

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL

## The Quiet Hour

YOUNG  
PEOPLE

## PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.\*

By Rev. J. W. McMillan, M.A.

John departed (Rev. Ver.), v. 13. There used to be kept in the menagerie of the Residency of Calcutta a royal Bengal tiger. He was a splendid and lordly animal, of the largest size and the most brilliant stripes. But he was in deeper terror of a mouse. Though no keeper would dare enter his cage, the moment a mouse ran across his floor, the huge beast cowered in a corner whining and trembling with fear. He could have crushed his enemy with a stroke of his paw, had he possessed the courage. Just as foolish and unreasonable is any cowardice in doing the work of God. He never sends a soldier to warfare at his own charges. He never risks a follower. Wherever the divine ord. may send us, we may be sure that the divine protection attends us. God cares for His own.

Paul stood up, v. 16. Do you remember the story of the heroic steersman on Lake Erie who held the wheel of the blazing ship while she rushed towards the shore? He stood in the midst of the fire and smoke. The frightened passengers, crowded at the stern, hoping against hope that the vessel might win the desperate race and land them before the flames destroyed them, could hear his voice answering the captain's orders. "Hold her due east," shouted the captain. "Aye, aye, sir," called John Maynard from the wheel. "Turn her a point south," said the captain. "Aye, aye, sir," rang the resolute reply. That is the answer of a true man to the commands of duty. John Maynard belongs to the apostolical succession of those who, like the apostles, are ready for any thing which they ought to do.

Remission of sins (Rev. Ver.), v. 38. A soldier in the Woolwich barracks, who was an incorrigible offender, upon whom every sort of punishment had been tried in vain, was again brought up for punishment. He had nothing to say, except that he was sorry. The colonel concluded a few appropriate remarks by saying: "We have resolved to forgive you." The sentence was so new, that the soldier broke down at once. He was never after known to be guilty of a fault. Mercy triumphed where severity had failed. So God makes His appeal to the deepest gratitude of our natures. Shall we not respond?

Urged, to continue (Rev. Ver.), v. 43. Perseverance is the momentum of all the graces. It is harder than any other virtue to achieve. Almost everybody can start at almost anything, but few can continue. An Indian who had become a Christian and who had grown fond of hymn singing, brought to the missionary a hymn which he had himself composed. The missionary found it to be of common metre, and of very simple composition. Here it is:—

"Go on, go on, go on, go on.

Go on, go on, go on.

Go on, go on, go on, go on.

Go on, go on, go on."

That is a hymn which is better practised than sung.

We turn to the Gentiles, v. 46. When Edison first invented the incandescent light, he made the film of platinum. The lamp burned and shone excellently, but it cost too much. Platinum is a proud metal, which thinks itself better than gold. It hides itself in distant mountains, and will not come forth ex-

cept at great expense and trouble. It was necessary to find something that did not think so highly of itself. Edison found it in the fibre of the bamboo, those long thin poles of which the swamps of the south are full, and some of which are sold for boys' fishing poles in Canada. So the Jews, who were too proud to accept the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, saw the Gentiles take their place in the kingdom. So Asia saw Europe. So parts of Europe saw other, and less favored, parts preferred before them. So every proud heart will see some humbler heart precede it. The last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT MIRACLES

