

The Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, N.S., JUNE 30, 1875.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1875.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Heroes and Judges.

SUNDAY, July 4th, 1875.—The Word made Flesh.—John i, 1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets. Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Heb. i, 1, 2.

ANALYSIS.—I. The Pre-existent and Divine Character of Christ. Vs. 1, 2. II. His work as Creator. Vs. 2-4. III. Christ the Light of men. Vs. 4-9. IV. The Word and Light embodied in human form. Vs. 10-14.

EXPOSITION.—Vs. 1.—In the beginning. Previous to the creation of the world or man. Col. i. 16, 17. John alone uses this form of expression. 1 John i. 1; Rev. xix. 13; 1 Peter i. 11. With God in closest relationship. 1 John i. 2; Prov. viii. 30. And was God. Here is distinction in person and unity in essential existence.

Verse 2.—The same was. An apparent repetition, but having for its object his connection with this world first in creation and then in government.

Verse 3.—By him. As the agent employed for the execution of creative power. See Ephesians iii. 9; Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2. This is striking proof of the divinity of Christ. Without him. All beings and things are therefore his creatures.

Verse 4.—In him was life. The life of Christ was not derived, but inherent and eternally his. Christ was not only the restorer of life after the fall, but the giver of it at first. The life. Christ was the only source of divine knowledge or light as well as life. 1 Peter i. 11. The word light is applied to Christ in many passages in the Old and New Testaments. Isaiah ix. 2; xlii. 6; xlix. 6; Acts xxvi. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 4, 6; Ephesians v. 13, 14.

Verse 5.—And the light. Referring probably to the time preceding Christ's appearing, and in the time when but comparatively little knowledge of God was possessed by mankind.

Verse 6.—There was a man. The preceding verses had referred to Christ before his incarnation. Now John is to speak of his coming into the world but alludes to John the Baptist, he being the last and greatest of the prophets. Matt. xi. 9-11. John was a burning and shining light, but when the true Light came he was eclipsed and soon vanished from sight. The man sent is here in strong contrast with God as seen in Christ. John was sent from God as was Moses, but Christ came as the Sun making all lesser lights as darkness.

Verse 7.—The same came. John appears in the other gospels as the forerunner or precursor of Christ. Here he bears witness to Christ as the Messiah with a divine pre-existence. Might believe. This was John's mission so to shew Christ to the world that men might believe in his Messiahship.

Verse 8.—He was not. It must be borne in mind that John had not yet completed his work and men were in doubt as to which was the greater. The statement in this verse has caused much trouble to many people supposing that every person that cometh into the world signifies all mankind and that all have the light here spoken of to some extent, others have limited the meaning of the passage to all who have the true light and that they derive their light from Christ. The same form of expression obtains in other passages (Ch. iii. 26; xi. 48; xii. 31; Luke xvi. 16; 1 Cor. iv. 5; xii. 7; Titus ii. 11. The world knew him not. Did not receive him as the Christ or acknowledge him in his true character.

Verse 11.—He came to his own. They were his own creatures who rejected him, and his own nation refused to recognize his rights to protection and defence.

Verse 12.—Some individuals did recognize him in his glorious character and to these he gave privileges and power as his own and as sons with him of the Most High. Their relation to Abraham would have no value in comparison to that which he gave.

Verse 13.—The fact of blood relationship does not prepare men for Christian life. It is not as children of Abraham or even of Abraham's descendants in a spiritual sense, that men become sons of God. The children of Christians need the new birth equally with the children of the wicked.

Nor of the will of man. This may refer to the proselytes who were received into the Jewish Church by the ceremonial observances.

Verse 14.—Made flesh. It was not simply the appearance of humanity, but actual and true manhood which Christ entered into. And dwelt among us. John the evangelist had had opportunities of seeing our Lord's manner of life, and had seen how much his habits had confirmed his teaching, and further that glory shone from him. Chap. xii. 41; 2 Peter i. 16. And yet he was but in the likeness of sinful flesh. Rom. viii. 3. Not therefore partaking of man's sinfulness in his flesh, or he could not make atonement. The only begotten. Although all men are the creation of God, and so stand in that sense as sons, yet the glory of Christ was so far beyond, that he stood alone the possessor of eternal sonship. Full of Grace, &c. As a depository he possessed all the treasures of wisdom, knowledge and purity, so that the sinner might come and find all that he could need without at all diminishing the efficacy of his grace.

