

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

The Quiet Hour

YOUNG
PEOPLE

THE LAME MAN HEALED.*

(By Rev. P. M. Macdonald, B.D.)

At the hour of prayer, v. 1. In some old cathedrals in Europe, they have finely constructed organs, played by master musicians. At twilight these organists play out the day in wonderful strains, and the people gather every evening to listen and weep, as old memories are stirred by the music and cares and worries aided to rest by its charm. When the tones of the instrument are hushed, and silence and dark fill the great church, the people move slowly out to their homes. But with the next day's end, there is the same hunger and the same need for the ministry of the music, and they come to listen again and again. So it is with prayer to God. It is a need new with every rising and setting sun, if we are to live pure and strong lives; and happy are they who early learn the power that comes from daily prayer.

The gate, called Beautiful, v. 2. The "beautiful gate" of the gospel is very different from the "Beautiful Gate" of the Jewish temple, at which Peter and John found the poor cripple. On the pillars at either side of that gate were inscribed the words, "Let no stranger pass beyond this on pain of death." Entrance into the inner sanctuary was limited to Jews alone. But the gospel flings wide open its gate to admit people of every race and country under heaven. All comers are welcome to enjoy the riches of heavenly grace.

Took him by the right hand, v. 7. In the public ward of a hospital, lay a man who had no friends. To a careless visitor there was nothing attractive in the wearied face and the wasted hands resting on the counterpane. But, if one looked closely, there was an eager and hungry look in the invalid's eyes. On the table beside him were fruit and flowers, left by a hurried, professional caller, but he never touched them. He ate little, and always seemed satisfied with his food. But the suppliant look never left his eyes. One day a lover of men, a big-hearted, warm-handed man, came into the ward. His eyes met the eyes of the invalid and he caught their appeal. Walking across the room, the visitor took both the hands of the bedridden one in his, and said, "I have come to sit a while with you." The look of unrest left the sick one's eyes, as he said, "Thank you, sir, it is not fruit, nor flowers, nor words, I need; but the touch of a brother's hand. I have seen better days but I am lonely now."

Entered with them into the temple, v. 8. In the dark days of American slavery, a philanthropist was passing a market where slaves were being auctioned to the highest bidder. A young woman was "put up," and the philanthropist bid her in at a large sum. When he received his purchase, he said, "You are free now to go where you please; here is the receipt that will show you belong to no man. Try to be good," and the purchaser turned to go away. With a cry and a sob, the poor redeemed slave fell on her knees before her deliverer, vowing that she would never leave him: "I am yours for life; you bought me free, and I cannot work for any other." This is what happens when honest, true souls perceive what God has

S. S. Lesson, January 24, 1909—Acts 3 : 1-16. Commit to memory vs. 9, 10. Study Acts 3 : 1-26. Golden Text—And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know.—Acts 3 : 16.

done for them in Jesus Christ's work and death. They boldly confess Him and faithfully serve Him, out of the gratitude that glows with an ever increasing flame in their hearts.

Walking, and leaping, and praising God, v. 8. Too often we are content merely to indulge in the "walking and leaping," and forget to praise God. We are enthusiastic over the results of God's working, but forget the Cause. We rejoice in our daily bread, our raiment, our homes, our friends, our health. Do we remember to acknowledge the goodness of the Giver of all these good things? One whose faith in God was strong, had a succession of sore trials sweep over his life. His friends feared the effect of these upon him, for his had been a cloudlessly happy life. To a group of these, who came to see him in his grief, he said, "I am comforted today, as I have been all my life, by these lines: 'Embosomed deep in Thy dear love,

Held in Thy law I stand;
Thy hand in all things I behold,
And all things in Thy hand;
Thou leadest me through unthought ways
And turnest my mourning into praise.'"

A WASTED WAY.

A wasted day! no song of praise
Wells up from the depths of grateful heart,
Yet others long to hear our lays,
The souls that dwell in gloom apart.

A wasted day! no kindly deed;
No cup of water, cool and sweet,
We bear to other souls in need,
Nor lead some pilgrim's straying feet.

