

The Christian Messenger.

BIBLE LESSONS FOR 1876.

INTERNATIONAL SERIES. Sunday, Aug. 27th, 1876.—Honest Industry.—Prov. vi. 6-22.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 6-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—'Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' Romans xii. 11.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday, Proverbs xxiv. 30-34. Tuesday, Ecclesiastes xi. Wednesday, Isaiah xl. Thursday, Matt. xii. 22-50. Friday, Luke xiii. 23-35. Saturday, 2 Corinthians xi. 2-28. Sunday, Romans xii.

ANALYSIS.—I. The ant and sluggard. Vs. 6-11. II. Devising mischief. Vs. 12-15. III. Six things hated. Vs. 16-19. IV. Honoring parents. Vs. 20-22.

ORIENTAL LAZINESS.—Many Orientals are industrious, but the most are intolerably lazy. The vice of the sluggard is everywhere manifest. Even with overseers the overseeing costs more than the work overseen. Hunters are too indolent to roast their game. Prov. xii. 27. Farmers will not plough because of the cold. Prov. xx. 4. Therefore they will beg in harvest, and have nothing. There is no Oriental vice so variously and scornfully illustrated by Solomon as this laziness of the people. His rebuke drawn from the ant is therefore very appropriate and suggestive. The ant will work without guide or overseer or ruler.

EXPOSITION.—I. The Sluggard. Verses 6-11.—This section consists of an admonition (vs. 6-8), an appeal (vs. 9), and a warning (vs. 10, 11).

The admonition. It is addressed to "the sluggard." This English word is from slug. Slug is allied to slack, is cognate with a German word meaning low-spirited, and the Danish word for snail, and means "a drone, a slow, heavy, lazy fellow." Provident industry is as emphatically enjoined throughout Scripture, as it is in nature and human necessities. In the fourth commandment the duty of labor for six days is as clearly put as the duty of rest on the seventh. Christ was an industrious son of industrious parents, and in his ministry as God's Son, the Messiah, he "went about doing good," with scarcely time given him for needful rest by night, a "Mighty Worker." And Paul gives it as the recognized law of the Christian brotherhood, that "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat." What one's work should be, will, of course, be determined by his position in life, "his calling," which is of God. But work, or industry, is not alone manual labor, as those engaged in this are so likely to apprehend. The work of the brain is just as truly and legitimately an industry. Our men of wealth, and men of the various "professions," are probably as hard workers, on the average as are any part of the community.

The providence, foresight, preparation for the future, required in this admonition, are not contrary to the precept, "take no thought for the morrow," etc.; or the prayer, "give us day by day our daily bread." The constant subordination of all plans, purposes, activities, to his will, every industrious and enterprising Christian can exercise; but no indolent, lazy man can trust; because he is breaking God's first law of nature and revelation, and has no right to expect good of God. The two sins equally sinful, and equally to be shunned, are (1) such anxiety for the future as fails to recognize God's ruling hand, and (2) such disregard of the future as fails to set in motion one's own hand.

"Meat" is here to be taken in the old English sense of food, though the exact translation of the Hebrew word is "bread."

The appeal. Vs. 9. How long, etc. The language of love, as well as of wisdom, desiring to save those in danger. "How long." The language of alarm also; because habit is so mighty, holding in its grasp the victim year in year out, despite all instructions and motives. The case is desperate—calls for vigorous measures.

The warning.—What answer to the appeal—to the urgency of love and wisdom? What answer? Ah! the sluggard just opens his eyes a little, turns slightly in bed, and half in anger, half in self-defence, says: "A little more

sleep," etc. The very way of him who neglects the great salvation; not pleased to be disturbed by the earnestness of Christian love—not daring to say, away, I will never arise; but annoyed, and yet owning the need of stirring—the answer is, Yet a little while, "when a more convenient season;" and so the slumberer slumbers on. Till when? Till poverty and destitution come on suddenly, hopelessly, like a traveller or rover, hence robber.

II. The Knave. Verses 12-15.—We have a description (1) of his course (vs. 12-14) and (2) of his end (vs. 15). It is not accidental that the writer proceeds from the drone to the knave, from idleness to fraud, for the same central principle controls in both, according as the temperament is sluggish or active. The principle is in each case to appropriate what belongs to others, not restrict use to honest ownership.

In verse 12, "a naughty man," is what is elsewhere translated "a man [or son] of Belial" (comp. 2 Cor. vi. 15). The phrase is thought to signify a worthless, or "good-for-nothing man." "Walketh" is to live and act continuously. See how every part of the man is made to serve his wicked purpose to deceive and defraud, every organ of the body a tool for knavish mischief, showing the completeness of the mastery of the evil principle, and illustrating also how completely the whole man should serve the spirit of righteousness within us. Another translation for "speaketh," in verse 13, is "scrapeth," as a sign for confederates in sin, as the whole thought of this verse is that of concealing from the innocent victim a purpose and plot made known to others by concerted signals.

