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CELIA.

BY MRS. MARY M. ARCHIBALD.

In a secluded spot beneath a spreading tree, on the New England shore, a grave was pointed out to the writer, —marked by a headstone bearing the inscription "Celia." This spot was once the trysting place of Celia and her companion, a sailor boy; and during his absence at sea here she would sit and sing the wild songs he had taught her and watch for the coming sail. Her patient watching was frequently rewarded; but there came a time when she looked in vain for her lover's return. Year's flew by and her song grew sadder and sadder, until silenced by death. The wanderer came back, but too late. On the old spot he found not Celia, but her grave, made there in fulfilment of her last request.

I

Singing on a mild May morning
Plain and woodland earth adorning;
Singing gladdest roundelay,
Gayest of the girl band gay:—
Singing 'lone yet lonely never,
Singing by the crystal river,
Shore bound copses ringing ever:
Artless singers, bird and child,
Magic music, sweet and wild.

II

Music in midsummer glory,—
Dreamy, dazing golden glory,
Melody of maiden song,
Merriest of the maiden throng;
Melody beside the river
Where the shade and sunlight quiver:
'Neath the willow's breeze—born shiver
Sings a maiden, child no more,
Weaving chaplets by the shore.

III

Music through the copses trilleth,
Autumn's stilly twilight filleth,
Flute sweet notes,—yet strangely sad:
Child and maiden—she was glad;
Woman now beside the river,
Sad and strange her song forever,
Standing 'neath the waving willow,
Gazing o'er the distant billow.

IV

Hide and seek the moon is playing,
Snow clouds o'er her bosom straying;
Snow flakes dancing o'er the lea
Hooding white the willow tree.
Song at midnight on the river,
Song of welcome first to give her;—
Captain singing, "Haul to shore!".
Bronze boy sailor now no more.

V

Hushed the song upon the billow:
Some one waiteth 'neath the willow:
"Waiting for me as of yore:"
Springs in rapture to the shore.
Moonbeams dance upon the river,
Neath the snow-veiled willow quiver,
Linger on the marble stone
Where he reads *her* name alone.
Hushed the song upon the billow,
Thro' the copses 'neath the willow:
'Neath the snow-mound by the river,
Hush'd the sweet sad song forever.

BISHOP SIMPSON'S FIFTH LECTURE.

(EXTRACTS.)

I shall never forget an exhibition I once attended. Shortly after schools for the imbecile were commenced in Europe, a young man, moved with benevolence, crossed the ocean to examine their mode of operation and success. Assured of their utility, he returned and commenced a similar institution. He advertised for the most idiotic and helpless child that could be found. Among those brought to him was a little boy of five years of age. He had never spoken or walked, had never chewed any hard substance, or given a look of recognition to a friend. He lay on the floor a mass of flesh, without even ability to turn himself over. Such was the student brought to this school. The teacher fruitlessly made effort after effort to get the slightst recognition from his eye or to produce the slightest intentional act. Unwilling however to yield, at the hour of noon he had the little boy brought to his room, and he laid down beside him every day for half an hour, hoping that some favorable indication might occur. To improve the time of his rest, he read aloud from some author. One day, at the end of six months, he was unusually weary, and did not read. He soon discovered that the child was uneasy, and was trying to move itself a little, as if to turn toward him. The thought flashed upon his mind: it misses the sound of my voice. He turned himself closely to it, brought his mouth near the child's head, and after repeated efforts the little fellow succeeded in placing his finger on the teacher's lips, as if to say, Make that sound again. The teacher said that moment he felt he had the control of that boy. He gained his attention, and by careful manipulation of his muscles, succeeded in teaching him to walk, and then to read, and when I saw him at the end of five years he stood on a platform, read correctly, recited the names of the Presidents of the United States, and answered accurately a number of questions on our national history. I looked with astonishment, and said to myself, Was there ever so much patience and such devotion? and how strong should be the love of that little boy for his teacher? I said, was there ever an instance of one stooping so low, and waiting so long? Then I said, Yes, there was one instance —the son of God come down from heaven, laid himself down beside me, his great heart by my heart, watched me with perpetual care, infused into me his own life, and waited for nearly twenty years before I reached my finger to his lips and said' "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." What condescension, what love to fallen man! Christ stooped so low, it authorizes us to stoop, and wait on, and wait, ever. Some of these wretched ones have been suffering for more than eight and thirty years, and have been lying at the edge of the pool waiting for us to come and help them into the troubled waters.

