

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lesson for 1878.

SUNDAY, November 3rd, 1878.—The Ten Lepers.—Luke xvii. 11-19.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 15-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?"—Luke xvii. 17.

DAILY READINGS.—Monday, Luke vii. 1-20. Tuesday, Leviticus xiv. 1-32. Wednesday, Matthew viii. 1-4. Thursday, 2 Kings v. 1-19. Friday, Romans ii. Saturday, Philippians iv. 1-8. Sunday, Psalm ciii.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Place of the miracle, Vss. 11, 12. II. The ten lepers cleansed, Vss. 12-14. III. One healed and saved, Vss. 15-19.

QUESTIONS.—I. Vss. 11, 12.—What is meant by "through the midst of Samaria and Galilee"?

II. Vss. 12-14.—Who met Jesus on his journey? Why did they stand "afar off"? What cry did they raise? What did Jesus say to them? How does this differ from his previous treatment of a leper? Matt. viii. 3, 4. Why were the ten lepers sent to the priest? Lev. xiv. 2. Where were they cleansed? Why should we obey Christ implicitly? Phil. iv. 13.

III. What did one of the ten lepers do? Of what nation was he? In what were the nine lepers lacking? How much faith only did they have? What higher blessing was denied to them?

1. Great misery on one side, great mercy on the other. 2. The ingratitude of the many, the thankfulness of one.—The disease of leprosy, the type of sin, (Isa. i. 6), to be healed only by the Great Physician. Many have a voice to cry in time of need, but no voice to utter thanksgiving. Phil. iv. 6.

Jesus leaves Perea and goes to Bethany, where he raises Lazarus from the dead (John xi. 1-46); because of which a council is summoned, and Caiaphas advises that he be put to death. John xi. 47-53. Learning this, Jesus goes with his disciples to a city called Ephraim, twenty miles north of Jerusalem, and some six miles northeast of Bethel, and here abides till the approach of the Passover, in April. John xi. 54-57. A little before the Feast, he begins his journey toward Jerusalem. Upon the way he meets and heals the Ten Lepers, about whom we are to study to-day.

EXPOSITION.—Verse 11.—As he went to Jerusalem.—From Galilee to Jerusalem, to the Festival of Tabernacles (Lev. ix. 51; John vii. 10). Through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. Our Saviour, on leaving Ephraim went, not to the south toward Jerusalem, but to the north, till he reached the northern border of Samaria, and then away eastward to the Jordan valley, thence down the valley, and by the usual way up from Jericho to Jerusalem. Matt. xx. 29.

Verse 12.—As he entered, etc.—This unnamed and unknown village, being situated on the line of his journey, was thus a border village; which accounts for the mingling of Jews and Samaritans, according to vss. 16-18. The lepers had their dwellings outside of the village, because of their uncleanness, ceremonially. See Lev. xiii. xiv. From respect at once for the Mosaic law and for Jesus, they do not draw nigh, but "stand afar off."

Verse 13.—Lifted up their voices.—More exactly, lifted up a voice, or raised a cry—one great need, one common want, coming out in a single, but united call. The distance made necessary the loud tone, which the words ("lifted up") imply, and which their sense of misery and hope of relief also prompted. Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us. These words show that they had heard of Christ's miracles, and believed in them. They regarded him as "Master," because controlling disease and demons.

Verse 14.—Go, shew yourselves unto the priests.—In accordance with Leviticus xiii. xiv. This command is given while they are still uncleansed. There is indeed an implication that healing will follow, or attend their obedience of the act. Their faith was tested. To show how "the Great Physician varies his treatment of his patients," there have been cited the following passages: Matt. xv. 21-28; ix. 1-8; viii. 3, 4; Luke vii. 13, 14. As they went, they were cleansed. While in the way of obedience, the reward of obedience became theirs. They could not have had from the priests the outward symbols of cleansing without the previous fact of cleansing. The place

for the ceremonial cleansing was the Temple at Jerusalem.

Verse 15.—And one of them. Only one. When he saw, etc. The event, though expected, was yet glad surprise, which filled and thrilled him with gratitude, as the expectation did not and could not. That assurance of hope is rare, which is not less than the assurance of experience. Turn back. A spontaneous, impulsive act, expressing his deep, keen, over-mastering sense of the greatness and goodness of the mercy asked, and now received. There was no weighing and balancing of the question, whether it were his duty first to see the priest. With a loud voice. Partly in order to be heard by all, partly from force and stress of holy emotion. Glorified God. Shewing a right view of the nature of Christ and his works, as being from God.

