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THE S. S. LESSON

INTERNATIONAL LESSON,
DEC. 11.

Lesson XI.—The Crucifixion, Matt.
27. 15-20. Golden Text,
Isa. 53. 5.

Verses 15-26—The remarkable conduct of Pilate in trying to avoid the infliction of the death penalty upon Jesus. With shrewd deference to a custom of the Jews, according to which pardon was extended to some prisoner during the feast of the passover, Pilate, who seems to have been completely convinced of the innocence of Jesus, yielded to the clamor of the crowd about the palace and offered to release unto them a certain Barabbas, who was a notorious and dangerous brigand, such as frequented the hill country between Jerusalem and Jericho, and who singularly enough bore the name of Jesus, or the other Jesus who was popularly called the Christ. He probably understood the popular temper, and expected the rabble to call for the release of their hero. His reasons for wishing to get rid of Jesus were: (1) His belief in the innocence of his strange prisoner; (2) his conviction that the chief priests and elders had delivered Jesus to him simply because of envy, a fact that would arouse his Roman sense of justice; (3) the peculiar dream of his wife. It was while her messengers were delivering her warning to the governor, that he should have nothing to do with this righteous man, that something occurred to swerve the sentiment of the crowd. The Jewish rulers, seeing the purpose of Pilate to release Jesus, incited the crowd to call for the release of Barabbas. This they did. But it did not convince Pilate that they wished necessarily for the death of the other, although the rulers saw that to give up Barabbas meant to destroy Jesus (20). So he asks, What then shall I do unto Jesus? With unanimous voice they reply, Let him be crucified. Still Pilate is unwilling to yield to their lawless prejudices—What evil hath he done? To this he receives no reply, for the mob has become possessed of an idea and they cannot get rid of it—Let him be crucified. It was useless for Pilate to attempt to beat back this storm. Still, while giving way, he felt the guilt of his act and dramatically washed his hands, as if symbolically to clear himself of the stain of another's blood. The people, however, once more with one voice, relieved him of all responsibility for the crime and voluntarily assumed the burden of guilt for themselves and their children. So Pilate "released him that for murder and insurrection had been thrown into prison, whom they claimed, and Jesus he handed over to their will." No mention is made of a formal sentence of death. The Jewish rulers had attended to that. All they wanted was Pilate's consent. And Jesus declared theirs was the greater guilt (John 19. 11). The horrible process by which Jesus was scourged before being delivered to the soldiers was a customary preliminary to capital punishment.

27-31—Mockery by the Roman soldiers. A band of soldiers had come to the city with the governor

in order to preserve quiet during the feast. These now amused themselves maltreating Jesus while preparations were being made for the crucifixion. Matthew divides their conduct in the palace into two parts: (1) The mock homage of the soldiers. The Romans had a ceremony which they called "Hail Caesar," and this, with evident glee, they modified to suit their contemptuous salutations to the King of the Jews. With a robe of imperial scarlet, a kingly crown cruelly woven of thorns that pressed into his bleeding head, and a reed which served as a mock sceptre, they compelled him to assume the role of king, while they prostrated themselves before him with insulting ribaldry. (2) The brazen outrages of the soldiers. These consisted in spitting upon him, snatching the reed from his hands and smiting him on the head, and then stripping him of the princely robe and putting upon him his own attire.

32-50—The crucifixion and death of Jesus.

32. Simon—As the procession of soldiers, priests, and frenzied rabble, which had formed to follow Jesus to the crucifixion, came out of the gates of the city, it was noticed that Jesus staggered beneath the weight of the heavy cross. No doubt he was exhausted by the excitement and suffering through which he had already passed. The soldiers therefore compelled a man named Simon to take the Saviour's burden. This man was evidently a Jew from the city in North Africa called Cyrene, and had come up to Jerusalem to celebrate the passover. He had two sons who seem to have become Christians. "Surely Simon also believed. It were indeed a strange irony had the man who carried the cross missed the salvation whereof it is the instrument and symbol."

33. Golgotha—There is much doubt as to the site and origin of the name. The place of a skull. Scholarly opinion favors an eminence just outside the Damascus Gate, known now as Jeremias's Grotto, and shaped as a skull.

34. Wine . . . mingled with gall—This was a bitter, drugged drink, which was mercifully provided for those about to suffer violent death, in order to deaden their sensibility (compare Proverbs 31. 6). We do not know why Jesus, after he had tested it, refused to drink it. Perhaps it was because he had already determined his course, and that included his drinking to the full the cup which his Father had appointed.

