

# Sunday Reading.

## THE LEGEND OF JUDAS.

A Curious Story Which Has Been Handed Down from the Middle Ages.

A recent writer in a Scotch paper says that the legendary "Life" of Judas Iscariot appears to have been introduced into European literature by Jacobus a Voragine, one of the countless writers of exempla, or "moralized" tales for the use of preachers, in the later middle ages. From Voragine it was taken into the "Life of St. Matthew" in the Golden Legend, printed by Caxton, and afterwards by Wynkyn de Worde (1512), and thence into the Polyconicon. This legend of the Arch-Traitor soon became part of the popular literature of Europe, and, in chapbook form, continued to be frequently reprinted till so late as the first quarter of the present century. In 1773 Thos. Gent, a somewhat voluminous scribbler, told the story in a very indifferent verse, under a most verbose title, beginning—"Divine Justice and Mercy displayed. Set forth in the unhappy Birth, wicked Life, and miserable End of that deceitful Apostle, Judas Iscariot," &c., &c. Of the many chapbook versions only two need be mentioned—"the Archknave, or the History of Judas, from the Cradle to the Gallows, compiled and translated from the High Dutch (i. e. German) of S. Clare, and the Spanish of Don. H. de Mendoz." London: Printed for J. Morphew, no date; "The Life and Death of Judas Iscariot, or the Lost and Undone Son of Perdition. Glasgow: Printed for the Booksellers," no date, but probably about 1820. The legend is briefly to the following effect:—

The father of Judas was a respectable tanner in the town of Joppa. His mother, before his birth, dreamed that he should become a thief and a murderer. When he was born, she discovered depicted under his left breast a cross, a gallows, two daggers and several pieces of money. These ominous tokens of the destiny of her babe she concealed from her husband, and when she was recovered she visited an astrologer and desired to know the meaning of the birthmarks. The "wise man" cast the child's horoscope, at which he turned pale and shook his head. The trembling mother pressed him to let her know the worst, and at length he said that the planet which ruled the child's birth portended that he should be a thief and a murderer, and what was infinitely worse, that he should betray the Lord of Life for lucre, and in despair lay violent hands on himself. "What, then, should be done to avert such terrible calamities?" the poor mother inquired. The astrologer suggested that she might cause the child's death but to this she would by no means consent. He then suggested that she should procure a small boat, or ark, so constructed as to keep out water but admit air, and having placed the child within it, she might safely commit him to the sea, and leave his fate in the hands of Providence. Accordingly, the mother procured the body of a child that had just died, and induced her husband to believe it that of their son; and having previously provided herself with a suitable ark, or little covered boat, she fastened on the child's breast a parchment scroll, stating, "I am Judas," and after carefully depositing him within, secretly committed him to the sea. The ark drifted till it stranded on the coast of Iscariot. Now, it so happened that the king of that country with his attendants, was walking near the spot when the strange object was seen to approach the shore, and he ordered it to be brought to him. On opening the ark, great was the astonishment of all to discover a babe within it, and reading the scroll, "I am Judas," the King said, "Thou shalt also be called Iscariot, since thou wast found on this coast." The child was taken to the palace and put in charge of a nurse, and he grew up. When old enough, learned tutors were appointed to teach Judas all branches of knowledge, and when he was fully grown up the King made him a privy councillor, and Judas soon became ambitious of attaining the throne. One day, while he was taking a ramble in the country, in company with the King's son, Judas suddenly stabbed the Prince, and, fearing to return to the palace alone, he took ship for Joppa, his native place. Though, of course, he was ignorant of the fact. There he obtained a situation as servant to a lady, who, one day seeing fine fruit in an adjoining garden, gave him money to buy some of it. Judas however, determined to steal the fruit, and keep the money for himself. On entering the garden, his own father—for it belonged to him—came up to him, and demanded to know his business there, upon which Judas drew his dagger and stabbed him to the heart, and once more took to flight. At the end of a year he returned to Joppa and married his own mother! When she discovered the ominous marks on his breast she was filled with consternation and exclaimed, "Tell me who you are, and where you were born?" Judas replied that all he knew was that he was found cast on the seashore in a little covered boat, and brought up by the king of the country. She then declared her true relationship to him, and counselled him to go and become a follower of the man Jesus, whose teachings were agitating the people. Judas, now penetrated with horror and remorse, accordingly quitted Joppa and became one of the Saviour's disciples, till at length his cupidity was incited by the Pharisees, and he was induced to betray his Lord for 30 pieces of silver, after which, in despair, he went and hanged himself.

