

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1881.

FOURTH QUARTER.

- 1. October 2. Free Giving. Exodus xxxv. 25-35.
2. October 9. The Tabernacle. Ex. xl. 1-16.
3. October 16. The Burnt Offering. Lev. i. 1-14.
4. October 23. The Peace Offering. Lev. vii. 11-18.
5. October 30. Nabad and Abihu. Lev. x. 1-11.
6. November 6. The Day of Atonement. Lev. xvi. 16-30.
7. November 13. The Feast of Tabernacles. Lev. xxiii. 33-44.
8. November 20. The Year of Jubilee. Lev. xxv. 8-17.
9. November 27. The Serpent in the Wilderness. Num. xxi. 1-9.
10. December 4. Balaam. Num. xxiv. 10-19.
11. December 11. Last Days of Moses. Deut. xxxii. 44-52.
12. December 18. Review of the Quarter's Lessons.
13. December 25. Publishing the Name of the Lord. Deut. xxxii. 1-4.

Lesson I.—OCTOBER 2.

FREE GIVING.

Exodus xxxv. 25-35.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Verses 25-29.

The last quarter's lessons covered the history of Israel in Egypt and Arabia up to the idolatry under Aaron, which God so severely punished. God finally forgave this sin, renewed the tables of stone containing the law, re-established his covenant with them, and proceeded to carry out the plans he had disclosed. Read from chap. xxxiii. 1 to the opening of this lesson.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. ix. 7.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. Free Giving, Exodus xxxv. 25-35.
T. Material for the Tabernacle, Exodus xxv. 1-9.
W. Offerings for the Tabernacle, Exodus xxxv. 4-24.
T. Offerings for the Temple, 1 Chron. xxix. 1-12.
F. Labor for the Temple, 2 Chron. ii. 1-16.
S. Wisdom from God, James i. 1-17.
S. Freewill Offerings, Exodus xxxv. 25-35.

FREEWILL OFFERINGS OF THE REDEEMED NATION.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. Freewill Offerings of Work, Vs. 25, 26. II. Freewill Offerings of Goods, Vs. 27-29. III. Freewill Offerings of Instruction, Vs. 30-35.

QUESTIONS.—For what was free giving required?

Vs. 25, 26.—What work for the tabernacle was done by the women? What condition of heart had these women? By what were they stirred up to this work? What kinds of work are acceptable with God? In what spirit should all work for God be done? (1 Cor. xv. 58).

Vs. 27-29.—What four articles are mentioned as brought by the rulers? For what uses were these? Who else brought offerings? To whom?

Vs. 30-35.—What workman did the Lord now call by name? What qualifications had the Lord put into this man's heart? Whom else did the Lord fit for this service?

ANALYSIS.—The intercession of Moses with God, on account of Israel's idolatry, prevailed: and God, who had threatened to simply send an "angel" before his people (xxxiii. 2), because they were "stiff-necked," and appeared to Moses only "without the camp" (xxxiii. 7), as if he would have nothing to do with the people, at last said: "My presence shall go with thee." Having comforted Israel with the assurance of forgiveness, Moses was called again "into the mount," to meet God, where he tarried another period of forty days and forty nights. He carried with him two tables, freshly hewn out of the rock (xxxiv. 4), upon which the Decalogue was inscribed anew. There, God also gave commandments concerning the government of Israel and Divine worship; and also directions as to the construction of the tabernacle. Having repeated to the people the law of the Sabbath, he informed them concerning the tabernacle, and called for voluntary offerings with which to build it. The inspiring scene of their response forms our lesson.

NOTE.—I. Willing Offerers, (vs. 25-29).