The end, however, will come, though it seem long to tarry. The wrong doer is always doing wrong chiefly to himself. The mischief maker is the ore for whom he most makes mischief. It comes as "calamity." The word so rendered means, first, a heavy burden which may crush, and then, as here, the crushing itself. One by such course of sin is heaping up wrath on wrath, judgment on judgment, till the whole, sudden as a flash of lightning from a clear sky, falls on the sinner's head and crushes him.

III. The Seen Abominations. Verses 16-19.—Compare Romans iii. 12-18. This seems to put in the abstract what verses 12-15 gave in the concrete. The character there described combines in himself the characteristics here enumerated. Here, as there, the climax is the sowing of discord. God is the Peace Maker; Jesus, the Prince of Peace; redemption, the making of peace. In nothing is antagonism to God more sharply manifest than in the breaking of peace. It is Satan's chief aim.

IV. Piety Commended. Verses 20-22.—This is like our previous lessons. The reason for its insertion is that the opposite character and its results have been set forth, and this is the practical lesson.

QUESTIONS.—Vs. 6. What lessons of practical value does the ant teach us? If men would reap rich fruits of health and wisdom, prosperity and piety, in manhood, what must they do in youth? Gal. vi. 7. What grace, the opposite of idleness, does Solomon command? Prov. xxii. 29.

Vs. 12-15. To what trait of character do these verses refer? What shall be the portion of hypocrites? Matthew xxiv. 51.

Vs. 16-19. Which sin leads the list of these six sins? What is the opposite of "a proud look"? Matt. v. 3. Which sin in the number is worse even than the other six? What is the opposite of "sowing discord"? Matt. v. 9. What commandment bearing upon this have we from God? 1 John iv. 21.

—Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, Sept. 3rd, 1876.—Intemperance.—Prov. xxiii. 29-35.

A PROPHECY.—The following prophecy, which went the rounds at the time of the Crimean war, has re-appeared. For its antiquity we do not vouch, but on the contrary greatly suspect. In 1455, more than four hundred years ago, the prophecy was made:—

"In twice two hundred years the Bear The Crescent shall assail; But if the Cock and Bull unite The Bear shall not prevail.

"But look! In twice ten years again— Let Islam know and fear— The Cross shall wax, the Crescent wane, Grow pale and disappear."

YOUTHS' DEPARTMENT.

Johnny's 'Pology.

Johnny Liston was always in great haste to do anything that gave him pleasure. I am sorry to say that sometimes the feet that ran so eagerly to the coasting place dragged slowly one behind the other when there was an errand to be done. But when there was a cry of fire, or a band of music playing on the square, no boy could reach the spot and stop to shut the gate; and unfortunate people who chanced to stand in his way had their toes trod on, and any package they held in their hands was quite likely to illustrate the law of gravitation by falling to the ground.

Of course, nobody liked this; so Johnnie had a rather unenviable reputation, much to the sorrow of his mother who wanted her little boy to grow up into a thorough gentleman.

One day Johnnie, standing by the kitchen window, spied the red coats and gilt trimmed caps of the village band. No sooner did he see than he rushed out giving the door a swing behind him. Back it came against his mother's elbow, making her dash the milk she was carrying over the new calico dress of Mrs. Baldwin, a neighbor who had just come to give her a recipe for pickling plums.

"Johnnie! Johnnie!" called Mrs. Liston; but Johnnie was already half way down the street.

When he came back his mother talked to him very soberly about the trouble these careless habits of his made for those around him, and ended by saying she wished he would go and beg Mrs. Baldwin's pardon.

Johnnie did not like to ask pardon any better than some other little boys you may know; besides, Mrs. Baldwin was not a favorite with him. She always looked as if she thought him one of the worst boys that was ever made. Naturally, he did not receive his mother's suggestion with favor.

"It mortifies me," continued Mrs. Liston, "to have people think I do not bring up my boy as a gentleman. What a rude, unladylike woman people must judge me to be when they see you act so roughly!"

"But, mother," protested Johnny, "you're not to blame. You try to make me nice and quiet, but I forget."

"People don't know that, and they judge mothers by their children. I want mine to be an honor to me."

Johnnie had grown so used to being called rude and careless that he did not mind it much; but he loved his mother dearly, and the thought that he was bringing disgrace upon her cut him to the quick. He studied the tea-kettle for a long time, and then he said:

"If I should go to Mrs. Baldwin and 'polagize, do you suppose she would think I had a polite mother?"

"I think she would," replied Mrs. Liston.