Such is the outline of the medieval legend of Judas Iscariot, which dates as far back at least, as the 13th century, and which, one should suppose, defeated the "moral" it was doubtless intended to convey, since it represents him as destined from before his birth to commit all the flagitious crimes ascribed to him. But perhaps neither monks nor people in those days read the story in this light, so we may let that pass. Jacobus a Voragine seems to have borrowed the substance of the story from Eusebius, Josephus, Oroziz, Zozomenes, and other early writers. Certain old-time theologians were of the opinion that Judas, in betraying his Master, was not actuated by cupidity, but rather, believing that Jesus would signally defeat his captors, thought that such a

quickening influence was called for, in order that the people should have the strongest possible proof of his Divine mission. But the Armenians, who believe that Judas was the very incarnation of all that was wicked, say that the reason why he resolved to hang himself was that, being aware that Jesus, after his cruel death on the cross, would go to Hades and deliver all the souls he found confined there, he expected forgiveness by being their before Him. The Devil, however, who was even more cunning than he, and, knowing his purpose, held him suspended over Hades until the Lord had passed through, and then let him fall into the place of perdition. The terrible punishment of Judas, like that of Cain, the first murderer, is often referred to in mediaeval books. For example, in the romance of Duke Huon of Bordeaux the hero finds Judas floating on a piece of canvas in the perilous gulf or whirlpool near hell. This canvas, Judas says, he once gave to a poor man for God's sake, an act of charity unique in his career, and God afterwards restored the canvas to him as a reward for his solitary virtuous action to protect him from the wind on his right side: tormented to death, yet he cannot die. A parallel to this is found in the Irish legend of St. Brendan, who met Judas on an iceberg in the Northern Sea, and learned that he was allowed to leave the sinner's burning lake every Christmas night to cool himself in the snow, because he had once given his cloak to a leper. This story is the theme of one of Matthew Arnold's best known poems. Greek, Russian, and Portuguese sailors have a curious custom every Good Friday of hanging Judas in effigy from a yard-arm, and then whipping the figure with ropes' ends till they are weary; after which they cut off the head or a leg and set it on fire, and then cast it blazing into the water. In Corfu, at a given signal on Easter Eve, the people throw out vast quantities of crockery from their windows and roofs into the streets, and thus execute an imaginary stoning of Judas; and it is popularly believed that the descendants of the arch-traitor dwell in Corfu at the present day.

## CHRISTIAN WORK IN THE HAREM.

The Experience of a Woman Missionary Who Has Lived in Asia Minor.

Mrs. Laura T. Seeley has been a missionary in the service of the Congregational Board for twenty years, and has spent that time in Asia Minor. She has been visiting friends in St. Louis. In an interview, Mrs. Seeley said:—

"I am located in a town called Odana, on the Cilician plains, in the south central portion of Asia Minor. You ask me what is the condition of woman in that land? Well, it would take a volume to tell it all. I cannot imagine how woman's condition could be worse than it is in Asia Minor. There are three religions in vogue there—those of the Moslems, the Greeks, and the Armenians. A Greek or an Armenian has but one wife, but the Moslem has as many wives generally as his purse and pleasure will allow. But not all Moslems are sufficiently wealthy to have more than one wife. About one Moslem out of every ten, I should say, has a harem. His harem may consist of three, four, a half-dozen or any number of women he cares to support. "The orthodox Mohammedan keeps the women of his harem secluded from public view, and he enforces this rule in the most rigorous way. If a woman of the harem appears on the street she is thickly veiled. When a Mussulman entertains his male friend they never enter the woman's parlor; they are entertained in the gentlemen's reception room. The women of the harem are not seen. As a rule, all Mussulmen allow the women missionaries to visit their wives in the harems. But we are strictly prohibited from carrying a Christian bible with us on these visits. Therefore, in order to spread the gospel of Christ in the harems we are compelled to first form a warm friendship with these women, and after ingratiating ourselves into their good graces, we can finally come to the point of giving them Christian knowledge in an oral way. By constant daily visits to these harems for years I have become perfectly familiar with the miserable lives that these poor ignorant women are compelled to lead. I say ignorant because the great majority of them are densely ignorant. These women, as a rule, are kept in a state of dense ignorance from their birth. They do not know that there is such a book as the Koran, the Mohammedan bible. They are never permitted to know that they even have a soul. They are never permitted to enjoy any of the benefits of education.

"Intellectually, a woman 30 years old is but a child. These women are taught to believe that their only mission in life is to submit to the wishes and desires of the lord of the harem. In other words a woman is nothing more than an abject slave to man. As this deplorable system has been in vogue for ages, one can readily see to what depths it is possible to sink woman. The women of the Moslem faith do not know that they have any rights. And under the present system, if they do become enlightened and demand some recognition, they only bring physical suffering upon themselves.

