

THE PASCHAL FEAST.

BY SUSAN COOLIDGE.

In travelling guise they held the Paschal Feast
In olden days.

With loins girt round, and shoes on feet,
And staves in hand, they met and shared the
meat,
And gave God praise.

No lingering at the banquet, each man took
His portion due,
And swiftly hid him forth, even as did
His fathers, worn slaves of the pyramid,
Zion in view.

A single morsel might suffice for some,
Snatched as they went;
On promise and on type their souls were fed,
So, though their bodies lacked a little bread,
They were content.

And even thus, my soul, be it with thee,
This Easter Day.

With loins girt round, and staff in hand,
As one made ready for the Promised Land,
Who may not stay;

Come, then. The feast is spread which angels
still

Desire to taste;
Take thou thy crumb, nor wait for farther good,
To bask and batten on immortal food,
But rise in haste;

And get thee forth to the hard trodden way,
The toil and tire,
The wilderness with many thorns beset,
O'er which the cloudy pillar hovers yet,
The guiding fire.

The Promised Land it beckons, fair and far,
Beyond thy view.

And though the foe be fierce, and travail long,
The Lord shall hold thee up, and keep thee strong,
And guide thee through.

Then, at the upper table, safely set
Thou mayst abide
In full security and rest at last,
With all the thirst and hunger of the past
Quite satisfied.

—Sunday-School Times.

CONVERTED CHILDREN.

The Rev. D. W. Hurlbut, of Milwaukee, says:—Objections aside, what can be said in favor of early conversions? Let us remember that Solomon closed up his review of life in the words: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Let us hear the promise: "Those that seek me early shall find me," and Christ's words: "Yea, did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" Again: "Except ye be converted and become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," and again, in the words of the text, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." Let us remember that beautiful record in the Old Testament of the child Samuel, who was given in answer to prayer, whose mother faithfully stayed at home that she might care for the little one until he was three years old and then brought him up to the temple and "lent him to the Lord;" she went home without her baby boy, and "Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child." And while he was yet a child in the silent watches of the night he heard a voice saying, "Samuel." He thought it was the voice of the high priest Eli who called him; but when the voice came the fourth time Samuel knew that it was the voice of the Lord and said; "Speak, for thy servant heareth." If Samuel could be thus consecrated in infancy and lent to the Lord in babyhood, why may not our little ones be so trained and so fully consecrated to Christ that they shall not be able to remember when they did not love the service of God? Let us remember Timothy, who Paul declares had from a child known the holy Scriptures, whose mother Eunice and grandmother Lois Paul commends so highly for their unfeigned faith. Let us remember that there were pious children among the early Christians. Polycarp, who died a martyr at the age of ninety-five, declares that he had served God eighty-six years, making him nine years old at the time of his conversion. Justin Martyr testifies of many who were considered disciples very young and continued uncorrupted all their lives.

In modern times we have Baxter, who declared that he did not remember the time when he did not love God and all that is good. President Edwards was converted at seven; Dr. Watts at nine; and these are only a few among the scores of eminent

divines whose names might be mentioned in this connection. I am personally acquainted with a lady who is now the wife of a Baptist minister, who was converted and united with a Baptist church when but seven years of age. She was opposed for a time by her father who was himself deacon of the church; but patiently she persevered until she obtained his consent and was baptized. She has ever been a leader among Christian workers. I was personally acquainted with Dr. Tolhurst who labored as a minister for many years in Northern Ohio. He was converted and united with the church at seven years of age. Rev. H. O. Rowlands, pastor of the Baptist church at Elgin, Ill., said: "Last winter in an afternoon meeting of the old members of my church there were thirty-seven present. They were all pillars and had been for scores of years. All but two of them had united with the church before they were fifteen years old." Of the 120 whom it has been my privilege to baptize, 12 were over 40 years of age; 14 were between the ages of 30 and 40; 24 between the ages of 20 and 30; 28 between the ages of 15 and 20; 42 under the age of 15. That is, a little over one-third of those whom I have baptized were under fifteen years of age; nearly two-thirds were under twenty years of age. Of the number baptized one has been excluded from the church. He was thirty-six years old when he professed conversion. Mr. Spurgeon, some time since, made the remarkable statement that among those whom he had been obliged to exclude from church-fellowship out of a church of 2,700 members he had never been compelled to exclude a single one who was received while yet a child. I say remarkable, and yet not remarkable; for this corresponds with nearly all testimony on this subject. Says an experienced pastor: "I have reason to thank God for permitting me the joy of seeing scores of children coming to Christ. No more satisfactory cases of conversion have ever come under my observation than many children."

