

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1877.

SUNDAY, Aug. 5th, 1877.—Paul sent to Macedonia.—Acts xvi. 1-15.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vss. 9-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord.”—2 Cor. ii. 12.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday, Acts xv. 32-41; xvi. 1-15. Tuesday, vs. 3; Gal. ii. 1-21. Wednesday, vs. 6; Revelation i. Thursday, vs. 6; Revelation ii. Friday, vs. 6; Revelation iii. Saturday, vs. 15; Acts ii. 37-47. Sunday, Romans xii.

ANALYSIS.—I. Timothy at Lystra. Vss. 1-3. II. Former cities revisited. Vss. 4, 5. III. Journey extended to Troas. Vss. 6-8. IV. Paul's vision here. Vss. 9, 10. V. Arrival at Philippi. Vss. 11, 12. VI. Baptism of Lydia. Vss. 13-15.

QUESTIONS.—What apostles in our last lesson did we leave at Antioch in Syria? Who returned to Jerusalem? Who remained in Antioch? A difficulty now arises between Paul and Barnabas: what was the occasion of it? How was it settled? Paul now begins his second missionary journey; in what direction does he travel from Antioch? What city by this course does he reach first?

Vs. 1. Where was Derbe? Had Paul been here before? Chap. xiv. 6. Whom did Paul find in Lystra? Who was Timothy's mother? 2 Tim. i. 5?

Vs. 2. Had Timothy been educated? Vs. 3. On what principle did Paul circumcise Timothy? 1 Cor. ix. 20?

Vs. 4. Why was it well to publish in them the decrees of the council at Jerusalem? In what sense were the decrees binding?

Vs. 5. How were the churches in Galatia afterward troubled? What were the apostles forbidden now to do? Was the gospel ever preached there? See Rev. i, ii, iii.

Vs. 7. What is meant by “assayed to go thither”?

Vs. 8. Where was Troas?

Vs. 9. What vision did Paul have in Troas? On what the call for “help” based? Matt. xxviii. 19.

Vs. 10. To what conclusion does Paul now come? Luke, in writing, up to this point, has said “they,” now he says “we;” what is to be inferred from this?

Vs. 12. What city is now reached? Is this city on the sea-coast?

Vs. 13. In the absence of a synagogue in Philippi, where do the apostles go to worship? To whom do they speak?

Vs. 14. What listener is specially mentioned? What was her business? Of what city was she?

Vs. 15. What is said of Lydia's “household”? Does baptism precede faith? Do infants ever exercise faith? Ought such to be baptized? What grace does Lydia now exercise? Rom. xii. 13. Restate the places visited by the apostles on this second missionary journey.

HISTORICAL CONNECTION.—We left Paul, Barnabas, Barsabas, and Silas at Antioch. Since then Barnabas has returned to Jerusalem, but Silas abides in Antioch. It was while continuing in Antioch that we may place the visit of Peter to this city, which Paul refers to in Gal. ii. 11, when he accused him of inconsistency. The time had now come for Paul's second missionary journey, accompanied now, however, not by Barnabas, but by Silas only. Barnabas wished to take with him his cousin John, whose surname was Mark. “But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other.” This separation was sad. It showed that even apostles were human, and not to be exempted from blame. Whose opinion was preferable, it is hard to say. It is the last mention we have of Barnabas in the book of Acts. Possibly, the final separation was amicable in the division of the first mission-stations among them, Paul taking the continental, and Barnabas the insular regions. Chap. xv. 37-41. Now, as Paul and Silas came up from Syria and Cilicia by the long pass through the range of Mount Taurus, called “Olician Gates,” they would reach Derbe before Lystra. Chap. xv. 41; xvi. 1. From these cities our lesson traces the course of the apostles to their arrival at Philippi, the

first city in Southern Europe to be honored by Christian missionary labor.

EXPOSITION.—The present lesson presents to us Paul and his associates on his old field of labor (vss. 1-5), going to his new field (vss. 6-12), and at his new field (vss. 13-15).

I. On the Old Field. Verses 1-5.—This was Paul's second missionary tour, and, according to Mr. Abbott's lessons, there had been an interval of some six years since the first tour, (see Lesson IV.); though Dr. Hackett makes it but “three or four.” Com., on vs. 2. The revisiting of the churches was only preliminary to the advance to new regions.

