

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1879.

SUNDAY, September 28th, 1879.—Third Quarter Review.

Thirteen Epistles of the twenty-one in the New Testament—not counting that written to the Hebrews—bear the name of the Apostle Paul. The Epistles are the voice of the Spirit of God certifying to Christians, to whom they were addressed, the true interpretations and applications of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. How idle it is, therefore, for any man to depreciate Paul for the sake of honoring Christ, since Christ himself promised that in the expediency of his personal departure for the good of his people he would send to them the Holy Spirit, whose method of teaching would be designedly more penetrating and internal than that they had enjoyed. "He shall dwell with you and be in you." "He will guide you into all truth."

BIBLE READINGS.—Rom. i. 1-7. Gal. i. 1-5. Phil. iv. 20-23. 1 Cor. i. 1-3. Eph. vi. 21-24. 1 Thess. v. 23-28. 2 Tim. iv. 19-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." 1 Cor. xv. 10.

The Epistles of Paul are not placed in our Bible as they were written, but evidently in accordance with their length and the importance of the communities to which they were addressed. On many considerations the New Testament order is doubtless a wise one. Chronology, surely, is not of so much importance as weightiness of Christian doctrine.

The Chronological Order and Place of Writing.

- 1. First Thessalonians. A. D. 52. Corinth. 2. Sec. Thessalonians. A. D. 53. Corinth. 3. Galatians.....A. D. 55-57. Probably Ephesus. 4. First Corinthians.....A. D. 55-57. Ephesus. 5. Second Corinthians. A. D. 57. Macedonia. 6. Romans.....A. D. 58. Corinth. 7. Ephesians.....A. D. 62-64. Rome. 8. Colossians.....A. D. 62-64. Rome. 9. Philemon.....A. D. 62-64. Rome. 10. Philippians.....A. D. 62-64. Rome. 11. First Timothy.....A. D. 64-66. Rome. 12. Titus.....A. D. 64-66. Macedonia. 13. Second Timothy.....A. D. 66 or 67. Rome.

Beginning while Paul's second missionary tour was in progress, they cover nearly fourteen years of his latest and richest experience.

Paul is first seen at Stephen's martyrdom (Acts vii. 57-60); was converted on his way to Damascus (Acts ix. 1-16); in Damascus was baptized (Acts ix. 17-19), and was set apart at Antioch. Acts xiii. 2, 3. He had a thorough acquaintance with the traditions, customs, and prejudices of Judaism; had a high social and official position confided to him by his countrymen; had treasures of rich and varied learning accumulated from numerous sources. Of Paul's authorship of the above thirteen Epistles there is no doubt. It is believed that he wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, but it is not here so claimed. On his own apostolic authority as received, not from men, but from God, Paul ever laid great stress. Gal. i. 11, 12; Acts ix. 3-7.

The contents of the Epistles are quite fairly divided between the doctrinal and the practical. In their earlier portions the doctrinal predominates, and in the latter the practical. They contain the last and fullest discoveries of the divine plan of salvation.

QUESTIONS.—Where do we first see Paul? Where was he baptized? Where set apart as an apostle? On what missionary journey did he begin to write his Epistles? To what church first? Upon what theme was the Thessalonian church greatly exercised? What Grecian church was factious and corrupt? In what Epistle is Paul's rebuke of Peter recorded? What Epistle is most full of affection and free from rebuke? In what Epistle does Paul say, "For me to live is Christ"? In what, "I have fought a good fight"? In what respect are the Epistles an advance upon the Gospels? In what Epistle do we find a long argument on justification by faith? In which Epistle a great argument for the resurrection? In which a beautiful chapter on charity? In which a full statement of the Christian armor?

Give to each scholar, upon the previous Sunday, one of the Epistles, and have him come prepared to tell when and where it was written; under what circumstances, and with what design; let him give the scope and teaching of the Epistle, and an analysis of its contents.

Or, take the main topics of each lesson—Peace, Security, Love, Victory, Reconciliation, Fruit-Bearing, Christian Warfare, Christ our Example, Christ in our Homes, Christ's Coming, Covetousness Overcome, and Our Duty to the Government—and make it the centre of earnest, inspiring, Biblical lessons.

ANALYSIS OF REVIEW.—For the first month of the Quarter, July, we have four lessons, and their subjects come under the general subject of The Christian Himself Saved. The five lessons of August present The Christian Saving Others. The three lessons of September are on Christians Awaiting the Lord's Coming.