Verses 25, 26.—All the women. The position of woman among the Jews was very like her position with us, mingling freely with the other sex, in the family and among strangers. They, as well as the men, brought their jewelry and golden ornaments as an offering unto the Lord. That women, with the Oriental passion for personal decoration, should do this, gives evidence of the enthusiasm of the occasion. Wise-hearted. Apt, ingenious, skillful. It is put for "wise headed"; for, among the Hebrews, the heart was the seat of mental power, as well as of the affections. They were wise hearted, too, in being moved by a love for God's house. Did spin? Spinning was done by women, in very early times, in Egypt. It consisted of little more than a twisting of the fibres together with the hand to form a yarn, which was given over to the men to weave, (vs. 35). Blue, purple, scarlet. The Hebrews had a sacred symbolism of color. The blue was the heavenly color, being the deep, dark blue, or violet of the Oriental sky. It well represented heavenly love in its depth and serenity. It is so used in sacred art. The dye was obtained from a shell fish, and also from indigo, in a manner which is now one of the lost arts. The purple was the far-famed Tyrian dye, obtained from a shell fish found upon the Phoenician coast; very costly and rare, because each fish yielded but a drop of the liquid dye. In the course of time, it became the royal color; and the Roman Emperors restricted its use to their own families. The scarlet was a flaming red, the gorgeous color belonging to earth, as the blue belonged to the heavens. It represented what was brilliant and glaring. See Isa. i. 18; Cant. iv. 3; Josh. ii. 18. The three colors together with white, were employed in the textures used for the curtains of the tabernacle, and for the sacred vestments of the priests. Fine linen, spun from flax that grew on the banks of the Nile. A very delicate fabric, literally worth its weight in gold. It is the "silk" of Prov. xxxi. 22. It was used as the ground of the figured work of the tabernacle, as well as of the embroidered hangings of the tent and court. Goat's hair. The hair of some varieties of goats is fine and soft. This was, probably, of the finer texture, like the material of the Cashmere Shawl. The cloth woven of this thread was used for "a covering upon the tabernacle," (Ex. xxvi. 7).

Verses 27, 28.—The rulers, or chief of the families, as having more wealth, brought onyx-stones, etc. No one can tell, certainly, what gems are meant, as used in the ephod and breast-plate, with the single exception of the sapphire in the breast-plate, which Moses describes as a transparent blue stone, like the firmament of heaven, (Exodus xxiv. 10). The onyx-stones, whatever they may have been, were two in number; set in ouches of gold; engraved with the names of the tribes of Israel, six in each stone; and were worn on the shoulders of the high priest, where they clasped, or held together, the two parts of the ephod, or priestly robe,—one part covering his back, and the other his breast. See Ex. xxviii. 9-13. The breastplate. (See xxviii. 15-22. This most costly and glorious part of the high-priest's dress was made of "fine twined linen, embroidered with gold and blue, purple and scarlet, and fastened with the gold chains to the onyx-stones on the shoulders, and also to the girdle around the waist. It had four rows of three precious stones, making twelve in all set in gold, and having inscribed on them the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. The magnificent breast plate seems to have been a purse or pocket, to carry a greater treasure,—the speaking gem, or the "Urim and Thummim,"—which may have been a diamond of matchless splendor. The twelve tribes were borne continually upon the shoulders and breast of the high-priest; and "whatever their errors or failures, their names glittered with unfading brilliancy."

Spice and oil. Olive-oil, made fragrant by the infusion of spices, was used for anointing the priests and the sanctuary utensils, and became a symbol of the Holy Spirit in consecration. See 1 Sam. x. 1, 6; 1 John ii. 20. The oil for the light was pure, beaten olive-oil (Ex. xxvii. 20), burned in the "golden candlestick." Verse 29.—A willing offering. Several things conspired to move them to this open-hearted liberality. 1. Penitence for their recent transgression. 2. A desire for localized worship; an intense craving for a place where Jehovah would dwell among them. 3. With these, the higher motive of love to God, and gratitude for his favors. Large giving was needed; as the tabernacle, with its furniture, is estimated to have cost a million and a quarter of dollars. For its construction, the most specific directions had been given. Nothing about it was left to man's devising. II. Wise Workers, (vs. 30-35). Moses reminds the people of the solemn call. xxxi. 1-6. Bezaleel. He sprang from the tribe (afterwards royal) of Judah; and his grandfather Hur was, most likely, the associate of Aaron, in holding up the hands of Moses, (xvii. 10). He seems to have been superintendent of the whole work. For this purpose, he was filled with the Spirit of God. God chose a man who had wisdom; that is, sound judgment; understanding, or the power to discern,—the perceptive faculty; and knowledge, or experience,—a practical acquaintance with all that required mechanical skill. To these, the Lord added his Spirit, that all of his attainments might be used to the highest possible advantage. With him, he associated Aholiab, from the tribe of Dan who, according to xxxviii. 23, was an engraver, a cunning workman, an embroiderer in blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen.

