



## LESSON X.—JUNE 4.

## The Resurrection.

John xx., 11-23.

## Golden Text.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. I. Cor. xv., 20.

Commit verses 19-21.

## Home Readings.

Monday, May 29.—John xx., 11-23.  
Tuesday, May 30.—Luke xxiv., 13-22.  
Wednesday, May 31.—Acts ii., 22-33.  
Thursday, June 1.—Acts iv., 1-12.  
Friday, June 2.—Rom. vi., 1-12.  
Saturday, June 3.—I. Cor. xv., 12-26.  
Sunday, June 4.—Dan. xii., 1-13.

(By Davis W. Clark.)

The record is charmingly natural when it describes the errand of the women to the sepulchre. They run with additional spices to complete the embalment, desisted from because of the approach of the Sabbath. They start precipitately, forgetting to take some one with them strong enough to roll away the stone for them. They well reflect in their action the mental state of all the disciples. It is improbable that they had forgotten the saying of Jesus about rising the third day; but it is evident they did not attach a literal signification to his words. Their ingenuousness is incontestable. The resurrection was as complete a surprise to them as to their enemies. The very spices in their hands were evidence of their honesty. Their sorrowing suspicion of a theft of the body proved them no party to such a robbery.

That garden near to Calvary witnessed the most remarkable guard-relieving of history. Four Roman soldiers, inured to all common causes of alarm, quaked like old earth herself, and swooned away, and with returning consciousness probably fled into the city, leaving their spears and shields upon the ground. Angels mounted guard in their stead. One of them possibly outshone his fellows. The snowy lustre of his raiment matched well his immaculate nature. The glory of his appearance was like an electric coruscation.

Among the holy women conspicuous at the cross and the grave, Mary Magdalene stands easily first. By some pitiful blunder, she has been confused, in art and Christian literature, with 'the woman who was a sinner,' so that her very name is used to describe a class of social outcasts. There is absolutely no evidence for this. About all we know of her is that she was from Magdala, on the southwestern coast of the Sea of Galilee. It has been said that there is reason to suppose that Mary Magdalene was in less humble circumstances than most of our Lord's disciples. He had set her free from some terrible mental or physical malady, and she gave him the holy love of a warm and generous nature.

She, with greater fervor perhaps than the others, started earlier (while it was yet dark) on the errand to the tomb. What was in her heart was richer than what was in her hand.

The description of Mary's recognition of Jesus is one of the most unique and skilful things in literature. Much in little! 'Jesus saith unto her, Mary!' She turned herself, and saith unto him, 'My Master!'

An entirely unnecessary mystical meaning has been attached to Jesus' words, 'Touch me not!' Paraphrased, they might be read: 'Don't cling to me now; there will be opportunity for you to express your affection in the future, for I have not yet left the world. Hurry to my brethren, and tell.'

The final scene of the first Easter Sunday is an interior one. It is perhaps in that very

upper room in which Jesus ate the Last Supper with his disciples. The shepherdless sheep are cowering behind closed doors. They are afraid of eavesdroppers or even a violent assault of their enemies. 'Peace!' What a word to be spoken to such a company at such a time and by such a Person! The 'breathing' of Jesus upon his disciples was a symbolical act. It is as if he was instituting a new sacrament, for he says to them just as he did when he handed them the bread and the cup, 'Take the Holy Spirit.'

## LIGHTS ON THE LESSON.

These women were in the way of loving service. That is how they came to be the first witnesses of the resurrection. Loyal doing leads to royal knowing. 'If any will do, he shall know.'

The stone was rolled away to exhibit the emptiness of the tomb. It was not rolled away for Jesus, but for his disciples; not that he might come forth, but that they might enter and see that he was gone.

The Crusades were a fight for a will-o'-the-wisp. The holy sepulchre, as called, is in the heart of a city, and, it is now conceded, can not have been the place of entombment. The true site is lost. It is well. We worship not the place, but the Person.

The Oriental manner of burial is interesting; the winding-sheet and napkin; embalment; rock-hewn chamber; 'loculi,' like stemship berths, in which bodies were laid. Stone for door, sometimes shaped like millstone and set in groove, so as to be rolled and held in position by a smaller stone like a chuck under a wheel.

It was just such a place that Jesus forsook on that first Easter morning. He first took precaution to fold the long linen strip with which his body had been swathed, and laid it on the spot where his feet had rested; then he did the same with the smaller strip, called a napkin in our translation. Thus he left an ocular proof that his body had not been removed in haste or by thieves.

The love, faith, fidelity of womanhood is transfigured in the resurrection scene.

