

2. In great difficulties, even when shipwrecked, all may work for their Master.

3. Wherever we are we may win the respect and love of those around us.—S. S. *Union Notes on Lessons.*

DEC. 16.—Paul at Rome.—Acts xxviii, 16-31. A. D. 61-63.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also; for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Rom. 1, 16, 18.

INTRODUCTORY.

After a detention of three months at Melita, Julius placed his prisoners on board another Alexandrian ship, the "Castor and Pollux," which had wintered at the island. About the beginning of February, A. D. 61 or 62, they sailed first to Syracuse, the capital of Sicily, distant about eighty miles, where they remained three days; and thence they beat up to Rhegium, on the Italian side of the straits of Messina. After a day's waiting for the weather, a fair south wind sprang up and carried them on the following day about one hundred and eighty miles to their destination at Puteoli, north of the Bay of Naples, one of the chief ports for the coast-trade, and therefore for the landing of passengers. As might be expected, at a port in such constant communication with the east, they found here Christian brethren, at whose desire Paul spent a week with them, the centurion being evidently eager to show him unbounded courtesy. And from thence, when the brethren in Rome heard of Paul at Puteoli, they came to meet him at *Appii Forum*, forty-three miles from Rome, and also at *Three Taverns*, thirty-three miles from Rome. He went up from Puteoli on the celebrated Appian Way, the usual route trodden by so many travellers:

"Praetors, procurators to their provinces
Hastings, or on returns, in robes of state;
Legions and rods, the emblems of their power,
Lictors and cohorts, trains of horns and wings,
Or eunuchs from regions far—
In various habits, on the Appian road."—*Shakespeare.*

How many of these travellers must have looked down on the apostle and his escort with the same feeling with which we regard the weary and dismal march of a chained gang of convicts, little dreaming that he came a truer conqueror than any general who had led his legions along that road to enter Rome in triumph.—*Baptist Question Book.*

EXPLANATORY.

V. 16. Captain, commander of the Pretorian camp; to dwell by himself, of course within the *Pretorium*—i. e., the general's palace or quarters; with a soldier that kept him, hence Paul's touching allusions to his chains.—v. 20; Eph. iii, 1; iv, 1; vi, 20; Phil. x, 13; 2 Tim. i, 16; iii, 9.

V. 17. Chief of the Jews together, explaining to them his present position exactly.

V. 20. For the hope of Israel—i. e., the hope of a Messiah which the nation cherished.—See xxvi, 6; compare Rom. x, 1.

V. 22. Showed or spoke any harm, they had had no official report from Jerusalem about him. For this there had hardly been time.

V. 22. This sect, this Christian sect.—See xxvi, 14.

V. 25. Well spake the Holy Ghost, an impressive conclusion of and appeal to his countrymen at this crisis. "Here the curtain falls upon the contest of Jewish unbelief against the things that concerned their salvation. And this we incline to believe is the reason why the history of the Acts here breaks off. There, in the capital of the world, the unbelief of the last section of the Jewish family to whom Paul revealed the Messiah completed the first stage in the diffusion of Christianity, at which the mass of the

Jewish race are for the time cut off from the kingdom of God. With respect to God's purposes touching the Jewish race, the three wonderful chapters (ix, x and xi) of Romans should be carefully studied. These may be regarded as a supplement to the Acts."

V. 28. Sent unto the Gentiles, as had been already announced in similar circumstances.—See ch. xiii, 46; xviii, 6.

V. 30. Two whole years—i. e., A. D. spring 61 or 62 to spring A. D. 63 or 64. All this time a prisoner, during which he kept up constant intercourse with the Gentile churches, aided by faithful attendants and messengers, who wrote and carried his letters. Among these were Luke, Timothy, Tychicus, Mark, Onesimus, and his fellow-prisoners Aristarchus and Ephraim.—Eph. vi, 21; Phil. i, 1; Col. i, 1, 7; iv, 7, 10, 14; Phil. 1, 10, 23, 24. Paul in this time also writes of spiritual children whom he had begotten in his chains, of converts among Caesar's household.—Phil. 10; Phil. 4, 22. Toward the end of these two years Paul had looked confidently to his release. Of this, however, farther in next lesson.—*Baptist Question Book.*

EXPOSITORY.

Nero was the Roman Emperor at this time, but his persecutions of the Christians were later in his reign. At present Jews and Christians were un molested.

I. PAUL'S PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

For the sake of Christ and the Gospel he did not wish his position as a prisoner to be misunderstood. Observe the wisdom of his explaining himself at once to the Jewish leaders. He tries to avoid exciting their prejudices; but he firmly asserts his own innocence, declaring himself the victim of misapprehension. It is right that every man should be jealous of his own good character, and here Paul gives us a model of Christian courtesy.

