

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

For the Christian Messenger. Letter from Rev. Mr. George. ZEONG, BURMA, May 15th, 1883.

Dear Editor,— What a feast of good things you have been able to give us during the last six months, every issue containing accounts of revivals in the churches. All good men must rejoice when God manifests His presence in the conversion of sinners and in the building up of the saints...

We now have six schools in our district, scholars averaging 30 in each, where the gospel is taught daily, and a Sunday School every Sunday morning. I hear good reports from several other stations, and you will be glad to hear that this is a year of grace for Burma as well as for Nova Scotia.

Sincerely your brother, Wm. GEORGE.

Missionary Correspondence.

There has been considerable uneasiness for a year past on account of armed bands of robbers. They would enter an out-of-the-way village and take possession, everything was at their command while they chose to remain, and woe to the village that dared to report their visit.

This has been a very hot season and the rains are late, only a shower about the tenth and bright sunshine ever since. For more than a month I have not tried jungle travel. Having lost nearly four years from my work in order to recuperate, I do not want to break down now from any reckless exposure.

In the absence of anything later from our missionaries we give the remainder of Mrs. Churchill's letter dated April 20th from the C. M. Link: On Friday we went over to visit the Yellamas. At the first house there are only three of a family—an old man, a widow, his daughter, who lost her husband a few months ago; and her daughter, also a widow since her childhood.

The old lady was very ill a month ago, so ill that I did not think she could recover. For more than a week she could not speak and could scarcely hear anything, but always greeted me with a smile when I went to see her. She was the one who first opened the door to the Yellamas to me, and I have always felt that she must be saved. She confesses before them all, seemingly sincerely, that she believes in Jesus and that He is the only Saviour.

Just as I got home, two Yellama men came to see me. One said he had a sick son at home, his only child, and wanted me to go to see him. The other said, 'You cured my son two years ago and I have brought this man to you that you may cure his son.'

I had to attend to something else and left the foregoing unfinished, but will send it now as I have not time to rewrite. We are well and busy. My wife has a class of Bible women, and I a class of preachers. Five of these men have been employed as preachers, and five of them are new men.

While I was there, there was considerable talk about a piece of cloth, and I asked what it meant. They informed me that this cloth, or quaka, had been purchased without asking the Brahmans whether it was a good day or not, and afterwards it proved to have been a bad day.

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At the house where the sick child was, we found the father holding him. I asked for the mother, 'O, she is in there,' he said. 'Sick?' I asked. 'Yes, a little.' Some other person whispered what I already knew, but had forgotten for the moment.

During the dust storm, in looking toward the east, we saw the glare from a burning village, which we at first thought was our own town burning. It must have been a hard time for the poor unfortunates to become homeless and homeless.

ZEONG, BURMA.—On March 24 we began a very successful three-days' meeting at Zeong. More than one hundred were present on Sunday, all from our own district.

CHINA, A New Experience.—Among the number baptized were four old men, heads of families, to whom late in life the gospel had come with its glorious message. Hard-featured, rugged specimens of humanity were they apparently; but they showed in their examination good evidence of having gladly accepted the offer of salvation.

ABORIGINES IN INDIA.—There is a large population of aborigines, a people who are outside caste, who do not belong to any of the old established religions, who are not under the influence of bigoted and hereditary superstition; and these aborigines offer a clear field upon which the missionaries may operate.

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1883. THIRD QUARTER. Lesson VIII.—AUGUST 19, 1883. ISRAEL FORSAKING GOD. Judges ii. 6-16. COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 14-16.

- DAILY HOME READINGS. The Lesson and Context, Judges ii. 11-23. Israel's Negligence, Judges ii. 1-5. Israel's Apostasy, Judges iii. 1-11. Judgments and Mercies, Ps. lxxviii. 54-72. Warning to the Impenitent, Acts xiii 38-52. Warning to Christians, 1 John ii. 15-29. A New Heart, Heb., ch. viii.

ISRAEL FAITHLESS TO JEHOVAH. LESSON OUTLINE.—I. A Wicked Generation, Vs. 6-10 II. Idolatry, Vs. 11-13. III Judgment and Mercy, Vs. 14-16.

QUESTIONS.—What does the Book of Judges record? Vs. 6-10.—What was the character of the new generation? What was the trouble? What does this fact prove? What was the general character of the Jewish nation? Vs. 11-13.—Into what did Israel fall? How did it come about? ch. iii. 5-7 How did Jehovah regard their conduct? How does he regard idolatry now? Can there be idolatry without worshipping images? Vs. 14-16.—How was Israel punished? What predictions and warnings were fulfilled? What did God from time to time raise up? For what purpose? Give the earlier examples of judgment and mercy found in ch. iii. When delivered, was the reformation of Israel permanent? ch. ii. 17-19 What did this show as to their character? What list of the Judges, ending with Samuel, at last became of Israel? What lesson for sinners who hear the gospel?

The beginning of this chapter records the visit of an angel of the Lord to Israel with a sharp rebuke, because they had not entirely driven out the Canaanites from the land, but had suffered portions of the different heathen nations to remain. He tells them that these shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be as snares to you.

NOTES.—Vs. 6.—This verse, with the three succeeding verses, is a repetition, in nearly the same words, of Josh. xxiv 28-31. When Joshua had let the people go. From the great gathering at Shechem, spoken of in the last Lesson. Every man went to his inheritance, with a purpose strong within him to possess the land by driving out the heathen.

VS. 7.—The profound impression made upon Israel by their godly and courageous leader, is seen from the statement that the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua. The company of leading men or princes, who had been associated with him, were permeated with his spirit, and had seen all the great works of the Lord, such as the miraculous crossing of the Jordan, and the fall of Jericho.