But why continue testimony and statistics upon this subject? What I have given is only the beginning of what I might give, but the story is one. If you cared to investigate, you would find that a large proportion of the ministry of our land were converted young—many of them quite young; and you would find that those people who constitute the sinew and back-bone of our churches were as a rule converted young. I have a feeling that if a boy passes sixteen years of age without giving his heart to Christ, the chances are against him. Then let us urge the children to "Remember their Creator in the days of their youth," and if a Sunday-school scholar, or one of our own precious offspring should give its heart to Christ, let us not be like Peter's friends who prayed for his deliverance and when their prayers were answered would not believe it and left Peter outside the gate. Let it not be said of us that Christ could do no mighty works in our midst because of our unbelief. Why do so many of our Sunday-school scholars graduate out of the Sunday-school into the world instead of into the church? One reason is because we do not expect their conversion, we teach them the precious truths of the Bible and do all in our power to make the truth plain; but the very tone of our teaching impresses the scholar that he is to adopt these truths and act upon his convictions, sometime in the future; not now. How many of us, in addition to faithful class-work, have taken our scholars one by one, alone, and urged calmly, prayerfully and earnestly, the desirability of an immediate decision for Christ. How many of us have done this with a firm faith in God that our prayers will be answered? Christ said, "All things are possible to him that believeth." This work is not a question of God's ability. It is a question of our faith.

THE ONLY WAY.

The Emperor had become greatly offended with the saintly bishop, Chrysostom. One day, violently enraged, he said in the presence of his courtiers, "I wish I could be avenged of that bishop!"

Each of his courtiers gave his opinion as to what would be the most effectual mode of punishing one to whom their master had so great an aversion.

The first said to the Emperor, "Banish

him to such a distance, that you will never see him again."

The second said, "No, rather confiscate all his property."

"Throw him into prison," said a third. "Are you not master of his life as well as his property?" said a fourth courtier. "Why do you not get rid of him by putting him to death?"

A fifth speaker, however, shrewdly said, "You are all under a great mistake; the Emperor may find a much better way of punishing this bishop. For this man, if you were to send him into exile, would take his God with him. If you confiscate his goods, you rob the poor, not him. If he were thrown into a dungeon, he would be all the better pleased, as he would then have time and solitude for communion with his God. Condemning him to death would be to open the gates of heaven to him. No, no! if the Emperor really wishes to be avenged on Chrysostom, he must force him to commit some sin: for he is a man who fears neither exile, poverty, chains nor death, being afraid of nothing but sin."—Ecc.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON V.—MAY 5.

THE COMMAND TO WATCH.—Mark 13:24-37.

COMMIT VERSES 35-37.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.—Matt. 13:33.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

To watch and pray is our privilege, our duty, our safety.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Mark 13: 13-37.

T. Matt. 24: 29-51.

W. Luke 21: 25-36.

Th. Dan. 7: 13-28.

F. 1 Thess. 4: 16-18; 5: 1-11.

Sa. 2 Pet. 3: 3-18.

Su. Rev. 21: 1-5, 10-27.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

24. *Sun shall be darkened*: to be taken either (1) figuratively, representing great civil and social commotions, or (2) literally. It applies figuratively to the first two comings, and probably literally to the third. 25. *Powers in heaven*: if taken figuratively, "the invisible influences which rule human society"; if literally, "the solar system." 26. *In clouds*: as he went to heaven. (See Acts 1:9-11.) With spiritual and heavenly powers. *Great power and glory*: manifested in the establishment of his kingdom on the earth.—Schaff. 27. *Send his angels*: heavenly angels, the ministers, "angels of the churches" (Rev. 2:1), or any messengers and agencies of God (Ps. 104:4; Heb. 1:7, 11). *Gather his elect*: his chosen ones, his disciples; the establishment of one church; the heart-unity of the church. *From the four winds*: denoting the four quarters of the world; i. e., from every part. 30. *This generation*: to be taken (1) literally, and referring to the destruction of Jerusalem (see Mark 9:1), (2) in the sense of race or nation, meaning that the Jews should not cease as a distinct nation till the fulfillment of these things and Christ's kingdom have come.