The call of Timothy to be a minister of the gospel and companion of Paul and Silas, is made prominent as perhaps the most important result of this visit. The name is Greek, meaning honor of God, and the person is he to whom Paul wrote the two letters “to Timothy.” From 1 Tim. iv. 14; i. 18; and 2 Tim. i. 6, we find that he was publicly and solemnly set apart and ordained to his work, probably at the time of his selection by Paul; and from 1 Cor. iv. 17, and other passages, that he became exceedingly dear and helpful to him.

II. Seeking a New Field. Verses 6-12.—The places mentioned in vss. 6-8 lie to the north and west of those already mentioned in vss. 1, 2, and like them form a part of Asia Minor, which is that part of Turkey in Asia immediately north of the Mediterranean—its extreme western part. Galatia, another form of the word Gaul. Phrygia adjoined both Lycania and Galatia, lying exactly to the west of them, and contained the city of Colosse. Bithynia extended from Phrygia north to the Black Sea, and Bosphorus. Mysia was to the west of these two provinces extending to the Dardanelles, and Archipelago. Troas about four miles from ancient Troy, where was the scene of the “Trojan war,” celebrated by Homer in the Iliad. Asia was a little province just south of Mysia, celebrated for having given its name to the greatest of the main divisions of the earth.

The places of vss. 9-12 were west and northwest of Asia Minor. Macedonia was an extensive province lying north of Greece and of the west part of the Archipelago in Europe, and belongs to Turkey. Neapolis, “the modern Cavallo,” was the nearest sea-port to the city of Philippi, ten miles inland to the north, on a fertile plain, very near the Thracian border. Samothracia was an island of the Archipelago, midway between Troas and Neapolis. The distance from Troas to Neapolis is, according to the maps, about one hundred and twenty-five miles. To come, or run by a straight course, was to “sail before the wind,” here with south wind.

III. At the New Field. Verses 12, 13.—The beginning of labors is here given. But we learn from the writer's use of “we,” instead of “they,” that at Troas (vs. 10) he, Luke, “the beloved physician,” had joined the company, and was taken along with them, perhaps because of Paul's infirm health. See Col. iv. 14; Philemon 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11. The few days of vs. 12 seem to have been those between the arrival and the first Sabbath, and were doubtless spent in making acquaintance with the Jews, and in ascertaining exactly that the state of affairs in the city.

The place of meeting was outside the city, and beside the little river Gangas, or Gangitis. The Jews are known to have often chosen the water-side as their place of worship, probably because of the lustrations, that is, purifications by water, connected with it. The word translated “prayer” means also place of prayer, either, as probably here, an open enclosure, or a building.

Lydia's baptism followed her faith. There is no hint that her household consisted of infants, much less that any infants were baptized, or that any one was baptized without faith. The Scriptures give no evidence of infant baptism, as Pedobaptist authorities of the greatest eminence themselves freely admit and assert. Baptism is a person's own confession, and profession of his own faith already existing.

—Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, Aug. 12th, 1877.—Paul and Silas in Prison.—Acts xvi. 22-34.

GOLDEN TEXT.—“And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.”

The Story of the Lesson.

FOR THE PRIMARY CLASS.

Paul started from Antioch, and took Silas with him. At Lystra, where Paul had been stoned, he met Timothy. He had been taught the Holy Scriptures from a child by his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois; but his father was a Greek. Paul took Timothy also with him; they were also joined by Luke, the beloved physician. The gospel had as yet been preached only in Asia. But now Paul and his company were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach in Asia. He tried again in another place, and was again forbidden. So they went to Troas, a city on the Egean Sea, which separates that part of Europe nearest them now was Macedonia, and in the night Paul saw, in a vision, a man from Macedonia, begging him to “come over and help us.” They thought surely the Lord had called them to preach there; so they set sail across the sea. They landed at Neapolis, but went right on to Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia. On the Sabbath-day they went out of the city to the river-side, where there was a prayer-meeting. Almost, if not all, who came there were women. Among them was Lydia, a seller of purple. The Lord opened her heart, and she attended to the things which were spoken by Paul. She and all her family were baptized.

Boys' Department.

Chapters full of Names.

BY HOPE LEDYARD.

The children had come to read their morning chapter with mamma. Philip, as usual, came last. Not that Philip did not love to read his Bible; he liked to get his mother all by himself, and read over the chapter about Naaman the Syrian, or talk about Joseph's history; but the regular morning chapter always seemed to interrupt some plan of Philip's. He would just have his dog (who was being “broken” to drive) harnessed, or he would be making a boat when his sister would call.