II. ARRANGEMENTS FOR GIVING AN ACCOUNT OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

Some vague ideas were afloat concerning the doctrines they held, but these were evidently exaggerated and untrue. "Everywhere the Nazarenes were spoken against." Paul wants the opportunity of explaining their beliefs. A conference is held at the prisoner's house, the Scripture rolls are brought out, and appeal is made to them. This is the proper way to get at the truth. Put away prejudice, talk it quietly over, and search the Scriptures. Paul showed that *Christ was Messiah*, and this was proved by the whole Scripture. If Messiah, all Jews, at least, should acknowledge and serve Him.

III. SOLEMN WARNINGS.

Why given when explanation and reasoning failed, and Paul saw that some were wilfully blind themselves to truths they did not wish to see. There is a time when persuasion must cease, and warnings come in. Compare our Lord's solemn warnings of the Lawyers, Scribes, and Pharisees.

IV. TWO YEARS OF WAITING AND WORKING.

Waiting for trial and working for Christ. Preaching Christ in a new sphere (see GOLDEN TEXT), and writing letters to keep up the Christian life in old spheres. His subject the Kingdom of God set up under the authority of Jesus Christ. Learn—1. The preacher may be bound, but the Word is not bound. 2. For us all the great appeal is to God's Word. 3. It is ever a most solemn thing to resist the truth: its sure result is blinding the eyes and hardening the heart. 4. The work of the Christian is never done till death; and his great work is preaching Christ by lip and by life.—S. S. *Union Notes on Lessons.*

GROWTH.—"Man in heaven is but the child matured. We shall never be greater than men. Whatever is brilliant and great for its future will be but the development of the germs that slumber in us now."

Religious Intelligence.

DENOMINATIONAL.

ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.

Baptists are reported during the month at Blythwood, Brampton, Bristol (Que.), Brockville, Chatham, Clarendon (Que.), Collingwood, Drummondville, Erin, Hamilton, Hillsburg, Montreal, St. (Catherine St.), Mount Forest, Ormond, (Que.), Osgoode, Salford, Toronto, (Fares St., Parliament St.), and Virgil.

Ministers Ordained.—Bro. ANTON HELMRECK was recently ordained at Rochester, N. Y., and has settled as pastor of the German Baptist church at *Sobolopol* Que.

Bro. GEO. L. WITTEK was ordained at Bristol, Que., on the 16th October, and has settled as the pastor of the Bristol and Clarendon churches. His P. O. address is Bristol, Que.

Bro. GEO. OLIVER was ordained at Pembroke on the 19th, October, and has settled as pastor of the *Pembroke* church.

Pastoral Changes.—Bro. R. N. FAIRFAX has resigned the pastorate of the *McNab St.*, (Coloured) church, Hamilton, and gone to the Southern States.

Bro. JOHN CRAIG, B. A., preached his farewell sermon to the *Whitby* church on Sunday P. M., October 7th, prior to his leaving as missionary to Cocanada India St.

Bro. GEORGE DAY has accepted the pastorate of the *Daywood* and *Woodford* churches. P. O. address, Leith, Ont.

Churches Organized. A second church has been recently formed in London, East-end, composed of seventy-four members from the parent church in *West St.*

The church in *Drummondville*, long dead, has been reconstituted with encouraging prospects.

Chapels Dedicated. At *Saw-Springs* (Indian) on the 16th, of October, a frame building worth about \$1,000. In the village of *Leith* (late Charlottetown Centre) on the 26th October.

Miscellaneous. *Brockville* Baptist church is preparing to build a handsome new edifice. Work is progressing very nicely on the new Temple, which the church, now meeting in *Oliver Tabernacle* Montreal, are erecting.

Rev. John Craig and his young bride, were handsomely entertained at a farewell social by the Port Hope Baptist chapel before leaving for India.

MARITIME PROVINCES.

Baptists.—Brookfield, N. S., 3; Clinch's Mills, N. B., 8; Dipper Harbour, N. S., 3; Ell River, N. B., 21; Jackstown, N. B., 81 (during revival); Greenwich Hill, N. B., 9; Hantsport, N. S., 2; Lawrencetown, N. S., 3; Ludlow, N. B., 5; North Esk, N. B., 2; St. Mary's (Not given); Upper Keswick, N. B., 4.

Chapels Dedicated. At *Paradise* N. S., on the 16th September, a handsome building, with appropriate services.

At *Jana's Harbour* N. S., on the 14th October, a very neat chapel, costing \$4,000, with appropriate services.

UNITED STATES.

Rev. GEO. A. FELTZ leaves the associate editorship of the *Sunday School Times* to accept a call to the pastorate of the Baptist church in Jamestown, N. Y. He will be much missed in Philadelphia in two places: First, in the *Times*, and, second, in the Memorial Sunday-school, of which he was superintendent.

The Rev. Dr. R. H. NEALE, well known in Toronto as the intimate friend of the late Dr. Caldwell, recently resigned the charge of the First Baptist Church of Boston, after a pastorate of forty years, and was given a complimentary supper by the Baptist ministers of that city and vicinity.