

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

THE CRUCIFIXION.

By Rev. J. W. Clark, London.

He bearing his cross, v. 17. The follower of Jesus must surely part company with his Master now. But, no. If he does, all is lost. Here is what the Master Himself says: "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14: 27). We talk of the little disappointments and ills of life as our crosses. So they are; but cross-bearing means a thousandfold more; it means the willingness to suffer all pain and all shame, if need be—for our Master's sake, and in our Master's service. May He give us His grace, that we may not shrink from the cross, in whatsoever form it come.

They crucified him, v. 18. That was long ago, and at the demand of Jews, on the other side of the world. The blackest deed that earth has ever known: the Lord of life and love put to shame and torture by those He came to save. But is the shameful deed not done afresh by every soul that rejects Him, and especially by every one, who being once a follower, has turned his back upon his Lord and Saviour? Let us spare our hard words, lest, some day, we also may be tempted to this dreadful sin.

In Hebrew, and in Latin, and in Greek (Rev. Ver.), v. 20. The sacrifice on the cross was for all men; for the Jews, to whom God had specially made Himself known; for the Romans, who were the world's rulers; for the Greeks, who were the world's teachers. And ever since, the world's scholarship, and the extension of empire throughout the world, have been the carriers of the red of this Jew of Nazareth. Into all lands it has gone, and in half ten hundred tongues His name is spoken; and at the pace at which the Christian powers are gaining sway, and the Gospel is spreading abroad, it looks as if, perhaps in a generation, His name shall have been heralded and His praises sung in all the earth.

Cast lots, v. 24. Gambling for the Saviour's garment, while He was in agony of death for the sin of the world! So, we do constantly belittle our lives. Our eyes are so unseeing, our ears so deaf to the great things God is saying to us. For the great Lord wants no follower of His to be without His share in bringing in the world-wide kingdom, whose liberties were purchased by that death upon the tree. He died; that was His part. We are more than mere beholders. It is ours to tell men the story, ours to work and pray that the full fruitage of the cross shall be gathered in. This is making great the littlest life.

That the scripture might be fulfilled, v. 24. Little recked those rough, careless soldiers, of scripture or its fulfilment. Their task, for that day, was to obey orders and crucify three Jews: their reward and recreation, the dividing of the garments. But they were making good, words spoken of God centuries before, and thus rendering it easier for men to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed God's Son and the world's Redeemer. Does it not teach us that God's hand is upon every thread in the great loom of life. There is nothing beyond His control. Our most insignificant acts may be helping mightily, or hindering His kingdom.

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, v. 26. A little Portuguese girl in one of the Boston public schools wrote this an-

swer to the question, What duty do we owe to those in our home, who have taken care of us?—"I owe it to my dear parents to prepare myself for work, so that my father, when he looks at me, may say, 'I shall have someone to take care of us in our old age.'" That was a true keeping of the Fourth Commandment; in which the Man Jesus on the cross, as well as the Boy Jesus in the home at Nazareth (Luke 2: 51, 52), has given us blessed example.

He said, v. 29. Of the seven "words" of Jesus on the cross, the first three were for others than Himself—the very first, for His enemies, "Father forgive them"; the second for a penitent, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise"; the third for his nearest and dearest on earth, "Woman behold thy son," as He commends His mother to the disciple John. How like Him, for was not the very purpose of His errand to earth to save and help others; and has not His compassion been ever deep and wide? Wide, wide, open are His arms of love.

It is finished: and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, v. 30. What can be said when we read such a sentence as this: "Waterloo," says Victor Hugo, "is the change of front of the universe." "Nearer truth," says another, "is this: Calvary is the change of front of the universe." The ages before looked forward to it. The ages since have been profoundly influenced by it. Calvary has not only changed the map of the world; but it opened up the world beyond and above. This at least, it may, and ought to, mean to every son of man who hears the story:—His work of redemption for me is finished; my work of service in His cause should begin.