There is something in the Lord's work for everybody to do, and everybody should do something. The delightful spirit of unity and of co-operation was, of itself, the assurance of success in the erection of the tabernacle. There can no difficulties stand before a harmonious church. Large giving is pleasing to the Lord. For this brings the giver toward the standard of Him who, though rich, yet yet for our sakes became poor. No class is more indebted to Christianity than the women; and nowhere does woman find so large an opportunity for efficient service, as in the Church of Christ.

For the Teacher of the Primary Class. Who went up Mount Sinai to talk with God? What did God give Moses to carry down to the people? What happened to those stones? Give the account, as in Ex. xxxiv. 1, 4, 28-35. When Moses came down the second time, did he find an idol? Had he been away as long as before? A few days after Moses came down the second time, you would have seen men and women coming to Moses. The women are bringing ear rings and bracelets and all kinds of jewels and precious stones; the men, too, are bringing gold and silver, brass, wood, and the skins of animals; some of the skins are colored red. Some are bringing fine linen and beautiful threads of blue, purple, and scarlet; others are carrying oil and sweet-smelling spices. While Moses was up on Mount Sinai, God had shown him the pattern of a beautiful tabernacle, or tent. God had told Moses just how to make it. It was to be God's tabernacle. Explain Ex. xxix. 43. The people were so glad to make a tabernacle for God, that they kept on coming every morning with more gifts. At last, one of the workmen went to Moses and said: "The people bring much more than enough." They were willing, cheerful givers. Our Golden Text tells us what God thinks of such givers. God loves them, every one. Where does God look, to see if you are a cheerful giver? —Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

An Association has been formed of several titled ladies of England, including the Princess of Wales, to encourage the sheep interest by popularizing garments made of home grown wool. This is considered important in view of low prices consequent on large supplies from foreign countries. A Lincolnshire farmer who used to realize £1,400 for his yearly clip, cannot at present obtain more than £600 for the same weight, and while the importations of yarn and woolen manufactures in 1859 were only one and a quarter million sterling, they had increased in 1878 to seven millions.

Booths' Department.

Scripture Enigma.

No. 139.

1. "God's way is perfect, and his word is tried"; What is He to his saints, when they abide Beneath his shadow, and in Him confide?

2. Of all sweet blossoms that in Canaan bloom, What is it sheds the loveliest perfume, And only in the sweetest vale finds room?

3. When God shall rise his people to set free, As when He once led Israel through the sea, What shall awake in dreadful majesty?

4. What do we call the simple instrument Fixed in the wall, or in the bare earth bent, To bear the glory, or sustain the tent?

5. When saints together stand in order due, Built on the prophets and apostles true, What is it that in Christ Himself we view?

6. God chose on Zion's holy hill to rest, That so his priests and people might be blest: What there should bud and be with splendour drest?

By no dark hints or subtle questions vexed, Find the plain answers from the sacred text, And range th' initials in due order next.

And now behold! from Jesse's roots upspring, Made strong for Him who strength from weakness brings, The Son of David, and the King of Kings!

Selected.

CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

241. What well-to-do fisherman is named in the gospels.

242. Who was the first one supposed to be "the son of promise."

243. What pious mother taught her son what she had learned from her mother?

244. Decapitate an open field, and leave belonging to one; a sign, and leave people; a covering, and leave an essential of life; part of a book, and leave the time of life.

245. Form a diamond of the following words:

- 1. The end of bad.
2. A town in Ireland.
3. The Psalmist.
4. The essence of badness.
5. The beginning of noise.

246. A toad in a well twenty feet deep, hops up six feet every day, but falls back each night five feet, thus gaining one foot a day. In how many days can it get out of the well?

247. A hare on one side of a stream wants to cross with twenty ears of corn. He can take but three ears at a time. How often must he go each way to accomplish his task?

Answer to Scripture Enigma.

No. 138.

- 1. E d i f y i n g...Eph. iv. 29.
2. A n d r o n i c u s...Rom. xvi. 7.
3. R e h o b o a m...1 Kings xii. 1, 19.
4. T a t n a i...Ezra v. 3.
5. H o s e a...2 Kings xvii. 1-6.
6. I n s t r u c t...Psa. xxxii. 8.
7. S p o u s e...Song of Sol. iv. 8-12.
8. M e r o d a c h...Jer. i. 2.
9. Y e r l o w...Psa. lxxviii. 13.
"EARTH IS MY FOOTSTOOL." Acts vii. 49; Isa. lxvi. 1.