"If, in our visits to the harems we succeed in converting a woman to the Christian faith, and she makes the fact known, she is immediately cast out of the harem unless she renounces our religion and again submits to the old customs. A Mussulman can cast any woman out of his harem, anyway, at his own pleasure, for there are no divorce laws that affect him. So whenever he tires of a woman he can cast her out. Only the low desires are developed among the women of the average harem. There are constant jealousies and bickerings among them. The husband generally has one wife who is a favorite, and sometimes he has two or three favorites if he has a large harem. Besides the jealousy existing among these favorites, the favorites themselves are despised by all the other women in the harem.

Some very amusing things happen, growing out of these jealousies. For instance, in one harem I visit there is one wife who is the prime favorite of the lord. There are no looking glasses in this harem, and the women in preparing themselves to receive the husband are required to paint one another's faces. The favorite in this case was most heartily hated by all the other

women. One day while painting her face they made her believe that they were taking especial pains to enhance her beauty. They used cosmetics in the most lavish way, but did it in such a manner as to give her the most horrible appearance possible. As there was no mirror in the harem, the favorite was in total ignorance of her horrible appearance. But there seems to be a natural artistic talent among these poor women, and it finds expression in their fine needlework and embroidery and laces. In fact, their whole time is occupied in this fancy work and in keeping their toilet in a way to please the husband."—St. Louis Republic.

## RULED BY A MISSIONARY.

A Queer Principality in Alaska, and Its Aboriginal Inhabitants.

Rev. William Duncan, ruler of Annette Island, a queer principality in the Pacific, south of Sitka, recently arrived in San Francisco after a long absence from civilization. Father Duncan, who is a minister of the church of England, has a record for heroic self-sacrifice surpassing even that of Father Damien, the priest of Malokai, whose experiences among the lepers have been heard around the globe. He has for thirty-seven years been a missionary among the Metlakahla Indians, who, as long as they have been known, had practiced cannibalism, and among whom one had to take his life in his hand. He first settled among the Metlakahlas, just across from his island in British Columbia, in sight of Mount St. Elias and the great Fairmeath range, and there remained until five years ago, when, owing to too tight a rein by the church of England and the British Columbia government, he removed to Annette Island. He first received assurances from the government at Washington, however, that this island should be deeded to him and the Indians in fee simple if he removed there, and this has since been done. The Metlakahlas, to the number of about 700, followed him there, he has since built up a town called Metlakahla, after the former town in British Columbia. The strange island of Annette is about fifty miles long and twenty-five miles wide, and covered in the centre by a snowy mountain range. All around the shores are valley and rolling lands, on which are great forests of pine, cedar and other similar trees. There are also some open glades and there are many pretty coves. All things considered, however, the island is unfit for occupancy except by natives of the far north, accustomed to the changing climate incident to the raging ocean about. The island was unpeopled before, and the government, thinking it would never be valuable for any other purpose, gave it to the missionary and his wards.

The missionary, who is the absolute ruler and king of the island, has built on Annette Island a practical reproduction of the first Metlakahla, though with some new features. He has built a sawmill, and the Metlakahlas have erected a large number of buildings, moulded somewhat on the plan of American huts, yet having distinct Indian characteristics. Father Duncan has also caused a cannery to be built and has given the Indians shares in it, when they so desired, in return for their labor. They have caught a great many salmon, halibut and other fish this year, he says, and have made considerable money. He thinks his queer colony will be as great a success in Alaska as it was in British Columbia.

"I have about 800 Indians with me now," said the white haired old missionary, "and they are increasing slowly all the time. The Alaska Indians are coming over and joining us. They are not as good Indians as the Metlakahlas, since they have for a long time been able to get whisky from the traders along the coast. This has debased them, and since they have acquired the taste for spirits it is hard for them to desist. There is no drinking in the island of Annette, for I have prohibited liquors of all kinds from coming there. I do not allow any cards either, or any other kind of gambling. When I first went among the Indians on the mainland the Hudson Bay Company, which had just established a post there, cautioned me that my life was in imminent danger every time I went among them. I speedily learned this was true. The buildings of the company were within a stout stockade formed of great logs and reaching very high. The houses, too, were what are known as blockhouses. There were two high and stout gates, or more properly great doors, and at the side of each was a most manned with cannon which could be turned to sweep the Indians right and left should they attack the fort. I went among the Indians every day and returned to the fort each night to sleep. In this way I picked up their language. I had oftentimes to go into the fort in the daytime when an attack was imminent. Once I had to take my position on the outpost, in charge of one of the guns, and on numerous occasions I had to, in one way and another, help defend the place. The Indians were the worst when the different clans were at war. At such times they particularly wanted to wreak vengeance on us. I have seen them kill Indians with whom they were at war and cut off their arms and bite out pieces. They would also, when infuriated, bite pieces out of the arms of their allies, or even out of their own. All this is now changed. I succeeded in translating parts of the Bible and other books into their language and have now got them pretty well Christianized."

