

SUNDAY  
SCHOOL

## The Quiet Hour

YOUNG  
PEOPLEPAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY  
JOURNEY—ATHENS.\*

By Rev. C. MacKinnon, D.D.

Mars' hill, v. 22.—Some engineers were laying out a beautiful park in a great city, when their survey was checked by an immense heap of rock. What were they to do with it? Thousands of dollars would be required for its removal. In the midst of the discussion a lady walked up and observed: "I will tell you what to do with these rocks. Plant honeysuckles and vines about them." This was done, and now the most lovely and fragrant place in all the park is where these rocks stand. Mars' Hill was once the seat of Pagan discussions, but Paul twined around it the flowers of Christian faith and hope. Luther would not let the devil have all the best music, but converted the best tunes into sacred melodies. Let us try to win all we can for our Lord. Let all our studies, all our thoughts, all our plans be guided by His Spirit, that the glory of the Lord may fill the whole earth.

The Unknown God, v. 23.—A poor woman was in great distress because she could not pay her rent. She was expecting the officer to seize her goods. A knock came to the door, and she would not answer it. She pretended to be away from home. The knock was repeated at the back door, the windows were rapped; it was all in vain. The poor woman would make no response, for she said, "They are after my goods and I will not let them in." It was no officer of the law, however, that stood without, but the pastor of her church, who had heard of her misfortune and who had been at pains to collect money to pay her rent and had come to place it in her hands. She did not take means to learn who was at the door, and suffered through her ignorance. If sinners only knew the nature of Him who gently knocks at the doors of their hearts, do you think they would bar Him out one moment longer? Their ignorance leads them to a fatal mistake. He who stands without is a Saviour, and His hands are laden with blessings.

He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, v. 25.—The great transatlantic liner weighs anchor, and moves out into the ocean. One day is clear, the next cloudy; one day calm, the next stormy; one day the passengers are sick, the next they are well. The skies and the sea and the deck are full of changes. But away down underneath the grand old ship is her mighty propeller, pushing her right on in sunlight or gloom, in calm or storm, amid sickness or health. Such is the Christian life, bright or dark, joyful or sad, sick or well; but underneath is the everlasting power of God that bears the Christian safely towards the eternal shores. What a comfort to know that no accident can ever disturb the sure and steady movement of that power!

For we are also his offspring, v. 28. "For good ye are and bad, and like to coins  
Some true, some light, but every one of you  
Stamped with the image of the King." It is true of every one of us that we bear upon us the image of God. Marred and defaced that image may have become through our sin and folly, but it is never destroyed, and His grace

can make it shine out again as clear and bright as the face of a coin fresh from the mint.

Judge the world, v. 31.—What a brilliant scene a large modern hotel makes when it is all alight in the evening! What vast amount of electricity must be daily consumed in it! Day after day, night after night, some rooms burn a hundred lights, some ten, some one. How can an exact account be ever kept of the consumption of all that electric current? The proprietor leads you beneath a double stairway. He lights a candle and holds it to the face of the meter. "Look," he says, "that meter indicates precisely how much electricity has passed through this meter in the last three months. There is the record for you!" Yes, every atom of energy that passed along these hundreds of wires has been registered, and every thought, plan, imagination, word or deed in the complex life of a boy or girl is being registered also. Not an oath, a lie, a slander, or an evil suggestion but has left its legible and indelible mark; and God shall "judge the world!"

Some mocked, v. 32.—It is a sad thing when any one is so devoid of reverence as to make religion the subject of a joke. It is a dangerous thing as well. On one section of an express train was a young man whose mind was always running on some frivolity. Friends warned him, but he said, "I want a joke on the conductor." He pulled the cord, the brakes went on immediately and the train came to a standstill in a sharp curve. The joker began to laugh as the trainmen hurried about to find the cause of the stoppage. But the laugh was of short duration, for the second section of the train, running on a special permit, and imagining that the first section was far in advance, came bounding round the curve behind it and caused a wreckage where many valuable lives were lost. It was all meant to be a huge joke. He thought what a joke it would be on the conductor to pull the air brakes cord. But there are sports that kill—none more so than those which foolishly make God the butt of their mockery. Sad tragedies are not far distant, when men delight in a joke at the expense of morality or religion. Whatever we are, let us always be reverent.