“Phil! mamma's waiting to read.”

On this morning I want to tell you of, Philip felt quite put out at being called, and every time his turn came to read he had to be told the verse.

“Philip,” said his mother, when the reading was over, “wait a moment; I want to speak to you. My boy, you did not pay any attention.”

“Well, mother, what's the use? The chapter was full of nothing but hard names. I don't see the use of reading ‘Salute Rufus,’ and a lot of other fellows with such dreadful names.”

“Dear, even if you don't see the use,” you ought to read the chapter carefully and reverently, because it is God's Word. But that chapter has taught me a lesson this morning, so you see it is of use.”

“Tell me, mother; I always like a chapter you've talked about.”

“As you each read over those names of different men and women, I thought how a true Christian ought to try and remember his friends—remember them by name; send kind messages to them. Paul, who had the care of all the churches, did not forget Rufus and his mother, Philologus and Julia. As you read ‘Greet Mary, who hath bestowed much labour on us,’ I felt ashamed to think I had sent no message to poor sick Mary Reilly, who was such a faithful servant to me years ago. Just a few kindly words of love, in a letter; the mere mention of one's own name gives great pleasure sometimes, and we are all too apt to forget these little things. Don't you know, Philip, how you always want to know whether Uncle George says anything about you in his letters?”

“I declare, mother, I never thought of it! I s'pose then we ought to try to remember folks' names.”

“Yes, my son. I am quite sure that a Christian who remembers names well will find it a great source of good. I know a boy whose whole life was changed because a kind christian gentleman remembered his name. The boy was called ‘Dirty Jack’ by the other boys in the village. Poor fellow! he could hardly help being dirty, for his father drank and his mother was a very shiftless, careless woman, that had never taught Jack to be neat and clean.

“Well, one Sunday somebody coaxed

Jack into the Sunday-school, and after the school was opened the superintendent came to the seat where Jack was, and asked his name. The boy was shy and did not answer, and another lad said, ‘Oh, he's Dirty Jack.’

“Jack was very angry, but the gentleman said kindly, ‘I am going to give this boy his real name. I shall call him John—it's a splendid name, for it was the name of the one whom Jesus loved best when He was on earth.’

“Jack didn't come to school the next Sunday, his father in a drunken fit had given him a black eye; but two weeks after, the same gentleman was walking near Jack's house, and saw him playing with some boys. He walked up to them, and shaking hands, said,

“Why, John my boy, how d'ye do? I wish you'd walk a little way with me.”

“Now, that boy was so pleased to be remembered and to be called by a decent name that it made him wish he was more worthy of such a kind friend. He began to try and kept his face and hands clean, and then had to comb his hair to match, and then his clothes looked so bad, compared with his clean hands, that he never rested till he had earned money enough to get some decent ones; and now John is grown up he says that he might still be Dirty Jack if it hadn't been for that kind gentleman remembering his name.”

“Well, mother, I won't think the name chapter of no use after this. I'll ‘salute’ you, mother,” and ran off.

Phil run out to his play, but his mother often noticed after that that he was careful to send his love to Uncle George, or a kind message to an absent schoolmate, and knew the lesson had not been lost.

Select Serial.

From The Day of Rest.

DORA'S BOY.

BY MRS. ELLEN ROSS.

CHAP. XXX.—A WEALTHY CUSTOMER.

Before Matthew had disposed of much of his spring stock he was waited upon by a dealer who had, for some time, been expecting a large consignment of rare foreign birds for stuffing. Matthew intended buying rather largely; and, when the contents of the dealer's packages were displayed to view, he selected several beautiful and rare specimens, thinking, almost with enthusiasm, what ‘artistic’ cases he could make up of them when they were stuffed and mounted.

When the transaction was concluded, and the man had gone, Matthew remarked, ‘Now, there'll be some splendid work done, and you must give a hand, my lad; and I'll tell ye what I shall do: I shall put an advertisement into the Times straight away, ‘cos these here is rare uns, and, like enough, I shall have gents on the premises pretty soon as'll make that same advertisement turn out a profitable spec.’

Matthew had not much to do with advertisements generally; but, when, on a rare occasion like the present, he had to speak of them, he put the accent on the third syllable with great energy. So the advertisement was promptly sent to the Times, and the very next day a gentleman called, who had previously been a good customer to Matthew.