35. Parted his garments—There were four soldiers. To one went the sandals, to another his turban, to a third his cloak, and to the fourth his girdle. Coming to the plain tunic, they were unwilling to rend it, since it was woven in one piece, and therefore, unwittingly fulfilling Psa. 22. 18, they cast lots for its possession.

37. His accusation—All four Gospels agree that it was written, The King of the Jews. John alone adds the interesting account of how Pilate gave vent to his hatred of the rulers by insisting upon the superscription's remaining written as at first.

38. Matthew mentions the two robbers and their words of reproach (44), but omits what is given by Luke alone, the incident of the repentance of one of them. This triple execution was in disregard of the law which forbade more than one on the same day.

43. Unknown to these mockers, they were speaking a great truth when they said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. The reason he could not come down from the cross was not that he was held by his bonds, but by his desire to save those who thus crucified him.

45. Darkness—This lasted from noon until three o'clock. It has frequently been pointed out that this was no unusual phenomenon. But we can trace in it the divine intervention and interpret it as we will. The evangelists give simply the fact.

46. Why hast thou forsaken me?—The full meaning of this cry is beyond human wisdom to fathom. It involves an interpretation of the meaning of death and sin, of the relation of Christ and sin, of the relation of Christ the Son to God the Father, and of Christ to humanity—in short, a complete theory of the atonement. Compare the discussion in Word Studies for November 20.

50. Yielded up his spirit—He might have retained it in the mortal body. (Compare his words in John: "I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down.") With a loud voice he cried: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." The details omitted in Matthew should be studied carefully in the other Gospels.

IMPOVERISHED BLOOD

A Common and a Dangerous
Trouble—You must Enrich
the Blood to Escape
Danger.

Anaemia is simply a lack of blood. It is one of the most common and at the same time most dangerous diseases with which growing girls suffer. It is common because the blood so often becomes impoverished during development, when girls are too frequently allowed to over-study, over-work and suffer from a lack of exercise. It is dangerous because of the stealthiness of its approach, often being well developed before its presence is recognized, and because of its tendency to grow so steadily worse, if not promptly checked, that it may run into consumption.

The value of the tonic treatment with Dr. Williams' Pink Pills should be known to every mother in the land. These Pills make new, rich blood, tone the organs and nerves, bring a glow of health to pale, sallow cheeks, and drive away the weakness, headaches, faintness, heart palpitation and loss of energy so noticeable in young girls who are suffering from anaemia. To all such Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are an actual life saver. Miss Mabel McTavish, Prince Albert, Sask., says: "In my case I can only say that life had lost its magic; all work was a trial, and even pleasure only a task. When I went up a flight of stairs I was ready to drop from sheer weakness, and I had begun to think life would be a continued burden. But all this is now changed, thanks to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. These were recommended to me, and after taking them for about a month I found my health renewed. I could sleep better, my appetite returned, and I was so strong and well that housework was no longer a burden to me. My sister seemed to be going the same way last summer and Dr. Williams' Pink Pills were at once sent for and two boxes made her as well as ever. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are now the prized medicine in our home, and doctor bills have been fewer since we discovered the virtues of this great medicine."

Sold by all medicine dealers or sent by mail at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

NOVEL USE OF CORKS.

Charles Hawkins of Peterborough, England, has succeeded in building a series of most interesting models, the chief of which is a large and comprehensive model of Burghley House, the historic seat of the Marquis of Exeter near Stamford. It took Mr. Hawkins, in his spare time, ten years to complete, during which time he walked nearly three thousand miles in repeated visits to the house in order to secure accuracy. The model measures five feet in length, four feet in width and three feet in height, and no fewer than half a million bottle corks were used in its construction.

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DISTRIBUTION OF SEED GRAIN AND POTATOES.

By instruction of the hon. Minister of Agriculture a distribution is being made this season of samples of superior sorts of grain and potatoes to Canadian farmers for the improvement of seed. The stock for distribution has been secured mainly from the experimental farms at Indian Head, Saskatchewan; Brandon, Manitoba; and Ottawa, Ontario. The samples consist of oats, spring wheat, barley, field peas, Indian corn (for ensilage only), and potatoes. The quantity of oats sent is 4 lbs., and of wheat or barley, 5 lbs., sufficient in each case to sow one-twentieth of an acre. The samples of Indian corn, peas, and potatoes weigh 3 lbs. each. A quantity of each of the following varieties has been secured for this distribution.

