

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL

## The Quiet Hour

YOUNG  
PEOPLE

## PARROT PRAYING.

By Rev. W. H. Jordan.

In an old book on "Customs in India" one finds some of the false teachings to which Christ alluded in his wonderful Sermon on the Mount. To repeat the names of the gods and to suffer many self-inflicted pains was believed to be meritorious and to be rewarded either in this life or in some future state of existence. Narayan is the name of a Hindu god. A notoriously wicked man, parched with fever and dying, called on the name of Narayan with his last breath, and Narayan saved him. So says the old fable which was so generally believed by the masses. Therefore, when one is dying, his friends exhort him to call upon the names of the gods, "and if he is so fortunate as to die with the name of a god upon his lips, they consider it a sure passport to heaven. Many spend large portions of their time repeating the names of the gods. Parrots are taught to do the same, and such a spokesman commands a great price, especially among business men, who imagine that by owning such a parrot their spiritual treasures are accumulating while they attend to their usual occupations." So Jesus said: "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye, therefore, like unto them."

Prayer is regarded universally as a necessity, and how many substitutes have been sought for real prayer! Sometimes it is the mere repetition of words, the counting of beads, "Our Fathers," etc., the five prayers a day of the pious Moslem, prayer wheels and feathers.

How different are the words of the Master, who said: "Go into the quiet of your closet, and there in secret wait on God, and they that wait shall grow strong again. Though cast down, they shall mount up with wings as eagles. Though discouraged, they shall go forward at a new pace; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." That is what prayer will do for them that wait upon the Lord. That is what keeps many a man and woman. Even the Psalmist said: "I had fainted unless I had believed (expected) to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living."

Some do not pray because to them it seems an empty form. God does not seem real to them. They do not know where God is. "Show us your God," said the taunting persecutors of an old martyr at the stake. "You would know Him if you would show yourselves worthy," he replied. And God says: "I will draw near to them that draw near to me." Time invested in prayer, meditation and Bible study, all to know the mind of God, pays the largest dividend. Never have men needed more to take time to be holy, to get God's viewpoint. Haste and carelessness will quickly spoil the prayer spirit. Charles K. Hamilton, who recently made that wonderful flight through the air from New York to Philadelphia and return, must drop into the swamp and spend hours in waiting for repairs, all due to haste and oversight of some most important details. He had forgotten to clean the spark plugs; they fouled, the engine balked, and he had to descend. So, too much care can not be given to the soul life. Time and thought, waiting upon God—this is what is needed to remove the friction, the wear and the tear of these busy days. Not mere parrot repetition, not forms, but spirit. They that worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth.—Jerseyville, Ill.

"I go forth among men, armored in a pure intent.

Great work is to be done, and whether I shall stand or crownless fall, matters not, so God's work be done."

## RESIGNATION.

Resignation is the courage of old age; it will grow in its own season and it is a good day when it comes to us. Then there are no more disappointments, for we have learned that it is even better to desire the things that we have than to have the things that we desire. And is not the best of all our hopes—the hope of immortality—always before us? How can we be dull or heavy while we have that new experience to look forward to? It will be the most joyful of all our travels and adventures. It will bring us our best acquaintances and friendships. But there is only one way to get ready for immortality, and that is to love this life, and live it as bravely and faithfully as we can.—Dr. Henry Van Dyke.

## THE TRIUMPH OF CHRIST.

The Nazarene has achieved the greatest victory recorded by history; His ideas mastered both the learned Romans and the barbarous Goths. He is the vanquisher of the old and the maker of the modern world, the one fresh, unspent, spiritual force in the world today. His religion is the remedy for all ills, and the inexhaustible source of healthy life. The world needs before all things a life-giving universal religion. But all these sages were essentially aristocratic, and their aristocracy embraced a very few privileged natures. They never dreamt of theocratic equality or of the sacredness of man as man. They felt that they would vulgarise both themselves and their knowledge by publishing it to the world. It was counted the greatest sin to divulge the secrets of the immortal gods to the mob. "Off, ye profane!" said the officiating priest to all but the initiated. The highest priest was a mystery monger, who, in his dark recess, closed to the many, muttered but did not proclaim, the will of the gods to the few. To them a religion for mankind seemed contrary to Nature. "Whoever believes that a world-wide religion is possible is insane," wrote Celsus. Christ only is "the poor man's philosopher." He bids us "count no man common or unclean." The very genius of His Gospel is "Come unto Me, all ye that labour." He has established the universalism which the Court of the Gentiles in the Temple foreshadowed. He has carried the humblest as well as the most learned with Him, and His ideas are now world-wide axioms and proverbs.—Rev. James Wells, M.A.

