

Our Young Folks.

A Youthful Martyr.

In the first ages of the Church of Christ, in the city of Antioch, a believer was carried fourth to die as a martyr. Ask any little child, "whether it were better to worship one God, the Maker of heaven and earth, and one Saviour, who is able to save us, or to worship the many false gods whom the heathens serve?" Now, it was so that a Christian mother had come to the spot, holding in her hand a little son, of about nine or ten years old, named Cyril. The heathen judge no sooner heard the martyr's words than his eye rested on the child, and he desired the question to be put to him. The question was asked; and, to the surprise of those who heard it, the boy replied, "God is one, and Jesus Christ is one with the Father. The judge was filled with rage. "Oh! how Christian!" he cried, "thou hast taught that child to answer thus." Then turning to the boy, he said, more mildly, "Toll me child, how did you learn this faith?" The boy looked lovingly in his mother's face, and replied, "It was God's grace that taught it to my dear mother, and she taught it to me." "Let us now see what the love of Christ can do for you," said the cruel judge; and at a sign from him, the officers who stood ready with their wooden rods, after the fashion of the Romans, instantly seized the boy. Gladly would the mother have saved her timid dove, even at the cost of her own life, but she could not do so; yet did she whisper to him to trust in the love of Christ, and to speak the truth. "What can the love of Christ do for him now?" asked the judge. "It enables him to endure what his Master endured for him and for us all," was the reply. And again they smote the child. "What can the love of Christ do for him?" And tears fell even from the eyes of the heathen, as that mother, so much tortured as her son, answered, "It teaches him to forgive his persecutors." The boy watched his mother's eyes as they rose up to heaven for him; and when his tormentors asked whether he would not now acknowledge the gods they served, and deny Christ, he still cried, "No; there is no other God but one; and Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of the world. He loved me, and I love Him for His love." The poor boy now fainted away between the repeated strokes, and they cast the bruised body into the mother's arms, crying, "See what the love of your Christ can do for him now." As the mother pressed her child gently to her own crushed heart, she answered, "That love will take him from the wrath of man to the rest of heaven." "Mother!" cried the dying boy "give me a drop of water from our cool well upon my tongue." The mother said, "Already, dearest, hast thou tasted of the well that springeth up to everlasting life—The grace which Christ gives to His little ones. Thou hast spoken the truth in love; arise now, for thy Saviour calleth for thee. May He grant thy poor mother grace to follow in thy bright path!" The little martyr faintly raised his eyes, and said again, "There is but one God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent," and so saying he gave up his life.—Golden Sayings for the Young.

Sabbath School Teacher.

LESSON XLIX.

