

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY—EPHESUS.*

By Rev. C. MacKinnon, D.D.

Spake boldly, v. 8. On one occasion, during the famous wars of Marlborough, when Mons was besieged and the courage of the attacking party had almost been exhausted, the Duke of Argyle rushed into the midst of the faltering soldiers, and exclaimed, "You see brothers, I have no concealed armor. I am equally exposed with you. I ask no one to go where I refuse to venture. Remember you fight for the liberties of Europe and the glory of your nation." These stirring words and this brave example inspired the troops with new resolution. They rushed forward to the assault again, and the town was captured. In King Jesus we have a Leader who was exposed to the same temptations and opposition that confront us. He calls us to follow Him, and He never lost a battle. We have but to go boldly forward at His call, and, in spite of the sneers and opposition of the world, we shall surely win in the fight.

Were hardened, v. 9. "That was not quinine I took just now," remarked an indisposed lady who had just taken a powder. Her husband hurried to the drug store to find what it was. The druggist threw up his hands in despair. It was an overdose of morphine. Two doctors were hastily summoned. They administered the most powerful antidotes and said, "Keep her awake for four hours, and she will be saved." The deathly stupor began to oppress her. "Please let me go to sleep," she pleaded; but her urgent words only drove them to more vigorous measures. They shook her, threw water in her face, dragged her roughly around the room. How glad were they, when the four hours were passed and the doctor pronounced her safe! Sin is just such a powerful opiate. Many have mistaken it for pleasure, and have indulged in stupefying draughts. Their senses are becoming benumbed, their consciences deadened and their hearts hardened. Their condition is one of great peril. Their best friend is he who rouses them at any cost.

Evil spirits, v. 12. A man goes down to a little rivulet and tries to clean it; but his efforts are in vain. He cannot filter the water clear. Then his friends shout to him, "Come up a little higher and run that hog out of the spring, and the water will clear itself." How often have men tried to improve their lives by dropping now this little habit, and now that; but, for all their efforts, they are no better than before. They have to climb up a little higher, and run some miserable hog of sin out of their hearts, before they can expect the streams of activity that issue from it to be sweet and wholesome. If we find that our resolutions are too easily broken and our vows for a better life too quickly forgotten, we may be sure that, somewhere in our hearts, lurks an evil spirit that must be driven out.

Fear fell upon them all (Rev. Ver.) v. 17. An operation was performed upon a blind man, which restored his sight to him; but the immediate effect was quite unexpected. It produced a strange sensation of fear. Formerly he went about the town without a guide, tapping with his stick in full confidence. With the opening of his eyes he saw danger everywhere in the road, until he got used to his new power. So, the first impression of the gospel is often one of dread. The sinner begins to realize that he has to deal with a holy God. His conscience alarms him. He is filled with new

apprehensions. Only when he comes to understand more fully, does he learn that God's holiness is the outcome of His love, and in His pardon he finds at length abiding peace.

Brought . . . books . . . burned them, v. 19. The trouble all arose from a fractured tooth. It had injured the tongue and the injury had developed into a cancer. First a third of the tongue had to be removed, then all the glands on one side of the face. "Is there hope for recovery?" asked the unfortunate victim. "If the last particle of the cancer is removed," was the doubtful reply. It was not removed. A sickly man returned home, the wreck of one of the pillars of his nation. A few days after one of the largest processions ever seen in his neighborhood followed him to his tomb. The disease of the soul is started just as simply. A bad book leaves an ineradicable thought in the mind. The whole life becomes gradually corrupted. The roots of the dreaded virus of sin defy excision by any human power, and poison the heart. There is one Physician, and one only who can effectually cure this soul sickness, and that is the Saviour, Jesus Christ, whose blood "cleanseth us from all sin." But, even though we may be cured, there is need of the utmost care, lest the seeds of infection should remain. Let the bad books be gathered and burned.

"AUF WIEDERSCHEN"

By Leah Palmer Morath.

Good-bye!

Why speak at parting

This word with grief or tears?

Know'st not to Christian friendship

No bitterness it bears?

Good-bye?

'Tis for the hopeless,

Who toll with earth-bound eyes,

And miss the heavenly vision

Illumined in the skies.

