

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1877.

SUNDAY, November 25th, 1877.—Paul in the Storm.—Acts xxii. 14-26.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vss. 21-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee."—Ps. lvi. 3.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday, Acts xxvii. 1-26. Tuesday, vs. 1; Matthew viii. 5-12. Wednesday, vs. 14; Psalm cii. 23-43. Thursday, vs. 24; Genesis xviii. 16-33. Friday, Job xxxvii. Saturday, Job xxxviii. Sunday, Psalm xlvii.

ANALYSIS.—I. The storm at sea. Vs. 14-20. II. Paul's prediction. Vs. 21-26.

QUESTIONS.—Paul is to be taken to Rome? In what ship does he embark at Caesarea? In whose military charge? Who were Paul's companions? Trace the voyage of Paul to the scene of the present lesson? Where was the vessel when Paul advised no further sailing for the present? Where did the centurion propose to put the vessel in for winter? What season of the year was it? Why was it a dangerous season for sailing?

Vs. 14. How were the hopes of the officers of the vessel now blasted? They wanted to sail by the south wind to Phenice, on the island of Crete; what wind now strikes them? What is the meaning of "Euroclydon"? Ans. A northeast wind.

Vs. 15. When unable to bear up against this wind, what are they forced to do?

Vs. 16. In what direction do they drift? How many miles is this small island to the southwest?

Vs. 17. Describe undergirding. What quicksands are especially feared?

Vs. 18. How was the ship lightened?

Vs. 19. What was this "tackling" cast out on the third day? Who had a hand in casting it out?

Vs. 20. Upon what were they wholly dependent for safe navigation?

Vs. 21. By what was this "much abstinence" occasioned? Of what does Paul remind the fainting officers, passengers and crew?

Vs. 22. What is his word of cheer? What his prophecy?

Vs. 23. How has he been made aware of all this? What noble confession does he make?

Vs. 24. What does the angel say is Paul's destination? How many lives did God give in answer, probably, to Paul's prayer? vs. 27.

Vs. 26. What other prophecy does Paul now utter? What is the Golden Text?

PAUL ON HIS VOYAGE TO ROME.—Having appealed to Caesar, Paul is sent to Rome. It was an answer to his long and earnestly-cherished wishes (Romans xv. 23), and emphatically foretold by Divine revelation. Acts xix. 21; xxiii. 11; xxvii. 24. In so doing, as Milman says, Paul "left, probably for ever, the land of his forefathers—that land beyond all others inhospitable to the religion of Christ." He had escaped the hostility of the Sanhedrim, and was now entrusted to the care of Julius, a noble centurion of the Augustine cohort. His ship belonged to Adramyttium, a city on the northwestern coast of Asia Minor. His companions were other state prisoners, and his friends, Luke and Aristarchus, from Thessalonica, mentioned before. See xix. 29; xx. 4. His first course was to Sidon; here he had liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself, and obtain help for his wants on the voyage. Thence he sailed under Cyprus—that is, under the lee of Cyprus. The direct course would have been south of this island, but the prevailing west wind compelled them to go north of it. He came next to Myra, in Lycia, a district of Pamphylia. Here his Adramyttium ship came to anchor, or went farther on her homeward way up the Aegean. Paul was now transferred to a larger ship from Alexandria bound for Italy, built not for coasting trade so much as for the open sea. The ship sailed west with difficulty, taking several days, owing to the west wind, to sail one hundred and thirty geographical miles from Myra to Onidus, a large seaport on a projecting peninsula on the coast between Cos and Rhodes, at the very entrance to the Aegean Sea. Then, being prevented from sailing farther westward (xxvii. 7), this merchant vessel from Alexandria struck south-easterly, and sailed under Crete, over against Salmon, on its eastern promontory; thence under the lee of its southern coast to Fair Havens, a place midway on the island, on its southern coast. Here they were sheltered by Cape Matala, lying a little to

the west, from the full force of the west wind and sea. The month was now October, the season of the fast or festival of atonement, regarded as too late in the year to be safe for a long voyage. Paul admonished Julius the centurion of the danger, but he took counsel from the master or the pilot of the vessel, who, not liking Fair Havens as a place to "winter in," owing to its exposure to southerly winds, favored Phenice, a town to the west of Fair Havens, easily reached in good weather in a few hours. When the south wind blew softly they supposed that all was ready for a quick sail to Phenice. It was only forty miles away.