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As to sermonizing, I feel my incomptency to advise. I have never been a systematic sermonizer. I have already said to you that in my early ministry I believed it impossible for me to become a successful preacher in the sense of being an orator. In addition to this, my health was very delicate, and I anticipated, at the longest, only two or three years of service. At that time, in the Church to which I belonged, there were no theological schools; and in the West no theological seminary, founded by any Church, had gained much reputation; hence I commenced my ministry without any specific theological training. I had read my Bible thoroughly from my earliest childhood, for I have no memory when I could not read; and my study in the original languages, more especially in the Greek, had been for years a delightful occupation; but no one had told me how to make a sermon. I had listened to good preachers, but the only sermons I had ever read were those of Mr. Wesley. I did not know there was such a thing as a skeleton, or a book of skeletons of sermons; and in my youthful innocence I would as soon have stolen money from a bank as to have attempted to appropriate a sermon which I had either heard or read. I remember well how, about the close of my first year, an older minister put into my hand, and offered to lend me, a book of sketches. I happened to have common sense enough to decline the offer; so, without knowing how a sermon was made, save as mentioned, I began to preach. I did not try to make sermons. I felt I must, at the peril of my soul, persuade men to come to Christ; I must labor to the utmost of my ability to get sinners converted, and believers advanced in holiness. For this I thought and studied, wept and fasted and prayed My selection of words, my plan of discourse, was only and all the time to persuade men to be reconciled to God. I never spoke without the deepest feeling, and unless I saw a strong divine influence on the congregation, or knew of some soul being converted, I felt sad, and sought retirement to humble myself before God in prayer My sermons were not well arranged; sometimes I had divisions, for I had heard ministers say firstly, and secondly, and thirdly. Sometimes I had a line written out here and there, and sometimes a few catch-words on a scrap of paper, but which I seldom, if ever, carried into the pulpit, and very few of which I ever preserved. My ministry was one of exhortation rather than of sermonizing; and I looked for immediate results under every effort, or to me it was a failure. So my early ministry was formed. Whatever my method was, it was purely my own, and was adopted, as I have said, not to make sermons, but to bring men to God. No one could have been more surprised than myself when I began to find, not only that souls were awakened and converted, but that friends began to speak kindly of my simple talks as sermons. So I finished my first year. My second year I was stationed in Pittsburgh, where I was compelled to preach three times on Sabbath and once at least during the week, but not always to the same congregation. I was so driven, it seemed as if I could not change my plans. At the end of my first year there I had preached all I knew, and expected to be relieved. But I was unexpectedly returned, to preach three times on the Sabbath and once a week to the same congregation.

I had a membership of four hundred, scattered over the city. In addition to my preaching, I led the public prayer-meeting, spent one evening with my official members, led two classes, took a deep interest in the Sunday-school, and formed a class of young men, whom I encouraged in their reading, and helped in some slight degree to prepare for the ministry. And so not expecting to be a preacher, I preached on; not expecting to live, I lived on. Many a time I resolved I would prepare better and yet I often found myself brought up to Saturday evening or Sunday morning with comparatively slight preparation for the Sabbath. But I studied intensely. I arose early and spent my forenoons faithfully—not in sermon writing, but in mastering standard works on theology, mental philosophy, and the natural sciences, of which I was passionately fond. I studied on my feet, and found my sermons among the sick and poor, in garrets and in cellars. Not expecting ever to do much in the pulpit, I spoke to men everywhere of Jesus and his love, and had the satisfaction of seeing many scores brought to the foot of the cross. I expected by and by to find leisure to make better sermons, but I have never found it. My boat got on the stream, and I have been borne down the rapid current without the time to rest until I can almost see the mouth of the river, and the boundless ocean. I would not advise any young man to do as I have done. I would breathe into you, if I could, the earnestness and love of souls and the devotion of my earlier ministry: but I would urge you to make a better preparation, and to become workmen more approved both of God and man.

ST. JOHN POOR.

At a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance held in St. John on Monday last, measures were adopted for relieving the distressed poor of the city and vicinity. We can only give brief statements of the condition of things from speeches delivered at the meeting.

Mayor Earle said—Few persons in the city had better opportunities than himself for judging the amount of suffering and want; from early morning until night his office was daily besieged by them in quest of relief, asking for food, fuel and clothing; and he assured the meeting that prompt action was needed, and that on a large scale, to succor these poor unfortunates.