## A LIVING HOPE.

By Amos R. Wells.

I like the sweet, old-fashioned phrase,  
"A living hope in Christ;"  
How many salpts of older days  
It gloriously sufficed!

"A living hope"—why, then it breathes,  
And fashions kindly speech;  
With cheery song its life enweathes,  
With courage dares to teach.

"A living hope"—why, then it walks,  
With steady step and swift,  
Where beggars crouch and evil stalks,  
And brings the needed gift.

"A living hope"—it labors then,  
It laughs, and, pitying, sighs:  
It lifts the life of earthly men,  
It lives—and never dies.

The world has lived with human beings in it a good many hundred years now, and the faithful wife and mother still ranks first among women. All other grades from her rank downward.

Use well the moment; what the hour  
Brings for thy use is in thy power,  
But what thou best can understand  
Best claims the service of thy hand.  
—Goethe.

Do not refrain from doing your own little because you can not do the much of some one else.

## LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

Market.—"In all the larger Greek cities the agora, or market square, was a place of assembly for traffic and for the transaction of public business. In Homer's day it was enclosed with large stones sunk into the earth, and provided with stone seats for the chiefs. In later times it grew into a magnificent structure, an open square surrounded with statues, altars, temples, and other buildings for the administration of justice and for market purposes. It was the centre of political and commercial intercourse and of religious life, answering to the gateway of the Jewish city. Here were celebrated the first festive games, here centred the great highways of the city, here began the great religious processions, here the great public assemblies of the citizens took place, here the different sorts of merchandise were gathered, partly in permanent shops and partly in temporary booths, and here was the centre of social and fashionable resort. During the market hours the agora was a place of general resort; it was also frequented in the afternoon and evening, somewhat in the manner of our public parks to-day, except that, unlike the latter, the ancient agora was the resort of the wealthy and the cultured, and it was deemed discreditable not to be seen there. Socrates habitually frequented it for the purpose of conversation and instruction." (Abbott.)

## FAMILY PRAYERS.

There is one mark of a household in which God is known or loved, which is too often wanting in our day—I mean the practice of family prayer. Depend upon it the worth of a practice of that kind can only be measured by its effects during a long period of time, and family prayers, though only occupying a few minutes, do make a difference to any household at the end of a year. How, indeed, can it be otherwise when each morning, and perhaps each evening, too, all the members of the family, the old and the young, the parents and the children, the master and the servants, meet on a footing of perfect equality before the Eternal, in whose presence each is as nothing, or less than nothing, yet to whom each is so infinitely dear that He has redeemed by His blood each and all of them? How must not the bad spirits that are enemies of pure and bright family life flee away—the spirits of envy and pride and untruthfulness and sloth, and the whole tribe of evil thoughts, and make way for His gracious presence in the hearts of old and young alike, who, as He brings us, one by one, nearer to the true end of our existence, so does He and He alone, make us to be "of one mind in a house." Here within the narrow presence of each home circle, and hereafter in that countless family of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues, which shall dwell with Him, the Universal Parent of all eternity.—Canon Liddon.

When boiling sweet corn to serve on the cob, leave just a few of the inner husks on the ear when boiling. It will be sweeter and keep warm longer.

Sweetness that never sours will do more to smooth one's pathway through the world than great accumulation of wealth.

The blessing of a house is goodness. The honor of a house is hospitality. The ornament of a house is cleanliness. The happiness of a house is contentment.

\* S.S. Lesson—"Paul's Second Missionary Journey—Athens. July 25, 1909: Acts 17: 22-34. Commit to memory v. 23. Study Acts 17: 16-34. Golden Text—God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.—John 4: 24.