SUBJECT: THE DUTY OF THE HOUR, TO WATCH AND PRAY.

QUESTIONS.

I. WATCH AND PRAY (v. 33).—What is it to watch? For what are we to watch? Against what things should we watch? What are some of the things which tend to make us careless and sleeping spiritually? Why is it necessary to pray as well as to watch? (Eph. 6:10-12.) Repeat some scripture exhortations about watching? (1 Pet. 4:7; 5:8; Rev. 3:3; 16:15; 1 Cor. 10:12; 16:13; Rom. 13:11; 1 Thess. 5:4-6; Heb. 2:1; 12:15.) Why is so much said in the Bible about watching?

II. BECAUSE OF DANGERS AND CHANGES (vs. 24, 25).—What time is referred to by "those days"? After what tribulation? What is signified by the darkened sun and moon, and the stars falling? (See Acts 2:16-21.) What do they mean if they refer to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem while some of the disciples were yet living? What if they refer to the millennium? What if to Christ's final coming. (2 Pet. 3:7-10.) What would remain unchanged amid all these changes? (v. 31.)

III. BECAUSE CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN (vs. 26-31).—What promise did Jesus make about his coming? What is meant by his coming? (See last lesson.) When was this prophecy fulfilled in part? (Mark 9:1; Acts 2:16-21; Matt. 16:26, 27.) What coming is still before us? (Matt. 6:10; Dan. 7:14; Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 25:31-46.) Meaning of verse 27? How were they to know when the coming was near? (vs. 28, 29.) When should it take place? (v. 30.) Meaning of "generation"?

IV. BECAUSE THE TIME IS UNKNOWN (vs. 32-37).—Who only knows the exact time of the coming? Show how this is a reason for watching and prayer. By what parable did Jesus enforce this truth? Relate it as told by Matthew. Who are the servants? What work is given to each of us? How are we to watch? (Matt. 24:46.) What will be the consequences of not watching? (Matt. 24:48-51.) How will praying help us to watch?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I. Dark and troublous times are sure to come before the kingdom of God can be established.

II. These should not discourage us, but bring comfort and faith, as signs of the coming.

III. Jesus Christ is surely coming in his kingdom, successful and triumphant.

IV. Nothing in the universe is so sure as the word of God, its promises and warnings.

LESSON VI.—MAY 12.

THE ANOINTING AT BETHANY.—Mark 14:1-6.

COMMIT VERSES 8-9.

GOLDEN TEXT.

She hath done what she could.—Mark 14:8.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The blessedness of making sacrifices for Christ.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Mark 14: 1-9.

T. Matt. 26: 1-13.

W. John 12: 1-8.

Th. Ps. 133: 1-3.

F. 1 Chron. 29: 9-28.

Sa. Ps. 41: 1-13.

Su. Ex. 35: 20-29; 36: 1-6.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. *Take him.... put him to death*: they would get him into their power, and keep him from teaching any more, but wait till after the feast before they killed him. 2. *An uproar*: there were multitudes there from Galilee attending the feast. They might be friends of Jesus. 3. *Simon the leper*: a relative of Lazarus, and probably cured by Jesus. 4. *Woman*: Mary the sister of Lazarus (not the one spoken of in Luke 7:36-50.) 5. *Box*: flask, with long neck. 6. *Ointment of spikenard*: a pound of it, says John. It was made of the spikenard, a plant of the valerian family, which grows in the East. 7. *Very precious*: worth 300 pence (a penny, denarius, = 15 cents), therefore worth \$45; but as a penny was the pay for a day's labor (Matt. 20:2), it would equal \$300 in our day. 8. *Poured it on his head*: and also his feet, and wiped them with her hair (John 12:3). 9. *And some*: Judas most of all (John 12:4). 10. *Given to the poor*: that was his pretence, but John says he was a thief. And he betrayed his master soon after for \$30. 11. *Good work*: it is good to express love. It leads to more giving to the poor. 12. *The poor, always*: as representatives of Christ, through kindness to whom we can show love to him. 13. *My body to the burning*: the anointing served this purpose whether Mary thought of it or not. 14. *A memorial*: not so much of her gift as of the love which prompted it.