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

Youths' Department.

THE LITTLE INK-MAN.

It was evening. Outside pattered the rain, but indoors, on the large round table, the lamp burned brightly; and at it sat a little boy, intent on his book. It was a very handsome one, with gay covers and splendid pictures, and he had been trying hard to learn to read, that he might enjoy as often as he pleased the stories to which they belonged.

Some of them were right wonderful, and the most remarkable thing about them was that his mother had herself written them all, and had them printed, which was far more astonishing to him than anything in the whole book.

That mother of his was now standing before the mirror, putting on a pretty cap, for she was going with his father to a party.

"Mother, dear," said he to her, "where did you get all these stories?"

"Out of the inkstand," answered she, with a kiss, bade Anna the maid take good care of him, and was gone; for the carriage stood ready to take her away.

That was too bad! he had so much to ask her about just then. Stories in the inkstand! He had never heard of that before, and was very curious to know how it could be. "I will peep into it some time," he resolved.

Presently Anna left the room, and came back, said she was going to the kitchen awhile to see her brother; he must be very good, and he should have a nice apple. It was really very strange that whenever his mother went to a party that brother of Anna's was sure to come. He knew it would be so, and also that he should get an apple by it; so he always sat quite still, although it was a little tedious. But this time he was glad of it, he so wanted to be all alone in the room.

Tripping on tiptoe to the table, he examined his mother's inkstand carefully all over. It and the sand-box were side by side in a heavy bronze standish, and both had covers of that metal. He put out his hand towards that of the former, but drew timidly back. Suppose when he took it off all the stories hidden away there should come out at once! He was not in the least used to an inkstand, for he had only just begun to learn to write on his slate.

At last, however, he took courage. If he was to do it at all it must be before Anna's return; so he climbed into the little stuffed arm-chair which stood close by the writing-table, and curling himself up in it, bravely lifted the cover, and anxiously looked in.

At first he saw nothing but the black ink; but in a minute or two up came a tiny figure out of that dark fluid, and looked at him over the brim. This was the little Ink-man, in his cool-black coat with red and blue facings, his bit of a face quite bright and clean, in spite of his having been in the midst of all that blackness. In his right hand he held a golden wand.

"What do you want of me?" said this mite of a man, in a very small voice.

"I want to see the stories that are in there," answered the boy, courageously; at which the little creature nodded, and leaping up took his seat, like a horseman, on the edge of the inkstand, waving his wand three times over the inside; where-

upon arose a vapor like a thin smoke, and spread in a mist over wall behind the writing-table, hiding all the pictures hanging there, and making of it a smooth, cloudy surface, which was soon all alive; for on it now began to appear a gay procession of moving figures, such as the boy had often seen in his magic-lantern, only much more distinct and brilliant.

Radiant with joy and amazement he watched them as they came and went; and well he knew them, too. There were Red Riding Hood and the wolf; the old woman who lived in the little house made of gingerbread; Snow-white with the dwarf; the lovely Sleeping Beauty;—all, all the people in the stories which his mother and Anna had so often told him, that he had them by heart long ago.

And now, ah, now came those in his mother's stories. There was the King of the Fishes in his golden boat, little Herchen and Traumerchen in the garden of the fairies, and the nodding schoolmaster with the gummy face, the white mouse dancing merrily to the rat music, and the wood in which the Crumb Fairy dispensed her gifts.

Not one was wanting; and all nodded kindly to him as though they said, "We're old acquaintances."

Then came some new figures that he did not recognize. Of them he had never even heard, but felt very sure at once that there must be beautiful stories to which they belonged.

"Good little Ink-man," said he, "do tell me who is that rosy fairy there with the golden crown?"

But the tiny fellow instead of answering went heels over head down into the ink, and with him vanished all the bright figures, leaving nothing but the old gray wall-paper with the pictures hanging against it the same as ever. And this was just because Anna had come back; for the Ink-man is never seen by any but two sorts of people—Sunday children and poets.

"You might have stayed awhile longer with your brother," said our boy rather peevishly.

"Yes; so that you could have played with your mother's inkstand, and have daubed yourself all over," returned Anna crossly, as she snapped down the cover.

The boy had been long asleep when his mother came, and going straight to his little bed stood gazing fondly at his rosy face, the light from the candle shining down on it. He opened his eyes and said, half awake—

"Mother, there are still ever so many stories in the inkstand."