A wasted day! no victory won,
The sword lies idle in its sheath,
If deeds of valor be undone,
How can we wear the conqueror's wreath?

A wasted day! Forbid it, Lord!
Glad service would we render thee,
To mourners speak a cheering word,
Bless thou the deed, though small it be.

Time is too short for wasted days,
Then let us leave no task undone,
Nor fail to lift to thee our praise,
For by Thy help the goal is won.

—C. Louise Bell, in Christian Work.

BACK TO GOD'S WORD.

It is the help which inspires self-help which is a living force in life. Amid the multitude of helps in the Sabbath-schools of to-day is there no danger that the scholar will fall in self-help? To one line of thought we call attention, and chiefly by illustration. In the Sabbath-school of long ago, when we had few helps, the committing to memory of scripture and of hymns was the chief thing with the scholar. How many scholars in the Sabbath school of to-day commit even the few verses of the lesson? How many teachers and superintendents emphasize this as of prime moment? How many scholars—teachers possibly—go to school without the preparation needed to make the half hour given to teaching helpful and profitable to either teacher or scholar? The Sabbath school largely fails of its own mission because scripture is not committed to memory as it should be. Even the pulpit sometimes fails of the abundant scriptural lessons, the text in some cases being the only crumb that falls from the rich granary of God's Word.—Lutheran Evangelist.

LIGHT FROM THE EAST.

(By Rev. James Ross, D.D.)

Hour of Prayer—The morning sacrifice at nine o'clock, and the evening sacrifice at three, were the fixed hours of Jewish prayer, to which many added the noon hour. As there were no clocks or watches in those days, there was no doubt some public method employed for calling the people to prayer. At least that is the custom among the Mohammedans today. Attached to every place of worship there are one or more tall round towers, with a winding stair on the inside and a balcony round the tower near the top. The muezzin climbs to the balcony and calls the faithful to prayer in long, slowly drawn out, and yet sharp, clear and penetrating, tenor Arabic, which reverberates away over the roofs of the houses and lingers on the ear with a pleasing insistence: "God is great. I testify that there is no God but Allah and Mohammed is the prophet of God. Come to prayer." Each part of this formula is repeated by itself several times. This call is made five times every day, in the morning at daybreak, just after noon when the sun begins to decline, in the afternoon, midway between noon and nightfall, a few minutes after sunset and at nightfall, when evening has shut in, about an hour and a half after sunset.

FROM A PASTOR'S PRAYERS.

Heavenly Father, give us grace to note thy little gifts. There are so many of them; and the stream is so constant. What pleasures thou hast stored up for us, and dost pass over to us, in the flowers, the sunshine, the morning breeze, the pleasures of the table, of books, of pictures of sleep and waking, of friendly greetings, of happy relations with our fellows! Not a moment passes without its ministries from thee, gently dropping into our else dreary lives. Give us grace to count our blessings, and not our vexations. Let the satisfaction and joy of thankful spirit possess us. Keep us from discrediting thy kind providence by our looks and whining speech. So fill us with thine own great contentment, Lord Jesus, that we cannot but generate sunshine wherever we walk, and thus bring cheer to the disheartened. . . . Even our smallest joys and pleasures, Lord, we would have and use for the benefit of others, not of self. . . . Let there be nothing narrow or petty in our lives, our thoughts, our feelings; nothing mean; nothing so untrue to facts as a sad heart and gloomy mien; nothing so unworthy as a spirit perpetually discontented and uneasy. Thou hast invited us to rest and peace and joy; we would take thee at thy word, and by thy grace would so live that our very looks, our tone of voice, our constant behavior, shall speak thy praise and prove a lure to all we meet, to draw them to thee.

He has the largest life who lives in the lives of the largest number of people.

God demands an account of the past, that we must render hereafter. He demands an improvement of the present, and this we must render now.—W. Joy.

We have little conception of the soul's joy, or capacities for joy, till we see it established in God. The Christian soul is one that has come to God and rests in the peace of God. It dares to call him Father without any sense of daring in doing it.—H. Bushnell.