Verse 16.—Fell down on his face.—The attitude of reverence; of humble, worshipful reverence; of manly humility in God's presence. If he did not honor Christ as God, he honored God as the source of Christ's loving, beneficent spirit and of the divine energy which attended Christ's word, and made whole his own diseased body. He gave Christ thanks; and Christ did not decline to receive these thanks. He was a Samaritan. This fact is mentioned, because of its bearing on the special lesson for which Luke introduces the narrative, and as explaining the words in vs. 18, where the Saviour intimates that lesson. Luke here, makes prominent and emphatic the universal aspect of the gospel—its adaptation and destination for the whole race.

Verse 17.—Where there not ten cleansed?—The exact translation is, "Were not the ten cleansed?" The question is not as to the number cured, but whether all of the company ("the ten") who had asked, had not received. The question is an emphatic assertion that all were healed, though only one came back. But where are the nine? Not that he would learn where, but to call attention vividly to their absence from that place.

Verse 18.—There are not found, etc.—If, as we have supposed, the return was prior, rather than subsequent, to the termination of their visit to the priests, this is the Lord's approval of that piety which both fills and overflows the measure of the law's letter, as higher and better than that which may keep the letter. If the return is to be conceived as subsequent to the presentation to the priests, the Samaritan's conduct is commended, as showing that he, unlike the rest, was ready to become, and be, a permanent follower of Christ.

Verse 19.—Arise, go thy way.—"Either go now to the priests, as previously bidden," or "go to your home and kindred." Thy faith hath made thee whole. "Hath saved thee," is the literal rendering; and it seems here to refer rather to the soul than to the body. This was a saving faith—holding unto God as his portion and his life.

TOPICS.—(1.) A type of sin.—Disease is the outcome of depravity, and every form of it is, in some sense, a memorial of the fall. It was hereditary, inveterate, incurable by any human skill.

(2.) Sinner's approach to the Saviour. Perhaps we should rather say, the Saviour's approach to the sinner. These lepers were not seeking Christ, but Christ was seeking them. It was not by chance that he passed just that way, while going "through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." He knew just where these lepers were, and all about their helpless misery; and so he came in search of them. For the Son of man was "come to seek and to save that which was lost."

(3.) The obedience of faith.—The prayer which these lepers offered was not answered at once. The leprosy was still upon them. They could see it, and feel it. Yet Jesus directs them to go and show themselves to the priests, just as if the cleansing were an accomplished fact, as they went, they were cleansed. Here is a lesson of the utmost importance to those who are waiting to feel right, before they undertake to do right; who are waiting, as they say, to be "converted," before they go forward in the pathway of obedience, whereas the Scriptures explicitly tell us that "we shall know, if we follow on to know the Lord," and "if any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

(4.) Thanksgiving.—There is something very melancholy in that question of our Saviour, "Were there not ten cleansed—but where are the nine?" Only one of the ten returned to "give glory to God." There is nothing meaner than ingratitude; and yet there is nothing that is probably more common.—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, November 10th, 1878.—Whom the Lord receives.—Luke xviii. 9-17.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."—Luke xviii. 17.

Youth's Department.

"He was my brodder."

"Nearly all the ornaments in this room have a story attached to them," I said to a friend, as she was admiring an exquisite little bust of Charles Dickens that stood on top of one of the book cases in the library.

"One sunny day last autumn a little Italian boy came along to my floor with a basket of plaster-of-Paris wares on his head.

"They were very pretty, and the children almost went wild over them, as country children always do over an unusual display.

"You have no bust of Dickens?" I said to the little fellow, after I had looked over the articles, and had bought a lovely vase.

"Deekens?" he said, in his funny broken English, looking puzzled at first; but presently a smile broke over his fair, bronzed young face as he went on, 'Deekens busto—write stories—Little Nell—no.'

"Then pointing out the window, he said, 'Snow come—I bring him not then. Snow go away, I come again; then I bring Deekens, lady.'