Johnny kicked the wood-box until the copper toes of his shoes were as bright as newly coined dollars. Suddenly he said:

"I'll go; but I bet she'll say something hateful."

"If she does, you must remember how much trouble you have given her, and make no impertinent reply."

Johnnie walked slowly down the garden to the gate, which he latched behind him. This was one of the errands on which the feet went slowly.

"I am sorry, Mrs. Baldwin," he began. "Mother always tells me to be quiet, but I forget and"—

"You ought to be sorry," interrupted Mrs. Baldwin. "My brand-new calico that I never had on but twice before! But run right home and tell your ma that it is three pounds of sugar to seven of plums, instead of five, as I told her; and shut the gate after you for the last time you went out you left it open, and Mr. Smith's brindle cow got in and trampled all over the garden. I don't see why you can't remember. If you were my son—though I'm glad you ain't—I reckon I'd make you. But hurry back before your ma gets those plums in."

Johnny felt a great desire to tell Mrs. Baldwin that he did not want her for a mother any more than she did him for a son. But he thought of his newly formed resolution of proving by his conduct that his mother was, as he expressed it, the "most politest woman in the village;" so he shut his lips tightly and ran home.

"Well, what did Mrs. Baldwin say?" asked his mother.

"She said that I ought to be sorry, and that there were three pounds of sugar to seven of plums, and that if I was her boy she'd make me behave, and she was glad I wasn't her boy; and I wanted to tell her that I was glad too but I thought it wouldn't be polite, so I didn't. She wasn't very nice, and I don't like to 'polagize; but I ain't sorry I did, for"—and Johnny drew his plump little figure to its utmost height—"I mean to be a gentleman, if she ain't; and mother, I am going to try to be an honor to you."

Mrs. Liston was peeling onions; perhaps that was the reason why there were tears in her eyes, and when kissing Johnnie, she murmured: "God help you, my boy."—S. S. Visitor.

Little Charley's Chapel.

BY REV. ARTHUR MURSELL.

I heard of a minister who went to preach somewhere in the north, and he was directed to tell the driver when he got to the station to drive him to "Ebenezer" Chapel. He acted upon these instructions, when the driver—who was not like a London "cabby," only to be guided by the names of public houses, but who was a quiet, civil old fellow, whose kindness to his horse marked him as a good sort—turned to his "fare" and said, "Ebenezer—oh, you mean little Charley's chapel, don't you?"

"Little Charley's chapel—no, I mean Ebenezer." "Yes; we old folks know it as little Charley's chapel," he said. "Why do you call it little Charley's chapel? Was it because the honorable member for Salford laid the foundation-stone?" "No, but little Charley laid the foundation-stone. The fact is, sir, a few years ago we wanted a new chapel, and we thought a good deal about how the money must be raised; but times were very bad, and people were very poor, and labor and materials were very dear, so we resolved to give it up. But a day or two after the meeting a little boy, about nine years old, came to the minister's door and rang the bell. The minister came out himself, and found the little fellow with his face all flushed, and the perspiration standing on his forehead, and his little toy wheelbarrow, in which there were six new bricks. He had wheeled his load up a long, steep hill, and was so out of breath that he could hardly speak. At last he found breath to answer the minister's wondering question. "Well, Charley, what is it?" "Oh, please, sir," said Charley, "I heard you wanted a new chapel, and were thinking of giving it up; so I begged these bricks from some builders who are building a house down the village, and I thought they would do to begin with." The minister called the committee together again, and Charley's little barrowful of bricks was brought before them. The child's enthusiasm was contagious, and the desponding committee plucked up heart; and little Charley laid the first stone of the big chapel, which will hold one thousand people, and cost £6000, and now it is out of debt."

"And what has become of little Charley?" The old man's voice grew husky. "If you'll let me pull up at the churchyard, sir, I'll show you Charley's grave. There's a many graves there, but you may always tell Charley's by the bright fresh flowers. He was the pet of the Sunday school, and the children never let a day go by without putting fresh flowers on his grave. He used to live close by the school, and he died the very day the last pound of the chapel debt was paid. It was a summer's day, and he made them set his window open that he might hear the children sing. He would have them sing a happy tune, and he died trying to join them in it from his little bed; but though he could hardly begin the hymn on earth, we all believe he finished it in heaven." There is no human mission or occupation which carries with it more strong or striking proofs that it is more blessed to give than to receive than Sunday school teaching.

A Romanist once said to a Christian, "You Protestants could not prove your Bible, if it were not for the Holy Catholic Church and her great men." "True," says the Christian, "for the Bible predicted that there would be such an apostate church and priesthood, and here you are, just as the Bible said"

The Stockwell Orphanage.