I. The Christian Himself Saved.—JULY.

1. Peace with God.—Romans v. 1-10. Man's natural state is one of sin, enmity, condemnation, death. Vss. 8-10. The state of recovery is PEACE, which consists of a profound harmony with God, and a sweet consciousness of that profound harmony. Vss. 1-5.

2. The Security of Believers.—Rom. viii. 28-39. This security consists in the effectual and infallible preservation and perfecting of the Christian's "peace with God." Vss. 28, 35, 39. It cannot be removed or disturbed by all the adverse power of earth and hell, of time and eternity. Vss. 38, 39.

3. Christian Love.—1 Cor. xiii. 1-13. Love is the inward principle of our assured and secured peace with God. V. 13. The presence of love can be known by its loving fruits. Vss. 4-7.

4. Victory over Death.—1 Cor. xv. 50-58. This will be consummated at Christ's Second Coming. V. 52. It consists in the resurrection of the Christian in a new body, if he dies before Christ's coming, and in the instantaneous change of his body, if alive at that coming. Vss. 51-54.

II. Christians Saving Others.—AUG.

1. The Ministry of Reconciliation.—2 Cor. v. 14-21: All need what the Christian has experienced; namely, peace with God, effected by reconciliation, which includes a change of nature or regeneration, and a change of relation to God or justification. Vss. 17, 21.

2. The Fruit of the Spirit.—Gal. v. 22-26; vi. 19. Our ministry in saving others is a ministry of the Holy Spirit and of its "fruits." They are the very opposite of the works of the flesh or unrenewed nature. Vss. 24, 26. One reaps what, and as, he sows. Vss. 7-9.

3. The Christian Armor.—Eph. vi. 10-20. This holy ministry meets, and must master unholiness and antagonism. V. 12. Only Divine strength imparted to men can give success. V. 10. Each should help others in the warfare, especially by prayer for them. Vss. 18-20.

4. The Mind of Christ.—Phil. ii. 1-13. The perfect paths of ministry and of conflict is found in the history of Christ's life. V. 1, 2. God's power in us is pledged to make Christ's sacrifice and victory ours in our measure. Vss. 12, 13.

5. Practical Religion.—Col. iii. 16-25. In our ministry of sacrifice we have songs of joy in a foretaste of the triumph. Vss. 16, 17.

III. Christians Awaiting the Lord's Coming.—SEPTEMBER.

1. The Coming of the Lord.—1 Thess. iv. 13-18. He will come again in glory. V. 16. Then shall all deceased saints rise, and all living saints be changed, to have each a glorified body. V. 15. This hope is forever a grand comfort to believers. Vss. 13, 14, 18.

2. The Christian in the World.—1 Tim. vi. 1-16. The natural desire of property, tempts to forgetfulness of Christ, and to foolish and ruinous lusts and deeds. Vss. 6-10. Perpetual vigilance is the price of Christian liberty and of a share in the glorious hope of the Lord's coming. Vss. 11, 12.

3. The Christian Citizen.—Titus iii. 1-19. Our heavenly citizenship hinders not, but greatly helps our earthly citizenship and its duties. Vss. 1, 2. God in three persons, redeems man and transforms him into a holy fitness for proper duties of both the earthly and the heavenly citizenship. Vss. 3-7. Such doctrine we are to lay to our own heart and to the hearts of others. Vss. 8, 9.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

SUNDAY, October 5th, 1879.—Our Great High Priest.—Heb. iv. 14-16.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."—Heb. vii. 25.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Go over the themes and Golden Texts, use the following words as helps:

- 1. JUSTIFY. 7. ARMOR. 2. SAFE. 8. CHRIST-LIKE. 3. LOVE. 9. WHATSOEVER. 4. VICTORY. 10. COMING. 5. RECONCILED. 11. GODLINESS. 6. FRUIT. 12. OBEDIENCE.

Question on each Golden Text repeated.

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

- No. 38. 1. El bethel.....Gen. xxxv. 7. 2. Zipporah.....Ex. xviii. 2. 3. Ruth.....Ruth i. 16. 4. A sahel.....2 Sam. ii. 18.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 39. The initials of the subjoined give the watchword between one of the patriarchs and his offended relative.

- 1. The bitter water in the wilderness of Shur. 2. One of the "works of the flesh." 3. The refuge of Lot at the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. 4. Christ's "ambassador in bonds." 5. One of the two men who were inspired with wisdom and skill to prepare the tabernacle and its furniture. 6. The husband of the avenger of Israel's wrongs.

