

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.*

By Rev. P. M. MacDonald, M.A., Toronto.
They know not the voice of strangers, v. 5. A man in India was arrested for sheep-stealing. When he was on trial, his accuser, who declared himself to be the owner of the sheep, was present in the court room. Each of the two claimants the sheep, and each had witnesses to support his claim, so that it was difficult for the judge to decide to which the sheep belonged. Knowing, however, the ways of shepherds and the habits of the sheep, he adopted the following means of getting at the facts. He had the sheep brought into the court room. Then he sent the accuser out of the room, while he told the prisoner to call the sheep and see if it would come to him. But the frightened animal, not knowing the voice of strangers, would not go to him. In the meantime the other man had grown impatient and, probably knowing the nature of the test that was being made, gave a kind of "cluck," at which the sheep bounded to the door of the room where he was, bleating in delight. The sheep was given to him, and the other man was punished for false accusation.

I am the door of the sheep, v. 7. The story is told of a widowed mother, whose daughter, an only child, left her home, and went into an evil life. The mother could only pray for her lost child, and this she did constantly. After a time, one dark night, at midnight, the girl came home. Creeping to the cottage in the storm, she found the door unlocked, and entered. At once she was lovingly welcomed by the overjoyed mother. When she heard again and again that she was forgiven, she asked how it came that the door had been left unlocked: "You were always careful to have it fastened, mother." The mother said, "Never, my child, since you left me, has that door been fastened day or night. I prayed God to send you back to me, and I left the door unlocked, that when you came, you might find entrance at once." Christ is the door to God's love. No one ever comes to it to find it shut. The door is always open, when we would come to God by Christ.

By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, v. 9. There is a thrilling story of some Russians who were crossing the wide plains of their country one wintry day. The hungry wolves were hunting, and had scented the horses of the travellers. Before long the race for life had begun. Leaving the beaten track, the men turned aside to a house they saw, and had only time to cast off the locking of the horses and get them, with themselves, inside the house, when the pack overtook them. They tore at the door, leaped against the sides of the house, howling as only hungry wolves can. But the men were safe.

Life more abundantly, v. 10. Dr. Alexander MacLaren tells how, when he was in Australia, he saw wretched cattle trying to find grass on a yellow pasture, where there was nothing but here and there a brown stalk that crumbled to dust in their mouths as they tried to eat it. But six weeks later after the rains had come, he saw the same pasture covered with high, rich, juicy, satisfying grass. The cattle were now sleek and strong and full of life. Like that abundant pasturage, is the provision which

*S.S. Lesson, April 5, 1908. John 10:1-11. Commit to memory v. 9. Study John 10:1-18. Golden Text—The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.—John 10:11.

Jesus offers to us. It will put new energy and vigor into every fibre of the soul, sending us out to win glorious victories over all that would hinder us from doing His will.

Giveth his life for the sheep, v. 11. Dr. John G. Paton, the famous missionary of the New Hebrides, writes of one of the native preachers of Tanna that, at a time of great danger on that island, when this preacher's life was in danger, Paton tried to persuade him to remain on the neighboring island of Anioteum till quieter days. But he could not persuade the man, who said, "Misey (Missionary), when I see them thirsting for my blood, I just see myself, when the missionary first came to my islands. I wanted to murder him, as they now want to murder me. Had he stayed away for such danger, I should have remained a heathen; but he came, and kept coming to teach us, till by the grace of God I was changed to what I am. Now the same God that changed me can change these poor Tannese to love and serve Him. I cannot stay away from Tanna."

PRAYER.

O, great Keeper of the destinies of man, be near us upon this Sabbath Day. There are times when all seems dark, when life seems so much a part of death that our souls cower in the gloom of hopelessness and refuse to be comforted. At such seasons, we pray Thee, send us the blessed hope, and assurance which tells us that man's end is not death, but life, not defeat, but victory and life everlasting. And this we ask in His name who died that we might have this sure knowledge and comfort. Amen.

AN EASY WAY.

Wouldst thou be wretched?
'Tis an easy way:
Thinking of but self, and self alone, all day;
Thinking of thy pain, thy grief, thy loss, thy care,
All that thou hast to do, or feel, or bear;
Thinking of thy good, thy pleasure and thy gain,
Think only of thyself, 'twill not be vain.

Wouldst thou be happy?
Take an easy way:
Think of those round thee—live for them each day;
Think of their pain, their loss, their grief, their care;
All that they have to do, or feel, or bear;
Think of their pleasure, of their good, their gain;
Think of those round thee—'twill not be in vain. —Selected.

THE MEANING OF A TOUCH.

One of the most reliable methods of identifying a man is to take an imprint of his thumb and finger. Among all the unnumbered millions of people on earth there is no other touch just like his, and no other man can make an exact reproduction of the impress he left. His hand gives him away. What he touches carries with it his record and by that record he is forever known and judged. The touch is slight; it requires but a moment; it does not call the higher powers of mind and heart into exercise. Two important considerations suggest themselves: A man is forevermore imparting himself in what he does; personal accountability survives all attempts at evasion or escape. God knows us apart.—Central Baptist.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, D.D., London.

Robber—From the days of Ishmael, the Bedouin has been a robber by trade, and his calling, so far from being disgraceful, has been thought most honorable. The weak character of the government of Palestine has served to encourage the lawless, and to render property very insecure. The roughness of the country also furnished these with the means of hiding and defence. They took refuge in caves in the face of steep cliffs, and could be dislodged only by the Romans lowering, by chains, great wooden boxes bound with iron and full of heavily armed soldiers, who pulled the robbers out of the caves with hooks on the end of long poles and dispatched them or hurled them over the precipices. In the larger caves, they smothered them by fire, of brushwood at the cave's mouth. All through the Middle Ages and down to very recent times, Palestine was exceedingly unsafe for solitary travellers, and even yet every party that visits the Jordan takes an armed Bedouin escort along. And on the east of the Jordan the Arab lurks like a wolf among the hills, jumps out and in a moment strips a traveller of everything valuable, and disappears as quickly as he came, whether it would be folly to try to follow him. The prevalence of robbers caused the villages to be built in strong positions on the hills.

READY FOR THE BLESSING.

Disappointment for which we are not responsible always brings with it a blessing. But gratitude for such disappointment does not count for much unless it is exercised while the blessing is yet unseen. It is easy to be thankful for disappointment after the blessing has appeared. Headwinds and heavy seas had delayed a party of pleasure-seekers on a coasting-steamer until they knew that they must lose a longed-for drive on shore. There were many complaints. But the last day of the voyage was on an unruffled, sunlit sea, and along a beautiful southern river. Then smiles replaced gloom. "Think what we would have lost if we had finished the voyage at night, according to our plan. Blessings on those headwinds!" was the exclamation of one passenger. "I knew it would be all right!" was the response of a friend who had not ceased to smile even when the seas were heaviest. That is the faith that gets out of life the joy that God has intended all should have. Its possessors are welcome wherever they go, because they act on the belief that disappointments are only God's appointments. "And headwinds right for royal sails."—Sunday School Times.

When you judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of pleasure, of the innocence or malignity of actions? Take this rule: Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things—in short, whatever increases the strength and authority of your body over your mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may be in itself.—Susanna Wesley.

When you have done that which gratifies you, slip away and be quiet. When you have said that which is pleasing to both hearer and speaker, forget it. When you have made sacrifices for others—well, that's no more than is expected of you, for we are here to help one another and pass this way but once.