Good-bye?

Why need we hear it

With sad or anxious heart,

When nothing, only distance,

Can sweep us far apart?

Good-bye?

Not—God be with you

Until we meet again!

Robs parting of its sorrow,

And even death of pain.

PRAYER.

Almighty God, the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. If we feared Thee more we should know more of the mysteries of Thy wisdom and of Thy love. The revelation is with God, but the sight is not with us: we have not the prepared heart, the obedient will, the pureness of spirit needful to receive all the light we might enjoy. Our sins have kept good things from us; our iniquities have been as a cloud darkening the sun, so that we who might have sat in the rays of the morning and enjoyed the immediate presence of God are often left in darkness and loneliness, not knowing the right hand from the left, persecuted by our own perplexities, vexed and exasperated by all the occurrences of time. We might have sat with Christ upon His throne, judging tribes and nations; we might have had eyes that wander through eternity; but our sins have befuddled us, and impoverished us, and left us on the earth when we might have been enjoying our citizenship in heaven. Yet we have heard of Thy goodness to sinful men; this word has been sounded in our ears: Herein is love: while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. We are amazed. Our hearts are first struck with unbelief. May that unbelief not deepen into disbelief, but rise gradually like a dawning day into the zenith of perfect and triumphant faith. Amen.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Ross, D.D.

SCHOOL.—In Greek cities all schools were private enterprises, and the Government supervised the moral character of the teacher, but not his scientific qualifications. Grammar, which included reading, writing and arithmetic, was the first stage. The pupils formed letters on wax tablets with a metal or ivory pencil, which was pointed at one end and flattened at the other for smoothing down the surface of the tablet to erase the writing. Paper made from papyrus was also used, and for important documents prepared parchment, on which the writing was with pen and ink. After receiving the rudiments of education, the boy committed to memory Homer and other national poetry. Musical instruction was the second part of education. Technical excellence was not so much desired as the moral influence of the art, its exhilarating and inspiring effect at games, meals and in war. Stringed instruments were principally used, although wind instruments, and instruments of percussion were well known. The last stage of education was given in the gymnasium. The harmonious development of every part of the body was thought to be of equal importance with the culture of the mind. The end was a perfect human form, capable of ease and grace of motion and hardened against pain and the vicies of laziness.

"AFFLICTION."

When the Psalmist said: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted," he was not talking cant. He had reached the point in his earthly career at which he could look back upon the preceding years and see them—much as God sees them—as a whole. He could appreciate the danger of the temptations which he had met, and the necessity of sharp warnings at this point, and of actual scourgings of the soul at that point, in order to prevent his straying, or to rescue him, already strayed from the way of safety. Such a retrospect of life is granted to each of us at times, and it is a full of instruction. It teaches us a tremendous truth, the need and use of the unhappiness. Chastening widens the experience, deepens the sympathy, enlarges the range of friendship, invigorates character, throws the soul back upon God in firmer trust and does a work for the soul so noble that if its own character alone be regarded, the divine love behind it and pervading it becomes evident. Blessed are they who no longer need to be thus assured, because their own hearts have learned the truth and rest upon it.—The Congregationalist.

THE INDWELLING GOD.

The kingdom of God is within us. In the latency of every soul there lurks, among the things it loves and venerates, some earnest and salient point whence a divine life may begin and radiate, some incipient idea of duty, it may be; some light mist of disinterested love, appearing vague and nebulous and infinitely distant within the mighty void—a broken fringe of holy light, seen only in the spirit's deepest darkness; and therein may be the stirrings of a mystic energy, and the haze may be gathered together and glow within the mind into a star, a sun, a piercing eye of God. But whenever the Deity dwelleth within us, he will be unfelt and a stranger to us till we abandon ourselves to the duties and aspirations which we feel to be his voice, till we renounce ourselves and unhesitatingly precipitate our life on the persuasion of our disinterested affections. While his spirit "bloweth where it listeth," yet certain it is that they only who do his will shall ever feel his power.—James Martineau.

*S.S. Lesson, August 15, 1909. Acts 19: 8-20. Commit to memory vs. 19, 20. Study Acts 18: 23 to 19: 22. Golden Text—The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.—Acts 10:17.