.

"There is no grammar to this language. The only book we have is a small dictionary. There are nouns, but there are no plurals to learn, as man, men; duck, ducks; goose, geese; but we may say, one man, three man, five duck, or many goose.

"There are some verbs, but not many, and none to decline. It is not, 'I see, you see, he sees; I saw, they shall see'; but 'I see, he see; I see a long time ago, they see to-morrow.' Then, as there are but few words, we get along without some you use every day. There is no verb to be, so hard to learn, no *am, are, was, shall be*. Instead of saying, 'Where is John?' or 'I will be there to-morrow,' we say, 'Where John?' and 'I there to-morrow.'

"Of course there are no hard rules of syntax to learn where the noun must agree with its verb, or the adjective with its noun, and the like. But when a person begins to learn to talk the language it seems as if a few rules and plurals of nouns and verbs to decline would be a great help, for it seems as if it were all mixed up and must be picked out in some way, but one hardly knows how. Indeed, those who know it best often find it difficult to understand each other, and the Indians will not use it among themselves when they can help it; only when they wish to converse with Indians of other tribes or with the whites.—Advance

Nowhere has the newspaper business made more rapid progress in late years than in Japan. But a few years have passed since the first printing press was set up there and we believe that to a young Nova Scotian belongs the honor of having introduced that agent of civilization. Now there are upwards of thirty newspapers in the Japanese Empire, some published in the native language. Lately, however, a check has been put upon the advancement of the press by the adoption of laws which by most of the newspapers are regarded as offensive.—Chronicle.

Gen. Joe Johnston, it is said, has finally accepted a thrice offered appointment from the Khedive to become commander-in-chief of the army of Egypt, with a salary of \$25,000 per annum, and \$100,000 to procure an outfit, and is preparing to go over.

Matthews, the soda-water man, has purchased for \$45,000 the right to dispense drinks in the Centennial Exhibition buildings. The contract to supply beer has been sold for \$50,000.

There is a purple half to the grape, a mellow half to the peach, a sunny half to the globe, and a better half to the man who is so fortunate as to have a good wife.

The do-nothingness of Christians is the bane of the church. Live with respect to business and society as you do to the church and there will soon be neither shop nor store, nor will there be a fireside to invite you to its comforts.

The following sign is painted on a fence in the neighbourhood of Rochester: "Kash paid for little calves not mourn to daze old."