

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

QUARTERLY REVIEW.

A brief reference to the closing year will be fitting on this its very last day. Speak of our many reasons for thankfulness, such as health, peaceful homes, a goodly land, gospel privileges, etc. Have the scholars repeat in concert the Golden Text for the Quarter. The Lessons of the Quarter may be linked with the names of outstanding persons mentioned in them. (The Goodness of God, as shown in the Lessons, should be kept steadily before the scholars' minds; see preceding page, also Home Study Quarterly, October-December, page 126)

I. Daniel—Lessons I and II. In Lesson I recall the splendid feast, the strange handwriting on the wall, the king's amazement, the sending for Daniel, his interpretation of the writing on the wall, and the issue of all, the setting on the throne of Babylon, Cyrus, who was to free God's people. The points in Lesson II are the malice of Daniel's foes, their crafty plot, Daniel's courage and fidelity, the king's yielding, the casting of Daniel into the Lion's den, the king's night of anxiety, his early visit to the den, Daniel's perfect safety. The goodness of God clearly appears in both these Lessons, in the first opening up the way for His people's return to their own land, and in the second, delivering His servant from a dreadful death.

II. Zerubbabel—Lessons III, IV, and V. The decree of Cyrus giving the Jews permission to go back to their own land and rebuild the temple, the preparations for the journey, an account of the treasures given to the returning captives—these are the points in Lesson III. In Lesson IV, we have the laying of the temple foundations amid the mingled tears and shoutings of the people, and opposition from the enemies of the Jews, in Lesson V., Zechariah's great word of encouragement. Surely God was good to His people on their journey and after they had reached their own country.

III. Esther—Lesson VI. Here, too, God's goodness shines out in the wisdom given to Mordecai, the courage inspired in Queen Esther, and the complete success with which her plan for the saving of her people was crowned.

VI. Ezra—Lesson VII. The temple commenced by Zerubbabel had been completed for fifty-eight years. And now, Ezra, the great teacher of the law, comes from Babylon to instruct the people. He journeyed under the protection of God, who in His great goodness brought him and his company, with their treasure, to the holy city.

V. Nehemiah—Lessons VIII, X, and XI. This brave soldier and wise ruler was never tired of praising the goodness of God to him. He saw the divine hand moving the king of Persia to give him permission to go from Shushan to Jerusalem and rebuild the ruined walls of Jerusalem; protecting him and the workmen at their task; and when the work was completed, he acknowledged the divine care by gathering his people together to hear God's Word and to observe the glad Feast of Tabernacles.

VI. Paul—Lesson IX. Our Old Testament Lessons were interrupted to make room for one from Paul's Epistles showing us how we may imitate the goodness of God in making love our guide in all our dealings with those about us.

VII. The Messiah—Lessons XII, and XIII. These two closing Lessons point to the crowning proof of God's goodness, His best and greatest gift to

men. Emphasize in connection with Lesson XII, the truth that, if we are to enjoy the Saviour's blessing, we must put away from us everything that is evil. The last Lesson will be fresh in the minds of the scholars. Take a moment or two to press home very earnestly and affectionately our debt of gratitude to Christ for all He has done for us. We can best repay this debt by giving ourselves to Him, that He may rule in our hearts and lives.

THE CHILD IN THE MIDST.

By Rev. R. J. Macpherson, B.D.

There is a great deal in our Saviour's life and in His teaching that makes the years of infancy, childhood and youth of very special interest to every Christian. In the very beginning is the beautiful scene of the manger of Bethlehem making hallowed forever the hours of earliest babyhood; and next, almost wonderful, His presentation in the temple, when the little child of eight days was honored by His Father in heaven with the prophetic praises of the aged Anna and Simeon. Then comes His visit to Jerusalem at the age of twelve, when He surprised the learned doctors and lawyers, the scholars of Israel, with His marvelous questions and answers. Besides all this there is His untiring love for children, the happy days in His public ministry when He took them up in His arms and blessed them; the demand which He made upon all His disciples, and repeated again and again, that they should be like little children; His teaching that His kingdom was a kingdom of such as these.

