

It is announced that Lord Derby had given sites for three new churches in Bootle, and one of these churches is as good as begun, since Mr. Thomas W. Cookson wrote to Canon Lefroy offering £4,000 to be paid when £2,000 was collected.

The voluntary offerings of English Churchmen for the spread of elementary education and for training colleges, down to the passing of the Education Act of 1870, amounted to £15,104,988, and since that period to £13,806,295, making a grand total of nearly twenty-nine millions.

South London contains about one hundred parishes; East London has about ninety-three parishes; 280 more clergy would be needed in South London if a parson were provided for every 2,000 souls. No wonder, then, that the Bishop of such a diocese should call loudly for financial help towards supplying the spiritual needs of his people.

A new church has been opened at Grindelwald, Switzerland. It has been erected chiefly through the efforts of Canon Butler, of Winchester, who, nearly two years ago, made known the need that existed for a church in a place which is frequented by large numbers of English and Americans, and who has since laboured assiduously to carry his project into effect. The opening ceremony was performed by the Bishop of Ripon. There is still a debt of £600 on the church, and contributions toward the fund will be thankfully received by Canon Butler.

At the annual meeting of the Universities Mission, it was reported that £15,500 had been raised against £14,000 last year, and there are now twenty-six clergy, twenty-three laymen and fourteen ladies engaged in this mission.

The Archbishop of Canterbury recently confirmed at the cathedral seventeen children belonging to the old Kent Road Deaf and Dumb Asylum.

On Trinity Sunday and St. John the Baptist's Day, the two archbishops and twenty-nine bishops admitted 235 candidates to the diaconate, and 255 deacons to the priesthood. Of these 148 were graduated of Oxford, 145 of Cambridge, and only twelve were "literati."

The Bishop of London presided at Exeter Hall at the annual meeting of the Association of Volunteer Lay Helpers for the Diocese of London, which now numbers about five thousand members. His lordship dwelt on quality being of more importance than quantity, and pointed out that it was the holy life that told, whether in the choirman, the Sunday-school teacher, the sidesman, the lay-reader, or the visitor, and not what they sang, or said, or did.

The Bishop of Lahore laments the delay in providing an Anglican Church at Quetta, the British station on the Afghan-Beluchi border. "I am told that the Russian Government at each advance no sooner forms a new military centre (as recently Askabad) than the church is one of the first buildings their engineers are invariably charged with. Also at Quetta, as elsewhere, the Roman Church precedes the Anglican."

As regards the Diocese of Clogher, Ireland, now happily revived, it is remarkable that no prelate was consecrated to it from 1645 until, on the death of Lord R. Tottenham, that see became annexed to Armagh in 1850, under the provision of the Church Temporalities Act. The explanation of this fact is, that the revenues of the see were so good that it was usually filled by translations from some other see. Lord John George Beresford was his own successor in this see, which he held as bishop for a short time in 1819, and again succeeded to as primate in 1850.

Four ladies were "set apart" as deaconesses by the Bishop of Manchester on St. Peter's Day, this being the first time that the "service for the admission of deaconesses" has been used in that diocese. The Deaconesses' Home, Rochdale, of which Canon McClure is Warden, was established about two years ago.

The Bishop of Liverpool has appointed the Rev. John Burbridge, of Liverpool, to succeed the late Canon Carr as Canon of the Liverpool Cathedral. A report upon the designs for the new cathedral is in preparation, and it is hoped will be issued soon. Bishop Ryle recently consecrated, in a densely populated portion of Everton, a new church, to be built at a cost of £4,000, and to seat 600 persons.

The following facts are given of Church extension in the Diocese of Liverpool:

Fifteen large new churches have been built and consecrated and are now the centres of parochial districts; four large new churches have been built and opened by license, and will be consecrated as soon as the endowment and repair fund is completed; five new churches have been founded and are being built; three old churches have been taken down and rebuilt; three new districts have been provided with iron churches or temporary buildings until permanent churches can be built, and are regularly worked by licensed mission curates with Sunday and week day services; at least two more new churches are planned and proposed, and large sums of money already provided for their erection; three large old churches have been restored at a cost of £4,000 or £5,000 each; four churches have been enlarged at great expense by the addition of chancels. Such is a brief account of material Church extension in the Diocese of Liverpool during the first six years of its existence. It is work that has been done in a period of extraordinary commercial depression. It has been done in a diocese where there are only about 200 incumbents. Not least, has it been done in a diocese where at least half the inhabitants (and not a few of the wealthiest) are either Presbyterians, Nonconformists, or Roman Catholics, who cannot reasonably be expected to contribute to the extension of the Church of England.

## Correspondence.

All Letters containing personal allusions will appear over the signature of the writer.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our correspondents.