"We were preparing grapes for preserving, and when Minnie gave him a nice large bunch which, running out into the garden, she picked from the trellis purposely for him, and I had given him a few pleasant words, the gratification he showed was touching to see.

"Le sono infinitamente obligato"—as we might say, 'I am ever so much obliged to you'—he said, the tears glistening in his shining black eyes, 'God bless you ladees!' he continued smiling, and turned round to bow again as he passed out of the yard.

"We spoke of him several times during the winter, and planned, idly, as we then thought, where our prospective bust of the great story-teller should be placed.

"One pleasant morning in May, as I was assisting John in getting my flowerbeds ready for the bulbs and seeds, I heard the latch in the doorway gate rattle, and turning around, saw another plaster-of-Paris vender coming up the walk, smiling pleasantly as he placed his long tray of busts and vases upon the ground.

"My thoughts immediately flew to the little Italian boy who had called the autumn previous, and seemed grateful for the bunch of grapes my sister had given him, and had promised to bring us the bust of Dickens.

"But this young Italian was not the same person; although he resembled him very much, he was a good deal older. 'I haf bring ze bust of Deekens to ze lady,' he said, bowing as I approached him.

"But you are not the one who was to bring it!"

"No, no, lady," he replied very sadly; 'he was my brodder. He now in heafen. He died, it was so cold. But he say many times, same day ze cold snow go away, and I sal carry ze busto of Deekens to ze lady where ze grapes grow. But he died, and I haf come to carry it.'

"How did you find the place?" we asked, as we brushed away the tears we could not suppress at the touching little recital.

"Oh, he told me, my brodder, to come by ze the church wize clock, and ze yellow house, and I sal come to ze house with many grape-vines—one in ze apple tree, wize ze seat under it."

"How much shall I pay for the Dickens?" I asked, as I handed the bust to my sister and started to go for my portemonnaie.

"Notting, notting; you speak so kind to my little brodder, and she," pointing to my sister, 'did gif him ze sweet grapes,

and he was so tired and homesick—and he come here not again—oh, I sal now go!' And the poor Italian with tears streaming down his olive cheeks, hurriedly turned away.

Before we could speak a word of comfort to him he had replaced the tray upon his head, and trudged along alone with his grief.—Youth's Companion.

Remarkable Echoes.

In the sepulcher of Metella, the wife of Sulla, in the Roman Campagna, there is an echo which repeats five times, in five different keys, and will also give back with distinctness a hexameter line which requires two and a half seconds to utter it. On the banks of the Naha, between Bingen and Coblenz, an echo repeats seventeen times. The speaker may scarcely be heard, and yet the responses are loud and distinct, sometimes appearing to approach, at other times to come from a great distance. Echoes equally beautiful and romantic are to be heard in our own islands. In the cemetery of the Abercorn family, at Baisley, when the door of the chapel is shut, the reverberations are equal to the sound of thunder. If a single note of music is breathed the tone ascends gradually, with a multitude of echoes till it dies in soft and bewitching murmurs. In this chapel is interred Margery, the daughter of Bruce, and the wife of William Wallace. The echo at the Eagle's Nest, on the banks of Killarney, is renowned for its effective repetition of a bugle call, which seems to be repeated by a hundred instruments, until it gradually dies away in the air. At the report of a cannon the loudest thunders reverberate from the rock, and die in seemingly endless peals along the distant mountains. At the Castle of Simonetta, a nobleman's seat about two miles from Milan, a surprising echo is produced between the two wings of the building. The report of a pistol is repeated by this echo sixty times; and Addison, who visited the place on a somewhat foggy day, when the air was unfavorable to the experiment, counted fifty-six repetitions. At first they were very quick, but the intervals were greater in proportion as the sound decayed. It is asserted that the sound of one musical instrument in this place resembles a great number of instruments playing in concert. This echo is occasioned by the existence of two parallel walls of considerable length, between which the wave of sound is reverberated from one to the other until it is entirely spent.—The World of Wonders.

SAFE MEDICINES.—A reader of the Hebrew Leader proposes the following remedy for the ills of the flesh and spirit, composed of leaves, plants and roots, which if taken without a wry face, will make any man respectable and happy. Leave off drinking. Leave off smoking. Leave off chewing. Leave off snuffing. Leave off swearing. Leave off lying.

