

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND.*

(By Rev. J. W. McMillan, M.A.)

Told him, v. 30. If you meet an old school friend, the first thing you say is, "Tell me all about yourself. Where have you been and what have you been doing?" And he tells you with pleasure and relief, of his successes and struggles. And you think that Jesus cares more about your career. Every morning the lines to be told of what you purpose for the day. Every evening the remembrance, and wants to be told how you have fared. If there is any special difficulty, any puzzle or injury or temptation you have met, he wants you specially to tell him of that. For it is his joyous mission to help in every time of need.

Rest a while, v. 41. There is a foolish recreation called, "No holidays in heaven." Its suggestion is that there should be no holidays on earth. Now, we always supposed that it was an holiday in heaven. For rest comes after work. Only those who do no work need no holiday. And only they have a grudge at recreation. A human body is both a machine and an organism. As a machine it needs repair, as an organism it needs recuperation. Sleep is an holiday, and the sleep of the laboring man is sweet. Holidays are good things, if you have earned them. The old verse of the school primer is good advice:

"Work while you work,
Play while you play,
That is the way
To be happy and gay."

Sleep not having a shepherd, v. 34. In the old feudal days, a vagrant was called a "masterless man." He was a pitiable object. Nobody exercised authority over him. Nobody set him his task. Nobody protected him from his foes. Such is any one who rejects the rule of God over his life: "king of himself, that heritage of woe." The sheep cannot escape from its own nature. It is forever a creature needing a shepherd. No more can man escape from his human nature. He needs God. His true citizenship is in the kingdom of heaven, and his only chance of happiness lies in obedience to its divine government.

Give ye them to eat, v. 37. Livingstone once told an African chief of Christ's love for sinners. "Did your father know of this?" asked the hearer. "Yes," said the missionary. "Then," replied the chief, "why did not your father come and tell my father about it?" Oh, the world is so hungry of soul for the love of God! What joy to tell those near at hand the message they long for, to carry or send it to the dark hearts and homes of the heathen!

Five, and two fishes, v. 38. It was a boy's lunch, but in Jesus' hands was multiplied into an immense banquet. Our Lord was a practical Arithmetician. He did not work sums on a blackboard, but He worked them in actual stuffs and commodities. With His own life He performed the same miracle of multiplication. His words, spoken to a few people, are in millions of copies of the scriptures. His love is operating in numberless hearts. His blood is washing away uncounted sins.

Did all eat, and were filled, v. 42. There was plenty. Our Saviour never gave but He gave abundantly. He never half healed a cripple, or gave a leper a few years' respite from his plague. No invalid ever tottered away from His presence saying, "I think I feel a slight improvement." When He raised the dead, it was to a life of immediate health and vigor. Never

doubt the power of Christ to redeem your whole life, and to redeem it wholly. He is able to save unto the uttermost; and willing, as well, if we are but willing to put ourselves in His hands.

The fragments, v. 43. There is always something over in God's gifts to us. It is not meant, nor is it necessary, that we shall consume them all ourselves. It may be only a trifle we have to give, perhaps only a cheery word or a pleasant smile, but the poorest can be distributors, as well as recipients, of heaven's kindness. The chief blessedness of God Himself consists in giving without stint the bounties of providence and the riches of grace. Let us covet the joy of the dispenser.

About five thousand, v. 44. A big company to provide for. But Jesus, as Lord of all, was accustomed to providing daily for all the myriad inhabitants of earth. And His plan of redemption is on a gigantic scale. It is a "world" that He came to save, and no mere handful; and it is "into all the world" that He sends the heralds of His cross. The only way in which people can be saved is one by one. But our work is only just begun when we succeed in bringing one soul to Christ. The whole world should be on every Christian's heart.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, D.D.

Green Grass—In the hot Jordan valley grass is never green after April, as the fierce sun and the extraordinary dryness of the air shrivel it up, and thus confirms the statement of John that the Lesson miracle occurred at the Passover season (the second Passover in our Lord's ministry, see John 2:13-25). The place was a plain at the northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee, where the people followed Jesus, and where they were joined by crowds on their way to Jerusalem.

