

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1880.

FIRST QUARTER.

Lesson V.—FEBRUARY 1.

TRUE DISCIPLES.

Matt. v. 1-16.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 3-10.

The Sermon on the Mount was probably delivered in March, A. D. 28. Matt. iv. 13-25, which comes between the last lesson and this, is a summary of abundant labors occupying more than a year. Mount Hattin, some seven miles southwest of Capernaum, is the traditional place of this sermon; it has two points, the Horns of Hattin, and between them a plateau where the multitude could have stood.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Ye are the light of the world."—Matt. v. 14.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. True Disciples.....Matt. v. 1-16.
T. Blessings and Woes.Luke vi. 20-26.
W. Blessings in Pardon.Ps. xxxii. 1-11.
F. Fruits of the Spirit.Gal. v. 13-25.
S. Comfort in Trial....Matt. x. 16-24.
S. Glory in Tribulation.Rom. v. 1-11.
S. The True Light.....John i. 1-14.

PARALLEL TEXTS.

- With vs. 1: Mark iii. 9, 13; Luke vi. 13, 17.
With vs. 2: Job iii. 1; Ps. lxxviii. 2.
With vs. 3: Rom. xiv. 17; Isa. lxvii. 2.
With vs. 4: Heb. xii. 11; Rev. vii. 14; Eccles. vii. 2, 3.
With vs. 5: Matt. xxi. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 4, 15; Ps. xxxvii. 11.
With vs. 6: Ps. xvii. 15; Ps. lxxv. 4.
With vs. 7: Ps. xli. 1, 2; Matt. xviii. 35.
With vs. 8: Ps. xxiv. 3, 4; Heb. xii. 14.
With vs. 9: Ps. xxxiv. 14; John xiv. 27.
With vs. 12: 2 Cor. iv. 17; Rom. viii. 18.
With vs. 16: 1 Pet. ii. 12.

TRUE CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Characteristics, Vs. 3-10. II. Promises, Vs. 3-10. III. Duties, Vs. 11-16.

QUESTIONS.—How much time elapsed between the temptation of Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount? What was Jesus doing in this interval? On what mountain was this sermon preached? Why did he go into the mountain? Why did the multitudes follow him? (Matt. iv. 23-25.) To whom did Jesus address this sermon? (v. 1.) What is meant by "disciples"? What is the lesson topic? What "kingdom" is meant? Who is its King? Why do we call him a King?

Vs. 3-10.—Eight characteristics of the true children of the kingdom are specified here:—what are they? What does each mean? Of what are such qualities the fruits? (Gal. v. 22, 23).

Vs. 3-10.—With each characteristic of his true children Jesus joins a promise—name each in its order. What do they severally mean? Who may claim these promises?

Vs. 11-16.—Of what use is salt? Of what use should Christians be? What of Christian living? Of what use is salt or piety if the savor be lost? What other title is given the true children? What new duty does this enforce?

What name is given to the sayings in v. 3-10? What strange source of joy have the true children? What other sources of joy have they? What duties have they as the salt of the earth? What as the light of the world? At what should children of the kingdom aim? (Phil. ii. 15.)

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Verse 1.—Disciples.—The connection in Luke vi. 13-16 shows that the twelve had been selected just prior to this discourse. These were addressed primarily, and others too were taught.

Verse 3.—Blessed.—Happy now and to be so for ever. In these beatitudes Jesus goes counter to all the notions of the Jews. Poor in spirit: the reverse of proud in spirit, haughty. Theirs is: they have the evidence that Christ rules in them. Rom. xiv. 17.

Verse 4.—Mourn.—All sorrow is profitable to those in the kingdom. Rom. v. 3-5.

Verse 5.—Meek.—The opposite of ambitious, self-seeking. As Israel of old inherited Canaan, so the whole earth is assured to the meek. Matt. vi. 33.

Verse 8.—See God.—Kings were wont to conceal themselves from the public; only the most favored saw the king. The pure in heart are thus favored with access to God.

Verse 9.—Peacemakers.—Christ was

the model peacemaker (Col. i. 20): he was also God's beloved Son, and those like him are God's children.