Skepticism constantly assails the miracles of the Bible, declares them to be impossible, and holds them up to derision. No miracles are more wonderful than those performed by our Lord Jesus Christ. He healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, fed thousands of hungry men and women by increasing a few loaves and fishes, cast out devils, and raised the dead. Is not the manner in which these miracles are recorded a proof of irresistible power and that they really occurred? Consider such a sentence as this:—"They brought to him the lame, the halt, the blind, and those that were sick of divers diseases, and many that were possessed with devils, and he healed them all." Such an artless statement of such wonderful deeds is to be found, if we remember correctly, more than twenty times in the gospels. Is it possible to conceive of an impostor who could content himself with such an announcement? If a writer was drawing upon his imagination, if he was fabricating an account to increase the fame of his Master, would he, could he stop with so simple so general an account? Is there an instance anywhere of falsifying in this fashion? Is it human to manufacture such a record? Would not an impostor tell the number, and magnify the number of the cases? Would he not describe the severity, the hopelessness of their sickness? Would he not draw a picture of the suffering man, accompanied by his dependent family, brought by his anxious and sorrowing, yet hopeful friends? Would he not tell what years of torturing pain the invalid had endured, how vainly he had sought help from man, what a sum he had spent endeavoring to obtain relief? Is it conceivable that, to use plain words, a liar could have contented himself with saying, "They brought the lame, the halt, and the blind, and he healed them all?" Is not the conclusion irresistible that these miracles were actually wrought, that they were a common occurrence? But is there not also another conclusion just as irresistible, namely, that the writers of such an account were controlled by a superhuman agency, were controlled by the all-wise God described in the Scriptures? If they were not, how was it that they wrote nothing more? How was it that being such men as we know they were, they did not give a more particular, detailed statement? Did ever such men or any men content themselves with so plain, so unadorned a statement of such transactions? The miracles were wrought. The evangelists wrote what they had seen. Their pens were guided and controlled by God. The books containing such records are true, and are the inspired Word of God.—Christian Intelligencer.

Blessed be the man who finds his life-work early and does it! Cuyler.

## LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

By Rev. James Rose, D.D.

Reading.—The service in the Jewish synagogue was somewhat like that of the Episcopal Church of to-day. Prayers were read in the tongue of the country by the "angel" of the congregation. The sacred roll of the Law was handed from the ark to the reader, by the sexton, and the lessons in a fixed order were read in Hebrew, one from the Law and one from the Prophets. After each verse of Hebrew a translation or paraphrase of it into the vernacular was made by the reader himself, or by the interpreter who stood behind him. Usually the Septuagint (Greek) version was used, because it was generally understood. At this point an expository discourse, or one on the practical bearings of the lesson, was usually delivered by an elder of the synagogue, or by some visiting teacher. The migratory character of the Jews of the Dispersion made them very attentive to strangers, and ready to profit by their presence. On this occasion some rumor of the visitors had reached the elders, who therefore sent the sexton to ask them to speak. After the sermon was ended, there was an enumeration of the woes of the chosen people, and the service was closed with a benediction and a solemn and united "Amen."

## A MARVELOUS CHANGE.

"Behold, I make all things new." There is no human power so enviable as that whereby a man is able out of worn-out materials to construct a new machine, or convenience or work of art; the more enviable according to the contrast between the inadequacy of the means and the beauty and perfection of the result. We call this power genius, and admire it as the supreme manifestation of human faculty. But the world can show nowhere else another Christ who has made all things new to the soul itself, because the soul itself is created anew. Suddenly a man who has been sleeping in indifference, or blinded by passion, and who has been feeling the sadness and somberness and dreariness of everything, wakes up to a new conception of everything, because Jesus has touched his heart. There is nothing more wonderful than this in the universe. Were it less frequent it would be more marvelous in our eyes. It is the miracle of miracles.

## A PRAYER.

Father of our hearts, the sense of need within us is greater than our power of utterance. Be not far from us, but as we grope after Thee in the darkness, wilt Thou let us feel the strong clasp of Thy hand holding ours. Oh, God, we are weak, but Thou art mighty. Our weakness makes us ashamed to lift up our eyes to Thee; and yet the knowledge of Thy love and pity gives us courage. Help us to stop looking into our own hearts, and to look away to Thee. Help us to stop feeling after our motives, and to use all our energies in doing Thy will. Keep us from allowing any earthly disappointment or adversity to shake our hold upon Thee. Keep us from allowing any earthly affection or tie to shadow our love for Thee. Wilt Thou purify every love of our hearts, and make holy every common act of every day. In the dear name of The Son, our Saviour. Amen.—Philadelphia Westminster.

He that is unwilling to serve God in pain and patience is unworthy of so good a Master.

\* S.S. Lesson, May 9, 1909.—Acts 13: 13-16, 38-49. Commil to memory vs. 38, 39. Study Acts 13: 13-52. Golden Text: The word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.—Acts 13: 49.