SUBJECT: EXPRESSING OUR LOVE TO JESUS.

QUESTIONS.

I. THE GATHERING OF JESUS' ENEMIES (vs. 1, 2).—What great feast was near at hand? What were the chief priests doing while Jesus was talking with his disciples? Why did they wish to put him to death? (John 11:48.)

II. THE GATHERING OF JESUS' FRIENDS (v. 3).—When was this supper held? (John 12:1.) In what town? At whose house? Who were present? (John 12:1-3.) What great thing had Jesus done for them? Had he probably healed Simon also?

III. JESUS ANOINTED WITH THE PRECIOUS NARD (v. 3).—How did Martha show her regard for Jesus? (John 12:2.) How did Mary show her devotion to him? What is spikenard? How much was there in the alabaster flask? (John 12:3.) How much was it worth? (v. 5.) Where did she pour this nard? (v. 3.) John 12:3.) What further proof of devotion did she show? (John 12:3.)

IV. FAULT FOUND WITH THE ACT (vs. 4, 5).—Who found fault with Mary? Who was the leader in this murmuring? (John 12:4.) What was his motive? (John 12:6.) What great crime did he soon commit? (Mark 14:43, 44.) What pretence did he make? How did he get other disciples to join him? Is it easy and natural to find fault with others? Is it right?

V. JESUS DEFENDS MARY'S ACT (vs. 6-9).—What did Jesus say to the fault-finders? On what other occasion did Jesus praise Mary for doing what others condemned in her? (Luke 10:39-42.)

What was the FIRST DEFENCE? (v. 6).—Why is it good to express our love to Jesus? Are gifts of good value unless we show our love and regard? Can we show love except by making sacrifices of precious things? Does expressing love increase it? Do we need to express our love oftener to friends, parents, teachers, pastor? Do the poor and sick have special need of this?

What was the SECOND DEFENCE? (v. 7).—Does giving to Jesus lead us to give more to the poor around us? Is this one way we can show our love to him? (Matt. 25:40.)

What was the THIRD DEFENCE? (v. 8).—Can anything better be said of us than this? Was it as really acceptable as Martha's service? Did the dead have uses she did not expect?

What was the FOURTH DEFENCE? (v. 9).—What did Jesus promise? Would she have had this memorial if she had done the act for show? Has this act of hers helped many to do what they could? In what ways do you show your love to Jesus?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I. Affection desires to express itself by making sacrifices for the loved.

II. All need the sympathy of others, and to have it expressed.

III. Expressing our affection increases it.

LESSON CALENDAR.

(Second Quarter, 1889.)

1. Apr. 7.—The Triumphal Entry.—Mark 11:1-11.
2. Apr. 14.—The Rejected Son.—Mark 12:1-12.
3. Apr. 21.—The Two Great Commandments.—Mark 12:28-34.
4. Apr. 28.—Destruction of the Temple Foretold.—Mark 13:1-13.
5. May 5.—The Command to Watch.—Mark 13:24-37.
6. May 12.—The Anointing at Bethany.—Mark 14:1-9.
7. May 19.—The Lord's Supper.—Mark 14:12-26.
8. May 26.—Jesus betrayed.—Mark 14:43-51.
9. June 2.—Jesus before the Council.—Mark 14:55-65.
10. June 9.—Jesus before Pilate.—Mark 15:1-20.
11. June 16.—Jesus Crucified.—Mark 15:21-39.
12. June 23.—Jesus Risen.—Mark 16:1-13.
13. June 30.—Review, Missions, and Temperance.—1 Cor. 8:4-13.