Verse 10.—Are persecuted.—This is the treatment to be expected by the true children, hence the amplification and closer application of v. 11, 12. Righteousness' sake: because the marks of the true children of righteousness are on them. So in v. 11, "for my sake," and the evil is said "falsely."

Verse 12.—In heaven.—Where abundant compensations are graciously granted.

Verse 13.—Salt.—The world-wide preservative and source of flavor; such are Christians. Gen. xviii. 32. Salt, when its active properties are gone, is fit only to be cast out.

Verse 15.—Candle.—Lamp and lamp stand, instead of candlestick.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class.

Jesus had entered upon his work, and now preaches his first sermon. He had healed some people sick with different kinds of diseases, and cast wicked spirits out of some, and the people followed him about, curious to see what he would do next. Seeing so many people, he went up to a mountain and sat down on the ground, while the people gathered around him, anxious to see and hear him. The first word of that wonderful sermon was blessed, and as soon as he opened his mouth a stream of blessings flowed out, for it seemed as if his heart was so full of blessings that he could talk of nothing else until he had told all these. Eight or ten times he told of those who should be blessed; yet these were only the beginning of the blessings he came to give. More than a thousand years before he was born on earth David said of him, "Men shall be blessed in him, all nations shall call him blessed." Ps. lxxii. 17. And now it had come true. But the things which he called blessed are very different from those which most persons would think such. He did not say, Blessed are the rich, the joyful, the great, those who eat dainty food; but, Blessed are the poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who are persecuted, those who are reviled. If you wish to be children of the King, to belong to the kingdom, to be his true disciples, you must have these qualities that the Saviour speaks of.—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Youths' Department.

The Smiling Dolly.

A LITTLE STORY FOR A VERY LITTLE GIRL. I whispered to my Dolly, And told her not to tell, (She's a really lovely Dolly— Her name is Rosabel).

"Rosy," I said, "stop smiling, For I've been dreadful bad! You mustn't look so pleasant, As if you felt real glad!"

"I took mamma's new ear ring— I did, now, Rosabel— And I never even asked her— Now, Rosy, don't you tell!"

"You see I'll try to find it Before I let her know; She'd feel so very sorry To think I'd acted so."

I had wheeled her round the garden In her gig till I was lame; Yet when I told my trouble, She smiled on just the same!

Her hair waved down her shoulders Like silk, all made of gold, I kissed her, then I shook her, Oh, dear! how I did scold!

"You're really naughty, Rosy, To look so when I cry. When my mamma's in trouble I never laugh—not I."

And still she kept on smiling, The queer, provoking child! I shook her well and told her Her conduct drove me wild.

When—only think! that ear-ring Fell out of Rosy's hair! When I had dressed the darling, I must have dropped it there.

She doubled when I saw it, And almost hit her head; Again I whispered softly, And this is what I said:

"You precious, precious Rosy! Now I'll go tell mamma How bad I was—and sorry— And, O, how good you are."

"For, Rose, I hadn't lost it; You knew it all the while, You knew I'd shake it out, dear And that's what made you smile."

The first Snow-storm.

(JUST SIX MINUTES LONG.)

Thousand little fairies Dressed in dazzling white, Tossing, tumbling, flying, Each with all his might!

Whisking through the branches Of the bending trees; Kissing rosy faces Without "If you please."

Tossing, tumbling, flying, Dancing through the sky, 'Till the sun comes laughing, And they shout, "Good-by!"

Scripture Enigma.

No. 56.

- 1. A bird that furnished meat for the Israelites in the wilderness.
2. The birthplace of an ancient patriarch.
3. The eldest son of Shem.
4. The man who refused a reasonable request of King David.
5. A name of one of the apostles, signifying a rock.
6. The father of Lot.
7. A mountain which overlooked the promised land.
8. The Mount of Ascension.
9. The sea on whose shores our Saviour did many mighty works.
10. A fellow-laborer of Paul in missionary work.
11. The mother of the prophet Samuel.
12. The priest to whom he ministered.
13 and 14. Two men who sang praises while in prison.
15. The father of Jacob.
16. The name of his mother.
17. The name given signifying the glory is departed.
18. The disciple who was absent at Christ's first interview with His disciples after His resurrection.