ANSWERS TO CURIOUS QUESTIONS.

239. SOLOMON OLIVER LINEN OVER MEN OR N

- 240. 1. J ehoida.
2. A chan.
3. M ary.
4. E lizabeth.
5. S ycamore.
6. T yre.
7. H ezekiah.
8. E sau.
9. L ystra.
10. E sther.
11. S aul.
12. S tephen.

JAMES THE LESS.

Never hold any one by the button or the hand in order to be heard out; for if people are unwilling to hear you, you had better hold your tongue than them.

We behold all round about us one vast union in which no man can labor himself, without laboring at the same time for all others.

BEN-ONI;

OR,

THE MISSION OF CHILDHOOD.

BY DR. LORIMER.

I.

The heavens were darkened with the whiteness of falling snow, the earth shivered beneath its tender caresses, the melancholy winds moaned under its burden, the gaunt bare trees bent wearily beneath its load of colorless, icy fruit, and the narrow, crooked streets of Boston town were filled with its chilling drifts. Down it came steadily, merrily, persistently, insistently, with the footfall of an infant and the grip of a giant, now whirling and eddying, then flying and driving, and then lazily and idly, as though faltering and irresolute. Sometimes the fleecy shower gleamed and gamboled, sparkled and frolicked, like selfish spirits, and then in changeful mood it came slowly and solemnly, like dying souls approaching their final resting place.

Snow, snow, snow! nothing but snow, snow everywhere! It looked like an invasion of angels, though in each immaculate flake there dwelt the frigidity of cruel fiends; it resembled a host of busy philanthropists intent on purifying the city, but whose excessive zeal when thawed would only leave the city fouler than before. It decked everything in white—the stores in which greed drives its grinding trade, the muddy streets over which commerce rolls its wealth of enterprise, the stately court-house where political chicanery thrives, in the name of patriotism, and the churches where heartless formalism holds its Sabbath-worship—as though intent on making the outside of the platter clean while all within is foul and feculent. Ah me! what a mocker is the "beautiful snow;" it paints all things in the holy hues which they should wear, and suggests the blamelessness which should reign within, and as we chatter and shudder at the sermon, it melts away and disappears. In effect it says, "This is all your boasted reforms and reformers can do for you; they can only clean up and polish the outside of the social sepulchre, while its indwelling rottenness remains untouched; yea, so morally boggy, swampy and putrid is your world that it would even defile the sanctity of angel inhabitants, just as it converts my crystal purity into sooty, nasty, dirty mud. A cold, biting, cutting cynic is the snow; and our poor hearts would be as those hyperboreal regions where the violet never blooms, where no flower of hope could flourish, were it not that Christ has appeared among men, fairer than the fairest of nature's elements, and more potent, and healing than the sun in its glory. And, blessed be God! when the storms of earth are fiercest, and the tempest is most pitiless, and human beings crouch most selfishly round the blazing hearth, secure at home leaving the dreary outcast to the glacial charity of hoar winter, Jesus does not withdraw from the ways of men, but through the awful crash and roar of the gale, defying the icy sleet and the Arctic wind, seeks the houseless, the friendless and abandoned, that he may warm them into a nobler life in his bosom.

I never could understand why so many poets and romancers fall into ecstasies over the varied beauties and the lustrous loveliness of the snow. Yet that they do so is familiar to all who are familiar with literature. They eulogize it, idealize it, extol it, rhyme about it, and quietly overlook the fact that no savage scourge of the race was ever so callous or ever perpetrated so much mischief. It is at once a deceiver and a destroyer—like the crooked-back Richard, it smiles, and murders while it smiles, and seems most like a saint when most it plays the devil.

It blinds the mariner as he nears the rock-bound coast; and he who has steered his vessel safely through the uncompromising tempests of the surging sea, goes down in sight of home, misled by the treachery of this seeming pious element. The simple peasant in the valleys dreads its approach; for he knows from sad experience that, let it come ever so softly and innocently, it will gather up its might, and taking its signal from the sun, will break loose from mountain fastnesses, and will bury in its descending rush all that he holds dear or values. Although it looks so harmless, it will derange the commerce