The Trinity Church "pawn shop," in Boston, of which the papers are talking is one branch of the large charitable work carried on by that active Episcopal church. The plan is one which Dr. Donald brought with him from New York. It is intended to help the needy ones of his own parish only by making a loan of money in exchange for various small articles. A small rate of interest is charged. The project is under the charge of a parish visitor, who has an office at Trinity House on Burroughs Place. When reports of the plan first appeared many people coming from distant places sought to take advantage of the opportunity, and some were vexed because they could receive no help.—Congregationalist.

Is a Happy Christian.

A wealthy New England manufacturer lives in summer in the town where his factory is, but has been accustomed to spend the winter with his family in a fashionable Boston hotel. One fall before leaving for the city he was converted. Then he did not want to leave the church; he and all his family joined the church at the New Year's communion. He fitted up his house for a winter residence, and the whole church has wonderfully increased in activity by his example; of twenty-six additions twenty-two were by profession, largely due to his influence. He had been a smoker since he was twelve years old, but he has given that up—"so I can help the boys," he says. He is a happy Christian.

Messages of Help for the Week.

"It shall come to pass, that from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord."—Isaiah 66: 23.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Rom. 8: 14.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—16th and 17th verses.

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."—28th verse.

"If God be for us, who can be against us?"—31st verse.

"O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?"—Rom. 9: 20.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! \* \* \* For of Him and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."—Rom. 11: 33-36.

## Choosing the Better Part.

Christ's words to Martha, "Mary hath chosen the better part," are full of the tenderest sympathy and cheer to overburdened women if they would but open their understanding to comprehend its import. At that time much more than now household drudgery was woman's only legitimate sphere; even his disciples marvelled that the Master should condescend to talk with 'a woman' beside the well. Yet in the midst of all that prejudice, it is not the immaculate housewife he commends, but the one who, utterly forsaking all these 'womanly' duties (?), improved the priceless opportunity to sit at his feet. Be assured, sisters, the women who, not of necessity but choice, even though it be from a mistaken sense of duty, waste their higher powers in order to save a little of this world's goods, may receive when they come before the Master the doubtful commendation, 'Thou art careful and troubled about many things,' but it will be the Marys who will win the highest praise of 'the hath chosen the better part.'

## "For Years,"

SAYS CARRIE E. STOCKWELL, of Chesterfield, N. H., "I was afflicted with an extremely severe pain in the lower part of the chest. The feeling was as if a ton weight was laid on a spot the size of my hand. During the attacks, the perspiration would stand in drops on my face, and it was agony for me to make sufficient effort even to whisper. They came suddenly, at any hour of the day or night, lasting from thirty minutes to half a day, leaving as suddenly, but, for several days after, I was quite prostrated and sore. Sometimes the attacks were almost daily, then less frequent. After about four years of this suffering, I was taken down with bilious typhoid fever, and when I began to recover, I had the worst attack of my old trouble I ever experienced. At the first of the fever, my mother gave me Ayer's Pills, my doctor recommending them as being better than anything he could prepare. I continued taking these Pills, and so great was the benefit derived that during nearly thirty years I have had but one attack of my former trouble, which yielded readily to the same remedy."

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tone to the whole body, and thereby enabling a system subject to Sick Headache to withstand future attacks. It gives relief in one day and speedily effects a permanent cure.

Mrs. Isabella S. Graham, of Friendswood, Indiana, writes: "For a number of years I have suffered intensely with Nervous and Sick Headache; had hot flashes, was sleepless and became despondent. Dr. Faris, of Bloomington, Indiana, spoke so highly of South American Nerve Tonic that I was induced to buy a bottle. That purchase led to a few others, and now I sleep soundly, feel buoyant, strong and vigorous. I would not be back in the condition I was in when I began taking this medicine for any sum you could name."

Mrs. J. H. Prouty, of La Grange, Indiana, writes: "Your South American Nerve Tonic worked a marvellous cure with me last year. I began taking it last April about the 20th. The first week I made a gain of 16 lbs. and from that time on I made a steady gain until I reached my normal weight, making in all a total gain of 80 lbs. After taking it three or four months I found myself a well woman."

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