The initials of these names form an important injunction of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Thessalonians.

CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- No. 29. Make a square of words of the following names:
1. The Apostle Peter's father.
2. King David's grandfather.
3. The grandfather of Zerobabel in the genealogy of Christ.
4. The head of 454 who went back to Jerusalem from Babylon.

Answer to Enigma.

No. 55.

- 1. Wonderful.....Isaiah ix. 6.
2. A mram.....1 Chron. vi. 3.
3. L ebanon.....Sol. Song iii. 9.
4. K ing David.....1 Chron. xix. 5.
5. I ncense.....Num. xvi. 46-48.
6. N ineveh.....Jonah iv. 11.

- 7. L evites.....Deut. xxxi. 24-27.
8. O phir.....1 Kings x. 11.
9. V ophsi.....Num. xiii. 14.
10. E den.....Gen. iii. 7.

The exhortation to the Church at Ephesus, so applicable to the Churches at the present day is

"WALK IN LOVE." Eph. v. 2.

ANSWERS TO CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- No. 27. Joshua. Josh. xviii. 9.
28. Cork in Ireland.

Select Serial.

Florence Walton,

OR,

A Question of Duty.

BY MAY F. MCKEAN.

CHAPTER II.—MISS GRACE MARKWELL.

Just why Miss Grace Markwell had never married had long been a subject of discussion and speculation to which was attached the greatest amount of interest by her numerous Westtown friends, but all their speculations and arguments brought them no nearer the truth than at first. But as this is a matter which does not concern our story, the reader must share the uncertainty of the rest of the Westtownians.

Another subject of importance to many of her friends was, "Why should Miss Markwell ever think of such a queer idea as taking a boarder?" Sometimes some of them even ventured to interrogate her upon this point; and then her answer was always given with the very sweetest of smiles: "You must know, my dear, Dr. Ronselle is not like any other boarder. I assure

you I would never consent to open my house as a common boarding-house. But, you see, the doctor is quite out of the ordinary run; he is intelligent, handsome, accepted in the best society—the very best, my dear—and he is really very wealthy. It is an accommodation to him, to be sure, to have a home in our set, but I find it very pleasant to have him with us too."

She had vouchsafed this much to her sister on the first evening of her arrival after they had retired from the porch; and Mrs. Walton had received the intelligence with a little look of astonishment, because, you must know, Mrs. Walton was one of the very few persons who did not think particularly strange of her having a boarder. To be sure, she knew as well as any one that her esteemed sister was what the world calls wealthy, but that there was anything so peculiar as to require any sort of an apology in the fact of Dr. Ronselle boarding with her had never entered her innocent mind. It was only for an instant that her thoughts rested upon this fact now. It was her sister's tone as much as her words that caused her immediately to revert to her own recently-assumed position in the household. She grew a little confused, and was about to speak, when Miss Grace continued very blandly:

"You see, sister, so many think it strange, but then I've money enough to allow me to do pretty much as I please, without minding what people may think. Now, in your case it is entirely different. I can imagine just how you must feel: with husband, health, and home all gone, without even enough to keep up appearances, of course you have to study popular opinion and—"

"Sister Grace, what are you saying?" It was the first time since her bereavement that she had heard her losses spoken of as matters of purely worldly regard. Besides, her sister looked at almost everything from a different standpoint from that in which she herself viewed it.

"I was merely remarking that you—" began the ever-smiling Miss Grace.

"Please spare your remarks; I don't feel able to hear them just now; but perhaps it would suit you better if Florence and I were to find another boarding-place," Mrs. Walton replied with what composure she could command.

Miss Grace looked up in surprise:

"Why, sister Jennie, why should you think of leaving us? I know that in your enfeebled state of health you will need much more to make you comfortable than otherwise, but I hope we shall be able to make everything pleasant for you; you surely could not hope to find a nicer home?"

Even Mrs. Walton, with all her natural amiability of character, softened and strengthened by Christ's love in her heart, could not restrain the just indignation which rose at these most unsisterly words. She replied:

"And yet, sister Grace, neither Florence nor I possess those qualities which make Dr. Ronselle welcome as a boarder in your family; we are neither of us wealthy, beautiful, nor accepted in the best of Westtown society, being entirely unacquainted here."