THE CHRISTIAN.

By Charles W. Nevins.

With truth for toil, with God to discipline,

With hope to aflame,
With strength to win;

With aim, the best that earth and time contain,

With power for loss,
With power for gain;

With cheer for heart, with hope at end of day,

The world has served
A master on his way.

A PRAYER.

O Thou Eternal One, I need Thee for time. They are always telling me that earth is the robing room in which to prepare for heaven. Rather hast thou said that heaven is the robing room in which to prepare for earth. It is from within Thy sanctuary that I am armed for the battle of life; it is in meeting my God that I learn to meet my brother. I am not fit for this world till I have seen the other world; I must go up to the mount ere I give laws to the people. It is from behind the veil of eternity that I speak to the things of time. I could not bear the fretting of the shore were it not the sight of the sea. I could no stand the murmur of the crowd were it not for the murmur of the shell. I should sink beneath the burden and the heat of the day unless I were refreshed by the spray from the ocean of Thy love. Roll in then, thou great sea! Roll in upon the hot sands of time, and have the thirsty land! Roll in upon the beach, and wash its impurities away! Let us hear the sound of Thy waves, and we shall bear the rumbling of earth's chariot wheels! He who has lain one moment on Thy breast is fit to tread the rusty courts of time.—George Matheson.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Hall Caine, in a recent article on "The Moral Responsibility of Authors," makes use of the widely-quoted anecdote of Turner. A lady, criticising his paintings, remarked, "But I don't see these colors in the sunset Mr. Turner." "I dare say not," replied the artist, "but don't you wish you could?"

There is a world of uncomfortable query, in that remark, when we apply it to ourselves in its broadest sense. For instance, how many opportunities have we missed for saying the one needed word, or doing the one needed act, because we did not see the need? We accept people at their own, or surface, valuation, and minister to them accordingly, when a sympathetic endeavor to see beneath the exterior might reveal conditions vastly different. This was illustrated recently in the experience of a settlement worker in Boston's Italian quarter.

When she came to the school she was advised particularly as to the treatment of a certain boy whom the principal called "a hopeless case." He was an undeveloped lad of thirteen, with the facial expression and bearing of a man, and seemed to have acquired all the vices of speech and habits that the slums could teach. He came to the classes regularly, but was the cause of such endless disturbance that the principal had resolved to debar him; but, full of the zeal of the new worker, the teacher begged a month's grace.

For three weeks he made her existence miserable, and only the sternest repression kept him within bounds. After an unusually trying day, she made him remain after the others had left.

He settled down in his seat indifferently, waiting the customary warning and entreaties. But this teacher works with her heart as well as her head. She crossed the empty room, and took his two brown, reluctant hands in her own.

"Raffaele," she said simply, looking straight into his eyes, "I am tired, too tired to be teacher tonight. I shall say nothing of the rules you have broken, but I want to ask you to be kinder to me. I want to be your friend, but you are making my work hard and my heart heavy. Won't you let me care for you? It will help me."

He sat quiet a few moments, and the teacher looked out the window, wisely silent. When she looked his way again the tears were streaming over his cheeks, and the next instant he was sobbing on her shoulder. The boy was hungry for friendship and love, but he resented authority. He was the oldest of ten children, and in his crowded, squalid home there was no time for attention, or affection.

He had been dependent on himself for most things since babyhood, and he found the world a poor place for sympathy. Yet, under the stolid exterior was the starved child-heart, and a very little tenderness won his lasting allegiance.

What people need, and what we think they need, is a problem for delicate handling; but as the trained eye sees colors that escape the majority, so careful insight will bring that wonderful broadening of mind and heart, that warm sense of universal brotherhood, that alone is rich reward.—Inez G. Thompson, in S. S. Times.

No matter how humble the abode, if it be sweetened with kindness and smiles the hearts will turn longingly toward it; and home, if it be ever so homely, will be the dearest spot beneath the circuit of the sun.