Rev. D. Maclise said no doubt existed in the community as to the amount of present suffering; for it had been shown in the papers. He was cognizant of much want in the section of the city where he resided, in fact his house was constantly visited by people of whom he knew nothing asking for aid. He had tried to do something for the worst cases, and had advised others to go to the Alms House, though that institution he had since learned was full. The greatest want existed among those who did not make their condition known. He was glad to learn from the Mayor that the Relief Fund was not exclusively for those who had been burned out. No statistics had been submitted to this meeting, because no one had been authorized to prepare them, but he could give the names of many present sufferers. The rev. gentleman mentioned the case of the family of an English mechanic residing near the Marsh Bridge who had lived four weeks on bread and water; also that of a widow with four children whose eldest daughter had been sick for some time, who called on him last Saturday in deep distress, having just been warned out of her house by the landlord. Scores of such cases existed. He had furnished the press with some of the particulars, and he would be happy to furnish fuller information to the charitable. It was folly to say get work; as it can't be got at even 60 cents a day. He described the manner in which the city was districted some years ago for relief purposes, as a method worthy of following in the present case.

Rev Mr. Hart felt the time had come to call a citizens' meeting with reference to the relief of the poor. He had thought over the matter and agreed with Dr. Waters that the distress arose somewhat from the commercial depression; while a great part of it was due to the late calamitous fire. The fire had crippled the rich, who now could not aid those whom the hard times had reduced to penury. Prompt action was required. He was glad to learn there was no legal obstacle to using the Relief Fund for the indirect victims of the fire, and if the continuance of that fund was, as had been contended, likely to cause permanent pauperism, it was a strong argument in favor of its immediate expenditure for deserving cases. But if the civic authorities could be induced to provide work for the laborers out of employment, it would be still better than helping them from the fund, as it would not make them feel that they were paupers.

* * * *

Rev. Dr. Waters moved that Captain Prichard, Mr. T. W. Daniel and Dr. Bennet be appointed a committee to call on the Executive Committee of the Relief and Aid Society, to see what they would do about extending relief He thanked the Sheriff and other officers of that Society for the manner in which they had discharged their duty. Resolution unanimously adopted.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIRST QUARTER:—STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

B. C. 445. LESSON V. THE READING OF THE LAW; or, The Holy Word. February 2.

EXPLANATORY.

Verse 1. *All the people.* Including not only the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who were still few, but all the Jews settled in the other towns and villages. *As one man.* 1. "There is an impressiveness and moral power in a multitude assembled for religious service." In every age revivals of religion have followed large congregations. 2. "Hence, we should seek to bring all the people to God's house." *Street.* More properly, "open place," probably a park or square south of the temple, between it and the city wall. *Water gate.* Probably located in the district called Ophel and opening to the subterranean reservoirs beneath the temple, near the present entrance to Al Aksa. *They spake.* Indicating that the movement began with the people themselves, and not with the authorities; a popular revival of interest in the word of God. 3. "It gives good hope for the church when its membership begin to inquire after the Scriptures" *Ezra.* The greatest character in the latter history of the Jewish people, called "the second founder of Israel." He was a priest and scribe, gifted also with prophetetical inspiration. He came with a commission from Artaxerxes Longimanus, about B C. 458, thirteen years before Nehemiah's arrival, and accomplished several important reforms among the people. By his influence they were led to a close study of an exact obedience to the written word of God. He is believed by the Jews to have 1. Instituted the great synagogue at Jerusalem. 2. Edited, arranged and settled the canon of the Old Testament. 3. Introduced the use of the Chaldee characters in place of the obsolete ancient Hebrew. 4. Written the books of Chronicles, Ezra, and perhaps Nehemiah and Esther. 5. Established synogogues for worship and the reading of the law. Before the events related in this lesson, he had probably been absent at Babylon, but now returns to assist Nehemiah in his work of restoration. His tomb is shown at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. *Scribe.* The name of an order which arose after the captivity, when the prophets began to cease, and the people turned toward the written law, The scribes were of various rank, the highest being interpreters and teachers of the Scriptures, the lowest mere copyists and writers. As a class, they were held in high respect, but in later years grew proud and arrogant, well deserving the censures which they received from our Lord. *Book of the law.* Probably not only the Pentateuch, but also most of the Old Testament Scriptures, which Ezra was then arranging and revising.