There is, then, so much in common between our Saviour and those whom we meet in the Sabbath school—the children—that meeting with them is all but meeting with Christ Himself. "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me." This one hour on Sabbath afternoon brings before our memories many of the scenes which most endear Him to us, and carries us into the spirit of others which must have been among the pleasantest in the life of Him who had so much of sorrow and heart-pain to darken His days.

Nor is this all. The spirit of the child is the spirit of His true disciple; the spirit of the child is the spirit of the kingdom; the spirit of humility as exemplified in the child is the spirit which elevates to greatness in that kingdom. And it is here in the Sabbath school, above all places else, that we feel the contagion of the spirit; it is here especially that we see its beauties; it is here that we earnestly desire it. And here, too, it is imparted to us. It is difficult to say whether the child in receiving the tuition of the teacher, or the teacher in beholding and learning and imbibing the spirit of the child, receives the greater blessing. Here, away from the world with its pride, its falseness and its selfish competitions, there is not only one little one in the midst, but many all around him, from whom he may learn the spirit of simplicity and candor, of humility, of dependence and innocence. Thus he grows like the Saviour Himself, and fulfills the condition of an abundant entrance into His kingdom.

Cartwright, Man.

Faith may disappoint as to the form, but never as to the fact. The prophets saw the Christ, not as Simeon saw him, but through a sense of faith just as real.

Jesus gave us not a creed, but a life. Creeds may be extracted from it, but unless permeated by his life, they have no force beyond that of words.

QUEEN'S SUNDAY ADDRESSES.

The one on the 3rd December was given in Convocation Hall by Prof. Dr. Kilpatrick, Toronto. His subject was founded on Christ's question to the disciples in John 6, "Will ye also go away?" After a suitable description of the circumstances leading to the question put to the twelve remaining disciples, he said there is a very close analogy between these and the present age. The "hard sayings," which some could not bear their, apply with a like pressure on many in the present day. There are shallow-minded persons, who are easily moved away from the faith of the gospel. There are others who are no longer holding the doctrines of their fathers, but who are even losing their faith. As Christ did not wish the disciples to go away, yet left them a free choice, so this is the Saviour's desire to-day, with his offer of choice. This proposal is all the more made to those who wish to be thorough Christians, and not loosely connected with the church as numbers are. This is a "hard" position; and young men going out into the world, will find the world is much given to drifting away from Christ. The great pursuit is after the dollars, especially in the West. But there are other tendencies to draw away from Christ:—The domain of physical science; as also the misapplication of the historical method. By this some think by their explanations, to take away the original. You will find the impact of these forces which lead away from Christ. No doubt, there are "hard sayings" in Christianity. Most find it a hard thing to be a Christian; a great strain is put upon faith. It takes all that is in a man to believe in God; to believe in the incarnation of Christ. But in the midst of all these difficulties, a solution can be found. With some the difficulty is intellectual, with others it is moral, thus the greatest. When there is willingness, you are on the way to solution. This is found in Christ, and from Him. Look at the answer of Peter; "To whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life?" Notice from this three propositions. First, none will go who see the alternative. No intellectual resting-place between Christianity and pessimism. With certainty, spiritually this is the only alternative. How is man to be reconstructed? The answer is, none but Christ. Secondly, none will go who are in earnest about life. Many, all will go who do not know the value of life. Christ is not interesting to those who are not serious about life. But those will not go, who have discovered the greatness of their nature, and also the suitability of Christ to their nature. Thirdly, none will go who have had personal experience of Christ. First it was experiment; now it is experience. We know that thou art the holy one of God. Earthly friendships may be broken up; but the friendship of Christ cannot be broken. To know him is to be bound to him. This is a growing matter. As a King, he claims your full allegiance. Thus faith shall grow into intense, personal conviction. But there must be a full surrender to him. Another question in this passage deserves attention. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" You may well ask the question, Lord is it I? Have your souls ever yet escaped the paralysis of sin? If there is the doubt; the answer should be No, no! But thou, Christ, must keep me.

As a body without a spirit, wood without fire, a bullet in a gun without powder, so are all prayers without fervency of spirit.