



BANYAN TREE.

A QUEER TREE.

The banyan or Indian fig tree is found on the banks of the River Ganges and in many parts of India, and is a tree much valued and venerated by the Hindu. He plants it near the temple of his idol; and if the village in which he resides does not possess any such edifice, he uses the banyan for a temple and places the idol beneath it. Here, every morning and evening, he performs the rites of his heathen worship. And, more than this, he considers the tree, with its outstretched and far-sheltering arms, an emblem of the creator of all things. The peculiar growth of the banyan renders it an object of beauty, and produces those column like stems that cause it to become a grove in itself. It may be said to grow, not from the seed, but from the branches. They spread out horizontally, and each branch sends out a number of rootlets that at first hang from it like slender cords and are about in the wind. But by degrees they reach the ground and root themselves into it; then the cord tightens and thickens and becomes a stem, acting like a prop to the wide-spreading branch of the parent plant. Indeed, column on column is added in this manner, the books tell us, so long as the mother tree can support its numerous progeny.

LESSON NOTES.

FOURTH QUARTER.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

A. D. 27.] LESSON I. [Oct. 7.

JESUS AT NAZARETH.

Luke 4. 16-30. Memory verses, 16-19.

GOLDEN TEXT.

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.
—Hebrews 12. 25.

OUTLINE.

1. The Text, 16-19.
2. The Sermon, v. 20-27.
3. The Hearers, v. 28-30.

TIME.—A. D. 27.

PLACES.—Nazareth and Capernaum, in Galilee.

RULERS.—Tiberius, Emperor of Rome; Pontius Pilate, Procurator of Judea; Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee.

EXPLANATIONS.

16. "Brought up"—Trained in youth. "Synagogue"—Jewish Church, or place for Bible study. "Sabbath-day"—That is, the Jewish Sabbath—our Saturday.
17. The book—"A long roll, like one of our modern wall maps, only that it was smaller, and rolled lengthwise, not breadthwise. "The prophet Elisha"—Isaiah. Very likely each prophecy was made up into a book by itself, for the words were written, not printed, and usually were made very large.
18. "The Gospel"—Glad news. "Recovering"—Bringing back.

20. "Closed the book"—Rolled it up again. "Minister"—Not a pastor or preacher, as with us, but a man who was employed to take care of the synagogue—a sort of sexton and class-leader and Sunday school superintendent in one.

21. "Began to say"—Said at length, and with great beauty, what is here put into a single sentence.

22. "All bare him witness"—Everybody acknowledged. "Gracious words"—Words of grace, of beauty, and eloquence. "Is not this Joseph's son?"—Very likely most of them knew no better.

23. "Heal thyself"—That is, do for your own people what we have heard you have done for others.

25. "Elias"—Elijah.

26. "Of Sion"—This phrase shows that the widow was a Gentile, not a child of Abraham. "Eliaseus"—Elisha.

HOME READINGS.

M. Jesus at Nazareth.—Luke 4. 16-30.

Tu. Another visit to Nazareth.—Mark 6. 1-6.

W. The text.—Isa. 61. 1-6.

Th. Scripture testimony.—John 5. 36-47.

F. Without human learning.—John 7. 10-18.

S. Wisdom rejected.—Prov. 1. 24-33.

Su. Refusing to hearken.—Deut. 10. 15-19.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

What in this lesson are we taught about—

1. The duty of public worship?
2. The fulfilment of Scripture?
3. The power of prejudice.

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What did Jesus do at Nazareth on the Sabbath-day? "Went into the synagogue, read the Scriptures, and preached." 2. What truth did he proclaim? "That all prophecy was fulfilled in him." 3. How were the people impressed? "They were amazed, and made angry." 4. Of what did Jesus remind them? "That when Israel rejected the grace of God it was given to the Gentiles." 5. What did his hearers do? "They tried to kill him." 6. What did Jesus do? "Paused through their midst, and went to Capernaum." 7. What is the Golden Text? "See that ye refuse not," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The Messiahship of Jesus.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

Where is the Spirit said to bear this witness?

The Spirit himself beareth witness with our Spirit that we are children of God.—Romans 8. 6.

THE BOY AND THE BOATMEN.