Dec. 5. } JESUS AND MARY. { John xx. 11-13. 1875. } COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 15, 16. PARALLEL PASSAGES.—Matt. xxviii. 1-8; Mark xvi. 2-7; Luke xxiv. 9. SCRIPTURE READINGS.—With v. 11, read v. 1 and Luke viii. 2; with v. 12, compare Job. i. 14; with v. 13, read John xxi. 4; with v. 15, read Luke xxiv. 16; with v. 16, read John xiii. 13; with v. 17, compare 2 Cor. v. 16; with v. 18, compare Matt. xxviii. 9, 10, and Luke xxiv. 22-24. GOLDEN TEXT.—Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene.—Mark xvi. 9. CENTRAL TRUTH.—Jesus could not be holden of death. Great agitation and excitement were produced among the friends of Jesus by the quaking of the earth (Matt. xxviii. 2), the angels, and the finding of the grave empty, and by the conflicting ideas and feelings. There was "hurrying to and fro." It was early dawn, the light not yet clear. Each party had its own experience and observation, as in all such scenes of confusion, and as each reports there is the usual obscurity and seeming lack of harmony. There would have been none of this if the disciples had concocted the story. Then it would have been all plain. But the witnesses are honest. (This feature of the narrative ought to be explained to the more advanced classes, with, perhaps, a reference to Robinson's, Elliott's, Neander's, or other "harmony" of the events.) The account of Mary's proceedings on this eventful morning is briefly this: She, in common with the women, on coming near sees the stone rolled away. It was very large (Mark xvi. 4), and so could be seen before coming to it. Her eager mind rushes to the conclusion that the body has been snatched away, perhaps for dishonor. She does not wait a moment. The disciples, particularly Peter and John, ought to know. She rushes off to tell them. "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." "They," she does not know who, and "we," the rest of the women, and I, of v. 1. The two hastens, and outrun her, of course. Indeed she can learn little more and need not hasten, yet her love draws her towards the place. Meantime they get fuller disclosures (vs. 3-8), but know not what to make of them, and go home (v. 10), i. e., to their stopping-place. She comes meanwhile alone, and the interview of our lesson follows. (V. 11.) Shows us Mary in distress by the grave, perplexed, gazing again into the resting place of the beloved teacher who had delivered her from so much misery. She does not stand inside indeed, but stoops down and looks (down) into the tomb. She may stand to us as the picture of our race—weak, perplexed, not knowing what to do, weeping, miserable, looking into a grave in despair, and in need of a revelation from heaven. (V. 12.) She gets comfort. The angels—two in number, enough to bear witness—sitting, their work is done, "one at the head, the other at the feet," as it had been. Christ was fittingly attended, as at the temptation (Matt. iv. 11), and the agony (Luke xxii. 43), in the grave. These represent his Heavenly Father, and wait on him in the rising from the grave. They mark the divine approval of that act. They attest it to men. They learn from it themselves. They attest also the dignity of Jesus. They minister comfort to his followers. Like the Scriptures—God's revelation to helpless men—they declare what otherwise man could not know. (V. 13.) They speak with sympathy, and respect, for "woman" has not the abrupt and somewhat harsh tone it would have with us, if so used. (See John xii. 25, and u. 4.) Angels are in sympathy with God's people. A friendly relation with them is established by redemption. (See Heb. xii. 22.) (The human mind, ignorant or incredulous of revealed truth on this point, and lacking something, finds a substitute in gnomes, fairies, and the alleged facts of "spiritualism," the "necromancy" of Deut. xviii. 11, and of the witch of Endor.) Her reply is in the singular (so v. 15), as she is now alone, yet fearless in the courage of love. She indicates no surmise as to who had taken the body. Nor does she seem to expect information from them, but absorbed in the one idea—the body is not there and must be found—she turns. So God's children often seek one thing and find another. All seems lost to them, when the best blessings are near. The providences are dark, but light is flashing from the promises. (V. 14.) Turning and raising herself, she notices rather than sees one standing near. It is a garden. The presence of a gardener would be natural. It was not quite clear daylight yet. She did not expect, and so did not recognize Jesus. Who can tell how much change had occurred in look, clothing, etc. She is the picture of many a saint, expecting when he is at hand a comfort, expecting light from sermons, ministers, sacraments, when he himself is near. (V. 15.) He repeats and enlarges the question, "Whom seekest thou?" Her attitude was that of a seeker. Her reply assumes his knowledge of her errand. She is alone, speaks in the singular, but alone, will, in her grateful love, undertake everything. "I will take him away." He then gives her opportunity to tell what she is seeking. She does it informally in her very eagerness. (V. 16.) He speaks her name, in the old tongue, "Mary!" It is enough. He is here. All queries as to how, why, when, are dismissed. "Rabboni!" the response to his "Mary!" She is probably stretching out her hands in glad recognition (perhaps to assure herself that he is not a spirit), when he interposes with (V. 17.) A word which has suggested diverse meanings. There are two that deserve respect. According to one our Lord means that something more urgent than demonstrations of love is now pro-