Mary mourned what was really her greatest gain. Suppose she had found the body still in the tomb. It would have been the most disastrous 'find' of history. What Mary ignorantly deprecated was really the infinite gain of humanity. The very emptiness of Jesus' tomb is its chief glory.

The open tomb was converted into a bureau of information for the troubled disciples. White-liveried attendants were there to point them to the place where the Lord lay and to the grave clothes laid in such orderly fashion as to preclude the idea of a hasty and clandestine removal, and to announce the blessed truth, 'He is risen!'

The special authority to 'remit and retain' was not given to the apostles in the language, 'Whosoever sins ye forgive,' etc. It is as if Jesus had said, 'You are going out to preach the terms of forgiveness; viz., repentance and faith. If men meet the conditions they will be forgiven. If they do not, their sins will stand against them.' Any other interpretation would give a mechanical and arbitrary power of a privileged class over their fellow.

## NOTES FROM THE COMMENTARIES.

Mary stood: Revised Version, was standing, on her return to the tomb after telling Peter and John that Jesus was not in the tomb. Such offices (as embalment) were performed by those who were not closely related to the deceased, so that the absence of our Lord's mother is not wonderful.—Bengel. She stooped and looked: Because she was anxious to see whether she might not, after all, be mistaken about the absence of the body. She stooped because the top of the entrance was so low that she could not otherwise get a near view of the inside of the tomb.—Clark. Even in the midst of her grief she is moved by a natural desire to see if there is any trace of her Lord's body in the tomb. Seeth two angels: To be regarded as a distinct vision to Mary, which, from the fullness with which it is recorded, she probably herself related to the evangelist. She turned: It may be that the angels, looking toward the Lord, showed some sign of his coming.—Westcott. Why weepest thou? This first word of the risen Lord to a mortal is an inexhaustible text for the resurrection. He has risen again to comfort those who mourn.—Stier. Whom seekest thou? Christ

takes cognizance of his people's cares.—Henry. Borne him hence: Her answer shows that she thought it possible that it had been found inconvenient to have the body of Jesus in that tomb and that it had been removed to some other place of sepulchre. Take him away: In order to inter him elsewhere. Her overflowing love, in the midst of her grief, does not weigh her strength. Jesus saith unto her, Mary: With one word, and that one word her name, the Lord awakens all the consciousness of his presence; calling her in that tone, doubtless, in which her soul had been so often summoned to receive Divine knowledge and precious comfort.—Alford. Unto him: [In Hebrew]. Rabboni: The insertion in Hebrew is of importance as indicating the language spoken between Christ and his disciples. Peace be unto you: Ordinary words of salutation, of more than ordinary significance. Breathed on them: The Lord in his majesty does not bestow a kiss. His sacred breath is more than that would have been.—Stier. Like the breath of a friend on the cheek, so graciously and confidentially should the Spirit of God come upon the spirit of man.—Braune.

## C. E. Topic.

Sunday, June 4.—Topic.—The making of a Christian; helping one another. Eph. iv., 1-6; Heb. x., 24, 25. (Consecration meeting.)

## Junior C. E. Topic.

## THE FIERY SERPENTS.

Monday, May 29.—The king of Edom. Num. xx., 14-21.

Tuesday, May 30.—Going around Edom. Judges xi., 16-18.

Wednesday, May 31.—Getting discouraged. Num. xxi., 4.

Thursday, June 1.—They spake against God. Ps. lxxviii., 18-22.

Friday, June 2.—Nehushtan. II. Kings xviii., 4.

Saturday, June 3.—Paul's thought about it. I. Cor. x., 1-11.

Sunday, June 4.—Topic.—The fiery serpents. Num. xxi., 4-9; John iii., 14, 15.

## Real Teaching Wanted.

It is alarming to be told that, in proportion to the number of the children, there are 50,000 fewer teachers in Sunday-schools than there were a decade ago, in consequence of which many superintendents are driven to accept any volunteer teacher, whether fit for the work or not. It is little wonder that there is such a terrible abyss between the school and the Church; a mere minority passing from one to the other. We need teachers—real teachers—who can do something more than 'say a few words' to the young. Children want teaching.

We often wonder if many people grasp the meaning of the word 'teach.' To entertain them with stories, keep them quiet in view of prizes, lecture them—this is not teaching. Anybody will not do as a teacher. There must be tact, love and training. The whole question of religious training for the young will have to be faced as never before, in view of recent events and future developments. But, above all, parents need to know the Divine art of teaching their own offspring the ways of the Lord, for there is no school like the home.—'Christian.'

Some men's hearts are as great as the world, and still have no room in them to hold the memory of a wrong.—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

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