EXPOSITION.—I. The Storm at Sea. Verse 14-20.—Verse 14.—But not long after [contrary to this expectation] that is, after leaving "Fair Havens" (vss. 13, 18), two or three hours at most. Arose against it, literally, struck, etc., indicating both suddenness and force, and explaining the reference to the boat in verse 16. The wind struck down from the island [and so against the ship]. Tempestuous winds. Literally, typhonic winds. Not simply a "whirlwind," but rather, a hurricane, as its name "Euroclydon," (that is, driving and continuous northeast wind.) "Such a sudden change from a gentle southern breeze to a violent north or northeast wind is a very common occurrence in those seas."

Verse 15.—Caught. Borne along as a leaf in a whirlwind. We must remember that Luke, the writer of this narrative, was on board. Hence the vividness of description. Bear up into the wind. Into the wind's eye, or, against the wind. The wind forced the ship away from its direction toward Phenice (vs. 12), blowing out from the inland. Let her drive. Literally, "were borne," that is, with the wind, running before it. So in life's voyage we often sail as we can, rather than as we would.

Verse 16.—Running under, etc., that is, sailing close to the island, and on its lee, not windward side, which in this case was the south side, the wind being northward. Clauda "is a small island, about twenty miles from the south coast of Crete. For this they wisely steered. Had much work to come by the boat. That is, to get control of the ship's boat, which in the pleasant south wind coasting (vss. 12, 13), had been towed behind, and which from the suddenness and fury of the gale, they had not been able to haul in until now, sheltered by the island. Even now it was done with difficulty, so terrible was the tempest. This boat was the one hope of escape in case of wreck, though in this wreck it came near being the death of the one hope to the passengers. Vs. 30, 31.

Verse 17.—Helps. "Ropes, chains, etc.," to strengthen, and thus "help" the ship in its time of extra trial and strain. Undergirding. Passing a large cable-ropes round the hull or frame of a ship to support her in a great storm, or when for any cause she is thought to be not strong enough to hold together at sea. "Should fall into the quicksands. The Syrtis, or Syrtis Major, a dangerous gulf on the coast of Africa, southwest of Crete. Strake sail, etc. "Lowered the sail," etc. Partial furling the sail, leaving some little canvas "set" near the bottom, to enable the ship to move somewhat away from the African coast while "drifting."

Verse 18, 19.—The next day. After attempting to make Phoenix, or after lying to. The cargo, doubtless of grain (vs. 38), was left, and was needed for ballast. Everything movable above was thrown overboard, perhaps the heavier and least valuable one day, the rest the next. The mainyard, an immense spar, probably as long as the ship, and which would require the united efforts of passengers and crew to launch overboard. The anchors were retained for use (vs. 44). Our own hands. Luke and the passengers generally.

Verse 20.—Neither sun nor stars, etc. Upon these the sailors depended for observation. The mariner's compass was unknown.

II. Paul's Prediction. Verse 21-26.

Verse 21.—Long abstinence. "Many days." Vs. 20. The speech seems to have been made toward the end of the fourteen days (verse 33), but on which is not shown. Fear took away appetite. The ship's provisions were not gone (vs. 34). Ye should have hearkened, etc. See vs. 10. The event had proved his

words true, whether they were of revelation or sagacity. Hence they would now more readily take his advice. This harm and loss. Violence and property thrown overboard.

Verse 22.—Now. Emphatic, in contrast with the time of his first advice. No loss of any man's life, etc. Announced as God's revelation to him (vs. 23), seemingly contradictory to the last clause of vs. 10.

Verse 23.—The angel of God, etc. Exactly; an angel of the God whom I, etc. Not Jesus, as on former occasions where Paul needed new strength of spirit for his work. I serve. This service was the outward acts of worship, such as his fellow-voyagers had witnessed, and perhaps spoken of to him.

Verse 24.—Fear not. He had the natural fear of death, and besides, though a prisoner, life had more of good for him than for any other one of the crowd. Before Caesar, That is, before the Roman emperor, confirming the assurance of xxiii. 11, his heart's desire. Hath given thee. Saved for Paul's sake, and in answer to his earnest prayer. Christians are the world's "salt." See also Genesis ix. 21-29.

Verse 25.—Wherefore. God's word is sure, even though against it go all appearances. Faith grasps the unseen, resting with good reason on a promise of God.

Verse 26.—The next lesson explains this verse.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, December 2nd, 1877.—The Deliverance.—Acts xxvii. 33-44.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven."—Psalm cvii. 30.