per, namely, informing the disciples (see v. 18), and that though he would ultimately ascend, yet not immediately. There would be time for loving intercourse and confirming of faith before his ascension. "I am not immediately going, though I shall go after a time." The second is based on the idea that she meant to renew the old relations (as "Rabboni" shows), that he meant to convey to her that a new relation between him and his disciples was now formed involving more reverence, and that he withdraws from a "too human touch." But, on the other hand, he allowed, later, the touching of Thomas, and showed that his body was real by eating (Luke xxiv. 43). Is there not a third, and more natural reading? "Touch" has been taken to mean mere momentary contact, such as, with hot iron, will burn. But it may mean continued contact. "Clave non to me now." I told the disciples that I would remain with them for ever. Yet not in this form, or in a bodily way. Tell them I ascend to my father and theirs, and after that I shall be with them so that they can cleave to me." He teaches them as they are able to bear it, that not the bodily, but the spiritual presence is the blessing to them. He is to be known, but not after the flesh. He calls them "brethren." His death has, in this respect, made no changes. Mark the force of "my Father, my God and yours." One with Christ! See the ever memorable words (John i. 12). (V. 18.) Records her obedience to the divine command. She may not cleave to him and hold him fast, but she may show her love and trust in obedience. She has high honor put on her—the first mortal messenger to announce Christ's resurrection—and that to apostles! Learn from this: (a) The power of gratitude. She received much and loved much. (b) The wisdom of God. All things connected with the resurrection arranged with a view to the end in view. (c) The grace of Jesus. He meets the seeking souls. Yet in his own way—not ours. (d) His unchanging faithfulness. The timid, deserting, doubting disciples are "my brethren." (e) The honor to woman. On her fell heavily the curse (Gen. iii. 16). To her comes early and fully the blessing. Sin abundant. So does grace. Yet not to draw her into prominence. Mary, like the mother of our Lord, here disappears. SUGGESTIVE TOPICS. The time—the place—the state of mind of the disciples—of the women—of Mary—her history—obligations to our Lord—her aim in coming—the discovery—her probable thought—communication to the two—after-course—her attitude—the angels—their duty there—their question—the Lord's appearance—her mistake—how corrected—her impulse—how checked—meanings attached to the words—the first—second—a third probable—the lesson to us, and the honor upon woman. LESSON L. Dec. 12. } JESUS AND THOMAS. { John xx. 15-21. 1875. } COMMIT TO MEMORY, vs. 28, 29. PARALLEL PASSAGES.—John xiv. 5; 1 John i. 1 Peter i. 8. SCRIPTURE READINGS.—With vs. 24, 25, read Mark xvi. 14; with v. 26, read Acts xx. 7; with v. 27, comp. John xi. 15; with v. 28, read Rom. i. 4; with v. 29, read Heb. xi. 27; with v. 30, read Acts i. 3; with v. 31, read 1 John v. 13. GOLDEN TEXT.—Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established.—2 Chron. xx. 20. CENTRAL TRUTH.—Peace and strength come by faith. I. THOMAS DOUBTING. The opening verse of our lesson declares the occasion of the incident here reported. On the day he rose, in the evening of the first Christian Sabbath, the Master entered the closed room where the disciples were assembled. They were together for mutual encouragement, and in a retired place, shunning observation for fear of the Jews, already excited against them. Thomas called Didymus (or "the twin"), was not there. The habit of his mind was such, that possibly he at once lost all hope and went on his own way. This however is not declared, and is not quite supported by his being with the twelve a week after. He may however, in the meantime, have so far reconsidered the matter as to wait for more evidence; or (less probable) his absence may have been accidental. However he was absent; he missed much—the conclusive evidence of the Lord's resurrection (v. 20), the joy it gave, the repeated salutation of forgiveness and reconciliation (vs. 19, 21), the gift of the Holy Ghost (v. 22), the authoritative commission to declare the terms of divine forgiveness (see Jer. i. 10). We may learn from this, the wisdom of making the most of all religious services and opportunities of fellowship open to us. That from which we stay away, from lack of taking trouble or from deliberate purpose, may offer the very help we need. A Sabbath afternoon or evening service may include a message for us. (V. 25.) The "glad" disciples met Thomas with the news. He would not take their testimony. He must see for himself. He must even have more evidence of the senses than they had. He must have it in the most distinct sensuous and even gross way. His mind is made up beforehand that just such, and no other evidence, will convince him. "I will not believe." There are three remarks proper on the speech: (1) It is a providential blessing that we have an example of infinite wisdom dealing with a faulty doubter. For (2) There was much fault in this form of doubt. And (3) He (Thomas) was not illustrating faith, which believes on proper evidence, namely, the Divine Word, but proud self-will. (See Note on "The Scepticism of Thomas," p. 186.) II. THOMAS CONVINCED. (V. 26.) The next Sabbath (and a week