“I suppose I am in time to have the pick of your new stock, Matthew Pedder,” said a voice in accents so refined and pleasant that Hugh, who was putting things to rights under the counter, stood up at once to see who had suddenly entered, for those gentlemanly tones seemed familiar to him.

“You're first comer, sir,” replied Matthew, greatly gratified, and his beaming face betrayed his feelings. “And somehow I guessed you'd be that same, sir, you bein' ‘thusiastic about birds as I are myself.”

“You have a young shopman, I see,” observed the gentleman, with his eyes fixed on Hugh. “But I think I must have seen him here before; this is not the first time, certainly, that I have seen that face.”

“No, sir, you've never seen him here before,” replied Matthew. “He's only bin with me this winter, and I ha'n't had the pleasure o' seein' you in these parts, sir, since early o' last summer.”

“But I saw the gentleman before. I came to London, sir,” said Hugh, pulling gently at Matthew's sleeve.

“I thought so, my little lad,” observed the gentleman. “And where was it?”

“Please, sir, you met mother and me one day when we were going to London, and you were just going home to Colton Hall,” answered Hugh, well remembering the name of the house, and all the incidents of that eventful day.

“Ah, I remember!” exclaimed the gentleman with a pleasant smile. “And so your mother has found you a place with Mr. Pedder, has she, and I suppose you are in love with all his birds?”

“Bless you, sir!” cried Matthew, “his mother ha'n't found nothin' but a grave for herself. That boy was just set down at my door, as ye may so say, for me to take in, and I took him in; and here he's bin with me for nigh five months, and here I hope he's goin' to be for many a year.”

“And his poor mother is dead, is she?” asked the gentleman with kind interest. “She looked frail and fading when I saw her; but I hoped I might yet have an opportunity of doing her a good turn. I remember telling her to send to me, if she thought I could be of any use to her. I have a pleasant recollection of her husband; and I was truly sorry to see her a widow, and in distress.”

“Well sir her trouble is all over now,” said Matthew, who felt pleased to meet with one who had known Dora Haldane.

“And I'm lookin' after her boy as well as I knows how, and I think we toddles on pretty well together.”

“I am very glad of it,” said the gentleman. “And do you send this little lad to school?”

“He's just about goin', sir, but he haven't started yet. It have took a bit o' time for him to get into my ways; and I thought he'd better start when brighter weather come to put a bit o' sperrit in him. In my ‘pinion it's no use a startin' at anything without sperrit. Well, so ye see, sir, he'll be off to school next week, or the week after, without fail!”

“Will you allow me to pay for his education, Mr. Pedder? I should be very happy to do so; and it will relieve you of what may, perhaps, be too much of a responsibility for you.”

“No thankye, sir, thankye all the same,” replied Matthew. “The cost ain't much, and I can afford it, and, somehow, I likes the thoughts o' payin' for him myself. I shall send him to the nearest National School, and that's cheap enough, ye knows, sir.”

“But if, after a time, you would like to send him to a superior school I will gladly assist you to give him a good education, if you will only let me know about it. I have no boys of my own to educate; and I should feel a pleasure in doing anything for this boy, whose parents I know were respectable and worthy people.”

“Well, we shall see, sir, many thanks to you,” replied Matthew. “But I hope, sir, yer own boys'll be comin' by'n-by to use up yer spare cash.”

The gentleman shook his head somewhat sadly. “Whether or not,” he said, “I shall be able to help to set this boy up in life, if you will allow me. And now I'll look over these varities of yours, Mr. Pedder, and my wife wants one of your German canaries that has nightingale notes.”

“All them same I'll show yer honor in a jiffy,” said Matthew, with a business-like air. And the next half hour was spent in discussing the birds, both dead and alive, and in buying and selling the same.

The purchaser gave Matthew minute instructions about the work he was to do for him; and then patting Hugh kindly on the head, at the same time slipping half-a-crown into his hand, he wished him and Matthew good morning took his leave.

“And so you've seen that fine gent afore?” said Matthew, as he began busily tidying up the place.

“Yes, sir; he lives at Dolton Hall, down near where grandmother used to live. Do you know what his name is?”

“Yes, I should think so!” exclaimed Hugh. “See what he gave me on the sly! And he held up his half crown delightfully.”

“Tush! that's but a flee-bite to him!” said Matthew. He might fling them same about from mornin' till night, and never miss ‘em. Ann he do fling about, too; he an't no niggard. But then it's come easy go easy with him: he's one o' the sort as little Lisa's so rare savage about.”

“What! does he keep a gin-shop?” ex-