"We'll get them all out," was her reply. And she kept her word—Translated for the Christian Register from the German of Amelie Godin.

THE CARPENTER AND THE LION.

The following anecdote is told of a lion who was kept in a menagerie at Brussels. The den of this lion, who was named Danco, needed some repairs. The carpenter who had to make them, on seeing the lion in the same cage as that in which he was to work, started back in terror.

"I can't go in beside that beast," he said.

"But," replied the keeper, "I will take him to the lower end of the cage while you are at work."

Upon this they entered the cage, and the carpenter fell to work. For a while the keeper amused himself with Danco, but growing tired, dropped into a sound sleep. The carpenter worked on without fear, trusting to the keeper for protection from the beast he so much dreaded. Having repaired the lower part of the cage, he turned to ask the keeper's opinion of his work. To his horror, he saw the lion and his keeper sleeping side by side. The lion awoke at the sound of the carpenter's voice, and glared at him fiercely. After a warning growl, which seemed to say, "Don't you come too near my master," it placed its paw on the keeper's breast and composed itself once more to sleep. To the carpenter's great joy, some of the attendants came up and awoke the keeper, who did not appear the least alarmed at his position, but shaking the lion's paw, led it off to another cage and left the carpenter to finish his work without further alarm.

It is a blessed thing that our responsibilities and cares come upon us, as the months and years, by degrees. We are thus brought in all things, to bear our burdens; and when, in after years, they are all past, they seem to have been as nought.

TEMPERANCE.

ONE OF THE EFFECTS OF DRINK.

The following is from the (London) Telegraph, of May 5:

A young man named Jaques was walking along the East Ham-road, when he was accosted by a tall, powerful fellow with a hatchet, who, exclaiming, "Don't go any further, for it is to be done here," struck him a fearful blow with the weapon, and followed up the attack so briskly that he cut in two several of the victim's fingers. Jaques was rescued, after suffering injuries which are expected to prove mortal, and his would-be murderer was soon after arrested. He turned out to be an Irishman, named Michael Murphy, whose indigence wildness had been aggravated by an attack of delirium tremens, the result, of course, of unlimited indulgence in strong drink. He had told his landlady that he would kill the first person he met, "either man, woman or child," and, like most of such maniacs, in whose madness there is a strong vein of cunning and deliberate method, he had kept his word. This is an illustration of our home savagery which, it must be admitted, has some novel features. If there were many truculent Murphys prowling about for victims, the streets would be avoided like the outskirts of an African jungle, by all timid persons; but how are the wild beasts to be kept off? Strong drink is the cause, and we cannot prevent men of Mr. Murphy's impetuous temperament from drinking themselves frantic as long as they have the means of payment or credit. Nor would enforced abstinence for a time do much good. If such a man is shut up for six months he will return to his evil courses "like a sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire," and probably with greater zest than ever. Still less can we reflect with any sort of satisfaction on the prospect of getting rid of him with the same finality as in the case of other ruffians who have committed murder. Murphy will not be hanged, for he was utterly mad at the time he hacked about the poor fellow Jaques, and therefore he will be sent to a criminal lunatic asylum, to escape by and by, no doubt, like so many others. Yet, surely, where the possession of strong drink in large quantities and for long periods is necessary to the making of a murderer, there should be some means of prevention before the last stage is reached. A raging maniac, inflamed with the after effects of repeated intoxication, and visibly ripe for mischief, should be taken hold of in the interests of society and placed beyond the power of doing harm. Should we allow a tiger at large in one of our highways to take a nap in peace if we felt sure that as soon as he awoke, alert and hungry, he would try to make a meal off the nearest human being?

A TEMPERANCE PRAYER MEETING.

A Ladies' Temperance Prayer-meeting is held at 3 P. M. every day, in one of the rooms at Farwell Hall, Chicago. The ladies believe in the power of Christ to save even to the uttermost. At a recent meeting a gentleman remarked substantially:—"When I submitted to Christ he took away my craving appetite for strong drink. He led me to keep clear of temptation. He wrought in me to will and to do of his own good pleasure, and so while I committed myself to him, Christ saved me, and Christ keeps me!" Another said in thrilling words, that the power of an unyielding will had enabled him to stand unmoved with sharp knives thrown between his fingers and beside his throat, and make his living by this exhibition of bravery, but mere human will had been powerless to save him from the thirst for drink. When his mother died he resolved never to touch liquor; yet so bound by appetite was he, that ere she was buried he was drunk! When his father died and he heard his little sister praying that he might not be a drunkard, again he vowed to quit his cups, but his resolutions were as tow in the fire; when he fell from the trapeze in the circus, he resolved anew to be a temperate man, but again he drank. At length he went to a prayer-meeting, impelled by curiosity alone, and with no faith in prayer to reach his case. But before he had left the room he had given himself to Christ, and since that hour he had been another man. Christ kept him hour by hour! This man, thus plucked as a bran from the burning, is now working to redeem others—and wonderfully saved, he now gives all the glory to God and his Christ.