has never past since without this Sabbath), the disciples were again assembled. They had, we may reasonably infer, the Lord's authority for thus marking the day. Thomas was present. Jesus came again, "The doors being shut" must be mentioned to indicate that his coming was supernatural. (How often no finds the heart so!) He repeats his salutation, "Peace." He is "Prince of peace" (Isa. ix. 6). The disciples would leave him to lead, and the first thing apparently, is to deal with this one unsettled, and so may be sure, unhappy disciple. Without introduction or ceremony, He who knew "what was in man" (John ii. 25), meets the terms of Thomas, declared to the eleven, and in Thomas' own words. The effect was overwhelming and instant. The knowledge, the condescension, the grace, the patience here disclosed, declare the divine Lord. He holds out no longer. He does not apply his own test; other evidence has satisfied him. He enumerates, not as has been crudely alleged, a profane exclamation of surprise, but a solemn, grateful, most tender recognition of Jesus as his own divine Lord, his Emmanuel (Matt. i. 23). (V. 28.) Jesus accepts the testimony (see Acts x. 30, and xiv. 15) Let it be noted here, that honest doubt is not a safe state; that a mind in suspense is "faithless"; that there is no wisdom in remaining in it; that Christ desires men to get out of it; that he knows their thoughts; that he offers suitable evidence, and desires them to be believing. If he does not now treat men as he did Thomas, it is because he has given ample proof already (Luke xvi. 31). To say, "I will not believe unless I see such evidence as I demand (e.g., a spirit from the other world), is to declare the millions of the Church Catholic who have believed, though they have not seen, fools or fanatics." It is to reflect on God, as if he invited their belief on defective evidence. III. THOMAS INSTRUCTED. There is reproach in the Lord's word (v. 29). "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed;" "My word beforehand" (Matt. xvi. 21), and the testimony of thy brethren" (v. 25), "thou wouldst not believe." This is not the highest kind of faith. There is a higher, that of those who do not have nor crave such evidence; who can speak like Peter (1 Peter i. 8), or like Paul (2 Cor. v. 7). This blessing comes on the overwhelming mass of Christians. Had all refused to accept Christ but on the evidence required by Thomas, either there had been no Christian Church, or Christ must have been on perpetual exhibition on earth. Thomas was only a little way removed from the Jews who said, "Show us a sign" (Matt. xii. 38). Our Lord points to no individual cases, but states a general principle in v. 29. IV. GENERAL SUMMARY. (V. 30.) "Many other signs," etc. Two views are entertained regarding the applications of these words: (a) That John refers to his entire Gospel, and accounts for his omitting much that is given in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Against this it is urged that the break from the narrative is abrupt, and that "before the disciples" is meaningless. (b) That he refers to the evidences he had reported of his rising again, other "signs" being given by other evangelists. There is less objection to this. Great names are on both sides. The "other" refers to the one Thomas had given him; the "signs" need not be taken as miraculous only, but including all the "infallible proofs" (see 1 Cor. xv. 5-7). But the settlement of this is of less moment than the aim which John avows in (V. 31.) "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God," etc. This was the vital question. Men were divided into two parties. The testing question was, "Is Jesus the Christ?" He would have that point firmly settled. During the time between Christ's rising and this writing, the other Gospels had been given and read. Many questions arose as to our Lord's true nature, as subtle and eager men turned their thoughts to him. John was well fitted to answer these, by intimacy with Christ, by sympathy with him, by years by spiritual enlightenment (and the Holy Ghost employs suitable instruments), and so he writes his gospel. He concedes the work and worth of the others, who have written what he has not, as he has much which they have not. And all this is not for speculation or curiosity, but for a practical end—the highest for us, "That believing, ye may have life through his name." See John iii. 36; x. 10; xiv. 6. Learn from all this: (a) The evil of unbelief, however it seems to be candid and call for evidence. Thomas is not commended but censured. (b) The nobleness of faith, which takes the divine word as evidence. Thomas' "free inquiry" spirit is at the best, and when it results the best, a second-rate thing. (c) The absolute need of knowing Christ. (d) The variety and abundance of proof that he rose from the dead. (e) The wonderful pity of Jesus, who even to such a temper vouchsafes conviction and faith, which is in every believing man "the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8). (f) The gentleness of the love, which did not "cast out" Thomas; nor did the Evangelists report this, till probably he was dead, for John only gives this narrative. SUGGESTIVE TOPICS. The general character of Thomas—his absence on the first Sabbath evening—how regarded—how much he lost—the lesson to us—the effect of Christ's appearance on the disciples—of the report on Thomas—his avowal—the evil in it—the spirit of it—the good we incidentally gain from it—the lessons it may teach us—the Lord's grace—when shown—his salutation—its meaning—his words to Thomas—their effect—the rebuke—the general truth—the objects of John's record—the lessons to us. A PRESENT God is enough for present need.

