

The Quiet Hour

For Dominion Presbyterians.

Review—June 25th.*

Before we leave for a while these studies in the Gospels we need to review the ground traversed during the past quarter. We have been called to consider the most important facts and the most sublime teaching. It has been our privilege to see Jesus in the deep places of His life, facing calmly the greatest conflicts and teaching His disciples to trust Him through the darkest hours. Such lessons as we have had cannot be summed up in a few sentences; indeed the most eloquent language cannot express their full meaning. Words few and sober are the most suitable, and for the rest devout silence.

The first lesson of the quarter suggests all the rest; it shows us both the lowliness and the glory of our Lord. There He stands by the grave of Lazarus, shedding tears, and then declaring "I am the Resurrection and the Life." Jesus Christ oppressed by human sorrow and then conquering it. The whole gospel is in that. Can we wonder that He drew out the sister's passionate love, so that she all unconsciously anointed Him for the burial. Her beautiful offering of love was the type or many to be called forth by His personal attraction. How many earnest women there are to-day working for Christ in tenderest ways, hoping to have that benediction, "She hath done what she could." And how strange it seems that in His presence men could quarrel for precedence, so that he needed to give a special example of humility. Was not His whole life such an example? Why should this be needed? He washes His disciples' feet in this most solemn hour, as a rebuke to them, and a lesson to us. And indeed, we need the lesson; our false pride and foolish rivalry are not easily subdued. The greatest attainment, a lowly mind, comes only to those who grasp the deep meaning of the Saviour's sacrifice. That act of lowliness on the eve of His great sacrifice is really a manifestation of its spirit. In the truest sense He made Himself a servant of all.

Then we had three lessons which show Him as at once the true teacher and the centre of His own teaching. He is the way, the truth and the life; by Him men come to the Father, and in Him they see the Father. For His disciples

He will prepare a mansion in the Father's house, but He will also prepare a mansion for the Father in their hearts. When He is gone another Comforter will come, but the object of faith and the centre of teaching is the same. The Paraclete will take of the things of Christ, and show these heavenly things in a new light to true believers. Thus the disciples who are facing the horror of a great loss are assured that they will not be "orphans"; what seems to be a loss will be transformed into an enrichment a spiritual gain. Then they will learn the meaning of one of the last and greatest of parables, that He is the vine and they are the branches. The union between the disciples and the Lord is a living one. His life is really to flow into them, making possible purity of heart, beauty of life, and strength of character. This is a great mystery, because it concerns the life that is deepest, divinest. If the expression and explanation is difficult, the fact is as well attested; to this all the saints bear witness. They gladly acknowledge that without the Christ they could do nothing. "I live, yet not I, Christ liveth in me."

These lessons, so full of highest truth, were followed by three that set forth the sufferings of our Lord Jesus betrayed and arrested, treated as a criminal, His friendship abused, His place of prayer desecrated. Gethsemane has its lessons not less than Calvary, for there the great submission was made, and the cup accepted from the Father's hand. From that sacred place of worship He went forth to meet it all, all the shame and sorrow of His mysterious destiny. He now appears as the rejected One. Rejected by Pilate, who in the person of Jesus rejects justice and chooses expediency instead of principle. Rejected by the Church in the action of its high priest, "He came to His own and His own received Him not." The Church, which professed to be longing for the Christ, could not recognize her King, and gave Him bigotry and bitter scorn instead of loving homage. What is the meaning of all this suffering? Why is it permitted? Surely that the justice and love of God may receive in the same moment its highest manifestation. Christ died once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. Our last lesson very properly presented the Risen Christ, showing that to Him death was not destruction, the Cross was a victory, not a defeat. The resurrection throws light upon the earthly life and explains

the final tragedy; the risen life creates a new Church and floods it with the light of heaven. No wonder that in the strength of this resurrection the disciples were new men; the critics who watched their conduct sharply could find only one explanation, viz., they had been with Jesus; that was true, but there was another, a more complete statement, which Peter and John could have given, which was, that not only had they been with Jesus, Jesus was still with them; the glorious promise was beginning to be fulfilled, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

The Silent Battles.

By Frank Walcott Hutt.

Sages and history, a wondrous story
Have ye revealed, through all the ages
down,
Of strife and peace, of battles and of glory,
Of cross and crown.

Brave men have risen to heed the call of duty,
True souls have grappled with the shape
of Wrong,
And through their wars have come, in martial
beauty,
Unspoiled and strong.

But in your tomes I find nowhere recorded,
Nowhere endowed with its honors due
One tale of valor, tested and rewarded,—
One tale that's true.

It is the unconfessed, unuttered story,
Repeated in each life from sun to sun,
Of man's long, silent struggle, and God's
glory,
When Right has won.

In all the record of the past, oh, never
Is God's right hand more manifest and
strong,
Than when, by prayerful, earnest, firm en-
deavor,
Man masters Wrong.

—Sunday-school Times.

The Empty Life.

The life that is not made buoyant and luminous by an immortal hope is a sad and empty one. Hope is one of the things that endure. It gives wings to the soul, and lifts it up above the distressing and vexatious affairs of this life. The heart without a strong, abiding confidence, or at least a well-founded expectation, concerning the things of the life to come, must be heavy, indeed. Overwhelmed by the cares of the passing day, distracted by the fierce competitions of business, disappointed by multiplied manifestations of human selfishness, humiliated over his own failures and haunted by the uncertainty of the final outcome, how can that man be contented in his own soul or be of service to others, who does not possess that "hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began?" The hopeless life is an empty, unsatisfying and unfruitful life, and none are more conscious of this than those who are living in it.—The Christian Advocate.

*Golden Text.—"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."
—Tim. i., 1-15.