

THE S. S. LESSON

INTERNATIONAL LESSON,
SEPT. 4.

Lesson X. Two Parables of Judgment, Matt. 21. 33-46. Golden Text, Matt. 21. 43.

Verse 33. Another parable—Following his custom, Matthew gives a group of three closely related parables, of which this is the second, the others being the two sons, and the marriage feast. All drive home the lesson of the fig tree, that the hollow professions of the Jewish rulers must bring upon them severe judgments. This is the only one of the three which is found in all three of the Synoptics.

A householder—Matthew alone refers to God in this way. It is a favorite word with him. The kingdom of Israel is frequently spoken of in the Old Testament as a vineyard. The hedge was a fence of any sort, and here may stand for all those "individuals, institutions, the whole national economy," by which God hedged in the life of Israel, to protect and restrain it. It is unnecessary to give a special meaning to the vinepress. In the Oriental vineyard, "Where the soil was deep, a press was dugged in the earth. This, built round with masonry and carefully cemented, received the juice expressed in a wooden structure set on the surface." The tower was a substantially built affair, commanded a view of the whole vineyard, and was apparently the abode of the keeper throughout the summer and autumn.

Husbandmen—Under the monarchy these were the kings and priests; after its collapse, the scribes and priests. They were appointed to oversee the interests of the kingdom.

Went into another country—In this way Jesus indicates the cessation of the old theocratic form of government, in which Jehovah was the only King.

34. The season of the fruits drew near—Again and again God looked at seasonable times for a fair return for his investment among the Jewish people.

He sent his servants—A long line of prophets. The fruits they demanded were obedience to the law of God and the virtues of a godly life.

35. Beat . . . killed . . . stoned—Hostility to the prophets, among all classes, is written all over the history of the Jews. This antagonism changed in form and in degree, but there was no let-up, and it increased rather than decreased. According to tradition, Isaiah and Jeremiah both met violent deaths.

36. Again—After the terrible warning of the captivity Jehovah sent still other servants, but these were treated shamefully, as were the first. It is strange that the unusual benefits which these messengers of God brought to the nation should have been so lightly regarded. But until the death of Malachi, when the succession of prophets ceased, and the nation began to mourn for more of their type, each generation failed to appreciate what the Householder was doing for his vineyard by sending these servants.

37. Afterward he sent . . . his son—This was an indirect reply to the rulers, as to where Jesus obtained his authority. It was the authority of One sent from the Father, an authority greater than that of the servants by so much as the Son of God is greater than all the prophets.

They will reverence my son—Meaning that this is the treatment of his son that the father ought to expect, though implying no ignorance on God's part of the humiliation to which his Son was to be subjected.

38. The husbandmen—Since the sons acted just as the fathers before them, the keepers of the vineyard are represented as the same throughout.

This is the heir—The rulers did not acknowledge Jesus to be the true Messiah, but it was because, in their greed and obtuseness, they had misread prophecy and so looked for a King of different mold. So it is assumed in the parable that Jesus is the Son, and known to be such, and yet is deliberately killed.

39. Cast him forth—Perhaps referring to the fact that Christ was dragged forth from the city before being killed.

41. According to this, Jesus drew forth from the rulers their own confession of the righteousness of their condemnation. Mark and Luke represent Jesus as answering the

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question himself, while the hearers protest, "God forbid." The words are a threefold prophecy of the doom awaiting Jerusalem, the call of the Gentiles, and the continued fruitfulness of the Christian Church.

42. The stone—Suddenly changing the figure from the vineyard of Isaiah to the familiar stone which the builders rejected (Psa. 118. 22), Jesus shows that the repudiation of the stone by the builders is as unavailing as the killing of the heir by the husbandmen. In both cases the object of rejection turns up again to overwhelm the rejecters. "The husbandmen destroyed themselves when they destroyed the heir; and the builders heaped contempt upon themselves when they contemptuously set aside the stone. They lost the stone for their own edifice, but it received its due honor in a more noble building" (Plummer.)

43. This is not parable, but bald fact. The nation which despises the manifest favors of God shall suffer the humiliation of having them taken away and given to a people who will appreciate them.

44. To the stone of the Psalms is now added the stone of Isa. 8. 14 and that of Dan. 2, 34, 44. He who stumbles at the fact of Christ may be broken to pieces, but the pieces can be put together again; but, if the final condemnation of Christ the Judge fall upon a man and scatter him as dust, there can be no recovery.

45. It is characteristic of Matthew to single out the Pharisees for condemnation.

46. Took him for a prophet—The crowds had gone after him as they had after John the Baptist, because they thought at last, after such a long interval, the old order of prophets had been restored.

SCOTCH BARONET A SAINT.

Gives Up Estates and Labors as Missionary Monk Until Blind.

Although British baronets have the reputation of being wicked, probably owing to the fact that the villain of almost every melodrama is "a bald, bad baronet," there are some of them who are almost saints. To the latter category belongs Sir David Hunter Blair, a barefoot monk of the Order of St. Benedict, who, after spending a number of years laboring in the swamp districts of the Amazon River to convert the natives to Christianity, has now returned home to Europe perfectly blind, in the faint hope that some miracle may be accomplished toward the restoring of his eyesight by the world famed oculist, Professor Pagenstecher at Weisbaden.

