

with which he shatters the glass balls in the air. Two or three at a throw going into pieces under his quick and sure bullets, his eye and his fire moving together, even when he has to turn while his ball is in the air. But he did not come to do it by taking it easy. Macaulay did not become a great writer, Thomson a great poet, Bacon a great thinker, Luther a great reformer, Napoleon a great fighter, Whitfield a great preacher, nor Watt nor Stephenson great inventors, by taking it easy. In government, in art, in mechanics, in law, in medicine, the men of mark have been the toilers who put their entire strength into what they did. Young man, when you are resolving to "take it easy," you are making up your mind—however admirable your necktie, or artistic your moustache—to be commonplace. Even strong and vigorous minds have often fallen below the level which they early attained, by taking it easy. How many great names could be indicated in literature that are known mainly by their earliest efforts. Then they were on their mettle. They had to do their utmost, if they were to do anything. Time, pains, care, revision, were given to their writings before they were ventured before the world. Their best things were brought out in the best way. Later they had an assurance of success. Their names were made. But the works they then wrote are not bought as were those that made their names. Who reads Sir Walter Scott's later poems as he reads "The Lay," or even "Paradise Regained" as he reads "Paradise Lost?" There is no evidence that Burke, or Dr. Johnson, with his great, rollicking, hearty, hard-worked nature, ever sat up all night to read any of Miss Burney's later works; but the former paid that sincere compliment to "Evelina." Great preachers have been described as men who can preach great sermons but rarely do it. If for some cause they fall into the way of "taking it easy," they will do it rarely indeed. And they are not all singular. All great results represent great exertion.

"But," it may be asked, "is there to be no rest, no quiet, no repose in one's life?" Ah! we are not talking about *life*, but about *work*. Take rest, by all means, at proper times, in proper places, in proper ways. But even in taking rest some method is needed, and one may "take it" so "easy" that it will be irksome instead of restful, and the memory of it unsatisfactory. Absolute idleness is poor rest, unless one is sleeping. See new objects, get new ideas, make new exertions, move on new lines, bring a new set of muscles—bodily or mental—into use, and do it heartily, and you rest, and so rest as to be in many ways a better furnished worker when you resume work. To let weeks pass in which—like the man's idea of comfort in church—one sits still and thinks about nothing, is to prepare one's self for that habitual absent-mindedness which has not always the plea of great genius behind it. One would like to see a strong, vigorous worker even resting in character. It is not given to every man as to Professor Wilson to climb mountains and to traverse moors, like a deer, or to be equally at home above or below the waters of the Westmoreland lakes which he so much loved, and where he could amuse himself by falling overboard, giving a ducking to the boatman who jumped after him, and after a gambol with him in the water, setting him back again in his boat—but the great, intense, hearty being that appears in such vehement rest is just the nature to laugh or cry in print with a laughing or weeping reader, or to lecture in the dusk with a fervour and force that stop the students' note-taking, as they sit still and gaze on the face that reflects so vividly the enthusiasm of the poet and scholar.—*Dr. John Hall.*

PREACH JESUS.

Preach Jesus, the true sacrifice for sin, offered by Himself, not any miserable substitute offered by men. Distinguish well the visible from the spiritual Church, the outward from the inward man,—so shall you keep separate the shadow from the substance, the semblance from the truth. Preach Jesus, the true Priest for ever, the High Priest in heaven: not the bishops or clergy, weak worms of the earth. Preach Jesus, the Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man." No

breathing thoughts or burning words, no tongue of angel or of flaming seraph can tell the treasures of this matchless name. Jesus, the name above every name, has been preached in city and in country, in cottage and in dungeon, in caverns of the earth, on wildest hillside and on solitary shore; and wherever preached in simplicity, faith, and prayer grace has been given and power bestowed, sinners have wept and prayed and trusted, while angels sang in ecstasy, and heaven has rung with joy. The poor, the miserable, the lonely and forsaken, the heirs of sorrow and the sons of shame, have been gladdened by His Gospel and cheered by His word. No music to their ears like the music of His mercy; no cordial for their heart like the balm of His blood; no cover for their nakedness like the garment of His righteousness; and no procession for their wonder like the going forth of Jesus to conquer and to save. No structure raised by mortal hands, however stately and however costly, can satisfy their taste or come up to their desire. They look for the "habitation of God" that Jesus is erecting of living stones, hewn out and fashioned by the Almighty's hand, growing and glittering in the sunshine of His power, and resting secure on His everlasting strength. Already in anticipation and contemplation thereof, are they charmed with a beauty such as eye never saw, and regaled with music such as ear never heard.—*The late Bishop of Cork.*

The Sunday School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XVII.

April 25. } *CONFESSIO AND CROSS-BEARING.* } Mat. xvi. 13-28.
1880.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."—Matt. xvi. 24.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Matt. xiii. 44-58. Jesus again Rejected.
T. Matt. xiv. 1-12. Death of John.
W. Matt. xiv. 13-21. Five Thousand Fed.
Th. Matt. xiv. 22-36. Jesus Walks on Water.
F. Matt. xiv. 1-20. The Disciples Defended.
S. Matt. xv. 21-39. Syro-phenician Woman.
Sab. Matt. xvi. 13-28. Confession and Cross-Bearing.

HELPS TO STUDY.

The conversation between Christ and His disciples, recorded in our present lesson, took place probably about six months before the crucifixion.

In the time—nearly a year—that passed since the day by the Sea of Galilee, described in last lesson, the people of northern Palestine had determined to make Jesus an earthly king against His will (John vi. 15); His enemies had become more embittered, and He had not attended the passover, but had remained in Galilee (John vii. 1); He had delivered the discourse contained in John vi., about eating the flesh of the Son of Man and drinking His blood, and many had fallen away from Him (John vi. 66).