2. *The priest.* Ezra was descended from Hilkiah, who had been high-priest in the reign of Josiah. *Brought the law.* The sacred writings, being in manuscript only were very scarce and valuable, and kept with great care, and only brought before the public on great occasions. 4. "There were then but a few Bibles for a whole land: let us thank God that now we may have a Bible in every house." In 1300 A. D a copy of the Bible was worth the wages of a labouring man for thirteen years; now it may be bought for twenty-five cents. *All that could hear with understanding.* Better translated, "all having understanding to hear;" children who were of age to listen intelligently to the law and the history. *First day of the seventh month.* This was the "feast of trumpets," (Lev. 32, 24; Num. 29, 1.6) a "new-year celebration," as the seventh month of the ecclesiastical year was the first month of the civil year. It was the month Tisri or Ethanim, nearly corresponding to October, 5 "How much better were the sacred pleasures of the ancient Israelites on their holidays than the senseless noises with which so many keep our national days."

3. *He read therein.* Every circumstance conspired to make this a solemn service —the striking scene itself; the rank and importance of those who conducted the exercises; the listeners, gathered from all cities; the sacred volume, brought out of the seclusion of ages, and from its sacredness and scarcity doubly precious. 6. "The remembrance of religious services in after years come back with added power to the memory and the conscience." John Newton, on the deck of a slave ship, suddenly remembered his early prayers beside his mother's knee, cried out "My mother's God! have mercy on me!" was transformed into a holy man and earnest minister, and wrote many hymns of the church, among them "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," etc. *From morning.* A service of about six hours, probably without intermission. 7. "When God's book is scarce, people hunger for its words, and are ready to feast upon them." In the dawn of the English Reformation, when the "Great Bible," newly translated by royal authority, stood on its desk, chained to a pillar in the cathedral, the people gathered in vast throngs, standing on the stone floor listening hour after hour to the reader's voice, and whenever he paused, crying "Read on! read on." *Attentive.* 8. "From these ancient hearers let us learn a lesson of interest in the word of God."

4, 5. *Pulpit.* Literally, "tower." Probably, however a raised platform, elevated so high that the reader could be seen by a large multitude. *They had made.* As a temporary, not a permanent structure. *Beside him.* These were priests, perhaps those who were then employed in the temple service. They probably by turns assisted and relieved Ezra in the reading, and also added to the influence of the service by the encouragement of their presence. 9. "The leaders in society should sanction and encourage the services of the church by their example." All we know of these eminent men is that they took part in a worthy work. 10. "Though a man's history may be forgotten, yet his influence lives after him." *Opened the book.* Not such a volume as ours, but a long roll of manuscript, wound upon a stick. *He was above.* Being over the heads of the people, all could witness him as he unrolled the sacred scroll. 11. "There is an added impressiveness to God's truth when it reaches the eye as well as the ear." *All stood up.* As a sign of reverence toward the book of God. 12. "Let us learn how to treat the book which comes from God, carefully respect its every leaf, and never misuse or injure it." The ancient Jews would not tread on a scrap of paper, lest it might contain the word of God.

6, 7, 8. *Answered.* A response, not merely from a few, but from the whole congregation, testifying their concurrence with the prayer and praise. 13. "The public worship of God is not a spectacle to be gazed upon, but a service in which all should participate." *Amen.* A Hebrew word meaning "firm," or "so be it." *Lifting up their hands* Pointing toward the heavens, as calling upon God to witness *Bowed.* In the posture of supplication, with knees bent and head turned earthward. 14. "Let us learn a lesson of reverent posture while God is addressed during divine service." *Also Jeshua,* etc. These thirteen Levites seem to have been stationed at intervals through the crowd, to repeat and explain the reading, where the voice of Ezra would not reach the multitudes. *And the Levites.* Or, "even the Levites." *Caused the people to understand.* They may have explained the more obscure passages, or translated the obsolete words, as the people were then speaking a language as different from the earlier Hebrew as ours is now different from that of Wickliffe's day. *People stood.* The word "stood" is not in the original. They remained in order while the law was read and explained. *Distinctly* Some think that here is a reference to some sort of choral recitative or chanting. *Caused them to understand.* Many scholars translate, "And they [the people] gave heed to the reading;" making the reference to the hearers rather than the readers.

GOLDEN TEXT: The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. Psa. 119, 130

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION: *The divine authority of Scripture.*

The next lesson is Neh. 13, 15-22.