Miscellaneous.

NEW YORK has elected Democratic State officers. THE CIVIL WAR in Turkey is becoming sanguinary on both sides. TURKEY has withdrawn her troops from the Servian frontier. Servia has done the same. NEW ENGLANDERS are to be listed instead of the Admiralty's fugitive slave law. THE OLD CASTLE at Nottingham is to be converted into an Art Museum at a cost of £15,000. SPAIN is sending large numbers of troops for Cuba. Six thousand are preparing to leave. THE GLOBE funeral passed off quietly on the 16th inst. Cement was used instead of the sarcophagus. THE GREEK Journal, announce the death of Mrs. Black, Byron's "Maid of Athens" at the age of seventy-six. THE INTERNAL REVENUE of the United States for the present year is estimated at \$122,000,000. A FIRE DAMP explosion in Holland has resulted in the death of ten persons, and injury to one hundred more. DURING the past week a continuance of wet weather with storms has prevailed in England and France. THE DIAMOND MERCHANTS of Paris, Halpen & Co., have failed with liabilities amounting to \$3,000,000. THE CRISIS between Madras and Padang is broken, thus interrupting communication with the East. A FARMER named Abel McDonald was murdered about half a mile from Caledonia on the 20th, at 8 p. m. THE POPULATION of Calcutta is 795,000 of Bombay 641,000, of Madras 380,000, of Lucknow 285,000. THE SHIP which collided with the Pacific has since been wrecked through mistaking one light for another. A VIOLENT STORM occurred on the coast of England on the night of the 19th inst., causing great loss of life and damage to shipping. THE DUKE OF MODENA, Francis V., is dead. He was dispossessed of part of the present kingdom of Italy in 1860. THE IRON TRADE is expected to be depressed this winter. One firm near Leeds has just discharged nearly three thousand men. THE RUSSIAN Official Gazette states that there is no danger of the disturbance of the present pacific relations of Europe. THE MUTINIOUS crew of the ship Lennie are to be sent to England for trial, as the murder is supposed to have been committed in British waters. THERE ARE 1,396,000 men to carry on the Government in British India; about twice the population of the Maritime Provinces. BRITISH INDIA has an area of 904,049 square miles, with a population of 190 millions, or about 211 persons to the square mile. THE SARGE Toronto, of Glasgow, has been wrecked near Navassa, an island off the west coast of Hayti. The only survivor is a Spanish negro. CARDINAL McCLOSKEY holds up the establishment of the State endowed University of Maynooth as an example to other countries, especially to America. ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM has been begun by the Porte, three districts having been detailed from Herzegovina and placed under the Government of an Armenian Greek. A FEW DAYS ago Cardinal Cullen secured the appointment of an Archbishop in Ireland, because he was opposed to any change in the political relations of that country. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC Church represented by two California Bishops, has been awarded one million dollars by Sir Edward Thornton, in an arbitration with Mexico, in what was known as the Pious Fund Case. A MUTINY took place among the crew of the ship Lennie, of Yarmouth, N.S., while she was off the coast of France, and the master, mate, and boatswain were killed. Six of the crew who were Greeks escaped in a boat. A GENTLEMAN has placed at the disposal of the Church Missionary Society in England, the sum of £10,000 in answer to Messrs appeal through Mr. Stanley for the Christianization of Africa. Mr. Stanley was much indebted to Messrs for his co-operation in the discoveries he has made. LOUIS XIV., having appointed Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux, he was anxious to know how the merits of this wonderful preacher were appreciated by the inhabitants of that city. "Tolerably," was the answer to his question. "Tolerably!" said the king; "is that all you have to say concerning him?" "In truth," replied the people, "we think he must be an inferior person. We should have preferred a bishop who had finished his education, but whenever we wait upon our Diocesan, we are told that he is at his studies." Bossuet was a universal genius. He despised the tricks of rhetoric so much admired in the present day, and came down upon his hearers with an authority that was irresistible. Born 1627; died at Paris, 1704.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

