

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLEHEALING OF THE MAN
BORN BLIND.

And as Jesus passed by, he saw, v. 1. Touch the furthest extremity of the body, and by marvellous telegraphy of the nerves the sensation is instantly transmitted to the brain. More wonderful than this is the line of communication between all suffering ones and the compassionate heart of the Saviour. No pain can torture our bodies and no sorrow can rend our hearts, which He does not feel, and in which He will not bring to us help and comfort.

Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? v. 2. We may be greatly puzzled by our own sufferings and the sufferings of others. But of some things we are very sure. We know that God is full of power, so that He can bring good out of evil. We know that He is wise, and has some plan in which suffering has a place. We know that He is good, caring for the smallest of His

right hand told him the injury received when a boy had made him the man he was. It turned him from manual labor to study, and he became one of Canada's greatest public men. "The works of God" were "made manifest" through his suffering; and we may be sure that God is waiting to use every untoward happening that comes into our lives to reveal His divine power and grace.

The works of Him that sent me, v. 4. God is the great worker. He is unceasingly active. The Bible opens with the story of His tremendous work of creation. It pictures Him as continually caring for every living creature. Most glorious of all is His wonderful work of redeeming the world. And He invites us to co-operate with Himself in accomplishing this supreme design. There is no room for sloth or indolence in the service of God. It calls for the exercise of all our energies. It offers opportunities for the boldest enterprise. Brains and enthusiasm will find their fullest

scope in the greatest of all undertakings, the salvation of the world.

I am the light of the world, v. 5. When Highland chieftains in days of old would summon their clansmen to battle, fires were kindled on one hill-top after another, until the signal could be seen in the remotest hamlet. There is no rest for the followers of Jesus until the light that He gives is carried to the furthest corner of the world.

"The beam that shines from Zion Hill,
Shall lighten every land."

Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, v. 7. People often long for some proof that the grace of God has really come into their hearts. They are not very likely to get this by sitting still and wishing for it. The surest way to win the assurance so much desired is to take some plain, direct command of Christ, and set about obeying it. In the very act of doing this, we shall become conscious of strength not our own. We shall recognize with joy that the all-powerful Saviour is working in us.

He went, washed, came seeing, v. 7. "Faith cures" are often understood to be cures wrought without the use of means. But surely it is true faith that leads one to use remedies which God has placed within his reach, while he looks for the divine blessing with them. The truth is that health and every good thing in life has, like a coin, two sides. On the one hand, it is God's gift, and on the other, the result of our own effort. And, to use a familiar saying, we should work as if everything depended on us, and trust as if everything depended on God.

I am he, v. 9. Yes, and there are many who can look back upon a sinful life, and say with tears of sorrow, "That is the kind of man I once was. But"—and this it is that fills them with undying gratitude—"the Man that is called Jesus, opened my eyes to see my folly and sin, and trusting in Him as my Saviour, I was delivered from my evil ways."

I went, washed, received sight, v. 1. This statement of the blind man illustrates the chief point of superiority in Christianity to all other religions. Some of them, like Confucianism and Buddhism, have excellent systems of morals. But they give no power for the good life which they require. On the other hand, the religion of Christ, not only teaches what we ought to do, but also takes the weakest of us and gives us strength to obey its precepts. It not only commands but, at the same time enables.

If we would mix a little more of heaven with our dull and stupid lives, religion would not seem so verdureless and bleak.

TO-MORROW.

"Do not say the better lies behind,
The better in the present lies,
The better in the present lies,
The future with the best to fill.
"The fruitful past is but a seed-time,
From which the golden harvests spring;
The blessed deeds of yesterday,
Shall all a richer morrow bring."

ARE YOU TIRED?

Are you weary of your labors?
Does your work seem hard today?
"I toil longer than my neighbors!"
Grumbling often, do you say?
Learn of God's most humble creatures;
Make the bees and ants your teachers—
Busy toilers, silent preachers—
And, glad-hearted, work away!

THE EFFECTIVE SERMON.

The sermon that is after a soul is like the Master, "filled with compassion." It will have in it what was in Christ's eyes when he looked on Peter, with the curses and denials scarce off that poor disciple's lips. I will have in it what was in Christ's voice when he stood weeping over Jerusalem and said: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her brood, under her wings, and ye would not." The severest rebuke will get its chief severity from this deep undertone of divine compassion. And whether it be warning or entreaty, command or invitation, the terrors of the law or the forgiveness of the gospel, the pathos of a suffering and beseeching and pursuing love will bathe it all, and make it clear that if the sermon does not bring the prodigal home it will be because he preferred to trample on his Father's heart, and murder mercy.

Brethren of the ministry, what are sermons to "the times," compared with sermons to the eternities? Sermons of instruction are indeed priceless. But the gospel is not simply food for the saints. It is a cry of alarm. It is a word of rescue. It is a call to repentance. If sinners are not brought to Christ how can they be built up in Christ? Let it never be forgotten that souls are before us every Sabbath—sinful, unsaved, perishing, lost souls. Men of God, "throw out the life-line!"—Herrick Jackson.

All windows open on sacred scenes. The Meccas and Jerusalem of our worship are not walled cities; they are invisible and inward sources of inspiration. And yet it remains true that this principle of the outlook of the soul, the habitual frontage of one's life and thought, is still the most preliminary question of religion. Just as your home or room is valuable as it looks south or north, as it faces sunny fields or sunless alleys, so the first principle of the mind or soul is that it shall face the right way; and the difference between spiritual health and spiritual disease is often not so much a matter of opinion or creed, as of spiritual frontage.