The baronet graduated from Oxford and married. Upon his wife's death he obtained special permission from the Pope to take orders and turned over the family's Ayrshire estate to his brother, a naval captain.

Sir David, who is the fifth baronet of his line, has also done missionary work in Patagonia. He is the only monk on record who belongs to any clubs, having retained his membership in the Caledonian, in Edinburgh, and of the Conservative, in London.

"I noticed in the store we visited to-day everybody was crowded around the perfumery counter." "That's not surprising." "Why not?" "Oughtn't perfumer naturally be a scenter of attraction?"

MODERN FOOD SUPPLIES

CHANGES IN OUR INDUSTRIAL CUSTOMS.

Disappearance of the Millstone—Bread-Making Remains the Same.

The remarkable changes of the latter half of the nineteenth century in the means of communication and transport have enormously altered commercial and industrial relations. Improvements in machinery and vastly increased competition have also made a lasting impression. The appearance of railways, the post office, telephones, sounded the knell of small and local enterprises and prepared the way for gigantic combined industries.

A review of these changes as they affect the preparation of foods and food-stuffs has recently been made by Prof. Lindet of the National Agronomic Institute of France. Reference is chiefly to French industries, but some of the points, says the British Medical Journal, are of general interest. In the manufacture of bread the old millstone, which had done duty for centuries, has since 1884 rapidly been replaced by more efficacious and economical machinery. This has caused the disappearance of the old country mills and has insured the production of

A MUCH FINER FLOUR.

In the actual baking of bread there has not been such a noteworthy change; the necessity for the early delivery of fresh bread every morning still enables the local baker to maintain his place. Attempts at wider organization and co-operation have only been to a certain extent successful, but greater progress in this direction may be expected with the cheapening of motor conveyance.

In the wine industry similar changes have been effected. Keen competition, bad years, the ravages of vine pests and the introduction of many chemical novelties have rendered the old family vintages, famous for centuries in many cases, unable to keep abreast of the times with the usual result that they have been bought up to form part of larger concerns. With large capital these have been able to meet successfully various emergencies and to apply scientific methods to what has become a national industry.

DAIRY PRODUCTS.

Of more interest to us are the facts with regard to milk, butter and cheese. The growth of towns has necessitated bringing the larger part of their milk supply from a considerable distance and has led to the great increase in milk traffic on railways. Two-thirds of the milk supply of Paris is brought in by rail. This has called for elaborate methods of keeping the milk

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fresh and pure. The establishment of large milk companies has tended largely toward the standardization of the milk supply for instead of receiving the milk from one or two cows the customer obtains a uniform mixture from thousands of cows, and he has the assurance that it will always be pretty much of the same strength and quality.

Private butter making is giving place to commercial enterprises on a large scale. Butter making has become such a fine art, involving so many complicated processes, that the individual has been unable to afford the latest improvements in machinery. Much the same applies to the making of cheese, although in both cases certain circumscribed localities and small dairies with a well established reputation are able to maintain their place on the market.

BUTTER SUBSTITUTES.

The manufacturers of margarine, and other substitutes for butter, has had an important effect on the butter trade and has led to much legislation with the object of preserving agricultural interests. In France in 1908 the amount of butter substitutes manufactured was more than one-fifth of the amount of butter. The production of sugar, unlike that of butter and cheese, has never been an individual business. It has always involved costly plants and a large number of hands. Even here, however, the tendency for business to grow and for smaller ones to be merged in them is very marked. In 1870 there were in France 520 sugar manufactories, each producing an average of 770 tons. To-day there are only half that number, but their average production is four times as great.

Such is the movement—gradual, it is true, but none the less certain—which is creeping into our in-

dustrial customs, and which owes its initiation to the demand for better and cheaper production. Its future developments will be interesting to witness, and perhaps we may live to see the realization of Robida's facetious scheme for laying in food supplies by means of a tube from a great central kitchen.

FACT AND FANCY.

Only the vaccinated may vote in Norway.

A moralist is a person who is in earnest about other people's morals.

A man's character can be accurately told by his handwriting, especially when his love letters are read out in court.

An old stork's nest, built on the roof of the cathedral of Colmar, in Northern France, became dislodged during the winter and threatened to fall into the street. It measured five feet across and it was four feet high. It weighed 1,500 pounds and was such a compact mass that to destroy it picks had to be used. In the nest were found seventeen stockings, five fur caps, the sleeve of a silk blouse, a large piece of leather and four metal buttons.

The rabbit, which overruns Australia, has almost caused a civil war. In the past certain Australians made colossal fortunes by exporting millions of rabbits which they secured for nothing. Eventually, though, it became necessary for the government to find a better means of exterminating this destructive creature, for it threatened to ruin the country. A law was passed authorizing farmers to poison the rabbits. Thus the rabbit-exporting companies were put out of business. They are now fighting for a repeal of the poisoning law.

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