

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

JESUS THE ENTERTAINER.

By Professor James Stalker, D.D.

The words "he withdrew" in the first verse of this lesson are characteristic of a new stage of the ministry which opens here and goes on to the end of the twentieth chapter; for, in this new period, he avoided those places over which he had ranged with freedom in earlier months and, retiring to distant or solitary parts, devoted himself to instructing the Twelve, as if realizing how soon the carrying forward of his cause would be left in their hands.

The Unwearied Worker.—The blow of the Baptist's death had fallen heavily on his spirit, and at the same time, it would appear, the Twelve returned from their first missionary tour with much to confide to him; so that he felt the need of rest and sailed away with his disciples to the less frequented shores of the lake, landing, it would seem, to the east of Bethsaida, which stood on the east bank of the Jordan at the point where it enters the lake. But the purpose of obtaining solitude was defeated by the multitude, who, seeing the boat depart, hastened round the north curve of the lake and were waiting on the shore when the party in the boat disembarked. Jesus was like a doctor or a minister who, coming home from a day's exhausting toil with the purpose of spending the evening in the family circle or in the perusal of some fascinating volume, finds, on arriving inside his door, a message calling him to some case of distress in a distant part of the parish. Yet he never hesitated for a moment, but, forgetting his fatigue and postponing his conference with the Twelve, he at once set to work to heal all who had need of healing. He was not irritated by the intruders, but moved with compassion.

The Anxious Disciples.—So absorbed did Jesus become with the work on hand that the hour for food passed without being observed, and the signs of the approaching evening began to show themselves without his taking any notice. But the Twelve were less absorbed, and they ventured to come and suggest to him the necessity of breaking up the meeting, in order that the multitude might go and procure themselves food. But, in the glow of happy emotion, he replied with a smile, "They need not depart; give ye them to eat." The Twelve were in need of a lesson themselves about this very subject of food; or they would be in need of it soon, when they were left without worldly means and with the task of evangelizing the world on their hands. Meantime the words of their Master set them calculating, so that they fully realized how stupendous was that which he suggested and how utterly beyond their capacities. They examined all there was at their disposal; and it turned out that they had only a single loaf and not so much as half a fish for every thousand men, not to mention the women and children. But they were to learn that a little in his hands becomes a great store, poverty becomes wealth, and weakness strength.

Filling the Hungry with Good Things.—With his love of order, Jesus had his guests arranged in companies, which to one eye that saw them, variegated with the gay colors of Oriental clothing, suggested flowerbeds; and the green grass with which the place abounded furnished a delicious couch to repose upon. Did the food multiply as it passed from hand to hand? or was it in the hands of Jesus that the miracle took place? If the latter was the case, then he must have continued distributing all the time, though the disciples helped him. By blessing what they were about to receive he gave his sanction to the practice of grace before meals, by which we are reminded that our own food also comes from God, though in a less direct way. It must have been a happy gathering; and the Giver of the feast was the happiest of all, as a host ought to be among his guests. In this miracle and in the first of all

the miracles, when he made the water wine, he appears in a very attractive aspect; and it is the same in which he appears down through all the generations, as, at his own table, he says to his friends, "Eat, friends, drink; yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." Perhaps the guests on this occasion were less filled with astonishment than might be supposed; for, great as the miracle was, there was about it much that was homely and natural. Had Jesus been a sensational thaumaturgist, or had his biographers been inventors of marvels, the scene would have been very different—a banquet served by angels in vessels of gold, wine sparkling in jeweled chalices, and the air filled with heavenly music. But barley bread and common fish! And how homely is the next touch, "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost." He who could create food on such a scale orders the fragments to be saved for future use. Never was there such a stupendous lesson in frugality. But frugality is twin-sister to liberality. Make as much as you can; save as much as you can; give as much as you can.

The Contrast of the Two Miracles.—All sorts of attempts have been made to invalidate this miracle; but it is narrated by all four Evangelists. Certain writers assume the second miracle to be only the first in a slightly altered guise; but it differs in many respects—number fed, number of loaves, of fishes, of baskets taken up, Greek name for baskets, time the multitude had been with Jesus—and, in more than one of the Gospels, Jesus himself subsequently, in reproving the disciples for their unbelief, refers to each miracle separately (Matt. 16: 9, 10; Mark 8: 19, 20).

Aberdeen, Scotland.