A young man was once rowing me across the Merrimac River in a boat. Some boatmen going down the river with lumber had drawn up their boat and anchored it in the spot where the boy wished to land me.

"There!" he exclaimed, "these boatmen have left their boat right in my way!"

"What did they do that for?" I asked.

"On purpose to plague me," said he; "but I will cut it loose, and let it go down the river. I would have them know I can be as ugly as they can."

"But, my lad," said I, "you should not plague them because they plague you.

Because they are ugly to you is no reason why you should be so to them. Besides, how do you know they did it to vex and trouble you?"

"But they had no business to leave it there—it is against the rules," said he.

"True," I replied; "and you have no business to send their boat down the river. Would it not be better to ask them to remove it out of the way?"

"They will not comply if I do," said the angry boy; "and they will do so again."

"Well, try for once," said I. "Just run your boat a little above or a little below theirs, and see if they will not favour you when they see you give way to accommodate them."

The boy complied; and when the men in the boat saw the little fellow quietly and pleasantly pulling at his oars to run his boat ashore above them, they took hold and helped him, and wheeled their boat around, giving him all the chance he wished. Thus, by submitting pleasantly to what he believed was done to vex him, the boy prevented a quarrel. Had he cut the rope at that time and place, and let the boat loose, it would have done the boatmen much damage. There would have been a fight, and many would have been drawn into it. But the boy, who considered himself the injured party, prevented it all by a kind and pleasant submission to the injury.

A USEFUL DOG.

The shepherd dog is a rough, shaggy animal with sharp, pointed ears and nose. It is an invaluable assistant to the shepherd, as it knows all its master's sheep and never allows them to stray away.

Without his dog the life of the shepherd would be one of continual anxiety. In fact, a sheep raiser knows his flocks are often safer under a good shepherd dog than under a man shepherd hired to watch the flock.

In California and South America, you may see thousands of sheep without any other guardians than half a dozen shepherd dogs. They go out with them early in the morning; they keep by them all day, driving away the birds of prey that would attack the young lambs, and the wild dogs that would worry the sheep, and bring them home in the evening. The dog will even carry in its mouth a lamb that is too young to keep up with the flock. When they reach the fold he drives them in and lies down at the door to guard them.

In England and Scotland these dogs are great favourites and there are many good stories told of them. One night, seven hundred lambs that had been committed to the keeping of a shepherd broke loose from his control and scampered away over the hills. "Sirrah," said the shepherd to his dog, "they're away."

Silently the dog left his master's side, and started away after the wandering charge. The shepherd passed the hours from midnight till dawn in a weary search, and at daylight he was about to return home in despair when he caught sight of Sirrah at the bottom of a deep ravine guard-

ing the whole of the vast flock. Not one lamb was missing. How he had managed to gather them all together in the dark was beyond comprehension.

A Short Sermon.

BY ALICE GARY.

CHILDREN who read my lay,
This much I have to say;
Each day and every day
Do what is right!
Right things in great and small
Then, though the stars shall fall
Sun, moon, and stars, and all,
You shall have light.

This further I would say:
Be you tempted as you may,
Each day, and every day,
Speak what is true!
True things in great and small;
Then, though the stars shall fall
Sun, moon, and stars, and all,
Heaven would show through.

Figs, as you see and know,
Do not of thistles grow;
And though the blossoms blow
White on the tree,
Grapes never, never yet
On the limbs of thorns were set;
So, if you good would get,
Good you must be.

Life's journey through and through,
Speaking what is just and true,
Doing what is right to do
Unto one and all,
When you work and when you play,
Each day, and every day;
Then peace shall gild your way,
Though the sky should fall.

A SURE TEST.

Tell me what the Bible is to a man, and I will generally tell you what he is. This is the pulse to try, this is the barometer to look at, if we would know the state of the heart. I have no notion of the Spirit dwelling in a man, and not giving clear evidence of his presence. And I believe it to be a signal evidence of the Spirit's presence when the Word is really precious to a man's soul. When there is no appetite for the truths of Scripture, the soul cannot be in a state of health. There is some serious disease. Reader, what is the Bible to you? Is it your guide, your counsellor, your friend? Is it your rule of faith and practice? Is it your measure of truth and error, of right and wrong? It ought to be so. It was given for this purpose. If it is not, do you really love your Bible?

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