The Story of the Lesson.

FOR THE PRIMARY CLASS.

Festus found a ship which was going to Rome, and placed Paul on board, in charge of Julius, the centurion, and his one hundred soldiers. Afterwards they changed to another ship. They waited at a place called Fair Havens for a change of wind. Paul advised them to winter there; but they sailed away, hoping to find a better place farther on. Suddenly they were caught in a storm, called the Euroclydon. They could not guide the ship, and the wind blew them near a little island, called Clauda, where they tried to prepare to face the storm. They first hoisted the small boat on board. They had hard work to do this. Then they passed strong ropes round and round the hull, to keep the planks together. Then they took in the sails, and pulled some of the rigging down, for fear the wind would drive her on the quicksands of Africa. The next day they threw overboard whatever they could spare best; and the third day, Paul and the other passengers, helped to throw out the heavy ropes and the mast. They lost all hope; for they did not see either sun or stars for several days. Only Paul was not afraid. And now he told the sad party to cheer up: that the angel of God—"whose I am, and whom I serve"—had told him that, though the ship would be wrecked, not a single life should be lost.

Select Serial.

From The Day of Rest. DORA'S BOY.

BY MRS. ELLEN ROSS. CHAP. XLVII.—PROGRESSING.

Great was Lisa's delight when, on visiting Matthew and Hugh about a month later, she was told that the design which she had suggested had given the greatest possible satisfaction. Hugh was offered a better price for it than he had yet received for any single design; and in a kind letter which he had received at the time, it was mentioned that one of the firm would shortly be in London, and would then take the opportunity of calling upon Hugh to make business arrangements for the future.

"Eh, my!" exclaimed Matthew, "what a place this is for any gentleman to come to, to do business with ye, Hugh! It's a pity now that we hadn't moved our traps down to the country afore any one wanted to see you."

"Why?" asked Hugh in a slightly aggrieved tone. "Oh, cos look what a place it is to ask a gentleman in to," replied Matthew,

feeling thoroughly dissatisfied with his home for the first time in his life. He was so proud of his boy, and of the beautiful work he could do, that it seemed to him a shame that the place should not be more worthy of him, and of the important transaction that was to take place between him and his employer.

"Well, it's as good as we can afford at present," answered Hugh, pleasantly, "and therefore we won't be so foolish as to be ashamed of it. It's clear: we are as good as housemaids at seeing that; and if you could do business with a gentleman like Mr. Barnet here, surely I can do business with any one who comes to see me. I'm not ashamed of the place I've been brought up in, sir."

"Well, I'm glad of that!" exclaimed Matthew, much relieved. "I'm satisfied enough with the old place: it's only for your sake that I wish for a better. I shan't care for myself if I never get a spankier place than this."

"Nor I," said Hugh readily. "I confess I should like to live in a pretty country place, with everything nice about me, and more books than we've got here, although you've been good enough to get me many a one, and I shall value them as long as I live: they have been such a help and comfort to me."

"So they've been the same to me, in a small way," responded Matthew. "Many's the bit you've read out of 'em that my old soul have took in like food, and have grown on too. And they've bin more to you than to me, I guess. Of course you must have more books, Hugh, my lad; and it seems clear to me that you'll some day get into a persuasion to get everything you likes round ye as well as books."

"You think that I'm going to make a fortune, and live in a great style!" laughed Hugh. "But no, Mr. Pedder, I don't expect that, and I am sure I don't even wish that. If I can get on as well as my father did I shall be content; but I should be more than content—I should rejoice—if I had sufficient to enable me to be helpful to others, to have money to do good with, since it seems likely that I shall not be able to do good in any other way."

"Not?" exclaimed Matthew. "Why you're doin' good every day of yer dear life, my lad, jess cos you're what ye are. I won't puff ye up by tellin' ye what you've done for me, and what ye does do; but maybe you'll know it some day. Talkin' of books," added Matthew, after a pause, "you must make Lisa a present of one before we goes away, Hugh. You see she've had somethin' to do with bringing ye this luck, makin' out that pattern for ye, so spry and handy; and I fancy nothin' 'ud please her better than a book: I've noticed she always looks so hungry up at yer book-case when she comes in; and one day when I axed her if she was fond o' book-reading, her eyes lighted up like fire-coals, as they've got a way of doin' when she feels anythin' strong like, and she says, says she, 'I'd sooner have books nor food any day, though I do know what it is to be hungry.' It seems to me Lisa have got on by strides since that Miss Marner took her up; and nobody 'ud ever believe what a poor chit she used to be about the streets. But Lisa's got somethin' in her, and she'll make her way in life, you'll see."