The National Baptist says that Rev. Mr. Butler, editor of the Christian Index, "is prominently mentioned as a candidate for Governor of Georgia."

THE BOW IN THE CLOUDS.

Once, when I was a little girl, I disobeyed my mother. After that I was afraid and went to an old barn, away off, so that mother could not find me. All at once it began to rain so hard that I could not go back to the house. So I sat still and thought of what I had done. I remembered that God had seen me disobey, and that he was angry at people who did wrong. It kept on raining harder yet, and I was afraid that God was going to drown the world because I was so bad, just as he had done in Noah's time.

I put my face down in the hay and cried. Pretty soon I felt my father touch me. "What is the matter, Louie?" he asked. "I have been very naughty, and God will never forgive me," I said. Father took me in his arms and carried me to the door. The rain had stopped. I looked up; and there in the sky was a rainbow, its beautiful colors shining in the sun.

My father said to me: "When Noah came out of the ark, none of his children could forget the awful flood which had left the earth so lonely. Every time it rained, they must have been afraid that the flood was coming again. And when they did wrong they thought that perhaps God would punish the world as he had done before. So God told Noah that the rainbow should be a sign that he would never drown the world again, but would watch over men. And when men saw it shining after the rain, they were to remember his promise to them. So the rainbow would be a token between God and men."

"I would rather not have God watch me, I am so naughty," I said.

Then my father told me how God loves us, and when we do wrong is ready to forgive us, if we are sorry for our sin, and confess it. He sent his dear Son to die for us. For his sake he is willing to forgive all our sins, instead of punishing us. It made me very happy to think that God loved me, and was willing to forgive. And after that, every time that I saw the rainbow, it was a sign to me of the blessed promise of God to take care of us.

Last week a ferry boat containing Catholic pilgrims en route to visit the shrines on the other side of the Mur from Indenburg, Province of Tyrol, sunk in the middle of the stream. Seventy-six are missing, all of whom are believed to be drowned.

Mr. George Muller, the founder of the Ashley-down Orphanages, has been preaching at Brighton, and the numbers attending are so large that the Dome, which accommodates 3,000 persons, is to be secured.

One of the curiosities of English ecclesiastical law is that while a clergyman of the Established church may preach in the streets, in a theatre, or in a music hall, he may not preach in a place of worship belonging to dissenters.

An illustration of the spread of the principles of religious toleration is afforded in the fact that a bill has been introduced into the Prussian Diet granting corporate rights to Baptists.

Elder E. Dudson says that the way he is enabled to give something to every good cause, is this: "Instead of buying a new suit of clothes, I have the ones dyed. As soon as I got to Charleston, I looked out a dyer and had my clothes dyed, and it cost me only \$3.50." But what did you do with yourself while the dyer had your clothes.—Religious Herald.

The National Baptist says that "Dr. J. R. Graves, of Memphis, preached a sermon at the St. Johns Lutheran church (Charleston) an hour and a half in length, denouncing the Lutheran church, its robes, its ceremonial, its ordinances and doctrine. The pastor of the church sat with him in the desk, wearing his gown."

Frank if not courteous.

In a comedy now playing in Paris, M. Labossiere is requested to give something to a charitable enterprise. "Very good," he says, "put my name down on the list for a hundred francs—M. Labossiere, dealer in metals, and member of the General Council." "But, sir, we have no list! and in a hat! Here is five francs for you." And he puts the bank note back into his pocketbook.

Rev. Horatio B. Hackett, D. D., Professor in the Rochester Theological Seminary, sailed on Saturday 29th ult., for Europe, in company with Rev. Dr. Furber, of Newton. Prof. Hackett expects to spend the summer months abroad, and return to resume his labors in Rochester in the autumn. He will visit Germany and the region contiguous.