VS. 9.—They buried him in the border (within the limits) of his inheritance. This was Timnath-heres (portion of the sun). The Jews see in this name a reference to the act of making the sun stand still, which is to them the greatest exploit of Joshua's life, as they state that the figure of the sun was carved upon the sepulchre.—McClintock and Strong. The name of this city in Josh. xix. 50, where we have the record of its grant to Joshua, and in Josh. xxiv. 30, is Timnath serah. The serah with its letters transposed is equivalent to heres, and is supposed to be meant for the same. This spot was given to Joshua at his

own request, after the partition of the country was completed. The exact locality is not identified.

VS. 10.—There arose another generation. As the new king of Egypt forgot Joseph (Ex. i. 8), so the new generation of Israel forgot the Lord. They were strangers to the solemnizing experience of their fathers, and too readily yielded to the corrupting influences of the idolatry that surrounded them.

VS. 11.—The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. The first utterance of this sad and familiar refrain. Seven times do we meet it in Judges, as descriptive of the seven apostasies of Israel, which brought upon them seven servitudes. Baalim. The plural form of Baal, and, according to Keil, a general term used to denote all false deities. 'Baal was the chief male deity of the Canaanites, and was worshipped by the different nations with peculiar modifications, and therefore designated by various distinctive epithets.' Such as Baal-berith; i. e., Covenant Baal; Baalzebub, Baal (lord) of the fly, and protector from it; Baal-peor, Baal presiding over the licentious rites of worship. There are similar modifications of the Mariolatry of Roman Catholic countries, but with the one and same object of idolatrous worship.

VS. 12, 13.—Forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt. Their folly and ingratitude could not be more strongly expressed. The God who delivered them by a series of astounding miracles from the degrading slavery of Egypt when they were broken and helpless, and had shown himself powerful and gracious, was cast off for the impotent and false deities of the people that were round about them, whom these gods could not protect. Bowed themselves. Publicly worshipped. See graphic picture of their sin in Pas. vi. 34-39. Ashtoroth. Also in the plural, the singular form being Ashtoreth. The female deity corresponding to Baal. Her worship was wide-spread, and the rites connected with it those of the most revolting licentiousness. The effort to mingle such worship with the worship of Jehovah, was, in the highest degree, insulting to God.

VS. 14, 15.—Hence the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel. 'Our God is a consuming fire' (Heb. xii. 29). The intensity of his nature is seen in his indignation against sin as well as in his love of holiness. He delivered them into the hands of spoilers, etc., as he had declared he would if they forsook him (Josh. xxiv. 20). God is as true to his threatenings as to his promises of grace. He withdrew his aid from them, by which they had heretofore conquered, and used the wicked nations as scourges for them. They were defeated in battle, and given over to the plunderings of their enemies. Nor did the Lord merely refrain from helping them; for his hand (power) was against them for evil. All their undertakings at home and abroad were out of joint. Everywhere they were baffled and overcome. Greatly distressed. As any people would be that were given over to the horrors and cruelties inflicted upon a conquered nation in ancient times.

VS. 16.—Nevertheless. God is a God of grace as well as of justice. He made provision for their deliverance upon repentance. The Lord raised up. By prompting men at critical times of Israel's oppression to undertake their deliverance, and giving them courage and power for the work. Judges. A unique order, not like the ordinary judges of the theocracy (Ex. xviii. 21-26), but called for a specific purpose according to Israel's needs, and endowed with extraordinary powers. There were four different judges, including Deborah, during the period of this Book. They began their authority with an act of national deliverance, and generally combined military leadership with civil rule. The office was not hereditary; but each one was specially called of God for the service.

SUGGESTED LESSONS. This Lesson forcibly illustrates the danger of ungodly associations. 'Evil communications corrupt good manners.'—The Israelites were ashamed of being singular, and therefore joined in the popular idol-worship around them. Notice their progressive steps in sin. First they forgot, then they forsook the Lord, and then boldly served Baal. Baal worship is as popular to-day as then. The world, self, unholy pleasure, mammon, have their millions of votaries. Let the Christian beware lest he be drawn away from his Lord.

God does not share in any sickly sentimentalism about sin. He hates and punishes it. The golden thread of grace is seen in the texture of judgment. God makes provision for the deliverance of his people, even while he smites.

Help for Parents, or for the Teacher of the Primary Class.

We have three Lessons in the Book of Judges. This one gives a general view of the people of Israel during the period between the conquest of Palestine and the establishing of the monarchy under Saul. There were good times and evil times. Obedience and disobedience. Prosperity and adversity. The first chapter relates their partial work of driving out the Canaanites. The idolatry and evil practices of the Canaanites were cruel and revolting in the extreme. God sent his people into that land to purify it, and fit it to be the home of a people to whom his oracles were committed, and from whom should come the Saviour of men. The Canaanites were like a cancer in the human body; nothing less than the severest measures will do for such a disease, and nothing short of destruction, full and complete, would meet their case. It was just and right that they should be removed from the land, and the people of Israel were merely the agents of God in effecting his purpose.

The 'Judges' of Israel were the Rulers raised up at special times. When Israel was in distress, and bowed down in repentance, they were often lifted up and brought near to God by the leadership of the Judges. For perhaps fifty years, Israel was faithful, through the period when Joshua ruled them, and during the period of the elders who lived after the death of Joshua. Then they forgot God. We forgot God! Yet how much greater, in every way, our privileges and helps to remembrance. In forgetting, they easily drifted away from God, and so, though perhaps they did not at first mean to do so, they forsook God. Perhaps they did not like to be different from their neighbors. They wanted to be well thought of by the Canaanites. So they went one step lower, and followed Baal. Sin is sure to be linked with suffering. Becoming the servant of sin we live in it day by day until sin has entire dominion over us. Except we turn to God again, we are lost forever.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

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