"Yes, Lisa shall have a nice book," answered Hugh. "And at Christmas, too: it would be too long for her to wait till Lady-day, and you know we shall not go away till then. I will give her Longfellow's poems, for I am surs she would like them; she is so found of poetry, and knows lots by heart. That night that I walked home with her after she had given me that design, we were talking about flowers, and she quoted that beautiful piece of Mary Howitt's which you remember I learnt long ago, 'God might have made the earth bring forth

Enough for great and small, The oak-tree and the cedar-tree Without a flower at all."

You remember sir?"

"Ay, yes, lad; I remember most of what you've learnt in the way of hymns and verses," said Matthew. "And that un about the flowers is rale nice. So Lisa knowed it, did she? Well, I hope she'll find companions amongst them girls as'll be good for her: she ain't one o' the general sort; and it 'ud be a pity for her to have to suffer the want of

somebody of the same feather as herself to talk to and go with. One gets lonesome with only one's own company, after a bit, no matter what good terms you're upon withyself."

Matthew and Hugh had, during that month, been down into the country to look after Dorothy's cottage, and found it tenanted by the same person who was there when dora Haldane had called on her way to London. She had some intention of leaving, she said; and when Hugh explained that they were wishful to have the house, she expressed her willingness to leave at Lady-day in the following year, but hinted that she would like to be remembered in a substantial way for accommodating them by turning out.

Matthew took the hint and said readily, "Thank ye, ma'am: and you may depend on us to pay the cost of movin' your house-things, and puttin' down a sover'in besides for yer trouble."

And seeing the woman's gratification at this announcement, they went back to London, feeling sure of having the cottage.

Before Christmas, the partner in the Northern firm made his appearance. He seemed astonished to find his designer such a young fellow; but generously expressed himself highly satisfied and pleased with his artistic work. They then went into the details of business, and at the close of the interview Hugh was greatly gratified to find that he had secured a position in connection with their manufactory, which he might hold for years with great advantage and profit.

When he was gone, Matthew said, rather excitedly, "Now you've got a post, Hugh, and I must have a post. Don't think as I'm goin' to live down in the country like a born gentleman with nothin' to do: I'm goin' to get in with one or two successful stuffers about these parts, and get 'em to send me a job now and then. If my right hand have lost its cunning, there's enough left in t'other to manage a bit o' work if you'll give me a hand sometimes, as you've done in this place. You'll have bits o' time to spare; and it'll be change of work for ye; and if I can do ever sech a bit, with ever such poor pay, it'll keep me from feelin' that I've sunk down into a useless old log."

Hugh recognized the feeling which prompted Matthew to say this, and he responded heartily, "Yes, that will be pleasant for you Mr. Pedder, and certainly I'll help you all I can. You'll see that we'll manage to turn out good work in your line for many a year to come, sir."

Dorothy came on Saturdays as usual to do their cleaning; and she dropped in occasionally on other days to take tea with them, being cordially invited to do so both by Matthew and Hugh. Then the latter called regularly every week to pay her rent, and to see that she wanted for nothing to make her comfortable. On Sunday afternoon he generally called to walk out with her, and altogether they were as much like one family as they could be, living in different dwellings.

Hugh and his grandmother had had a little talk about his mother, but not half sufficient, nor of a character to satisfy him that she was held in proper estimation by her mother. But as time went on, he was pleased to see that she began to be desirous of hearing more about her lost daughter, and frequently started the subject herself, seeking in a shame-faced sort of way, to elicit all the information she wanted, without letting him see that she was anxious to get it. However, Hugh was at all times sharp enough to read her easily, and he quietly rejoiced to see the mother within her gradually gaining an ascendancy over the harsh and unforgiving woman.

During her more frequent intercourse with her grandson she had altogether improved: her rasping manner gave way to a more agreeable one; and instead of wearying him with a whining list of her grievances, past and present, as she did at first, she sometimes met him with an attempt to smile, and allowed him to do most of the talking, while she sat listening with an air of graciousness that she had but rarely manifested towards him or anybody else. These signs of improvement, small though they were, helped to dispel the terrible dread which had seized Matthew and Hugh, when it was first revealed