Pennyworth—The Roman denarius, rendered penny, was a silver coin about the size of our ten cent piece, but thicker. The aureus, the standard gold coin of the empire, worth about five dollars at the present price of gold, was equal to twenty-five denarii, each of which would thus be equivalent to twenty cents. The translators of our Bible fixed its value at fifteen cents, estimating it by the value of silver in their day. But not only is there a difference between the value of a coin as bullion, and its value as a legal tender, but the price of silver is a very changeable quantity, and the purchasing power of a coin is its real value. A penny was then the day's wages of a workman, so that it was about equal to our dollar today, and the whole sum to \$200, which would allow four cents worth of bread to each man.

A PRAYER.

O God, our Father, we thank Thee for the grace that makes poor wanderers in sin hear Thy voice when out and away from all that can call to holiness of life. How we drift. Sin drives the little shaly of life out on the raging seas of separation from heaven and Thee. Human voices are drowned in the noise of the raging storm. Then out to the sinner ready to perish sounds the great voice of love divine, with its tender call, "Come close, come unto Me, for with Me is life and fulness of joy." For this wonderful grace and for its saving power, we thank Thee, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The smallest things become great when God requires them of us; they are small only in themselves; they are always great when they are done for God, and when they serve to unite us with him eternally. —Fensola.

THE CHRISTIAN'S COMMISSION.

By Rev. John W. Little, B.D.

"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." These simple words of our Lord give His conception of what it means to be His disciple. To be a follower of Christ is to be committed to a career whose controlling purpose is the same as that for which He was sent into the world.

This purpose may be separated in thought into two aspects, according as it looks Godward or manward. The same Christ who said He came to reveal the Father, said also, that He came to seek and save the lost. Under the one aspect, we think of personality, character, life; under the other, of influence, conduct, service. Alas! we sometimes try to separate them in experience. There they are indissolubly united. We cannot bind ourselves up to God through the most persistent Bible study, prayer, and praise, unless we, at the same time, give our lives in self-denying service for others. Nor can we become effective workers in the Master's kingdom, if we neglect the personal cultivation of our own inner spiritual life. Our influence increases only with the growth of our personality. On the other hand, our service enriches our own life. The higher the tree grows, the longer its branches become, and the greater the area of kindly shade it furnishes for the weary traveler. So, in the Christian, there should be a growth Godward and manward taking place at the same time. We can become good Christians, neither by private devotions alone, nor by public service alone.

Our purpose in life is, therefore, to reproduce the life of Christ in its double aspect. "Christ in us, the hope of glory," means also Christ in us, the regenerative power of the world. This is the commission that Christ has placed in us, that we will fulfil this purpose. This is the end of all the gracious influences He has brought to bear upon us, that we accept this commission and accomplish it. It is a lofty ideal for weak and erring man. "Who is sufficient for these things?" Yet He who knows what is in man, has commissioned us to realize this ideal, has "sent" us into the world to carry forward His life and work. His authority is behind us, if we make the endeavor, and His resources will avail for us in our need. Because He calls us to it, we can do it in Him. Here is our hope, not in ourselves,—our wisdom, our progress, or in the encouragement of others, but in God as linked with man in Christ, and dwelling in man. Thus does Jesus strive, and, in a very real sense, Christ is born again in every redeemed heart. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," said Christ. "He that sees Me, sees the Christ who is the ideal of the Christian."

"It is not what a man does that exalts him, but what a man would do," writes Browning. If we enter into Christ's conception of our life as His disciples, if we patiently and persistently and prayerfully struggle onward and upward to its fulfillment, if our present dissatisfaction only acts as a stronger stimulus to "press toward the mark," then, however many our failures and falls, yet the very struggle, with the nobility of its animating ideal, will leave right deposits in our character.

Keewatin, Ont.

This world is a place for the training of souls in a Christian immortality. Hence Christ must be the Lord of life and death, of diseases and demons, of every mystery and might.—George MacDonald.

A tear is never too small to mirror the face of God.

*S.S. Lesson, May 27, 1906.—Mark 6: 30-44. Commit to memory v. 41. Read Matthew 14:13-21; Luke 9:10-17. Golden Text—My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.—John 6:32.