Oats.—Banner, Abundance, Danish Island, Wide Awake, Thousand Dollar, Improved Ligowo—all white varieties.

Wheat.—Red varieties: Marquis and early Red Fife (early beardless sorts of high baking strength), Red Fife (beardless), Preston and Huron (early, bearded). White varieties: White Fife (beardless), Bobs (early, beardless).

Barley.—Six-rowed: Mensury and Manchurian (a selection from Mensury). Two-rowed: Standwell and Invisibile.

Field Peas.—Arthur and Golden Vine.

Indian Corn (for ensilage).—Early sorts: Angel of Midnight, Compton's Early, and Longfellow. Later varieties: Selected Leaming, Early Mastodian and White Cap, Yellow Dent.

Potatoes.—Early varieties: Rochester and Irish Cobbler. Medium to late varieties: Gold Coin, Carman No. 1, and Money Maker. The later varieties are, as a rule, more productive than the earlier kinds.

Only one sample can be sent to each applicant, hence if he receives a sample of oats, he cannot also receive one of barley, peas, Indian corn or potatoes. Applications on printed cards or sheets, or list of names from one individual or applications for more than one sample for one household cannot be entertained. The samples will be sent free of charge through the mail.

Applications should be addressed to the Dominion Cerealists Experimental Farm, Ottawa, and may be sent in any time from December 1, to February 15, after which lists will be closed, so that the samples asked for may be sent in good time. Applicants should mention the variety they prefer, with a second sort as an alternative. Applications will be filled in the order in which they are received, so long as the supply of seeds lasts. Farmers are advised to apply early to avoid possible disappointment. Those applying for Indian corn or potatoes should bear in mind that the corn is not usually distributed until April, and that potatoes cannot be mailed until danger from in transit is over. No postage is required on mail matter addressed to the Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

WM. SAUNDERS,
Director of Experimental Farms.

THE CANADIAN WILDERNESS.

600,000 Square Miles of it is Very
Little Known.

There are vast areas in Canada of which even the Government has no definite knowledge, and there are thousands of square miles where the foot of a white man has never trod. Practically all knowledge of this big wild country has been secured again and again along a few chosen and well worn routes, outside of which investigation has seldom gone, says Leslie's Weekly.

Imagine a dozen or so well beaten vehicle highways traversing a country one-fourth as large as Eu-

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Johnson-Richardson Co., Limited, Montreal.

ropes—narrow highways hemmed in by impenetrable wilderness—and one may form some sort of an idea of the little that is still known of 600,000 square miles of the North American continent.

Along these routes nearly all "explorers" have gone. Along them are situated most of the fur posts, and beyond their narrow lines but little is known. And in this world of forest and ridge mountains and eternal desolation, still buried in the mystery and silence of endless centuries, are its "people."

Approximately there are from 15,000 to 25,000 human souls in an area fifteen times the size of Ohio, and there are no more than 500 of these who have not some Indian blood in their veins. On the other hand fully one-half of the total population has its strain of white blood.

Alma—"Yes, Oscar, when we are married you will not go to the club at nights. You will stay at home, and I'll sing and play the piano for you, won't I?" Oscar—"Yes, dearest; you know I never cared much for pleasure, anyway."

It isn't necessary to believe forever what you believed once.

Chapped Hands AND Cold Sores

Are your hands chapped, cracked or sore? Have you "cold cracks" which open and bleed when the skin is drawn tight? Have you a cold sore, frost bite, chilblains, or a "raw" place, which at times makes it agony for you to go about your household duties? If so, Zam-Buk will give you relief, and will heal the frost-damaged skin. Anoint the sore places at night, Zam-Buk's rich healing essences will sink into the wounds, end the smarting, and will heal quickly.

Mrs. Yellen, of Portland, says: "My hands were so sore and cracked that it was agony to put them near water. When I did so they would smart and burn as if I had scalded them. I seemed quite unable to get relief from anything I put on them until I tried Zam-Buk, and it succeeded when all else had failed. It closed the big cracks, gave me ease, soothed the inflammation, and in a very short time healed my hands."

Zam-Buk also cures chafing, rashes, winter eczema, piles, ulcers, festering sores, sore heads and backs, abscesses, pimples, ring-worm, etc., cuts, burns, bruises, scalds, sprains. Of all drug stores and stores, or post free from the Zam-Buk Co., Toronto. Price 50¢ a box.

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