AN English Protestant Church is in course of erection on the site of the old slave market at Zanzibar. THE SUEZ Canal cost \$05,000,000. Its income this year will probably be about \$1,260,000. IT is a sign of the times that the Reformed Jews have almost ceased to observe the Feast of Ab, the anniversary of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple. THERE may be different answers to W. E. G.'s question, "Is the Church of England worth preserving?" but one thing is clear—the jaws are ready.—Punch. ACCORDING to the Indian Journals, four Europeans—a German, two Irishmen, and an English ex-officer—have recently become Mahomedans of the fanatical sect of the Wahabees. FOURTEEN thousand dollars have been collected in Scotland to erect an educational memorial institute to John Knox, at Haddington, Scotland. He is believed to have been a native of that town. IT is a significant fact that the many distinguished men who have been banished by the present Spanish Government, have been conspicuous advocates of the abolition of slavery. THE Rev. John Laidlaw, of the Free West Church, Aberdeen, having received a call from the Free High Church, Edinburgh, as successor to the late Rev. William Arnot, has intimated his intention of declining the same. DR. BIRCH has recently unrolled a mummy of the period of the twenty-sixth dynasty, the property of the Duke of Sutherland, at Stafford House. The body was that of a woman of advanced age, and was in a most perfect condition. MR. PHILIP PHILLIPS, the "Singing Pilgrim," now in Australia, and the originator of the solo singing which Mr. Saukey and others are using so successfully, has arranged to visit India, and is expected in Calcutta about the first of December. A GERMAN paper expresses uneasiness at the decreasing population of Prussia proper. Between 1861 and 1864 there was an increase of 84,400, but between 1864 and 1867 there was a decrease of 12,922, and between 1867 and 1871 one of 56,440. Allowing for the loss of life in the last two wars, and for the Prussian soldiers quartered in France at the time of the census, the loss of population in ten years amounts to 52,200. TRIALS must be felt for Jesus to be known. IT is no small mercy to understand an affliction.