"Oh, but you are my sister. The cases are not at all parallel. Certainly you must remain. Anyway, you and my niece would not be looked upon exactly as boarders—more as one of the family, you know; and as for society, my name is sufficient guarantee for your ready admittance there."

"We would not remain an unwelcome member of any family," replied Mrs. Walton, perhaps a little bitterly; she was so disappointed, so very much disappointed, in this reception from her sister.

"Unwelcome? Why, Jennie, how strangely you talk! As if any one could be more welcome to my heart and home than my eldest sister! Of course you are and always will be welcome. I think you must be tired out by your long journey; you will feel in better spirits when you have rested; will you retire soon?"

But Mrs. Walton did not wish to disturb the young folks, and preferred waiting until Florence should come to her. Miss Markwell chattered on very pleasantly and as if quite unconscious of their late conversation. She talked of the fashions, the weather, the last boating-party among the young folks; of the

new church edifice completed but a few weeks previous; of Ethel; of Dr. Ronselle; of Clifford Walraven; in fact, of anything in which she could take the lead and leave her sister to manifest her interest by a nod or a monosyllabic answer. Mrs. Walton was thoroughly wearied by the time the young ladies appeared, and Florence assisted her to retire.

At that hour in two apartments of Miss Markwell's elegant home were two very different scenes. The accomplished owner of all this wealth and beauty was resting carelessly in a large easy-chair. She had removed the braids and curls from her comely head and loosened her own still abundant tresses, which fell in dainty ripples over finely rounded shoulders, for Miss Grace was still in the very prime of her womanhood, though the rains and dews of thirty-eight summers had fallen into her life.

She was evidently well satisfied with herself this evening. Yes, she had done just what she had intended doing—just what she was always doing; she had impressed those around her with the magnitude of her importance, owing to the amount of her bonds, real estate, bank account, and other possessions. She had striven to convey the idea that she was doing an exceedingly gracious commendable act in thus opening her heart and home to receive her bereaved sister as one of her family. She thought it always best that persons should know at the very outset just what their standing and relation was; she had shown that this evening. She was the rich Miss Grace Markwell—her sister a charity to care for. Certainly, Miss Markwell thought she had reason to congratulate herself upon her charity. But, alas! the right hand knew full well what the left was doing. She saw her reflection in the glass as she was sitting there, and felt well pleased with herself generally.

In another room—which, though it lacked the superb elegance of Miss Grace's apartment, was still very beautifully and appropriately furnished—sat Mrs. Walton. Older than her sister by nearly eighteen years, she no longer laid claim to beauty on the score of youth, yet there was that in her face which far more than compensated for its loss. Her hair was still soft and rather abundant, but silvery in its whiteness. Like the shining crown of glory it encircled her sweet face, from which love and peace spoke to the beholder.

But just now a shadow rested upon that dear face. She too reclined in an easy-chair, wearily now, as Florence went quickly about getting everything in readiness for her comfort.

Should she tell her daughter all that was in her heart? Perhaps then the shadow would extend its influence to that young heart as well. No, she would keep the unsisterly words she had just heard locked in her own keeping.

"That will do now, Florence dear," she said presently; "you are a good daughter. Now, if you will, please read to me. My head aches so badly I fear I could not see."

"Not one of your old headaches, I hope? I should have been more thoughtful and not kept you up so long," returned the daughter as she stroked back the silvery hair. And then a moment after, as she took up her mother's Bible, "Where shall I read this evening, mother dear?"

Florence found the place, and read slowly and distinctly all that wonderful psalm, in which David is encouraging his heart to more faith in God. Very soothingly the words fell upon the listening ear, and as the youthful voice ceased the aged one repeated, as if forgetful of her listener.

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." That is it. Why should we be disquieted and cast down when the path is not just smooth? I think he sent us here; perhaps we may have a work to do for him. I will hope in him; I shall yet have cause to praise him."

Florence, ignorant of what was passing in her mother's mind, thought of but one part of this soliloquy; to this she answered quickly.