Plant your pleasure in the home circle. Plant your faith in truth. Root your habits in industry. Root your feelings in benevolence. Root your affections in God.

For directions see the Holy Scriptures, and beware of counterfeit creeds and quack theologians.

'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose Friends out of sight, in faith to muse How grows in Paradise our store! Then pass, ye mourners, cheerly on, Through prayer unto the tomb; Still, as ye watch life's falling leaf, Gathering, from every loss and grief, Hope of new spring and endless home.

Fat bacon twice a day is the food of Mr. Peter Mankins, of Washington Co. Ark., who is 108 years old, has a splendid set of teeth and is as hearty and lively as most men of fifty.—N. Y. World.

"What is wisdom?" asks the teacher of a class of small girls in a primary school. A bright eyed little creature arose and answered, "Information on the brain."

Rain has fallen almost constantly and very heavily in the north of Scotland. Harvesting operations are being seriously impeded, and the crops much damaged. No such rainfall has occurred in several districts for years. Rivers have overflowed their banks in some parts of Forfarshire, and the roads have been converted into small streams.

Temperance.

For the Christian Messenger. Tobacco.

MR. EDITOR,—

In our humble opinion, the time is not very far distant, when there will be as powerful a raid against the use and sale of tobacco as there now is against that terrible fiend "rum."

Tobacco will probably be the next great moral and physical evil to battle against and grapple with.

PROPHECY.

Societies will be formed all over the country, having a solemn pledge, viz.:

1st. To abstain from the use of tobacco. 2nd. A more stringent pledge of Temperance will gradually take the place of the present one, viz.: "Also; that I will neither make, buy, sell, nor use Tobacco in any form, except for poisonous purposes, and that I will do all in my power to persuade others to a similar course."

TOBACCO USING

is a standing disgrace on Christianity. Many are really ashamed to own themselves slaves to this pernicious habit. Comparatively few ministers use it, this is a credit to the profession, and some of those who yet cling to this really debasing filthy habit, do so in secret, so their influence will not be injurious to the young.

Shame on christians who have not the moral courage to abandon this disagreeable wicked habit for the good of their race. What a spirit of self-sacrifice! Did the early christians use Tobacco? No! 'Tis not enough that here and there, christians are abandoning this useless hurtful habit,—that the young are kept from its baneful influence by Bands of Hope, &c. No! our duty does not end here, let us who are sober declare now against Prince Tobacco. A fight on this question, means something. There is an immense tobacco trade to oppose. The silver shrine Diana business is not easily overthrown, nor will be destroyed without much hard fighting. The sooner the war commences the sooner will the conquest be achieved.

RELIGIOUS PRESS.

We are glad to see the Press favouring the suppression of this thing.

What, may we ask, has of late years so largely aided temperance workers, is it not the Religious Press and the religious element, through this means thrown into the movement. The religious world ought to be foremost in promoting these needful reforms, rather than be dragged into it by the onward uprising tide from other quarters.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

We would even go so far (had we our way), as to require professed christians to abandon the use of liquors and tobacco the same as swearing and other evils, before being received into full fellowship in the christian church.

If tobacco using is Scriptural then, only then may it be safely followed.

Yours, &c., W. J. G.

PROHIBITION DOES PROHIBIT.—The following statistics tell their own story. They satisfactorily meet the oft-made statement that Prohibition is a failure. It is shown that under the Prohibitory law Maine had in 1870 one criminal to 2,022 of its population; in 1871, one to 2,062; in 1873, one to 2,299; in 1874, one to 2,333; in 1875, one to 2,305.—Michigan had in 1871, one to 1,120 of its population; in 1872, one to 1,088; in 1873, one to 1,034; in 1874, one to 934; in 1875, one to 840; in 1876, one to 790. Maine consumes less than one million dollars' worth of liquor in a year; Michigan as much as twenty-six million dollars' worth. In the latter state out of 3,744 commitments to the House of Correction in ten years 5,265 were for being "drunk and disorderly." This is a text that preaches its own sermon.

Wendell Phillips says: "It would be safe to say that not one man in five hundred in Maine can get at liquor, and if this is not success, let any man show greater success in the execution of any law in christendom."—G. T. Advocate.

We drink up the entire value of the property in the country every twenty years, and wonder what makes the times so hard.—Cal. Rescue.