Boys' Department.

Miss Blake's Tinies.

"My dear Carrie! you don't mean to say that your sole reason for wanting to go home to-day is to preside over those precious Sunday School children tomorrow? It's absurd. I shan't let you go!"

"Please Aunt, you must. I have provided no substitute, and I would not have my tinies neglected for a great deal."

"I'm sure," said Jack, leaning in at the open window, "it's a sin and a shame to shut anyone up in a school-room these summer days; it will do the little monkeys good to be without a teacher for one day. You ought to stay, Carrie; we'll have tea in Sunny-mead this afternoon with Tom Harris and the Clayton girls if you'll stay."

Miss Blake went to the window, and leaning out as if to gather a rose, whispered coaxingly to Jack. "Don't keep me against my conscience, Jack. I love to be here, but you don't know how my little ones need me. Indeed I can't stay, and it vexes your mother for me to seem so obstinate."

Jack made a wry face, but being fond of his cousin he was equal to the occasion, and when his mother began again to say, "I shan't think of your going for such a paltry reason," he interrupted, "Well, mamma, Carrie's conscientiousness is the fruit of your own sowing. How you used to lecture us on our small duties, such as brushing our teeth and cleaning our nails. Do you remember, Carrie?"

"Yes; and to this day I feel a twinge of educated conscience if I go downstairs without opening my window and throwing back the bedclothes in the wholesome fashion Aunt used to insist upon."

Mrs. Blake being somewhat mollified by these reminiscences, the good-natured Jack continued, "She shan't be plagued, mother; I'll drive her to the station as I go for the Clayton girls, and then there'll be no bother about taking her on Monday, which will be a blessing. Let's know the train you want to go by."

Carrie ran off to consult her time-table, and collect her sundry possessions, and at four o'clock was driving with Jack through the pretty country lanes towards Stenfield Station.

"It's wholly against my better judgment, Carrie, that I have aided and abetted your going back to town this evening. I'm too soft-hearted by one-half. You girls always coax me to do what you wish."

"It's good for me that you are soft-hearted, Jack: I don't love town a bit more than you do, but I know I am right in going back."

"How many scholars have you?" Jack asked, suddenly, in the midst of switching the flies off Betsy Jane's ears. "About thirty tinies."

"To what age do these 'tinies' run?"

"From four to nine. Any more questions, sir?"

"No. Now I bring home the application. What earthly good can it do these small children for you to spend your strength and breath and really fine powers upon them Sunday after Sunday? What can you find to say to such little things that they can understand?"

Carrie's soft grey eyes looked at the high green banks and wild rose-covered hedges till they grew indistinct from gathering tears; then she said very low, "If we love a person very much, it is not difficult to say a great deal about Him, is it, Cousin Jack?"

"How terribly in earnest you are, Carrie—you always were as a child. But honestly, don't you think some times that your fine powers are wasted on such little children? If you had a class of young women, or, better still, big boys, it might be worth spending your time and strength upon."

"I would not have a 'grown-up' class, unless it seemed very manifestly my duty, for anything; all the 'giftie' I have is for teaching very little children, and instead of my 'fine powers' (as you flatteringly call them) being wasted on these tinies, I feel oftener how inadequate I am to such responsible work."

"Preach away, Carrie!"

"I feel it's more than preaching, Jack, for sometimes I think greater responsibility rests upon me than upon a minister; for these little ones have not learned to be sceptical, and if they love their teacher, they believe without question all she says and all she lives, while we grown-up people doubt, and query, and weigh every statement in the scale of common sense, until all chaff (and some grain too, I fear) flies away, and we accept only that which commends itself. Is that my train?"

"Ah! so it is. Gee, go along Betsy Jane; just in time; jump in Carrie, at once. I'll bring your ticket and luggage."

In a few moments good-bye was said, and Carrie, whizzing along towards dingy Birmingham, was too busy with her own thoughts to notice how each station she passed brought her farther away from green fields and trees, until with an almost painful start she found herself in the crowded New Street Station.

A pale-faced, unwholesome looking child, without hat or shawl, stood on the platform watching the passengers alight. As Miss Blake stepped out of the train the little figure darted to her side, and catching hold of her dress pleaded, "Please, teacher, will you come and see Maggie—she's hurted herself? Mother says she's dying, and she wants you, please. Do come quick!"

"Maggie? dear little Maggie dying? What is the matter with her, Ellen? Don't cry so, dear, but tell me."