A LESSON IN MECHANICS.

Having a knowledge of structural work one soon learns not only to respect that kind of work, but also the men who do it; and following on this, as by a natural process, one gains a respect for life as the highest form of structural work. When I first went to Australia I thought I knew a great deal, for the university can certainly turn out men who can pass examinations; but it was not till I had put up a workshop in my home and made myself familiar with one or two trades that I felt that I had completed my apprenticeship to life. I learned to respect the work and the workman, and more especially the beautiful work of the Creator. When I gained proficiency at the bench I had to give up shooting, because of the great respect I had developed for that wonderful piece of machinery—a bird on the wing. My feelings of pride at my skill in shooting a flying bird were changed into feelings of shame as the little creature lay at my feet—the work of its Creator ruthlessly destroyed. I felt that I had no right to destroy what I could not put together again.—Sir John Cockburn.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS.

Mon.—The test of sacrifice (Matt. 20: 25-28).

Tues.—The test of righteousness (Isa. 58: 1-11).

Wed.—The test of blessing (Num. 24: 3-9).

Thurs.—The test of obedience (Isa. 1: 1-9).

Fri.—The test of justice (Zeph. 3: 1-7; Mic. 2: 1-3).

Sat.—The test of priesthood (1 Pet. 2: 9, 10; Rev. 1: 5, 6).

*Y.P. Topic, Sunday, May 29, 1910—Is ours a Christian nation? (Psa. 33: 8-22).

MARK TWAIN'S FUNERAL.

The Brick Presbyterian Church, at Fifth avenue and Thirty-seventh St., of this city, was last week the scene of one of the most remarkable funerals New York has ever seen. More than 2,000 people went in personal sorrow to pay their last tribute to a cherished friend. This throng was of all creeds, races and conditions. The man of millions touched elbows with the outcast, the woman of fashion held the child of the tenements nearer for a closer view, the author and the artisan, the laborer and the scholar, filed past and with bowed heads went from the bier of him who had carried into their lives light and cheer. Arrangements had been made for services at three o'clock Saturday afternoon, and an hour before that time the church was filled by those who waited to enter the church. The coffin had been taken directly from the train and placed at the foot of the pulpit, where it remained until its removal to its final resting place. First to be admitted to the church were many of the close friends of Mr. Clemens, authors, publishers, educators, financiers, men and women prominent in the world of society and fashion, and then when the doors were opened to the general public the seats at the rear and the side and the empty galleries were immediately filled to overflowing. Never was man more universally beloved or more sincerely mourned than was Mark Twain. It was a funeral devoid of convention and of pomp. Through the lofty church could be heard the strains of Chopin's Funeral March as the clergy took their places on the platform. As the low notes vibrated through the church many could be seen weeping. It was Mr. Clemens' wish that the funeral service be simple, and in accordance with his known wishes no pallbearers were selected or specially designated.

The service was conducted by the Rev. Dr. Henry Van Dyke, minister in charge of the Brick Presbyterian church, and also professor of English literature at Princeton University. He read a few simple passages of Scripture, including the comforting verses of the Twenty-third Psalm. He followed with a brief and simple address, in which he spoke of the kindly nature and the noble soul of him who has now passed on to his reward. "It is fitting," said the clergyman, "that the friends of Samuel L. Clemens, whom all the world knew as Mark Twain, should meet for a few moments in this quiet place and look upon his face in kindness and gratitude before his body is carried to rest in God's Acre beside those whom he 'loved long since and lost awhile.' This house is consecrated in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to the religion of simple faith and sincere love. Our friend who has left us would sympathize with this service. In its true spirit and purpose, which is to help us to better, truer, kinder thoughts in the presence of life's mysteries, to brave and more cheerful conduct under the pressure of life's sorrow, and to a quiet and peaceable resignation to the will and wisdom of the unseen Ruler of life's events. This is not the place nor the time for an eulogy of the famous writer, the honored and representative American. Here and now we are all of us simply human. The touch of grief is upon us. We are reminded of the frailty of mortal flesh, the many burdens and trials of humanity, and the brevity of our way upon earth. We think of Mark Twain not as the celebrity, but as the man whom we knew and loved. We remember the realities which made his life worth while; the strong and natural manhood that was in him; the depth and tenderness of his affections; his laughing enmity of all shame and pretenses his long and faithful witness to