The annual festival was lately celebrated. Our readers are well acquainted with the history of this important institution, and they will be glad to learn that the endowments are now valued at £30,000, and it is hoped that the managers will soon be enabled to establish a girl's orphanage. About £80 a week is needed to meet the current expenses, and gifts of food, clothing, firing, &c., will be acceptable. The annual report states that there are now in residence 236 boys, and the institution is in an excellent sanitary condition. The schools had been efficiently maintained. The total receipts of the year amounted to £12,821, the expenditure to £5,887; invested in the purchase of freehold estate, £6,324, leaving a balance to credit on March 31, 1876, of £1,204. Upwards of two thousand persons assembled in the grounds in the afternoon. There was first, at three o'clock, a bazaar, the stalls being presided over by ladies, and an hour later the orphan boys gave a concert in the dining-hall. At five o'clock there was tea, and when that was over a meeting was held on the lawn, as the large hall was incapable of accommodating the great number of persons present. On a wagon, Sir Henry Havelock, Bart., M. P., took the chair, supported by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, his father, his brother, the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon, his sons, Messrs. Thomas and Charles Spurgeon, the Revs. Aubrey C. Price, M. A., Dr. M'Ewan, D. Jones, B. A., and other gentlemen. The Chairman remarked that on the previous day they had had an anniversary—Mr. Spurgeon's birthday and he congratulated him upon it, but was afraid to ask him what number of birthdays it made up—Mr. Spurgeon: Forty-two. (Laughter.) The Chairman said a lady would not have answered so frankly. (Laughter.) It was just fifteen years since, at Mr. Spurgeon's invitation, he had presided at the opening of the Tabernacle; but it seemed to him that Mr. Spurgeon was endowed with perennial youth. (Cheers and laughter.) It was gratifying to find that, whereas not farther back than 1866 when that institution was founded by a charitable lady (Mrs. Hillyard), there were 148 boys in it, there were now 236, exclusive of the 146 removals that had taken place. (Cheers.) He congratulated them upon the fact that the boys were total abstainers, that their standard of education was high, and that their religious training was all that could be desired. (Cheers.) Mr. C. H. Spurgeon, who was loudly cheered, spoke of the fat and healthy appearance of the boys and said it must not be forgotten that they had not got a very lean vice-president (the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon), nor very lean trustees—(laughter)—and that their master, Mr. Charlesworth, appeared to be in very robust health. (Laughter.) The fact was, the tone throughout the orphanage was the holiest and happiest he had ever known. (Cheers.) During the past year they had spent less and received more, and were in a better position than in any previous year. The orphanage full; they had hundreds of applications, and selected as many as they should be likely to take for the next twelve months; and they could not take more than the place would hold. He had thought of a girl's orphanage, but did not know when that would come. (Cheers.) Personally, neither he nor the trustees had any more interest in the orphanage than those he addressed. Short addresses were given by the Rev. D. Jones, Dr. Ewan, J. T. Wigner, J. Spurgeon, and the grandfather, and Charles and Thomas Spurgeon. A large sum was collected during the afternoon and evening.

The other day a minister offered prayer at the laying of a corner-stone. A brisk young reporter bustled up and said:

"I wish you would give me the manuscript of that prayer."

"I never write out my prayers," said the preacher.

"Well," said the reporter, "I couldn't hear a word you said."

"I wasn't praying to you," quickly responded the parson.

A Boston tailor has had his bill-heads stamped with a picture of a forget-me-not.

Bow to destiny. One of these days he may be polite and return your bow.

Abstract... Advocat... cheering... last winter... commenced... one to be... should rec... year. Antig... accession... God's Spi... in the abs... the Churc... Ambers... faithfully... report. Our mem... are cons... members. Ambers... preaching... Corey an... vain. W... do to be... Acadia... first time... doctrines... spiritual... advanced... brethren... 28th of J... wishes o... baptized... P. Freem... Brookf... part of... interest... of the Sp... year. Barney... limited... you in t... strength... join the... a meetin... to pay of... Cape... the mer... the wor... tered. Logical... been cal... W. J. Bi... build, u... during t... Cow... Brown w... tember... did not... been rea... baptized... Centre... the Lord... cause of... and furn... happy... smiled u... verted t... for aid f... us. Six... Dilige... keep up... Rev. Da... Spring t... Folly... our priv... We hav... your bo... good ac... seasons... are spiri... baptized... Green... without... the star... one four... for us. Goshe... day for... during t... to make... pastor... Great... the lov... His ch... access... The con... financia... power, a... Deacon... and is g... Glenc... boast o... border... the pre... brother... two by... Gooso... labors o... ference... in the S... God's S... Guys... cause o... with me... power o... But the... Truly t... tried, a... they m... hard in... harvest... restored... Port... preachi... here on... Home... from M... has bee... be rece... were ce... kindly... Huntin... with us