## REMINDER OF A DISREGARDED RULE.

We need to be reminded with emphasis repeatedly that in whatever we do as members of society we must be actuated by a regard for others as truly as by regard for ourselves. We are prone in our selfishness to consider solely our own interests in our activities. If the interests of others enter into the calculation it is because we can thereby the better subserve our own advantage. The Apostle Paul says: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (wealth). That is not only in things indifferent, but in all other things also we are to act with the good of others in view as well as the good of ourselves. Self is not to be the object of our actions. A proper recognition of this rule of conduct would revolutionize our social life. If men were to begin to renounce their own preferences and act in accord with the demands of the best interests of the community what a change would greet us in our mental, material, moral, and religious condition everywhere.—Presbyterian Standard.

## I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS.

Hear the pledge of Jesus Christ: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you. Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." As long as God lives and our souls live, so long does this pledge stand. It is true, we cannot always feel this presence. But we can always know that it is there, always think of it, so long as thought endures, always rest upon it forever and forever; and the reason why this promise is given is that we may hold fast to this truth. There may be a moment in the very depth of sorrow and anguish when the presence is hidden from us. But is it not because we are stunned, unconscious?

It is like passing through a surgical operation. The time comes for the ordeal. The anaesthetic is ready. You stretch out your hand to your friend. "Don't leave me, don't forsake me." The last thing you feel is the clasp of that hand, the last thing you see is the face of that friend. Then a moment of darkness, a blank—and the first thing you see is the face of love again. So the angel of God's face stands by us, bends above us, and we may know that he will be there even when all else fails. \* \* \* Amid the mists that shroud the great ocean beyond the verge of mortal life, there is one sweet, mighty voice that says: "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. In all thy afflictions I will be with thee, and the angel of My face shall save thee."—Henry Van Dyke, D.D.

A pious English officer, just before engaging in one of the battles for which Great Britain has been noted, lifted up his eyes and his hands toward heaven and offered the following brief, soldierly prayer: "O, Lord, thou knowest how busy I must be today; if I forget thee, do not thou forget me. Amen." Then, arising from his knees, he commanded, "Forward, march!"

## THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND.

By Professor James Stalker, D.D.

Farewell to Galilee! In that part of the country Jesus had grown up; He had loved its landscapes and been familiar with its life; He had traversed it in all directions, preaching and healing; and, on the lake called by its name, He had been busy at all hours with the work of evangelization. He had prayed for the inhabitants and wrestled with their unbelief. But now He was leaving them, and His face was turned toward Jerusalem. He did not, however, go straight thither, but visited on the way Perea, beyond Jordan; it being His mission to preach his gospel in all parts of the land. In this new field of labor He unfolded the same activities as He had previously done in Galilee; but the general course of His life partook of the character of His earlier rather than of His later ministry in the northern province. Especially was He bent on the education of the Twelve. This we see in the lesson for to-day, in which there are two incidents, each of which is important in itself, but is turned into a lesson for the disciples. A further connection between the two incidents may be drawn from Mark, who informs us that Jesus fondled the babes and loved the young man—perhaps "kissed" should be the translation, as Rabbis were wont to do this when pleased with their pupils.

A Lesson of Humility.—The disciples were annoyed that the work of Jesus—especially perhaps, their own instruction should be interrupted by what they considered waste of time. Mothers with children are apt to disturb religious meetings. I have heard a child in its mother's arms cry out shrilly in the very heart of a