In this lesson we are taught: (1) *Who Christ is*, (2) *What Christ was to do*, (3) *What was to be done to Christ*, (4) *What Christ's Followers are to do*.

I. WHO CHRIST IS.—Vers. 13-17. In answer to the question, *Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?* The Saviour draws from His disciples a brief statement of the world's opinions regarding Him—not for His own information, but in order as usual, to place the false side by side with the true, so that they could be the more easily distinguished when apart.

These opinions are as numerous and as various now as they were when the question was asked. Some say that Jesus was a good and wise man—nothing more; some, that He was partly deceived and partly a deceiver. But a much more important question for each of us is, *Whom say ye that I am?*

A recent writer says: "It matters less to you and to me what others think of Jesus, than what we think of Him. If everybody else is in error on this point, and we look at Jesus in a proper light, all is well with us, however sad we may be over the failure of others. And if everybody else holds a correct belief, and we are in error, it is as bad for us as if there were no truth in the universe. If you believe that you are not a lost sinner, you will not—you cannot—look to Jesus as a Saviour; for there can be no Saviour if there is no danger to be saved from. Or, if you believe that you are lost, but that Jesus cannot be trusted to take you just as you are and save you absolutely, you will not—you cannot—look upon Him as your Saviour. In what light do you look at Jesus? Do you look upon Him as a needed Saviour? Do you look upon Him as a sufficient Saviour? Do you look upon Him as your Saviour? Whom do you say that Jesus, the Son of Man, is?"

In answering this question, Peter, as usual, occupies the position of spokesman for the twelve; and the Saviour

recognizes the answer, *Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God*, as the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

II. WHAT CHRIST WAS TO DO.—Vers. 18-20. He was to establish His kingdom on earth, to build His Church (see Zech. vi. 12, 13; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Eph. ii. 21, 22; 1 Cor. iii. 9), founding it upon a rock.

Was this rock Peter? The Church of Rome says it was. Many of our modern Protestant commentators are of the same opinion; and they may certainly hold that opinion without becoming Papists, for what Peter gets does Rome no good; but is Peter the "stone which the builders rejected" and which has "become the head of the corner?" Is Peter the "foundation" other than which "no man can lay?" The whole teaching of Scripture is against the view that the Saviour would speak of any mere human being as the foundation of His Church. There is no violence done to the text by taking the words *Thou art Peter* (*petros*, a rock, masculine) and upon this rock (*petra*, feminine) I will build My Church, to mean that the Church would be built on the doctrine, or fact, proclaimed in Peter's confession, viz., the divinity of Christ. In any case the most that can be accorded to Peter is a place among "the apostles and prophets" upon whom the Church is said to be built, "Christ Himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. ii. 20).

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Peter was the first to open the kingdom of heaven to the Gentiles in his preaching; and there may be some reference to that fact here; whatever other "power of the keys" or of binding or loosing is here meant, is given to Peter only as the representative of the twelve, and, through them, of the whole Christian Church.

Tell no man. This prohibition was only temporary, and was removed when the apostles were commanded to "preach the Gospel to every creature."

III. WHAT WAS TO BE DONE TO CHRIST.—Vers. 21-23. We now find the Saviour beginning to prepare His disciples for the events of the near future, and to teach them that His way to the accomplishment of the great work in which He was engaged lay through suffering and death. The disciples did not, as yet, know enough to enable them to reconcile the two apparently contradictory facts of the establishment of the kingdom and the death of its Lord; and so Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him. He began, but he was not permitted to finish his rebuke, for, as Dr. Alexander says, he "was cut short by one of the severest answers ever uttered, which effectually taught him his mistake and brought him to his senses."

IV. WHAT CHRIST'S FOLLOWERS ARE TO DO.—Vers. 24-28. Christ offered no false inducements to followers. He placed no delusive hopes before them. Neither does He now. He calls us to a course of self-denial, and hardship, and suffering, and death if need be, but He calls us to glory and to honour and to immortality as the end of that course.

Whoever will save his life shall lose it. We give Dr. Alexander's exposition of this passage, or rather of the corresponding passage in Mark: "*Whoever will* (is willing, wishes to) *save his life* (i.e. his natural life—the life of his body, for its own sake, as the highest good to be secured or sought) *shall* (by that very act not only lose but) *destroy it*. He cannot perpetuate his life on earth, and by refusing to look higher forsakes heaven. The converse is then stated as no less true and important. *Whoever loses or destroys* (i.e. allows to be destroyed if needful) *his life* (in the lower sense before explained) *for My sake, in My service and at My command, not only now while I am present upon earth, but even after my departure, for the sake of the Gospel, the diffusion of the truth and the erection of My kingdom, he shall save his life in losing it, or only lose it in a lower sense to save it in the highest sense conceivable. The difficulty of distinguishing precisely between life, and life in this extraordinary dictum only shows that the difference is rather of degree than of kind, and instead of weakening strengthens the impression.*"

For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. Again we find that the best we can do with our limited space is to give Dr. Alexander's short but comprehensive exposition: "*What will it profit a man* (what will he gain on ordinary principles of value or exchange) *if he gain* (acquire in the usual commercial sense) *the whole world* (i.e. all that it can offer as an object of attraction or desire, the aggregate sum total of enjoyment, whether sensual, ambitious, intellectual, pecuniary) *and lose* (a most emphatic passive form—be made to lose, be injured, ruined with respect to) *his own soul* (the word before translated 'life' but here denoting rather that which lives, enjoys and suffers). What are enjoyments if there is no one to enjoy them, if the man himself is lost, i.e. lost to happiness forever?"

CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure for Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who desire it, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. W. SHERAR, 149 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.