"We were playing yesterday and some bricks fell on her—and, oh! she's hurted dreadful," and the child sobbed till she could hardly stand.

"Ellen, dear, if you cry so much you won't be able to take me home with you. Come, hold my sunshade while I put these other things in the cloak-room, and then we will go. Jesus loves Maggie better than we do, dearie, don't forget that," and with a kiss on the tear-stained little face Miss Blake went to bestow her packages in the cloak-room.

Very quickly they passed through the streets which lay between the station and Maggie's home, but none too quickly, as Miss Blake saw, when Ellen, opening the door, showed her the sorrowful group inside. The rough, dirt-begrimed father leaning on the table, his head in his hands, weeping as only a strong man can weep. The mother, with a dry heart-breaking look in her eyes, seated on a low chair, with the bonny little four-year-old Maggie in her lap, over whose marred face the ashen lines of death were fast stealing. Some sympathetic neighbours were whispering together and crying round the child, but all made way for Miss Blake, who, laying off her hat and gloves, knelt down by the side of her pet pupil.

"Don't touch her," said the mother hoarsely. "I don't think she'll know you, though she knew us all an hour ago, and asked for you, Miss."

For a few minutes the silence was only broken by the strong man's sobs and the little one's painful breathing. "O! the pain is coming again," moaned

the poor mother as the baby-brow contracted, and the little frame writhed and quivered. As the paroxysm passed, a look of ineffable peace succeeded, and, opening her eyes the child whispered, "Teacher, I can't sing it to father, and I want to."

"Sing what darling? I'll sing it,"

"Jesus cares for me. Father should-n't cry, should he?"

Miss Blake turned and gently laid her hand upon the rough head on the table, "Mr. Banner, Maggie wants me to sing her last words to you for her: May I?"

"Yes, yes, Miss."

So Miss Blake put by her tears, and with one arm round Ellen sang:—

"I am a little child, But Jesus cares for me; And even me He wants His little child to be."

"Jesus will take me up And hold me on His knee, And fold me in His arms, His little child to be."

"Then I would go to Him, For I would let Him see How glad I am to come, His little child to be."

"And I will stay with Him, For Jesus wishes me, When I am big and old, His little child to be."

As she sang the father raised his head to listen, and warm tears crept from underneath the poor mother's burning eyelids, to fall upon the peaceful dead face of little Maggie, who went to "stay with Jesus" as her message was being given to the dear ones she left behind. F. S.

"Johnny," said a fond mother to her boy, "which would you rather do, speak French or Spanish?" "I would rather," said Johnny, rubbing his waistband and looking expressively at the table, "I would rather talk Turkey."

The puzzle which careful mothers try to solve is how to train the girls, and how to restrain the boys.

Temperance.

A young Man's Course.

I saw him first at a social party. He took but a single glass of wine, and that in compliance with the request of a fair young lady with whom he conversed. I saw him next, when he supposed he was unseen, taking a glass to satisfy the slight desire formed by sordid indulgence. He thought there was no danger.

I saw him again with those of his own kind, meeting at night to spend a short time in convivial pleasure. He said it was only innocent pleasure.

I saw him yet once more. He was pale, cold and motionless, and was carried to his last resting place.

I thought of his future state. The Bible teaches, "Drunkards shall not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven."

THE CHILDREN OF RUM DRINKERS.—Dr. Martin, of the Salpetriere, Paris, has made a series of interesting observations on nervous affections among the offspring of alcoholic parents. His results may be summed up as follows: In 83 families in which one or more members showed nervous excitability with a history of alcoholic origin, there were 410 children. Of these, 108—more than a quarter—had convulsions, and in the year 1874, 169 were dead; 241 were still alive, but 83, i. e., more than one-third of the survivors, were epileptic.

A SHORT LIVED CLASS.—A prominent life insurance office in London declares that the mortality among the publican (liquor selling) class is 59 per cent greater than among its members generally; and the Insurance Directory states that "it is notorious among insurance offices that inn keepers and publicans are a short lived class."

Tobacco Antidote.—Gentian root is said to be a tobacco antidote. Buy two ounces or more of gentian root, coarsely ground. After each meal, or oftener, take as much of it as amounts to a quid of "fine-cut," which chew slowly, swallowing the juice. "Continue this a few weeks and you will conquer the insatiable appetite for tobacco, which injures both mind and body, and from which thousands struggle to be free, but give up in despair."