## PRAYER.

SIR.—I intended not to trouble you again with my rustic notes. But as one of your correspondents has kindly informed us of the approved attitude at public prayer, in Edward VI. time, I also shall, with your permission, offer a few hints. In this, as in all other things, the testament which contains the records of the only Catholic Church in which we believe, is to be consulted. 1. *Attitude*.—Presbyterians, Lutherans, &c., love to pray standing in churches. It is to be wished they do not so, to be seen of men, Matt. vi. 5. The English Church and others kneel in synagogues, this is the Scriptural mode of public prayer, Acts xx. 31. He kneeled down and prayed with them all, xxi. 5. And we kneeled down on the shore and prayed. 2. *Direction*.—Under this head, every one should choose that position, in which he will be most retired. Turning from the minister we cannot see him in earnest prayer, nor he us. Because we turn from the minister, that we be not seen of men, our simple Presbyterian and Roman Catholic brethren, jestingly apply to us an epithet less dignified than back turners. The minister by kneeling in the same direction as the people in front of him, will thereby be better able to edify them. Let all things be done to edifying, 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

WM. MONSON.

## Notes on the Bible Lessons

### FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, ON THE INSTITUTE LEAFLETS.

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## BIBLE LESSON.

"The Barren Fig Tree."—St. Luke xiii. 1, 9.

The opening verses of our lesson give us an account of what led to this parable being spoken. Pilate, the Roman Governor, had cruelly caused the death of some Galileans, while in the act of offering sacrifices. Some persons brought the news to Jesus, and they told it in such a way as to show that they shared the popular belief, that such a terrible judgment must have been brought on by some great sin of which they had been guilty. We have an example of this belief in the case of Job's friends, see Job iv. 7; Job xxii. 5. This idea was a wrong one, and Jesus points out that we are not to regard God's judgments as special punishments for special sins, see what He tells them,

verse 3, but as an awakening call to repentance. This was the lesson Jesus wished to bring home to them and us.

1. *A Fruitless Fig Tree*. "A certain man had a fig tree." This was not an neglected one, growing by the wayside, as was common in Palestine, such as that, perhaps, mentioned in lesson xxvi., but it was planted in his vineyard, the soil rich, he expects plenty of fruit. For three years he searches at the proper time for figs, but finds "nothing but leaves," it must be hopelessly barren, it is taking up room which might be better filled, see the order he gives, verse 7, "Cut it down." But was it cut down at once? No. The dresser or caretaker pleads for one more trial, another twelve months, verse 8. If after enriching and cultivating the soil fruit appear, the labor will not have been thrown away, but if not, he will not ask that it be left to cumber the ground longer.

2. *A Fruitless Nation*. The Jews were like this fig tree, it stood out distinct among the vines, so did the Jews as God's "peculiar people," they are often in the Bible compared to a vineyard, see Deut. xiv. 2, see Isaiah v. 1, 2. But how like this barren fig tree they had been, time and again had he come "seeking fruit." He had come by Moses and the prophets calling them to repentance, and to bring forth fruit. Above all, this well beloved Son, the dresser of His vineyard, had come, repeating the warnings given, and urging them to repent, and all to no avail. Yet a last chance, God gave them a respite of forty years, and then at last the fruitless fig tree was cut down. His judgments were poured out upon the guilty nation, and Titus and the Roman army were the axes by which the decree was carried out. But this parable has a lesson for us. What is it?

3. *Fruitless Lives*. Just as the fig tree described the Jews in former days, so it represents the Christians of these days. We are by baptism members of God's Church, as such, God the Master of the vineyard, comes year after year "seeking fruit," this He has a right to expect, St. John xv. 5, 8, 16; Col. i. 10; Hos. xiv. 8. What does He find? the "fruit of good living?" or does He find us barren and unfruitful? Christians only in name, and not in heart and life, if so, have we any right to complain if the sentence were to go forth "cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground." But some one may say, what fruit can boys and girls bear? When they grow up will it not be time enough? Ah! that is just the mistake so many make, they have a wrong idea of religion, that somehow it takes the brightness out of young people's lives. Are not the fruits of the spirit as enumerated in Gal. v. 22, 23, just such as with the blessing of God the youngest of us may show in our lives. And if we are bearing none of these fruits, we are bearing other fruit, which, alas, is only too common, hatred, envy, spite, lying, intemperance. Yet still the merciful Intercessor pleads for us, Heb. vii. 25; Rom. viii. 34; 1 Tim. ii. 5; 1 John ii. 1. See the wonderful forbearance of God. He is anxious that sinners should repent, not willing, as Peter tells us, "that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." see how, before the flood, He gave one hundred and twenty years, Gen. vi. 3. How He warned Nineveh, Jonah iii. 4, and although we have sinned against Him, we are still spared, perhaps, may be having our last chance now, for there is a limit of the long suffering of God. May it never have to be said of any of us, "Ye would not come unto Me that ye might have life," rather may we

Give our hearts to His obedience,  
Serve and love Him best of all.

## Family Reading.

### ONLY.

It was only a word of kindness,  
But it brought a wealth of rest,  
As it lovingly lay enfolded  
In the midst of a weary breast.

It was only a small white daisy  
That lifted its tiny head;  
But it preached a sweet spring sermon  
Of the rising from the dead.

It was only a thoughtless answer  
To a young enquiring heart;  
But it made the soul grow careless  
Of the good and better part.

It was only a little shamrock  
That the outward eyes could see,  
But it told a blessed lesson  
Of the hidden Trinity.

AGNES TRESHAM.